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THE

Evangelical Expoſitor:

OR, A

COMMENTARY

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE.

WHEREIN

The Sacred TEXT of the OLD and NEW TESTAMENT is inſerted
at Large; the Senſe Explained; and the more difficult Paſſages Elucidated:

WITH

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

ALSO

References to Parallel Scriptures; the Marginal Readings; and a Chronology.

For the Uſe of Families and Private Chriſtians of every Denomination.

By the Reverend THOMAS HAWEIS,

Rector of Aldwinckle, Northamptonſhire, and Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of Peterborow.

VOL. I.

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BRITAN
NICVM

PREFACE.

AS it is the profeſſed belief of every Chriſtian, that the Scriptures alone contain the way of ſalvation; it is therefore their greateſt intereſt, as well as duty, to conſult thoſe ſacred oracles, and diligently enquiring after the mind and will of God therein revealed, to follow with ſimplicity and ſincerity the path marked out to them in this ſure guide to heaven. To be a believer upon truſt, or a Chriſtian by education, is only to abuſe the name, without a real poſſeſſion of the thing. We muſt go then to the word and to the teſtimony, that on the foundation of ſcriptural knowledge we may raiſe the glorious ſuperſtructure of real Chriſtianity, and be enabled not merely to have a good hope, through grace in ourſelves, but be able alſo to give to others a reaſon of the hope that is in us.

Though the ſacred text attentively read, with a heart directed to Him who *giveth wiſdom and underſtanding to the ſimple*, will generally afford the beſt comment on itſelf, by comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual: yet, it will conduce not a little to enlarge our views, and to warm our hearts, if we borrow the aſſiſtances which the wiſe and faithful Expoſitors have given us, either to elucidate the more difficult paſſages, or to apply the more obvious to the conſcience, or to ſpiritualize the ceremonies, or to enliven the parts purely hiſtorical, with obſervations practical, and naturally ariſing from the ſubject.

This Expoſition goes forth with this profeſſed deſign, and is commended to the bleſſing of the Divine Spirit, who alone can make our feeble efforts effectual to the end propoſed. The author has been indebted to ſeveral Expoſitors who have gone before, but owns his greateſt obligations to Mr. Henry, whoſe excellent Expoſition hath received ſufficient commendation in the many editions it hath paſſed. But as the length and expenſiveneſs of ſo large a work prevents its uſefulneſs to many, who can neither afford the time or expence it requires, ſo manifold repetitions and explications, perhaps ſometimes unneceſſary or tedious, render it leſs acceptable to others. The following work therefore will be included in a compaſs much more convenient; and whilſt it is attempted to remove all ſuperfluous enlargements, it is hoped, that Mr. Henry's ſpirituality will be preſerved, with what additional improvement, either in matter or manner, the reader muſt determine.

The references, marginal readings, and chronology, ſhould never be omitted in any edition of the Bible, as they ſerve greatly to open its contents, by leading us to conſult the parallel ſcriptures, explain the Hebrew common names, or give the more literal, and uſually the more genuine ſenſe of the words.

I deſire to look up to God for help and aſſiſtance in this important work, which was undertaken in the country, where a ſmall charge afforded me more than uſual leiſure: and if by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit, it ſhall be made uſeful to the churches of Chriſt, I ſhall count my labour not in vain, and give God the praiſe; as I have reaſon to be thankful to Him, who hath bleſſed it, in any communications of farther knowledge or edification to my own ſoul.

Aldwinckle,
June 28. 1765.

THOMAS HAWEIS.

TESTIMONIALS in Favour of this Work.

Copy of a Letter from the Rev. Mr. VENN, *of* Huddersfield *in* Yorkſhire, *to the Publiſhers.*

I Received the Sheets of Mr. HAWEIS's EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR. I heartily approve of his Deſign, to make the bleſſed Word of God more read, and more underſtood. The *great Maſters in Iſrael*, of whoſe Comments he intends to make much Uſe, muſt render his Work valuable; and whoever knows his ſpirited Manner of Writing, and truly Evangelical Principles, (as he has publiſhed them to the World in his Volume of Sermons), and has a Zeal for the Advancement of the Redeemer's Glory, will be glad to recommend to ſerious Chriſtians of all Denominations Mr. Haweis's Expoſition.

H. VENN.

Huddersfield, April 23, 1765.

Copy of a Letter from the Honourable and Reverend Mr. SHIRLEY, *Rector of* Loughrea *in* Ireland, *to the Author.*

I Had the Pleaſure of your Letter, and the very great Pleaſure of ſome Sheets of your EXPOSITION. I was really charmed with it; and if you conceive that my Name will be of any Service in the Recommendation of it, I think I owe this not only to you, but to the Public.

WALTER SHIRLEY.

April 13, 1765.

Copy of a Letter from the Rev. Mr. TOWNSEND, *Rector of* Pewſey *in* Wiltſhire, *to the Publiſhers.*

I Have read the Sheets of Mr. HAWEIS's EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR, which you ſent me, and think the Work fully anſwers the Title. It appears to me to be far beyond any Expoſitor I have ſeen; more ſpirited, and fully as experimental. I can with Pleaſure recommend to others a Book, from which I expect ſo much Pleaſure and Edification myſelf.

JOSEPH TOWNSEND.

Pewſey, April 22, 1765.

Copy of a Letter from the Rev. Mr. NEWTON, *of* Olney *in* Bucks, *to the Publiſhers.*

I Have peruſed the Sheets you ſent of the EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR. The Deſign has my hearty Approbation: I hope and believe it will conduce to the great Ends of advancing the Redeemer's Glory, and the Knowledge of his Word and Grace amongſt us. So far as my Influence will reach, I ſhall moſt cordially recommend it to ſerious Chriſtians of every Denomination.

JOHN NEWTON.

Olney, April 16, 1765.

THE

EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;

OR, A

PRACTICAL COMMENT

Upon the Firſt Book of MOSES called

GENESIS.

WE have now before us, The Holy Bible, or Book, for ſo Bible ſignifies. We call it the Bible by way of eminency, for it is incomparably the beſt book that ever was written, the Book of Books, ſhining like the ſun in the firmament of learning; other valuable and uſeful books, like the moon and ſtars, borrowing their light from it. We call it the Holy Bible, becauſe it was written by holy men, indited by the Holy Ghoſt: it is perfectly pure from all falſhood, and corrupt intention, and the manifeſt tendency of it is to promote holineſs among men.—The great things of God's Law and Goſpel are here written to us, that they might be reduced to a greater certainty, might ſpread further, remain longer, and be tranſmitted to diſtant places and ages more pure and entire than poſſibly they could be by report and tradition. And we ſhall have a great deal to anſwer for, if theſe things which belong to our peace, *being thus* committed to us, *be neglected by us as a ſtrange and foreign thing,* Hoſ. viii. 12.*—The Scriptures, or Writings of the ſeveral inſpired penmen, from Moſes down to St. John, (in which divine light, like that of the morning, ſhone gradually) are all put together in this bleſſed Bible, which, thanks be to God, we have in our hands, and they make as perfect a day, as we are to expect on this ſide Heaven.* This is the light that ſhines in a dark place, 2 *Pet.* i. 19. *and a dark place indeed, the world would be without the Bible. That part of the Bible which we call the Old Teſtament, contains the acts and monuments of the Church from the creation, almoſt to the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, which was about four thouſand years. This is called a Teſtament, or Covenant,* (Διαθήκη) *becauſe it was a ſettled declaration of the will of God concerning man in a federal way, and had its force from the deſigned death of the great Teſtator,* the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world, *Rev.* xiii. 8.*—The five books of Moſes begin the Old Teſtament, and were probably the firſt which were ever written, and are certainly the moſt ancient writings now extant, and therefore beſt able to give us a ſatisfactory account of the moſt ancient things.—The firſt of thoſe five books, which we call Geneſis, was written moſt probably by Moſes in the wilderneſs, after he had been in the mount with God. And as he framed the tabernacle, ſo did he the more excellent and durable fabric of this book, exactly according to the pattern ſhewed him in the mount; into which it is better to reſolve the certainty of the things herein contained, than into any tradition which poſſibly might be handed down from Adam to Methuſelah, from him to Shem, from him to Abraham, and ſo to the family of Jacob.—Geneſis is a name borrowed from the Greek: It ſignifies the original, or generation; fitly is this book ſo called, for it is a hiſtory of originals; the creation of the world, the entrance of ſin and death into it, the invention of arts, the riſe of nations, and eſpecially the planting of the Church, and the ſtate of it in its early days. It is alſo a hiſtory of generations, the generations of Adam, Noah, Abraham, &c. not endleſs but uſeful genealogies.—The beginning of the New Teſtament is called Geneſis too.* Mat. i. 1. Βίβλος γενέσεως, *The Book of the Geneſis or Generation of Jeſus Chriſt. Bleſſed be God for that Book which ſhews us our remedy, as this opens our wound. Lord, open our eyes that we may ſee the wonderous things both of thy Law and Goſpel!*

Year before the common year of Chriſt 4004.

CHAP. I.

The foundation of all religion being laid in our relation to God as our creator, it was fit that that book of divine revelations, which was intended to be the guide, ſupport, and rule of religion in the world, ſhould begin, as it doth, with a plain and full account of the creation of the world; in anſwer to that firſt enquiry of a good conſcience, Where is God my maker? *Job* xxxv. 8. *Concerning which, the wiſeſt Heathens erred exceedingly: ſome aſſerting the world's eternity and ſelf-exiſtence; others aſcribing it to a fortuitous concourſe of atoms;* thus the world by wiſdom knew not God. *The holy ſcripture therefore is revealed to extricate us from this labyrinth of error, and to teach us that this world was, in the beginning of time, created by a Being of infinite wiſdom and power, who was himſelf before all time, and all worlds. The firſt verſe of the Bible gives us a ſurer and better, a more ſatisfying and uſeful knowledge of the origin of the univerſe, than all the volumes of the philoſophers. The lively faith of the humble Chriſtian underſtands this matter better than the elevated fancy of the greateſt genius,* Heb. xi. 3.

We have three things in this chapter, (1.) *A general idea given us of the work of creation,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *A particular account of the ſeveral days work. The creation of the light the firſt day,* ver. 3—5. *Of the firmament the ſecond day,* ver. 6—8. *Of the ſea, the earth, and its fruits, the third day,* ver. 9—13. *Of the lights of heaven the fourth day,* ver. 14—19. *Of the fiſh and fowl the fifth day,* ver. 20—23. *Of the beaſts,* ver. 24—25. *Of man,* ver. 26—28. *And food for both, the ſixth day,* ver. 29—30. (3.) *The review and approbation of the whole work,* ver. 31.

1. [a] IN the beginning [b] God created the heaven and the earth. 2. And [c] the earth was without form and void, and darkneſs *was* upon the face of the deep: and [d] the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

[a] John i. 1. [b] Pſal. xxxiii. 5. lxxxix. 11, 12. cii. 25. cxxxvi. 5. cxlvi. 6. Iſa. xliv. 24. Jer. x. 12. li. 15. Zeck. xii. 1. Acts xiv. 15. xvii. 24. Heb. xi. 3. [c] Jer. iv. 23. [d] Pſal. xxxiii. 6. Iſa. xl. 13, 14.

v. 1. What dignity of ſentiment! what majeſty of language, yet withal, what ſimplicity! Behold in the very opening of the ſcriptures, the ſtrong and ſtriking evidence of their divine original.

We have in theſe verſes, a ſhort, but expreſſive hiſtory of the creation of all things.

1. The great Agent is the Elohim. The name is plural, to lead us to the immediate view of the trinity of perſons in the one divine eſſence. *Note*, Without the light of revelation, we muſt have for ever remained ignorant of the true God. The Supreme Being of the wiſe deiſts, is as far removed from the Elohim of the ſcripture, as the innumerable deities of the blind idolater.

2. The work. Heaven and earth. The higheſt archangel is as much the workmanſhip of God, and as much dependent on him, as the worm which crawls under our feet. The ſun that gilds the firmament, and the clod it ſhines upon, have one original; how great then He who made all theſe! What beauty, what order, what ſcenes of wonder and admiration ſtrike the eye of the attentive beholder. Look, my ſoul, and read in theſe fair letters the wiſdom, power and glory of thy maker. Yet theſe eyes can reach no farther than the clouds; if ſuch the excellence of the outer court, what may we not expect within! yea, how much more than eye hath ſeen, or human heart conceived!

3. The time. In the beginning. Then time began. God alone is eternal. This is his eſſential attribute. The difference between creator and creature, is as the meaſure of time to eternity. The higheſt created being in this ſcale, is here loſt as the drop of the bucket in the boundleſs ocean. Let thoſe tremble then at the dire indignity they offer him, who dare degrade into a temporary exiſtence that eternal Son, who, from everlaſting to everlaſting, is over all, God bleſſed for ever.

4. The manner. God created. Creation is the bringing into being what had before no exiſtence. This is the prerogative of God alone. The things which are ſeen, were not made of the things which do appear.

Learn hence the object of our worſhip, the Creator, the Elohim, Three perſons, but one only and true God. His right to us is undoubted; all we have, and are, is of his bounty. Moſt juſtly therefore ſhould we yield up ourſelves to him, in love and adoration; by whom, and for whom are all things. Happy that heart that thus is led to anſwer the end of its creation.

v. 2. The creation here appears in its ſtate of chaos and confuſion. The jarring elements yet unſeparated, the earth an unformed maſs, the deep ſpread over it, whilſt darkneſs wrapped in ſwaddling bands the new-born embryo. But He who could produce the materials, can as eaſily arrange them in beauty, order, and comely proportion. The Spirit of the Lord, not the material wind that was not yet produced, but the eternal Spirit of the Elohim moved upon the face of the waters, impregnating them, as it were, with the principles of life and activity, as the hen broods over her neſt.

Before Chriſt 4004.

Such as appeared the material world before the Spirit of God quickned the lifeleſs lump; ſuch is now the ſpiritual world, till the ſame divine power interpoſes. 1. The ſoul of man by ſin, is become a heap of confuſion: as dead to God, and incapable of producing any fruits of holineſs, as the unformed chaos to produce trees or flowers. 2. Darkneſs covers it: we have neither the faculty of viſion to deſcry, nor light to illuminate ſpiritual objects. We know nothing of ourſelves, our God, our Saviour, our proper work, or happineſs, as we ought to know. 3. The whole world, which now lieth in wickedneſs, preſents to the enlightened mind, a lively image of this original confuſion and emptineſs. Darkneſs ſurrounds it, no beauty appears, God is forgotten, the jarring elements of corrupt nature breed wild uproar, and univerſal deſolation ſeems diffuſed around. The heart that hath been taught its true reſt, daily cries after that new heaven and new earth, where only real joy is to be found. 4. As incapable as this chaos was, of forming itſelf into order; as impoſſible as it was for this darkneſs to produce the light, or kindle up the ſun, ſo impoſſible is it for man, by any powers or ability of his own, to reſtore his fallen ſoul to the likeneſs and image of God, or to produce one beam of heavenly light, or ſpark of ſpiritual life. 5. It is the office of the ſpirit of God, (and his power only can effect it) to produce light and order in the dark and chaotic ſoul. There muſt be as evident a demonſtration of his divine agency upon the heart, as here appeared on the great deep. If a man have not experienced this, it had been good for him he had never been born. 6. Be our mortal bodies however diſſolved in earth, fire, water, air, He who firſt moved upon the face of the waters, can by the ſame energy recall the ſcattered particles of our duſt, and from the diſſipated and disjointed atoms raiſe up a glorious body, bright as the ſun when it ſhineth in its ſtrength.

3. [e] And God ſaid, Let there be light: and there was light. 4. And God ſaw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided * the light from the darkneſs. 5. And God called the light Day, and the darkneſs he called Night: and † the evening and the morning were the firſt day.

[e] 2 Cor. iv. 6. * Heb. Between the light and between the darkneſs. † Heb. And the evening was, and the morning was, &c.

v. 3. Light is the firſt born of creation, and brighteſt image of its Creator, who is called the father of lights, and in whom is no darkneſs at all. Whenever we enjoy the beams of day, our minds ſhould be led up to him, who dwelleth in the light, which no man can approach unto. But he muſt beſtow the internal as well as the external bleſſing, elſe in the blaze of noon we muſt grope for the wall as blind, nor can by ſearching find out God. Lighten our darkneſs then, we beſeech thee, O Lord!

He wills, and ſtrait ſtarts into being the exact form of the divine idea. By the ſame power of his effectual word, he ſaith to the ſoul, Let there be light; and inſtant a new creation riſes to the view; the ſoul emerges from the deeps of ignorance and ſin; the true light ſhineth; the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt appears; the heart is drawn by ties of irreſiſtible conviction, and begins to walk in the light, as he is in the light: happy that ſoul who by experience can ſay, I was once darkneſs, but now am light in the Lord! But forget not the exhortation which follows, Walk as children of the light.

v. 4. It was ſuch as God deſigned, excellent in uſe, and beautiful in itſelf. How little are common mercies noticed: who thinks of the bleſſing of light? though without it, creation would be a blank, and earth a dungeon. Though light appears, darkneſs has ſtill its uſe: it is not deſtroyed: the viciſſitude is as grateful as neceſſary in this mortal ſtate. The beams of the morning are not more pleaſing to the opening eye, than the ſhadows of the night to the cloſing eyelids. The preſent is a changing ſtate, where night and day are ſucceſſive: Let the ſoul who mourns in darkneſs be comforted, the day is at hand: and let him, on whoſe head the candle of the Lord ſhines brighteſt, not be too confident, the day of joy hath ſome dark clouds: bleſſed be God for this reviving hope; that the hour approaches when our ſun ſhall no more go down. It is among the glories of heaven, that there is no night there.

v. 5. The things receive their name as well as their being from God. The day is thine, the night alſo is thine: oh that both may be for ever conſecrated to his ſervice and glory, and then whether we ſleep or wake, we are the Lord's. A glorious day! nor finiſhed without the praiſe of admiring angels: theſe morning ſtars then ſung together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy, *Job* xxxviii. 7. May my every day thus be cloſed with praiſe to him, who is ſo worthy to be had in remembrance. The firſt day of the world was the firſt day of the week alſo: the reſurrection of Jeſus on the ſame day, hath made it doubly diſtinguiſhed. Henceforth it is ſet apart to commemorate that yet more glorious work the new creation: this is the day the

Lord hath made, and ſtamped with his own great name, "The Lord's Day." *Rev.* i. 10.

[f] Pſ. cxxxvi. 6. Jer. x. 12. li. 15.
* Heb. Expanſion.
[g] Pſ. cxlviii. 4.

6. ¶ And God ſaid, [f] Let there be a * firmament in the midſt of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament, from [g] the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was ſo. 8. And God called the firmament Heaven: and the evening and the morning were the ſecond day.

v. 6, 7. God proceeds in his ſtupendous work. 1. Having made the light, a proper medium is now provided, through which its rays may paſs: the firmament, or expanſe, that vaſt immenſity of ſpace, in which the celeſtial bodies move, in which this habitable globe appears, as little when viewed amidſt the ſurrounding creation, as the mote which plays in the ſun-beam compared with that great luminary. *Note,* Though this firmament is ſtretched over us, the way is open to the throne of God, and faith can even here enter within the vail, and prayer hath wings that mount beyond the ſkies; and when, in the judgment-day, the heavens ſhall be wrapped together as a ſcroll, we ſhall, without a covering, ſee the glories now concealed; and face to face behold him, who made all theſe things. 2. The deſign of this firmament, to divide the waters from the waters. There are waters beneath the firmament that cover the great deep, and rivers which run among the vallies; and there are waters above the firmament, in clouds that drop down fatneſs, and in treaſure houſes reſerved for purpoſes of judgment. We have ſeen, when God opened the windows of heaven, and ſwept away a world of the ungodly. O what a great God is he who hath thus provided for the comfort of all that ſerve him, and the confuſion of all that hate him. It is good having him our friend, and bad having him our enemy.

3. The inſtant accompliſhment of the divine will; it was ſo. What God wills, he works. Lord, what thy all-powerful word enjoins, let thy almighty grace effect, and then ſhall I be ſuch as thou wouldſt have me be.

v. 8. The name given the firmament, *Heaven.* The viſible heaven, the outer court of this great temple, we behold; the region of air and clouds and meteors around us, and the yet more diſtant ſcene gilded with the ſun, and all thoſe ſtars that glitter in their ſeveral ſpheres; but above theſe heavens, a third appears, where God is ſaid to fix his radiant throne, and where immortal ſpirits dwell: not that the heaven, or heaven of heavens can contain him, whoſe immenſity can no more be circumſcribed by his creation, than his eternity can be meaſured by the ſucceſſions of time. With heaven in our eye, can we continue to grovel on the earth? Is there our father's houſe, and this his glorious abode, and ſhall not our ſouls aſpire after him, and long to be with him, to paſs the threſhold of his dwelling-place, and to be admitted into his immediate viſion? *The Second Day:* Time now began to meaſure its regular periods, and what a work each day produces! Happy could we, as theſe ſwift hours paſs by, be able to ſay at every cloſing day, I have finiſhed the work he hath given me to do.

[h] Job xxvi. 10. xxxviii. 8. Pſ. xxxiii. 7. civ. 9. cxxxvi. 6. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22.
* Heb. Tender graſs.

9. ¶ And God ſaid, [h] Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together, unto one place, and let the dry-land appear: and it was ſo. 10. And God called the dry-land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God ſaw that *it was* good. 11. And God ſaid, Let the earth bring forth * graſs, the herb yielding ſeed, *and* the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whoſe ſeed *is* in itſelf, upon the earth: and it was ſo. 12. And the earth brought forth graſs, *and* herb yielding ſeed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whoſe ſeed *was* in itſelf, after his kind: and God ſaw that *it was* good. 13. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

v. 9, 10. The ſeparation of the ſuperior from the inferior world being perfected, the third day opens with the formation of this earth into beauty and order, from its ſtate of confuſion. 1. The waters are collected into proper receptacles, which he called Seas, or the Great Sea; for though diffuſed and diſtant the parts, they are one great whole. All the rivers which run into the ſeas, do firſt derive their ſource from thence. The action of the ſun raiſing up the waters, as fire in an alembick, the clouds return it in dew, or ſhowers; and theſe collecting, form the ſtreams which thus alternately come from, and return to, the ſtorehouſe of the great deep.

2. The waters being drawn off, the earth acquires its neceſſary ſolidity, and the dry land appears. Lord, if thou ſpeak the word, I ſhall emerge from the floods of ſin, and ſtand forth from amidſt the deep waters which run over me, to tell thy power and praiſe.

v. 11, 12, 13. The earth thus prepared is now filled with vegetative life, for preſent uſe, and for perpetuity too, each of the various and innumerable ſpecies of trees, plants, and flowers, bearing ſeed in itſelf. Wonderous proviſion! what a gracious God have we, who openeth his hand thus, and filleth all things living with plenteouſneſs! How ungrateful is man, who ſo ſeldom, or ſo coldly, remembers, that theſe are thy gifts, O God! Learn hence,

1. That as all things are from God, they ſhould be employed for him. We are but ſtewards, he the great proprietor; the more he beſtows, the more obliged are we, and bound in duty and gratitude to love and honour him in his mercies. 2. The command once given, ſtill operates; the earth continues its productions in regular ſucceſſion, and every returning ſpring and ſummer a new creation riſes. We ſhould do well, always to look beyond ſecond cauſes; the more we ſee of God in the productions of the earth, the more ſhall we value them. 3. God's creatures are all good; the corn, the wine, and the oil, have received a bleſſing from God. Shall we turn then theſe bleſſings into a curſe by our abuſe of them, through intemperance, or idolatrous attachment of our hearts to them? God forbid. 4. Every day has its work of mercy and grace, ſeverally to attract our notice, and awaken our gratitude. Let it be remembered always, that he who once began, worketh ſtill, nor does a day paſs over us, but ſome work of providence or grace marks it with a note of obſervation.

[i] Deut. iv. 19. Pſ. cxxxvi. 7.
* Heb. Between the day and between the night.
† Heb. The two.
‡ Heb. For the rule of the day, &c.
[k] Job xxxviii. 7.
[l] Jer. xxxi. 35.

14. ¶ And God ſaid, Let there be [i] lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide * the day from the night: and let them be for ſigns, and for ſeaſons, and for days, and years. 15. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was ſo. 16. And God made † two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the leſſer light ‡ to rule the night: *he made* [k] the ſtars alſo. 17. And God ſet them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth, 18. [l] And to rule over the day, and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkneſs: and God ſaw that *it was* good. 19. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

v. 14, 15. The fourth day preſents us with the formation of the luminaries of heaven, particularly conſidered in their uſes and deſign reſpecting the earth. This being the place where God chuſes to make the moſt eſpecial diſplay of his grace and glory, the other parts of the creation are diſpoſed for its ſervice.

The light had been before created, but diffuſed abroad; now it is collected into ſeveral bodies, and thereby becomes more powerful, more glorious, and more ſerviceable. Where God is the agent, his work muſt be perfect. Uſe and beauty there ever unite.—Hath the Lord kindled theſe heavenly luminaries in the firmament, and ſhall they not warm our hearts with ſacred love, whilſt in the contemplation of them, and lead us up to himſelf, who is the father of lights?

Their deſign is, 1. To divide the day from the night, by their riſing and ſetting; to mark the ſeaſons by the progreſs of the ſun through the ſigns of the Zodiac; and the years, by his return at the appointed time. In wiſdom hath God made them all. By him projected in their ſpheres, each ſeparate luminary revolves at fixed periods, and, as if endued with reaſon, the ſun knoweth its going down. 2. To give light upon the earth, to ſhine with cheering beams to comfort us, and to direct us in the work we have to do. The day is the ſeaſon for labour: what thy hand then findeth to do, do it with thy might; the night cometh, when no man can work.

v. 16, 17, 18, 19. The lights mentioned before, are here particularized; the ſun, moon, and ſtars. 1. The ſun, which, though to the eye of ſo ſmall a circumference, is more than an hundred and ſixty times as big as the earth. He is the great fountain of light, and from him our planetary ſyſtem repleniſhes its ſeveral orbs with light; and whilſt they all receive immediately from the ſun, they reflect it again one to another. How glorious that viſible luminary! the unguarded eye cannot bear his beams direct: but how much more glorious He who placed him in his ſphere, and before whom the angels veil their faces! 2. The Moon. The leſſer light, though counted great, becauſe by its nearneſs to us we receive more light from it, than from all the reſt: thus inferior to many other planets in ſize, yet to us more uſeful than them all. Not he that knows moſt, but he that makes the beſt uſe of his knowledge, is the truly valuable man.—The moon is dark, and borrows all her light from the ſun. Do we ſhine, let us never forget the fountain from whence our orb is filled; if we are light, it is only in and through the Lord. 3. The ſtars. Vaſt in ſize, and numberleſs as they appear, they are ſpoken of as a very little thing; juſt mentioned to point out their maker, and no more. The ſcripture indulges no vain curioſity. Though He who made them bringeth them forth in order, and *calleth them all by their names,* his intention in the ſcripture towards us is not to teach us a ſyſtem of aſtronomy, but to inſtruct us in the wiſdom that maketh wiſe unto ſalvation. It was a noble ſentiment of a certain judge, when preſſed to ſtudy aſtronomy: "I intend to ſe-"cure heaven firſt, and I'll take the ſtars in my way."— 4. The ſetting and riſing ſun now firſt began to meaſure night and day, and ever ſince theſe ordinances endure. My ſoul, let never morning riſe, that does not find thee on thy bended knees; let never evening dawn, without the duteous tribute of prayer and praiſe to him, who maketh the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

20. ¶ And God ſaid, [m] Let the waters bring forth abundantly * the moving creature that hath life, and † fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the ‡ open firmament of heaven. 21. [n] And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God ſaw that *it was* good. 22. And God bleſſed them, ſaying, [o] Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the ſeas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

[m] 2 Eſdras, vi. 47.
* Heb. The creeping ſwimming creature, a living ſoul.
† Heb. Let the fowl fly.
‡ Heb. Face of the firmament of heaven.
[n] Pſ. civ. 25, 26.
[o] Chap. viii. 17.

v. 20, 21. Amongſt the works of God, animal life had not yet appeared on the earth. The fifth day begins this work; and as there is proviſion made, mouths are found for the meat. The fiſh and fowl are firſt formed of the water, dead in themſelves, but teeming with life the moment the creative word goes forth. The greateſt, as well as the leaſt, owe to God their breath and being; and the whale that unweildly rolls along the ocean, coſts him no more than the worm that twinkles in the drop before the microſcope. Each endued with powers ſo exactly ſuited to his ſtate, and ſo exquiſitely faſhioned, that he who looks without wonder and adoration muſt be blind indeed. I know not whether moſt to pity the ignorance, or abhor the impiety, of the atheiſt and the infidel.

v. 22, 23. Not only their being, but the continuance of it, is provided for. Life is a fleeting thing; ſucceſſion is needful. God hath commanded it ſhall be, and, in virtue of his bleſſing, the heavens are covered with fowl, and the fiſh repleniſh the waters; and all for the uſe of man. Oh that he were wiſe, that he knew the bountiful giver. The fiſher, who caſts the bait into the brook, and the fowler, who ſeeks to the wood, ſhould remember ever, that theſe are God's creatures, given for our good, and therefore to be received and ſought with thankfulneſs to him. When any amuſement leads us from God, inſtead of to him, however innocent in itſelf, it becomes ruinous to us. As the days advance, ſtill ſomething more excellent than the former is produced. It will be well with us when the like progreſs appears, and to-day is one ſtep nearer perfection than yeſterday.

24. ¶ And God ſaid, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beaſt of the earth after his kind: and it was ſo. 25. And God made the beaſt of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God ſaw that *it was* good.

v. 24, 25. The beaſts are the production of the ſixth day. The earth, prolific now as the ſeas before, pours forth her offspring. The grazing herds, the various reptiles, and ravening inhabitants of the foreſt, each in his kind ſuited to anſwer the purpoſes of his maker, and to fill the place aſſigned him in the rank of beings.—Let cavillers queſtion the uſe of many beaſts of prey, or animals that appear a burden rather than a bleſſing; it is enough for the believer, that God ſaw it was good, to ſilence all ſceptical reaſoning. Though we may not know how at preſent, we ſhall know fully hereafter.

26. ¶ And God ſaid, [p] Let us make man in our image, after our likeneſs: and [q] let them have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27. So God created man in his own image, [r] in the image of God created he him: [s] male and female created he them. 28. And God bleſſed them, and God ſaid unto them, [t] Be fruitful, and multiply, and repleniſh the earth, and ſubdue it: and have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that * moveth upon the earth.

[p] Chap. v. 1. ix. 6. Wiſd. ii. 23. 1 Cor. xi. 7. Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10.
[q] Pſ. viii. 6.
[r] 1 Cor. xi. 7. Jam. iii. 9.
[s] Chap. v. 2. Mal. ii. 15. Matt. xix. 4. Mark x. 6.
[t] Chap. ix. 1. xxxv. 11.
* Heb. Creepeth.

v. 26, 27, 28. Behold the finiſhing ſtroke of the Divine Creator, Man, the laſt and greateſt work of God. Animal life was produced; now at laſt the crown of creation is brought forth in a rational ſoul. The earth, like a ſtately palace, furniſhed for his reception, ſeems to call for the great inhabitant; one who can be the tongue of this lower world, and render to the great Author of all the praiſe of his glorious works. Obſerve,

1. The ſolemnity of his creation. He is not, like the other creatures, produced at an inſtant; but firſt a ſacred counſel is as it were held between the perſons of the undivided Trinity: the reſult of it is, one who in his perſon ſhall unite both worlds. His body, though far tranſcending other animals, to be of the earth; his ſoul ſpiritual, and in the image of God. One who is capable of paying a reaſonable ſervice to that triune God, in whom he lives, and moves, and hath his being. *Note*, Man is then only *Man*, when he anſwers the end for which God made him. He who forgets the deſign of his creation, and prefers the indulgence of the body, to the proper enjoyments of the immortal ſoul, is no longer a man, but a beaſt.

2. The pattern after which he is formed. No leſs than God himſelf; in his image and likeneſs. This likeneſs chiefly appears, (1.) In his poſſeſſing a rational and immortal ſoul. His body, however beautiful and glorious, was of the earth, earthy; his ſpirit from the Father of ſpirits, a ray from the uncreated Sun of light and life. (2.) In the rectitude and purity of his nature. His underſtanding capacious, diſtinct, and clear; his will turning to God's will, as clay unto the ſeal; ſelf-inclined, and ever ready to hear and to obey. His affections, without wandering or diſtraction, ſupremely fixed on one great object, and finding all their enjoyment in his love and ſervice. To live for God, was as natural, as to breath; and all his converſation holy, as God is holy. Ah happy ſtate! no more now alas is left, but the ſad remembrance; a remembrance, that makes the preſent ſtate of ſin and miſery but more grievous. How fallen! how defaced this image! How is the gold become dim! how is the moſt fine gold changed! Oh Lord, raiſe up theſe deſolations of many generations! (3.) He repreſented God on earth. All things were put under his feet; they paid their homage to man, as he to God. But ſin hath broke the tie; and ſince man played the rebel firſt, no wonder the creatures have revolted from him, and ſcarce can now be reduced to ſerve him. The whole creation groaneth. Lord, haſten the day of reſtitution, when this diſordered world once more ſhall riſe from the furnace, and righteouſneſs again ſhall dwell in it.

3. Man was created male and female, two in perſon, one by the union of marriage. *Note*, Man is but half himſelf, without his partner woman. From this original pair deſcend the numerous generations of men that have overſpread the earth. How fooliſh and vain then is the pride of pedigree, when the beggar on the dunghill can claim the moſt ancient and ennobled extraction, as the ſon of Adam, which was the ſon of God. We have, in the literal ſenſe, one father; we are brethren of one family, the ſame blood runs in our veins, and therefore brotherly affection ſhould be in our hearts one to another. Oh when ſhall it be, that we ſhall practice this great duty, to love one another out of a pure heart fervently?

4. The bleſſing of God is pronounced upon him; he hath the earth as his poſſeſſion, and is commanded to multiply and repleniſh it with inhabitants. (1.) The earth is given to the children of men, but not as lords paramount. Man is to occupy it for God's glory, and render him the tribute of bounden duty and ſervice continually. The moment he abuſes it by waſte, or pride, or inordinate affection; he will be reckoned with as an unjuſt ſteward. (2.) Children, and the fruit of the womb, are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord. In virtue of his firſt benediction, the world continues from generation to generation: yet uſually how little is God's hand ſeen, or his bleſſing ſought for herein?

5. Man is to ſubdue and govern it. By his ſuperior wiſdom he is furniſhed with methods to make the fierceſt animals yield, and the ſtrongeſt to ſerve him; and he hath dominion over all, by grant from God himſelf. We have forfeited it by ſin, but God in mercy, hath not wholly reſumed it: though much is loſt, and all had been, were it not for the repairer of the breach, who is come to be the Saviour of all men; though more eſpecially of thoſe who believe; to them all is reſtored, for all is ours, in bleſſing and ſanctified uſe, when we are Chriſt's.

29. ¶ And God ſaid, Behold, I have given you every herb * bearing ſeed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding ſeed: [n] to you it ſhall be for meat. 30. And to every beaſt of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* † life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was ſo.

* Heb. Seeding ſeed.
[n] Chap. ix. 3. Pſ. civ. 14, 15.
† Heb. a living ſoul.

v. 29. God having given man a general dominion, gives him a particular grant of proviſion. Though he ruled over the beaſts, they are to be his ſubjects, not his food. In his firſt ſtate of bliſs, he needed them not: yet no doubt his board was ſpread with ſuch fruits and herbs, as this now ruined earth cannot produce.

1. The proviſion was *liberal.* Every tree. God is no niggard of his gifts, nor reſtrains us from any thing truly good for us. When it became needful, he added the living creatures to his former grant, *Gen.* ix. 3. and hath given them to us richly to enjoy. 'Tis not the uſe, but the abuſe, which he forbids: may we never then ſpend in the indulgence of our luſts, what was given for the comfort of our lives.

2. It was *plain* and *ſimple,* ſuited to preſerve his body in health, and to perpetuate his life, either here below, or till his tranſlation to a better world. The curſe which entered by ſin, hath indeed now brought in death; but the unnatural luxury that hath taught many ſo to diſguiſe their food, that we can no longer know it, is no ſmall means of ſhortening the few days that are yet allotted.

v. 30. Man is not the only object of God's care; he giveth fodder to the cattle, and feedeth the young ravens who cry to him. On him the creatures all depend; and though they have no ſtorehouſe or barn, they want for nothing. He openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteouſneſs. How wondrous his bounty! How univerſal his providence! What abundant reaſon have we to caſt at all times our care upon him! Shall the cattle be fed, and his children famiſhed?

31. And God ſaw every thing that he had made, and behold *it was* [x] very good. And the evening and the morning were the ſixth day.

[x] Verſes 4, 12, 18, 21, 25. Ecclus. xxxix. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 4.

v. 31. Behold now the compleat work of the glorious God. He who begins, will alſo make an end. Let the people of God be comforted; he doth not work by halves: Hath he begun the new creation in their hearts, he will perfect the ſame, unto the day of his appearing.

1. We have here a ſolemn review of the whole. He who makes the work, knows it thoroughly. Be it ever in our mind, that theſe eyes of Omniſcience ſtill go to and fro through the earth, and that from them nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret.

2. The approbation on the review: It was very good. Exactly anſwering the mind of the Creator; no flaw, no error, no want, no redundance: admirably ſuited for the ſervice of man, and in the higheſt meaſure demonſtrating the wiſdom, power, grace, and glory of the hand which formed it.—Whatever God doth, is well done. Though unbelief would often call in queſtion the works of his providence or grace, the day is coming, when we ourſelves ſhall be convinced, that all was holy, and juſt, and good. At the end it ſhall ſpeak.—How different are our works on the review from God's! Alas! the more we reflect, and the more attentively we view them, the more we ſee of their evil, and are covered with ſhame and confuſion. Yet, to be thus humbled, is mercy. When we begin to ſee, and ceaſe from our own works, we ſhall be led to him whoſe work is perfect, and of whom, and of us in him, God will himſelf declare, that he is well pleaſed.

3. The cloſing of the ſixth day. God could at an inſtant have begun and made an end: he wanted no conſultation, or correction in his work; all known to him it was from the beginning, and to him as eaſy to will a world, as a worm into being; but he wrought ſix days, to teach us to work, and reſted the ſeventh, enjoining by precept, as he hath taught us by example, to ſeparate it for our day of holy reſt, to be ſpent entire in his ſervice, in the contemplation of his works and ways, and in adoration, love, and praiſe. Lord, may my every Sabbath thus be ſpent, till not one day, but every day, I ſhall come to celebrate an eternal ſabbath in thy preſence in glory, and reſt from all my works and labours beneath the ſun, in the enjoyment of thy bleſſed ſelf.

CHAP. II.

We have, 1. *The inſtitution and ſanctification of the ſabbath, which was made for man, and to further his holineſs and comfort,* ver. 1—3. 2. *A more particular account of man's creation,* ver. 4—7. 3. *A deſcription of the garden of Eden, and the placing of man in it, under the obligations of a law and covenant,* ver. 8—17. 4. *The creation of the woman, her marriage to the man, and the inſtitution of the ordinance of marriage,* ver. 18, ad finem.

1. THUS the heavens and the earth were finiſhed, and [a] all the hoſt of them. 2. And [b] on the ſeventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he reſted on the ſeventh day from all the work which he had made. 3. And God bleſſed the ſeventh day, and ſanctified it: becauſe that in it he had reſted from all his work which God * created and made.

[a] Pſ. xxxiii. 6.
[b] Ex. xx. 11. xxxi. 17. Deut. v. 14. Hebr. iv. 4.
* Heb. Created to make.

v. 1. Nothing remained farther to be done; the whole was finiſhed to the utmoſt perfection, and regulated in the exacteſt order. Numerous as the hoſts of heaven and earth are, each knew his place, and kept his rank. How ſecure is the man that hath theſe hoſts engaged for his protection; how dreadful and inevitable the ruin of thoſe, againſt whom both combine as inſtruments of God's vengeance.

v. 2, 3. The grand machine compleat, and ſet in motion, by implanted virtue continues its appointed revolutions. And now the great Creator reſted, not as weary, or exhauſted, but with complacence and delight, in the contemplation of his own wiſdom, power, and grace, thus glorioſly manifeſted in all his works. Hereupon he appoints a conſtant memorial of this great tranſaction, in the ſeparation of a ſeventh day for his immediate ſervice.

1. The ſabbath is of divine appointment. One day in ſeven God claims wholly for himſelf, to remember him in the works he hath wrought. Whether the day we obſerve anſwer exactly to that ſeventh which was at firſt appointed, is dubious: it does not, we know, to the Jewiſh ſabbath; but this we know, that it is the day when the Redeemer entered into his reſt, after perfecting the work of our redemption, and is now ordained to perpetuate not only the remembrance of the old, but alſo of the more glorious new creation.

> "'Twas great to raiſe a world from nought,
> "But greater to redeem." *Watts.*

2. It is a holy day. Every day of our life ſhould be devoted to God's ſervice; but one in ſeven is more peculiarly to be ſet apart for the Lord, to be withdrawn from worldly occupations, and to be ſpent in the delightful work of prayer and praiſe, of meditation and mutual conference, tending to raiſe up our minds to him, the great author of every bleſſing, and to prepare us for the reſt, which remaineth in the eternal world for the people of God.—How impious then and profane, to pollute it with works of common labour; and how much more profane, to proſtitute it to the purpoſes of pleaſure, vain company, idle amuſements, or works of wickedneſs. Shall he not viſit for theſe things?

3. It is a bleſſed day. God will meet thoſe who ſpend it with him, who call the ſabbath a delight, and fill them with his conſolations. They will find it is good for them to be with him; and every ſuch day ſpent on earth, will quicken their deſires after, and increaſe their reliſh for, the eternal ſabbath, when he ſhall take them to himſelf, as his bleſſed children, to inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world. *Note,* As ſabbath-breaking is the door to all evil, ſo ſabbath-keeping is the way to never-ending bleſſedneſs.

4. ¶ Theſe *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created; in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. 5. And every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field, before it grew: for the LORD God had not cauſed it to rain upon the earth, and there *was* not a man to till the ground. 6. But * there went up a miſt from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. 7. And the LORD God formed man † *of* the [c] duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life; and [d] man became a living ſoul.

* Or a miſt, which went up from, &c.
† Duſt of the ground.
[c] Ecclus. xvii. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 45.
[d] 1 Cor. xv. 47.

v. 4, 5, 6. We had God before in his triune character, as the Elohim; now he calls himſelf Jehovah, alone ſelf-exiſtent, whilſt all beſides is of him and from him. To us there is but one God; the unity of the Divine Eſſence is as much an article of our creed, as the trinity of perſons.—As we have ſeen the generations of the heaven and earth, with their various furniture, here a more diſtinct notice is taken of ſome of the productions of the earth to the praiſe of the great Creator.

Obſerve, 1. The ſtate of perfection in which things were made: the plants and trees in full growth, fit for immediate uſe: nor ſun nor rain had contributed yet to their produce. When God pleaſes, he can work without means, as well as with them. Though it becomes us not to tempt him, it is our duty always to truſt him.

2. The proviſion God makes for the continuance of vegetation: before the rain fell, a miſt from the earth watered it. Where God hath planted divine grace in any heart, he will take care to water it, and make it grow. The increaſe, as well as the formation, is wholly from him.

3. That the ground is made for cultivation, and that it is man's proper buſineſs to till it. Though grace in the heart be a new creation, brought forth without man's labour, yet it is deſigned that we ſhould cultivate the heavenly plant, and, with dependance on God's bleſſing, be ſeeking to grow in grace, and bring forth fruit unto perfection.

v. 7. Man's formation is more particularly taken notice of, the different parts of his compoſition, and the effect of their union by the hands of the Almighty.

1. His body is formed of the duſt of the ground. Man in *innocence* had much to humble him, when he could look upon the earth under his feet, and call it mother. He was but duſt

of duſt: but how much more cauſe hath fallen man to be humble, when he is not only of the duſt, but muſt return to the duſt again. It is ignorance of our original, and forgetfulneſs of our end, that leads us to high thoughts of our vile and ſinful ſelves.

2. The ſpirit is immediately from God: He is the father of ſpirits, and forms them in a capacity for, and with a view to, the enjoyment of himſelf. How debaſing then, to fix a heavenborn ſoul on earthly vanities! Whither ſhould the god-like ſpirit aſpire, but after him whoſe breath kindled it, in communion with whom is its only proper happineſs?

3. The union of body and ſoul makes the living man. The body, when created, however beautiful, was dead and uſeleſs of itſelf. The body, when the ſpirit leaves it, is now loathſome and deteſted. Let us then weigh the value of both, that we may learn to prefer the better part.

4. The whole is God's work, whether body or ſoul; and both therefore ſhould be devoted to his glory. The body, as well as the ſoul and ſpirit, ſhould be preſented to him a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reaſonable ſervice. Happy they, who by daily delightful experience prove, that they are God's offspring, by glorifying him thus in their body, and in their ſpirit, which are his.

8. ¶ And the LORD God planted a garden [e] eaſtward [f] in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleaſant to the ſight, and good for food: [g] the tree of life alſo in the midſt of the garden, and the [h] tree of knowledge of good and evil. 10. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 11. The name of the firſt *is* [i] Piſon: that *is* it which compaſſeth the [k] whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. 12. And the gold of that land *is* good: [l] there *is* bdellium and the onyx-ſtone. 13. And the name of the ſecond river *is* Gihon: the ſame *is* it that compaſſeth the whole land of *Ethiopia. 14. And the name of the third river is [m] Hiddekel: that *is* it which goeth † toward the eaſt of Aſſyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates. 15. And the LORD God took ‡ the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dreſs it and to keep it.

[e] Chap. iii. 24.
[f] Chap. iv. 16. 2 Kings xix. 12. Ezek. xxvii. 23.
[g] Chap. iii. 22. Rev. xxii. 2.
[h] Ver. 17.
[i] Ecclus. xxiv. 25.
[k] Chap. xxv. 18.
[l] Num. xi. 7.
* Heb. Cuſh.
[m] Dan. x. 4.
† Or eaſtward to Aſſyria.
‡ Or Adam.

v. 8—14. Man, thus created, hath an abode provided for him ſuitable to his ſtate, where every thing around him conſpired innocently to delight and comfort his body, whilſt God himſelf, by a ſacramental pledge in the tree of life, engages to be the joy and happineſs of his ſoul. We have a deſcription of the place, its ſituation, rivers, produce, and peculiarities.

1. It was a garden. When no inclement ſky had yet began to lour, when ſtorms and tempeſt had not learnt to roar, when nature, ever-blooming, filled the eye with pleaſure, and the air with fragrance, a palace of gold had been a confinement, and beds of ivory mean, compared with the delicious groves of Eden, and thoſe couches of amaranthine flowers, that decked this happy place. The ſtarry canopy of heaven was extended over them; the wide earth around ſerved as the courts to grace the temple; whilſt this ſecluded ſpot, the bleſt abode provided by their bounteous Maker, like the holy place of old, ſhone with brighter beauties, than ever adorned that houſe of Solomon, though overlaid with gold, and ſtudded with precious ſtones. Imagination could not conceive, nor deſire wiſh for a greater profuſion of delights. *Note*, The richer the mercy, the more ungrateful the ill return. To whom much is given, of them much will be required. You who poſſeſs this world's abundance, what effect hath it upon you? Do you remember the giver in the gift?

2. The ſituation; eaſtward in Eden. The choice of the ſpot was from God, and the furniſhing it his work. It was no doubt the beſt of that which was all very good. No traces of it however now remain; as ſin drove man out, the deluge ſwept it away. All that we know of it is, that it was eaſtward compared with Judea. The ſearch after the ſpot hath employed the curious, and the conjectures about its ſituation engaged the pen of the learned; we ſhall be leſs diſappointed and perplexed in our reſearches, if we quit the terreſtrial Eden, and ſeek after the Paradiſe of God. If but an entrance be granted us there, we ſhall recover all that Adam loſt, and more.

3. Its produce; every thing pleaſing to the eye, and good for food. God conſulted the pleaſure, as well as the profit, of his creatures. If a beautiful proſpect delights the eye, or a delicious ſavour the palate, it is the gift of God, and to be acknowledged to his glory. Moroſe inſenſibility, and monkiſh auſterity, is as far removed from true humility and ſelf-denial, as it is from gratitude.

4. Its peculiarities. Many were the trees that adorned the garden, but two of wonderful efficacy. The firſt was the tree of *life*; whether ſo called, becauſe of ſome property contained in it of preſerving the human body from decay, or becauſe appointed of God as the pledge and ſeal of man's immortality, whilſt he continued in a ſtate of obedience. *Note*, Many have pretended ſince to have invented preſervatives againſt decay, and elixirs of life; but death hath proved ſhortly the vanity of the pretenſion. There now remains but one medicine that can make us truly immortal, and that is the bread which cometh down from heaven, of which if a man eat, he ſhall never die. O may we cry with the diſciples, Lord, evermore give us this bread.—(2.) The tree of the knowledge of good and evil; ſo called from its deſign to point out the knowledge of good and evil to man; foraſmuch as it was to ſtand for a teſt of his obedience or diſobedience to the poſitive command of God, enjoining him to abſtain from it; and further, as it eventually ſerved to convince man, when, contrary to the command, he dared to eat of it, of the good he loſt, and the evil, which elſe he had never known. *Note*, In many caſes, to be ignorant, is to be innocent.

5. The rivers. The garden was well watered with refreſhing ſtreams: the names of them are tranſmitted to us, and their courſe deſcribed.—One of theſe ſtreams compaſſed Havilah, and an eſpecial remark is made upon the riches of that land. Gold and precious ſtones are uſually found in the brooks; but they deſcend thither from the mountains, whence the river flows. *Note*, If the ſands of gold which are found in the rivers of grace are ſo precious, how much more ſhould we prize the mine itſelf, in the mount of the Paradiſe of God!—Havilah had the gold and precious ſtones, but Eden the tree of life. Whilſt other lands boaſt of mines of diamonds, and their ſands of gold, it is our greater glory, that we enjoy the goſpel.

v. 15. God made the abode, and then brought the inhabitant into it. *Note*, 1. Man held all as matter of gift, not right. Man in innocence was indebted for all to ſovereign grace; and how much more now is man a ſinner! 2. It is the great comfort in every ſituation of life, to ſee God's hand in leading us into it. Whenever he is our guide, and we follow, he will aſſuredly ſpread the table of bleſſing, and make us drink of the waters of his Paradiſe.

But even in Paradiſe man was not to be idle; though it was made ready to his hands, he was to dreſs and keep it. Learn hence, (1.) Though the work of God in our ſalvation be wholly his own, and by grace we are ſaved; that doth not ſuperſede our diligence, but more oblige us to work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling, becauſe God worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure. (2.) That if Adam was created to work, it can be the prerogative of none of his deſcendants to plead exemption from it. To waſte therefore our time in indolence, or to ſquander it away in vain pleaſures, will bring a grievous reckoning, when the maſter of the vineyard ſhall come and viſit the ſlothful ſervant. (3.) That ſecular employments will very well conſiſt with a life of communion with God. The ſons and heirs of heaven, while they are here in this world, have ſomething to do about this earth, which muſt have its ſhare of their time and thoughts; and if they do it with an eye to God, they are as truly ſerving him in it, as when they are upon their knees. (4.) The gardener and huſbandman may comfort themſelves in their laborious employment, that it is the firſt trade God taught to man, and affords abundant matter of conſtant meditation to lead us up to him. The ſpade and the pruning-hook, when rightly uſed, may be made the means of cultivating the heart, as well as the garden, or the field.

16. And the LORD God commanded the man, ſaying, Of every tree of the garden † thou mayeſt freely eat. 17. But of [n] the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, [o] ‡ thou ſhalt ſurely die.

† Heb. Eating, thou ſhalt eat.
[n] ver. 9.
[o] Chap. iii. 19.
‡ Heb. Dying, thou ſhalt die.

v. 16. God, who placed man in this Eden, gives him directions how to hold the grant, and under what conditions he would continue the enjoyment of it to him and his poſterity. As he was their fountain head, reſpecting life, he is appointed their repreſentative and covenant head alſo. By his obedience, or diſobedience, they ſtand or fall. *Note*, They who preſume to find fault with this diſpoſition, had they been by, would never have heſitated at the propoſal.

1. God hath an abſolute right over his creatures, and he can command them nothing but what is holy, juſt, and good. Happy are they who yield themſelves up to his government, and make his will the rule of all their conduct; without limitation, exception, or heſitation.

2. The particular exertion of that authority over Adam, preſcribing the terms on which his bliſs ſhould endure.

(1.) An aſſurance to him of the perpetuity of his preſent happineſs on his obedience. The whole garden is his and his heirs for ever, under the ſacramental ſeal of the tree of life.

(2.) The proof of this obedience ſtated, in the abſtinence from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Death is denounced

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nounced on the offence, and life implied therein on obedience. This obſerve, and live for ever: this tranſgreſs, and dying thou ſhalt die: ſo the original, intimating the dreadfulneſs of the puniſhment, and the certainty of its execution. Not only he ſhould be excluded from the tree of life, and all the bleſſings therein ſealed to him, but alſo ſuffer the pains of death; whether ſpiritual, in the loſs of God's image; or temporal, in the return of his body to the duſt; or eternal, in the baniſhment of body and ſoul from God's preſence for ever, and their ſufferings in everlaſting torment: and this to commence from the day of his tranſgreſſion, *in the day thou eateſt thereof*, &c. That very hour the image of God ſhould depart, he ſhould become a condemned criminal, dead in law, and be obnoxious to God's wrath to all eternity.

God fenced his commands with dire threatenings to man in innocence. Doth fallen man then leſs need them? Yet how do men hate to hear of the wages of ſin, and to be perſuaded by the terrors of the Lord?

3. The prohibition enjoined, was of moſt eaſy compliance; could admit of no doubt, being poſitive and clear, and ſerved withal to give a proof of ſubmiſſion, both of body and ſoul, to God, in the denial of appetite, and the reſtraint of vain curioſity.

God had fully provided for man's happineſs, and the reſtraint ſo trivial, it was a new inſtance of his kindneſs; for what leſs could have been contrived: how gracious all his dealings and deſigns? And what an aggravation to man's guilt, ſhould he after all prove falſe and faithleſs, and wantonly tranſgreſs a covenant ſo eaſy in its terms, ſo glorious in its promiſes, ſo terrible in its threatenings.

18. ¶ And the LORD God ſaid, *It is* not good that the man ſhould be alone: [p] I will make him an help † meet for him. 19. And [q] out of the ground the LORD God formed every beaſt of the field, and every fowl of the air, and [r] brought *them* unto ‡ Adam to ſee what he would call them; and whatſoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.

p Chap. iii. 12.
† Heb. as before him.
q Chap. i. 20—24.
r See Chap. vi. 20.
‡ Or the man.

v. 18. Though man was poſſeſſed of all the bliſs of paradiſe, one thing was ſtill lacking to his felicity. He was alone, nor amidſt the various orders of creatures, could find any like unto himſelf. Angels were rational ſpirits, but incorporeal; beaſts corporeal, but irrational. God ſaw, and pitied him. With the affection of a kind father, unſollicited he conſulted his neceſſities, and reſolves to ſupply him with a help-meet of his own ſpecies. Learn here, 1. Solitude is not ſuited for man. In his ſtate of innocence, ſociety was needful. Good company is ſtill not only a great means of our comfort, but a great help to our edification. 2. A ſingle life wants many advantages, that can only be enjoyed with a ſuitable help-meet. Celibacy was never an ordinance of God: he who made man, knew what was beſt for him. 3. God's glory required he ſhould not be alone; the earth could not thus be repleniſhed, nor the bleſſing pronounced be effectual. 4. In the choice of a wife, a help-meet is to be ſought. A companion, a friend, whoſe preſence at home may be to us more than all the world beſide. The reaſon why ſo many are miſerable in the marriage ſtate, is, that they have married the face, or the portion, inſtead of the woman. 5. A good help-meet is of the Lord: they who chuſe for themſelves, to gratify their luſts, their pride, or their covetouſneſs, without conſulting his will, or ſeeking his bleſſing and direction, have reaſon to expect a briar inſtead of a roſe.

v. 19. Adam had before received the grant, now he is called to exerciſe the authority. The creatures paſs in review before him to pay their homage, and receive their ſeveral names; and thereby afford a proof of his wiſdom, as well as their ſubjection. *Note*, A good king ſhould be the father of his ſubjects; to exerciſe cruelty on the brute creation, is to turn tyrants, inſtead of lords over it. He that committed them to us, expects that we treat them with lenity and kindneſs.

20. And Adam ‖ gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beaſt of the field: but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21. And the LORD God cauſed a deep ſleep to fall upon Adam, and he ſlept: and he took one of his ribs, and cloſed up the fleſh inſtead thereof. 22. And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, † made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23. And Adam ſaid, This *is* now bone of my bones, and fleſh of my fleſh: ſhe ſhall be called woman, becauſe ſhe was [s] taken out of man. 24. [t] Therefore ſhall a man leave his father and his mother, and ſhall cleave unto his wife: and they ſhall be one fleſh. 25. And [u] they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not aſhamed.

‖ Heb. Called.
† Heb. Builded.
s 1 Cor. xi. 8.
t Chap. xxxi. 15. Matt. xix. 5. Mark x. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. v. 31.
u Chap. iii. 7. & x. 11.

v. 20—23. All the creatures had their fellows, beſides man himſelf. God knew his wants, and prevents his wiſhes. This tranſaction had paſſed on the ſixth day, as obſerved in the laſt chapter. The manner of it is recited in this.

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1. Man was firſt formed. He hath in all things the priority and pre-eminence: nor was he made for the woman, but the woman for the man. *Note*, They have read their Bible to little purpoſe, who have not learned to reverence and obey their huſbands. 2. The woman was made of a rib of Adam, while he ſlept; not from his head, to uſurp authority over him, nor out of his feet, to be trampled upon; but out of his ſide, to be regarded as next himſelf; under his arm, to be protected; and near his heart, to be beloved by him. Behold a type of the ſecond Adam. Thus Jeſus ſlept the deep ſleep of death upon the croſs; and from his wounded ſide, poured out the blood, which purchaſed his ſpouſe the church. 3. The work was of God. He cauſed the ſleep, and opened the ſide, and cloſed it up again. It had been a painful operation when waking; but now the pain is neither felt, nor the rib wanted. *Note*, When God is pleaſed to cauſe the believer's ſoul to reſt wholly in him, he can keep their minds in ſweet compoſure, under the ſevereſt afflictions, and cauſe their greateſt loſſes to become their moſt laſting gain. 4. God brings her to the man. As he had provided her for his comfort, he preſents her as his wife. That wife that is of God's making by ſpecial grace, and of God's bringing by ſpecial providence, is likely to prove a help-meet for a man. 5. Her affectionate reception. This now is bone of my bone, and fleſh of my fleſh. *Note*, The huſband muſt regard his wife as his own fleſh, and nouriſh and cheriſh her with the moſt tender endearment. 6. The name given her, *woman*. In token, not only of her ſubjection, but of her nearneſs to himſelf: though differing in ſex, the ſame in nature.

v. 24. God, with the firſt marriage, lays down the law for poſterity. 1. It is the firſt and ſtrongeſt relation; it began before parental duty exiſted, and is nearer than any ties of nature. *Note*, Before marriage, it is moſt diſobedient and ſinful to engage without parents conſent: after marriage, no ties, nor authority, muſt ſeparate thoſe whom God hath joined together. 2. It is indiſſoluble: there is but one allowed cauſe of divorce, fornication; unleſs, peradventure, we may add obſtinate deſertion. Where a connection muſt be ſo laſting, with what ſerioufneſs, care, and thoughtfulneſs, ought it to be entered upon? 3. It is between one man and one woman. As true love can never be divided, lawleſs luſt can never be ſatisfied. 4. They are one fleſh: but they muſt be firſt one heart. The union of bodies is the direct plague in nature, without the union of ſouls.

v. 25. They needed not cloaths for defence, and their ſpotleſs innocence knew no ſhame: this is the offspring of ſin. Though the bluſhes of modeſty are ſo pleaſing now, we ſhould not forget that guilt firſt covered the face with ſhame.

CHAP. III.

The ſtory of this chapter is the moſt afflicting of any we have in all the Bible. It contains an account of the ſin and miſery of our firſt parents, the wrath and curſe of God againſt them, and on the earth: O that our hearts were deeply affected with this record! for we are all nearly concerned in it. We have here, 1. *The innocent tempted*, ver. 1—5. 2. *The tempted tranſgreſſing*, ver. 6, 7, 8. 3. *The tranſgreſſors arraigned*, ver. 9, 10. 4. *Convicted*, ver. 11—13. 5. *Sentenced*, ver. 14—19. 6. *Reprieved*, ver. 20, 21. 7. *Notwithſtanding their reprieve, execution in part done*, ver. 22. ad finem. *And were it not for the gracious intimations here given of redemption, by the promiſed ſeed, they and all their degenerate guilty race, had been left to endleſs deſpair.*

1. NOW [a] the ſerpent was [b] more ſubtle than any beaſt of the field which the LORD God had made: and he ſaid unto the woman, † Yea, hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2. And the woman ſaid unto the ſerpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3. But [c] of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midſt of the garden, God hath ſaid, Ye ſhall not eat of it, neither ſhall ye touch it, leſt ye die. 4. And the ſerpent ſaid unto the woman, Ye ſhall not ſurely die. 5. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes ſhall be opened: and ye ſhall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

a Rev. xii. 9. & xx. 2.
b Matt. x. 16. 2 Cor. xi. 3.
† Heb. Yea, becauſe, &c.
c Chap. ii. 17.
d 2 Cor. xi. 3. 1 Tim. ii. 14.

v. 1. Our firſt parents, in bliſs and joy united, little ſuſpected the dreadful ſtorm which now was preparing for them, by the great enemy of their ſouls. The devil, once an angel of light, but ſelf-tempted, and now by ſin become a fiend of darkneſs, hating God and his work; with envious jealouſy beheld this happy pair, and inſtant meditates their ruin. Having experienced the efficacy of his wiles, on ſpirits like himſelf, drawn

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in his train from their bright ſpheres of glory, he with like fraud attempts, and but too fatally ſucceeds with man. He aſſumes the ſerpent's form: a ſerpent then as harmleſs in approach, as beautiful in appearance. The garb of innocence hath often ſince impoſed on the unwary; and Satan's wiles are never ſo dangerous as when thus he transforms himſelf into an angel of light. And he was more ſubtle than any beaſt of the field; a fit inſtrument therefore for the cunning tempter. *Note*, the craft and cunning of the devil, and wicked men, hath ever been more ſucceſsful againſt men's ſouls, than open violence.

1. The woman is ſingled out for the ſnare. He knew of the two ſhe was the weaker, not only in body, but in mind. *Note*, Satan knows our weak ſide, and uſually there begins his attacks. 2. She was alone. Solitude is dangerous. She is not the only woman who hath been thus undone. 'Tis ſafeſt for every wife to be near her huſband's ſide. 3. She was near the tree, perhaps gazing on it: it is dangerous to be in the way of evil: they who would not eat of the forbidden fruit, muſt not approach the forbidden tree. 4. The artful queſtion propoſed, *Yea, hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every tree of the garden.* (1.) He conceals his intention under the guiſe of innocent enquiry: Satan does not ſhew his ſting, till he has ſeized his prey. Some previous converſation ſeems implied, and this ſubject unſuſpiciouſly introduced. We need be jealous; the moſt apparently innocent enquiries often conceal the moſt foul deſigns. (2.) He inſinuates, that it was unkind to lay them under any reſtraints; the garden was given them, why ſhould any tree be excepted? The moment the heart can entertain hard thoughts of God's law, obedience will be at an end. (3.) A doubt is ſuggeſted, whether God had given any ſuch command? If faith wavers, temptation will ſurely prevail. Unbelief is at the bottom of all our ſins.

v. 2, 3. Theſe verſes contain her anſwer to the queſtion of the tempter. It was plain and full. She was not ignorant of the command; nay, rather adds to it: they muſt not only not eat, but not touch it. *Note*, 'Tis ever bad meddling with edged tools. Nor was the threatening concealed, though here ſhe heſitates, and rather diminiſhes its awful import.

Obſerve, 1. How inexcuſable ſhe was: ſhe fully knew the will of God. Sin againſt light and knowledge hath peculiar aggravation. 2. Her weakneſs to diſcourſe about a point ſo dangerous: the very mention ſhould have awakened ſuſpicion, and bid her fly. Temptations have more than half prevailed, when they can get a hearing. To parley, is the prelude to ſubmiſſion.

v. 4, 5. We have here the ſerpent's reply. 1. He no longer ſeeks to invalidate the command, but the threatening being faintly urged by her, he boldly denies. *Note*, 1. Confident aſſertions readily paſs with weak minds, and thoſe who are willing to be perſuaded; and it is much eaſier boldly to deny, than clearly to prove. 2. The hopes of impunity are the great encouragement to ſin, and the ſupport of impenitence. By theſe, Satan's kingdom is ſtill upheld. Did a ſinner ſee before him the wages of ſin, and were everlaſting burnings once truly believed, the devil would tempt in vain. I ſhall have peace, is ſtill the grand lie; when God hath ſaid, there is no peace. 3. He not only promiſes her peace, but profit. And when moſt effectually ruining them, aſſures them of the greateſt advantages. How often, by purſuing a falſe and fancied good in view, do we ſtill loſe the portion we actually poſſeſſed. The things he promiſes, were, 1. Knowledge; a vaſt increaſe of wiſdom, like unto God. He inſinuated hereby their preſent imperfection, and perverts cunningly the name of the tree to the purpoſes of his deluſion. It is not the firſt nor laſt time that Satan hath quoted the ſcripture againſt the ſcripture. The knowledge of good and evil, which that tree was deſigned to teach, was *practical*; of duty and diſobedience: and *experimental*; of happineſs or miſery. He conſtrues it to be *notional*, as if it would give their minds enlarged views of the nature, kinds, and origin of good and evil. *Note*, Satan hath hardly ever been more ſucceſsful againſt men's ſouls, than by the bait of wiſdom. To be philoſophers, they have turned unbelievers; and affecting to be wiſe above what is written, they have become vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart hath been darkened. 2. Power. Ye ſhall be as Gods. Though not ſelf-exiſtent, yet ſelf-ſufficient; no longer ſubjects, but ſovereigns. He ſuggeſts, (1.) Diſcontent, as if their caſe was hard, and their ſituation leſs happy and glorious than it might be: Lord keep me from the ſin of a diſcontented mind! By this, angels fell; and Adam was undone. (2.) The pride of greatneſs. He knew the tempting bait; it had ſeduced himſelf: Lord, let not the foot of pride come againſt me! (3.) Hard thoughts of God, as if on purpoſe he forbad them, becauſe he knew the effects would be to raiſe them up to an equality with himſelf. Behold his devices: he is ſtill the ſame. Thus he continues to deceive with fair ſpeeches and lying promiſes: thus he miſrepreſents the reſtraints of God's law as ſevere: and, grievous to think, thus he ſtill prevails, and the world lieth εν τω πονηρω, under the power and dominion of this wicked one.

6. And when the woman ſaw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* † pleaſant to the eyes, and a tree to be deſired to make *one* wiſe; ſhe took of the fruit thereof, and [e] did eat, and gave alſo unto her huſband with her, and he did eat. 7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that [f] they *were* naked: and they ſewed fig-leaves together, and made themſelves ‡ aprons. 8. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in ‖ the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themſelves from the preſence of the LORD God amongſt the trees of the garden.

v. 6. Unhappy ſouls! thus to give ear to a lying and ſeducing ſpirt, rather than to the God of truth. 1. She looked, and becauſe ſhe ſaw the fruit as beautiful to the eye, ſhe concluded the ſerpent in the right, and that there could be no more harm in this, than in any other tree. It is bad judging by the eye: the moſt pleaſing fruit contains often the deadlieſt poiſon. 2. She not only promiſed herſelf pleaſure for the taſte, but wiſdom for her mind. This tree herein excelled all the reſt, and was more deſirable, perhaps too, ſtill more, becauſe forbidden. Sin begins in the deſire, and reſtraint only whets the appetite: ſo perverſe are we become. 3. She boldly plucked the fruit, perhaps for a nearer view, or by the touch firſt to aſſay, whether any ill conſequence really would accrue. 4. She did eat; eager to make the laſt experiment: and it may be, hoping to ſurprize her huſband with the transforming change ſhe had experienced, and the ſuperior knowledge ſhe had attained. *Note*, As woman was firſt in the tranſgreſſion, ſhe ſhould remember it to her ſhame. 5. She gave him alſo; came to him with the tempter's power, and, either out of love, wiſhed him to make the trial with her, and enjoy the pleaſure, or out of malice, loſt herſelf, reſolves not to ſink alone. 6. Vanquiſhed by her importunity, or ſeduced by the ſame pleaſing hopes which deluded her, he joined in the tranſgreſſion. *Note*, Though it was the firſt time, it is not the laſt that man hath liſtened to the ſyren tongue of woman, to his ruin.

Behold here the uſual proceſs of temptation. 1. An outward object preſented by the devil, promiſing us much pleaſure and advantage in the purſuit. 2. The eye caught with it, and led to gaze upon it; the eye is the great inlet of temptation: thoſe who would guard their heart, muſt often veil their eyes. To look upon a woman's beauty, is the road to luſt after her; and to fix the greedy eye on gold, is the prelude to covet it. 3. Deſire after it; when temptation has got ſo far, luſt hath conceived, and ſin will be the birth. *Note*, Though we ſhould never ſeize the forbidden fruit, if the deſire be towards it, the ſin is already committed. 4. The gratification of the deſire. There is no ſtopping, if once the unbridled appetite is let looſe: when we firſt gazed, we thought it ſhould reſt there: we then drew nearer, but reſolved to ſtop. The hand was ſtretched out to touch, but not to take; till, like the revolving ſtone on a declivity, each revolution accelerated its motion, and ſin no longer could be reſiſted. 5. We cannot be content to ſin alone: thoſe who themſelves hearken to the devil's wiles, quickly turn tempters for him. How little does many a ſinner think of the dreadful charges againſt him from thoſe ſouls, to whoſe ſin and ruin he may have, by his ſollicitations, ſome way contributed?

v. 7. They wanted to ſee more, and now they are gratified; but oh what a ſight! How preferable had blindneſs been to ſuch a diſcovery.

1. They ſaw their own nakedneſs; not only of their bodies but of their ſouls. The robe of innocence was rent; the image of God was defaced; their minds now a ſcene of diſturbance; their happineſs departed; their miſery come upon them; all was loſt, and dark deſpair, and dread of deſerved puniſhment overwhelmed them. 1. How dreadful a thing is ſin: it ſmiles in the face, but it leaves behind the poiſon of a ſerpent: oh that we felt its evil more, and, from the fear of its conſequences, kept from the jaws of the deſtroyer. 2. How ſhameful. It muſt cover us with confuſion, either in time or eternity. Happy they, who by real repentance have taken ſhame to themſelves here before God and man, and through the blood of Jeſus, have their iniquity pardoned and their ſin covered.

2. They ſought to conceal it, and the methods they took, ſhewed how improved they were in wiſdom. Strange folly, to think that fig-leaves could hide their ſhame: it was a poor covering reſpecting themſelves: it was uſeleſs reſpecting God. How like are we! (1.) We think all is well, if we can hide our ſhame from each other, and ſave our credit among men? But ſhall not the day come, when it ſhall be laid open before an aſſembled world? (2.) How apt are we to fly to excuſes, inſtead of humbling our ſouls under conſcious guilt. Frank acknowledgement is in ſome ſort reparation; whilſt every ſubterfuge is an aggravation of the crime.

v. 8. Guilt and fear are inſeparable. They no ſooner hear the voice of God, than that which was before their delight and joy, becomes their horror and confuſion. It ſhould ſeem God

appeared

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† Heb. A deſire.

[e] Ecclus. xxv. 24. 1 Tim. ii. 14.

[f] Chap. ii. 25.

‡ Or things to gird about.

‖ Heb. Wind.

appeared to them in Eden, as he afterwards deſigned to appear in the world to ſuffer, and ſhall appear at the laſt to judge; and this might tempt them to think it was probable enough, that as he appeared like them in perſon, they might become like him in power. But now their preſumptuous hopes are at an end, and they ſeek the thickeſt covert to be hid from his eye. Their own conſciences become accuſers, and they have already the ſentence of death in themſelves: now they began to diſcover the lie of the tempter; their godhead is debaſed into the loweſt wretchedneſs, their promiſed power into abject weakneſs, and their proud wiſdom into ſenſeleſs folly. Learn hence, 1. The falſhood of ſin's promiſes: ſuch will every diſobedient ſoul prove to his coſt. He expects happineſs, but there will be found a lie in his right hand. 2. That God will diſcover ſin, be it never ſo concealed. Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord?

9. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and ſaid unto him, Where *art* thou? 10. And he ſaid, I heard thy voice in the garden: and I was afraid, becauſe [g] I *was* naked; and I hid myſelf.

[g] Chap. ii. 25.

v. 9, 10. The voice was heard before with dread, how much more the ſummons? We have, 1. God's call. Where art thou? It was the call of judgment; prepare to meet thy God. *Note*, Willing or unwilling, the voice of the trumpet muſt ſhortly ſummon us to his tremendous bar: happy for the ſoul who can ſay with confidence of gracious acceptance, Here am I. (2.) It was a voice of conviction. I know thy iniquity; it is in vain to flee.—It is a great mercy when God finds out the ſinner in this world with his awakening calls, for there is then hope of repentance and return. (3.) It was a voice of mercy, inviting him to return. *Note*, The great inducement to the ſoul, to come forth from the thicket of ſin, is, that there is pardon to be obtained. Had we no hope of this, we ſhould be deſperate indeed. 2. Adam's reply. A confeſſion of his ſhame, and therein of his ſin, and this with juſt apprehenſions of his deſerved doom. Obſerve, 1. Whence all our fears proceed. Sin makes the ſoul afraid to meet the face of God; ſin arms death with its poiſoned ſting; ſin kindles up the flames of hell, every pang of conſcience, every apprehenſion of danger, every afflictive diſpenſation; all derive their origin from hence. 2. That there is no approaching God with comfort, in the nakedneſs of our fallen nature: bleſſed be his name; he hath provided for us garments, that the ſhame of our nakedneſs may be covered. The righteouſneſs of Jeſus, the ſecond Adam, can hide every tranſgreſſion, and we need not then any longer fear to ſtand in the preſence of the moſt holy God; for therein arrayed, we ſhall be found without ſpot or blemiſh.

11. And he ſaid, Who told thee that thou *waſt* naked? haſt thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou ſhouldſt not eat? 12. And the man ſaid, [h] The woman, whom thou gaveſt *to be* with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13. And the LORD God ſaid unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou haſt done? and the woman ſaid, The ſerpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

[h] Chap. ii. 18.

v. 11. The confeſſion of ſhame was the proof of guilt. God knew, but he means to bring them down into the duſt of ſelf-abaſement; therefore he puts this alarming queſtion, that they might remember the aggravations of their tranſgreſſion, and turn ſelf-accuſers. *Note*, 1. Confeſſion of ſin is required, not for God's information, but for our humiliation. 2. When a man comes to the ſight of his guilt, he will find abundant aggravations he never thought of till then: the rebellion, the ingratitude, the wilfulneſs of his conduct, will make ſin appear to him exceeding ſinful.

v. 12. When they cannot deny, they ſtill would palliate: they had eaten, 'tis true, but they would transfer the load of guilt from one to the other. We are apt imitators of this bad example; juſt ſo much of our ſins as are known, we confeſs; but we would fain ſeek excuſe, and extenuate what we cannot conceal. Adam is the firſt to be addreſſed: he is the head, and therefore, from him, moſt is to be expected. He accuſes his wife, and that in ſuch a way, as tacitly lays the blame on God, Thou gaveſt her: I hoped for a help-mate, and found a tempter. Obſerve, 1. How often doth man lay ſin at God's door, and how impious, as well as ungrateful, the charge! Why, ſays one, did God give me paſſions, if I may not gratify them? Why did he give me the world to be made a ſnare to me? Alas! men will not ſee that God meant a bleſſing, the curſe is our abuſe of it. 2. No connections, relations, intreaty, or influence, will excuſe us in the day of judgment, for acting contrary to God's will. If the wife of our boſom entice us, or the friend of our heart perſuade us, we ſhould ſay, Get thee behind me, Satan.

v. 13. As Adam accuſed his wife, ſhe caſts it upon the ſerpent: He beguiled me; a weak excuſe. Is the beaſt wiſer than the man, or was he to be believed ſooner than his Maker?— How credulous are we, when Satan is the teacher? any fallacy will paſs for argument. How infidel! where God himſelf hath ſpoken, there is nothing then, but carnal reaſon will queſtion it. *Note*, Seek for ſhelter where we will, we ſhall be found without covering at laſt. Let the tempter have whatever ſhare in it, the deed will prove our own: nay, to have done it at the inſtigation of the devil, will be our crime, inſtead of our excuſe.

14. And the LORD God ſaid [i] unto the ſerpent, Becauſe thou haſt done this, thou *art* curſed above all cattle, and above every beaſt of the field: upon thy belly ſhalt thou go, and [k] duſt ſhalt thou eat all the days of thy life. 15. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between [l] thy ſeed and [m] her ſeed: [n] it ſhall bruiſe thy head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel.

[i] Exod. xxi. 29—32.

[k] Iſa. lxv. 25. Mich. vii. 17.

[l] Matth. iii. 7. & xiii. 38. & xxiii. 33. John viii. 44. Acts xiii. 10. 1 John iii. 8.

[m] Pſal. cxxxii. 11. Iſa. vii. 14. Mich. v. 3.

[n] Rom. xvi. 20. Heb. ii. 14. 1 John v. 5. Rev. xii. 7—17.

v. 14, 15. The criminals convicted, ſentence muſt paſs; and it begins with the tempter, whoſe crime was moſt notorious, and whoſe judgment the moſt ſevere.

The curſe of God intolerable, and endleſs is his doom.

The ſerpent, though but the inſtrument, muſt ſuffer. God will ſhew his diſpleaſure againſt ſin, wherever it appears. He was more ſubtle than any beaſt, and now is moſt accurſed. *Note*, The heavieſt wrath of God will light upon their heads, who have employed the acuteſt genius's in the ſervice of the devil, againſt the revealed truths of God. He is condemned to lick the duſt, to crawl under every foot, and to fill the laſt and loweſt place: and withal, to ſuffer perpetual war as hated of man, and cruſhed by him, wherever he ſhould be found. And though his envenomed ſting would ſtill mark his firſt malice, and bite the heel which trod on him, yet his head ſhould be bruiſed, and death be his portion. Mark the end of companions in iniquity; deadly hatred quickly ſucceeds the moſt cordial union.

But the chief edge of this ſword of judgment is levelled againſt him who ſpoke in the ſerpent. He is doomed, 1. To be degraded, deteſted, and abhorred for ever: he was caſt from the height of heaven before; now he ſinks ſtill lower. As this hath filled the meaſure of his iniquities, it fills the meaſure of his puniſhment: humbled, to be trodden down by thoſe whom he deceived; to be bruiſed under their feet, over whom he had triumphed; and to be the object of eternal hate, of thoſe whoſe friendſhip he had abuſed. Sooner or later, pride will have a fall.

2. A perpetual enmity is put between the ſeed of the woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent; with the certain expectation of his ruin in the conflict. *Note*, (1.) The believer's heart, in this world, partakes of both theſe ſeeds; and the war of corrupt affections and Satan's temptations, continue till death; yet grace ſhall win the crown: and though the wounded heel prove mortal to the body, we ſhall, through Jeſus, ſhortly triumph over death, and him who hath the power of it. (2.) This world will be a divided world, where the people of God muſt meet with many a ſore thruſt from Satan's ſeed, the ungodly ſet on fire of hell; but may we ever remember for our comfort, the triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment.

But what to Satan was ſo full of horror and deſpair, like the pillar of the cloud between Iſrael and the Egyptians, offered a bright beam of hope to fallen man. He heard the aſſured promiſe of a ſeed, who ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head; and, however his apprehenſion of the perſon might be indiſtinct, yet it afforded him a ground of faith and hope. We now are aſſured, that this ſeed was Chriſt; and need not doubt but the goſpel preached unto him in this firſt promiſe, was as effectual as to the other patriarchs, before his appearance in the fleſh. *Note*, If Chriſtianity be not full as old as the creation, it is almoſt as old.

Chriſt is called the woman's ſeed, as being in the fulneſs of time to be born of her, and of woman only. Let it be remembered for the woman's comfort and honour, if ſhe was the firſt to bring ſin into the world, ſhe hath alſo born him who will make an end of ſin, and take it out of the world. His heel being bruiſed, repreſents the ſufferings of his humanity, when taking away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf: but his wound is Satan's ruin. The nails which faſtened the crucified Saviour's feet, ſmote him, like Siſera, through the temples: his power and kingdom are deſtroyed, and his wiles for ever fruſtrated. The redeemed of the Lord are reſcued; that wicked one toucheth them not. Though he thruſts ſtill out his forked tongue, the agonies of death, as it were, are upon him: the ſpreading goſpel of Jeſus continues to compleat the conqueſt, and it will be in a little while perfected; when Satan ſhall be bruiſed under our feet, and death and hell be caſt into the lake of fire. Thou promiſed ſeed, fulfil, and that ſoon, thy people's hope!

16. Unto the woman he ſaid, I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow, and thy conception; in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children: and [o] thy deſire *ſhall be* † to thy huſband, and [p] he ſhall rule over thee.

[o] Chap. iv. 7.

† Or ſubject to thy huſband.

[p] 1 Cor. xiv. 34. 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. Tit. ii. 5.

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v. 16. As the woman is ſecond in guilt, ſhe is next in ſentence. She is to ſhare with the man in his curſe too; but ſhe hath a burden laid on her, peculiarly her own.

1. An increaſe of ſorrows in conception and childbearing. Of all agonizing pains, theſe are acute to a proverb; whilſt weariſome days and nights precede them; and fear, as well as anguiſh, embitters them. *Note*, 1. Every groan of travail, is the cry of ſin; and every ſorrow we feel, ſprings from this root. If our ſorrows are multiplied, no wonder: our ſins are ſo: at the worſt, we muſt acknowledge they are leſs than our iniquities deſerve. 2. We ſhould regard the word of God in every ſorrow: this alone can reconcile the heart to patient ſubmiſſion; *I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, for it was thy doing*, Pſal. xxxix. 9.

2. Her ſtate of ſubjection pronounced. Whilſt innocence remained, if ſome ſuperiority was placed in man, ſo gentle and affectionate was the ſway, that woman rather ſeemed the equal partner of the throne; but ſince ſin hath entered, her yoke is heavier. Her huſband rules, and as the fallen mind is now diſturbed with pride and angry paſſions, theſe breed diſquiet, and often make obedience real puniſhment. Happy thoſe, who inſtead of complaining of their ſuffering, lament their ſin. To diſobey or murmur, or affect equality, much more ſuperiority, is not only a violation of the divine law, but an inſult on the divine judgment.

17. And unto Adam he ſaid, Becauſe thou haſt hearkned unto the voice of thy wife, and [q] haſt eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not eat of it: [r] curſed *is* the ground for thy ſake; in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life. 18. Thorns alſo and thiſtles ſhall it † bring forth to thee: and [s] thou ſhalt eat the herb of the field. 19. [t] In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it waſt thou taken: for duſt thou *art*, and [u] unto duſt ſhalt thou return.

[q] Chap. ii. 17.
[r] Iſa. xxiv. 5, 6. Rom. viii. 20.
† Cauſe to bud, &c.
[s] Pſal. civ. 14.
[t] 2 Theſ. iii. 10.
[u] Eccleſ. xii. 7.

v. 17, 18, 19. Man laſt appears to receive his ſentence, and a terrible one it is; enough to make the ears of every one who heareth it, to tingle; who being involved in the crime, as in the loins of Adam, continues to ſuffer the puniſhment.

1. The ground and its productions, of late ſo beautiful, and pronounced ſo good, now groans under the curſe, and ſuffers an awful change. Briars and thorns, inſtead of luxuriant fruitfulneſs, are all its preſent produce; and, till ſubdued by man's labour, incapable of ſupporting the periſhing life which ſtill remained to him. Let the huſbandman who ploughs the ſoil, remember who hardened it; and whilſt we ſee in our gardens the continual ſpreading weeds, be it on our mind what ſowed them there. Then ſhall the whole earth around us lead us to a continual remembrance of, and humiliation under, our fallen ſtate.

2. Man's life is imbitter'd by toil and ſorrow. It cannot be ſupported but by the one; and even then, will be attended with the other.

(1.) The earth muſt be ſubdued with the ſweat of his face; weariſome labour becomes his daily employment; he cannot eat his bread till he has earned it. *Note*, Labour is not only our duty, but our puniſhment; none are exempted from it, in ſome kind or other: idleneſs is defiance of the curſe, as well as diſobedience to the command. (2.) Sorrow, as well as labour, is our portion: our bread muſt be embittered by our burdens; remembrance of the paſt, as well as experience of the preſent, was a pregnant ſource of woe to Adam. Becauſe the ſin remains, the ſorrow does. Why doth diſeaſe make us loath our food? Why doth the tongue ſo often turn the ſweeteſt portion into bitterneſs? Why are we ſo frequently eating the bread of mourners? Why are tears our meat day and night? Why, in our happieſt days, are ſome dark clouds ſtill ſpread over us? Why is there not a man on earth but is born for ſorrow and trouble, as the ſparks fly upward? Read this curſe, and the anſwer will be clear. It will puzzle the wiſeſt infidel to account for ſuffering, but by admitting of ſin.

3. Death muſt conclude the ſcene. Though reſpited for a moment, the ſentence is paſt, and muſt be executed: Duſt thou art, and unto duſt ſhalt thou return: this is to nature, the king of terrors, and that becauſe it is the wages of ſin. Behold in this glaſs, O man, thine image reflected, whoever thou art.

(1.) Thy frailty. Duſt of the earth; as weak to reſiſt the efforts of diſeaſe and ſickneſs, as the chaff to endure the furious blaſt of the whirlwind. Greatneſs, riches, beauty, honour, make no diſtinction: the wind of death alike bloweth upon them, and they are gone. (2.) Thy certain end: unto duſt thou ſhalt return. There is no diſcharge in this war, ſooner or later: it is appointed unto men once to die; and remember, after this is judgment: conſider therefore and be wiſe. (3.) That the cauſe of all this is one man's diſobedience: one ſin deſtroyed a world, yet fools make a mock of it. But do thou look from whence thou art fallen, if yet there may be hope. (4.) That hope appears in the ſecond Adam, our better covenant head and repreſentative, who having taken upon himſelf our ſins, and borne our ſorrows, endured the curſe, and nailed it to the croſs. Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

But dare any proud reaſoner object to this judgment of God, and ſuggeſt that the puniſhment is greater than the crime? Let ſuch an one well weigh the deed, and he will confeſs the wages mete. For in this act of diſobedience, every aggravation united: impious unbelief and inſolent pride, envy of God's perfections, and lawleſs appetite, contempt of God's favours, murmuring, diſcontent, wilful diſobedience, and black ingratitude; and this complicated with the baſeſt treachery, and moſt unrelenting cruelty towards the unborn millions, whoſe perſons he repreſented, and whoſe life was bound up in him. Let any man conſider the above catalogue, and then ſhall God be clear in his ſayings, and juſt when he hath judged.

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20. And Adam called his wifes name † Eve, becauſe ſhe was the mother of all living.

† Heb. Chavah.

v. 20. Eve, or life, is a very expreſſive name of her, who was to be the mother of all living, and moſt expreſſive, if we regard that ſeed ſhe ſhould bring forth, who ſhould deſtroy death, and in whom all his people ſhould be made alive. In this view, her name was a profeſſion of Adam's faith in the promiſe; and thus beautifully comes in after the dreadful ſentence, to ſhew that though God viſited his iniquities with a rod, and his ſin with ſcourges; yet his loving kindneſs would he not utterly take from him.

21. Unto Adam alſo and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of ſkins, and cloathed them.

v. 21. An inſtance this that he ſtill cared for them, and had not, as they deſerved, though highly offended, utterly caſt them off. They wanted cloaths now to hide their ſhame, but who ſhall provide them, or whence? Behold the proviſion, and learn inſtruction from it. 1. To be proud of our dreſs, is to value the badges of our guilt; our cloaths are our ſhame, and 'tis twice our ſhame to be proud of them too. 2. Uſe, not finery, was here conſulted. Let the poor be thankful they are better clad than their father; and let the rich remember needleſs and expenſive ornaments ill befit a ſinful body, and a fallen ſinner. But above all, 3. The ſignificancy of theſe coats of ſkins. In the dying beaſt they beheld their death; and not to overwhelm them with ſorrow, they ſaw in the deſert *of* ſin, the ſacrifice *for* ſin: the blood that was ſhed taught them the atonement which the Lamb of God on their behalf ſhould make; and the ſkins which covered their bodies, repreſented that ſpotleſs robe of righteouſneſs which ſhould prevent the ſhame of their ſpiritual nakedneſs from appearing: to conceal which, all they could do for themſelves was as vain, as the fig-leave aprons they wore. They, whom the Lord Jeſus Chriſt cloaths, ſhall not be found naked.

22 ¶ And the LORD God ſaid, [x] Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now leſt he put forth his hand, and [y] take alſo of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23. Therefore the LORD God ſent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, from whence he was taken. 24. So he drove out the man: and he placed [z] at the eaſt of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming ſword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

[x] Like Iſa. xix. 12. & xlvii. 12, 13. Jer. xxii. 23.
[y] Chap. ii. 9.
[z] Chap. ii. 8.

v. 22, 23, 24. Death was reſpited; but toil and trouble immediately came upon him, in his expulſion from this bleſt abode. We have here,

1. God upbraiding his folly and ſin, by a moſt piercing irony or mockery: he deſerves to be put to ſhame, who dares to commit ſin. Yet God's deſign is not to ſport with his miſery, but to awaken him to repentance: if he covers him with confuſion, it is to lead him to converſion. *Note*, When a ſinner comes to a diſcovery of his ſtate, he as much upbraids his folly, as he laments his ſin.

2. The reaſon of his expulſion; to prevent his eating of the tree of life; not that it now could profit him, but leſt he ſhould flatter himſelf with hopes of living, and profane the ſacramental ſeal, when he had broken the covenant it confirmed. (1.) Scandalous ſinners, and ſelf-righteous formaliſts, ſhould be excluded from the Lord's table: they cannot but abuſe it. What can the ſeal ſignify to thoſe, who are ſtrangers to the covenant of grace? (2.) Though this tree is now no more, bleſſed be God for a better: Jeſus Chriſt is the tree of Life, growing in the paradiſe of God, and whoever will, may freely come to him, and eat and live.

3. The manner; driven out: reluctant, no doubt, but go they muſt. They had forfeited God's favour, and muſt bear the burden: yet not to leave theſe happy groves alone or chiefly grieved their hearts; it was here they met and enjoyed communion

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nion with their maker: this to loſe, was bitterneſs indeed. *Note*, Spiritual death, the wages of ſin, conſiſts in the ſeparation of the ſoul from God, and in this muſt we have continued for ever, unleſs the Lord Jeſus had come to reſtore us to the loſt favour of, and communion with God.

4. The guard he placed at the garden. They might have attempted a return, but the attempt is rendered impracticable. The cherubims, the executioners of God's wrath, wave the ſword, the mark of God's diſpleaſure: though it conſume them not utterly, they may behold their juſt deſert, and tremble. *Note*, The way to the tree of life is for ever barred to fallen man; the covenant of works is broken: none can ſay any more I am pure from my ſin; and the caſe is irreparable; no place is found for repentance: one ſin only can never be undone by any human power, or paid for by any human ſuffering. The terrible ſword of judgment is drawn; the ſinful ſoul muſt die: till we learn to deſpair of ourſelves, there is no hope for us; for then, and only then, we ſhall be led to lay hold of that covenant of grace, eſtabliſhed in the Redeemer's blood and righteouſneſs, and calculated to ſave the loſt and the deſperate.

CHAP. IV.

We have here, 1. *The birth, names, and callings, of Cain and Abel*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Their religion and different ſucceſs in it*, ver. 3, 4, *and part of* ver. 5. 3. *Cain's anger at God, and the reproof of him for that anger*, ver. 5, 6, 7. 4. *Cain's murder of his brother, and the proceſs againſt him for that murder*, ver. 9—16. 5. *The family and poſterity of Cain*, ver. 17—24. 6. *The birth of another ſon and grandſon of Adam*, ver. 25, 26.

4003. 1. AND Adam knew Eve his wife: and ſhe conceived and bare Cain, and ſaid, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2. And ſhe again bare his brother † Abel: and Abel was ‡ a keeper of ſheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

† Heb. Hebel.
‡ A feeder.

v. 1, 2. We have an account in theſe verſes of the children of Adam; two are only mentioned:

1. Cain the eldeſt; his name ſignifies poſſeſſion, and his birth was a cauſe of joy. A man child was gotten *from the Lord*, the fond mother hoped *for the Lord* alſo. *Note*, Parents are apt to promiſe themſelves too much from their children, and that makes the diſappointment the heavier.

2. Abel; that is, vanity. Perhaps in compariſon with his brother, he was lightly eſteemed, as his name imports. The partiality of parents is often ſinful; and in the iſſue, the diſregarded child proves their bleſſing, and the darling their plague. *Note*, Man in his fallen ſtate, fitly may be called Abel, for he is altogether lighter than vanity itſelf.

3. Their employment. Adam brought not up his ſons in idleneſs, but honeſt induſtry: one a ſhepherd, the other a huſbandman. Learn hence, (1.) the ſhepherd and the plowman ought not to repine at their laborious calling; it is the moſt ancient, and was reckoned among the moſt honourable. — (2.) Fathers have a right to chuſe a calling for their children, and it is their duty to be diligent and induſtrious in it.

3. And † in proceſs of time it came to paſs, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4. And Abel, he alſo brought of the firſtlings of ‡ his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the LORD [a] had reſpect unto Abel, and to his offering: 5. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not reſpect. And Cain was very wroth, and [b] his countenance fell.

† Heb. At the end of days.
‡ Heb. Sheep or goats.
[a] Heb. xi. 4.
[b] Chap. xxxi. 2.

v. 3, 4, 5. The ſons of Adam no ſooner began to be grown up for labour, but we find them before the Lord. Religion was the firſt thing, no doubt, he taught them, and divine worſhip is a principal part of it.

1. They appeared, according to their vocations, with their ſeveral oblations of the fruit of the ground, and of their flock: (1.) The worſhip of God ſhould be the firſt thing we ſhould inſtil into our children; if they are brought up in the nurture of the Lord, we may have good hopes, when they come to years of diſcretion, to find them in his holy ways. (2.) According as the Lord hath bleſſed us, we are bound to honour him with our ſubſtance, whether for the ſupport of his cauſe, or the relief of the diſtreſſed. He will count this done to himſelf. (3.) Among the worſhippers of God, there will ever be found hypocrites: men forward enough to bow the knee, and give alms, and appear religious, but void of true faith; without which, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. Such was Cain.

2. They were very differently regarded. Cain was rejected, whilſt Abel offers an acceptable ſacrifice. If it be aſked, why? 1. Becauſe Cain was a wicked man, his ways were diſpleaſing to God, and therefore his ſacrifice was an abomination. 2. Becauſe he was an unbeliever; his works were his truſt, and he looked to no better righteouſneſs than his own for acceptance. *Note*, The works of the ſelf-righteous are in God's ſight the works of the ungodly, and will be rejected with abhorrence. Before we preſume to approach God, let us ever remember, that our ſacrifices can only be acceptable to him, when offered in the faith of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

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Abel's ſacrifice, on the other hand, God had reſpect to; 1. Becauſe it was offered in faith: this was its commendation to his regard. It was a ſacrifice of atonement in blood, implying an acknowledgment of his ſin and deſert, and profeſſion of his dependance on the Redeemer to come. *Note*, Wherever faith in Jeſus, is there God will teſtify his approbation of our ſervices: though the fire of heaven do not deſcend upon our ſacrifice, as it ſeems to have done on Abel's, the fire of love will upon our heart, and bear witneſs of our acceptance, that we are the children of God. 2. Becauſe it was accompanied with the offering of his heart. He was a righteous man, *Matt.* xxiii. 35. And as the tree was good, its fruit was holineſs to the Lord. *Note*, There is a real difference in the characters of men: no good works can proceed but from an honeſt and good heart: the ſame faith which makes the perſon accepted, purifies the heart, and enables it to perform an acceptable ſervice. Be it remembered, however, who maketh us to differ, that we may not think more highly of ourſelves, than we ought to think.

3. The effect this produced on Cain. Anger againſt God, as if he were unjuſt in his regards, and envy at his innocent brother, becauſe of God's favour to him, kindle in his boſom, dart from his fiery eyes, or disfigure his pale and fallen countenance. Behold a lively picture of the devil: how like is the offspring to the parent; a fallen man to a fallen angel?

Learn here, (1.) Rebukes only exaſperate the unhumbled. He is filled with the fury of the Lord, as a wild bull in a net, *Iſa.* li. 20. (2.) The children of God are ever the objects of anger, and envy to the children of the devil. The wicked ſeeth the righteous, and gnaſheth upon him with his teeth, *Pſal.* xxxvii. 12. (3.) The enmity of the ſeeds began in Cain and Abel, and will only end with the end of time.

6. And the LORD ſaid unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7. If thou doeſt well, ſhalt thou not † be accepted? and if thou doeſt not well, ſin lieth at the door. And ‡ unto thee *ſhall be* his deſire, and [c] thou ſhalt rule over him.

† Or have the excellency.
‡ Or ſubject unto thee.
[c] Chap. iii. 16.

v. 6, 7. God condeſcends to reaſon with Cain on the perverſeneſs of his conduct. The ſinner that periſhes, ſhall be left inexcuſable. I ſtretched out my hands, but no man regarded— It were well, if on the firſt motions of ſin in the heart, or in the firſt glance of the kindling eye, this queſtion were in our thoughts, Why art thou wroth? There was no reaſon for it: for,

1. Acceptance was as free for him as for his brother, if he came in the ſame way: it was infidelity and diſobedience only that excluded him; but that moment if he returned, he ſhould find favour: bring the ſacrifice of faith, it ſhould be welcome, and go and ſin no more. *Note*, God is ever ready to receive the returning ſinner; may his goodneſs lead us to repentance. 'Tis a fearful thing to abuſe it, and thereby to treaſure up wrath againſt the day of wrath.

But, 2. If he perſiſted in his evil, his unbelief, and envious wrath, he muſt expect to be rejected, and judgment would proceed againſt him. Be aſſured, ſooner or later, God will puniſh. Woe to that ſinner, at whoſe door, in an hour of death, and in a day of judgment, unpardoned ſin is found.

3. God aſſures him, as Abel was his younger, he ſhould alſo be his inferior. God deſigned not to degrade him from his birthright, though his ſin deprived him of the bleſſing: remember, dominion is not founded in grace: the gifts of God's ſpecial favour, alter not the diſtinctions of his providence. Religion never taught a man diſloyalty, or diſreſpect of his ſuperiors, but the want of it. The beſt chriſtians are ever the moſt ſubmiſſive ſubjects, the moſt dutiful children, and moſt reſpectful ſervants.

8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to paſs when they were in the field, that Cain roſe up againſt Abel his brother, and [d] ſlew him.

[d] Wiſd. x. 3. Matt. xxiii. 35. 1 John iii. 12. Jude 11.

v. 8. Anger in the heart, is murder at the door: nothing is wanting but opportunity and impunity, to make every paſſionate man another Cain. Many were the aggravations of this foul crime. It was his brother; a brother to him ever dutiful and ſubmiſſive, a perſon diſtinguiſhed with God's favour, and one, who, unſuſpicious of danger, talked with him as a friend. But what can ſtand before malicious envy? No doubt the time was, when Cain had ſtarted at the horrid deed; but when once a man gives place to the devil, there is no conception to what a pitch of daring wickedneſs he may arrive. *Obſta principiis.* If we would not commit murder, let us refrain from anger. Death thus began its ravages, its wages now appeared. But

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though his parent's aching hearts beheld the reeking gore, I doubt not, they felt acuter pangs for living Cain, than for departed Abel. He died in faith; and from a ſinner on earth, became a ſaint in heaven. He died a martyr, and firſt of that noble army, received the crown: whilſt we bewail his end, we ſhould rejoice in his deliverance. *Note*, The ſaints of God are mortal; death muſt bring them down to the grave; but bleſſed be God for a hope, full of immortality; when they are delivered from the burden of the fleſh, they will be in joy and felicity inconceivable as eternal. What an argument to courage, if called to ſeal the truth with our blood, ſtriving againſt ſin.

9. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? and he ſaid, I know not: *Am* I my brothers keeper? 10. And he ſaid, What haſt thou done? the voice of thy brother's † blood [e] crieth unto me from the ground. 11. And now *art* thou curſed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. 12. When thou tilleſt the ground, it ſhall not henceforth yield unto thee her ſtrength. A fugitive and a vagabond ſhalt thou be in the earth.

† Heb. Bloods.
[e] Heb. xii. 24. Rev. vi. 10.

v. 9. The murder was ſecret, and no doubt carefully concealed. But there is a great eye, from which nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret: and he in this world orders his providence, often in ways almoſt miraculous, to bring the blood that is covered to light. God here, 1. Maketh inquiſition for it by an alarming queſtion, ſuited to cover him with confuſion, perhaps deſigned to humble him to repentance. 2. His anſwer; falſe and inſolent.

(1.) Falſe: I know not. A direct and wilful lie. He would fain conceal it; what folly? Can omniſcience be impoſed upon? One ſin never comes alone: he who dared to commit murder, heſitates not to cover it with a lie. They have both the ſame father: thus ſin ever blinds the eyes and hardens the heart.

(2.) Inſolent. Am I my brother's keeper? Who elſe ſhould have been? Who ſo proper? Who ſo bound in love and duty? *Note*, God juſtly expects of us a kind concern for our brethren; if they receive damage to body or ſoul, through our neglect, much more through our means, he will require it at our hands.

v. 10, 11, 12. We have here, 1. God's reply, pointed with conviction, covering him with confuſion, *What haſt thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.* Blood hath a voice to reach the ſkies; murder will call for vengeance, blood for blood.

(1.) Shall murdered bodies thus cry out, and murdered ſouls be ſilent? Hear, ye careleſs ſinners, whoſe lips and lives caſt abroad firebrands and death. Tremble ye negligent paſtors: how many loſt immortal ſouls are laying their blood at your door? (2.) Where ſhall the man flee, whoſe ſin hath teſtified to his face, whoſe guilt is evident? To the blood of Jeſus. This crieth louder for mercy, than Abel's did for vengeance: happy the ſoul whoſe cries of ſin are drowned in deeper cries of the blood of the Saviour. Even a murderer need not deſpair.

2. God's judgment againſt him: now thou art curſed. No judgment ſo heavy as the wrath of God, and how much more when without hope of mercy. He is ſpared to live upon the earth, not in proſpect of repentance, but as a warning againſt ſin: a reprobate ſpirit, is a damned one in this world. How ſhould we be afraid of ſin, leaſt we provoke God to give us up to a reprobate mind, and then we are as deſperate as if already ſhut up in the belly of hell. Two things ſhall make his abode here as miſerable, as his proſpects hereafter are terrible.

(1.) The earth ſhall with-hold her ſuſtenance; though tilled, it ſhall not yield her increaſe. Adam received it barren, but by ſweat it brought forth fruit. Cain ſhall not only ſweat to till, but ſhall find it barren ſtill. *Note*, A wicked man hath the curſe of God on whatever he hath and doth; and this, like the gall in the cup, embitters all.

(2.) It ſhall refuſe him a ſettlement; a fugitive and a vagabond ſhalt thou be. He ſhall be caſt out from the ſociety of men, and left to wander up and down, as much a terror to himſelf, as an abhorrence to others. *Note*, This fugitive and vagabond is every ſinner; he ſeeks to fly from himſelf, but guilt, like a fiend of hell, haunts him; and conſcience, with a ſcorpion's whip, continually ſcourges him.

13. And Cain ſaid unto the LORD, † My puniſhment *is* greater than I can bear. 14. Behold, thou haſt driven me out this day from the face of the earth: and from thy face ſhall I be hid, and I ſhall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it ſhall come to paſs, that [f] every one that findeth me ſhall ſlay me. 15. And the LORD ſaid unto him, Therefore whoſoever ſlayeth Cain, vengeance ſhall be taken on him [g] ſeven-fold. And the LORD ſet a mark upon Cain, leſt any finding him ſhould kill him.

† Or mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.
[f] Chap. ix. 6.
[g] Pſal. lxxix. 12.

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v. 13, 14. Cain's puniſhment was leſs than his iniquity deſerved; yet he murmurs againſt it, as cruel, and more than he can bear. The hardened heart of man is thus ever diſpoſed to charge God fooliſhly. Doth a living man dare to complain of any preſent burden? Let him rather ſtand aſtoniſhed that he is out of hell. *Note*, They who quarrel with the puniſhments of ſin, as too ſevere, will feel them to their coſt by and by; and be made to own the juſtice of them too. Four ſore judgments were upon him; rejection from God's face and favour, as a reprobate; expulſion from the comforts of ſociety and the church of God; a reſtleſs and tormented conſcience; and the continual and terrible fears of death. Learn, 1. The ſoul who departs from God, is the prey of conſtant diſquiet: though he ſeeks reſt, he finds none. 2. Guilt is the ſource of ceaſeleſs horror, and every proſpect of death to ſuch an one, is big with terror and diſmay.

v. 15. We have here God's protection of Cain, and the mark ſet upon him. Firſt, to confirm the ſentence paſſed upon him he is not to be executed, leaſt he be forgotten, but lives a ſtanding monument of God's vengeance againſt ſin. We need not wonder that God does not immediately cut off daring and preſumptuous ſinners: he hath wiſe ends to anſwer in them. Secondly, the mark was to point him out; not more to ſave him harmleſs, than to brand him infamous, This is the Murderer! The mark of ſin is upon every guilty ſoul: though ſecret now, the day is near when the brand of the beaſt will appear in the forehead, and the impenitent ſinner be pointed out as the object of ſcorn and abhorrence to ſaints and angels; and be doomed to live for ever as an outcaſt from God, with devils in hell.

16. ¶ And Cain went out from the preſence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the eaſt of Eden. 17. And Cain knew his wife, and ſhe conceived and bare † Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his ſon Enoch. 18. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methuſael: and Methuſael begat ‡ Lamech.

† Heb. Chanock.
‡ Heb. Lemech.

v. 16, 17, 18. We have here, according to the ſentence, 1. Cain's baniſhment. The preſence of the Lord he no longer deſired; but dreaded, and therefore ſought to fly from it. He had done now with worſhip and ſacrifices; and as God had forſaken him, he renounces all profeſſion of godlineſs, and commences vagabond. None ſink ſo low, none grow ſo infamouſly vile, as thoſe who having made profeſſion of godlineſs, return, as the dog to their vomit.

2. Whither he went. To the eaſt of Eden, the way the flaming cherub ſtood; inſenſible to God's dreadful judgments, and defying them; ſuch daring impiety being the laſt produce of the abandoned heart: but he found no reſt. It was the land of Nod, or trembling, to him wherever he was: he could not fly from himſelf. Let the guilty ſinner never think of flying from God, but to God, if ever he hopes to find reſt unto his ſoul.

3. His labours. To build a city, an expedient dictated by his *fears*, perhaps to ſecure his perſon; or by his *impiety*, in hopes of diſappointing the divine ſentence; or by his *miſery*, to divert his thoughts; or by his *pride*, to make himſelf diſtinguiſhed: whatever a wicked man doth, his motives, purſuits, and ends, are all wrong. Learn hence, (1.) 'Tis a ſad ſymptom of a ſinful ſtate, when a man cannot bear his own thoughts, but muſt be ſeeking ſome continual engagements in order to divert his mind. (2.) The ſinner ſeeks a fixed abode in the earth: he would ſet up his name and city here. To be worldly minded, is the ſure evidence of departure from God. (3.) In vain are all the attempts of the guilty: his poſſeſſions muſt fail, his cities moulder into duſt, his name be blotted out, and death, which brings him to the judgment-ſeat of God, diſappoint all his labours under the ſun.

4. His family. The names of them are mentioned, but no good of them; they were chips of the old block; *malus corvus, malum ovum*; what a curſe to his family is a wicked parent?

19. ¶ And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. 20. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of ſuch as dwell in tents, and *of ſuch as have* cattle. 21. And his brothers name *was* Jubal: he was the father of all ſuch as handle the harp and organ. 22. And Zillah, ſhe alſo bare Tubal-Cain, † an inſtructer of every artificer in braſs and iron: and the ſiſter of Tubal-Cain *was* Naamah.

† Heb. Whetter.

v. 19, 20, 21, 22. We have ſome account of one of Cain's poſterity; and as we might expect a bad father and a worſe ſon;

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1. His taking two wives. He was the firſt probably, who had tranſgreſſed the divine inſtitution: he began the bad cuſtom, but better men followed him. How hard, when cuſtom hath eſtabliſhed ſin into a law, to eſcape from the pollutions that are in the world!

2. His remarkable family. Wicked men often proſper, and flouriſh like a green bay tree for a time; but their end is, to be conſumed together. Be not thou envious then, though his houſe be increaſed. We have the names and occupations of his children: (1.) Jabal, the father of ſhepherds, celebrated for his knowledge in breeding and keeping cattle. (2.) Jubal, a muſician, and the firſt inventor of it. (3.) Tubal-Cain, famed for his works in braſs and iron. (4.) Naamah, their ſiſter, the beautiful, as her name ſignifies. It ſeems not improbable, in this degenerate race idolatry began; and Lamech being the Jupiter, his ſons are the Pan, Apollo, and Vulcan, and his daughter the Venus of the heathens. Obſerve, 1. Amidſt all their worldly inventions, no mention is made of God, or his ſervice: as long as the worldly mind can profit or pleaſe himſelf, he looks no higher. 2. Wicked men may be made very uſeful in their generation. 3. Though muſick was firſt invented by a bad man, God hath made it ſubſervient to a good end. 'Tis a pity the profeſſors of muſick ſhould, in their conduct, rather chuſe to imitate the inventor Jubal, than the reformer of it David.

23. And Lamech ſaid unto his wives, Adah and
Zillah, Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken
† Or I would ſlay a man in my wound, &c. unto my ſpeech: for † I have ſlain a man to my wound-
ing, and a young man ‡ to my hurt. 24. If Cain ſhall
‡ Or in my hurt. be avenged ſeven-fold, truly Lamech ſeventy and ſeven fold.

v. 23, 24. Lamech's wickedneſs is farther recorded.

1. His imperiouſneſs. His wives hear his voice, and tremble. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who marry like Lamech, for luſt, will ſeldom long ſpeak the kind voice of love. (2.) The moſt rigorous exacters of others duty, are often the moſt flagrant neglecters of their own.

2. His ferocity. *I have ſlain a man to my wounding*, &c. I have done it, nor fear the conſequences; or as in the margin, *I would ſlay a man*, that dared provoke, or ſtand in my way, though I were wounded in the conflict. Bloody-minded men ſtick at nothing when their paſſions hurry them on! the accurſed ſin of duelling is Lamech's ſpirit.

3. His preſumptuous impiety. From Cain's protection, he infers his own ſecurity, commit what crimes he would: thus wicked men wax worſe and worſe. Becauſe God's vengeance is not ſpeedily executed, they harden themſelves in the confidence of impunity: but though vengeance be ſlow, it is ſure; their damnation ſlumbereth not. All we hear of Cain and his ſeed, is a continuance of evil: a bad beginning neceſſarily leads to a bad end.

3874. 25. ¶ And Adam knew his wife again, and ſhe bare
h Chap. v. 3. a ſon, and [h] called his name † Seth: For God, *ſaid ſhe*,
† Heb. Sheth. hath appointed me another ſeed inſtead of Abel, whom
3769. Cain ſlew. 26. And to Seth, [i] to him alſo there was born
i Chap. v. 6. a ſon; and he called his name Enos: then began men
‡ Or to call themſelves by the name of the Lord. ‡ to call upon the name of the LORD.

v. 25, 26. Great, no doubt, was Adam's grief for his loſt Abel; greater for his rebellious Cain: but he ſhall not have all ſorrow and no comfort. God will in ſome ſort make up the breach; though he ſhall have enough to awaken the remembrance of his ſin and his ſorrow, he ſhall not be left utterly deſtitute. 1. God gives him another ſon, to be the eſtabliſhment of his family, and in whoſe houſe the worſhip of God ſhould be perpetuated in the room of Abel. God will never want a holy ſeed. Though the church be never ſo perſecuted, *Sanguis martyrum ſemen eccleſiæ:* There ſhall ſtill be a generation to ſerve him. 2. The name given him; Seth, placed or ſettled; and another ſeed, typifying that emphatical ſeed the Meſſiah, who ſhould be placed as an enſign on an hill, and to whom ſhould the gathering of the people be. 3. The farther increaſe of his family in Seth's ſon, Enos, or miſerable; ſo called, to remind us that the beſt of men were but miſerable ſinners. And now in their ſeed's ſeed, they behold a comfortable proſpect of the perpetuity of the true religion. For, 4. They were diſtinguiſhed for their regard to God's name and worſhip: they were of a different character from the irreligious offspring of Cain: they continued in prayer and public ſacrifices: no doubt Adam's children had done ſo from the beginning, but they now began to be more remarked for it. The more the wickedneſs of men appears, the more ſhould the people of God be quickened: 'tis high time to be jealous for God's glory, when iniquity abounds. The margin reads, *they began to be called by the name of the Lord:* Perhaps a name of reproach given by the wicked ſons of Cain; the godly, the preciſe. The people of God ever bore his name; a name of infamy in the earth, but a name of honour in heaven; the ſons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

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CHAP. V.

This chapter is the only authentic hiſtory extant of the firſt age of the world from the creation to the flood. It contains an account of the deſcendants of Seth to Noah, and is preſerved, and from thence continued down to Chriſt, Luke iii. 36. *who was* the ſeed of the woman, *that was promiſed. We have here an account,* 1. *Concerning Adam,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Seth,* ver, 6—8. 3. *Enos,* ver. 9—11. 4. *Cainan,* ver. 12—14. 5. *Mahalaleel,* ver. 15—17. 6. *Jared,* ver. 11—20. 7. *Enoch,* ver. 21—24. 8. *Methuſelah,* ver. 25—27. 9. *Lamech and his ſon Noah,* ver. 28. ad finem. *All ſcripture being given by inſpiration of God is profitable, though not all alike profitable.*

1. THIS is [a] the book of the generations of Adam: 4004. a 1 Chron. i. 1. Luke iii. 36.
In the day that God created man, in [b] the like-
neſs of God made he him: 2. [c] Male and female creat- b Chap. i. 26. Wiſd. ii. 23.
ed he them; and bleſſed them, and called their name c Chap. i. 27.
Adam, in the day when they were created. 3. ¶ And 3874.
Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a*
ſon in his own likeneſs, after his image; and [d] called his d Chap. iv. 25.
name Seth. 4. And the days of Adam after he had
begotten Seth, were eight hundred years; and he be-
gat ſons and daughters. 5. And [e] all the days that A- e 1 Chron. i. &c.
dam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he
died.

v. 1, 2. We have a recital here of what was largely treated of before. 'Tis uſeful that man ſhould often be reminded of his maker, for he is ſtrangely apt to forget him. We have here, 1. His name: this was not ſo expreſsly mentioned before; it ſignifies red earth, to point him to his original, and ſignify his ſubjection; and both have one name, for they have one nature, and by marriage are one fleſh: let the man love his wife then, even as himſelf. 2. His generations. His own and his poſterities: the only valuable genealogy is this; to know, not from whom we come, but from whom Chriſt came. The greateſt man living is but the ſon of the duſt; of the earth, earthy: the only noble extraction is to be related to the Lord from heaven.

v. 3, 4, 5. No notice is taken of what other children he begat; though in virtue of the bleſſing, no doubt, he begat many before, as well as after Seth. 1. The time of his birth. The 130th year, a long ſpace, and full of trouble: now there is a little ſunſhine after the dark cloud. We need be thankful for every mercy in the way, and wait in this vale of tears with patience, till our appointed change comes. 2. What is ſaid of him? *He begat him in his own likeneſs*; not in the image of God, in which himſelf was created, but in the likeneſs of his own corrupt and fallen ſelf. Miſerable effects of ſin! We can entail nothing now upon our offspring, but ſin and the curſe of it. Grace doth not run in the blood, but corruption doth. 3. His age and death; certain to come, though long delayed: may we often remember it, and learn from the view, ſo to number our days, as to apply our hearts unto wiſdom.

6. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and [f] be- f Chap. iv. 26
gat Enos. 7. And Seth lived after he had begat Enos 3769.
eight hundred and ſeven years, and begat ſons and daugh-
ters. 8. And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and
twelve years, and he died. 9. And Enos lived ninety
years, and begat Cainan. 10. And Enos lived after he 3679.
begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat
ſons and daughters. 11. And all the days of Enos were
nine hundred and five years: and he died. 12. And Cainan
lived ſeventy years, and begat Mahalaleel. 13. And 3609.
Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and
forty years: and begat ſons and daughters. 14. And all
the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and
he died. 15. And Mahalaleel lived ſixty and five years, 3544.
and begat Jared. 16. And Mahalaleel lived after he be-
gat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat ſons
and daughters. 17. And all the days of Mahalaleel were
eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died. 18. 3382.
And Jared lived an hundred ſixty and two years, and he g Jude 14, 15.
begat [g] Enoch. 19. And Jared lived after he begat Enoch
eight hundred years, and begat ſons and daughters. 20.
And all the days of Jared were nine hundred ſixty and
two years: and he died.

v. 6—20. Adam's deſcendants are recounted to the ſixth generation. He lived to ſee the earth overſpread, and repleniſhed with inhabitants. The account of Seth's poſterity is dwelt upon;

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upon; whilſt Cain's is only mentioned, and no more. God's ſaints are precious in his ſight.

Obſerve, 1. How death paſſed upon all. Their lives were long indeed, but the burden of the tale is, and he died. Health, riches, wiſdom, and what is better, godlineſs, make no diſtinction here: 'Tis all thou art, and all the proud muſt be.

2. Their days are mentioned, to remind us that years and ages are but longer days; and when they are gone, will be like yeſterday, which is paſt.

3. The length of their lives. Many ages. Though death was entered, his ravages were reſtrained, either by the excellent temperature of the air, and the wholeſomeneſs of their food, in which the antideluvian world, no doubt, far exceeded the preſent; or by the power of God, who preſerved men's lives to overſpread the earth the ſooner, or rather that the true religion might be thus preſerved from corruption. A ſinner looks back with regret on theſe lives of ages, and wiſhes their return; a ſaint of God rejoices in his happier lot, that he is not left ſo long to groan in this tabernacle, being burthened.

3317. 21. And Enoch lived ſixty and five years, and begat Methuſelah. 22. And Enoch [h] walked with God after he begat Methuſelah three hundred years, and begat ſons and daughters. 23. And all the days of Enoch, were three hundred and ſixty-five years. 24. And [i] Enoch walked with God, and he was not: for God took him.

[h] Chap. vi. 9. & xvii. 1. & xxiv. 40. Pſal. xvi. 8. & cxvi. 9.

[i] Ecclus xliv. 16. Heb. xi. 5.

v. 21—24. In the foregoing generations, nothing is ſaid of their characters; their deſcent bids us hope they imitated their father. But here God ſingles out one to be the imitation of future ages, as he was the glory of that in which he lived. Obſerve,

1. His converſation in the world. He walked with God.

(1.) His practice was agreeable to God's will: he maintained a happy communion with him: his ſoul was weaned from the vanities of the world, and fixed on God as his only portion. *Note*, The life of every chriſtian is walking with God. 1. As a reconciled ſinner, through the blood of Chriſt. 2. As a reſtored ſoul, through the ſpirit of Chriſt. 3. As an obedient ſervant, according to the word of Chriſt. 4. As an obſervant worſhipper in all ordinances, and an attentive improver of all providences. 5. As happy in the fellowſhip obtained with God, through his dear Son. 6. As a conſtant expectant of God's appearing to take us to himſelf, that we may behold his glory.

(2.) His preaching. He not only himſelf lived for God, but he laboured for God, *Jude* 14. Boldly rebuking ſin, and encouraging the faithful in their adherence to God, from the proſpect of the appearance of their Lord to judge the ungodly, and to reward his ſaints.

(3.) His perſeverance herein. To the end of his days. There ſeems no reaſon to apprehend he did not walk with God before; we are aſſured, however, after he begat Methuſelah, he did three hundred years. Every true ſaint of God is known by his perſeverance. It was a long while to live thus in a wicked world, but he walked by faith. *Note*, True faith never faileth.

2. His tranſlation from earth to heaven. It was his buſineſs and happineſs to live for God; it is his reward to live with God. He was in the prime of life when God took him; had not, according to general reckoning, lived out half his days: but ſurely he was a wonderful gainer by the exchange. He quitted a wicked world for a heavenly kingdom; a life of toil for a reſt in glory; a ſcene of vanity for bliſs eternal. *Note*, we ought not too much to lament for our dear friends that die in the Lord, leſt our ſelfiſhneſs, rather than our affection appear. Though the child be robbed from the tender parents, the huſband from his weeping family, or the zealous miniſter from his deſolate flock: the loſs indeed is ours, the gain is theirs. They have lived enough whom God takes to himſelf: the days that are cut off from the labours of time, ſhall be added to the rewards of eternity. Early deaths, and ſudden deaths, are reckoned untimely; but who can think it untimely to go to the boſom of Jeſus; or who ſhould grieve that

> No painful agonies need to untie,
> The ſoul that's ready to aſcend on high,
> And mourns its exile from its native ſky.

3. The manner of his tranſlation. He was caught up, perhaps viſibly, as Elijah afterwards, into heaven: his body changed in the twinkling of an eye, from corruption to incorruption, from diſhonour to glory, from natural to ſpiritual, and his ſoul, freed from every ſpot of ſin, made meet for an inheritance among the ſaints in light. We may not hope for ſuch a change, but we expect an equivalent; the arm of death, which ſnatches the believer from the earth, ſhall carry him to the place whither Enoch is gone before.

4. The grand principle which influenced him to ſuch a conduct, and brought him to ſuch an end; Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Heb.* xi. 5. *Note*, (1.) Faith only can enable us to walk with God. (2.) Thus ſhall we pleaſe God. (3.) God will teſtify his pleaſure in ſuch a walk, by his witneſs in our hearts now, and by his approbation in a judgment day. (4.) Eminent believers ſhall have ſingular honours, as one ſtar differeth from another ſtar in glory.

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25. And Methuſelah lived an hundred eighty and ſeven years, and begat Lamech. 26. And Methuſelah lived after he begat Lamech ſeven hundred eighty and two years, and begat ſons and daughters. 27. And all the days of Methuſelah were nine hundred ſixty and nine years: and he died.

v. 25, 26, 27. Methuſelah died in the year of the deluge, as if taken away from the evil to come. He exceeded all men in length of days, but died too: every man living is altogether vanity. When we conſider that a thouſand years and one day are alike compared with eternity, the difference of the age of Methuſelah, and the child that breathed only, and died, vaniſhes into nothing. If eternity is ſo vaſt, and time ſo vain, how careful ſhould we be to redeem the one, in order to ſecure the other.

28. And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a ſon. 2948. 29. And he called his name Noah, ſaying, This ſame ſhall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, becauſe of the ground [k] which the LORD hath curſed. 30. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat ſons and daughters. 31. And all the days of Lamech were ſeven hundred ſeventy and ſeven years: and he died. 32. And Noah was five hundred years old: 2448. and Noah begat [l] Shem, Ham, and [m] Japheth.

[k] Chap. iii. 17. & iv. 11.

[l] Chap. vi. 10.

[m] Chap. x. 21.

Good and bad men have the ſame names, but their characters eaſily diſtinguiſh them; Lamech the ſaint, from Lamech the ſinner. He had many ſons, but one moſt remarkable. We have,

1. His name: Noah; reſt. They expected in him a comfort from their toils. Children ſhould be a reſt for their parents: happy they who can ſay by experience of their dutifulneſs and affection, this ſame ſhall comfort us.

2. His family. Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They are particularly mentioned, becauſe of the ſubſequent tranſactions: Shem, though firſt in name, is not firſt in age; but as he was firſt in God's favour, he obtains the preference. God's gifts are his own; if he chuſes one and not another, who ſhall accuſe him of partiality? or ſay to him, What doſt thou? Shem ſignifies, name: for from him is to deſcend the ſeed, who is above every name. *Note*, If the name of Chriſtian be ours indeed, the birthright and bleſſing are entailed on it: we ſhall be counted among the church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven.

CHAP. VI.

The moſt remarkable thing we have upon record concerning the old world, is the deſtruction of it by the univerſal deluge, of which this chapter begins the hiſtory; wherein we have, 1. *The abounding iniquity of that wicked world,* ver. 1—5. *and* ver. 11. 12. 2. *God's juſt reſentment, and reſolution to puniſh it,* ver. 6, 7. 3. *The ſpecial favour of God to Noah.* 1. *In the character given of him,* ver. 8, 9. 10. 2. *In the communication of God's purpoſe to him,* ver. 13, 17. 3. *In the directions he gave him to make an ark for his own ſafety,* ver. 14, 15, 16. 4. *In the employing of him for the preſervation of the reſt of the creatures,* ver. 18—21. *Laſtly, Noah's obedience to the inſtructions given him,* ver. 22. *And this concerning the old world is written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the new world are come.*

1. AND it came to paſs when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, About 2469. 2. That the ſons of God ſaw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they choſe.

v. 1, 2. The chapter opens with an account of the cauſes of that univerſal degeneracy which began to prevail on the earth.

1. The increaſe of men. The multitude of evil doers is the great encouragement and ſupport of ſin. *Note*, It is a bad ſymptom of a bad ſtate, when any man's plea is, that he is no worſe than his neighbours. It is enough, that he is like the world, to be condemned with the world.

2. Their unholy marriages. The ſons of God, the ſeed of Seth, diſtinguiſhed for their piety, beheld the beauty of the daughters of men, the wicked ſeed of Cain, and took them

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wives from that degenerate family. Behold here the dire cauſe of their apoſtacy from God. Learn hence, (1.) A bad woman armed with beauty is one of the moſt deadly inſtruments the devil can employ againſt the ſons of God. (2.) Thoſe who in marriage conſult only the pleaſing the eye, will ſoon find an aching heart. (3.) A Chriſtian man or woman ſhould dread as much to be yoked with an unbeliever, as a living body to be tied for life to a dead corpſe: the one can communicate contagion, but the other cannot enliven.

[a] 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. [b] Pſal. lxxviii. 39.

3. And the LORD ſaid, [a] My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, for that [b] he alſo *is* fleſh: yet his days ſhall be an hundred and twenty years.

v. 3. The Lord's diſpleaſure for theſe proceedings, and his threatened judgments againſt the evil doers.

1. His diſpleaſure. He will withdraw his ſpirit. He had raiſed up Noah, a preacher of righteouſneſs; he had given them ſecret convictions; and now he threatens to leave them to fill up the meaſure of their iniquities, till they ſhould be ripe for deſtruction. Obſerve, (1.) Nothing grieves the ſpirit of God more ſorely than fleſhly luſts. (2.) Every freſh indulgence of ſin is a new reſiſtance againſt God's ſtrivings. (3.) When the ſpirit of God is reſiſted, his calls become leſs ſenſible, till he is quite withdrawn. (4.) When God ſtrives no more, then we ruſh headlong into ſin and ruin. Lord, take not thy holy Spirit from us.

2. The reaſon given. Man is fleſh, incurably corrupt, and altogether become abominable. When there is a total mortification, there is no help but amputation, *enſe recidendum.* What can be ſo abaſing as this view of our vile natures: Man is ſunk totally into fleſh, and his very ſoul is become earthly, ſenſual.

3. A merciful reſpite. An hundred and twenty years. God never ſtrikes without warning; but when his goſpel is rejected, his calls diſregarded, his admonitions made light of, though he wait long, his time of patience ends; the ſword is drawn, the ſinner dies. Let us hear then, and fear, and do no more wickedly.

* Or the whole imagination, purpoſe, or deſire.
[c] Chap. viii. 21. Matt. xv. 19.
† Heb. Every day.

4. There were giants in the earth in thoſe days; and alſo after that, when the ſons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them: the ſame *became* mighty men, which *were* of old, men of renown. 5. And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth, and that * every imagination of the thoughts of his [c] heart was only evil † continually.

v. 4, 5. Things went from evil to worſe. What elſe could be hoped from ſuch ungodly connections. The produce of theſe marriages was giants, mighty men, men of renown for their conqueſts and their power. (1.) Whenever a wicked man has great power, we may expect great oppreſſion. (2.) The renown of conquerors is their greateſt diſhonour, and the trumpet of fame the ſound of infamy. We are apt to admire a Cæſar, or Alexander, and in the glare of conqueſt forget the peſts of ſociety, and the ſcourges of mankind.

God ſaw. How could he but ſee, when his eyes go continually to and fro thro' the earth. He ſaw, 1. The wickedneſs of man was great in the earth. The cry of the oppreſſed, and the tears of the injured, came up before him, and it was univerſal. The earth was filled with it; all ranks and all degrees had corrupted their ways. *Note,* (1.) When great men are wicked, their wickedneſs is great. (2.) The examples of the great are deadly infectious; what they begin, will quickly be imitated. (3.) But God takes notice. There is a book of remembrance written: not an oppreſſive deed, or wicked word, but is minuted for judgment.

2. The root of this great wickedneſs; the apoſtate nature of man. His inward parts are ſtill worſe than his way; his heart is naught; all his thoughts perverſe; yea, every riſing imagination big with evil; and this determinedly and continually. Behold a lively picture of a fallen ſpirit. *Note,* However great outward wickedneſs is, God ſees greater abominations within: the heart of every ſinner contains greater crimes than ever were yet committed.

[d] See Numb. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 11—29. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Mal. iii. 6. Jam. i. 17.
* Heb. From man unto beaſt.

6. And [d] it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7. And the LORD ſaid, I will deſtroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth, * both man and beaſt, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them.

v. 6, 7. God could not behold without concern a conduct ſo offenſive to his purity, and ſo diſhonourable to his moral government, and therefore moſt juſtly determines to viſit for theſe things.

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1. God repented that he had made man; it grieved him at his heart. Not that he is ſuſceptible of ſorrow, or capable of change: he ſpeaks after the manner of men only, when affected with ſuch provocations. His diſpleaſure againſt ſin is without any painful ſenſation, yea, is the emanation of his immaculate purity; and his repentance, a change of conduct, not a change of mind. Doth God thus regard ſin, and ſhall not we grieve for it, and repent over it? *Note,* Man new made ſhall not diſappoint his labour. In Jeſus Chriſt, and the new creation in him, he will be able to eternity to ſay, *This ſame ſhall comfort us concerning the work of our hands.* Chap. v. 20.

2. The purpoſe of God to deſtroy man, the work of his hands; to wipe out his name from among the living, and, as involved in his ſin, to conſume the whole brute creation with him. *Note,* (1.) He that makes can unmake us in an inſtant: he need only breathe in anger, and the candle of life he hath lighted ſhall be extinguiſhed. (2.) Thoſe who will not be converted, muſt be conſumed. (3.) If the ſinner will have God to change his judgments, he muſt by faith change his way. In vain are the hopes of mercy, where there remains the indulgence of ſin.

[e] Chap. vii. 1. Ezek. xiv. 14—20. Ecclus xliv. 17. Heb. xi. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
* Or upright.
[f] Chap. v. 32.

8. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9. Theſe are the generations of Noah; [e] Noah was a juſt man, and * perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. 10. And Noah begat three ſons, [f] Shem, Ham, and Japhet.

v. 8, 9, 10. Noah was an exception from the general corruption; for we find,

1. A token of God's approbation of him. God giveth to every man according as his work is. His judgment is according to truth. Though Noah was a deſpiſed preacher in a careleſs world, God's favour amply repaid him, and made him more highly honourable than the giants of renown. I had rather find favour in the eyes of the Lord, than be regarded by an admiring world; and have my name written in the book of life of the Lamb, than emblazoned in the annals of fame amongſt the mightieſt heroes.

2. The reaſon of this approbation. (1.) He was a juſt man, or a juſtified man; he was firſt a believer, and then a preacher of the righteouſneſs of faith. No acceptance with God without faith. (2.) A perfect man; ſincere before God, and without allowed guile, though, as we find, compaſſed as other men with infirmities. *Note,* Though perfection of ſincerity be found in men, freedom from ſin never was nor will be in this world, ſave in him who was more than man. (3.) He walked with God, when all beſide were walking in their own ways. He dared to be eminently ſingular, and to profeſs it too. It is a bleſſed proof of a heart with God, when in evil days a man dare openly avow himſelf on the Lord's ſide.

11. The earth alſo was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. 12. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all fleſh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

v. 11, 12. God takes repeated notice of the wickedneſs of men. He will not only be, but be ſeen to be juſt in his judgments. Violence and ſpoil disfigured the earth, and, like devouring beaſts let looſe, the fallen ſons of men preyed one on another. Every kingdom, city, family, was anarchy; and every place confuſion. It was ſurely high time to interpoſe. Sin is the cauſe of every miſchief: if kingdoms fall, or houſes are divided, to this it muſt be aſcribed. *Note,* The people of God are uſually looked upon as the burden and the troublers of the earth. How little do men know, that for their ſakes only judgment this hour lingereth.

* Or from the earth.
† Heb. Neſts.
[g] 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 5.

13. And God ſaid unto Noah, The end of all fleſh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold, I will deſtroy them * with the earth. 14. Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: † rooms ſhalt thou make in the ark, and ſhalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15. And this is the faſhion which thou ſhalt make it of: the length of the ark ſhall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16. A window ſhalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit ſhalt thou finiſh it above, and the door of the ark ſhalt thou ſet in the ſide thereof: with lower, ſecond, and third ſtories ſhalt thou make it. 17. And behold, I, even I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to deſtroy all fleſh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven: and every thing that is in the earth ſhall die. 18. But with thee will I eſtabliſh my covenant: and [g] thou ſhalt come into the ark; thou, and thy ſons, and thy wife, and thy ſons wives with thee. 19. And of every living

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thing of all fleſh, two of every ſort ſhalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee: they ſhall be male and female. 20. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind: two of every ſort [h] ſhall come unto thee, to keep them alive. 21. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou ſhalt gather it to thee; and it ſhall be for food for thee and for them.

[h] See Chap. xix.

v. 13—21. God's favour to Noah now begins to appear in a very ſignal inſtance.

1. He communicates to him his fixed purpoſe to deſtroy the world of the ungodly. Their end is come, their meaſure of iniquity is filled, and his patience at an end: the veſſels of wrath are now fitted for deſtruction. When the appointed hour in God's eternal counſels arrives, then the end of the world, and of all fleſh, comes in a more awful ſenſe.

2. The manner of their end. By a flood. I that bound up the waters in ſwaddling bands, when the great deep firſt broke from the womb of nature, will open its fountains. I, even I; my power will accompliſh it, and my decree is unchangeable. Their burning luſts ſhall be quenched in a deluge of waters.

3. His covenant with him and his family. A covenant of mercies temporal and ſpiritual: a deliverance from the devouring flood; but, better ſtill, a deliverance from the deluge of iniquity too. *Note*, (1.) The covenant of grace was from the beginning the only ſaving hope. (2.) With whomſoever God eſtabliſhes it, nothing can diſappoint the fulfilment: it is ordered in all things, and ſure. (3.) That faith in God's promiſe is the only and ſure way of laying hold of an intereſt in this covenant.

4. The means and methods preſcribed for the ſaving himſelf and his family. An ark. He muſt provide it. *Note*, God's ſure promiſes do not make our labours needleſs, but encourage us to work, from the aſſurance of ſucceſs. God orders the manner of the ark. He who ſaves will direct us in the propereſt methods to work out our ſalvation. It is not deſigned for ſailing, but to ſave from ſinking; and it is to be made large enough to contain himſelf, his family, and ſome of every ſpecies of animals. Mark the bleſſing of pious parents; Noah's whole family were kept alive for their father's ſake.

5. The aſſurance that God would collect the proper freight, when he had prepared the veſſel. Though we may often be in the dark, how things ſhall be brought about, yet if we are acting under the divine command, and truſting upon the divine promiſe, he will bring it to paſs.

6. Noah firſt preached to thoſe who periſh, and then became a ſaviour to thoſe who ſurvived: in both an eminent type of his Lord, who, when he left thoſe inexcuſable who rejected his word, opened the door of his heart, a ſafe retreat from all the floods of wrath to every guilty ſinner who ſhould flee thither. To this ark, my ſinful ſoul, betake thyſelf.

22. Thus did Noah, [i] according to all that God commanded him, ſo did he.

[i] Chap. vii. 5—9—16. Heb. xi. 7.

v. 22. No ſooner commanded, but he obeys: ſuch is the ready mind of every true believer. Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.

1. His unreſerved faith. A thouſand corrupt reaſonings no doubt intruded, of the how, and why, and wherefore; but it was enough for Noah, he had God's word, that ſilenced every doubt. *Note*, The reaſon why men do not now flee from the wrath to come, is becauſe they attend to the vain reaſonings of their mind againſt the expreſs revelation of God.

2. His diligence. He began immediately, and finiſhed it according to the pattern. He ſtaggered neither at the trouble and expence, nor could be diverted by the mockeries of the unbelievers, who, no doubt, thought him a very ridiculous enthuſiaſt, to attempt providing againſt ſuch an improbable, or, as to them it appeared, impoſſible event. *Note*, Thoſe who cannot bear the ſcoffs of the world, or be ready to give up all for Chriſt, will never ſwim in the ark.

3. It was a continual ſermon: every blow of the axe and hammer was a call to repentance. It convinced not the world indeed, but it condemned it. *Heb.* xi. 7. *Note*, The time will come, when ſinners will remember their obſtinacy and hardneſs of heart, too late to amend it.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter we have the performance of what was promiſed in the foregoing chapter. 1. *God's gracious call to Noah and his family to come into the ark*, ver. 1. *and to bring the creatures that were to be preſerved alive along with him*, ver. 2, 3. *in conſideration of the deluge at hand*, ver. 4. 2. *Noah's obedience to this heavenly viſion*, ver. 5—9. *an account of which is repeated*, ver. 13—16. *to which is added God's tender care, to ſhut him in.* 3. *The coming of the threatned deluge*, ver. 10. *the cauſes of it*, ver. 11, 12. *the prevalence of it*, ver. 17—20. 4. *The dreadful deſolations that were made by it in the death of every living creature upon earth, except what were in the ark*, ver. 21, 22, 23. 5. *The continuance of the deluge, before it began to abate, one hundred and fifty days*, ver. 24.

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1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Noah, [a] Come thou, and all thy houſe into the ark: for [b] thee have I ſeen righteous before me in this generation. 2. Of every clean beaſt thou ſhalt take to thee by * ſevens the male and his female: and of the beaſts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. 3. Of fowls alſo of the air, by ſevens, the male and the female; to keep ſeed alive upon the face of all the earth. 4. For yet ſeven days, and I will cauſe it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living ſubſtance that I have made, will I ‡ deſtroy from off the face of the earth.

[a] Matt. xxiv. 38. Luke xvii. 26. 1 Pet iii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
[b] Chap. vi. 9.
* Heb. Seven ſeven.
‡ Heb. Blot out.

v. 1, 2, 3, 4. When the work was finiſhed, and the one hundred and twenty years at an end, then God begins to fulfil his faithful word.

1. Noah is commanded to enter with his family, and all the creatures. "Come into the ark." Sweet voice of mercy, thus inviting to a ſure refuge from the impending ſtorm. Such is the gracious call of Jeſus to the ſinful ſoul; Come unto me, and I will give you reſt. And ſhall we be obdurate, as blind to our own intereſt as inſenſible to the Saviour's love! Surely then we deſerve to periſh. His family were not all like their father; one we are aſſured was wicked enough, yet his father's mercies deſcend upon him. Learn, (1.) There is no pure ſociety under the ſun: in the ark was a reprobate, and, amongſt the twelve apoſtles, a traitor. (2.) A bad child fares often the better for his parent's ſake.

2. A comfortable teſtimony repeated of his integrity. It is a bleſſed thing to have God's atteſtation to our ſimplicity before him; and it is the Lord's delight to behold it, his care to reward it. He will preſerve ſuch from the plagues of the ungodly, and reſerve them as monuments of his diſtinguiſhed mercy.

3. The regulations concerning the beaſts, their nature and number. Of clean and unclean both muſt come, for none muſt be loſt; yet their number differs, not only becauſe the clean are moſt ſerviceable for man, and therefore ſhall be moſt numerous, (behold the wiſe providence of God!) but alſo becauſe of them he muſt offer unto the Lord. *Note*, Man, in the proviſion that is made for his comfort, ſhould never loſe ſight, that the greater end ſtill propoſed in all God's works is his own glory.

4. Another reſpite of ſeven days. A moment more, another call, and the laſt. They who will not regard the judgment at their door, muſt periſh without remedy. *Note*, When the heart hath long been hardened againſt the calls of God, there is little hopes of a change at laſt. Of the multitudes of dying beds I have attended, I never ſaw one man, of whom I had Chriſtian grounds of confidence, who only then began to be warned of their danger, when at the gate of death.

5. And [c] Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him. 6. And Noah was ſix hundred years old, when the flood of waters was upon the earth. 7. And [d] Noah went in, and his ſons, and his wife, and his ſons wives with him, into the ark, becauſe of the waters of the flood. 8. Of clean beaſts, and of beaſts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, 9. There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10. And it came to paſs * after ſeven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

[c] Chap. vi. 22.
[d] 1 Pet. iii. 20.
* Or on the ſeventh day.

v. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. He was not diſobedient to the heavenly admonition.

1. He went in, and all his, and the creatures God had brought him.

2. As ſoon as he was ſafe lodged, that moment the flood came. *Note*, God waits now only for his laſt ſaint to be gathered in, and for the number of his elect to be accompliſhed, and then a more terrible deluge of fire ſhall deſcend upon the ungodly.

11. In the ſix hundredth year of Noah's life, in the ſecond month, the ſeventeenth day of the month, the ſame day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the * windows of heaven were opened. 12. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

* Or floodgates.

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v. 11, 12. We have the time and manner of this awakening judgment particularly recorded.

1. The time; the 600th year of Noah, of the world 1656, on the 17th day of the ſecond month. And as we ſuppoſe the earth was created with the ripe fruit upon it, the ſecond month ſhould anſwer our November: ſo that Noah had time to collect his harveſt, and make proviſion for his long voyage. *Note*, Noah was an old man: the oldeſt ſaints muſt expect their trials to the lateſt day; and as they are veterans in the ſervice, they are the better prepared for it.

2. The manner. Two cauſes are aſſigned; the deeps broken up, and the windows of heaven opened. When God pleaſes to avenge his quarrel, all creatures above, below, around us, are ready inſtruments for his judgments.

(1.) The fountains of the great deep were broken up. The earth is founded upon the floods; its bowels contain enough to deſtroy it, if God lets looſe the waters from their priſons. (2.) The windows of heaven were opened: the clouds poured down inceſſant torrents, forty days and nights; and from theſe concurrent cauſes, the earth ſunk as a ſtone in the mighty waters. Learn here, (1.) The greateſt bleſſings may quickly be made the heavieſt judgments. (2.) To look beyond ſecond cauſes to the firſt. If floods deluge, or earthquakes ſwallow up, or fires conſume, there is one who gives each element its commiſſion, and each judgment its orders. (3.) That there are within the earth, as in the heavens above, ſtorehouſes of fire, as well as water; and that this world is doomed one day to experience their fatal influence. Be it our care then to ſecure a covert from the impending ſtorm, in him who is the only refuge; and then, *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, they ſhall not overflow thee; and when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt.* Iſa. xliii. 2.

13. In the ſelf-ſame day entred Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the ſons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his ſons with them, into the ark. 14. They, and every beaſt after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every * ſort. 15. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all fleſh, wherein *is* the breath of life. 16. And they that went in, went in male and female of all fleſh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD ſhut him in.

* Heb. Wing.

v. 13—16. We have a repetition of the care God took of Noah and his family; and, 1. It is particularly obſerved, that his three ſons were no polygamiſts; they were content with one wife: and no batchelors, againſt the ordinance of God. It appears to be God's will (ſome ſpecial caſes excepted), that every man ſhould have a wife, as it is evident he ſhould have but one.

2. That God ſhut them in.

(1.) *He brought them in*; Noah by his grace, and the creatures by his power, reſtraining their mutual enmities for a time. *Note*, 1. If ever we come into the ark, we muſt think to whom we are indebted for it. By grace ye are ſaved. 2. Not the reſtraints of ſin for a ſeaſon, but the ſubdual of ſin in the heart, is the proof of a change of nature.

(2.) *He kept them in*, ſafe amidſt the ſurrounding floods. The ſoul which God calls, he keeps; for *his gifts and callings are without repentance*, Rom. xi. 29. *He ſhut them in*, as ſeparate from the wicked world. Thoſe that are Chriſt's people, though in the world, are not of the world, but choſen out of the world, and in affection and temper ſeparated from the world.

(3.) In ſhutting them in, he ſhut all the world out. No doubt, when they began to ſee the lowring clouds, and the riſing waters, then they were importunate enough for that admiſſion they had ſlighted. But it is too late to cry, Open unto us, when the door is ſhut. *Note*, (1.) This is the day of ſalvation. Chriſt is a willing Saviour, and his arms of mercy are ſtretched out, to ſave the vileſt ſinner from the wrath of God. He that cometh to him now, ſhall be in no wiſe caſt out. (2.) If men neglect the day of mercy, it will be too late to come when it is the day of judgment. It muſt be now, or never.

17. And the flood was forty days upon the earth: and the waters increaſed, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. 18. And the waters prevailed, and were increaſed greatly upon the earth: and the ark went upon the face of the waters. 19. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered. 20. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

v. 17—20. Now the waters prevail. He that begins will make an end. We have,

1. Noah's ſafety. The ark was lifted up above the earth. *Note*, (1.) The church of Chriſt will ſwim, when its enemies ſhall ſink like lead in the mighty waters. (2.) The increaſe of the waters raiſed it the higher above the earth, and the nearer heaven. See the ſanctified uſe of afflictions.

2. The riſing of the waters above every hill and mountain, fifteen cubits. The ſinners, no doubt, fled to theſe refuges, hoping to find the waters abate; and driven at laſt to the utmoſt verge, with trembling hearts felt its approach to their bodies, and the vanity of all their efforts to ſtem the dreadful tide. There is no ſecurity for the ſoul who is out of Chriſt: every refuge to him is a refuge of lies.

21. And [e] all fleſh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beaſt, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. 22. All in whoſe noſtrils *was* * the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry land, died. 23. And every living ſubſtance was deſtroyed, which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were deſtroyed from the earth: and [f] Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark. 24. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

[e] Luke xvii. 27. Wiſd. x. 4.

* Heb. The breath of the ſpirit of life.

[f] Wiſd. x. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 5. iii. 6.

v. 21—24. Behold the dreadful ſcene; what ravages are made on the earth! See its inhabitants ſwept away with the beſom of deſtruction. They are all dead corpſes floating upon the waters. How awful, how ſudden the ſurprize! when eating and drinking, building, marrying, and in the height of the bridal feaſt, to hear the craſh of elements, to ſee the wreck of nature, and a diſſolving world. In vain they cry, in vain they climb, in vain they intreat; every avenue is ſhut up, and eſcape impoſſible; whilſt Noah, ſecure in the divine protection, ſwims in ſafety, and ſleeps in peace. See,

1. How fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Sinner, read and tremble; a more fearful doom awaits thee, except thou repent.

2. Though Noah's relations, or his carpenters, might plead their blood, or their labours, it will not procure them admittance. Ties of blood will be diſſolved in the judgment day, and not the work, but the temper will be regarded. Let miniſters beware; their ſucceſs is not their ſecurity.

3. Noah with his family lives alone, whilſt the world, more numerous probably than the preſent, periſhes without exception. Let no man then doubt of the fewneſs of thoſe who ſhall be ſaved. As it was in the days of Noah, it will be in the days of the ſon of man. Shall few then be ſaved? give thy diligence to be of that few.

4. Though Noah lives, he lives but in a melancholy ſituation: around him ſeas without a ſhore, and theſe overſpread with deſolation. Many, no doubt, near and dear to him were among the ſlain; and he could not but lament over what his preaching and prayers could not prevent. *Note*, It is a mercy if amidſt general viſitations we eſcape, like Job, with the ſkin of our teeth. *Job* xix. 20.

CHAP. VIII.

In the cloſe of the foregoing chapter we left the world in ruins, and the church in ſtraits, but in this chapter we have the repair of the one, and the enlargement of the other. 1. The increaſe of the waters is ſtayed, ver. 1, 2. *2. They begin ſenſibly to abate*, ver. 3. *3. The ark reſts*, ver. 4. *4. The tops of the mountains appear*, ver. 5. *5. Noah begins to ſend out his ſpies, a raven and a dove, to gain intelligence*, ver. 6—12. *6. The face of the earth dry*, ver. 13, 14. *7. Noah's diſcharge and departure out of the ark*, ver. 15—19. *8. His ſacrifice of praiſe, which he offered to God upon his enlargement*, ver. 20. *9. God's acceptance of his ſacrifice; and the promiſe he made thereupon not to drown the world again*, ver. 21, 22. *And thus at length mercy rejoiceth againſt judgment.*

1. AND God remembred Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to paſs over the earth, and the waters aſſwaged. 2. The fountains alſo of the deep, and the windows of heaven were ſtopped, and the rain from heaven was reſtrained. 3. And the waters returned from off the earth * continually: and after [a] the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

* Heb. In going and returning.

[a] Chap. vii. 24.

v. 1, 2, 3. Since the work of vengeance was finiſhed, it was time to remember mercy to Noah, now ſo long a priſoner in the ark, and perhaps by this time looking with ſome ſollicitude for releaſe from his confinement. It is ſaid,

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1. God remembered Noah; not that he had been ever forgotten of him; but for a time he left him, without any ſpecial token of his remembrance. *Note*, Though the faithful ſeem at ſome ſeaſons to be forſaken, and begin to ſay, My God hath forgotten; yet are his eyes ever upon them to do them good; if he tarry therefore, wait for him: none ever truſted on him, and was aſhamed.

2. He remembered the cattle alſo. His mercies are over all his works: he careth for beaſts that periſh, and ſhall he forget or forſake his people? that be far from him.

3. The evidence of his remembrance. He ſtayed the waters from flowing. (1.) He ſent a wind, to dry up the floods. He hath winds in his treaſures, as well as waters, to dry up, as well as to deluge. All things ſerve him. (2.) He ſtopped the windows of heaven, and the fountains of the deep. *Note*, When afflictive providences have accompliſhed their ends, they ſhall be removed. (3.) He cauſed the waters to return from off the earth continually; part ſhut up within its bowels, in the vaſt abyſs, part exhaled by ſun and wind, and reaſcending into the clouds. (4.) It was a work of time, an hundred and fifty days, before they were conſiderably abated. *Note*, When our trials are long, and our deliverance ſlow, we had need pray: hold out faith and patience.

4. And the ark reſted in the ſeventh month, on the ſeventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. 5. And the waters * decreaſed continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the firſt *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains ſeen.

* Heb. Were in going and decreaſing.

v. 4, 5. After toſſing on theſe billows, at laſt the ark reſts on Ararat. *Note*, Though the church ſuffers long in this tempeſtuous world, it ſhall reſt at laſt upon the mount of God. It was two months after they felt ground, before the mountains were ſeen. They looked out, no doubt, every day, and wiſhed for dry land; at laſt, with joy it appears. Life is a long voyage; in age, or ſickneſs, the believer perceives he draws near the ſhore; and when death's ſhadows are ſtretching over him, he begins to diſcover the happy land of glory beyond the grave, *as the morning ſpread upon the mountains.*

6. And it came to paſs at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. 7. And he ſent forth a raven, which * went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

* Heb. In going forth and returning.

v. 6, 7. He was told when the flood ſhould come, but not when it ſhould abate. He begins now therefore to open the window, after forty days: perhaps he feared to expoſe himſelf ſooner to the waters. He felt himſelf ſafe where he was. It is folly to expoſe ourſelves to needleſs danger. A raven is then ſent out, but returned not to the ark with any intelligence: the carcaſſes of the dead ſupplied it with food. *Note*, A carnal mind takes more pleaſure in the carrion of the world, than the food of the ark.

8. Alſo he ſent forth a dove from him, to ſee if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. 9. But the dove found no reſt for the ſoul of her foot, and ſhe returned unto him into the ark: for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and † pulled her in unto him into the ark. 10. And he ſtayed yet other ſeven days, and again he ſent forth the dove out of the ark. 11. And the dove came in to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf plucked off: So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. 12. And he ſtayed yet other ſeven days, and ſent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

† Heb. Cauſed her to come.

v. 8—12. Noah's ſollicitude induces him to ſend out another meſſenger, a dove. *Note*, Taking proper means to be relieved, is very conſiſtent with perfect reſignation. She returns at firſt empty, then with an olive-leaf, at laſt no more. Learn, 1. The world of ſin can afford no reſt to a gracious ſoul for the ſole of his foot. This *is not thy reſt; it is polluted.* 2. The olive-branch of the goſpel declares God's waters of wrath are aſſwaged. 3. When God's time is come, then ſhall we leave the ark of the church on earth, and fly away, and be at reſt in the boſom of Jeſus.

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13. ¶ And it came to paſs in the ſix hundredth and firſt year, in the firſt *month*, the firſt *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. 14. And in the ſecond month, on the ſeven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

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v. 13, 14. On the firſt day of the new year he ventured to remove the covering, and behold, (and a matter of praiſe no doubt it was) the ground was dry. He did not leave the ark thereupon, but waited God's call to come out, as he had it to go in. *Note*, God's time is the beſt time, and now that time is come.

15. ¶ And God ſpake unto Noah, ſaying, 16. Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy ſons, and thy ſons wives with thee. 17. Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all fleſh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and [b] be fruitful and multiply upon the earth.

[b] Chap. i. 22.

v. 15, 16, 17. Not a day is he confined more than is needful for him. When the ground is fit for his abode, God ſends to deliver him from his confinement. They are ſure always of being in the right, who do nothing without the divine warrant. And now the earth is renewed, the bleſſing is renewed alſo. It will be a wretched world, deſolate as it is; but God will repleniſh it for Noah's uſe. *Note*, They that ſerve him ſhall want no manner of thing which is good.

18. And Noah went forth, and his ſons, and his wife, and his ſons wives with him: 19. Every beaſt, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatſoever creepeth upon the earth, after their * kinds, went forth out of the ark.

* Heb. Families.

v. 18, 19. He obeys as ſoon as called. More than a year he had been now confined, yet all was ſafe and well, of his numerous families. It does not appear that one was miſſing. *Note*, Thoſe who are ſafe lodged in Chriſt, are ſafe for eternity; there is no death there.

20. And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD, and took of every clean beaſt, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.

v. 20. The firſt concern of a gracious ſoul is to praiſe God for his mercies. Noah's firſt building is an altar, and his employment a ſacrifice of thankſgiving. His ſtock of clean beaſts and fowl was ſmall, and one out of ſeven might be thought much; but Noah knew they would never be diminiſhed by ſuch a uſe of them. *Note*. No man was ever the poorer for what he employed in God's ſervice, nor the richer by what he defrauded it of.

21. And the LORD ſmelled a † ſweet ſavour, and the LORD ſaid in his heart, I will not again curſe the ground any more for mans ſake; ‡ for [c] the imagination of mans heart *is* evil from his youth: neither will I again ſmite any more every thing living, as I have done. 22. ‖ While the earth remaineth, ſeed-time and harveſt, and cold and heat, and ſummer and winter, and [d] day and night ſhall not ceaſe.

† Heb. A ſavour of reſt.
‡ Or though.
[c] Chap. vi. 5. Matt. xv. 19.
‖ Heb. As yet all the days of the earth.
[d] Jer. xxxiii. 20, 25.

v. 21, 22. A grateful heart is that ſacrifice wherewith God is ever well pleaſed. The Lord accepts his ſervice, and bleſſes him in return abundantly.

1. The ſmell of the ſacrifice is a ſweet ſavour: it was the figure of that, in which God hath ſince declared he is well pleaſed. It is for Chriſt's ſake alone, that any of our ſervices are offerings of a ſweet ſmell.

2. God's gracious promiſe: I will no more curſe the ground, &c. Though man will be ſtill a ſinner, theſe floods ſhall not return. *Note*, It is a ſignal mercy to be aſſured from the return of judgment.

3. The reaſon given: *For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.* It would ſeem this was rather a reaſon for the curſe. No; there would be no end of deluges, if this were the caſe; and they would not mend the matter. Waſh the Ethiopian in all theſe waters, he will be an Ethiopian ſtill. *Note*, God remembers whereof we are made, and pities us; he is under a covenant of patience with all, but he is under a covenant of peace with many.

4. While the earth remaineth, the regular ſucceſſions of ſeaſons ſhall continue, and meet with no ſuch dire interruptions! In virtue of this declaration, they abide unto this day, a confirmation to our faith in better promiſes. He that eſtabliſhes the covenant of the day and the night, will ſurely be found faithful in that everlaſting covenant he hath eſtabliſhed with his people.

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CHAP. IX.

Both the world and the church were now again reduced to a family, the family of Noah, of the affairs of which this chapter gives us an account. Here is, 1. *The covenant of providence ſettled with Noah and his ſons,* ver. 1—11. *God promiſeth,* (1.) *They ſhould repleniſh the earth,* ver. 1—7. (2.) *They ſhould be ſafe from the inſults of the brute creatures, which ſhould ſtand in awe of them,* ver. 2. (3.) *They ſhould be allowed to eat fleſh for the ſupport of their lives, only they muſt not eat blood,* ver. 3, 4. (4.) *The world ſhould never be drowned again,* ver. 8—11. (5.) *God requires of them to* take care of one anothers lives, *and of* their own, *ver.* 5, 6. 2. *The ſeal of that covenant,* viz. *the rainbow,* ver. 12—17. 3. *Noah's ſin and ſhame,* ver. 20, 21. 4. *Ham's impudence and impiety,* ver. 22. 5. *The pious modeſty of Shem and Japhet,* ver. 23. 6. *The curſe of Canaan, and the bleſſing of Shem and Japhet,* ver. 24—27. 7. *The age and death of Noah,* ver. 28, 29.

1. AND God bleſſed Noah and his ſons, and ſaid unto them, [a] Be fruitful, and multiply, and repleniſh the earth. 2. And the fear of you and the dread of you ſhall be upon every beaſt of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fiſhes of the ſea; into your hand are they delivered. 3. [b] Every moving thing that liveth ſhall be meat for you; even as [c] the green herb have I given you all things: 4. But [d] fleſh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, ſhall you not eat. 5. And ſurely your blood of your lives will I require: at [e] the hand of every beaſt will I require it; and [f] at the hand of man, at the hand of every mans brother will I require the life of man. 6. [g] Whoſo ſheddeth mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed: for [h] in the image of God made he man. 7. And you, [i] be ye fruitful, and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

[a] Chap. i. 28. xxxv. 11.
[b] 1 Tim. iv. 3.
[c] Chap. i. 29.
[d] Lev. xvii. 14. xix. 26. Deut. xii. 23. Acts xv. 20.
[e] Exod. xxi. 28.
[f] Pſal. ix. 12.
[g] Exod. xxi. 12. Levit. xxiv. 17. Matt. xxvi. 52. Rev. xiii. 10.
[h] Chap. i. 26, 28. 1 Cor. xi. 9.
[i] Chap. i. 28. v. 2.

v. 1—7. We have here God's gracious dealings with Noah, the great gifts beſtowed on him, and the charge enjoined him.

1. He bleſſed him. This is worth all the reſt, and what makes every gift truly valuable: *For the bleſſing of the Lord it maketh rich.* (1.) It was a ſpiritual benediction; an aſſurance of grace and favour. (2.) It was a temporal benediction. They ſhould increaſe and multiply. They were few men left, but in virtue of this, one ſhall quickly become a thouſand. Note, *Children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord.*

2. He beſtows the property of, and gives them dominion over, the creatures. If the ox and horſe ſerve us with their ſtrength, we muſt remember who put them under our feet. If the wild beaſts, when unprovoked, rather fly from, than purſue us, it is becauſe God hath put the dread of us upon them. Were God only to let looſe the animal creation upon us, we ſhould quickly be deſtroyed.

3. He permits us meat for our ſuſtenance. Before the flood, animal food was either unneceſſary, or forbidden: now we may ſlay and eat. *Note,* Before we partake of the mercy at our tables daily, let us not forget to acknowledge the gift, and to adore the gracious giver.

4. The charges enjoined. (1.) Concerning the beaſts. They muſt not not eat the blood; that is, not eat the fleſh raw, with the blood in it: and herein man's own health and comfort were conſulted: or it had reſpect to the blood of atonement in the ſacrifices, and therefore whilſt they continued to be offered, it muſt not be looked upon as a common thing. This reaſon no longer ſubſiſting, the law is abrogated; only as ſome ſcrupulous minds ſtill refrain, let not him that eateth deſpiſe him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth.

(2.) Concerning men. 1. No man has a right over his own life, nor may quit it at will: he holds it from God. *Note,* Self-murder is among the greateſt of crimes. 2. The beaſt which kills a man muſt die; ſuch care hath God over us: and he who knowingly keeps a dangerous or miſchievous beaſt, is acceſſary to the murder. 3. The man who murders another, muſt ſuffer death for death. God requires it of the magiſtrate to execute judgment; and whatever other crimes kings may pardon, I queſtion whether this be not an excepted caſe. But ſhould the murderer, by cunning or power, eſcape the ſword of human juſtice, God will require it at his hand. The day is near, when craft cannot conceal, nor power protect the guilty. The reaſon given is, the image of God in which he was created. Though we are fallen creatures, and have loſt our original glory, yet ſo much dignity remains in the ruins, as ſuffices to ſhew the grandeur of the palace.

8. ¶ And God ſpake unto Noah, and to his ſons with him, ſaying, 9. And I, [k] behold I eſtabliſh my covenant with you, and with your ſeed after you; 10. And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beaſt of the earth with you, from all that go out of the ark, to every beaſt of the earth. 11. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant with you, neither ſhall all fleſh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood: neither ſhall there any more be a flood to deſtroy the earth.

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[k] Ver. 11, 12. Iſa. liv. 9.

v. 8—11. We had the covenant promiſed before, *I will eſtabliſh*: we have it here confirmed; I, behold I *do* eſtabliſh it with you, and your ſeed after you. *Note,* 1. God's covenants conſiſt of promiſes: as man can do nothing for himſelf, God engages to do all for him: nay, what he demands from him, he promiſes to work in him. 2. Children may be as much living members of this covenant as their parents: for it is for them as well as us. 3. The fulfilment of the promiſes in the covenant, depends on the faithfulneſs of God, and therefore we may be confident that they are *ſure mercies.* The ſpecial contents of it are, the preſervation of the living creatures, and the earth. The ſea now flows; but God ſaith, hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further. The rain deſcends, but the clouds now are quickly wearied of waterings, *Job* xxxvii. 11. Though the world be wicked as before, we ſhall not be deſtroyed as before. But let no preſumptuous ſinner deceive himſelf, becauſe this judgment is with-held: there are other arrows in God's quiver, *and ſecretly ſhall he ſhoot at them, and they ſhall be wounded.*

12. And God ſaith, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me, and you, and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: 13. I do ſet my bow in the cloud, and it ſhall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14. And [l] it ſhall come to paſs, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow ſhall be ſeen in the cloud: 15. And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me, and you, and every living creature of all fleſh: and the waters ſhall no more become a flood to deſtroy all fleſh. 16. And the bow ſhall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlaſting covenant between God and every living creature of all fleſh that *is* upon the earth. 17. And God ſaid unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have eſtabliſhed between me and all fleſh that *is* upon the earth.

[l] Ecclus xliii. 11, 12.

v. 12—17. The covenant is now ſigned and ſealed by a viſible token, the rainbow. A glorious object, and a conſtant aſſurance of God's remembrance of us, and of our ſecurity from the deſcending waters. *Note,* 1. As we are apt to be affected with viſible objects; God therefore, not only in the covenant of nature, but of grace, hath inſtituted viſible ſigns for our greater comfort and confidence. 2. The darker the ſky, the brighter the bow: the more the danger ſeems to threaten, the more ſhall the people of God be ſupported. 3. The cauſe of the bow in the clouds, is the refraction of the beams of the ſun. Jeſus, the ſun of Righteouſneſs, ſits with the rainbow round about his throne, and therefore his people are ſafe from fear of evil. 4. The ſign of our ſecurity in the cloud, ſhould ever awaken our thankfulneſs, and lead up our minds from temporal promiſes thus fulfilled, to conclude the certainty of the eternal promiſes, that are yet in hope.

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18. ¶ And the ſons of Noah that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; and Ham *is* the father of Canaan. 19. Theſe *are* the three ſons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overſpread. 20. And Noah began to *be* an huſbandman, and he planted a vineyard. 21. And he drank of the wine, and was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent.

v. 18—21. We have an account of Noah's return to his buſineſs, and of his grievous and ſhameful fall.

1. He was now an old man, and all his family were theſe three ſons, men, and able to work for him, but he will not be idle himſelf. He began with ploughing and planting, to repair the waſte the flood had made. Whilſt we are in the world, we have always ſomething to do; the miſery is when we are going out of it, the heart is often more attached to it, and we grow *moſt men of the earth* (as the Hebrew word, *huſbandman,* ſignifies) when we are dropping into the grave.

2. His vineyard proved his ſnare. Inſtead of uſing its produce to the glory of God, and the refreſhment of his body, he abuſed it by intemperance, to the diſhonour of both. 1. He was drunk; it was a ſad return for late mercies; and a dreadful ſymptom of miſerable corruption, which abode even in thoſe who eſcaped the general deſtruction. Learn hence, (1.) A

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good man may be overtaken in a fault; and though it ſhall make him ſuffer, it ſhall not utterly deſtroy him. (2.) See what is the perfection we can expect in man; leſs or more, ſin will cleave to us. (3.) When we leaſt expect danger, we may be moſt eaſily ſurprized: no doubt, when Noah began to drink wine, he never intended to be drunk with it. (4.) Whilſt we enjoy the creatures richly, let us uſe them temperately; elſe ſhall our joy be quickly turned into ſorrow. 2. He was uncovered; expoſed himſelf to every eye, an old man, a patriarch, a father, a prieſt, a prophet: what a ſhame! How ſad are the conſequences, as well as how great the ſin of drunkenneſs! (1.) It is moſt ſhameful and ſhameleſs: a man who is drunk has no reſtraint of decency; he is ſhocking to others, and when he knows his words and works, muſt be ſhocked at himſelf. (2.) He is fit for every wickedneſs; and having loſt reſtraint, only wants temptation to plunge into any crime. Luſt, quarrels, murders, are the genuine offspring of drunkenneſs. (3.) He is under no reſerve; he can betray his friend, or ruin himſelf; he is open to every impoſition, and inſenſible to every conſequence.

ᵐ Chap. x. vi.

22. And ᵐ Ham the father of Canaan ſaw the nakedneſs of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their ſhoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedneſs of their father; and their faces were backward, and they ſaw not their fathers nakedneſs.

v. 22, 23. We have here the different conduct of Noah's ſons on the occaſion.

1. Ham's undutifulneſs and impiety. He was rather pleaſed than grieved at what he ſaw; derided, rather than compaſſionated his unhappy father; and publiſhed, inſtead of concealing his ſhame. *Note*, 1. It is a ſure proof of a wicked heart, when ever we can be pleaſed with others ſins. 2. Our father's ſhame is our own, and he muſt be a bad bird indeed that defiles his own neſt. 3. How particularly careful ſhould parents be? a drunken father, can with no ſhadow of reaſon expect ſobriety or modeſty in his ſon.

2. Shem and Japheth's tenderneſs: they will not ſee it themſelves; they would conceal it from others. 1. Love will cover the ſins of our neighbour. 2. Duty and reverence for our parents or ſuperiors, will make us twice careful to conceal their faults.

24. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger ſon had done unto him. 25. And he ſaid, Curſed *be* Canaan; a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren. 26. And he ſaid, Bleſſed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan ſhall be † his ſervant. 27. God ſhall ‡ enlarge Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan ſhall be his ſervant.

† Or ſervant to them.
‡ Or perſuade.

v. 24—27. He awoke. 'Tis mercy, when he ſlept the ſleep of ſin, he did not ſleep the ſleep of death; but God reſtored him not only to his ſenſes, but his favour. He foretels the future condition of his children.

1. A curſe on Ham and his deſcendants for his wickedneſs. The Canaanites felt the effect of this 800 years after, when the Jews, Shem's poſterity, either deſtroyed or reduced them to the moſt abject ſervitude. Learn hence, 1. Though God's curſes are long delayed, yet they will take effect at laſt. 2. That bad fathers entail God's viſitations on the children brought up in their wicked ways. How dreadful a ſcene in the day of judgment, to have children's blood required at their ungodly parents hands.

2. The bleſſing on Shem and Japheth.

1. On Shem. (1.) Spiritual bleſſings. The Lord is his God, and more than all is comprized in this. That man, that houſe, that people muſt needs be bleſſed, who have the Lord for their God. (2.) Temporal bleſſings; Canaan ſhall be his ſervant. Though the people of God expect not their kingdom in this world, they ſhall have enough of it; and by and by they ſhall rule over the nations with a rod of iron, *Rev.* ii. 27.

2. On Japheth. (1.) An enlargement of territory. His poſterity peopled Europe; great part of Aſia, and probably America. (2.) His dwelling in the tents of Shem. His partaking of the ſpiritual benediction with him. The Gentiles were to be converted, and united to the Iſrael of God. (3.) Canaan muſt ſerve him too. In virtue of which, his poſterity ſucceſſively were ſubdued by Aſſyrians, Chaldeans, Grecians, and Romans. *Note*, 1. 'Tis not dwelling in large tents, but in God's tents, is the valuable mercy. 2. Though Shem had the bleſſing firſt, yet, bleſſed be God, Japheth's ſpiritual border is now moſt enlarged: thus the laſt ſhall be firſt.

1998. 28. ¶ And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

v. 28, 29. His long life was a great mercy to the world: his experience as a man could direct them in their worldly labour; but his preaching as a prophet, where his congregation were all his children too, would have a more bleſſed influence ſtill, to direct them to heaven. Having lived for God in two bad worlds, he now, no doubt, lives with God in a better.

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CHAP. X.

This chapter ſhews more particularly what was ſaid in general, chap. ix. 19. *concerning the three ſons of Noah, that* of them was the whole earth overſpread. *It is the only certain account extant of the original of nations, and yet perhaps there is no nation but that of the Jews that can be confident from which of theſe* 70 *fountains (for ſo many there are here) it derives its ſtreams. Through the want of early records, the mixtures of people, the revolutions of nations, and diſtance of time, the knowledge of the lineal deſcent of the preſent inhabitants of the earth is loſt; nor were any genealogies preſerved but thoſe of the Jews for the ſake of the Meſſiah; only in this chapter we have a brief account,* 1. *Of the poſterity of Japheth,* ver. 2—5. 2. *The poſterity of Ham,* ver. 6—20. *and in that, particular notice taken of Nimrod,* ver. 8, 9. 3. *The poſterity of Shem,* ver. 23. *to the end.*

1. NOW theſe *are* the generations of the ſons of Noah; Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were ſons born after the flood. 2. ᵃ The ſons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meſhech, and Tiras. 3. And the ſons of Gomer; Aſhkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. 4. And the ſons of Javan; Eliſhah, and Tarſhiſh, Kittim, and Dodanim. 5. By theſe were the iſles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

ᵃ 1 Chron. i. 5.

Japheth's family. The places beyond the ſea, with regard to Judea, are called iſles. Each man had his lot. Bleſſed be God, we of this happy iſland, diſtinguiſhed for mercies, though deſcendants of Japheth, dwell now in the tents of Shem.

6. ¶ ᵇ And the ſons of Ham; Cuſh, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. 7. And the ſons of Cuſh; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the ſons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan. 8. And Cuſh begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is ſaid, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. 10. And ᶜ the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar, 11. Out of that land † went forth Aſhur, and builded Nineveh, and ‡ the city Rehoboth, and Calah, 12. And Reſen, between Nineveh and Calah: the ſame *is* a great city. 13. And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim. 14. And Pathruſim, and Caſluhim, (out of whom came Philiſtim) and Caphtorim.

ᵇ 1 Chron. i. 8.
About 2218.
ᶜ Mich. v. 6.
† Or he went out into Aſſyria.
‡ Or the ſtreets of the city.

v. 6—14. The family of Ham. Bad, it is to be feared, as their father: though one only of his deſcendants is remarked upon, Nimrod, *i. e.* Rebellion. One who became haughty and tyrannical to a proverb. He was, 1. A great hunter: beaſts abounded; it was a good ſchool for war to purſue them. Thus, from a ſportſman, he was fitted for a conqueror. The firſt hunter was a bad man: how many have ſince followed his example. 2. He ſet up for a king. The government before ſeems to have been patriarchal, but his pride is not ſatisfied with one houſe, or one city. Pride is a reſtleſs ſin, and can never be ſatisfied. 3. His farther increaſe: much will have more: he built again. *Note*, When the ſpirit of building is in a man, he cannot keep his feet out of the mortar: this is one of the vanities under the ſun.

15. ¶ And Canaan begat Sidon his firſt-born, and Heth, 16. And the Jebuſite, and the Emorite, and the Girgaſite, 17. And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, 18. And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites ſpread abroad. 19. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comeſt to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goeſt unto Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Laſhah. 20. Theſe *are* the ſons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

v. 15—20. Canaan's being the family which Iſrael had moſt concern with, it is more particularly mentioned. They had a

goodly

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goodly portion, but they tilled it for others. Though the wicked proſper for a time, like the gourd of Jonah, yet whilſt the curſe of God is upon them, this worm at their root will by and by turn their glory into ſhame.

[d] 1 Chron. i. 17.
[e] Chap. xi. 12.
[f] 1 Chron. i. 19.

21. ¶ Unto Shem alſo the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born. 22. [d] The children of Shem; Elam, and Aſhur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram. 23. And the children of Aram; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Maſh. 24. And Arphaxad begat [e] Salah; and Salah begat Eber. 25. And [f] unto Eber were born two ſons: the name of one *was* Peleg, for in his days was the earth divided; and his brothers name *was* Joktan. 26. And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, 27. And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah, 28. And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba. 29. And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all theſe *were* the ſons of Joktan. 30. And their dwelling was from Meſha, and as thou goeſt unto Saphar, a mount of the eaſt. 31. Theſe are the ſons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations. 32. Theſe *are* the families of the ſons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by theſe were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

v. 21—32. Shem's poſterity. 1. He is called the father of the children of Eber, the Hebrews. It being his higheſt honour to be the head of that people whom God, of all nations, ſeparated for himſelf; and of whom as concerning the fleſh Chriſt came. *Note*, Goodneſs is the trueſt greatneſs. The father of a ſaint is more honourable than the father of a king. 2. The brother of Japhet the elder. Though Japhet be not firſt in the bleſſing, yet he is not excluded from it. *Note*, It is a happy thing for brothers to be united by grace as by blood. 3. Peleg's name is remarked: it ſignifies diviſion; and it ſeems to be given him on account of that confuſion of tongues, which, when he was born, began. *Note*, In the true church of God, the name of Peleg may be had in ſad remembrance. What faithful heart can behold our diviſions, without grief and ſorrow. Oh that as we have one father, we had one houſe, and one heart!

CHAP. XI.

We have in this chapter, 1. *The diſperſion of the ſons of men at Babel.* (1.) *The cauſe. Their preſumptuous deſign to build a city and a tower,* &c. ver. 1—4. (2.) *The righteous judgment of God upon them in diſappointing their deſign, by confounding their language, and ſo ſcattering them, ver.* 5—9. 2. *The pedigree of the ſons of God down to Abraham,* ver. 10—26. *with a general account of his family, and removal out of his native country,* ver. 27. ad finem.

† Heb. Lip
‡ Heb. Words.
‖ Or eaſtward, as chap. xiii. 11. 2 Sam. vi. 2. with 1 Chron. xiii. 6.
† Heb. A man ſaid to his neighbour.
‡ Heb. Burn them to a burning.

1. AND the whole earth was of one † language, and of one ‡ ſpeech. 2. And it came to paſs as they journeyed ‖ from the eaſt, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3. And † they ſaid one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and ‡ burn them throughly. And they had brick for ſtone, and ſlime had they for morter. 4. And they ſaid, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whoſe top *may reach* unto heaven, and let us make us a name, leſt we be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

v. 1—4. Though the diviſion of the earth had been made either by the appointment of God, or the wiſdom of Noah foreſeeing the increaſe of men, they were loth to ſeparate; and as they brought corruption out of the ark, as well as into it, now it appears abundantly in their daring attempt and deſign: We have here,

1. Their reſolution. To build a tower. Probably the metropolis of their kingdom: in order thus to be united under one viſible head, Nimrod their king, and hereby to procure themſelves a name to their lateſt poſterity; and by this alſo they hoped to prevent their diſperſion, and ſo diſappoint the purpoſed diviſion. *Note*, (1.) They who ſeek a great name by bad ways, will often find it, but ſtamped with infamy. (2.) When the preſumptuous ſinner, or the ſelf-ſufficient, build up their hopes of heaven higheſt, their confuſion is neareſt, and their ruin moſt inevitable. (3.) There is no counſel or might againſt the Lord; they who attempt to diſappoint his determination, only in the end cover themſelves with ſhame.

2. A ſpacious plain in the land of Shinar, where they dwelt, afforded them abundance, and unity of language united them in their deſigns. *Note*, Many a worldly heart is ſo pleaſed with his accommodations on earth, that here he would fain build his abode; and putting his name in this Shinar, look no farther.

3. The methods they purſued. 1. They encouraged each other. Go to. When people are unanimous, what can they not accompliſh! 2. They provided materials the moſt durable, and therefore promiſed themſelves ſucceſs in their undertaking. Learn hence, 1. The great help of united efforts: Shall the children of this world unite, and ſhall the children of God be divided? 2. Nothing ſo promiſing as to reſolve, and do; they ſet about the work immediately. To die only reſolving, as is the caſe of many, is never the way to build the tower that can reach to heaven.

[a] Chap. i. 26.
† *i. e.* Confuſion.
[b] Wiſd. x. 5.

5. And the LORD came down to ſee the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6. And the LORD ſaid, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be reſtrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7. Go to, [a] let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not underſtand one anothers ſpeech. 8. So the LORD ſcattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9. Therefore is the name of it called † Babel [b], becauſe the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD ſcatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

v. 5—9. The thing diſpleaſed the Lord. Therefore he comes down (ſpeaking after the manner of men) to ſee, and on the ſpot to judge concerning the undertaking.

We have here, 1. The name God gives theſe mighty workers, the children of men. The ſons of God in Eber's family had nothing to do with theſe daring rebels; but they had much to fear from them, and therefore they wiſely ſeparated. *Note*, 1. The children of men are children of vanity; fooliſh in their deſigns, and weak in their efforts againſt God. 2. They are children of corruption, wicked as well as weak; and therefore obnoxious to the divine diſpleaſure.

2. God's reſolution to confound their enterprize. He beheld their pride, but he is able to abaſe them; and if he ſuffers them to proceed, it is only to make his power more to appear, and their ſhame to be double. Learn, (1.) God does not always ſtop the ſinner in his mid career, but ſuffers him to go on and proſper, for many a long day; but mark the end of thoſe men. (2.) When the wicked ſay, Let us caſt off his bands, and break his cords from us, they are but forging their own chains. God mocks at the impotent attempt, and will make it appear as fooliſh as it is impious.

3. The method God took. He confounded their language; a method perfectly effectual to prevent the deſign: they could no longer join in counſel, nor obey command. Whenever he pleaſeth, he can as eaſily diſappoint the devices of the wicked, as he now divided their tongues. It was a mercy he viſited them no farther: had he ſaid, let us go down and conſume them utterly, he had been righteous; but he mingles mercy with judgment in this world: 'tis in the next where they will have judgment without mercy. But it was a heavy ſtroke on them and their poſterity; they were thus cut off from converſing with the people of God, as well as from all intercourſe with one another. The latter, perhaps, the moſt terrible diſappointment, but the former the heavier judgment.

4. The effect produced: they left off to build. It is high time to have done, when God ſtands againſt us. And diſperſed according to the diviſions allotted them: thus the very evil they would avoid, came upon them. The name they propoſed for honour, becomes Babel, confuſion; nor ever again will there be perfect unity on the earth. *Note*, (1.) The trouble we ſeek to avoid by unlawful means, will certainly come upon us more ſeverely, by the very methods we make uſe of to eſcape it. (2.) It is God's work to ſeparate as well as unite, and oftentimes he brings good out of evil: by the ſcattering of the church, *Acts* viii. 4. the goſpel was propagated; by the diſperſion of men, the earth was repleniſhed.

10. ¶ [c] Theſe *are* the generations of Shem: Shem *was* [c] Chap. x. 22. 1 Chron. i. 17.
an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after
the flood. 11. And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad
five hundred years, and begat ſons and daughters. 12. 2346.
And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Sa-
lah. 13. And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four 2311.
hundred and three years, and begat ſons and daughters.
14. And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber. 15. 2281.
And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and
three years, and begat ſons and daughters. 16. And [d] [d] 1 Chron. i. 19.
Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat [e] Peleg. 17. [e] called Phalec. Luke iii. 35.
And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and

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Peleg lived thirty years and begat Reu. 19. And Peleg
2217. lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years,
2185. and begat ſons and daughters. 20. And Reu lived two
[f] Luke iii. and thirty years and begat [f] Serug. 21. And Reu lived
35. Saruch. after he begat Serug two hundred and ſeven years, and
2155. begat ſons and daughters. 22. And Serug lived thirty
years, and begat Nahor. 23. And Serug lived after he
begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat ſons and
2126. daughters. 24. And Nahor lived nine and twenty years,
[g] Luke iii. and begat [g] Terah. 25. And Nahor lived after he be-
34. Thara. gat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat
2056. [h] Joſh. xxiv. ſons and daughters. 26. And Terah lived ſeventy years,
2. 1 Chron. i. 26. and [h] begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

v. 10—26. The deſcendants of Shem to Abram the father of the faithful, are here recounted. This genealogy is preſerved for our ſakes, that we might ſee the fulfilment of God's promiſes in the woman's ſeed; among whoſe anceſtors Abram ſtands in ſo diſtinguiſhed a light. *Note*, The parts of ſcripture which ſeem leaſt practical, are not always leaſt uſeful. The genealogies which lead to Chriſt, are names of gold. It is obſervable, the age of men gradually decreaſed, whether from any phyſical cauſes after the flood, operating on their bodies, or God's immediate hand. It is a bleſſing now to us, that threeſcore years and ten are the limits: a ſoul that is ſeeking God, will count it enough to be ſo long confined in a ſinful world.

27. ¶ Now theſe *are* the generations of Terah: Terah
begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat
1996. Lot. 28. And Haran died before his father Terah, in
the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. 29. And
Abram and Nahor took them wives; the name of A-
brams wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahors wife
[i] Chap. xxii. [i] Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah,
20. and the father of Iſcah. 30. But [k] Sarai was barren; ſhe
[k] Chap. xvi. 1, 2. & xviii. had no child. 31. And Terah took Abram his ſon, and
11, 12. Lot the ſon of Haran, his ſons ſon, and Sarai his daugh-
ter in law, his ſon Abrams wife; and they went forth
[l] Neh. ix. 7. with them from [l] Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land
Judith v. 7. Acts vii. 4. of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.
1923. 32. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five
1921. years: And Terah died in Haran.

v. 27—32. The account of Abram begins, ſo eminent in the ſucceeding hiſtory. We have mention made of,

1. His father, Terah, of whom it is ſaid he ſerved other Gods, *Joſ.* xxiv. 2. Idolatry came in betimes. It is the nature of fallen men to depart from the living God.

2. His brothers and family. Nahor, and Haran, the father of Lot, who died before Terah. Death gives no quarter to young or old. And Iſcah, perhaps the ſame as Sarai, afterwards his his wife, Chap. xxii. 12.

3. The country; Ur of the Chaldees, an idolatrous place; yet there dwelt the patriarchs. *Note*, 1. It is a miſerable thing to be born in a country of idolaters; it is worſe ſtill to live among them; and worſt of all, as Haran did, to die among them. 2. It behoves us much to enquire, if we are got out of the land of our nativity; for we are born in wickedneſs: better never have been born, than not to have removed from thence by being new born.

4. Their removal to Charran, where Terah died. Many reach Charran, who come not to Canaan; not far from the kingdom, but never enter it.

N. B. *v.* 26. Though Abram be here mentioned the firſt of Terah's children, yet it is probable that he was the youngeſt, and mentioned the firſt only by way of eminence, as Shem was before; becauſe he was to be the progenitor of our Lord. Certain it is, that he was not born this year: Haran moſt probably was. Abram was not born till 60 years afterwards; for he was but 75 years old when he left Haran or Charran, chap. xii. 4. and Terah was dead before he left it. *V.* 32. But from this year to Terah's death, were 135 years; therefore Abram muſt have been born in the 130th year of Terah's life, juſt 60 years from this year 2056.

CHAP. XII.

The pedigree and family of Abram we had an account of in the foregoing chapter; here the Holy Ghoſt enters upon his ſtory; from henceforward, Abram and his ſeed are almoſt the only ſubject of the ſacred hiſtory. In this chapter we have, 1. *God's call of Abram to the land of Canaan*, ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *Abram's obedience to this call*, ver. 4, 5. 3. *His welcome to the land of Canaan*, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. 4. *His occaſional remove into Egypt, with an account of what happened to him there. Abram's flight and fault*, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13. *Sarai's danger and deliverance*, ver. 14—20.

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1. NOW [a] the LORD had ſaid unto Abram, Get [a] Chap. xv. 7.
thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, Neh. ix. 7.
and from thy father's houſe, unto a land that I will ſhew Acts vii. 3. Heb. xi. 8.
thee. 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I [b] Chap. xxvii.
will bleſs thee, and make thy name great; and thou ſhalt 29. Exod. xxiii. 22.
be a bleſſing. 3. And [b] I will bleſs them that bleſs thee, Numb. xxiv. 9.
and curſe him that curſeth thee: and [c] in thee ſhall all [c] Chap. xviii.
families of the earth be bleſſed. 18. & xxii. 18. & xxvi 4. Pſal. lxxii. 17. Acts iii. 25. Gal. iii. 8.

v. 1, 2, 3. God had appeared unto Abram, in Ur of the Chaldees, and warned him out of that land. In obedience to the heavenly viſion, he had come as far as Charran or Haran, where his father died, and now he muſt proceed on his journey. Though not knowing whither he went, he followed God, and then he knew he was ſafe. *Note*, God will not ſuffer his people to take up their reſt any where ſhort of heaven; if they are making a home of the houſe of their pilgrimage, he will warn them to remove. We have here,

1. God's command; and a trying one it was: to leave his country, to part with his deareſt friends, to forſake his poſſeſſions, and to follow God, without ſo much as aſking him whither he would lead him; but it was a matter become highly neceſſary. He dwelt in an idolatrous houſe; it was time for him to fly, leſt he be infected with their ſins. Now muſt he prove his faith in, and love of God, by an implicit obedience, and a chearful forſaking all to follow God. Behold, in the conduct of Abram, the duty of every faithful ſoul. (1.) To give himſelf up entirely to be guided by the word of God. (2.) To renounce the deareſt relations, and to become ſtrange to his own houſe, when the glory of the Redeemer requires it. (3.) To part with the world always in affection, and to live in it with a diſpoſition to leave it, or loſe it chearfully, whenever God calls. (4.) To forſake the ways of ſin, and the companions in ſin, and to have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs. (5.) To make no heſitation about the conſequences, but to leave them in God's hand.

2. God's promiſe to encourage him. He requires nothing from him, but he will amply repay him for it: but for this, he muſt be truſted. Accordingly, here is every imaginable bleſſing ſet before him: (1.) He ſhould be a great nation. Though he was old, and his wife barren, God would bleſs him, and make his ſeed as the ſtars of heaven. (2.) He would make his name great: though he was a ſtranger, and unknown, his fame ſhould riſe above the kings of the earth. (3.) He ſhould be a bleſſing to all around him; and the lateſt ages ſhould call him bleſſed, and be the better for him. (4.) God would bleſs his friends, and curſe his enemies; ſo that he would, as it were, ſhare his weal and woe with him, and be his portion and ſhield. And (5.) Above all, from him ſhould the Meſſiah come, to bleſs all nations. *Note*, 1. The heirs of Abraham's faith ſhall inherit his bleſſing. (1.) They ſhall be great, made kings unto God. 2. Their name ſhall be written in the book of life of the lamb. 3. God will be the friend of their friends, and the enemy of their enemies. The enemies of the people of God little think againſt whom they ſport themſelves. 4. He will make them bleſſed in Jeſus, to all eternity, and ſharers with Abraham in this Canaan of everlaſting reſt. (2.) The ſalvation of the goſpel, is a common ſalvation for all families and all nations; God excludes none, who do not exclude themſelves: whoſoever will, let him come. (3.) When we reckon up our loſſes and gain for God, we ſhall find the one nothing, and leſs than nothing, and vanity: the other, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

4. So Abram departed, as the LORD had ſpoken
unto him: and Lot went with him: And Abram *was*
ſeventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.
5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brothers
ſon, and all their ſubſtance that they had gathered, and
the ſouls that they had gotten in [d] Haran; and they went [d] Chap. xi.
forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of 31.
Canaan they came.

v. 4—5. Abram, without heſitation, obeys; though old, to ſeek a ſettlement, yet ſatisfied, if God was with him, he ſhould find a reſt in every place. We have, 1. His company: his wife and nephew. Both choſe to ſhare his lot, as both had choſen his God for theirs. Learn (1.) Thoſe who have one hope, will have one way. (2.) It is a wonderful mercy when huſband and wife go heavenward together. 2. His ſubſtance, ſervants, and goods, he removed, bag and baggage, for he had no thoughts of returning. *Note*, They who ſet out for heaven, muſt never think of going back. As it was a ſtrange land, he needed a preſent proviſion. In our way to glory, God forbids not

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not a prudent care for daily bread: and he took with him the ſouls whom he had gained, whether by purchaſe or perſuaſion, that they might be partakers in the promiſed bleſſings. *Note*, They who ſerve God themſelves, will reckon it their greateſt gain, if they can win others to ſerve him too.

3. His arrival. They who go out under God's promiſe, will arrive ſafe under his bleſſing. Though the way to heaven be long or difficult, God can conduct us through, and bring us thither at laſt: go on, and truſt him.

6. ¶ And Abram paſſed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the [e] plain of Moreh. And [f] the Canaanite *was* then in the land. 7. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and ſaid, [g] Unto thy ſeed will I give this land: and there builded he an [h] altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. 8. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the eaſt of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, *having* Beth-el on the weſt, and Hai on the eaſt; and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and [i] called upon the name of the LORD. 9. And Abram journeyed, † [k] going on ſtill toward the ſouth.

[e] Deut. xi. 30. Judges vii. 1.
[f] Chap. x. 18, 19. & xiii. 7.
[g] Chap. xiii. 15.
[h] Chap. xiii. 4.
[i] Ibid.
† Heb. In going and journeying.
[k] Chap. xiii. 3.

v. 6—9. He is come, but he finds no preſent poſſeſſion in it; the Canaanite was there. Obſerve,

1. His journeyings. He was a wandering pilgrim, without a ſettled abode, and in a ſtrange land, glad to pick up a ſubſiſtence in the mountain or the plain, wherever he found a ſpot unoccupied. To be ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth, is the true character of a traveller to glory.

2. God's appearing to him. Though he was without comfort in the land, he had abundance in the Lord, whoſe preſence amply repaid every toil. He comes with promiſes of rich encouragement, and that is ſterling payment in Abraham's eyes: the land is now made over to him and his ſeed. *Note*, 1. Where God viſits us, we never can be deſolate, though we were alone in a mountain. 2. Though we leave all for God, we ſhall receive it again with intereſt: in this world an hundred fold, and in the world to come life everlaſting.

3. Abram's grateful acknowledgment of the mercy. He builded an altar. A ſpecial favour demands a ſpecial return of thanks: though the promiſe be diſtant, faith embraces it as preſent and ſure, ſuch is its realizing nature. Not that this altar was ſingular; wherever he pitched his tent, he placed it by him: he and his houſe muſt ſerve the Lord, and prayer and praiſe are their conſtant duty and delight. Family worſhip is of antient date: they who have not an altar in their family, for conſtant devotion, will not have God in their houſe for their conſtant friend.

10. ¶ And there was a famine in the land: And Abram [l] went down into Egypt to ſojourn there; for the famine *was* grievous in the land.

[l] Pſal. cv. 13.

v. 10. It was a diſcouraging providence, to be in the land of promiſe, and ſo ſoon to be driven out of it by famine. It required ſtrong faith to weather theſe trials: ſevere temptations are uſually the portion of the believer, and they are permitted, *That the trial of his faith may be found more precious than gold*, 1 Pet. i. 7. And now where ſhould he go? Back again, would nature ſay? No, ſays grace, forward. Egypt was near him, and thither he directs his courſe. *Note*, 1. It is our duty to uſe means for relief in every diſtreſs. 2. Never to uſe forbidden ones. Still he is but a ſojourner. Since God had given him the promiſe of Canaan, he will not take up his abode elſewhere: though for a time we may be ſeparated from our home, our hearts will be upon it, wherever we are.

11. And it came to paſs when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he ſaid unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou *art* a fair woman to look upon. 12. Therefore it ſhall come to paſs, when the Egyptians ſhall ſee thee, that they ſhall ſay, This *is* his wife; and they will kill me, but they will ſave thee alive. 13. [m] Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my ſiſter: that it may be well with me for thy ſake; and my ſoul ſhall live becauſe of thee.

[m] Chap. xx. 13. See Chap. xxvi. 7.

v. 11—13. Though he can truſt God in Canaan, he cannot in Egypt; and this leads him to diſſemble himſelf, and to bring others to join with him.

1. His fear: they will kill me. What, when the fulfilment of God's promiſes depended on his life? How weak are the ſtrongeſt, if left for a moment to themſelves. Who need not, after ſuch an inſtance, fear, leſt he fall?

2. The reaſon of his fear. Sarah's beauty would lead them to deſtroy him to poſſeſs her. *Note*, It is too true: the paſſion for a woman, when without reſtraint, will lead a man through every crime, in order to gratify his luſts.

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3. The bad courſe he took. He taught her and his houſehold to deny her being his wife, under the equivocation of her being his ſiſter: and thus not only brought his family into the ſin of lying, but had like to have involved an innocent man in the crime of adultery. *Note*, Never any good came of lying and diſſembling.

14. ¶ And it came to paſs, that when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman, that ſhe *was* very fair. 15. The princes alſo of Pharaoh ſaw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaohs houſe. 16. And he [n] entreated Abram well for her ſake: and he had ſheep, and oxen, and he-aſſes, and men-ſervants, and maid-ſervants, and ſhe-aſſes and camels. 17. And the LORD [o] plagued Pharaoh and his houſe with great plagues, becauſe of Sarai Abrams wife. 18. And Pharaoh called Abram, and ſaid, What *is* this *that* thou haſt done unto me? Why didſt thou not tell me that ſhe *was* thy wife? 19. Why ſaidſt thou, She *is* my ſiſter? ſo I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore, behold thy wife, take *her*, and go thy way. 20. And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him: and they ſent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

[n] Chap. xx. 24.
[o] Chap. xx. 18. 1 Chron. xvi. 21. Pſal. cv. 14.

v. 14—20. We ſee how near Abram was to loſe his wife by his ſin, and how God graciouſly interpoſed.

1. Sarah's beauty proved her ſnare, as it has done to a thouſand women beſide. She is ſeen, and commended and taken by Pharaoh. Unſuſpicious of the deceit, he loads Abram with benefits, and Sarah with careſſes.

2. God interpoſes to preſerve Pharaoh from ſin, and Sarah from ruin. God plagued him and his: what theſe plagues were, we know not; but God made him know the reaſon ſoon enough, to prevent his purpoſes. *Note*, 1. They are bleſſed corrections, that are made the means of keeping us from ſin. 2. That it is God's aſtoniſhing mercy to deliver us often from that perilous ſituation, into which our own folly and ſin had brought us, and where we muſt have been inevitably undone, but for his wonderful and unexpected interpoſition.

3. Pharaoh's commendable behaviour on the occaſion. (1.) His mild and juſt rebuke. At whoſe door had the ſin lain, if Sarah had been taken to his bed, as to his houſe: What haſt thou done? *Note*, 1. If they who profeſs religion are diſingenuous, they deſerve, and muſt expect to be reproved for it. 2. The perſons of whom we entertain ſuſpicions, are often found not only more conſcientious than we thought, but more ſimple hearted than ourſelves. (2.) His reſtoration of Sarah, Behold thy wife! take her. *Note*, We muſt remove temptation, if we would keep from ſin. And he adds the moſt generous treatment. The gifts are confirmed; his perſon and ſubſtance are ſafe, and not a hair of his head is hurt. How often are we in fear where no fear is? And leaſt new ſnares might bring him into new troubles, he is diſmiſſed in peace. Thus the father came up as the figure of his poſterity: he went down for famine, and returned full. God can make all things work together for good, to thoſe who love him.

CHAP. XIII.

In this chapter we have a further account concerning Abram. 1. *In general, of his condition and behaviour in the land of promiſe, which was now the land of his pilgrimage.* 1. *His removes*, ver. 1, 3, 4, 18. 2. *His riches*, ver. 2. 3. *His devotion*, ver, 4, 18. 2. *A particular account of a quarrel that happened between him and Lot.* (1.) *The unhappy occaſion of their ſtrife*, ver. 5, 6. (2.) *The parties concerned in the ſtrife, with the aggravation of it*, ver. 7. (3.) *The making up of the quarrel, by the prudence of Abram*, ver. 8, 9. (4.) *Lot's departure from Abram to the plain of Sodom*, ver. 10—14. (5.) *God's appearance to Abram to confirm the promiſe of the land of Canaan to him*, ver. 14—17.

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1. AND Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him into the ſouth. 2. And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in ſilver, and in gold. 3. And he went on his journeys [a] from the ſouth, even to Beth-el, unto [b] the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai; 4. Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the firſt: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

[a] Chap. xii. 8, 9.
[b] Chap. xii. 7, 8.

v. 1—4. We have here, Abram's return; and inſtead of faring ill, as he feared; we find

1. He was very wealthy; (heavy, ſays the Hebrew.) Wealth increaſed, is but an increaſe of trouble. But his riches made him not forget God. *Note*, 1. A rich man (though ſeldom) may

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may be a good man. 2. It is a bleſſed proſperity, which is employed in promoting of God's cauſe, and advancing his glory.

2. The place of his abode between Bethel and Ai, where his former altar ſtood. *Note*, The very ſpot where we have enjoyed ſweet communion, will be reſorted to with pleaſure, and bring to our remembrance the obligations we are under to a gracious God.

3. His prayer to God. He had much to thank him for paſt favours, much to aſk of preſent bleſſings on his return. *Note*, 1. Prayer is the breath of a faithful ſoul: wherever he is, you will hear this of him, Behold, he prayeth. 2. Every return from journeying in ſafety, calls for new acknowledgments to our merciful God.

5. ¶ And Lot alſo which went with Abram had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6. And [c] the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their ſubſtance was great, ſo that they could not dwell together. 7. And there was a ſtrife between the herdmen of Abrams cattle, and the herdmen of Lots cattle: and [d] the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

[c] Chap. xxxvi. 7.
[d] Chap. xii. 6.

v. 5, 6, 7. Lot had got well by Abram's company; he had his bleſſing alſo. Thoſe who ſuffer with God's people, ſhall reign with them, ſhall ſhare their joys as well as ſorrows. But worldly riches are often the cauſe of much uneaſineſs, as was the caſe here. For,

1. There was not room for both, and they muſt divide or incommode one another. Thus every comfort has its croſs.

2. Their numerous flocks proved a cauſe of diſpute between their ſervants, too jealous for their maſters intereſt; and as is too commonly the caſe, the maſters were drawn into the diſpute. Learn, (1.) How dangerous riches are. To them we may aſcribe moſt of our diſputes; for theſe, brother goeth to law againſt brother. (2.) How dangerous for maſters to give ear to ſervants tales. How much miſunderſtanding hath hence ariſen? (3.) How wicked it is in ſervants, to ſow diſcord among families.

3. The danger and offence incurred hereby: for the Canaanite and Perizzite dwelled in the land. *Danger*, by their diviſion: 'tis this is uſually the ruin of kingdoms, families, and above all, of churches. *Offence:* when profeſſors of religion quarrel, they will ſurely make the ways of truth to be evil ſpoken of.

8. And Abram ſaid unto Lot, Let there be no ſtrife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we *be* † brethren. 9. [e] *Is* not the whole land before thee? Separate thyſelf, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left-hand, then I will go to the right: or if *thou depart* to the right-hand, then I will go to the left.

† Heb. Men, brethren. See chap. xi. 27. Exod. ii. 13. Acts vii. 26.
[e] Chap. xx. 15. & xxxiv. 10.

v. 8—9. Abram's wiſdom and peaceableneſs avert the ill conſequences which might accrue from the quarrel. Obſerve,

1. His deſire to accommodate the matter peaceably. Let there be no ſtrife, I pray thee, between me and thee; it ill becomes us as near relations, and worſe, as ſervants of God. Learn, 1. It is our wiſdom to leave off betimes: the wiſer man and the better man will always be the firſt to ſeek peace. 2. It needs both addreſs and gentleneſs, to bring thoſe who are in the wrong, to conſent to an accommodation. 3. Chriſtians ſhould conſider their relation to each other. They are brethren, let them love as brethren, and then all diſputes will be at an end. 4. They who have God's glory at heart, will have a greater concern leaſt that ſuffer, than for their own intereſts.

2. His propoſal. Separate thyſelf peaceably, and chuſe the right or left, I am content with the refuſal. (1.) Obſerve Abraham's kindneſs: ſince we muſt part, let us part friends. Separate thyſelf, I pray thee. Oh! if Chriſtians would be content to unite in love, and think and let think in uneſſential matters, how much perverſe diſputing would be prevented. (2.) His ſelf-denial. He had certainly moſt authority to command, and moſt right to claim the land, eſpecially after the promiſe, to which Lot was no ſtranger, but he is ready to forego both. *Note*, 1. Though we might command, it is more chriſtian to entreat. 2. It behoves us often rather to ſuffer loſs, than to ſeek a litigious redreſs.

10. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD deſtroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as [f] the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comeſt unto Zoar. 11. Then Lot choſe him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed eaſt: and they ſeparated themſelves the one from the other. 12. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom. 13. But the men of Sodom *were* [g] wicked, and ſinners before the LORD, exceedingly.

[f] Iſa. li. 3.

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[g] Chap. xviii. 20. Ezek. xvi. 49.

v. 10—13. We have here Lot's choice; in which not only ſome ſymptoms appear of ſelfiſhneſs, in ſecuring the beſt land, but of unkindneſs and ingratitude in parting thus readily from his kind benefactor. How hard is it for good men to diveſt themſelves of this hated ſelf. Obſerve,

1. The place. All the plain of Jordan; and a delicious ſpot it was, like Eden for beauty and fertility. Here he reſolves to fix his abode, without farther conſideration, or weighing the inconveniencies to which he expoſed himſelf, from the people who dwelt there. We are too apt to be guided by the eye, but ſenſe is a bad director: we uſually are led to rue the choice we make, whether of company, or dwelling under its influence. Would we ſpeed well, we ſhould firſt always conſider what is beſt for our ſouls.

2. The people. Vile and wicked exceedingly: all are bad, but ſome much worſe than others, and the worſe for the bleſſings they enjoyed; nothing ſo much contributing to fill up a man's iniquities, as abuſed mercies. To be placed among ſuch a people, though his dwelling and converſation among them was a gracious warning and call from God to them, it was a heavy affliction and trouble to himſelf. *Note*, 1. God marks every man's ſins, according to their aggravations: great ſinners will have great puniſhments. 2. God's miniſters muſt remember, wherever they are, their buſineſs is to appear for God, though only ſojourners. 3. That it is often the heavy lot of good men, to live among bad neighbours. 4. That it is a ſad reflection when they have brought themſelves into theſe circumſtances.

14. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Abram, after that Lot was ſeparated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, north-ward, and ſouth-ward, and eaſt-ward, and weſt-ward. 15. For all the land which thou ſeeſt, [h] to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed for ever. 16. And [i] I will make thy ſeed as the duſt of the earth: ſo that if a man can number the duſt of the earth, *then* ſhall thy ſeed alſo be numbered. 17. Ariſe, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. 18. Then Abram removed *his* tent, and came and [k] dwelt in the † plain of Mamre [l], which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

[h] Chap. xii. 7. & xv. 18. & xvii. 8. & xxiv. 7. & xxvi. 4. Deut. xxxiv. 4. Acts vii. 5.
[i] Chap. xv. 5. & xxii. 17. & xxvi. 4. & xxviii. 14. & xxxii. 12. Exod. xxxii. 13. Numb. xxiii. 10. Deut. i. 10. 1 Kings iv. 20. 1 Chron. xxvii. 23. Iſa. xlviii. 19. Jer. xxxiii. 22. Heb. xi. 12.
[k] Chap. xiv. 13.
† Heb. Plains.
[l] Chap. xxxv. 27. & xxxvii. 14.

v. 14—18. Lot is gone, but Abram has a better friend left. God viſits him, and communion with him makes us ample amends for every loſs. And he comes at a ſeaſon when Lot's choice might have affected Abram, to comfort him with the aſſurance, that though for a moment he might feel the loſs, yet in the end the land muſt be all his own. Obſerve,

1. God's promiſe. Lot looked and choſe the beſt, but it was a precarious and unhappy abode to him. Abram ſhall look on every ſide, and inherit it, and his ſeed after him. Theſe repeated aſſurances convey increaſing conſolations.

2. The command; to go through and view the premiſes, for they were his own, and he might look upon them as ſuch, as ſoon as he had a ſeed capable of occupying them.

3. The aſſurance that God would raiſe up a ſeed to him, and though childleſs now, make him a numberleſs multitude. Learn, (1.) God's covenant is immutable. (2.) The more at God's command we look forward by faith to the heavenly Canaan, the more ſhall we be comforted. (3.) It is God's work to give the land, and then the ſeed; firſt to provide the kingdom, and then to prepare us for it. (4.) Though nothing appeared more unlikely than the fulfilment of the promiſe, Abram's faith ſtaggered not; nor ſhould ours in the darkeſt day.

4. Abram's obedience. He went forth, and fixed again his abode in Mamre, near Hebron; took poſſeſſion in God's name for his family, though himſelf no more than a ſojourner in the land of promiſe: and as was his cuſtom, no ſooner pitched his tent, than he reared his altar. *Note*, It is our duty in every place to make profeſſion of our religion, and to be neither aſhamed nor afraid to be found in the worſhip of God.

CHAP. XIV.

We have four things in the ſtory of this chapter. 1. *A war with the king of Sodom and his allies*, ver. 1—11. 2. *The captivity of Lot in that war*, ver. 12. 3. *Abram's reſcue of Lot from that captivity, with the victory he obtained over the conquerors*, ver. 13—16. 4. *Abram's return from that expedition*, ver. 17. *with an account of what paſſed*, 1. *Between him and the king of Salem*, ver. 18, 19, 20. 2. *Between him and the king of Sodom*, ver. 21—24.

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1. AND it came to paſs in the days of Amraphel [a] king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellaſar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations. 2. *That theſe* made war with Berah king of Sodom, and with Birſha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shameber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is [b] Zoar. 3. All theſe were joined together in the vale of Siddim [c], which is the ſalt-ſea. 4. Twelve years they ſerved Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5. And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that *were* with him, and ſmote the [d] Rephaims in [e] Aſhteroth Karnaim, and the [f] Zuzims in Ham, and [g] the Emims in † Shaveh Kiriathaim. 6. And [h] the Horites in their mount Seir, unto ‡ El-paran, which *is* by the wilderneſs. 7. And they returned, and came to En-miſhpat, which *is* Kadeſh, and ſmote all the country of the Amalekites, and alſo the Amorites, that dwelt in [i] Hazezon-tamar. 8. And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the ſame *is* Zoar) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim. 9. With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellaſar: four kings with five. 10. And the vale of Siddim *was full of* ſlime-pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there: and they that remained fled to the mountains. 11. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. 12. And they took Lot Abrams brothers ſon (who dwelt in Sodom) and his goods, and departed.

[a] Chap. x. 10. & xi. 2.
[b] Chap. xix. 22.
[c] Deut. iii. 17.
[d] Chap. xv. 20.
[e] Joſh. xiii. 12.
[f] Deut. ii. 20.
[g] Deut. ii. 10, 11.
† Or the plain of Kirjathaim.
[h] Deut. ii. 12, 22.
‡ Or the plain of Paran.
[i] Numb. xii. 16. & xiii. 3. 1 Chron. xx. 2.

v. 1—12. This is the firſt war in ſacred hiſtory. The cauſe of it was the rebellion of the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim and Bela, againſt their conqueror Chedorlaomer, a prince of Perſia. He, with his confederates, attacks them thereupon, routs their forces, plunders their cities, and among the reſt, for whoſe ſake this victory is recorded, carries away Lot among the captives. And now Lot began to ſee the folly of his choice, and to ſhare in the evil of his bad fellow-citizens. *Note*, 1. Pride and ambition are the great cauſes of the deſolations which are wrought in the earth. 2. When a nation is ſunk in luxury, it becomes an eaſy prey to any ambitious neighbour. Let England tremble. 3. We are to blame ourſelves for the miſchiefs we meet in bad company: What doth Lot here? 4. In public calamities the righteous often ſuffer with the wicked. 5. We are often like Lot; when in haſte to be rich, only going the ready way to be undone.

13. And there came one that had eſcaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for [k] he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eſhcol, and brother of Aner: and theſe *were* confederate with Abram. 14. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive † he armed his ‡ trained *ſervants*, born in his own houſe, three hundred and eighteen, and purſued *them* [l] unto Dan. 15. And he divided himſelf againſt them, he and his ſervants by night, and [m] ſmote them, and purſued them unto Hobah, which *is* on the left hand of Damaſcus. 16. And he brought back all the goods, and alſo brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women alſo, and the people.

[k] Ch. xiii. 18.
† Or led forth.
‡ Or inſtructed.
[l] Deut. xxxiv. 1.
[m] Iſa. xli. 2, 3.

v. 13—16. Though God afflicts his choſen ſervants, yet, when their caſe ſeems moſt deſperate, help is at hand. Now was Lot giving himſelf up for loſt, when Abram's courage and conduct redeem him from ſervitude. A fugitive from the battle informs Abram of the diſaſter, and he reſolves immediately to purſue. Not ambition, but charity rouſed his ſpirit for war; it was not to enrich himſelf, but to recover his friend. We have here,

1. His preparations. His own ſervants, and the forces of his confederates: his own amounted to 318, a large family, but a ſmall army; but what they wanted in number, they made up in fidelity, bravery, and obedience. They were trained, not to arms, as their trade, but for their defence: or rather trained up in the ſteps of Abram's faith and piety, and therefore ready to follow him, as confident of the divine protection under ſuch a general. *Note*, 1. Though war is very undeſirable, it is not always unlawful. 2. Thoſe will be the beſt ſoldiers, who are the beſt chriſtians. Tho' religion ſuffers men not to be quarrelſome; it ever prevents them from being cowards. 3. It is highly the intereſt and duty of every general to have his ſoldiers diſciplined in the truth: profaneneſs and impiety cannot but tend to make men afraid to die. 4. A great family is a great charge; happy the maſter, that like Abram, not only provides for their bodies, but cares alſo for their ſouls.

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2. Their march, and attack of theſe confederate kings by night: brave and generous to the laſt degree, and ſo wiſely directed, that Abram may vie with the greateſt generals. It might have been called hardineſs, to attempt ſo great an army with ſuch an handful of men; but Abram had the Lord of Hoſts on his ſide, and then more were for him than againſt him. Learn, (1.) When we are engaged in a good cauſe, we are bound to truſt upon the Lord mighty in battle for ſucceſs. (2.) In war, policy is uſually more effectual than force.

3. Their compleat victory. Their enemies are purſued to their fenced cities, and all the captives and ſpoil left a prey to the conqueror. As it was for Lot's ſake, the expedition was undertaken; he is firſt mentioned, and called Abram's brother, not only becauſe of their family relation, but of their religion. *Note*, 1. We ought to be ready to lay down our lives for the brethren. 2. Their unkindneſs to us affects not our duty to them: we muſt forgive, not only our avowed enemies, but what is harder to be put up with, the ingratitude of our friends. 3. A nation fares the better for one righteous man. For Lot's ſake, all the inhabitants of theſe cities are recovered alſo.

17. ¶ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him (after his return from the ſlaughter of Chedorlaomer and of the kings that *were* with him) at the valley of Shaveh, which is the [n] kings dale. 18. And [o] Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the prieſt of the moſt high God. 19. And he bleſſed him, and ſaid, Bleſſed *be* Abram of the moſt high God [p] poſſeſſor of heaven and earth: 20. And bleſſed *be* the moſt high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him [q] tithes of all.

[n] 2 Sam. xviii. 18.
[o] Heb. vii. 1.
[p] V. 22.
[q] Heb. vii. 4.

v. 17—20. Behold Abram's greatneſs: kings come to congratulate his victory. The kings of Sodom and Salem: the latter deſerves attentive conſideration.

1. His name, Melchizedek, king of righteouſneſs; his kingdom, Salem, king of peace. See *Heb.* vii. 1. His character; a prieſt of the moſt high God. He is generally ſuppoſed to be a prince of Canaan, a worſhipper of the true God. But more probably the ſon of God, the true king of righteouſneſs and peace, appears to bleſs his faithful ſervant. *Note*, It will be a bleſſed meeting indeed, when he ſhall come, after all our victories over ſin, death, and the grave, to meet us in the clouds.

2. The proviſion he brought; bread and wine. The ſame the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath now provided to ſtrengthen and comfort his faithful ſoldiers, whilſt manfully fighting his battles.

3. His benediction on Abram. He bleſſed God for him, and bleſſed him from God. *Note*, 1. The moſt high God muſt be the object of our continual bleſſing and praiſe. 2. All good things come from him; if we are enabled to overcome our ſpiritual enemies, we owe it to the ſtrength of the moſt high God. 3. A true chriſtian rejoices, and bleſſes God for the proſperity of his brethren.

4. Abraham's grateful offering. The tenth of the ſpoils. Learn, 1. They who miniſter in holy things, have a right to tythes. 2. God expects they who have abundance ſhould honour him with it. 3. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our great high prieſt, muſt be applied to as the only channel in which our ſervices and offerings can be preſented with acceptance to God.

21. And the king of Sodom ſaid unto Abram, Give me the † perſons, and take the goods to thyſelf. 22. And Abram ſaid to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the moſt high God, [r] the poſſeſſor of heaven and earth, 23. That [s] I will not take from a thread even to a ſhoe-latchet, and that I will not take any thing that *is* thine, leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay, I have made Abram rich: 24. Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eſhcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

† Heb. Souls.
[r] ver. 19. Chap. xxi. 33.
[s] Eſth. ix. 15, 16.

v. 21—24. We have the king of Sodom's conference with Abram.

1. His generous offer of all the ſpoil, except the priſoners. *Note*, They who fight for us, deſerve to be well paid.

2. Abram's refuſal; with the reaſons for it. (1.) His oath before he went to battle. Swearing is a ſolemn act of religion: it is an appeal to the moſt high God, that ſeeth and avengeth. *Note*, 1. Whenever we ſwear, we muſt perform, though it be to our own injury. 2. It muſt be in a lawful matter, and for the glory of God, and the good of our neighbour. (2.) He feared, leaſt any reproach ſhould be caſt on his faith or his charity. He would not have it ſuggeſted, that he either wanted or needed to be enriched from this ſpoil. *Note*, 1 A chri-

ſtian man will avoid the things, though lawful, from which the adverſary might take occaſion to ſpeak reproachfully. 2. Faith will ever lead a man to look down upon this world, as a very little thing. A mean and mercenary ſpirit is not the ſpirit of the truth. 3. When we ſee a thing wrong, there muſt not be the leaſt thread found upon us. (3.) He excepts the food of his ſoldiers, and the ſhare of his allies: this was both right and reaſon. *Note*, 1. We have no right to exact from others, the ſame reſtraints we impoſe upon ourſelves. 2. They earn their bread hard, who earn it at the peril of their lives.

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter we have a ſolemn treaty between God and Abram, concerning a covenant that was to be eſtabliſhed between them. It contains, (1.) *A general aſſurance of God's kindneſs and good-will to Abram,* ver. 1. (2.) *A particular declaration of the purpoſes of his love, concerning him in two things.* 1. *That he would give him a numerous iſſue,* ver 2. to ver. 7. 2. *That he would give him Canaan for an inheritance,* ver. 7. to the end.

1. AFter theſe things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a viſion, ſaying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* [a] thy ſhield, *and* thy exceeding [b] great reward.

[a] Pſal. iii. 3. & v. 12. & lxxxiv. 11. & xci. 4. & cxix. 114.
[b] Pſal. xvi. 5.

v. 1. Abram is favoured with frequent manifeſtations of the divine preſence. He was met by kings, but now by the King of Kings. God ſpoke to him in a viſion, probably in ſome glorious viſible repreſentation of himſelf, ſuch as was the Shechinah: whilſt the natural man dreads every appearance or viſion from another world, as boding no good to him; the ſoul that hath his affections there, hath nothing to fear from thence, but every thing to hope for. We have,

1. God's encouragement: fear not, Abram. All his victories were not ſufficient to remove his fears, not ſo much, I apprehend, from his enemies, as reſpecting the fulfilment of the promiſe when as yet childleſs. *Note*, True faith, nay ſtrong faith, may have fears attending it.

2. His promiſe. (1.) I am thy ſhield: therefore no reaſon had he to apprehend any danger; God is his people's guardian: none can approach to hurt thoſe, over whom the ſhield of almighty love is held. 2. I am thy exceeding great reward. Every thing beſide to a believing ſoul is light upon the balances; the enjoyment of the bleſſed God is the *ultimatum* of his felicity. O may I know more feelingly, and ſay more confidently, Thou art my portion, O Lord!

2. And Abram ſaid, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs, and the ſteward of my houſe *is* this Eliezer of Damaſcus? 3. And Abram ſaid, Behold, to me thou haſt given no ſeed: and lo, one born in my houſe is mine heir.

v. 2—3. Abram ſpreads his grief before the Lord, and ſince he is ſo gracious ſhews him his trouble. *Note*, God's ears are ever open to the voice of our complaint. 1. He had a great promiſe, but no appearance of its fulfilment: he was childleſs, and likely to continue ſo, being old, and one of his ſervants muſt be his heir. Where then is the ſeed? What is all that thou giveſt me, if this be with-held? Learn, 1. How hard it is, when mercies are long delayed, not to grow impatient, and weary of waiting. 2. In every diſtreſs, our buſineſs is to make God our boſom friend. 3. Whatever we enjoy, unleſs this ſeed be born in us, Chriſt the hope of glory, all is nothing. A Chriſtleſs ſoul, though rich as Crœſus, or great as Cæſar, muſt ſtill be a miſerable ſoul.

4. And behold the word of the LORD *came* unto him, ſaying, This ſhall not be thine heir, but he that ſhall come forth out of thine own bowels ſhall be thine heir. 5. And he brought him forth abroad, and ſaid, Look now toward heaven, and tell the [c] ſtars, if thou be able to number them: and he ſaid unto him [d], So ſhall thy ſeed be. 6. And [e] he believed in the LORD; and [f] he counted it to him for righteouſneſs.

[c] Jer. xxxiii. 22.
[d] Exod. xxxii. 13. Deut. x. 22. 1 Chron. xxvii. 23. Rom. iv. 18. Heb. xi. 12. See Chap. xiii. 16.
[e] Rom. iv. 3, 9, 22. Gal. iii. 6. Jam. ii. 23.
[f] Pſal. cvi. 31.

v. 4, 5, 6. God's anſwer to his requeſt, What wilt thou give me?

1. An aſſurance of a ſon, not born in his houſe, but of himſelf. And ſuch a ſon, whoſe progeny ſhould vie with the ſtars of heaven for multitude, and ſhine as the ſtars for glory. *Note*, God is better to us than our fears, and when we deſpair, works moſt eminently to accompliſh his own purpoſes.

2. Abram's ſatisfaction in the anſwer. A thouſand doubts of how and when might ariſe, but he regarded not his own age, nor the deadneſs of Sarah's womb. See, 1. The nature of faith, an acquieſcence in the divine promiſe. 2. The effects of it, patient hope.

3. His faith is counted to him for righteouſneſs. God regarding him as righteous, and ſignifying it to him for his comfort. *Note*, 1. By faith in Jeſus Chriſt alone, can we be juſtified before God. 2. By faith, all the Old Teſtament ſaints were accepted, as well as the New. 3. That this is the fundamental doctrine of the Chriſtian religion, and diſtinguiſhes it from all ſyſtems of morality. To err in this, is to err in the fundamentals of Chriſtianity.

7. And he ſaid unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of [g] Ur of the Chaldees, to [h] give thee this land to inherit it. 8. And he ſaid, Lord GOD, [i] whereby ſhall I know that I ſhall inherit it? 9. And he ſaid unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a ſhe-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. 10. And [k] he took unto him all theſe, and divided them in the midſt, and laid each piece one againſt another: but [l] the birds divided he not. 11. And when the fowls came down upon the carcaſes, Abram drove them away.

[g] Chap. xi. 28.
[h] Pſal. cv. 42. Rom. iv. 13.
[i] See chap. xxiv. 13, 14. Judg. vi. 17, 37. 1 Sam. xiv. 9, 10. 2 Kings, xx. 8.
[k] Jer. xxxiv. 18.
[l] Lev. i. 17.

v. 7—11. As the ſeed is promiſed, the land is added moreover. If Chriſt be ours, heaven is ours. We have here,

1. A remembrance of mercies already conferred on Abram; I brought thee out of that idolatrous land of thy nativity, as a brand ſnatched from the burning: and a promiſe of more; I brought thee hither to inhert this; thine it ſhall be; I am able to ſubdue all thine enemies, and I will fulfil my promiſes. *Note*, 1. Paſt mercies are uſually the earneſt of greater. 2. Salvation is a ſpecial mercy. Well may we wonder, why we are taken out of Ur, the fire, and others left. 3. It is a ſure mercy; God will finiſh his own work, and not a tittle ſhall fail. 4. None ſhall come ſhort of the eternal inheritance who are called with the holy calling.

2. Abram's deſire of ſome ſign; not out of diſtruſt of God's faithfulneſs, but for the more aſſured confirmation of his faith. Learn, 1. The ſtrongeſt believer hath need to pray, Lord, increaſe my faith. We have need to make uſe of all means, eſpecially the ſacrament, for the further confirmation of our hearts in the divine promiſes. 3. The clearer our views are of a covenant title to heaven, the more comfortable ſhall we be.

3. God's anſwer: he directs a ſacrifice, and appoints the beaſts which ſhould be ſlain. *Note*, 1. In waiting upon God in his ordinances, we may expect to be met by him with promiſes. 2. The beſt muſt be preſented to him: negligent prayers, and inattentive hearing, is like bringing the lame and the blind for a ſacrifice.

4. Abram's obedience. He divided the beaſts, according to the cuſtom in ſolemn covenants, and waited for God's appearing to confirm the promiſe. And as he waited long, the fowls fell upon the ſacrifices, and he drove them away. *Note*, When God calls us to his footſtool, though he delay to anſwer us, we muſt not be weary of waiting: and when in prayer, and our appearances before God, vain, wandering, or worldly thoughts intrude, we muſt drive them out, leaſt they devour the beſt of our ſacrifices.

12. And when the ſun was going down a deep ſleep fell upon Abram; and lo, an horror of great darkneſs fell upon him. 13. And he ſaid unto Abram, Know of a ſurety, that [m] thy ſeed ſhall be a ſtranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and ſhall ſerve them, and [n] they ſhall afflict them [o] four hundred years. 14. And alſo that nation whom they ſhall ſerve, will I judge: and afterward ſhall [p] they come out with great ſubſtance. 15. And thou ſhalt go to thy fathers in peace: [q] thou ſhalt be buried in a good old age. 16. But in the fourth generation they ſhall come hither again: for the iniquity of [r] the Amorites *is* [s] not yet full.

[m] Exod. xii. 40. Acts vii. 6.
[n] Exod. i. 11.
[o] Ibid. xii. 40.
[p] Ib. xii. 36. Pſal. cv. 37.
[q] Chap. xxv. 8.
[r] 1 Kings, xxi. 26.
[s] Dan. viii. 23. Matt. xxiii. 32. 1 Theſſ. ii. 16.

v. 12—16. When Abram had waited for God from morning until evening, as the ſun was going down, God appears, to his comfort. *Note*, Though we went all our days, waiting for God, and after years of patience, only found him when the ſun of life declined, we ſhould have an abundant recompence. Here we may obſerve,

1. The preparation for God's manifeſtation of himſelf. A divine extaſy, a deep ſleep fell on him, which whilſt it left the ſoul more free and active, locked up the ſenſes from all diſturbance and diſtraction. And in the ſleep, an horror of great darkneſs, ariſing from an awful reverence of the majeſty of that God, with whom he was converſing, and a preſage of the events which God was about to diſcloſe to him. *Note*, 1. The more we are abſtracted from the objects of ſenſe in all our worſhip, the better. 2. Darkneſs, great darkneſs and hor-

ror, may ſometimes ſeize a Chriſtian's ſoul. 3. It adds a new reliſh to the joy, when there ariſeth up light in the darkneſs.

2. God's revelation concerning himſelf and his poſterity. 1. His poſterity. (1.) Their ſufferings, ſojourning, and captivity in Egypt. *Note*, 1. It is beſt to know the worſt firſt. 2. Our unſettled ſojourning on the earth, will make our reſt in heaven the more welcome. 3. We are all ſervants till God comes to looſe the bands of corruption. 4. Suffering is the portion of God's children; it is thus we muſt enter the kingdom. 5. Though our ſufferings upon earth, were as long as Iſrael's in Egypt, nay, as many ages as days, the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory will make them appear light afflictions, and but for a moment. (2.) Their return to the land of promiſe, after the days of their captivity, with great ſubſtance: God will enrich them under their ſufferings, and at laſt bring them forth, laden with the ſpoil of their oppreſſors. Let the oppreſſors of God's people, like the Egyptians, know their day is coming. (3.) Two cauſes of their return are mentioned, 1. The judgments of God upon Egypt, in the plagues which afterwards came upon them: his people's quarrels are his own, and he will avenge them. 2. The filling the meaſure of the iniquity of the Canaanites. God waits long, and is kind. He ſtrikes not, till incorrigible impiety makes patience needleſs.

2. Concerning himſelf. Though he ſhould not live to ſee his poſterity's triumphs, neither ſhould he taſte their affliction. A peaceful life, a good old age, and an honourable ſepulchre ſhall be his lot. *Note*, (1.) It is a bleſſed thing to die in peace: this is the fruit of Abram's faith. (2.) One of the comforts of death is to be gathered to our fathers: thoſe dear relatives, whether by nature or grace, who have fallen aſleep in Chriſt before us. (3.) Old age is a bleſſing indeed, when the hoary head is found in the way of righteouſneſs. (4.) The grave to the ſinner, is the land of captivity; to the believer, it is the gate which leads into the land of promiſe.

17. And it came to paſs, that when the ſun went down, and it was dark, behold a ſmoaking furnace, and † a burning lamp that paſſed between thoſe pieces. 18. In that ſame day the LORD [t] made a covenant with Abram, ſaying, [u] Unto thy ſeed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. 19. The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20. And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21. And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgaſhites, and the Jebuſites.

† Heb. A lamp of fire.
[t] Chap. xxiv. 7.
[u] Chap. xii. 7. & xiii. 15. & xxvi. 4. Exod. xxiii. 31. Numb. xxxiv. 3. Deut. i. 7. & xi. 24. & xxxiv. 4. Joſh. i. 4. 1 Kings, iv. 21. 2 Chron. ix. 26. Neh. ix. 8. Iſa. xxvii. 12.

v. 17—21. God confirms the covenant by a viſible ſign, and particularly deſcribes the bounds of their inheritance.

1. The ſigns, emblematical of the ſtate of the people. A ſmoaking furnace, alluding to their affliction, and a lamp of fire to guide them through the ſmoak and darkneſs. *Note*, Though the furnace of affliction be a dark and dreary ſtate, there is light ſown for the righteous; and they who are under divine guidance, need not be caſt down under the ſevereſt preſſures.

2. The confirmation of the covenant, by the paſſing of the lamp between the ſlain beaſts. Such was the cuſtom in men's ſolemn covenant, to paſs between the divided bodies, as an awful oath, that the violator of it ought thus to be cut in ſunder; and perhaps this fire conſumed the ſacrifice, and was a farther mark of its acceptance, *Judges* xiii. 3. *Note*, (1.) How great are God's condeſcenſions, thus to humble himſelf to our weakneſs. (2.) No firm covenant with God, without a ſacrifice of atonement. Bleſſed be God for the blood of the Lamb that was ſlain, in whom all the promiſes of God are yea and amen.

3. The boundaries of the land of promiſe. It is as ſure as if they were already in poſſeſſion. Note, *He that believeth,* HATH *everlaſting life,* John iii. 36.

CHAP. XVI.

Hagar is the perſon moſtly concerned in the ſtory of this chapter, an Egyptian woman, probably one of thoſe maid-ſervants, which the king of Egypt, among other gifts, beſtowed upon Abram, chap. xii. 16. *Concerning her we have four things in this chapter:* 1. *Her marriage to Abram her maſter,* ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *Her miſbehaviour towards Sarai her miſtreſs,* ver. 4, 5, 6. 3. *Her diſcourſe with an angel that met her in her flight,* ver. 7—14. 4. *Her delivery of a ſon,* ver. 15, 16.

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1. NOW Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children: and ſhe had an hand-maid, [a] an Egyptian, whoſe name *was* [b] Hagar. 2. And [c] Sarai ſaid unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath reſtrained me from bearing: I pray thee [d] go in unto my maid; it may be that I may † obtain children by her: and Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. 3. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her huſband Abram to be his wife.

[a] Chap. xxi. 9.
[b] Gal. iv. 24.
[c] Chap. xxx. 3.
[d] Chap. xxx. 3, 9.
† Heb. Be builded by her.

v. 1, 2, 3. We have here, at Sarai's inſtigation, the marriage of Abram with Hagar, his Egyptian ſervant; one of thoſe blots which ſtand in his fair eſcutcheon.

1. The author of it: his wife; and the cauſe of her deſire is her own barrenneſs. After ten years more waiting, ſhe was ſollicitous to have children by any means, and never feared in a ſervant to find a rival. *Note*, 1. The moſt dangerous temptations come from thoſe who are moſt dear to us. We dare not deny them. 2. God's gifts are wiſely diſtributed. All have much to be thankful for; but there is always ſome allay to keep us from ſeeking our reſt in the creature. 3. How many a rich man would give half his eſtate for an heir; when the peaſant, who lives in a cottage, has children like olive-branches about his table. 4. Inordinate deſire after creature-comforts puts us on indirect means of obtaining them. 5. The comfort we ſeek in ſuch ways generally comes embittered with gall.

2. Abram's compliance with his wife's requeſt. Inexcuſable, no doubt: a bad example, and has an unhappy iſſue. Perhaps a ſollicitude to obtain the promiſe, might make him think it not unlawful: ſo apt are we to warp our conſcience to our wiſhes. *Note*, 1. Foul temptations may have fair pretences. 2. When we leave faith, and conſult with fleſh, we are ſure to go out of the way.

4. ¶ And he went in unto Hagar, and ſhe conceived: And when ſhe ſaw that ſhe had conceived, her miſtreſs was deſpiſed in her eyes. 5. And Sarai ſaid unto Abram, My wrong *be* upon thee: I have given my maid into thy boſom; and when ſhe ſaw that ſhe had conceived, I was deſpiſed in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee. 6. But Abram ſaid unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid *is* in thy hand; do to her † as it pleaſeth thee. And when Sarai ‡ dealt hardly with her, ſhe fled from her face.

† Heb. What is good in thine eyes.
‡ Heb. Afflicted her.

v. 4, 5, 6. We have juſt the effects which might be expected from ſuch a ſinful ſtep.

1. Hagar's inſolence. No ſooner with child, than ſhe forgets her ſtation, and begins, in conceit of the promiſed ſeed, to uſurp over the miſtreſs of the family. *Note*, 1. It is juſt in God to make thoſe inſtruments of our trouble, whom we have made inſtruments of our ſin. 2. It is the nature of a ſervile ſpirit, to be haughty and inſolent on any promotion. 3. The ſcorn of barrenneſs is among the bittereſt taunts.

2. Sarai's ill humour. As jealous of her huſband, as angry with her maid. Though Abram was quite blameleſs, reſpecting Hagar's pride, ſhe lays the blame at his door, and then profanely, in a paſſion, appeals to God for judgment, when ſhe now had only the uſage ſhe might well have expected. *Note*, 1. A perſon who is angry with himſelf, generally gives vent to it by abuſing the innocent. 2. Nothing commoner, than to quarrel with others for doing what we deſired, when the iſſue happens to fall out other than we deſigned. 3. They who take God's name in their mouth in anger, are almoſt ſure to take it in vain. 4. A perſon in a paſſion is always in the wrong, whatever cauſe may be given him for it.

3. Abram's peaceable anſwer. Though his wife, he remits her to her miſtreſs Sarai, to know her ſtation, and learn obedience. *Note*, 1. Nothing like a peaceable anſwer to turn away wrath. 2. Better yield ſometimes to an unreaſonable requeſt of a wife, than by an unſeaſonable oppoſition give ground for debate. 3. Nothing ſo fit for a proud heart, as to be degraded, and made to know their place.

4. Sarai's ſeverity to Hagar. When pride and jealouſy unite with power, woe to the poor ſufferer.

5. Hagar's flight. It was her duty to ſubmit, as it was Sarai's to have treated her mildly; but *Improbus ille puer, crudelis tu quoque mater:* both wrong, and therefore both perverſe. *Note*, 1. They who ſuffer for their faults, have a double obligation to take it patiently. 2. To fly from our croſs is uſually not only the way to ſin, but ſuffering.

7. ¶ And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderneſs, [e] by the fountain in the way to [f] Shur. 8. And he ſaid, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence cameſt thou? and whither wilt thou go? And ſhe ſaid, I flee from the face of my miſtreſs Sarai. 9. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto her, Return to thy miſtreſs, and ſubmit thyſelf under her hands.

[e] Chap. xxv. 18.
[f] Exod. xv. 22.

v. 7, 8, 9. We have Hagar's flight, and return at the command of an angel.

1. The place where ſhe was. The wilderneſs. Sin is this wilderneſs we are ſure to get into, the moment we leave the path of duty. She was going homeward, the way to Shur, but

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God interpoſes. *Note*, 1. It is a great mercy to be ſtopped ſhort by conſcience or providence in a ſinful way. 2. The miſeries we bring ourſelves into by our ſins, like the prodigal, make our return more deſirable.

2. The angel's addreſs and queſtion. The addreſs, to humble; the queſtion, to alarm her. Sarai's maid ſhould have taken correction ſubmiſſively, and not have left that holy family to return to the idols of Egypt. *Note*, 1. It would ſtop our career often, if we would aſk, Whither am I going? What am I doing? 2. Wilfully to leave the means of grace, is a dangerous ſtep. 3. If God did not graciouſly interpoſe, alas! what often would become of us, when under the guidance of a perverſe ſpirit?

3. Her anſwer. She pleads her miſtreſs's anger, as the cauſe of her flight. Though no excuſe for her, yet too juſt an accuſation of Sarai. *Note*, 1. The wrongneſs of others behaviour to us, is no real plea for an ill return. 2. They are partners of the guilt, who by their provocations lead others into ſin. 3. If maſters or miſtreſſes forbear not threatening, their ſervants will have ſome reaſon to complain.

4. The angel's command, or rather kind advice, *ver.* 9. *Note*, 1. When we are out of the way of duty, it becomes us to make haſte to return to it. 2. We are bound to hope for God's bleſſing when we do ſo, however diſagreeable or dangerous the ſtep may appear. 3. Better return to ſuffer, than by flight continue in ſin.

10. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto her, [g] I will multiply thy ſeed exceedingly, that it ſhall not be numbred for multitude. 11. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and ſhalt bear a ſon, and ſhalt call his name † Iſhmael; becauſe the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12. And [h] he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* againſt every man, and every mans hand againſt him: and [i] he ſhall dwell in the preſence of all his brethren.

[g] Chap. xvii. 20. & xxi. 18.
† i. e. God ſhall hear.
[h] Chap. xxi. 20.
[i] Chap. xxv. 18.

v. 10—12. We have here Hagar's comfort in her affliction. As ſhe ſubmits to the command, ſhe is favoured with an unexpected promiſe.

1. A ſon is aſſured her. She was with child, and ſhould bring Abram *an heir*, though not *the heir*. Yet ſhould his poſterity be numerous, *a large ſeed*, though not *the promiſed ſeed*. The Arabs were Iſhmael's ſeed, and their deſcendants to this day are not only vaſt in multitude, but great in power, the Turks, as is ſuppoſed, deriving thence their original. *Note*, Worldly bleſſings are often abundantly beſtowed on thoſe who have no better portion.

2. His name and character. His name, Iſhmael, God will hear. It is right to ſet up a memorial of paſt mercies for future comfort. Let the people of God be aſſured he will hear their cry, and will help them. His character. A wild man. Like the wild aſs's colt, intractable and fierce; and though in perpetual broils, yet preſerved amidſt his ſtronger neighbours. *Note*, 1. A quarrelſome diſputatious temper will ever be involved in ſtrife. 2. It is a ſad mark of the bond ſervant this. Grace teaches us meekneſs and patience. 3. Many who have expoſed themſelves by their own imprudence, are wonderfully protected by divine providence.

13. And [k] ſhe called the name of the LORD that ſpake unto her, Thou God ſeeſt me; for ſhe ſaid, Have I alſo here looked after him that ſeeth me? 14. Wherefore the well was called [l] ‡ Beer-lahai-roi; behold, *it is* [m] between Kadeſh and Bered. 15. ¶ And [n] Hagar bare Abram a ſon: and Abram called his ſons name, which Hagar bare, Iſhmael. 16. ¶ And Abram *was* fourſcore and ſix years old, when Hagar bare Iſhmael to Abram.

[k] See Chap. xxxii. 30.
[l] Chap. xxiv. 62. & xxv. 11.
‡ i. e. The well of him that liveth and ſeeth me.
[m] Numb. xiii. 26.
[n] Gal iv. 22.
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v. 13—16. Hagar immediately turns back, after a grateful acknowledgment of the mercy beſtowed on her; and Abram in his old age is comforted with a ſon.

1. The name ſhe gave the place where God appeared to her. Thou God ſeeſt me. *Note*, 1. It is the comfort of every affliction, the ſpur to every duty, and the reſtraint from every ſin, to feel the eye of God upon us. 2. We ſhould do well to acknowledge his gracious viſitations, and have them not only in our mind, but in our mouth.

2. Her admiration of God's condeſcenſion thus to look upon her. *Note*, 1. A ſoul brought to a ſenſe of his error, is amazed at the mercy he finds with God. 2. The eye of faith looks to the all-ſeeing God, and this is its ſtability and ſupport.

3. Her ſon born. Iſhmael, long before Iſaac. *Note*, Corruption is always the firſt born of the heart; and how many expect no ſecond birth, and die contentedly children of the bondwoman.

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CHAP. XVII.

This chapter contains a new appearance of God to Abram, and a more enlarged account of the covenant made with him. 1. Its general ſcope, ver. 1. 2. the particulars of it, 1. That he ſhould be the father of many nations, ver. 4, 6. and in token of that, his name was changed, ver. 5. 2. That God would be a God to him and his ſeed, and would give them the land of Canaan, ver. 7, 8. And the ſeal of this part of the covenant was circumciſion, ver. 9—14. 3. That he ſhould have a ſon by Sarai, and in token of that her name was changed, ver. 15, 16. This promiſe Abram received, ver. 17. And his requeſt for Iſhmael (ver. 18.) was anſwered abundantly to his ſatisfaction, ver. 19—22. 4. The circumciſion of Abram and his family, according to God's appointment, ver 23. ad finem.

1. AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and ſaid unto him, [a] I *am* the Almighty God; [b] walk before me, and be thou † perfect. 2. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will [c] multiply thee exceedingly. 3. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, ſaying, 1897.

[a] Chap. xxviii. 3.
[b] Chap. v. 22. & xlviii. 15. 1 Kings ii. 4. & viii. 25.
† Or upright, or ſincere.
[c] Chap. xii. 2. & xiii. 16.

v. 1, 2, 3. We have here a repeated manifeſtation of God's preſence to the holy patriarch, for his comfort and ſupport under the long exerciſe of his faith and patience.

Obſerve, 1. The time, when he was ninety-nine, thirteen years after Iſhmael's birth. A long while, for one who had enjoyed more frequent viſits; and longer ſtill, when we conſider how hope deferred maketh the heart ſick. *Note*, 1. An aged ſaint of God muſt expect to live more by faith, and leſs by ſenſible experiences. 2. When we have cauſe to fear, that by ſin we have cauſed God to withdraw his preſence, it is a ſore affliction. 3. The comforts we would unbelievingly anticipate, for our puniſhment are often delayed.

2. The humble poſture he appeared in before God. On his face. *Note*, 1. The nearer we come to God, the more ſhall we feel our ſinfulneſs and vileneſs before him. The ſpots that were unnoticed in the twilight are very viſible in the noon day. 2. Reverence and holy awe ſhould be upon our heart and countenance, when we are ſpeaking before God. 3. When we are found before God in worſhip, God will be found near us in bleſſing.

3. The promiſe and command given to Abram. (1.) The promiſe, I am God Almighty, I will multiply thee, &c. He who promiſes, is able alſo to perform; for he is almighty in himſelf, and all-ſufficient for us. *Note*, They who have God as their covenant God, have enough, nor need wiſh for more. (2.) His command. Walk before me, and be thou perfect. Learn, 1. He who offers himſelf to be our God, hath a right to expect that we ſhould be his people. 2. God can aſk for no leſs than our whole hearts, and we can offer him no leſs in deſire; though through the weakneſs of our fallen nature, he knows, and we feel, that we cannot always ſtand upright. 3. The ſoul that lives a life of faith, is poſſeſſed of the uttermoſt perfection God commands, for he is compleat in Chriſt. 4. If we have the ſimplicity which is in Chriſt, we have all the internal perfection which any ſcripture ſaint upon earth enjoyed.

4. As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou ſhalt be a father of † many nations. 5. Neither ſhall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name ſhall be [d] Abraham, for [e] a father of many nations have I made thee. 6. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make [f] nations of thee; and kings ſhall come out of thee. 7. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee. 8. And [g] I will give unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee, the land † [h] wherein thou art a ſtranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlaſting poſſeſſion; and I will be their God. 9. ¶ And God ſaid unto Abraham, Thou ſhalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations.

† Heb. Multitude of nations.
[d]. Neh. ix. 7.
[e] Rom. iv. 17.
[f] Chap. xxxv. 11.
[g] Chap. xii. 7. & xiii. 15.
† Heb. Of thy ſojournings.
[h] Chap. xxiii. 3.

v. 4—9. 1. By God's order Abram's name is changed into Abraham, correſpondent to the promiſe, I will make thee a father of many nations. A new name is a new honour; but it is better ſtill; it is a confirmation of his faith. What God calls him, he is. Though the children are unborn, faith gives ſubſiſtence to the things hoped for. More people probably this day are deſcended from him; and more kings have reigned, and do ſtill reign, of his poſterity in Iſaac, Iſhmael, and the ſons of Keturah, than from any man who lived in his or any ſucceeding time,

time. But in a more exalted and extenſive ſenſe, as the father of the faithful, his ſeed are yet more numberleſs, and every one a king.

2. God's covenant with him. Full of promiſes, great and precious; a numberleſs progeny, a fruitful land, a kingly throne, and everlaſting poſſeſſion of it: part to be fulfilled on earth, the better part in heaven, where Jeſus is ſet down upon the throne for ever and ever. *Note*, 1. God's covenant is as ſure as his faithfulneſs and power can make it. 2. The great bleſſing of the covenant of grace is, that all God is and hath are made over to us; wiſdom to guide, grace to pardon, power to ſupport, goodneſs to comfort: all things, in ſhort, are ours, if God is ours. 3. The crowning mercy is, it is as eternal in its continuance, as it was in its contrivance.

[i] Acts vii. 8.

[k] Acts vii. 8. Rom. iv. 11.
‡ Heb. A ſon of eight days.
[l] Lev. xii. 3. Luke ii. 21. John vii. 22. Phil. iii. 5.

10. This *is* my covenant, which ye ſhall keep between me, and you, and thy ſeed after thee; [i] Every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed. 11. And ye ſhall circumciſe the fleſh of your fore-ſkin, and it ſhall be [k] a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12. And ‡ he that is eight days old [l] ſhall be circumciſed among you, every man-child in your generations, he that is born in the houſe, or bought with money of any ſtranger, which *is* not of thy ſeed. 13. He that is born in thy houſe, and he that is bought with thy money, muſt needs be circumciſed: and my covenant ſhall be in your fleſh for an everlaſting covenant. 14. And the uncircumciſed man-child, whoſe fleſh of his foreſkin is not circumciſed, that ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant.

v. 10—14. The covenant being given, the ſeal of it is preſcribed, circumciſion. A bloody rite, to ſignify the neceſſity of ſhedding blood for the remiſſion of ſin; which all, from the infant to the aged, muſt ſubmit to; for none can enter the kingdom of heaven, but through the blood of the covenant; intimating alſo the neceſſity of putting off the ſins of the fleſh, and of that inward circumciſion, without which the other availed nothing; *for he was not a Jew, who was one outwardly*; and armed with the threatning of utter exciſion on non-compliance, becauſe neglect of the ſign implied rejection of the covenant. *Note*, 1. They who would have God for their God, muſt conſecrate themſelves to him under the inſtituted ſeals of the covenant. 2. Neglecters of God's ſacraments are excluded from God's promiſes, and liable to God's judgments.

† Heb. She ſhall become nations.
[m] Chap. xxxv. 11. Gal. iv. 31. 1 Pet. iii. 6.
[n] Chap. xviii. 12.
[o] Chap. xviii. 10. & xxi. 2.
[p] Chap. xvi. 10.
[q] Chap. xxv. 12, 16.
[r] Chap. xxi. 18.
[s] Chap. xxi. 2.

15. ¶ And God ſaid unto Abraham, As for Sarai, thy wife, thou ſhalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *ſhall* her *name be.* 16. And I will bleſs her, and give thee a ſon alſo of her: yea, I will bleſs her, and † ſhe ſhall be *a mother* of [m] nations; kings of people ſhall be of her. 17. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and [n] laughed, and ſaid in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and ſhall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? 18. And Abraham ſaid unto God, O that Iſhmael might live before thee! 19. And God ſaid, [o] Sarah thy wife ſhall bear thee a ſon indeed; and thou ſhalt call his name Iſaac: and I will eſtabliſh my covenant with him for an everlaſting covenant, *and* with his ſeed after him. 20. And as for Iſhmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have bleſſed him, and will make him fruitful, and [p] will multiply him exceedingly: [q] twelve princes ſhall he beget, and [r] I will make him a great nation. 21. But my covenant will I eſtabliſh with Iſaac, [s] whom Sarah ſhall bear unto thee at this ſet time in the next year. 22. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

v. 15—22. God now more explicitly reveals his deſigns to Abraham.

1. A ſon is promiſed, not of the bondwoman, but of the free. Sarai ſhall ſhare with Abraham in the bleſſing; ſhe ſhall be mother of kings and nations. *Note*, 1. Huſband and wife muſt count their mercies one. 2. A ſon from the Lord is a bleſſing we cannot be enough thankful for.

2. Sarai's name changed. A new name, to intimate the new honour he intended to confer on her. She is a *princeſs* indeed, as Sarah ſignifies, from whom he ſprings, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords.

3. Abraham's joy on the news. Wonder and delight, joined with deep humility, lay him on his face in adoration, whilſt his heart danceth for joy. *Note*, 1. Faith in God's promiſe fills the heart with joy in believing. 2. The only ſubſtantial bliſs is that which God communicates: of all other laughter we may ſay it is mad; and of mirth, what doth it? 3. The exultation of the ſoul in God is ever accompanied with equal humiliation. The higher we riſe in divine conſolations, the lower we lie in abaſement; whilſt falſe joy breeds pride and ſecurity.

4. His prayer for Iſhmael. Though Iſaac be preferred, Iſhmael is not neglected. Learn, 1. Though one child have the better portion, all demand our prayers and care. 2. The greateſt bleſſing we can aſk of God for our children, is his grace to direct their ways aright before his face.

5. God's gracious regard to him. Though Iſaac hath the covenant, Iſhmael ſhall not want a bleſſing. *Note*, 1. God gives us more than we are wont to deſire. He aſked one bleſſing, God promiſes two. 2. The ſons of God, like Iſaac, are ſons of laughter: to walk mournfully is not the character of the children of the promiſe. 3. The preference of Iſaac is of God's ſovereignty, that the election of grace may ſtand.

6. When Abraham is fully ſatisfied, God withdraws, and leaves him for a while to meditate upon theſe wonders of mercy. *Note*, God's ſenſible preſence cannot be expected always here: we are called now to live by faith; in heaven it will be unclouded ſight, uninterrupted fruition.

23. ¶ And Abraham took Iſhmael his ſon, and all that were born in his houſe, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abrahams houſe; and circumciſed the fleſh of their foreſkin, in the ſelf-ſame day, as God had ſaid unto him. 24. And Abraham *was* ninety years old and nine when he was circumciſed in the fleſh of his foreſkin. 25. And Iſhmael his ſon *was* thirteen years old when he was circumciſed in the fleſh of his fore-ſkin. 26. In the ſelf-ſame day was Abraham circumciſed, and Iſhmael his ſon. 27. And all the men of his houſe, born in the houſe, and bought with money of the ſtranger, were circumciſed with him.

v. 23—27. Abraham no ſooner is commanded, but he obeys without delay. God's commands are law and reaſon to him; and chearfully he receives the ſeal, as gratefully he had accepted the promiſe. *Note*, 1. The poſitive inſtitution of God admits no reaſoning: it is enough he enjoins us the ſign, for us to uſe it. 2. True obedience never defers till to-morrow what can be done to-day; for who knows what a day may bring forth? 3. They who would guide others in the right way, muſt firſt ſhew the example. 4. As it is known only to God, who are really choſen, we in hope baptize infants as well as others: if they could be members of the covenant before Chriſt's coming, why not after?

CHAP. XVIII.

We have an account in this chapter of another interview between God and Abraham, probably within a few days after the former, as a reward of his chearful obedience to the law of circumciſion. Here is (1.) The kind viſit which God made him, and the kind entertainment he gave to that viſit, ver. 1—8. (2.) *The matters diſcourſed of between them.* 1. *The purpoſes of God's love concerning Sarah,* ver. 9—15. 2. *The purpoſes of God's wrath concerning Sodom.* 1. *The diſcovery God made to Abraham of his deſign to deſtroy Sodom,* ver. 16—22. 2. *The interceſſion Abraham made for Sodom,* ver. 23—33.

[a] Heb. xiii. 2.
[b] Chap. xliii. 24.
[c] Judg. vi. 18. & xiii. 15.
† Heb. Stay.
[d] Chap. xix. 8. & xxxiii. 10.
‡ Heb. You have paſſed.
‖ Heb. Haſten.

1. AND the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he ſat in the tent-door in the heat of the day. 2. And [a] he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men ſtood by him: and when he ſaw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himſelf toward the ground, 3. And ſaid, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy ſight, paſs not away, I pray thee, from thy ſervant. 4. [b] Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and waſh your feet, and reſt yourſelves under the tree. 5. And [c] I will fetch a morſel of bread, and † comfort ye your hearts; after that you ſhall paſs on; [d] for therefore ‡ are ye come to your ſervant. And they ſaid, So do as thou haſt ſaid. 6. And Abraham haſtened into the tent unto Sarah, and ſaid, ‖ Make ready quickly three meaſures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he haſted to dreſs it. 8. And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dreſſed, and ſet *it* before them; and he ſtood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

v. 1—8. We have here Abraham's hoſpitality to three unknown ſtrangers, though afterwards found to be celeſtial viſitants in human forms.

1. His affectionate invitation of them. He ſat in the tent-door, to welcome in the weary traveller; and when no inns were yet in uſe, ſuch labours of love became the father of the faithful. *Note*, A Chriſtian's heart is generous and hoſpitable. No ſooner does the opportunity offer, than with profound reſpect, and urgent intreaty, he brings theſe gueſts into his tent. *Note*, (1.) Religion never teaches rudeneſs, but civility. (2.) A good man thinks it a favour done him, that he hath it in his power to relieve the deſtitute.

2. The hearty welcome given them. Luxury of diet yet unknown, (and how much better ſtill unknown!) and pride of equipage, make no part of Abraham's entertainment. Himſelf and Sarah not too great to ſerve, and one plain diſh, beneath a tree, compleats the banquet. Happy ſimplicity! where friendſhip unfeigned made hypocritical compliments uſeleſs, and plain abundance ſupplied thoſe wants of hunger, which pampered appetite never knew. *Note*, 1. True faith produces fervent charity. No fruits like thoſe which grow on this tree. 2. True nobility and greatneſs is ever moſt condeſcending.

9. ¶ And they ſaid unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he ſaid, Behold, in the tent. 10. And he ſaid, [e] I will certainly return unto thee, [f] according to the time of life; and lo, [g] Sarah thy wife ſhall have a ſon. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent-door, which *was* behind him. 11. Now [h] Abraham and Sarah *were* old, *and* well ſtricken in age: *and* it ceaſed to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12. Therefore Sarah laughed within herſelf, ſaying, [i] After I am waxed old, ſhall I have pleaſure, [k] my lord being old alſo? 13. And the LORD ſaid unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, ſaying, Shall I of a ſurety bear a child, which am old? 14. [l] Is any thing too hard for the LORD? [m] At the time appointed will I return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah ſhall have a ſon. 15. Then Sarah denied, ſaying, I laughed not: for ſhe was afraid. And he ſaid, Nay, but thou didſt laugh.

[e] Ver. 14.
[f] 2 Kings iv. 16.
[g] Chap. xvii. 19, 21. & xxi. 2. Rom. ix. 9.
[h] Chap. xvii. 17. Rom. iv. 19. Heb. xi. 11, 12.
[i] Luke i. 18.
[k] 1 Pet. iii. 6.
[l] Jer. xxxii. 17. Zech. viii. 6. Matt. xix. 26. Luke i. 37.
[m] Chap. xvii. 21. 2 Kings iv. 16.

v. 9—15. Now Abraham begins to find he hath loſt nothing by his gueſts. He invited but men; he finds among them his Lord. *Note*, They who do good to the leaſt of Chriſt's little ones, doth it unto him. Obſerve,

1. Their enquiries after Sarah. The women, according to the eaſtern cuſtom, ſat not down with them to meat. But they ſhewed by their enquiring, that they were no ſtrangers to his family. Civil enquiries are kind.

2. Abraham's anſwer. She is where ſhe ſhould be, in the tent. The duty of a wife is to be a keeper at home; and when we are in the way of duty, we may expect to find a bleſſing.

3. The promiſe made to Sarah. Now the Lord begins to appear. He ſpeaks more than man, that can ſay, I will, Thou ſhalt. Bleſſed be his name; not only all his promiſes, but his commands run thus: he makes us what he wills us to be.

4. Sarah's unbelief. Though out of ſight, not out of hearing: ſhe laughed at an event ſo improbable. *Note*, 1. Reaſon is a bad guide in matters of faith. 2. The ſame appearances may ariſe from different cauſes: a ſmile may beſpeak contemptuous unbelief, or ſatisfied confidence. 3. If Sarah called her huſband Lord, let her daughters remember and imitate her reſpect.

5. The rebuke given her. Why did Sarah laugh? Is any thing too hard for God? *Note*, 1. Suſpicions of God's power or grace, or both, are very diſpleaſing to him. 2. Rebuke is the kindeſt inſtance of friendſhip, and beſt return for favours received. Let the righteous ſmite me friendly. 3. Unwillingneſs to give, and backwardneſs to receive reproof, is a ſure ſign of a perverſe or cold heart.

6. Sarah's denial. To conceal one fault, ſhe makes two. One ſin ſeldom goes alone. Nothing leads us into a lye ſooner than fear. Fools that we are, not to place that fear on the proper object. Can man's rebukes be equal to thoſe God hath appointed for lying lips? Oh that we feared him more, and man leſs. Yet this rebuke wrought good effects; though unbelief prevailed before, faith triumphs now: he that knew her heart, could give the ſon. *Note*, When we might expect chaſtiſement for our ſin, God oftentimes humbles us with mercies.

16. ¶ And the men roſe up from thence, and looked towards Sodom: and Abraham went with them [n] to bring them on the way. 17. And the LORD ſaid, [o] Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18. Seeing that Abraham ſhall ſurely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth [p] ſhall be bleſſed in him? 19. For I know him, that he will command his children and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the LORD, to do juſtice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath ſpoken of him. 20. And the LORD ſaid, Becauſe the [q] cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their ſin is very grievous; 21. [r] I will go down now, and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. 22. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went towards Sodom: but Abraham ſtood yet before the LORD.

[n] Rom. xv. 24. 3 John 6.
[o] Amos iii. 7. John xv. 15.
[p] Chap. xii. 3. and xxii. 18. Acts iii. 25. Gal. iii. 8.
[q] Chap. iv. 10. & xix. 13. Jam. v. 4.
[r] Chap. xi. 5.

v. 16—22. The viſit over, the ſtrangers depart. But Abraham had taſted ſo much of the ſweets of their company, he will not leave them thus, but brings them on their way. *Note*, We are loth to part with thoſe, with whom we have enjoyed much of the preſence of the Lord. And now Abraham's kindneſs is ſtill more abundantly repaid: while two of his gueſts are ſent before, the third ſtays. His Lord not only gives him his company, but reveals to him his ſecret. Obſerve,

1. God's reaſons for informing Abraham of his deſign. (1.) He will not hide his counſel from him; for he is a friend, for whom he had done much, and would do more. *Note*, 1. It is a reaſon with God to give more, where he hath given much. 2. God diſcovers more of his ſecret counſels to his ſervants, than other men. An enlightened mind, thoroughly verſed in God's word, attains a knowledge next to prophecy. (2.) He will inſtruct his children and houſhold. Whatever knowledge he hath will be made uſeful to others as well as himſelf. Ye maſters of families, behold in Abraham's practice your example and duty. 1. To make it your care and buſineſs to inſtruct your children and ſervants in the way of the Lord. Remember, the loweſt under your roof hath an immortal ſoul, and it is entruſted to your care. 2. Be yourſelf the example of what you teach. 3. Be conſtant with them at a throne of grace, both to ſhew them the way thither, and to obtain a bleſſing on your labours among them.

2. His diſcovery of the deſign of his viſit to Sodom. Their ſins, that called for vengeance; and he is come to enquire into it: not that he wanted to be informed, but that he may appear both patient and juſt in all his judgments. Learn, 1. Crying ſins are heard in heaven, however unnoticed on earth. And *Note*, Theſe ſins were pride, luxury, and idleneſs. Who need not hearken, whether ſome ſuch cry goes up from him. 2. Sinners ſay, God ſhall not ſee; but they are woefully miſtaken. 3. God never puniſhes by report; many are belied, whom God will acquit; but where he condemns, his judgment is ever according to truth.

23. ¶ And Abraham drew near, and ſaid, Wilt thou alſo deſtroy the righteous with the wicked? 24. [s] Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou alſo deſtroy, and not ſpare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein? 25. That be far from thee to do after this manner, to ſlay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous ſhould be as the wicked, that be far from thee: [t] Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 26. And the LORD ſaid, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will ſpare all the place for their ſakes.

[s] Jer. v. 1.
[t] John viii. 3. & xxxiv. 17. Pſal. xciv. 2. Rom. iii. 6.

v. 23—26. Abraham no ſooner hears the ſecret, than ſtrait his heart begins to plead, if yet there may be hope. We have here,

1. Abraham's prayer. And a moſt ardent, humble, believing, loving prayer it is. 1. His approach; filled with the ſenſe both of the greatneſs and goodneſs of his dear Lord, he dares approach with reverence and hope, drawn by that fervent charity, which would ſnatch the brand from the burning. 2. His requeſt for Sodom. See how he pleads, (1.) For the righteous. Some he charitably hoped might be found. Lot, no doubt, and perhaps he had converts. Confident they ſhould be ſpared, he pleads God's glorious perfections; his mercy and righteouſneſs embolden his addreſs. *Note*, 1. It is a ſtrong ſupport in prayer to plead God's perfections, as a ground to ſpeak before him. 2. We muſt be confident, the Judge of all will do right; nor ſhall any man have cauſe to find fault with his determinations. 3. The righteous ſhall not be deſtroyed with the wicked. Though they be involved with them, they ſhall not be like them. They ſhall eſcape out of their trial, or their ſuffering ſhall be ſanctified unto them. (2.) For the wicked. Though we hate ſin, we muſt pity and pray for the ſinner. The worſt muſt not be forgotten; whilſt there is life, there is hope. *Note*, 1. To be ſpared to repent is a great mercy. 2. If any reprieve be hoped for, it is for the righteous ſake.

2. God's anſwer. Free and gracious. Thus doth prayer prevail. How ready he to hear, how willing to pardon: if fifty be found righteous, Sodom is ſpared. How ſhould it encourage our applications to him?

27. And Abraham anſwered and ſaid, Behold now, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the LORD, which *am* [u] *but* duſt and aſhes. 28. Peradventure there ſhall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou deſtroy all the city for *lack of* five? And he ſaid, If I find there forty and five, I will not deſtroy *it*. 29. And he ſpake unto him yet again, and ſaid, Peradventure there ſhall be forty found there. And he ſaid, I will not do it for forties ſake. 30. And he ſaid *unto him*, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will ſpeak: Peradventure there ſhall thirty be found there. And he ſaid, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there. 31. And he ſaid, Behold now, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the LORD: Peradventure there ſhall be twenty found there. And he ſaid, I will not deſtroy it for twenties ſake. 32. And he ſaid, [x] Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will ſpeak yet but this once: Peradventure ten ſhall be found there. And he ſaid, I will not deſtroy *it* for tens ſake. 33. And the LORD went his way, aſſoon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

[u] Chap. iii. 19. Job iv. 19. Eccleſ. xii. 7. 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48. 2 Cor. v. 2.

[x] Judg. vi. 39.

v. 27—33. Whilſt other givers expect we ſhould be ſatisfied, when God gives, he expects and is pleaſed that we aſk for more. Behold,

1. Abraham's renewal of his requeſts. 1. His preface: deeply humbled, he confeſſes himſelf duſt and aſhes, yea, and ſinful duſt and aſhes too, unworthy to ſpeak before God. Let us remember this ever, when we appear before God. The beſt of men are no better.

2. His prayers and anſwers. He fain would ſpeed, and therefore leſſens the number. God grants it. Once more he dares to ſpeak. Importunately he aſks for pardon in this boldneſs. Oh what a God have we, never weary of granting, never tired with importunity, and, glorious as he is, is not angry to be thus beſieged with ceaſeleſs cries. Again he ſpeeds. Again he cannot be ſilent; again is anſwered graciouſly. Yet once, and but once more, will he preſume to ſpeak: reduced to ten his laſt requeſt. And ſure, if five cities produce not ten righteous men, ruin muſt be near. Even hereunto God condeſcends to conſent. *Note*, (1.) How good is it to pray and never faint. (2.) There are ſins unto death, for which prayer cannot avail. (3.) When we have been diſappointed of ſucceſs, we ſhall not loſe the bleſſing; if the mercy be not vouchſafed to others, it will return upon ourſelves.

3. Their parting. God leaves him, but not till he hath done aſking; and Abraham returned to wait the iſſue, ſure, however, not to be diſappointed concerning God's promiſe, and looking if yet there may be hope. *Note*. We cannot expect too little from man, nor too much from God.

CHAP. XIX.

In this chapter we have the hiſtory of Sodom's ruin, and Lot's reſcue from that ruin; the reſult of the enquiry, Chap. xviii. 21. *is,* 1. *That Lot was very good,* ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *That the Sodomites were very wicked, and vile,* ver. 4—11. 3. *Special care was therefore taken for the ſecuring of Lot, and his family, in a place of ſafety,* ver. 12—23. 4. *Mercy having rejoiced therein, juſtice ſhews itſelf in the ruin of Sodom, and of Lot's wife,* ver. 24—26. *with a general repetition of the ſtory,* ver. 27—29. 5. *A foul ſin that Lot was guilty of, in committing inceſt with his two daughters,* ver. 30, ad finem.

1. AND there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot ſat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot ſeeing *them*, roſe up to meet them; and he bowed himſelf with his face toward the ground; 2. And he ſaid, Behold now, my lords, [a] turn in, I pray you, into your ſervants houſe, and tarry all night, and [b] waſh your feet, and ye ſhall riſe up early, and go on your ways. And they ſaid, [c] Nay, but we will abide in the ſtreet all night. 3. And he preſſed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entred into his houſe: and he made them a feaſt, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

[a] Heb. xiii. 2.

[b] Chap. xviii. 4.

[c] Luke xxiv. 28.

v. 1—3. We have, here, the angels arrival at Sodom, and Lot's kind reception of them.

1. The two angels came to Sodom at even. The Lord ſends his executioners of vengeance, and who ſhall ſtand before theſe miniſters of flame?

2. Lot meets and preſſes them into his houſe. Singular in his piety, he is ſelected from the general ruin. He is earneſt to ſollicit their company, and happy to entertain them liberally. He had ſeen no ſuch viſitants at Sodom of a long time. *Note*, Good men deſerve a hearty welcome. We cannot be too preſſing on ſuch to favour us with their company.

3. The angels at firſt ſeem courteouſly to excuſe themſelves, but at laſt yield to his ſollicitations. *Note*, 1. Every invitation which is given us muſt not be haſtily complied with, leſt we ſhould ſeem to run, where we ſhould wait to be drawn. 2. Thoſe who are hearty ſollicitors, however they may fail with men, ſhall prevail with God.

4. ¶ But before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of Sodom, compaſſed the houſe round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter. 5. And they called unto Lot, and ſaid unto him, Where *are* the men which came in to thee this night? [d] bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

[d] Judg. xix. 22.

v. 4, 5. They who came to ſee, were ſoon convinced of the wickedneſs of Sodom. Obſerve,

1. The univerſal corruption, old and young from every quarter. *Note*, That muſt needs be a wicked place, where the old ſet the example, and are ringleaders in iniquity.

2. Their crime. The moſt monſtrous and unnatural; ſhocking to think of, and infamous to mention; yet they dared avow it, and add impudence to their vile affections. *Note*, 1. No ſin in the ſight of God is more abominable than unnatural luſts. 2. When men have loſt ſhame, they are on the brink of ruin.

6. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and ſhut the door after him, 7. And ſaid, I pray you, brethren, do not ſo wickedly. 8. [e] Behold now, I have two daughters, which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto theſe men do nothing; for therefore came they under the ſhadow of my roof. 9. And they ſaid, Stand back. And they ſaid *again*, This one *fellow* came in to ſojourn, and [g] he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worſe with thee than with them. And they preſſed ſore upon the man, *even* Lot, and came near to break the door. 10. But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the houſe to them, and ſhut to the door. 11. And [h] they ſmote the men that *were* at the door of the houſe with blindneſs, both ſmall and great: ſo that they wearied themſelves to find the door.

[e] See Judges xix. 24.

[f] See Chap. xviii. 5.

[g] Ex. ii. 14.

[h] Wiſd. xix. 17. 2 Kings vi. 18. Acts xiii. 11.

v. 6—11. We have here,

1. Lot's interpoſition. Obſerve, (1.) His advice; an humble intreaty. A wiſe reprover will ever cloak rebuke with the garment of love. (2.) His haſty propoſal, *v.* 8. We muſt not commit ſin to avert ſin, nor do evil that good may come. (3.) His earneſt pleading of the laws of hoſpitality. When we treat with men, we ſhould endeavour to convince them by argument.

2. Their inſolent rejection of his advice, with intimidating threats againſt himſelf, *v.* 9. *Note*, 1. Ill language is the common lot of thoſe who ſet their faces againſt men's ſins. 2. Friendly admonition is often thus rejected as inſolent intruſion. 3. They who would rebuke wicked men, muſt put their life in their hand. 4. The laſt effort to ſave is then finiſhed, when ſinners thruſt out from them the preaching of the goſpel.

3. The angel's interpoſition to ſave Lot, and chaſtiſe theſe ſinners againſt the Lord. *Note*, (1.) God has a hand to pull us in at the door of ſafety, when our caſe ſeems almoſt deſperate. (2.) Thoſe who can truſt him with their life, are ſure of a ſafe retreat at laſt, where the wicked ceaſe from troubling. (3.) Whom God will deſtroy, he uſually infatuates. *Dementat quos vult perdere*. (4.) No judgment will turn the heart. Though ſmitten of God, as the men of Sodom, ſtill they are fully ſet to do evil. *They ſay, We will purſue it yet again.*

12. ¶ And the men ſaid unto Lot, Haſt thou here any beſides? ſon in law, and thy ſons, and thy daughters, and whatſoever thou haſt in the city, bring *them* out of this place. 13. For we will deſtroy this place: becauſe [i] the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD hath ſent us to deſtroy it. 14. And Lot went out, and ſpake unto his ſons in law, which married his daughters, and ſaid, Up, get ye out of this place; for the LORD will deſtroy this city: but he ſeemed as one that mocked unto his ſons in law.

[i] Chap. xviii. 20.

v. 12—14. Lot is here warned of the approaching cataſtrophe of Sodom, and, as permitted, flies to warn his relations to eſcape. Obſerve,

1. The

Before Chriſt 1897.

1. The command given him, to bring out all he could perſuade of his relations from the ruin. *Note*, Thoſe who are themſelves awakened to a ſenſe of their danger, muſt uſe their utmoſt efforts to perſuade others to fly with themſelves from the wrath to come.

2. Lot's haſte to inform his kinſmen, his ſons in law, and their families. Up, get you out. Abrupt and urgent; beſpeaking his ſollicitude, their danger, and the neceſſity of immediate compliance. *Note*, (1.) Miniſters cannot be too warm and urgent in their addreſs to ſinners conſciences. (2.) They who are in jeopardy every hour, have not a moment to trifle with.

3. Their reception of him. They thought him mad or melancholy, and laughed at his fears. *Note*, 1. Many now laugh at hell, who will ſhortly wail there eternally. 2. To mock at God's warnings, is the way to haſten his judgments. Such mockers ſtill are found. 3. It is no uncommon thing for deſpiſers of the goſpel to treat the miniſters of it as enthuſiaſts or melancholic.

15. ¶ And when the morning aroſe, then the angels haſtened Lot, ſaying, Ariſe, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which † are here; leſt thou be conſumed in ‡ the iniquity of the city. 16. And [k] while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and ſet him without the city. 17. And it came to paſs, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he ſaid, Eſcape for thy life; [l] look not behind thee, neither ſtay thou in all the plain: eſcape to the mountain, leſt thou be conſumed. 18. And Lot ſaid unto them, Oh not ſo, my Lord. 19. Behold now, thy ſervant hath found grace in thy ſight, and thou haſt magnified thy mercy, which thou haſt ſhewed unto me in ſaving my life: and I cannot eſcape to the mountain, leſt ſome evil take me, and I die. 20. Behold now, this city *is* near to flee unto, and it *is* a little one: Oh let me eſcape thither, (*is* it not a little one?) and my ſoul ſhall live. 21. And he ſaid unto him, See, I have accepted † thee concerning this thing alſo, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou haſt ſpoken. 22. Haſte thee, eſcape thither: for [m] I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither: therefore [n] the name of the city was called Zoar.

† Heb. Are found.
‡ Or Puniſhment.
[k] Wiſd. x. 6.
[l] ver. 26. Matt. xxiv. 16, 17, 18. Luke ix. 62. Phil. iii. 13, 14.
† Heb. Thy face.
[m] See chap. xxxii. 25, 26. Exod. xxxii. 10. Deut. ix. 14. Mark vi. 5.
[n] Chap. xiii. 10. & xiv. 2.

v. 15—22. We have here, Lot's flight and reſcue from the burnings of Sodom. Though ten righteous were not found to ſave the whole, one righteous man is found, and he ſhall ſave himſelf and family. Obſerve,

1. Lot's lingring in Sodom. How loth to part from his houſe, his goods, his ſons, his daughters; but go he muſt, or periſh in the flames. *Note*, (1.) Worldly things are a great ſnare to the heart. (2.) Theſe cauſe many an awakened ſoul to linger, through fear of loſs, or hope of gain, inſtead of coming out of the world, and being ſeparate. (3.) It is owing to God's ſovereign grace, that we are with a holy violence forced away, and ſaved from the effects of our ſinful lingerings.

2. The angels haſte to get him away; they laid hold on him, and his daughters, and brought them out, and then urge their flight to the mountain, without ſo much as ſtopping by the way, or caſting a look on the devoted cities. *Note*, (1.) They who would fly from ſin to Chriſt Jeſus, muſt never think of ſeeking reſt any where but in him. (2.) To look back with regret on the pleaſures of ſin, is the way to be again entangled thereby. (3.) Till death, we muſt haſten our flight faſter and faſter from the world which lieth in wickedneſs.

3. Lot's requeſt. *A mixture of unbelief.* Why could not he who called him out, help him on his way? How often does unbelief aſſault the faithful ſoul! A *mixture* of charity. If Bela was his refuge, his ſafety would be theirs alſo. It was a little city; perhaps leſs wicked therefore. God mingles his mercy in the midſt of judgment.

4. It is granted. Though there might be much infirmity in Lot's pretending to chuſe the place of his ſafety, the more mercy is manifeſted in God's yielding to his requeſt. Effectual fervent prayer availeth much. *Note*, 1. A righteous man ſaved the city; how valuable ſuch men! yet uſually they are thought the troublers. 2. God's hands ſeem bound till he is ſafe: thoſe who have everlaſting promiſes for their hope, need not fear to periſh: God cannot deny himſelf.

23. ¶ The ſun † was riſen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. 24. Then [o] the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimſtone and fire from the LORD out of heaven. 25. And he overthrew thoſe cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

† Heb. Gone forth.
[o] Deut. xxix. 23. Iſa. xiii. 19. Jer. l. 40. Ezek. xvi. 49. Hoſ. xi. 8. Amos iv. 11. Zeph. ii. 9. Luke xvii. 29. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 7.

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v. 23—25. Bright was the ſun which roſe upon devoted Sodom. Safe in their fooliſh confidence, Lot's flight afforded matter of freſh ridicule, and now they can welcome the returning day. But ſee when ſinners are in the heighth of their ſecurity, how deſtruction overtakes them. The ſun is covered, the ſtorm ariſes, the lightnings glare, the heavens are on fire, the flames deſcend, the ſmoaking cities ſend up their dying cries. Too late to call for mercy, it is the time of judgment. Mark the end of ſinners vain confidence.

Learn, 1. If judgments are on the earth, it is the Lord's work. The Lord Jeſus is not only the Saviour of thoſe who believe in him, like Lot, but he is the judge and deſtroyer of thoſe who, like Sodom, reject his ſalvation. 2. They who go after ſtrange fleſh, may expect to be puniſhed with ſtrange judgments. 3. What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Fools now make a mock of ſin, but they will find it a bitter thing, when they ſhall feel, with Sodom, the vengeance of eternal fire, *Jude*, 7.

26. ¶ But his wife looked back from behind him, and ſhe became [p] a pillar of ſalt.

[p] Wiſd. x. 7. Luke xvii. 32.

v. 26. But four came out of Sodom, and one was loſt by the way. Behold, and tremble. Remember Lot's wife.

1. Her ſin: looking back. Diſobedient to the command, and diſtruſtful of the threatning, with unſubdued affection to her worldly enjoyments, ſhe was drawn out by violence, but her heart was behind. *Note*, 1. They who make profeſſion of religion, out of complaiſance to their friends, or by mere conſtraint, will ſoon make ſhipwreck of it, to their ſhame. 2. If we think of leaving our ſin, we muſt make no reſerve, either in affection or practice: once on the way to heaven, we muſt perſevere; to look back, is to return unto perdition. Let us fear then, leaſt we fall.

2. Her puniſhment: a pillar of ſalt; a laſting memorial to warn ſucceeding ages. *Note*, (1.) Many a ſaint of God goes to heaven, and leaves his wife, through her perverſeneſs, on the plain. (2.) No inducement muſt tempt us to ſtay, or look back on them; if they will not go with us, we muſt leave them to their ruin.

27. ¶ And Abraham gat up early in the morning, to the place where [q] he ſtood before the LORD. 28. And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the ſmoke of the country went up as the ſmoke of a furnace. 29. ¶ And it came to paſs, when God deſtroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembred Abraham, and ſent Lot out of the midſt of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

[q] Chap. xviii. 22.

v. 27—29. Abraham ſpent the night, no doubt, ſollicitous about the iſſue of his prayer, and at early dawn, ariſes to ſee what God had determined. And here we have,

1. The awful ſight before him; the deſolate plain, and ſmoaking ruins of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Satisfied in the vengeance, no doubt he juſtified God in his judgments. The ſaints who ſhall praiſe God in glory for his mercies to themſelves, ſhall alſo when the ſmoak of the ſinners torment aſcends, cry Hallelujah, *Rev.* xix. 3.

2. The kind remembrance God had of Abraham, in the reſcue of Lot. *Note*, (1.) When we are enquiring after the anſwer of our prayers, we ſhall certainly find their effect; if not in our own way, yet in ſuch a way, as we have need be thankful for. (2.) Connexions with true believers, are great bleſſings; we often find the benefit of their prayers.

30. ¶ And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

v. 30. Lot's removal from Zoar. Whether ſhocked at their wickedneſs, or frightened with the apprehenſions of thoſe waters, that now roſe to make the lake of Sodom, he flies to that mountain, which before he was ſo unwilling to go to, and leaves the city, to dwell more ſecurely in a cave. *Note*, 1. Our own choice ſeldom proves good, and therefore, ſooner or later, God by diſappointments brings us to follow his will as the beſt. 2. Lot's plenty, that the land could not hold, is now gone, and a hole in a mountain contains his little all. *Note*, Thoſe who for ſecular advantage, leave God's people, will ſmart for it uſually in grievous diſappointments.

31. ¶ And the firſt-born ſaid unto the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come

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in unto us after the manner of all the earth. 32. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preſerve ſeed of our father. 33. And they made their father drink wine, that night: and the firſt-born went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when ſhe lay down, nor when ſhe aroſe. 34. And it came to paſs on the morrow, that the firſt-born ſaid unto the younger, Behold, I lay yeſternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night alſo; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preſerve ſeed of our father. 35. And they made their father drink wine that night alſo: and the younger aroſe, and lay with him; and he perceived not when ſhe lay down, nor when ſhe aroſe. 36. Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. 37. And the firſt-born bare a ſon, and called his name Moab: the ſame *is* the father of the Moabites unto this day. 38. And the younger, ſhe alſo bare a ſon, and called his name Benammi: the ſame *is* the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

v. 31—38. How little ſafety is there for us from ſin in any place? He who was kept in Sodom, is overcome in a cave. We have here,

1. His daughter's wicked contrivance. They had, it is to be feared, been too much tinctured with Sodom's ſin, and were eye-witneſſes of its puniſhment: now the old ſore breaks out again; what they could not effect when their father was ſober, they endeavour to bring about by drunkenneſs, and thus one crime is aggravated with another. *Note*, (1.) When a woman's heart is ſet on wickedneſs, it will go hard, but ſhe ſucceeds. (2.) No judgments can reſtrain thoſe, whom divine grace doth not change. (3.) Solitude is ſo far from being a cure to lewdneſs, that it there uſually prevails: to fly away from theſe evil imaginations into company, is their readieſt cure.

2. Lot's ſhameful and ſcandalous fall. Lord, what is man, if left to himſelf! Drunk and inceſtuous, and thus repeatedly too: let us read it with horror. *Note*, (1.) No man this ſide heaven, is ſafe from preſumptuous ſins, or above praying to be kept from them. (2.) Drunkenneſs hath no end of evil; then every crime without horror or ſhame is eaſily committed. (3.) Let neareſt relatives beware: the freedoms of their relation may degenerate into the fouleſt indulgences.

3. The fruit of this inceſtuous commerce. Two ſons, Moab and Ammon; and two nations alſo, a perpetual memorial of Lot's ſhame. *Note*, Though proſperity may ſeem to attend the moſt unnatural ſins, the end will be miſery and ſhame.

CHAP. XX.

We are here returning to the ſtory of Abraham, yet that part of it which is here recorded, is not to his honour. While there are ſpots in the ſun, we muſt not expect any thing ſpotleſs under it. The ſcripture is impartial in relating the blemiſhes even of its moſt celebrated ſaints. We have here, 1. *Abraham's ſin in denying his wife, and Abimelech's ſin thereupon in taking her*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *God's diſcourſe with Abimelech in a dream, wherein he ſhews him his error*, ver. 3. *Accepts of his plea*, ver. 4. 5. 6. *and directs him to make reſtitution*, ver. 7. 3. *Abimelech's reproof of Abraham*, ver. 8, 9, 10. *Abraham's excuſe*, ver. 11, 12, 13. 4. *The good iſſue of the ſtory, in which Abimelech reſtores Abraham his wife*, ver. 14, 15, 16. *and Abraham, by prayer, prevails with God for the removal of the judgment Abimelech was under*, ver. 17, 18.

1. AND Abraham journeyed from thence toward the ſouth country, and dwelled between [a] Kadeſh and Shur, and ſojourned in Gerar. And Abraham ſaid of Sarah his wife, [b] She *is* my ſiſter: and Abimelech king of Gerar ſent and took Sarah.

[a] Chap. xvi. 7, 14.
[b] Chap. xii. 13.

v. 1, 2. Abraham's removal is here mentioned, and his ſojourning among the Philiſtines. *Note*, Wherever we are in this world, we muſt remember we are but ſojourners, as all our fathers were. We have here,

1. A repetition of his former equivocation, and probably on the ſame account. Though Sarah was now in years, ſhe was yet beautiful. *Note*, It is a ſad thing to be overtaken with ſin, it is worſe to relapſe into it, but ſtill the backſlider may return. Let none preſume they cannot fall; let none fallen, ſink into deſpair.

2. The danger to which Sarah is again expoſed. When unbelieving fear comes upon us, the evils we ſhould otherwiſe avoid overtake us.

3. But [c] God came to [d] Abimelech in a dream by night, and ſaid to him, Behold thou *art but* a dead man, for the woman which thou haſt taken: for ſhe *is* † a mans wife. 4. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he ſaid, LORD, wilt thou ſlay alſo a righteous nation? 5. Said he not unto me, She *is* my ſiſter? and ſhe, even ſhe herſelf ſaid, he *is* my brother: in the ‡ integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this. 6. And God ſaid unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didſt this in the integrity of thy heart: for [e] I alſo with-held thee from ſinning [f] againſt me: therefore ſuffered I thee not to touch her. 7. Now therefore reſtore the man *his* wife; for [g] he *is* a prophet, and he ſhall pray for thee, and thou ſhalt live: and if thou reſtore *her* not, know thou, that thou ſhalt ſurely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

[c] Pſal. cv. 14.
[d] Job xxxiii. 14, 15.

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† Heb. Married to an huſband.
‡ Or ſimplicity, or ſincerity.
[e] Chap. xxxi. 7. & xxxv. 5. Exod. xxxiv. 24. 1 Sam. xxv. 26.
[f] Chap. xxxix. 9. Lev. vi. 2. Pſal. li. 4.
[g] 1 Sam. vii. 5. 2 Kings, v. 11. Job xlii. 8.

v. 3—7. God again interpoſes to ſave Sarah from her imminent danger. We have,

1. His appearance to Abimelech, to warn him of his danger in a dream. Why may not dreams ſometimes be ſtill monitory? He informs him he is a dead man if he touch her. *Note*, Every ſin hath this wages. The ſinner is already dead in the eye of God's law.

2. Abimelech's plea; ignorance, and in this caſe innocence. It is a bleſſed plea to have the teſtimony of a good conſcience. God will not ſlay the righteous.

3. God's acceptance of it, and injunction. He, who knew his heart, was ſatisfied of his integrity. *Note*, God's approbation is a counterbalance againſt every unjuſt ſuſpicion of the world. And God it was, who had with-held him. *Note*, God's reſtraining grace we are all wonderfully indebted to: How much worſe elſe had we been than we are? But he muſt ſend her back, or die, for ſhe is a prophet's wife, whoſe prayers ſhould be accepted for him. Learn (1.) God's prophets have his peculiar care. (2.) The king upon the throne is as much expoſed to the divine wrath by ſin, as the meaneſt. Let kings remember, they have the ſame law to be judged by, as their ſubjects.

8. Therefore Abimelech roſe early in the morning, and called all his ſervants, and told all theſe things in their ears: and the men were ſore afraid. 9. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and ſaid unto him, What haſt thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that [h] thou haſt brought on me and on my kingdom a great ſin? thou haſt done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. 10. And Abimelech ſaid unto Abraham, What ſaweſt thou, that thou haſt done this thing? 11. And Abraham ſaid, Becauſe I thought, Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place; and they will ſlay me for my wifes ſake. 12. And yet indeed *ſhe is* my ſiſter; ſhe *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother: and ſhe became my wife. 13. And it came to paſs, when God cauſed me to wander from my fathers houſe, that I ſaid unto her, This *is* thy kindneſs which thou ſhalt ſhew unto me; At every place whither we ſhall come, [i] ſay of me, He *is* my brother.

[h] Chap. xxvi. 10.
[i] Chap. xii. 13.

v. 8—13. We have here,

1. Abimelech's care and haſte to get rid of Sarah: he warns his ſervants, and trembles himſelf. When ſin is in the caſe, we cannot be too ſollicitous to be rid of it.

2. His ſerious reproof of Abraham, *v.* 9. A great ſin, that would have involved his kingdom in ruin, without any provocation, brought on him by Abraham's ſuſpicious fear, and falſe diſſimulation. *Note*, (1.) Adultery is among the greateſt of ſins. (2.) Kings ſhall rue for it. (3.) Their people are often involved in their puniſhment. (4.) The greateſt injury any man can do us, is to lead us into ſin. (5.) Uncharitable ſuſpicions are very evil to ourſelves, and oftentimes the cauſe of greater evil to others.

3. Abraham's weak and ſorry excuſe. His fears of the place beſpoke his cenſoriouſneſs; his fears for his wife, his unbelief. *Note*, (1.) We are too haſtily apt to conclude they have no religion, who are not exactly in our way of thinking: but we are often miſtaken to our ſhame; their practice reproves us. (2.) All equivocations generally lead us into ſcrapes. Truth will never ſhame its author.

14. And Abimelech [k] took ſheep, and oxen, and men-ſervants, and women-ſervants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and reſtored him Sarah his wife. 15. And Abimelech ſaid, Behold, my land *is* before thee: dwell † where it pleaſeth thee. 16. And unto Sarah he ſaid, Behold, I have given thy brother a thouſand *pieces* of ſilver: behold, he *is* to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that *are* with thee, and with all *other*; thus ſhe was reprov-

[k] Chap. xii. 16.
† Heb. As is good in thine eyes.

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reproved. 17. ¶ So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-ſervants; and they *bare* children. 18. For the LORD had faſt cloſed up all the wombs of the houſe of Abimelech, becauſe of Sarah Abrahams wife.

v. 14—18. Abraham's unreaſonable fears are farther rebuked by Abimelech's kindneſs.

1. He reſtores Sarah, and with her makes a noble preſent, as a repair of his miſtake, with full licence to live wherever he choſe: and he adds a warning to Sarah, againſt the like prevarication. *Note*, (1.) When we find a good man, he is worth making our friend. (2.) Let Sarah's daughters remember, their eyes and their affections ſhould be covered to all, but their own huſbands.

2. Abraham's return for Abimelech's favours. He prayed for him, and God healed his family of their barrenneſs. *Note*, The prayers of God's people for us, are the beſt returns they can make us.

CHAP. XXI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Iſaac, the child of promiſe, born into Abraham's family,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Iſhmael, the ſon of the bond-woman, caſt out of it,* ver. 9—21. 3. *Abraham's league with his neighbour Abimelech,* ver. 22—32. 4. *His devotion to his God,* ver. 33, 34.

1. AND the LORD viſited Sarah, as he had ſaid, and the LORD did unto Sarah [a] as he had ſpoken. 2. For Sarah [b] conceived, and bare Abraham a ſon in his old age, [c] at the ſet time which God had ſpoken to him. 3. And Abraham called the name of his ſon that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, [d] Iſaac. 4. And Abraham circumciſed his ſon Iſaac, being eight days old, [e] as God had commanded him. 5. And [f] Abraham was an hundred years old, when his ſon Iſaac was born unto him.

[a] Chap. xvii. 19. & xviii. 10, 14.
[b] Acts vii. 8. Gal. iv. 22. Heb. xi. 11.
[c] Chap. xvii. 21.
[d] Chap. xvii. 19.
[e] Chap. xvii. 10, 12.
[f] Chap. xvii. 1, 17.

v. 1—5. Iſaac, at laſt is born; the wonder and expectation of his day. Obſerve,

1. The fulfilment of the promiſe, when all human proſpects were at an end; when Abraham was as dead, and Sarah paſt the time of child-bearing. *Note*, (1.) Promiſed mercies will come in God's time. (2.) God can work for us, when we moſt deſpair of ourſelves. (3.) What nature cannot do, faith can, *Heb.* xi. 11.

2. Abraham's carefulneſs to obſerve God's preſcribed order, to circumciſe him on the eighth day, and give him the name of Iſaac. *Note*, When our hearts are circumciſed, and our new name given us, as ſons of Abraham, Iſaac's, ſons of laughter, then ſhall we rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

6. ¶ And Sarah ſaid, [g] God hath made me to laugh, *ſo that* all that hear will laugh with me. 7. And ſhe ſaid, Who would have ſaid unto Abraham, that Sarah ſhould have given children ſuck? for I have born *him* a ſon in his old age. 8. And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feaſt the *ſame* day that Iſaac was weaned.

[g] Iſa. liv. 1. & lxvi. 10. Gal. iv. 27.

v. 6—8. Obſerve, 1. Sarah laughed once in diſtruſt. Now with thankfulneſs and wonder filled, ſhe acknowledges God's goodneſs, to make her give ſuck, and be a joyful mother: Who could have thought it? but God doth more for us, than all we can aſk or think. Learn (1.) When mercies come, to receive them with wonder and love. (2.) To rejoice with thoſe who rejoice. (3.) Not to forget our ſinful diſtruſts, whilſt the mercy was delayed. (4.) To take care of the children God gives us. Every mother ſhould ſuckle, if ſhe can, her own children. It is unnatural to refuſe our breaſts to the fruit of our womb. (5.) Every redeemed ſoul in glory will wonder at himſelf: who could have ſaid or thought that ſuch a vile ſinner ſhould have ſuch a bleſſed portion?

2. Iſaac's infancy; his weaning, and the feaſt Abraham made at it. *Note*, There are ſome ſeaſons, when feaſting is not only innocent, but becoming. To rejoice before God in our feaſts, for mercies beſtowed, will preſerve us from exceſs, and enable us to eat and drink to his glory.

9. ¶ And Sarah ſaw the ſon of Hagar [h] the Egyptian, which ſhe had born unto Abraham, [i] mocking. 10. Wherefore ſhe ſaid unto Abraham, [k] Caſt out this bond-woman, and her ſon: for the ſon of this bond-woman ſhall not be heir with my ſon, *even* with Iſaac. 11. And the thing was very grievous in Abrahams ſight, becauſe of his ſon. 12. ¶ And God ſaid unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy ſight, becauſe of the lad, and becauſe of thy bond-woman; in all that Sarah hath ſaid unto thee, hearken unto her voice: for [l] in Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called. 13. And alſo of the ſon of the bond-woman will I make [m] a nation, becauſe he *is* thy ſeed.

[h] Chap. xvi. 1.
[i] Gal. iv. 29.
[k] Gal. iv. 30. See Chap. xxv. 6. & xxxvi. 6, 7.

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[l] Rom. ix. 7. Heb. xi. 18.
[m] Ver. 18. chap. xvi. 10. & xvii. 20.

v. 9—13. The caſting out the bond-woman and her ſon, is here commanded.

1. The cauſe. Iſhmael's mockery of Iſaac, which the Apoſtle calls perſecuting him, *Gal.* iv. 29. Sarah, diſpleaſed with ſuch abuſe, reſolves to diſmiſs him the family, with his mother. *Note*, (1.) Mockery is real perſecution. (2.) This at leaſt all who live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer. (3.) None are rejected of God without cauſe. (4.) They who are the ſeed of the bond-woman, all ſelf-righteous and carnal perſons, have no part in the kingdom of God, or of Chriſt.

2. Abraham's unwillingneſs. Though Iſhmael was not the favoured ſeed, he was a ſon. He was ſorry for the provocation, but more grieved at the thought of his expulſion. Learn, (1.) How great a grief to godly parents, is the ſin of their children. (2.) That when extremities of puniſhment are neceſſary, it is as bitter to the parent to inflict it, as to the child to ſuffer it.

3. God determines the matter by a revelation of his will: this ſatisfies him. *Note*, When we are in doubt about duty, God will make the way clear before us; and when he doth, we ſhould be ſatisfied. The reaſon God gives is the promiſed ſeed which ſhould deſcend from Iſaac, therefore Iſhmael's example may corrupt him, or his ſuperiority of age lead him to invade his birthright. Not that Iſhmael is utterly rejected; God may have mercies for him, though not under the peculiar covenant of Iſaac, and he is promiſed to become a nation for Abraham's ſake. God hath variety of gifts to beſtow, but he hath ſurely a right to do as he will with his own, to give one leſs, another more. Let us not preſume to impeach his ſovereignty.

14. And Abraham roſe up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave *it* unto Hagar (putting *it* on her ſhoulder) and the child, and ſent her away: and ſhe departed, and wandered in the wilderneſs of Beerſheba. 15. And the water was ſpent in the bottle, and ſhe caſt the child under one of the ſhrubs. 16. And ſhe went, and ſat her down over-againſt *him*, a good way off, as it were a bow-ſhot: for ſhe ſaid, Let me not ſee the death of the child. And ſhe ſat over-againſt *him*, and lift up her voice, and wept. 17. And God heard the voice of the lad: and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and ſaid unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he *is*. 18. Ariſe, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand: for [n] I will make him a great nation. 19. And [o] God opened her eyes, and ſhe ſaw a well of water, and ſhe went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. 20. And God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderneſs, and [p] became an archer. 21. And he dwelt in the wilderneſs of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

[n] Ver. 13.
[o] Numb. xxii. 31. See 2 Kings, vi. 17, 18, 20. Luke xxiv. 16, 31.
[p] Chap. xvi. 12.

v. 14—21. Abraham no longer heſitates, when God commands; though parental tenderneſs might plead, or Hagar's fate appear ſevere, it is enough for him to hear and obey. Thus he is trained up by one exerciſe of obedience, to the ſeverer taſk preparing for him in Iſaac. He gives them a little proviſion, and ſends them thus away. *Note*, Nature may ſtruggle hard, but when God's glory requires, wife and children muſt be parted with. We have hereupon,

1. Hagar's diſtreſs with her ſon in the wilderneſs. Her ſcanty proviſion exhauſted, weary with wandering, fainting with drought, famiſhed with hunger, the tender child ſinks down by her ſide, whilſt ſhe, unable to relieve his wants, with tenderneſs, ſuch as mothers feel, aggravated by diſtreſs ſo bitter, with face averted from her dying ſon, a ſcene too moving to behold, burſts into a flood of tears, and fills the ſolitary wilderneſs with unavailing lamentations. The former promiſes are all forgotten, and deſpair of help finiſhes her wretchedneſs.

2. Now was God's time of mercy. He, who beholds the tears of the miſerable, and hears the groans of thoſe who cannot cry to him, oppreſſed beneath their load of grief too big for utterance, He is near. God's voice is heard; a voice of tender pity, What aileth thee? ariſe, lift up the lad: he opens the fountain, dries up her tears, and Iſhmael lives; nay more, is great, grows up under God's care, and begins, in the ſettlement of his family, to ſee the fulfilment of the promiſe. Behold here, (1.) A lively picture of the awakened ſinner: he is brought into the wilderneſs, his miſery overtakes him, no help

is near, and nothing but unavoidable death before his eyes. (2.) Then God opens the fountain of mercy in the ſide of Jeſus, and opens his eyes to ſee it near. (3.) Inſtant the heart flies to this relief, and finds life in thoſe waters which Chriſt can give. (4.) From that hour, God is with him; and though in the wilderneſs of the world, he grows under his care; till (5.) He reaps the final bleſſing promiſed in the land of bliſs and glory everlaſting.

22. ¶ And it came to paſs at that time, that [q] Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his hoſt, ſpake unto Abraham, ſaying, God *is* with thee in all that thou doeſt. 23. Now therefore ſwear unto me here by God,† that thou wilt not deal falſely with me, nor with my ſon, nor with my ſons ſon: *but* according to the kindneſs that I have done unto thee, thou ſhalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou haſt ſojourned. 24. And Abraham ſaid, I will ſwear. 25. And Abraham reproved Abimelech, becauſe of a well of water, which Abimelechs ſervants had [r] violently taken away. 26. And Abimelech ſaid, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didſt thou tell me, neither yet heard I *of it* but to day. 27. And Abraham took ſheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech: and both of them made a covenant. 28. And Abraham ſet ſeven ewe-lambs of the flock by themſelves. 29. And Abimelech ſaid unto Abraham, What mean theſe ſeven ewe-lambs, which thou haſt ſet by themſelves? 30. And he ſaid, For *theſe* ſeven ewe-lambs, ſhalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witneſs unto me, that I have digged this well. 31. Wherefore he called that place Beer-ſheba†: becauſe there they ſware both of them. 32. Thus they made a covenant at Beer-ſheba: then Abimelech roſe up, and Phichol the chief captain of his hoſt, and they returned into the land of the Philiſtines.

[q] Chap. xx. 2. & xxvi. 26.

† Heb. If thou ſhalt lie unto me.

[r] See chap. xxvi. 15, 18, 20, 21, 22.

† *i. e.* The well of the oath.

v. 22—32. The remarkable favours ſhewn to Abraham, engaged the growing reſpect of his neighbours, which brings Abimelech to renew his acquaintance with him, and to cement it by a ſolemn covenant.

1. Abimelech's propoſal. Convinced of God's peculiar regard to him, he would engage him for his perpetual friend, and under oath of mutual kindneſs, ſecure to his ſon and ſons ſon, this great bleſſing of Abraham's friendſhip. *Note*, (1.) It is wiſe to take care that our children, when we are dead and gone, may be in good hands, and connected with the friends of God. (2.) Good done us is an obligation to return it, as Abimelech pleads.

2. Abraham conſents; but firſt acquaints Abimelech with a tranſaction, of which he denies the knowledge, reſpecting a well. This matter is amicably adjuſted, as differences between brethren ſhould be. *Note*, Servants are often in fault, when the maſter is blamed. The treaty then is paſſed; and after liberal preſents, Abraham ratifies it with an oath. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us not to reject proffers of friendſhip: we may be connected with thoſe as worldly friends, whom we cannot acknowledge as Chriſtian brethren. We ſhould be courteous to all men. (2.) An oath is lawful on ſolemn occaſions, and a confirmation of confidence, as well as an end of ſtrife.

3. The name the well bore ever after, Beer-ſheba, alluding to the oath there made, or the ſeven lambs, which confirmed it to Abraham: the word Sheba bears either ſenſe. (1.) If we ſwear, let us be punctual in the obſervance. (2.) If we bargain, let us make our bargain good.

33. ¶ And *Abraham* planted a † grove in Beer-ſheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlaſting God. 34. And Abraham ſojourned in the Philiſtines land many days.

† Or tree.

v. 33—34. Here for a while he ſettles in comfort, yet hath not a home, but a lodging: but wherever his abode, there ſhall be a houſe of prayer. He plants a grove, a place for contemplation; or an open oratory ſet apart for his own and his family devotions, and any of his neighbours who chuſe to join with him, and the object of his worſhip is the everlaſting God. Happy they who follow his ſteps, and find the everlaſting arms of this everlaſting God under them, as Abraham did.

CHAP. XXII.

We have here that famous ſtory of Abraham's offering up his ſon Iſaac, which is juſtly looked upon as one of the wonders of the church. Here is, 1. *The ſtrange command which God gave to Abraham concerning it*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Abraham's ſtrange obedience to this command*, ver. 3—10. 3. *The ſtrange iſſue of this trial.* 1. *The ſacrificing of Iſaac was countermanded*, ver. 11, 12. 2. *Another ſacrifice was provided*, ver. 13, 14. 3. *The covenant was renewed with Abraham hereupon*, ver. 15—19. *Laſtly, Account of ſome of Abraham's relations*, ver. 20, ad finem.

1. AND it came to paſs after theſe things, that [a] God did tempt Abraham, and ſaid unto him, Abraham. And he ſaid, † Behold, *here* I *am*. 2. And he ſaid, Take now thy ſon, thine only *ſon* Iſaac, whom thou loveſt, and get thee [b] into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

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[a] Hebr. xi. 17.

† Heb. Behold me.

[b] 2 Chron. iii. 1.

v. 1, 2. Whilſt we are in the body, we muſt be kept in the exerciſe of faith and obedience. There is no reſt, till the body reſts in death. Abraham had weathered his ſtorms, and began to enjoy repoſe in the comfort of thoſe bleſſings God had beſtowed on him. But now a greater ſtorm of temptation overtakes him, than ever he felt before. He had left his home, and expelled his ſon Iſhmael; but now the very hope and joy of his life is called, and Iſaac muſt bleed. Obſerve,

1. The author of this fiery trial, God; who cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, *i. e.* to ſin; but his temptations are to prove the truth, and increaſe the ſtrength of the faith of his ſervants. *Note*, If a man hath ſevere trials, it is to make him a burning light to God's glory.

2. The command given. When Abraham expects ſome meſſage of peace, as uſual, from his covenant God, how ſurprized muſt he be to hear the dreadful word, Take now thy ſon, make no delay; I call for thy ſon, take him, thine only ſon, in whom thou art ſo wrapped up, that the other is as nothing in thine eyes. This Iſaac, the child of thine age, the ſtaff of thy hopes; this darling, whom thou loveſt ſo tenderly, I call for: Iſaac muſt be offered up to me, not as my ſervant, but as my ſacrifice. Thy hands muſt ſlay him: thou muſt kindle the fire, and lay him thereon. Moriah is the diſtant place, and when thou comeſt, I will ſhew thee the mountain where he muſt be offered a whole burnt ſacrifice unto me. Did ever parent's heart hear ſo afflictive a command, where every word is torture, and pointed as a dagger to the heart.

3. ¶ And Abraham roſe up early in the morning, and ſaddled his aſs, and took two of his young men with him, and Iſaac his ſon; and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and roſe up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 4. Then on the third day Abraham lift up his eyes, and ſaw the place afar off. 5. And Abraham ſaid unto his young men, Abide you here with the aſs; and I and the lad will go yonder and worſhip, and come again to you. 6. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid *it* upon Iſaac his ſon; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife: and they went both of them together. 7. And Iſaac ſpake unto Abraham his father, and ſaid, My father: and he ſaid, † Here *am* I, my ſon. And he ſaid, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? 8. And Abraham ſaid, My ſon, God will provide himſelf a ‡ lamb for a burnt-offering: ſo they went both of them together. 9. And they came to the place which God had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order; and bound Iſaac his ſon, and [c] laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10. And Abraham ſtretched forth his hand, and took the knife to ſlay his ſon.

† Heb. Behold me.

‡ Or kid.

[c] Jam. ii. 21.

v. 3—10. With ſilent awe the patriarch hears, and heſitates not to obey. A thouſand arguments no doubt aroſe. Can God enjoin what he hath forbidden? Muſt Abraham become an unnatural monſter? Can human ſacrifices pleaſe him? and muſt a father murder his ſon? Can ſuch an unreaſonable as well as unnatural command come from God? What and where then is the promiſed ſeed? Sprinkled with the blood of her ſon, how ſhall I meet the upbraiding mother? and what will the nations think, when ſhuddering with horror they hear the dreadful tale? Thus fleſh objected: but faith conſults not with fleſh and blood: convinced, beyond the poſſibility of doubt, he had God's warrant, he haſtes to fulfil the dire command.

1. Early in the morning he roſe. Neither deliberation nor delay is admitted. *Note*, In difficult trials of faith, what we do we muſt do quickly.

2. He makes the needful preparations, cleaves the wood, where each ſtroke muſt have hewed his heart with pangs. Saddles his beaſt for diſpatch, and, probably unknown to Sarah, haſtes away. *Note*, The diſtreſs of others for him, is apt to melt down the martyr, more than his approaching ſuffering.

3. After three long days journey, where every ſtep muſt have been anguiſh, the place appears. Abraham undaunted ſees it

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afar off, diſmiſſes his ſervants, leſt they intrude and hinder him: alone he muſt bear the ſhock. *Note*, When we approach to God in worſhip, intruding thoughts and cares ſhould be ſhut out.

4. Iſaac, the darling boy, now bears the wood on which he muſt be extended a breathleſs corpſe; Abraham the fire to conſume, the knife to ſlay him. Who can abide it? what faith can ſtand? Grace is omnipotent.

5. No ſtranger to the wonted rites of ſacrifice, the lovely youth with innocence demands, My father,—a melting word! a piercing remembrancer!—Where is the lamb? Ah hapleſs child! might Abraham bleeding with tenderneſs ſay; it cannot be; thou muſt not lie down weltering in blood beneath my hand, my cruel hand.—No, unmoved, unſhaken, he replies, My ſon, God will provide himſelf a lamb. Thou art the ſacrifice; he gave thee me, and he demands thee back again.

6. The ſpot is fixed, the altar riſes, the wood is laid. Stupendous faith! The ſon, the ſeed, the Iſaac, the darling, is bound, is laid; the knife is drawn, the arm extended, the point deſcending into the ſhivering fleſh. Who can regard the attitude, and not be ſtruck with ſacred dread, with holy horror, and deep amazement, at ſuch determined obedience. God ſees well pleaſed, and ſtays the deſcending ſtroke.

11. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and ſaid, Abraham, Abraham. And he ſaid, Here *am* I. 12. And he ſaid, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt not with-held thy ſon, thine only *ſon* from me. 13. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering, in the ſtead of his ſon. 14. And Abraham called the name of that place † Jehovah-jireh: as it is ſaid *to* this day, in the mount of the LORD it ſhall be ſeen.

† i. e. The Lord will ſee, or, provide.

v. 11—14. Never meſſage greeted mortal ear more welcome.

1. The ſpeaker. The angel of the Lord. That bleſſed angel of the covenant, that only ſon, whom God hath ſpared to bleed for us; he arreſts the uplifted arm, and cries, Slay not thy ſon. Iſaac unbound, with rapture as given from the dead, is claſped to his boſom, twice welcome now, when thus reſtored. The trial was to prove Abraham's faith, not to ſlay his ſon. *Note*, (1.) When we give up every creature comfort to God, then ſhall we moſt enjoy them. (2.) Man's extremity is God's opportunity.

2. The approbation of this glorious inſtance of obedience, *v.* 12. God knew it before; he teſtifies it now for Abraham's comfort, and for his honour, to all ſucceeding ages. *Note*, God accepts our intentions as if accompliſhed; to him the will is the deed.

3. Another ſacrifice provided. When all is ready, the fire ſhall not burn in vain: a ram is in the thicket, and ſupplies the place of Iſaac. *Note*, Praiſe is the fit return of mercy.

4. A name is given the place, in memory of the deed. Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide or ſee. He will do both, behold his people's diſtreſſes with an eye of compaſſion, and provide a relief ſuitable to their wants. None ever truſted in him but found him in mercies abundant, in truth faithful, in promiſes unchangeable.

5. In the whole ſtory we have a lively type of greater things. We have ſeen the day, when God ſpared not his own ſon, when he was bound with cords, when he bore his croſs, and on this mountain, probably on this very ſpot, was offered up an offering for ſin; when he, triumphant over the grave, roſe again to live for ever more, and ſees the ſeed of his redeemed people, whom no man can number, and whoſe poſſeſſions are the glories of heaven and eternity.

6. And now, my ſoul, meditate on theſe things. Art thou a ſon of Abraham? Is there in thine heart a darling ſin? Is there a favourite luſt, like Iſaac, precious in thine eye? Draw forth the knife, and ſmite it to the heart. Hath God ſpared not his ſon for me, and ſhall I ſpare what he commands to ſacrifice? No, gracious Saviour, no. Help me to be faithful, unreſerved, chearful, willing in my ſurrender to thee, to keep back nothing from thee. Then prove me, and ſearch the ground of my heart; and when thou haſt tried me as ſilver is tried, crown the faith thou haſt beſtowed, and the obedience thou haſt wrought, with that unfading glory, which thou haſt promiſed unto thoſe who are faithful unto death.

15. ¶ And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the ſecond time, 16. And ſaid, [d] By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the LORD, for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt not withheld thy ſon, thine only *ſon*: 17. That in bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy ſeed [e] as the ſtars of the heaven, and [f] as the ſand which *is* upon the † ſea-ſhore; and [g] thy ſeed ſhall poſſeſs the gate of his enemies; 18. And [h] in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed: becauſe thou haſt obeyed my voice. 19. So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they roſe up, and went together to Beer-ſheba, and Abraham dwelt at Beer-ſheba.

[d] Pſal. cv. 9. Ecclus. xliv. 21. Luke i. 73. Heb. vi. 13.

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[e] Chap. xv. 5. Jer. xxxiii. 22.

[f] Chap. xiii. 16.

† Heb. Lip of the ſea.

[g] Chap. xxiv. 60.

[h] Chap. xii. 3. & xviii. 18. & xxvi. 4. Ecclus xliv. 22. Acts iii. 25. Gal. iii. 8, 16, 18.

v. 15—19. Thoſe who honour him, God will honour. Abraham pleaſed God, and he ſhall not want his reward.

1. The covenant is confirmed by an oath, to multiply his ſeed, that by two immutable things he might have ſtrong conſolation.

2. The better bleſſing is promiſed; that Meſſiah, in whom not one nation but all nations ſhould be bleſſed; whoſe ſeed ſhould exceed the ſtars; before whoſe victorious arms his enemies ſhould bow, and ſin, Satan, death and hell, receive their final and fatal overthrow. Abraham's natural deſcendants were honourable, great, and numerous; but this incarnate ſon of Abraham's race hath acquired for his people bleſſing, glory, power, dominion, ſuch as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

20. ¶ And it came to paſs after theſe things, that it was told Abraham, ſaying, Behold [i] Milcah, ſhe hath alſo born children unto thy brother Nahor; 21. [k] Huz his firſt-born, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of [l] Aram, 22. And Cheſed, and Hazo, and Pildaſh, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. 23. And [m] Bethuel begat [n] Rebekah: theſe eight Milcah did bear to Nahor Abrahams brother. 24. And his concubine, whoſe name *was* Reumah, ſhe bare alſo Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahaſh, and Maachah.

[i] Chap. xi. 29.

[k] Job i. 1.

[l] Job xxxii. 2.

[m] Chap. xxiv. 15.

[n] Rom. ix. 10.

v. 20—24. Abraham's friends flouriſh as well as himſelf; a numerous family, and, among the reſt, Rebeccah, of whom we ſhall hear more hereafter, and for whoſe ſake chiefly the reſt are mentioned. *Note*, It is a great comfort to hear of the proſperity of our friends; their joy is our own.

CHAP. XXIII.

Here is, 1. *Abraham a mourner for the death of Sarah*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Abraham a purchaſer of a burying-place for Sarah.* 1. *The purchaſe humbly propoſed by Abraham*, ver. 3, 4. 2. *Fairly treated of and agreed with a great deal of mutual civility and reſpect*, ver. 5—16. 3. *The purchaſe money paid*, ver. 16. 4. *The premiſes conveyed and ſecured to Abraham*, ver. 17, 18, 20. 5. *Sarah's funeral*, ver. 19.

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1. AND Sarah was an hundred and ſeven and twenty years old: *theſe were* the years of the life of Sarah. 2. And Sarah died in [a] Kirjath-arba; the ſame *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

[a] Joſh. xiv. 15. Judg. i. 10.

v. 1, 2. Sarah firſt pays the tribute of nature, and Abraham, juſtly afflicted with her loſs, with tears of no fictitious grief, laments the partner of his cares, who had been ſo long the comforter of his pilgrimage. *Note*, (1.) Death will part the neareſt relatives; let us remember and provide againſt it. (2.) Tears are due to the memory of our departed friends. (3.) The great ſupport under ſuch affliction is, when, though we mourn, we can ſay, Bleſſed are the dead who die in the Lord.

3. ¶ And Abraham ſtood up from before his dead, and ſpake unto the ſons of Heth, ſaying, 4. [b] I *am* a ſtranger and a ſojourner with you: give me a poſſeſſion of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my ſight. 5. And the children of Heth anſwered Abraham, ſaying unto him, 6. Hear us, my Lord; thou *art* a † mighty prince amongſt us; in the choice of our ſepulchres bury thy dead: none of us ſhall withhold from thee his ſepulchre, but that thou mayeſt bury thy dead. 7. And Abraham ſtood up, and bowed himſelf to the people of the land, *even* to the children of Heth. 8. And he communed with them, ſaying, If it be your mind that I ſhould bury my dead out of my ſight, hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron, the ſon of Zoar: 9. That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which *is* in the end of his field; for ‡ as much money as it is worth he ſhall give it me, for a poſſeſſion of a burying-place amongſt you. 10. And Ephron dwelt amongſt the children of Heth. And Ephron the Hittite anſwered Abraham in the § audience of

[b] Chap. xvii. 8. Hebr. xi. 13.

† Heb. Prince of God.

‡ Heb. Full money.

§ Heb. Ears.

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of the children of Heth, *even* of all that went in at the gates of his city, ſaying, 11. [c] Nay, my Lord, hear me: the field give I thee; and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; in the preſence of the ſons of my people give I it thee; bury thy dead. 12. And Abraham bowed down himſelf before the people of the land. 13. And he ſpake unto Ephron in the ‖ audience of the people of the land, ſaying, But if thou *wilt give it*, I pray thee hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there. 14. And Ephron anſwered Abraham, ſaying unto him, 15. Nay, my Lord, hearken unto me: the land *is worth* four hundred [d] ſhekels of ſilver: what *is* that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

[c] See 2 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22, 23, 24.
‖ Heb. Ears.
[d] Exod. xxx. 15. Ezek. xlv. 12.

v. 3—15. Abraham in the land of promiſe had neither houſe to cover his head, nor ſepulchre to bury his dead; but his preſent ſituation obliges him to make application for ſo needful a place.

1. His application to the children of Heth. He was a ſtranger among them, and therefore begs the favour to obtain ſome ſmall ſpot for a burying-ground. The beautiful Sarah was now no longer pleaſing; ſhe muſt be hid from his ſight. *Note*, (1.) Death makes ſtrange alterations with the faireſt face. (2.) The death of others ſhould remind us of our own; we are but ſtrangers in this world, and ſojourners, as all our fathers were. (3.) We ſhould beware of over much ſorrow, and ſeek to divert that grief, which, if exceſſive, may hurt ourſelves, but cannot profit the dead.

2. His application is received with the moſt generous offer of the beſt of their ſepulchres. Though he called himſelf a ſtranger, they acknowledged him a great prince.

3. Their civility meets with a reſpectful return. He bowed himſelf in acknowledgment of the favour. It is duty to be courteous. And begs them to intercede with Ephron to ſell the cave of Machpelah. It is no unlawful coveting to deſire to purchaſe what our neighbour can conveniently ſpare, and we need.

4. Ephron's generoſity. He offers to give it; and when Abraham would fain pay him, he mentions the value in ſuch a way, as intimates his readineſs to yield it without any conſideration. It was prudent and juſt in Abraham, who was rich, to preſs the purchaſe. We ſhould not needleſsly be obliged to others. It was noble in Ephron to offer it: it ſhewed a contempt of worldly wealth, and a pleaſure to oblige Abraham, which manifeſted how much he valued his friendſhip. *Note*, (1.) It is well ſo to behave, as to make our friendſhip valued and ſought. (2.) We find a generoſity often among thoſe who pretend not to Chriſtianity, which is a ſevere reproach on niggardly profeſſors of it. (3.) Between true friends nothing ſhould be reſerved. A union of heart will ever in ſome ſort make community of purſe. We ſhall ſay, What is that between me and thee?

16. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron, and Abraham weighed to Ephron the ſilver which he had named in the audience of the ſons of Heth, four hundred ſhekels of ſilver, current *money* with the merchant. 17. ¶ And [e] the field of Ephron, which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field and the cave which *was* therein, and all the trees that *were* in the field, that *were* in all the borders round about, were made ſure 18. Unto Abraham for a poſſeſſion in the preſence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city. 19. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre: the ſame *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan. 20. And the field and the cave that *is* therein were made ſure unto Abraham for a poſſeſſion of a burying-place, by the ſons of Heth.

[e] Chap. xxv. 9. & l. 13. Acts vii. 16.

v. 16—20. Abraham preferring the purchaſe, Ephron accepts the money, and conveys to him the field where the cave ſtood, with all its appurtenances. Abraham is put in poſſeſſion, and the children of Heth witneſs the bargain; and there Sarah's corpſe is depoſited. *Note*, (1.) Fair reckonings make faſt friends. (2.) Fidelity in our bargains is to be ſcrupulouſly obſerved. (3.) The decent care of burial is a profeſſion of our hope of the reſurrection of the body. (4.) Whilſt we are all ſo ſollicitous in general for a burying-place for our bodies in earth, let it quicken us to greater ſollicitude, to ſecure a reſting place for our ſouls in heaven.

CHAP. XXIV.

In the foregoing chapter we had Abraham burying his wife; here we have him marrying his ſon. Here is, 1. *Abraham's care about it, and the charge he gave to his ſervant,* ver. 1—9. 2. *His ſervant's journey into Abraham's country, to ſeek a wife for his young maſter among his own relations,* ver. 10—14. 3. *The kind providence which brought him acquainted with Rebekah, whoſe father was Iſaac's couſin-german,* ver. 15—28. 4. *The treaty of marriage with her relations,* ver. 29—49. 5. *Their conſent obtained,* ver. 50—60. 6. *The happy meeting and marriage between Iſaac and Rebekah,* ver. 61, ad finem.

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1. AND Abraham was old *and* † well ſtricken in age: and the LORD had bleſſed Abraham in all things. 2. And Abraham ſaid [a] unto his eldeſt ſervant of his houſe, that ruled over all that he had, [b] Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: 3. And I will make thee ſwear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that [c] thou ſhalt not take a wife unto my ſon of the daughters of the Canaanites amongſt whom I dwell: 4. But thou ſhalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my ſon Iſaac. 5. And the ſervant ſaid unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: muſt I needs bring thy ſon again into the land from whence thou cameſt? 6. And Abraham ſaid unto him, Beware thou, that thou bring not my ſon thither again. 7. ¶ The LORD God of heaven which [d] took me from my father's houſe, and from the land of my kindred, and which ſpake unto me, and that ſware unto me, ſaying, [e] Unto thy ſeed will I give this land; he ſhall ſend his angel before thee, and thou ſhalt take a wife unto my ſon from thence. 8. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou ſhalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my ſon thither again. 9. And the ſervant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his maſter, and ſware to him concerning that matter.

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† Heb. Gone into days.
[a] Chap. xv. 2.
[b] Chap. xlvii. 29. 1 Chron. xxix. 24. Lam. v. 6.
[c] Chap. xxvi. 35. & xxvii. 46. & xxviii. 2. Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.
[d] Chap. xii. 1, 7.
[e] Chap. xii. 7. & xiii. 15. & xv. 18. & xxvi. 4. Exod. xxxii. 13. Deut. xxxiv. 4. Acts vii. 5.

v. 1—9. As Sarah's death concurred with Abraham's age, in reminding him how few were his days to come; he is deſirous, as a good father, to ſee Iſaac well ſettled before he dies. Two things he was ſollicitous to prevent; his marriage with a daughter of Canaan, and his return to his own country to ſeek a wife. *Note*, (1.) Every godly man or woman ſhould well weigh Abraham's caution. An unconverted partner is a moſt dangerous and deadly ſnare. (2.) Parents, as they have a right to recommend what appears beſt to their children, ſhould, above all things, conſult their ſouls good. In conſequence of theſe views we have,

1. His ſolemn charge given to his ſteward, confirmed by an oath to act herein according to his intentions. He is to go and ſeek a wife from Abraham's kindred, and is ſolemnly enjoined by no means to ſuffer Iſaac to go thither himſelf. The ſteward, according to his known fidelity and affection, conſents readily to be employed, and takes the oath, with one proviſo, if the woman ſhould not be willing to come, he ſhould be free. *Note*, An oath is a ſolemn thing, and cannot be taken with too much warineſs and conſideration.

2. The encouragement Abraham gives him, *v.* 7. Paſt experience aſſured him of preſent ſucceſs: as he knew he was in the way of duty, he doubted not but ſucceſs would attend him. *Note*, It is good to remember the paſt mercies we have received, to encourage us in preſent dependance on the ſame care and kindneſs of our God.

10. ¶ And the ſervant took ten camels, of the camels of his maſter, and departed († for all the goods of his maſter *were* in his hand:) and he aroſe, and went to Meſopotamia, unto [f] the city of Nahor. 11. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, *even* the time ‡ [g] that women go out to draw *water*. 12. And he ſaid, O LORD God of my maſter Abraham, I pray thee ſend me good ſpeed this day, and ſhew kindneſs unto my maſter Abraham. 13. Behold, [h] I ſtand *here* by the well of water, and [i] the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: 14. And let it come to paſs, that the damſel to whom I ſhall ſay, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and ſhe ſhall ſay, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink alſo: *let the ſame be* ſhe *that* thou haſt appointed for thy ſervant Iſaac; and [k] thereby ſhall I know that thou haſt ſhewed kindneſs unto my maſter.

† Or, And.
[f] Chap. xxvii. 43.
‡ Heb. That women, which draw water, go forth.
[g] Exod. ii. 16. 1 Sam. ix. 11.
[h] Ver. 43.
[i] Chap. xxix. 9. Exod. ii. 16.
[k] See Judg. vi. 17, 37. 1 Sam. vi. 7. & xiv. 8. & xx. 7. 1 Mac. v. 40.

v. 10—14. How great a bleſſing is a truſty ſervant. We have here,

1. His expeditious journey, and ſafe arrival in Meſopotamia, where Nahor dwelt. It is mentioned to his honour; for that

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ſervant who makes conſcience of his duty, will find favour with him who is no reſpecter of perſons.

2. His earneſt addreſs to God, for a bleſſing and direction in this important buſineſs. *Note*, Where ſervants learn to pray, and fear God, the buſineſs of that family will proſper. He begs he may have good ſpeed that day. *Note*, Thoſe who begin the day with prayer, may hope to end it with praiſe. The particular mercy he ſeeks, is a ſuitable partner for his maſter's ſon; and he mentions thoſe beſt qualifications, humility of temper, and induſtry in her ſtation; begging by theſe ſigns God would point out the perſon at the well where his camels reſted. *Note*, (1.) In difficult caſes it is wiſeſt to begin with prayer for direction. (2.) It is a great mark of ſpiritual prudence, to look for and follow the leadings of God's providence. (3.) Thoſe who are found moſt induſtrious and gentle in the houſe of their father, will prove moſt amiable and uſeful in the houſe of their huſband.

15. ¶ And it came to paſs before he had done ſpeaking, that Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel ſon of [l] Milcah the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her ſhoulder. 16. And the damſel *was* † very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her, and ſhe went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. 17. And the ſervant ran to meet her, and ſaid, Let me, (I pray thee) drink a little water of thy pitcher; 18. And ſhe ſaid, Drink, my lord: and ſhe haſted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. 19. And when ſhe had done giving him drink, ſhe ſaid, I will draw *water* for thy camels alſo, until they have done drinking. 20. And ſhe haſted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels. 21. And the man wondering at her, held his peace, to wit, whether the LORD had made his journey proſperous or not. 22. And it came to paſs as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ‡ ear-ring, of half a ſhekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands, of ten *ſhekels* weight of gold; 23. And ſaid, Whoſe daughter *art* thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room *in* thy father's houſe for us to lodge in? 24. And ſhe ſaid unto him, [m] I *am* the daughter of Bethuel the ſon of Milcah, which ſhe bare unto Nahor. 25. She ſaid moreover unto him, We have both ſtraw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. 26. And the man [n] bowed down his head, and worſhipped the LORD. 27. And he ſaid, Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of my maſter Abraham, who hath not left deſtitute my maſter of his mercy and his truth: I *being* in the way, the LORD led me to the houſe of my maſters brethren. 28. And the damſel ran, and told *them of* her mothers houſe theſe things.

[l] Chap. xi. 29. & xxii. 23.

† Heb. Good of countenance.

‡ Or jewel for the forehead.

[m] Chap. xxii. 23.

[n] Ver. 52. Exod. iv. 31.

v. 15—28. No ſooner had he ſpoken, than God anſwers; ſo ready is he to hear our prayers. The maid comes, fills her pitcher, and is returning; but on his accoſting her, ſhe readily aſſiſts him to water his camels. In theſe days the qualifications of the fair were courteſy, humility, and diligence: let the degenerate daughters of pride, luxury, and lazineſs, bluſh at the compariſon. Thus providences remarkably concurred, and on enquiry he finds her a relation of his maſter, and is invited to the houſe. Happy they whom God thus brings together, not from the riotous aſſembly, or the market of public places, but by providential diſpoſition, in anſwer to fervent prayer. Two things hereupon he does,

1. Makes her a handſome preſent for her kind aſſiſtance. To wear the golden bracelet was then thought not inconſiſtent with the labours of induſtry.

2. He bleſſes God for the mercy ſo graciouſly ſhown him. Prayer and praiſe are like ſound and echo. They who pray ſhall praiſe; and nothing more matter of praiſe, than finding ſuch a partner, who to the amiableneſs of her perſon and manners adds the crowning beauty of religion. This was a freſh mercy to Abraham, and, like a good ſervant, his maſter's intereſts are his own, and he rejoices in God for his ſake, that he had found a ſuitable wife for his ſon.

29 ¶ And Rebekah had a brother, and his name *was* [o] Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. 30. And it came to paſs when he ſaw the ear-ring and bracelets upon his ſiſters hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his ſiſter, ſaying, Thus ſpake the man unto me; that he came unto the man, and behold, he ſtood by the camels at the well. 31. And he ſaid, Come in, thou bleſſed of the LORD, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? for I have prepared the houſe, and room for the camels. 32. ¶ And the man came into the houſe: and he ungirded his camels, and gave ſtraw and provender for the camels, and water to waſh his feet, and the mens feet that *were* with him. 33. And there was ſet *meat* before him to eat: but he ſaid, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he ſaid, Speak on. 34. And he ſaid, I *am* Abrahams ſervant. 35. And the LORD hath bleſſed my maſter greatly, and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and ſilver, and gold, and men-ſervants, and maid-ſervants, and camels, and aſſes. 36. And Sarah my maſters wife bare a ſon to my maſter when ſhe was old: and [p] unto him hath he given all that he hath. 37. And my maſter made me ſwear, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not take a wife to my ſon of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whoſe land I dwell: 38. But thou ſhalt go unto my fathers houſe, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my ſon. 39. And I ſaid unto my maſter, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. 40. And he ſaid unto me, The LORD [q] before whom I walk, will ſend his angel with thee, and proſper thy way; and thou ſhalt take a wife for my ſon of my kindred, and of my fathers houſe. 41. Then ſhalt thou be clear from *this* my oath, when thou comeſt to my kindred; and if they give not thee *one*, thou ſhalt be clear from my oath. 42. And I came this day unto the well, and ſaid, O LORD God of my maſter Abraham, if now thou do proſper the way which I go: 43. [r] Behold, I ſtand by the well of water; and it ſhall come to paſs, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw *water*, and I ſay to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; 44. And ſhe ſay to me, Both drink thou, and I will alſo draw for thy camels: *let* the ſame *be* the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my maſters ſon. 45. And before I had done ſpeaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her ſhoulder; and ſhe went down unto the well, and drew *water:* and I ſaid unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. 46. And ſhe made haſte, and let down her pitcher from her *ſhoulder*, and ſaid, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink alſo: ſo I drank, and ſhe made the camels drink alſo. 47. And I aſked her, and ſaid, Whoſe daughter *art* thou? And ſhe ſaid, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's ſon, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the ear-ring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands. 48. And I bowed down my head, and worſhipped the LORD, and bleſſed the LORD God of my maſter Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my maſters brothers daughter unto his ſon. 49. And now if you will deal kindly and truly with my maſter, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. 50. Then Laban and Bethuel anſwered and ſaid, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot ſpeak unto thee bad or good. 51. Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee, take *her*, and go, and let her be thy maſters ſons wife, as the LORD hath ſpoken. 52. And it came to paſs, that when Abraham's ſervant heard their words, [s] he worſhipped the LORD, *bowing himſelf* to the earth. 53. And the ſervant brought forth † jewels of ſilver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave *them* to Rebekah: He gave alſo to her brother and to her mother precious things.

[o] Chap. xxix. 5.

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[p] Chap. xxv. 5.

[q] Chap. xvii. 1.

[r] Ver. 13.

[s] Ver. 26.

† Heb. Veſſels.

v. 29—53. In conſequence of what had paſſed at the well, Laban, Rebekah's brother, comes and gives him the kindeſt reception. From Laban's character it is to be feared, the bracelets paved the way; for *a man's gift maketh room for him*, Prov. xviii. 16. The cattle are firſt put up and fed. *Note*, On a journey remember your beaſt before you eat yourſelf. And then the board is ſpread to entertain the ſtranger. But, before he eats, he opens,

1. His commiſſion at large; whoſe ſervant he was; the deſign of his coming; the riches of his maſter; the ſettlement of all upon his ſon; his care to have him marry among his own kin, and not among the daughters of Canaan; his prayer; the providential anſwer to it in the meeting of Rebekah; then begs them to conſider and determine concerning the iſſue of his journey. I know not whether moſt to admire the ingenuouſneſs of the repreſentation of his maſter's affairs, or the fidelity, which made him prefer his maſter's buſineſs to his own refreſhment: both admirable, and worthy imitation. *Note*, In religious courtſhip, plain dealing is the beſt wooing.

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3. The behaviour of Abraham's ſervant on the occaſion. He thanked God for the ſpeedy anſwer he had received. *Note*, As we go on receiving, we ſhould go on adoring. We ſhall, with all our praiſe to God, be left far behind. And, to confirm the match, as well as evidence his maſter's opulence, he makes noble preſents to the intended bride, as alſo to her mother and brothers. *Note*, The bride, the Lamb's wife, muſt be brought to him, not in her own ornaments, but in the jewels with which he hath decked her.

54. And they did eat and drink, he and the men that
were with him, and tarried all night: and they roſe up in
[t] Ver. 56, 59. the morning, and he ſaid, [t] Send me away unto my maſter.
55. And her brother and her mother ſaid, Let the
† Or a full year, or ten months. Judg. xiv. 8. damſel abide with us † *a few* days, at the leaſt ten; after
that ſhe ſhall go. 56. And he ſaid unto them, Hinder
me not, ſeeing the LORD hath proſpered my way:
ſend me away, that I may go to my maſter. 57. And
they ſaid, We will call the damſel, and enquire at
her mouth. 58. And they called Rebekah, and ſaid
unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And ſhe
ſaid, I will go. 59. And they ſent away Rebekah their
[u] Chap. xxxv. 8. ſiſter, and [u] her nurſe, and Abrahams ſervant, and his
men. 60. And they bleſſed Rebekah, and ſaid unto her,
Thou *art* our ſiſter, be thou *the mother* of thouſands
[x] Chap. xxii. 17. of millions, and [x] let thy ſeed poſſeſs the gate of thoſe
which hate them. 61. ¶ And Rebekah aroſe, and her
damſels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed
the man: and the ſervant took Rebekah, and went
his way.

v. 54—61. A good ſervant never loiters. Inſtead of ſtaying to ſpend the days in mirth and feaſting, no ſooner is his buſineſs done, than he is in haſte to be gone. Few ſuch ſervants to be met with now a days. But,

1. Natural affection pleads for a little reſpite. Though they know it is good for Rebekah, they are loth to part with her. *Note*, No joy pure without allay in this world. However, as he preſſes to be gone, Rebekah is called and aſked.

2. She conſents to go. She had, from the piety of the ſervant, conceived a high eſteem for the family, and therefore the more readily yields. *Note*, Though parents have a right of adviſing, they have none of conſtraining. Marriage muſt be of choice, not force.

3. On this they give her their bleſſing, take care ſhe is ſuitably attended, and ſend her on her way. *Note*, New relations need our prayers for God's bleſſing upon them.

[y] Chap. xvi. 14. & xxv. 11. 62. And Iſaac came from the way of the [y] well Lahai-roi;
for he dwelt in the ſouth country. 63. And
† Or to pray. Iſaac went out † to meditate in the field at the even-tide:
and he lift up his eyes, and ſaw, and behold, the camels
were coming. 64. And Rebekah lift up her eyes, and
[z] Joſh. xv. 18. when ſhe ſaw Iſaac, [z] ſhe lighted off the camel. 65. For
ſhe had ſaid unto the ſervant, What man *is* this that
walketh in the field to meet us? And the ſervant had
ſaid, It *is* my maſter: therefore ſhe took a vail and covered
herſelf. 66. And the ſervant told Iſaac all things
that he had done. 67. And Iſaac brought her into his
1856. mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and ſhe became
his wife; and he loved her: and Iſaac was comforted
after his mother's *death*.

v. 62—67. Iſaac inherited not more his father's promiſes than his piety. We have him here,

1. Employed in meditation. Improving an evening's walk in the bleſſed work of communion with God. Wiſe are they, who can make even their amuſements means of drawing them nearer the Lord. *Note*, (1.) Retirement is moſt needful for the ſoul. (2.) When we are in the field, we ſhould imitate the patriarch, where every object around us may ſerve to awaken ſerious thoughts of God. (3.) None ever will feel the want of company, who have learned the arts of converſe with a better world.

2. His meeting Rebekah. When we go to meet God, mercies come to meet us. He ſaw her at a diſtance, and when ſhe knew him, ſhe put on her veil, and alighted to meet him. Modeſty is woman's beſt ornament.

3. His marriage, and putting her in poſſeſſion of Sarah's tent. For three years he had mourned over his loſs of ſo dear a mother; and now he is comforted in a gracious wife, and his affection knit to her, as a loving huſband. Happy the pair, where mutual love makes marriage real union.

Before Chriſt about 1853.

CHAP. XXV.

The ſacred hiſtorian in this chapter, (1.) *takes his leave of Abraham, with an account,* 1. *of his children by another wife,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Of his laſt will and teſtament,* ver. 5, 6. 3. *Of his age, death, and burial,* ver. 7—10. (2.) *He takes his leave of Iſhmael, with a ſhort account,* 1. *Of his children,* ver. 12—16. 2. *Of his age and death,* ver. 17, 18. (3.) *He enters upon the hiſtory of Iſaac.* 1. *His proſperity,* ver. 11. 2. *The conception and birth of his two ſons, with the oracle of God concerning them,* ver. 19—26. 3. *Their different characters,* ver. 27, 28. 4. *Eſau's ſelling his birthright to Jacob,* ver. 29—34.

1. THEN again Abraham took a wife, and her About 1853.
name *was* Keturah. 2. And ſhe bare him Zimran,
and Jokſhan, and Medan, and Midian, and Iſhbak,
and Shuah. 3. And [a] Jokſhan begat Sheba and Dedan. [a] 1 Chron. i. 32.
And the ſons of Dedan were Aſſhurim, and Letuſhim,
and Leummim. 4. And the ſons of Midian; Ephah,
and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah.
All theſe *were* the children of Keturah. 5. ¶ And
[b] Abraham gave all that he had unto Iſaac. 6. But [b] Chap. xxiv. 36.
unto the ſons of the concubines which Abraham had,
Abraham gave gifts, and ſent them away from Iſaac his
ſon (while he yet lived) eaſtward unto the eaſt-country.
7. And theſe *are* the days of the years of Abrahams
life which he lived, an hundred threeſcore and fifteen 1821.
years. 8. Then Abraham gave up the ghoſt, and [c] died [c] Chap. xv. 15. & xlix. 29.
in a good old age, an old man, and full *of years*; and
was gathered to his people. 9. And his ſons Iſaac and
Iſhmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field
of Ephron the ſon of Zohar the Hittite, which *is* before
Mamre; 10. [d] The field which Abraham purchaſed of [d] Chap. xxiii. 16.
the ſons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and
Sarah his wife.

v. 1—10. Having brought the patriarch with glory to the end of the days of his pilgrimage, we have the concluſion of it in theſe verſes.

1. His laſt marriage, when he was old, yet the moſt fruitful. He had ſeveral ſons by Keturah, *v.* 2. *Note*, Age is not forbid the comforts of marriage.

2. His diſpoſal of his goods among them. Iſaac is his heir, and the ſon of his houſe; as the promiſes are entailed upon him, he hath the firſt and great portion; the reſt have each a fortune beſtowed on them, and are ſent to ſettle eaſtward, where they too became a great people: thus fulfilling the promiſe made to Abraham. *Note*, (1.) In the diſpoſition of our effects to our children, we ſhould be careful there may be no diſputes when we are dead. (2.) It is lawful for every parent to diſtinguiſh thoſe of his children who he has reaſon to think will make the beſt uſe of their portion.

3. His death. Full of days; after a long life, and happy old age, the taper of life burnt out, rather than extinguiſhed, he is gathered to his fathers. *Note*, Death is the way of all fleſh: it is happy for thoſe who by it are gathered to Abraham their father.

4. His burial by his two ſons, Iſaac and Iſhmael. They were now reconciled, and with filial duty lay him by the ſide of his beloved Sarah. *Note*, They who have lived together in love, may innocently deſire to lie together in the grave, eſpecially when heirs together of the grace of life, and expectants of a glorious reſurrection.

11. ¶ And it came to paſs after the death of Abraham,
that God bleſſed his ſon Iſaac: and Iſaac dwelt
by [e] the well Lahai-roi. 12. ¶ Now theſe *are* the genera- [e] Chap. xvi. 14. & xxiv. 62.
tions of Iſhmael Abrahams ſon, whom Hagar the Egyptian,
Sarahs handmaid, bare unto Abraham. 13. And
[f] theſe *are* the names of the ſons of Iſhmael, by their [f] 1 Chron. i. 29.
names, according to their generations: The firſt-born
of Iſhmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and
Mibſam, 14. And Miſhma, and Dumah, and Maſſa,
15. † Hadar, and Temah, Jetur, Naphiſh, and Kedemah. † Or Hadar, 1 Chron. i. 30.
16. Theſe *are* the ſons of Iſhmael, and theſe *are* their
names, by their towns, and by their caſtles; [g] twelve [g] Chap. xvii. 20.
princes according to their nations. 17. And theſe *are*
the years of the life of Iſhmael, an hundred and thirty 1773.
and ſeven years: and he gave up the ghoſt, and died, and
was gathered unto his people. 18. And [h] they dwelt [h] 1 Sam. xv. 7.
from Havila unto Shur, that *is* before Egypt, as thou
goeſt towards Aſſyria: *and* he ‡ died [i] in the preſence of ‡ Heb. Fell.
all his brethren. [i] Chap. xvi. 12.

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v. 11—18. Iſaac's hiſtory now begins. Moſes takes notice of the bleſſing which was upon him after Abraham's death; then for a moment digreſſes, to mention Iſhmael's children, their great proſperity, their country and towns, and Iſhmael's death, at the age of 137, in the preſence of his brethren, either in the midſt of them as his friends, or eminent among them for his poſſeſſions. *Note*, It is a mercy to have our friends to comfort us in a dying hour.

19. ¶ And theſe *are* the generations of Iſaac Abrahams ſon: [k] Abraham begat Iſaac. 20. And Iſaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, [l] the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the ſiſter to Laban the Syrian. 21. And Iſaac intreated the LORD for his wife, becauſe ſhe *was* barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and [m] Rebekah his wife conceived. 22. And the children ſtruggled together within her: and ſhe ſaid, If *it be* ſo, why *am* I thus? And [n] ſhe went to enquire of the LORD. 23. And the LORD ſaid unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb, and two manner of people ſhall be ſeparated from thy bowels: and [o] *the one* people ſhall be ſtronger than *the other* people; and [p] the elder ſhall ſerve the younger. 24. ¶ And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb. 25. And the firſt came out red, [q] all over like an hairy garment: and they called his name Eſau. 26. And after that came his brother out, and [r] his hand took hold on Eſau's heel: and [s] his name was called Jacob: and Iſaac *was* threeſcore years old when ſhe bare them. 27. And the boys grew: and Eſau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob *was* a plain man dwelling in tents. 28. And Iſaac loved Eſau, becauſe † he did eat of *his* veniſon: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

k Mat. i. 2.
l Chap. xxii. 23.
m Rom. ix. 10.
n 1 Sam. ix. 9.
o 2 Sam. viii. 14.
p Chap. xxvii. 29. Mal. i. 3. Rom. ix. 12.
q Chap. xxvii. 11, 16, 23.
r Hoſea, xii. 3.
s Chap. xxvii. 36.
† Heb. Veniſon *was* in his mouth.

v. 19—28. After being married near twenty years, Iſaac, like his father before him, is exerciſed with diſcouragement, and ſees no proſpect of the promiſed ſeed; yet he waits, and takes no other wife: and faith will be rewarded. He applies to God in prayer, and God now grants his requeſt, and Rebekah conceived. *Note*, (1.) Though we pray twenty years for a mercy, we ſhould not be weary. (2.) Huſbands and wives ſhould unite their ſupplications. We have in the ſtory of theſe twins,

1. Their ſtruggling in the womb, and Rebekah's diſtreſs thereupon. She, no doubt, often lamented her barrenneſs, and now her pregnancy is her burden. *Note*, What we moſt eagerly deſire, brings often with it trouble and vexation.

2. The courſe ſhe took hereupon. She enquired of the Lord, probably in prayer, or by ſome appointed methods preſcribed, as afterward by Urim and Thummim in difficult caſes. *Note*, To ſpread our griefs before a throne of grace, is a great relief.

3. The anſwer received. Two nations are in thy womb; the deſcendants of the two ſons, of manners different, and often at variance, but the elder ſhall ſerve the younger; Edom muſt ſerve Iſrael. Learn from this hiſtory (1.) The ſovereignty of God's election before the children are born, or had done good or evil. (2.) The ſtruggle in the heart of him who is begotten again between the old nature of ſin, and the new nature of grace. (3.) That this ſtruggle is apt to diſcourage the faithful, but is a gracious mark of God's election. (4.) The elder corrupt nature ſhall at laſt be ſubdued, and grace, the younger, reign through Jeſus Chriſt.

4. The birth of the twins, Eſau and Jacob. The one hairy, the other ſmooth; and as from their birth different, ſo in their lives and occupations: for in the womb, the ſeeds of all our future life ſeem to be ſown. Eſau was a hunter, hardy, bold, and loved the ſports of the field. Jacob, a ſhepherd, gentle in manners, and a lover of retirement. *Note*, (1.) Different diſpoſitions are born with us. Jacob was never made for a warrior, nor Eſau for a ſtudent. (2.) In the education of our children, we ſhould conſult their turn and temper.

5. The different regard they met with from their parents. Iſaac loved the brave ſpirit of Eſau, and the veniſon he caught him, whilſt Rebekah's fondneſs fixes on the more domeſtic Jacob. *Note*, Though it is almoſt impoſſible for parents to regard each child with the ſame affection, it is dangerous to have favourites, or to appear partial.

29. ¶ And Jacob ſod pottage: and Eſau came from the field, and he *was* faint. 30. And Eſau ſaid to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with † that ſame red *pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore his name was called Edom. 31. And Jacob ſaid, Sell me this day thy birth-right. 32. And Eſau ſaid, Behold, I *am* ‡ at the point to die: and what profit ſhall this birth-right do to me? 33. And Jacob ſaid, Swear to me this day; and he ſwear unto him: and [t] he ſold his birth-right unto Jacob. 34. Then Jacob gave Eſau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and roſe up, and went his way: thus Eſau deſpiſed *his* birth-right.

† Heb. That red *that* red *pottage*.
‡ Heb. Going to die.
t Heb. xii. 16.

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v. 29—34. As in the womb he caught his brother by the heel, and got the name Jacob, we here ſee how well he deſerved it in his dealing with Eſau. Jacob knew the value of the birth-right, and the promiſe which Rebekah muſt before in love have told him, might embolden him to attempt obtaining it. Now therefore, when occaſion offers, he ſeizes it. Obſerve,

1. The critical time. When Eſau returned hungry from hunting, and ſeeing Jacob with ſome delightful red meſs of pottage, begs to have it; then he propoſes the bargain: if he will ſell his birthright, the meſs ſhould be his own. *Note*, (1.) It was bad in Jacob, to take advantage of his brother's neceſſity; though it might not be pride that made him covet it, but the regard for the ſpiritual bleſſings, yet we may not ſeek even good things by wrong means. (2.) God over-rules our evil to the purpoſes of his own glory.

2. Eſau's conſent to the bargain. Hunger pleaded, and though in no danger of death, the ſtrength of his appetite ſuggeſted ſo weak an excuſe. The birth-right is trivial in his eyes, and probably, he thought in Iſaac's regard he was ſafe, and then he ſhould loſe nothing by the ſale. Thus profaneneſs is his character, *Heb.* xii. 16. *Note*, (1.) Gratifying ſenſual appetites, is the univerſal ruin of men's ſouls. (2.) The pleaſures of ſenſe for a moment will ill repay the loſs of God's bleſſing and favour to eternity. (3.) The wiſe are often outdone by ſimpler men; at leaſt in ſoul concerns, this is uſually the caſe. The plain followers of their Bible make a wiſer choice, than the cunning diſputers againſt it.

3. Eſau's careleſſneſs afterward. As if nothing had happened, he went his way, and never troubled his head about the matter. *Note*, To be negligent about ſpiritual bleſſings, is the ſure way to be deprived of them.

CHAP. XXVI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Iſaac in adverſity, by reaſon of a famine in the land, which,* (1.) *obliges him to change his quarters,* ver. 1. *But,* (2.) *God viſits him with direction and comfort,* ver. 2—5. (3.) *He fooliſhly denies his wife, being in diſtreſs, and is reproved for it by Abimelech,* ver. 6—11. 2. *Iſaac in proſperity by the bleſſing of God upon him,* ver. 12—14. *And,* 1. *The Philiſtines were envious at him,* ver. 14—17. 2. *He continued induſtrious in his buſineſs,* ver. 18—23. 3. *God appeared to him, and encouraged him, and he returned his duty to God,* ver. 24, 25. 4. *The Philiſtines at length made court to him, and made a covenant with him,* ver. 26—33. 5. *The diſagreeable marriage of his ſon Eſau, was an allay to the comfort of his proſperity,* ver. 34, 35.

1804.

1. AND there was a famine in the land, beſides [a] the firſt famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Iſaac went unto [b] Abimelech king of the Philiſtines, unto Gerar. 2. And the LORD appeared unto him, and ſaid, Go not down into Egypt: dwell in the land which I ſhall tell thee of. 3. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bleſs thee: for [c] unto thee and unto thy ſeed I will give all theſe countries, and I will perform [d] the oath which I ſware unto Abraham thy father. 5. And [e] I will make thy ſeed to multiply as the ſtars of heaven, and will give unto thy ſeed all theſe countries: and [f] in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed: 5. Becauſe that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my ſtatutes, and my laws.

a Chap. xii. 10.
b Chap. xx. 2.
c Chap. xiii. 15. & xv. 18.
d Chap. xxii. 16.
e Chap. xv. 5.
f Chap. xii. 3. & xxii. 18.

v. 1—5. We have here,

1. A famine which obliges Iſaac to remove from Canaan into the land of the Philiſtines. He muſt, like his father before him, learn to ſuffer, ere he receive the promiſe.

2. God's appearing to him. He forbids his journey to Egypt, and commands his ſtay at Gerar. *Note*, We are always right, when given up to the divine guidance.

3. The promiſe made him. As Abraham's ſon, he is his ſucceſſor in the covenant; it was entailed upon him, and God confirms it to him, for Abraham's ſake. *Note*, (1.) They who have God's favour, need not fear famine, nor any thing elſe. (2.) Though grace runs not in the blood, it often, through divine mercy, deſcends in the family. Happy that houſe!

6. ¶ And Iſaac dwelt in Gerar. 7. And the men of the place aſked *him* of his wife; and [g] he ſaid, She *is* my ſiſter: for he feared to ſay, *She is* my wife; leſt, *ſaid he*, the men of the place ſhould kill me for Rebekah, becauſe ſhe *was* fair to look upon.

g Chap. xii. 13. & xx. 2, 13.

Before Chriſt about 1917.

v. 6—7. Iſaac ſeems to have inherited not only Abraham's bleſſings, but his ſins too. Like his father, he diſſembles in the ſame words, and for the ſame reaſon. *Note*, (1.) Great men and good men have their infirmities; none are exempted. (2.) Fear is one of the moſt dangerous paſſions which ſatan works upon. (3.) To have got over the fear of death, is to be a great way towards heaven.

8. And it came to paſs when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philiſtines looked out at a window, and ſaw, and behold, Iſaac *was* ſporting with Rebekah his wife. 9. And Abimelech called Iſaac, and ſaid, Behold, of a ſurety ſhe *is* thy wife: and how ſaidſt thou, She *is* my ſiſter? And Iſaac ſaid unto him, Becauſe I ſaid, leſt I die for her. 10. And Abimelech ſaid, What *is* this thou haſt done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and [h] thou ſhouldſt have brought guiltineſs upon us. 11. And Abimelech charged all *his* people, ſaying, He that toucheth this man or his wife, ſhall ſurely be put to death.

[h] Chap. xx. 9.

v. 8—11. His diſſimulation is diſcovered, and rebuked by Abimelech. He is ſeen uſing ſome freedoms, which, however innocent in a huſband, had been evil in a brother; and with reaſon he is reproached with the danger to which he expoſed his wife, and the ſin to which he might have tempted his hoſpitable friends. *Note*, (1.) To be found a diſſembler, is to be a ſcandal to our profeſſion. (2.) When we lay ſnares in the way of the innocent, their ſins will light upon our heads.

12. Then Iſaac ſowed in that land, and † received in the ſame year an hundred-fold, and the LORD bleſſed him. 13. And the man waxed great, and ‡ went forward, and grew until he became very great. 14. For he had poſſeſſion of flocks, and poſſeſſion of herds, and great ſtore of ‖ ſervants. And the Philiſtines envied him. 15. For all the wells [i] which his fathers ſervants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philiſtines had ſtopped them, and filled them with earth. 16. And Abimelech ſaid unto Iſaac, Go from us: for [k] thou art much mightier than we. 17. ¶ And Iſaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. 18. And Iſaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philiſtines had ſtopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. 19. And Iſaac's ſervants digged in the valley, and found there a well of † ſpringing water. 20. And the herdmen of Gerar did ſtrive with Iſaac's herdmen, ſaying, The water *is* ours: and he called the name of the well ‡ Eſek, becauſe they ſtrove with him. 21. And they digged another well, and ſtrove for that alſo: and he called the name of it ‖ Sitnah. 22. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they ſtrove not: and he called the name of it † Rehoboth; and he ſaid, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we ſhall be fruitful in the land. 23. And he went up from thence to Beer-ſheba. 24. And the LORD appeared unto him the ſame night, and ſaid, I *am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I *am* with thee, and will bleſs thee, and multiply thy ſeed, for my ſervant Abraham's ſake. 25. And [l] he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Iſaac's ſervants digged a well.

† Heb. Found.
‡ Heb. Went, going.
‖ Or huſbandry.
[i] Chap. xxi. 30.
[k] Exod. i. 9.
† Heb. Living.
‡ *i. e.* Contention.
‖ *i. e.* Hatred.
† Room.
[l] Chap. xii. 7. & xiii. 18.

v. 12—25. Iſaac, under God's bleſſing, in the land of his ſojourning, ſtill abounds. Whilſt they are under famine, his land produces an hundred fold, his ſervants increaſe, his cattle multiply. This produces,

1. The envy of the Philiſtines. They could not look on him, but with an evil eye. *Note.* It is the tribute which merit pays, to be envied.

2. Their ill uſage and expulſion of him: for what can ſtand before envy? They ſhould rather have ſhared his bleſſings, by ſeeking to his God; but led by their wicked hearts, they ſtopped the wells Abraham had digged. *Note*, The envious man will put himſelf to expence and trouble, rather than not gratify his ill will. Still unable to bear him, they at laſt deſired him to be gone.

3. He conſents, and quietly removes farther off, *v.* 17. *Note*, It is wiſe rather to yield for peace ſake, than quarrel.

4. His care to find other wells. He opens old ones, and digs new. *Note*, In ſearching for the waters of truth, we may uſe the labours of thoſe who digged before us; and add our diligence ſtill to improve upon them.

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5. The Philiſtines followed him with diſputes from well to well, whilſt he quietly recedes from his right, and retires farther. At laſt, he finds another well, and there they left him in peaceable poſſeſſion, and he calls it Rehoboth, in token of the enlargement he enjoyed there. *Note*, They who follow peace, will find it at laſt: if perverſe men will ſtrive with them in this world, at leaſt they will find Rehoboth, a place of enlargements, and peace in heaven.

6. God's appearing to him, with encouraging promiſes, *v.* 24. *Note*, The ſeaſon of moſt comfort with God, is uſually when we are moſt beſet with the perverſeneſs of men.

7. His grateful acknowledgment. He built an altar, and perpetuated thus in his family the good ways of his father Abraham. Such is the gracious effect of *bringing up a ſon in the way he ſhould go.*

26. ¶ Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar; and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and [m] Phichol the chief captain of his army. 27. And Iſaac ſaid unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, ſeeing ye hate me, and have ſent me away from you? 28. And they ſaid, † We certainly ſaw that the LORD was with thee: and we ſaid, let there be now an oath betwixt us, *even* betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; 29. ‡ That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have ſent thee away in peace: thou *art* now the bleſſed of the LORD. 30. And he made them a feaſt, and they did eat and drink. 31. And they roſe up betimes in the morning, and ſware one to another: and Iſaac ſent them away, and they departed from him in peace. 32. And it came to paſs the ſame day, that Iſaac's ſervants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and ſaid unto him, We have found water. 33. And he called it † Sheba: [n] therefore the name of the city *is* ‡ Beer-ſheba unto this day.

[m] Chap. xxi. 22.
† Heb. Seeing, we ſaw.
‡ If thou ſhalt, &c.
† *i. e.* An oath.
[n] Chap. xxi. 31.
‡ *i. e.* The well of the oath.

v. 26—33. They who had ſent him away through envy, are now come to court his friendſhip. We have here,

1. Iſaac's queſtioning the purpoſe of their viſit. From the injuries he had received, he had need be on his guard. *Note*, Though we muſt love our enemies, we muſt watch againſt their devices.

2. Their buſineſs: To invite him to reconciliation, and to a ſolemn league between them. They profeſs ſincerity, acknowledge their conviction of God's favour to him, and therefore fain would make him their friend. *Note*, When the offending party ſeeks reconciliation, we ſhould be ever ready to grant it.

3. Iſaac conſents, entertains them generouſly, confirms the league by oath, and they part in peace. *Note*, We muſt not inſiſt upon paſt ill uſage, when there is a proſpect of preſent peace, but gladly embrace the favourable motion.

4. That day, a new and copious well is found; ſo that all he parted with, is amply made up to him. Thoſe who for peace ſake, or the truth's ſake, loſe a little, find perhaps at the end of the year, that they are gainers by the increaſe which God's bleſſing hath brought.

1796.

34. ¶ And [o] Eſau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Baſhemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: 35. [p] Which were † a grief of mind unto Iſaac and to Rebekah.

[o] Chap. xxxvi. 2.
[p] Chap. xxvii. 46.
† Heb. Bitterneſs of ſpirit.

v. 34, 35. Eſau's profaneneſs appeared before, but it is aggravated here. He takes two wives at once, both bad ones, and of a different religion; not only without the conſent, but to the great grief of his parents. *Note*, (1.) In chuſing a wife, it is a principal concern that we agree in religious opinions. (2.) That it be done with conſent of parents.

CHAP. XXVII.

We have here, 1. *Iſaac's purpoſe to entail the bleſſing upon Eſau,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Rebekah's plot to procure it for Jacob,* ver. 6—17. 3. *Jacob's ſucceſsful management of the plot, and his obtaining of the bleſſing,* ver. 18—29. 4. *Eſau's reſentment of this: In which,* 1. *His great importunity with his father to obtain a bleſſing,* ver. 30—40. 2. *His great enmity to his brother for defrauding him of the firſt bleſſing,* ver. 41—46.

1. AND it came to paſs that when Iſaac was old, and [a] his eyes were dim, ſo that he could not ſee, he called Eſau his eldeſt ſon, and ſaid unto him, My

[a] Chap. xlviii. 10.

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ſon: And he ſaid unto him, Behold, *here am* I. 2. And he ſaid, Behold, now I am old, I know not the day of my death. 3. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver, and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take † *ſome* veniſon; 4. And make me ſavory meat, ſuch as I love, and bring *it* to me, that I may eat; that my ſoul may bleſs thee before I die.

† Heb. Hunt.

v. 1—4. Infirmities of age were come upon Iſaac, and therefore, as his time was likely to be ſhort, he reſolves,

1. To beſtow on Eſau, as firſt-born, the bleſſing of the promiſed land and ſeed; perhaps, not underſtanding the prophecy, or not attending to it through natural affection and the rights of primogeniture. *Note*, Man propoſes, but God diſpoſes.

2. He communicates his reſolution to Eſau, who was ſtill, it ſeems, his favourite, though he had diſpleaſed him by marriage, and bids him ſhew one inſtance of his affection in procuring him ſome veniſon, that he might eat and bleſs him before he died. *Note*, (1.) Though children marry imprudently, parents muſt not be inflexible in their reſentments. (2.) When we grow old, it is time to think of dying. (3.) All worldly concerns ſhould be diſpatched before that time; it is enough then to do to die.

5. And Rebekah heard when Iſaac ſpake to Eſau his ſon: And Eſau went to the field to hunt *for* veniſon, *and* to bring it. 6. ¶ And Rebekah ſpake unto Jacob her ſon, ſaying, Behold, I heard thy father ſpeak unto Eſau thy brother, ſaying, 7. Bring me veniſon, and make me ſavoury meat, that I may eat, and bleſs thee before the LORD, before my death. 8. Now therefore my ſon, obey my voice, according to that which I command thee. 9. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them ſavoury meat for thy father, ſuch as he loveth. 10. And thou ſhalt bring *it* to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bleſs thee before his death. 11. And Jacob ſaid to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Eſau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a ſmooth man. 12. My father peradventure will feel me, and I ſhall ſeem to him as a deceiver; and I ſhall bring a curſe upon me, and not a bleſſing. 13. And his mother ſaid unto him, Upon me *be* thy curſe, my ſon: only obey my voice, and go and fetch me *them*. 14. And he went and fetched, and brought *them* to his mother: and his mother made ſavoury meat, ſuch as his father loved. 15. And Rebekah took † goodly raiment of her eldeſt ſon Eſau, which *were* with her in the houſe, and put them upon Jacob her younger ſon. 16. And ſhe put the ſkins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the ſmooth of his neck. 17. And ſhe gave the ſavoury meat, and the bread which ſhe had prepared, into the hand of her ſon Jacob.

† Heb. Deſirable.

v. 5—17. Rebekah overhearing the converſation between Iſaac and Eſau, reſolves immediately to put Jacob in his place, a thing, in many reſpects, utterly unjuſtifiable. Had ſhe pleaded with Iſaac the Divine command, ſimplicity had probably prevailed, and Jacob, without a cheat, had got the bleſſing; but now ſhe contrives the plot, and will have Jacob execute it. His objections ſhe anſwers, makes herſelf liable to the curſe, and as women's wits are ſharp, fixes on a method which can hardly fail of ſucceſs. To Iſaac's aged taſte, the ſavoury kid can eaſily paſs for veniſon, and Eſau's cloaths can transform the ſmooth Jacob, with the kids ſkins, into the hairy Eſau. *Note*, Thoſe who would ever appear before God with acceptance, muſt come in the garments of the all-perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus their elder brother; and though they are known to be miſerable ſinners, they ſhall find the bleſſing, becauſe complete in him.

18. ¶ And he came unto his father, and ſaid, My father: and he ſaid, Here *am* I; who *art* thou, my ſon? 19. And Jacob ſaid unto his father, I *am* Eſau thy firſtborn; I have done according as thou badeſt me: ariſe, I pray thee, ſit and eat of my veniſon, that thy ſoul may bleſs me. 20. And Iſaac ſaid unto his ſon, How *is it* that thou haſt found *it* ſo quickly, my ſon? And he ſaid, Becauſe the LORD thy God brought *it* † to me. 21. And Iſaac ſaid unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my ſon, whether thou *be* my very ſon Eſau, or not. 22. And Jacob went near unto Iſaac his father, and he felt him; and ſaid, The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Eſau. 23. And he diſcerned him not, becauſe his hands were hairy, as his brother Eſau's hands: ſo he bleſſed him. 24. And he ſaid, *Art* thou my very ſon Eſau? and he ſaid, I *am*. 25. And he ſaid, bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my ſon's veniſon, that my ſoul may bleſs thee. And he brought *it* near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26. And his father Iſaac ſaid unto him, Come near now, and kiſs me, my ſon. 27. And he came near and kiſſed him: and he ſmelled the ſmell of his raiment, and bleſſed him, and ſaid, See, the ſmell of my ſon *is* as the ſmell of a field, which the LORD hath bleſſed. 28. Therefore [b] God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatneſs of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine. 29. [c] Let people ſerve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and [d] let thy mother's ſons bow down to thee: [e] curſed *be* every one that curſeth thee; and bleſſed *be* he that bleſſeth thee.

† Heb. Before me.

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[b] Heb. xi. 20.
[c] Chap. ix. 25. & xxv. 23.
[d] Chap. xlix. 8.
[e] Chap. xii. 3. Numb. xxiv. 9.

v. 18—29. We have here,

1. The deception put upon Iſaac. Jacob appears, with aſſurance anſwers his father's enquiries, produces his veniſon, brings in God for his helper, removes the juſt ſuſpicions of his voice by producing his hands, and thus, after repeated aſſeverations, confirms his father in the identity of his perſon as Eſau. Herein committing a very great ſin, or rather a complication of ſins, which however God over-ruled for good, is noted to his ſhame. Learn here, (1.) How ſoon lying is learnt. (2.) When we are entangled in one lye, we are bound to forge many more, to ſupport ourſelves in it. (3.) The ſimpleſt-hearted men in general have need to fear being overtaken by this ſin. (4.) The voice that impoſes upon Iſaac, cannot impoſe upon God. The lying lips, and the prayer of the hypocrite, will ſoon be put to confuſion.

2. The bleſſing obtained by it. He kiſſed him in token of his regard, he bleſſed him as the favourite of the Lord, and ſolemnly puts him in poſſeſſion of the government of his brethren and the neck of his enemies, and therein conveys to him the generation of the promiſed ſeed, and headſhip over the church. *Note*, They who take wrong means, may obtain their ends, through God's over-ruling providence, but they will ſuffer, as Jacob did, for the indirect ſteps they have uſed.

30. ¶ And it came to paſs, as ſoon as Iſaac had made an end of bleſſing Jacob, and Jacob was yet ſcarce gone out from the preſence of Iſaac his father, that Eſau his brother came in from his hunting. 31. And he alſo had made ſavoury meat, and brought it unto his father; and ſaid unto his father, Let my father ariſe, and eat of his ſon's veniſon, that thy ſoul may bleſs me. 32. And Iſaac his father ſaid unto him, Who *art* thou? And he ſaid, I *am* thy ſon, thy firſt-born Eſau. 33. And Iſaac † trembled very exceedingly, and ſaid, Who, where *is* he that hath ‡ taken veniſon, and brought *it* me, and I have eaten of all before thou cameſt, and have bleſſed him? yea, *and* [f] he ſhall be bleſſed. 34. And when Eſau heard the words of his father, [g] he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and ſaid unto his father, Bleſs me, even me alſo, O my father. 35. And he ſaid, Thy brother came with ſubtilty, and hath taken away thy bleſſing. 36. And he ſaid, [h] Is not he rightly named ‖ Jacob? for he hath ſupplanted me theſe two times: [i] he took away my birth-right: and behold now he hath taken away my bleſſing. And he ſaid, Haſt thou not reſerved a bleſſing for me? 37. And Iſaac anſwered and ſaid unto Eſau, [k] Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for ſervants: and with corn and wine have I † ſuſtained him; and what ſhall I do now unto thee, my ſon? 38. And Eſau ſaid unto his father, Haſt thou but one bleſſing, my father? bleſs me, *even* me alſo, O my father. And Eſau lift up his voice, and [l] wept. 39. And Iſaac his father anſwered, and ſaid unto him, Behold, [m] thy dwelling ſhall be the fatneſs of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. 40. And by thy ſword ſhalt thou live, and [n] ſhalt ſerve thy brother: and [o] it ſhall come to paſs when thou ſhalt have the dominion, that thou ſhalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

† Heb. Trembled with a great trembling greatly.
‡ Heb. Hunted.
[f] Chap. xxviii. 3, 4.
[g] Heb. xii. 17.
[h] Chap. xxv. 26.
‖ *i. e.* A ſupplanter.
[i] Chap. xxv. 33.
[k] fulfilled. 2 Sam. viii 14. ver. 29.
† Or ſupported.
[l] Heb. xii. 17.
[m] ver. 28. Heb. xi. 20.
[n] Chap. xxv. 23. Obad. xviii. 19, 20.
[o] 2 Sam. viii. 14. 2 Kings viii. 20.

v. 30—40. Eſau, big with the expectance of the bleſſing, haſtes to his father with the ſavoury meat: but how amazed, how ſhocked, to find his hopes diſappointed, and the benediction already beſtowed! Obſerve,

1. His bitter ſorrow. *Note*, It is too late to grieve for the conſequences of ſin, when we have neglected to grieve for the cauſe of them. He ſought importunately now the privilege he had

ſlighted. *Note*, The day is near, when they who make light of God's covenant, ſhall ſeek in vain for the promiſes of it.

2. Iſaac's ſteadineſs. Though ſtruck at firſt with amaze, and trembling with ſurprize, he is convinced it was God's determination, and he confirms it, *v.* 33. No place was found for repentance, though Eſau ſought it diligently with tears, *Heb.* xii. 17. *Note*, God is in one mind, and none can turn him back: his favour to his elect, and his wrath towards the reprobate, abideth for ever.

3. Eſau's reproaches of Jacob. Inſtead of repenting of his own ſin, he abuſes his brother for a ſupplanter. With ſuch a temper, no wonder his intreaties are vain, and his prayers rejected. *Note*, It is too late when ſentence is paſſed, to cry for pity or pardon.

4. His importunity for a bleſſing alſo. Though he may not have the beſt, he may have ſome. *Note*, Many are deſirous of happineſs, who never take the way which leads to it.

5. Iſaac yields to his requeſt. He beſtows upon him a good land, a plentiful dwelling; confirms his ſubjection to his brother, with the hope however, in time, of ſhaking off his yoke: all which, we ſhall ſee fulfilled in their ſeaſon. *Note*, There are common bleſſings, which are ſhared by evil and good; and many times the evil are moſt favoured with them: but all without Chriſt, are ſcarce a crumb caſt to a dog.

41. ¶ And Eſau hated Jacob, becauſe of the bleſſing wherewith his father bleſſed him: and Eſau ſaid in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand, [p] then will I ſlay my brother Jacob. 42. And theſe words of Eſau her elder ſon, were told to Rebekah: And ſhe ſent and called Jacob her younger ſon, and ſaid unto him, Behold, thy brother Eſau, as touching thee, doth comfort himſelf, *purpoſing* to kill thee. 43. Now therefore, my ſon, obey my voice: and ariſe, flee thou to Laban my brother to [q] Haran. 44. And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away. 45. Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget *that* which thou haſt done to him: then I will ſend and fetch thee from thence. Why ſhould I be deprived alſo of you both in one day? 46. And Rebekah ſaid to Iſaac, [r] I am weary of my life, becauſe of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, ſuch as theſe *which are* of the daughters of the land, what good ſhall my life do me?

[p] Obad. x.
[q] Chap. xi. 31.
[r] Chap. xxvi. 35. & xxviii. 8.

v. 41—46. 1. The natural effects of diſappointed pride appear in Eſau's hatred and revenge. Though loth to grieve his aged father, he comforts himſelf he hath not long to wait, and then Jacob ſhall pay dearly for his cunning. *Note*, (1.) He is not the laſt reprobate ſon, who is pleaſed with the hopes of their father's death. (2.) They who think to defeat God's purpoſes, take counſel in vain. (3.) If God bleſſes, no wonder the wicked curſe. (4.) Marvel not, if brother riſe up againſt brother, when religion is concerned: it was ſo from the beginning.

2. Rebekah reſolves to diſappoint his purpoſes. She admoniſhes Jacob of his danger, and adviſes him to give way by yielding and abſence. *Note*, Diſtance of time and place wear off, or weaken the impreſſions of reſentment. She juſtly fears leſt ſhe ſhould be deprived of both ſons at once, by the murder of one and the execution of the other. The thought of a ſon a murderer, muſt needs be ſhocking to every parent.

3. She conceals from Iſaac, Eſau's purpoſe; but finds a very urgent reaſon for his conſent to her deſign, by pleading the danger of Jacob's marrying a Canaanite, and that ſuch a ſtep would make her life miſerable. *Note*, (1.) Parents are greatly intereſted in the ſettlement of their children. (2.) Where one child hath ſettled wrong, they ſhould be twice careful of thoſe which remain.

CHAP. XXVIII.

We have here, (1.) *Jacob's parting with his parents to go to Padan-aram; the charge his father gave him*, ver. 1, 2. *The bleſſing he ſent him away with*, ver. 3, 4. *His obedience to the orders given him*, ver. 5—10. *And the influence this had upon Eſau*, ver. 6. (2.) *Jacob's meeting with God, and his communion with him by the way. And there*, 1. *His viſion of the ladder*, ver. 11, 12. 2. *The gracious promiſes God made him*, ver. 13, 14, 15. 3. *The impreſſion this made upon him*, ver. 16—19. 4. *The vow he made to God upon this occaſion*, ver. 20, 21, 22.

1. AND Iſaac called Jacob, and bleſſed him, and charged him, and ſaid unto him, [a] Thou ſhalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. 2. [b] Ariſe, go to [c] Padan-aram, to the houſe of [d] Bethuel, thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of [e] Laban, thy mother's brother. 3. And [f] God Almighty bleſs thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayeſt be † a multitude of people: 4. And give thee [g] the bleſſing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy ſeed with thee; that thou mayeſt inherit the land ‡ [h] wherein thou art a ſtranger, which God gave unto Abraham. 5. And Iſaac ſent away Jacob, and he went to Padan-aram, unto Laban ſon of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Eſau's mother.

[a] Chap. xxiv. 3.
[b] Hoſ. xii. 12.
[c] Chap. xxv. 20.
[d] Chap. xxii. 22.
[e] Chap. xxiv. 29.
[f] Chap. xvii. 1.
† Heb. An aſſembly of people.
[g] Chap. xii. 2.
‡ Heb. Of thy ſojournings.
[h] Chap. xvii. 8.

v. 1—5. Rebekah's advice, we find, prevailed on Iſaac; and now Jacob is ſent away into a diſtant land, ſcarce better than a ſervant, and expecting a lingring exile. *Note*, Thoſe who are God's people, muſt expect the croſs with the crown, the ſuffering with the bleſſing. Obſerve,

1. The charge given him, *v.* 2. whither he ſhould go, and for what purpoſe. *Note*, (1.) It is comfortable to have a godly friend's houſe, where we can find an aſylum. 2. It is our duty not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, 2 *Cor.* vi. 4.

2. The bleſſing beſtowed on him. Iſaac now was convinced it was God's will it ſhould be Jacob's, and therefore confirms the promiſe. Fruitfulneſs and numbers ſhould enlarge his houſe, and Abraham's emphatical bleſſing, the Meſſiah, ſpring from him. Tho' now a diſtant exile, the poſſeſſion of Canaan is his own, and Eſau's abode ſhall not affect his title. *Note*, Faith can truſt more ſecurely upon the promiſe, than any other tenure.

3. Jacob ſets off without delay, without a ſervant, on foot, in haſte, more like a flight than a journey, and unknowing when he ſhall return. Behold, how God trains him up for greatneſs by humiliation, and teaches him to govern by his ſervitude; we find no murmuring at his lot. *Note*, If they who are reduced to the loweſt ebb, have the promiſe of God with them, they have enough to enrich and comfort them.

6. ¶ When Eſau ſaw that Iſaac had bleſſed Jacob, and ſent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he bleſſed him, he gave him a charge, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; 7. And that Jacob obeyed his father, and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram, 8. And Eſau ſeeing that the daughters of Canaan † pleaſed not Iſaac his father: 9. Then went Eſau unto Iſhmael, and took unto the wives which he had, [i] Mahalath the daughter of Iſhmael, Abraham's ſon, [k] the ſiſter of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

† Heb. *Were* evil in the eyes, &c.
[i] Chap. xxxvi. 3. called Baſhemah
[k] Chap. xxv. 13.

v. 6—9. Eſau began now to ſee his raſh choice, and fain would mend it by a match more to his father's mind. In order to which, he takes a daughter of Iſhmael: and thus inſtead of mending the matter, he but more confirmed the excluſion of his ſeed, for the bond-woman was ſolemnly caſt out and rejected. *Note*, 1. They who have only an eye to pleaſe men in what they do, will often meet with bitter diſappointments. 2. They who reſt on partial reformations, lie down but the more ſecurely under the wrath of God. 3. It is too late to be wiſe, when the opportunity is loſt.

10. ¶ And Jacob [l] went out from Beer-ſheba, and went toward [m] Haran. 11. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, becauſe the ſun was ſet: and he took of the ſtones of that place, and put *them for* his pillows, and lay down in that place to ſleep. 12. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder ſet upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, [n] the angels of God aſcending and deſcending on it. 13. And [o] behold, the LORD ſtood above it, and ſaid, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Iſaac: and the land whereon thou lieſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed. 14. And [p] thy ſeed ſhall be as the duſt of the earth; and thou ſhalt † ſpread abroad [q] to the weſt, and to the eaſt, and to the north, and to the ſouth: and [r] in thee and in thy ſeed ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed. 15. And behold, [s] I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goeſt, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have ſpoken to thee.

[l] Hoſea xii. 13.
[m] Acts vii. 2.
[n] John i. 51. Heb. i. 14.
[o] Chap. xxxv. i. & xlviii. 3.
[p] Chap. xiii. 16.
† Heb. Break forth.
[q] Deut. xii. 20.
[r] Chap. xii. 3. & xviii. 18. & xxii. 18. & xxvi. 4.
[s] ver. xx. 21.

v. 10—15. We have here Jacob on his journey to Syria, and a long walk he hath had; night approaching, he bethinks himſelf of a lodging. Obſerve,

1. He had a hard bed, and a cold pillow for weary bones to reſt upon; but he had God's bleſſing and care over him, and then he can ſleep in peace.

2. His dream made up for all the inconveniences of his lodging,

ing, *v.* 12, 13. He was without a guard, but angelic hoſts watched over him. *Note*, theſe are the miniſtring ſpirits, who, though unſeen, ſtill miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation. He was without a friend, but God appeared for him, let down his ladder of grace, and opened to him the gate of heaven. *Note*, Chriſt is this ladder; no man cometh to the father, but by him.

3. God's promiſe. A confirmation, to him and his ſeed, of the covenant made to Abraham: and moreover an aſſurance of protection and proviſion whitherſoever he went. *Note*, (1.) If God be our guardian, no danger can come nigh us. (2.) Whom he loves, he never leaves.

16. ¶ And Jacob awaked out of his ſleep, and he ſaid, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not. 17. And he was afraid, and ſaid, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the houſe of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven. 18. And Jacob roſe up early in the morning, and took the ſtone that he had put *for* his pillows, and [t] ſet it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19. And he called [u] the name of that place † Beth-el: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the firſt. 20. And [x] Jacob vowed a vow, ſaying, If [y] God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me [z] bread to eat, and raiment to put on; 21. So that I come again to my fathers houſe in peace: then ſhall the LORD be my God. 22. And this ſtone, which I have ſet *for* a pillar, [a] ſhall be God's houſe: and [b] of all that thou ſhalt give me, I will ſurely give the tenth unto thee.

[t] Chap. xxxi. 13—45. & xxxv. 14.
[u] Judg. i. 23—26. Hoſea iv. 15.
† *i. e.* The houſe of God.
[x] Chap. xxxi. 13.
[y] ver. 15.
[z] 1 Tim. vi. 8.
[a] Chap. xxxv. 7—14.
[b] Lev. xxvii. 30.

v. 16—22. A bleſſed night's reſt he had: he wiſhed rather ſtill thus to ſleep, than to awake. Obſerve,

1. How he was affected when he awoke. Struck with ſurprize and reverential awe, he cries, How dreadful is this place! God is there, and he knew it not. *Note*, (1.) God is nearer us than we are aware. (2.) His comfortable preſence is the joy of heaven: we are at the gate, when in his ordinances he manifeſts himſelf to us, as he doth not to the world. (3.) Whenever we are conſcious of his nearneſs, it will ever humble us in the duſt, under the view of our own vileneſs and corruption.

2. What he did to preſerve the memory of ſuch a viſit. He ſet up his pillow for a pillar, and pouring out his cruiſe upon it, called it by a new name, Beth-el, the houſe of God; inſtead of Luz, deriſion. *Note*, (1.) The world is this Luz, deriſion, vanity, compared with the ſubſtantial joys to be found in Beth-el, God's houſe and ſervice. (2.) The time and place where God firſt appeared to us in mercy, deſerve a perpetual memorial.

3. His vow thereupon. If God will keep him as he hath promiſed, and bring him back in peace, and during his exile ſupply him with food and raiment, he aſks no more, then (1.) the Lord ſhall be his God. He engages to yield up himſelf to his ſervice, to worſhip and obey him. (2.) Whatever God beſtows on him, the tenth ſhall be dedicated to him. *Note*, (1.) To bind our ſouls to God by ſolemn engagements, is the grateful return we owe to his love. (2.) We ſhould learn with Jacob to be content with food and raiment. (3.) To have the Lord for our God, is not more our duty than our privilege. (4.) We muſt make conſcience in dedicating part of our worldly goods to the uſe of the poor, and the ſervice of God's altar, according to our ability.

CHAP. XXIX.

This chapter gives us an account of God's providences concerning Jacob, purſuant to the promiſes made him in the foregoing chapter. 1. *How he was brought in ſafety to his journey's end, and directed to his relations there, who bid him welcome*, ver. 1—14. 2. *How he was comfortably diſpoſed of in marriage*, ver. 15—30. 3. *How his family was built up in the birth of four ſons*, ver. 31, ad finem.

1. THEN Jacob † went on his journey, and [a] came into the land of the ‡ people of the eaſt. 2. And he looked, and behold, a well in the field, and lo, there *were* three flocks of ſheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great ſtone *was* upon the well's mouth. 3. And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the ſtone from the well's mouth, and watered the ſheep, and put the ſtone again upon the well's mouth in his place. 4. And Jacob ſaid unto them, My brethren, whence *be* ye? And they ſaid, Of Haran *are* we. 5. And he ſaid unto them, Know ye Laban the ſon of Nahor? And they ſaid, We know *him*. 6. And he ſaid unto them, † *Is* he well? And they ſaid, *He is* well: and behold Rachel his daughter cometh with the ſheep. 7. And he ſaid, Lo, ‡ *it is* yet high day, neither *is it* time that the cattle ſhould be gathered together: water ye the ſheep, and go *and* feed *them*. 8. And they ſaid, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and *till* they roll the ſtone from the well's mouth; then we water the ſheep.

† Heb. Lift up his feet.
[a] Numb. xxiii. 7.
‡ Children.
† *Is there peace to Him?*
‡ Heb. Yet the day is great.

v. 1—8. With renewed ſtrength, after ſuch a viſit from God, Jacob proceeds on his journey, and arrives ſafe at Haran. We have here, his meeting and converſation with ſome ſhepherds at a well, to which providence had directed him; his friendly enquiries after Laban, and his advice to them concerning their buſineſs. *Note*, It is kind to aſſiſt others with our beſt advice, though unaſked.

9. And while he yet ſpake with them, Rachel came with her father's ſheep: for ſhe kept them. 10. And it came to paſs, when Jacob ſaw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the ſheep of Laban his mother's brother; that Jacob went near, and [b] rolled the ſtone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11. And Jacob kiſſed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. 12. And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father's brother, and that he *was* Rebekah's ſon: and ſhe ran and told her father. 13. And it came to paſs, when Laban heard the † tidings of Jacob his ſiſters ſon, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kiſſed him, and brought him to his houſe. And he told Laban all theſe things. 14. And Laban ſaid to him, [c] Surely thou *art* my bone and my fleſh: and he abode with him ‡ the ſpace of a month.

[b] Exod. ii. 17.
† Heb. Hearing.
[c] Chap. ii. 23.
‡ Heb. A month of days.

v. 9—14. We have here the firſt interview between Rachel and Jacob, and an affectionate interview it was. It began that connexion which was afterwards ſo cemented: he kiſſed her, and wept for joy; whilſt ſhe, as pleaſed to welcome her relation, of whoſe good qualities by report probably ſhe had heard, runs to her father Laban, and he with great kindneſs comes and invites him to his houſe. *Note*, (1.) There is often great impreſſion made at the firſt interview between thoſe whom God deſigns for each other. (2.) Our relations have a title to our kindneſs; they are unnatural indeed, that in their diſtreſs refuſe them their aſſiſtance.

15. ¶ And Laban ſaid unto Jacob, Becauſe thou *art* my brother, ſhouldſt thou therefore ſerve me for nought? tell me, what *ſhall* thy wages *be?* 16. And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel. 17. Leah *was* tender-eyed, but Rachel was beautiful and well-favoured. 18. And Jacob loved Rachel; and ſaid, I will ſerve thee ſeven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. 19. And Laban ſaid, *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I ſhould give her to another man: abide with me. 20. And Jacob [d] ſerved ſeven years for Rachel: and they ſeemed unto him *but* a few days, for the love he had to her.

[d] Hoſea xii. 12.

15—20. Jacob now enters heartily into Laban's ſervice, and Laban, in return, deſires to know the wages he ſhould give him. *Note*, The labourer is worthy of his hire. On this, we have,

1. The bargain made. Rachel's beauty he was not inſenſible to, and now had time to know her ſtill greater amiableneſs: this ſhall be the wages of his ſeven years ſervice. Laban conſents, and Jacob enters on his work.

2. The fulfilment of it, and with pleaſure too. Though the time was long, and the ſervice hard, yet love made the labour light; and if Rachel was his companion too, how agreeably muſt theſe hours ſteal away. *Note*, (1.) Virtuous love brings its own reward with it. (2.) Nothing is irkſome whilſt thoſe we love are with us, or that is done for them. (3.) If for a mortal love we can be delighted even with toil, how little ſhould we count every burden which brings us to the enjoyment of the perfection of beauty, in the eternal union of our ſouls to God.

21. ¶ And Jacob ſaid unto Laban, Give *me* my wife (for my days are fulfilled) that I may go in unto her. 22. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feaſt. 23. And it came to paſs in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him: and he went in unto her. 24. And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah, Zilpah his maid, *for* an

Before Chriſt 1752.

† Heb. Place.
e Judges xiv. 12.

hand-maid. 25. And it came to paſs that in the morning behold it *was* Leah: and he ſaid to Laban, What *is* this thou haſt done unto me? did not I ſerve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then haſt thou beguiled me? 26. And Laban ſaid, It muſt not be ſo done in our † country, to give the younger before the firſt-born. 27. [e] Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this alſo, for the ſervice which thou ſhalt ſerve with me yet ſeven other years. 28. And Jacob did ſo, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife alſo. 29. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid, to be her maid. 30. And he went in alſo unto Rachel, and he loved alſo Rachel more than Leah, and ſerved with him yet ſeven other years.

21—30. How juſt it is, that they who cheat others, ſhould be paid in their own coin. We have,

1. The wicked cheat put upon Jacob. His love diſappointed, his wages unpaid, and an unwelcome bride impoſed upon him; the more odious, becauſe ſupplanting the beloved Rachel. *Note*, It is often good for us to find diſappointments, where creature love might elſe engroſs our hearts.

2. The poor excuſe of Laban; mean and frivolous. No doubt, he found Jacob's labour ſo uſeful to him, that he contrived this as a means to ſecure him longer in his ſervice. *Note*, an inordinate love of gain, will often make a man proſtitute his own children; for to make them marry for gain, is ſcarce leſs than proſtitution. And now his ſecond propoſal lays a ſnare in Jacob's way: Rachel was his own by compact, Leah cannot be rejected. How hard is it to be among treacherous dealers, and not be entangled by them in ſome ſin. Polygamy is inexcuſable: from the beginning it was not ſo. *Note*, Real love cannot be divided.

† i. e. See a ſon.
‡ i. e. Hearing.
1751.
‖ i. e. Joined. See Numb. xviii. 2.
1750.
† i. e. Praiſe. Mat. i. 2.
1749.
‡ Heb. Stood from bearing.

31. ¶ And when the LORD ſaw that Leah *was* hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel *was* barren. 32. And Leah conceived and bare a ſon, and ſhe called his name † Reuben: for ſhe ſaid, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction: now therefore my huſband will love me. 33. And ſhe conceived again, and bare a ſon; and ſaid, Becauſe the LORD hath heard that I *was* hated, he hath therefore given me this *ſon* alſo: and ſhe called his name ‡ Simeon. 34. And ſhe conceived again, and bare a ſon; and ſaid, Now this time will my huſband be joined unto me, becauſe I have born him three ſons; therefore was his name called ‖ Levi. 35. And ſhe conceived again, and bare a ſon; and ſhe ſaid, Now will I praiſe the LORD, therefore ſhe called his name † Judah, and ‡ left bearing.

v. 31—35. A forced match muſt needs be unhappy; and nothing more ſhocking than to be obliged to call her wife, who is the object of our diſlike. God however relieved Leah's affliction, in giving her four ſons. *Note*, (1.) God uſually ſo diſpoſes his gifts, that what is denied in one thing, is made up in another, Rachel's barrenneſs in Jacob's love, and Jacob's diſlike by Leah's fruitfulneſs. (2.) The greateſt affliction of a wife is to have her huſband's love eſtranged from her. (3.) Judah is Leah's ſon, and therein ſhe hath peculiar honour. (4.) They who think to ſecure Chriſt's love by the value of their ſervices, will be miſtaken. His love is ſovereign and free, not depending on our fruitfulneſs, but his own choice.

CHAP. XXX.

In this chapter we have an account of the increaſe, 1. *Of Jacob's family; Dan and Naphtali by Bilhah, Rachel's maid,* ver. 1—8. *Gad and Aſher by Zilpah, Leah's maid,* ver. 9—13. *Iſſachar, Zebulun, and Dinah, by Leah,* ver. 14—21. *And laſt of all, Joſeph by Rachel,* ver. 22—24. 2. *Of Jacob's eſtate. He comes upon a new bargain with Laban,* ver. 25—34. *And in the ſix years further ſervice he did to Laban, God wonderfully bleſſed him, ſo that his flock of cattle became very conſiderable,* ver. 35—43. *And herein was fulfilled the bleſſing which Iſaac diſmiſſed him with, chap.* xxviii. 3. God make thee fruitful and multiply thee.

a 1 Sam. i. 5.
b Chap. l. 23. Job iii. 12.
c Chap. xvi. 2.
† Heb. Be built by her.
d Chap. xxxv. 22.
† i. e. Judging.
‡ Heb. Wreſtlings of God.
‖ i. e. My wreſtling.
e Mat. iv. 13.
† i. e. A troop, or company.
‡ Heb. In my happineſs.
‖ i. e. Happy.

1. AND when Rachel ſaw that ſhe bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her ſiſter; and ſaid unto Jacob, Give me children, or elſe I die. 2. And Jacob's anger was kindled againſt Rachel; and he ſaid, [a] *Am* I in God's ſtead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? 3. And ſhe ſaid, Behold, my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and [b] ſhe ſhall bear upon my knees, that [c] I may alſo † have children by her. 4. And ſhe gave him Bilhah her handmaid [d] to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. 5. And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a ſon. 6. And Rachel ſaid, God hath judged me, and hath alſo heard my voice, and hath given me a ſon: therefore called ſhe his name † Dan. 7. And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a ſecond ſon. 8. And Rachel ſaid, With ‡ great wreſtlings have I wreſtled with my ſiſter, and I have prevailed: and ſhe called his name ‖ [e] Naphtali. 9. When Leah ſaw that ſhe had left bearing, ſhe took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. 10. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a ſon. 11. And Leah ſaid, A troop cometh: and ſhe called his name † Gad. 12. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a ſecond ſon. 13. And Leah ſaid, ‡ Happy am I, for the daughters will call me bleſſed: and ſhe called his name ‖ Aſher.

v. 1—13. From connections like Jacob's, little domeſtic happineſs could be expected. Accordingly we find,

1. Rachel's envy at her ſiſter, and her perverſe demand from her huſband; ſhe ſpeaks as one at the point of death. *Note*, (1.) Envious diſcontent and diſappointed pride, have the moſt fatal effects. A broken heart is not a death ſo uncommon perhaps, as it is thought to be. (2.) Inordinate deſire after creature comforts, makes all our miſeries.

2. Jacob's reproof. It was impiety to quarrel with God's diſpenſations. He corrected therefore warmly as he loved. *Note*, (1.) Our love to the perſon, muſt not ſuffer us to connive at their ſins. (2.) In all our trials, God muſt be applied to. (3.) It is folly as well as ſin, to expect that happineſs from the creature, which only God can beſtow.

3. The wrong expedient Rachel took to relieve herſelf. Tho' none ſurely could be ſo near as her ſiſter's children, ſhe could not rule them ſhe thought, as ſhe could thoſe of her ſervant, and therefore Jacob muſt take her maid to wife; and when ſhe bore two ſons, they have names of contention, Dan and Naphtali given them, as if ſhe had now prevailed. *Note*, It is the wickedneſs of parents to tranſmit their quarrels in their children.

4. The ſame expedient uſed by Leah. Perhaps he conſented at Rachel's importunity, and now he cannot refuſe Leah pleading the precedent. *Note*, When we are overcome with ſin once, we ſhall more eaſily yield to it a ſecond time. Leah ſucceeds as her ſiſter, in two ſons, Gad a troop, and Aſher bleſſed, and counts herſelf happy, that ſhe ſhall be eſteemed for her numerous brood. *Note*, (1.) It is the folly of many, that they are governed by the eſtimation of the world, more than by reaſon or religion. (2.) It is no leſſening of our guilt, that God brings good out of evil.

About 1748.
About 1747.
† i. e. An hire.
About 1746.
‡ i. e. Dwelling.
f Mat iv. 13.
About 1745.
‖ i. e. Judgment.

14. ¶ And Reuben went in the days of wheat-harveſt, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel ſaid to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy ſons mandrakes. 15. And ſhe ſaid unto her, *Is it* a ſmall matter that thou haſt taken my huſband? and wouldſt thou take away my ſons mandrakes alſo? And Rachel ſaid, Therefore he ſhall lie with thee to night for thy ſons mandrakes. 16. And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and ſaid, Thou muſt come in unto me, for ſurely I have hired thee with my ſons mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. 17. And God hearkned unto Leah, and ſhe conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth ſon. 18. And Leah ſaid, God hath given me mine hire, becauſe I have given my maiden to my huſband: and ſhe called his name † Iſſachar. 19. And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the ſixth ſon. 20. And Leah ſaid, God hath endued me *with* a good dowry; now will my huſband dwell with me, becauſe I have born him ſix ſons: and ſhe called his name ‡ [f] Zebulun. 21. And afterwards ſhe bare a daughter, and called her name ‖ Dinah.

v. 14—21. Leah's bed was now deſerted, and ſhe is puniſhed thereby for her intruſion into Jacob's; but an occurrence happens, which reſtores her to him, and makes her again the joyful mother of children.

1. Rachel, taken with the ſight of mandrakes, whether flowers or fruit ſeems doubtful, which Reuben had brought his mother Leah, conſents to give Jacob up to her for a night, in exchange for theſe. *Note*, Our different paſſions often croſs one another; to gratify one, we muſt mortify the other.

2. Leah from thence brings forth Iſſachar, and counts him her hire. So apt are we to think ſucceſs a proof of the rightneſs of the deed. Again ſhe bears Zebulun, and Dinah, and then concludes ſhe ſhall now poſſeſs more of Jacob's company, but is perhaps miſtaken. Nothing can ſupply the place of affection.

Before Chriſt about 1749.

About 1745.

22. ¶ And God remembred Rachel, and God hearkned to her, and opened her womb. 23. And ſhe conceived and bare a ſon; and ſaid, God hath taken away [g] my reproach. 24. And ſhe called his name † Joſeph; and ſaid, [h] The LORD ſhall add to me another ſon.

g 1 Sam. i. 6. Iſa. iv. 1. Luke i. 25.
† i. e. Adding.
h Chap. xxxv. 17.

v. 22, 23. Had Rachel but exerciſed the patience of Rebekah, ſhe had not been ſo haſty to put her handmaid in her place. More prayer, and leſs worldly wiſdom, had better anſwered her end; for now, at her earneſt prayer, God remembers her and gives her a ſon. She calls him Joſeph, in token of her confidence in the increaſe of her children, now ſhe began to bear. *Note*, How little do we know what is good for ourſelves. This name had not been given, if ſhe could have foreſeen her next ſon muſt be her death.

25. ¶ And it came to paſs, when Rachel had born Joſeph, that Jacob ſaid unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. 26. Give *me* my wives and my children, for whom I have ſerved thee, and let me go: for thou knoweſt my ſervice which I have done thee.

v. 25, 26. Jacob now, after his long abſence, began to think of home. The land of Canaan was not only the land of his nativity, but the land of promiſe, and the ſeed which ſhould inherit it now began to multiply. Though he had nothing of his own, he has a good father to go to, who will welcome him and his; or, if not, he can truſt God. *Note*, (1.) God will not give mouths, without ſending meat for them. (2.) Every true Chriſtian, however comfortably ſettled or increaſed in this world, hath his eye and his heart upon his own country, which is above.

27. And Laban ſaid unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, *tarry*: for [i] I have learned by experience, that the LORD hath bleſſed me for thy ſake. 28. And he ſaid, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. 29. And he ſaid unto him, Thou knoweſt how I have ſerved thee, and how thy cattle was with me. 30. For *it was* little which thou hadſt before I *came*, and it is *now* † increaſed unto a multitude; and the LORD hath bleſſed thee ‡ ſince my coming: and now when ſhall I provide for mine own houſe alſo? 31. And he ſaid, What ſhall I give thee? And Jacob ſaid, Thou ſhalt not give me any thing; if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed *and* keep thy flock: 32. I will paſs through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the ſpeckled and ſpotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the ſheep, and the ſpotted and ſpeckled among the goats: and *of ſuch* ſhall be my hire. 33. So ſhall my righteouſneſs anſwer for me † in time to come, when it ſhall come for my hire before thy face; every one that *is* not ſpeckled and ſpotted amongſt the goats, and brown amongſt the ſheep, that ſhall be accounted ſtolen with me. 34. And Laban ſaid, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word. 35. And he removed that day the he-goats that were ring-ſtraked and ſpotted, and all the ſhe-goats that were ſpeckled and ſpotted, *and* every one that had *ſome* white in it, and all the brown among the ſheep, and gave *them* into the hands of his ſons. 36. And he ſet three days journey betwixt himſelf and Jacob: and Jacob fed the reſt of Laban's flocks.

i Chap. xxxix. 5.
† Heb. Broken forth.
‡ Heb. At my foot.
† Heb. To-morrow.

v. 27—36. Laban had now experience of his intereſt in Jacob's ſtay, and God's bleſſing upon him; and therefore, though he could part with his daughters and children, he is loth to loſe ſo good a ſhepherd as Jacob, by whoſe care he had proſpered ſo greatly. He intreats him therefore to ſtay. *Note*, Worldly men can give good words to ſerve their own ends. To engage him, as his family was large, and his poſſeſſions ſmall, and Jacob appeared not unwilling to yield, if he had a proſpect of providing for his family, he conſents to a propoſal of Jacob's, to give him the ſpeckled and ring-ſtreaked ſheep for his hire. Thus the matter would be put into God's hands, and Laban have no pretext to diſpute the property of Jacob. But to prevent any great advantage accruing to Jacob, he carefully ſeparates theſe mottled ſheep from the reſt, and ſets them three days journey aſunder. Learn, (1.) How wiſe and cunning worldly men are for their own intereſts. (2.) How vain their caution, when God deſigns to fruſtrate their purpoſes.

37. ¶ And Jacob [k] took him rods of green poplar, and of the haſel, and cheſnut-tree; and pilled white ſtrakes in them, and made the white appear which *was* in the rods. 38. And he ſet the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs, when the flocks came to drink; that they ſhould conceive when they came to drink. 39. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ring-ſtraked, ſpeckled, and ſpotted. 40. And Jacob did ſeparate the lambs, and ſet the faces of the flocks toward the ring-ſtraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban: and he put his own flocks by themſelves; and put them not unto Laban's cattle. 41. And it came to paſs, whenſoever the ſtronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. 42. But when the cattle were feeble, he put *them* not in: ſo the feebler were Laban's, and the ſtronger Jacob's. 43. And the man increaſed exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-ſervants, and men-ſervants, and camels, and aſſes.

k See Chap. xxxi. 9—12.

Before Chriſt 1911.

v. 37—43. Jacob's policy to ſecure his wages was nothing blameable. He had to deal with an artful maſter, and therefore is obliged to counteract his unjuſt deſigns. As in conception the imagination is thought powerfully to operate, he thus by the ſtriped poplar got a ſpeckled breed, and by ſetting them before the reſt, ſecured his own in the continuance of their colour in breeding; whilſt Laban's looking on them, brought forth lambs like them. And as he ſelected the ſtrongeſt cattle, his flock became at once vigorous and numerous; and thus he got good wages by his work. *Note*, (1.) They often outwit themſelves, who intend to impoſe upon others. (2.) The divine bleſſing can quickly make a little much.

CHAP. XXXI.

Jacob had left his father's houſe in a fright, came to his uncle in diſtreſs, very hard uſage he had met with there, and now is going back ſurrounded with fears. Here is, 1. *His reſolution to return*, ver. 1—16. 2. *His clandeſtine departure*, ver. 17—21. 3. *Laban's purſuit of him in diſpleaſure*, ver. 22—25. 4. *The hot words that paſſed between them*, ver. 26—42. 5. *Their amicable agreement at laſt*, ver. 43, ad finem.

1. AND he heard the words of Laban's ſons, ſaying, Jacob hath taken away all that *was* our father's; and of *that* which *was* our father's hath he gotten all this glory. 2. And Jacob beheld [a] the countenance of Laban, and behold it *was* not toward him † as before. 3. And the LORD ſaid unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee. 4. And Jacob ſent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock. 5. And ſaid unto them, I ſee your father's countenance, that it *is* not toward me as before: but the God of my father hath been with me. 6. And ye know that with all my power I have ſerved your father. 7. And your father hath deceived me, and [b] changed my wages [c] ten times: but God ſuffered him not to hurt me. 8. If he ſaid thus, The ſpeckled ſhall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare ſpeckled: and if he ſaid thus, The ring-ſtraked ſhall be thy hire, then bare all the cattle ring-ſtraked. 9. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given *them* to me. 10. And it came to paſs at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and ſaw in a dream, and behold, the ‡ rams which leaped upon the cattle *were* ring-ſtraked, ſpeckled, and griſled. 11. And the angel of God ſpake unto me in a dream, *ſaying*, Jacob: And I ſaid, Here *am* I. 12. And he ſaid, Lift up now thine eyes and ſee, all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ring-ſtraked, ſpeckled, and griſled: for I have ſeen all that Laban doth unto thee. 13. I *am* the God of Beth-el, [d] where thou anointedſt the pillar, *and* where thou vowedſt a vow unto me: now [e] ariſe, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred. 14. And Rachel and Leah anſwered, and ſaid unto him, *Is there* yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's houſe? 15. Are we not counted of him ſtrangers? for [f] he hath ſold us, and hath quite devoured alſo our money. 15. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that *is* ours, and our childrens: now then whatſoever God hath ſaid unto thee, do.

a Chap. iv. 5.
† Heb. As yeſterday and the day before.
b Ver. 41.
c Numb. xiv. 22. Neh. iv. 12. Job xix. 3. Zech. viii. 23.
‡ Or He-goats.
d Chap. xxviii. 18.
e Chap. xxxii. 9.
f Chap. ix. 15, 27.

v. 1—16. Jacob's great increaſe becomes now a dangerous ſnare; but God makes it the means of haſtening him home the ſooner. So eaſily can his providence change our dangers into mercies.

1. Laban's ſons beheld with indignation the flocks of Jacob, and talked as if they only wanted occaſion to take back the fruit of his bargain. They counted his ſhare all, and ſaw his ſheep magnified with the eyes of covetouſneſs; while Laban himſelf, though he ſaid nothing, betrayed in his countenance the ſame ſentiments. *Note*, (1.) An envious mind cannot bear another ſhould proſper more than themſelves, eſpecially in their own profeſſion. (2.) The things of this world appear glorious to thoſe who place their happineſs in them; but they are little in his eyes, who hath ſeen, by faith, the glories of a better.

2. Jacob hereupon reſolves to decamp, under the divine guidance and direction. The God of Bethel, to whom he owed all his ſucceſs, who directed him how to act by a viſion, now bids him be gone, and will protect him in his return. *Note*, (1.) When worldly proſperity increaſes, we are moſt tempted to take up our reſt here: it is well then to think of our home in heaven. (2.) Whilſt our worldly bleſſings come as covenant bleſſings, they are doubly ſweet. (3.) When we have gone out under God's guidance, we need not fear returning ſafe.

3. He acquaints his wives with his reſolution, but privately, for fear of Laban, and gives them his reaſons. *Note*, The huſband, in matters of importance to his family, ſhould conſult his wife, who, as the partner of his fortune, ſhould be the partner of his heart. They readily conſent, conſcious of the truth of his complaints, and the juſtice of his arguments. What Jacob had got, was not only his wages, but their juſt portion; they prefer therefore their huſband, as bounden, to their father's houſe, and are ready to go wherever he pleaſes. *Note*, A good wife will delight to ſhare her huſband's lot, wherever, or to whatever God is pleaſed to call him.

17. ¶ Then Jacob roſe up, and ſet his ſons and his wives upon camels. 18. And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram; for to go to Iſaac his father in the land of Canaan. 19. And Laban went to ſhear his ſheep: and Rachel had ſtolen the † images that *were* her father's. 20. And Jacob ſtole away ‡ unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. 21. So he fled with all that he had, and he roſe up, and paſſed over the river, and ſet his face *toward* the mount Gilead.

† Heb. Teraphim. Judg. xvii. 5. 1 Sam. xix. 13.

‡ Heb. The heart of Laban.

v. 17—21. The reſolution thus agreed on and fixed, Jacob ſeizes the firſt favourable opportunity of Laban's abſence; and as he had reaſon to fear reſtraint, if his purpoſe had been known, he goes off ſecretly. He took with him only his own, ſo that Laban might have no reaſon to complain; though Rachel ſtole her father's Teraphim, (little houſhold gods, probably a ſpice of the heathen idolatry, which remained in Laban's family) whether out of ſuperſtitious regard to them, or, as we may hope, to convince her father of the folly of truſting in theſe vanities. *Note*, Self-preſervation is the firſt law. We are not to commit ſin, but we may uſe every wiſe method to avoid impending danger.

22. And it was told Laban on the third day, that Jacob was fled. 23. And he took his brethren with him, and purſued after him ſeven days journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead. 24. And God came to Laban the Syrian [g] in a dream by night, and ſaid unto him, Take heed that thou ſpeak not to Jacob || either good or bad. 25. ¶ Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

[g] Job xxxiii. 15.

|| Heb. From good to bad.

v. 22—25. We have here,

1. Laban's purſuit. He raiſes all his family, and purſues the fugitive ſeven days, and overtakes him at Mount Gilead. *Note*, When anger and covetouſneſs are rouſed, what will not men do to gratify them? Even his own fleſh and blood are now likely to rue his vengeance.

2. That night God ſtops his career, forbids him to interpoſe, and reſtrains him from offering Jacob the leaſt injury. *Note*, (1.) God hath in his hand the hearts of all men. He ſaith to the furiouſneſs of man, as to the raging ſea, Hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further. (2.) He hath and will continue to reſcue his people, when they ſeem upon the brink of ruin. Let us in every circumſtance truſt, and not be afraid.

26. And Laban ſaid to Jacob, What haſt thou done, that thou haſt ſtolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the ſword? 27. Wherefore didſt thou flee away ſecretly, and † ſteal away from me? and didſt not tell me, that I might have ſent thee away with mirth, and with ſongs, with tabret, and with harp? 28. And haſt not ſuffered me to kiſs my ſons and my daughters? thou haſt now done fooliſhly in *ſo* doing. 29. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your fathers ſpake unto me yeſternight, ſaying, Take thou heed that thou ſpeak not to Jacob either good or bad. 30. And now *though* thou wouldſt needs be gone, becauſe thou ſore longeſt after thy father's houſe; *yet* wherefore haſt thou ſtolen my gods? 31. And Jacob anſwered and ſaid to Laban, Becauſe I was afraid: for I ſaid, Peradventure thou wouldſt take by force thy daughters from me. 32. With whomſoever thou findeſt thy gods, [h] let him not live: before our brethren diſcern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee: for Jacob knew not that Rachel had ſtolen them. 33. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maid-ſervants tents; but he found *them* not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entred into Rachel's tent. 34. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camels furniture, and ſat upon them: and Laban ‡ ſearched all the tent, but found *them* not. 35. And ſhe ſaid to her father, Let it not diſpleaſe my lord, that I cannot riſe up before thee; for the cuſtom of women *is* upon me: and he ſearched, but found not the images.

† Heb. Haſt ſtolen me.

[h] See Chap. xliv. 9.

‡ Heb. Felt.

v. 26—35. Though Laban is reſtrained from hurting Jacob, he is not from upbraiding him, Here is,

1. His charge againſt him, of great unkindneſs. He pretends wondrous affection to his children, nothing of which he had ever ſhown. *Note*, When a man is diſappointed of a miſchievous deſign, he would fain have it thought he never intended it. He ſuggeſts alſo, as though it were a force upon his daughters, though they were firſt conſulted. *Note*, A bad heart is pregnant in inventing evil ſurmiſes. He vaunts his power to hurt him, but owns himſelf under a divine reſtraint, from God's appearing to him the night paſt. *Note*, It were well, if men attended more to the ſecret notices, ſleeping or waking, given their conſciences from God. However, one charge at leaſt with ſome colour he can maintain: his gods are ſtolen, and Jacob the thief. Sad gods indeed, that cannot preſerve themſelves.

2. Jacob maintains his innocence. If he went off ſuddenly, he had reaſon, from Laban's paſt conduct, to ſuſpect injuſtice. As to his gods, he denies the charge, and imprecates vengeance on the thief. Had he known her, he had ſpoken more warily. *Note*, Evil wiſhes cannot be too ſparingly diſperſed: they may light on thoſe we leaſt ſuſpect.

3. Laban's ſearch for his gods in vain. Rachel by an artifice conceals them. It was probably an untruth, at beſt an excuſe. *Note*, They who ſteal, will never want a lie or excuſe to conceal it.

36. ¶ And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob anſwered, and ſaid to Laban, What *is* my treſpaſs? what *is* my ſin, that thou haſt ſo hotly purſued after me? 37. Whereas thou haſt ſearched all my ſtuff, what haſt thou found of all thy houſhold-ſtuff? ſet *it* here before my brethren, and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. 38. This twenty years *have* I *been* with thee; thy ews and thy ſhe-goats have not caſt their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. 39. [i] That which was torn *of beaſts*, I brought not unto thee, I bare the loſs of it; [k] of my hand didſt thou require it, *whether* ſtolen by day, or ſtolen by night. 40. *Thus* I was, in the day the drought conſumed me, and the froſt by night; and my ſleep departed from mine eyes. 41. Thus have I been twenty years in thy houſe; I ſerved thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and ſix years for thy cattle: and [l] thou haſt changed my wages ten times. 42. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Iſaac had been with me, ſurely thou hadſt ſent me away now empty: God hath ſeen mine affliction, and the labour of my hands, and rebuked *thee* yeſternight.

[i] Exod. xxii. 10, &c.

[k] Exod. xxii. 12.

[l] Ver. 7.

v. 36—42. It is now Jacob's turn to chide, when Laban can make good not the leaſt of his accuſations, nor find a thread he can juſtly claim. *Note*, Though he had reaſon to expoſtulate, he did wrong to be angry: no provocation can excuſe that. He could appeal to Laban for his honeſty, carefulneſs, and fidelity;

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and every inſtance he produces of the uprightneſs of his ſervice, reflects upon Laban as an unjuſt and unreaſonable maſter. *Note*, Though it be our unhappy caſe to have ſuch a maſter as Laban, a good ſervant, like Jacob, will not be the leſs faithful and induſtrious. We muſt leave the matter with God, and then we ſhall have Jacob's bleſſing.

43. ¶ And Laban anſwered, and ſaid unto Jacob, *Theſe* daughters *are* my daughters, and *theſe* children *are* my children, and *theſe* cattle *are* my cattle, and all that thou ſeeſt *is* mine: and what can I do this day unto theſe my daughters, or unto their children which they have born? 44. Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and [m] let it be for a witneſs between me and thee. 45. And Jacob [n] took a ſtone, and ſet it up *for* a pillar. 46. And Jacob ſaid unto his brethren, Gather ſtones; and they took ſtones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. 47. And Laban called it † Jegar-ſahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. 48. And Laban ſaid, This heap *is* a witneſs between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed: 49. And ‡ [o] Miſpah; for he ſaid, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are abſent one from another. 50. If thou ſhalt afflict my daughters, or if thou ſhalt take *other* wives beſides my daughters, no man *is* with us; See, God *is* witneſs betwixt me and thee. 51. And Laban ſaid to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold *this* pillar which I have caſt betwixt me and thee; 52. This heap *be* witneſs, and *this* pillar *be* witneſs, that I will not paſs over this heap to thee, and that thou ſhalt not paſs over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. 53. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob ſware by the fear of his father Iſaac. 54. Then Jacob § offered ſacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. 55. And early in the morning Laban roſe up, and kiſſed his ſons and his daughters, and bleſſed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

[m] Joſh. xxiv. 27.

[n] Chap. xxviii. 18.

† i. e. The heap of witneſs.

‡ i. e. A beacon, or watch-tower.

[o] Judges xi. 29.

§ Or, killed beaſts.

v. 43—55. Laban could not gainſay Jacob's expoſtulation; truth and conſcience confirmed it. But when he dares not do evil, he pretends kindneſs, and would fain make a merit of that affection which he had never ſhown, and beſtow as a gift what was Jacob's by hard ſervice, *v.* 43. Hereupon,

1. He propoſes a covenant of friendſhip, and Jacob readily conſents. *Note*, We muſt follow peace with all men, eſpecially with thoſe of our own houſe and family. The terms are, That Jacob ſhall take no other wife, and that no injuries ſhould be offered on either ſide. Jacob never deſigned the one, nor intended the other. *Note*, They who behave ill, are moſt apt to ſuſpect others to be like themſelves. Hereupon, a pillar is erected of ſtones, a ſacrifice is offered, the oath is taken, they eat and drink before the Lord, and, according to their different languages, called the place the Heap of Witneſs, and the Watch-tower. Learn, (1.) To forgive and forget all injuries is Chriſtian-like. (2.) When friends are parted, it is their comfort, that God ſees and watches between them. (3.) Thoſe who take the ſeals of the covenant, ſhould look well that they be faithful to the engagements that are upon them; for God is not mocked.

2. Their parting in peace. The ſtorm is blown over; anger ſubſides into paternal benediction, and threatning into kiſſes of love. *Note*, (1.) Strange alterations are brought about by God's providence. (2.) Near relations are doubly bound mutually to forgive, and live in peace.

CHAP. XXXII.

We have here Jacob ſtill upon his journey towards Canaan. By the way he meets, 1. *With good tidings from his God,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *With bad tidings from his brother, to whom he ſent a meſſage to notify his return,* ver. 2—7. *In his diſtreſs,* 1. *He divides his company,* ver. 7—8. 2. *He makes his prayer to God,* ver. 9—12. 3. *He ſends a preſent to his brother,* ver. 13—23. 4. *He wreſtles with the angel,* ver. 24—32.

1. AND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2. And when Jacob ſaw them, he ſaid, This *is* God's hoſt: and he called the name of that place † Mahanaim.

† i. e. Two hoſts, or camps.

v. 1, 2. God hath preſerved him hitherto, and ſtill continues to guard him ſafe home. He had the promiſe of protection, and he truſted it; now he has the ſight of his angelic convoy, and may be comforted. Who can hurt them whom angels miniſter unto? and need there was of every ſupport, for his paſt dangers were only the prelude of greater impending. God thus prepares his people by ſtrong conſolations for difficult ſervices. *Note*, When every believer draws near his laſt conflict in death, and Canaan is in view, then ſhall theſe attendant ſpirits ſurround the dying bed, to welcome the departing ſoul, and lodge it ſafe in the boſom of Jeſus. He called the place Mahanaim, *two hoſts*; they protected his front from Eſau, and his rear from Laban.

3. And Jacob ſent meſſengers before him to Eſau his brother, [a] unto the land of Seir, [b] the † country of Edom. 4. And he commanded them, ſaying, Thus ſhall ye ſpeak unto my lord Eſau; Thy ſervant Jacob ſaith thus, I have ſojourned with Laban, and ſtayed there until now. 5. And I have oxen, and aſſes, flocks, and men-ſervants, and women-ſervants: and I have ſent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy ſight.

[a] Chap. xxxiii. 14, 16.

[b] Chap. xxxvi. 6, 7, 8.

† Heb. Field.

v. 3—5. Juſtly apprehenſive of Eſau's old grudge, he endeavours to pacify him by a kind and humble meſſage, acquainting him with his return, and the proſperity God had ſhewed him. *Note*, (1.) Yielding pacifies wrath. It is wiſe often to make ſubmiſſions to ſuperiors, though unjuſtly exaſperated againſt us. (2.) Abundance, which ſhould make a good brother rejoice, to a wicked one often proves an occaſion of greater envy and diſpleaſure.

6. ¶ And the Meſſengers returned to Jacob, ſaying, We came to thy brother Eſau, and [c] alſo he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. 7. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and diſtreſſed: and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels into two bands; 8. And ſaid, If Eſau come to the one company and ſmite it, then the other company which is left ſhall eſcape.

[c] Chap. xxxiii. 1.

v. 6—8. We have here,

1. The meſſenger's return; and a ſad anſwer he brought back. Probably Eſau had heard of Jacob's coming, and was in the way with his band of men, breathing out fury and revenge. *Note*, (1.) A malicious ſpirit never forgets. (2.) Jealouſy is cruel as the grave; even a brother's life cannot ſtand before it. (3.) Power and policy are uſually with the oppreſſors. What would become of the poor church of Chriſt, if ſome ſupport more than human did not attend it?

2. Jacob's fear. And reaſon enough he had for it. *Note*, (1.) Repeated trials muſt be expected by every Chriſtian. (2.) Fears of approaching danger may be, where confidence in the promiſe is unſhaken.

3. His diſpoſition of his family. At leaſt, one part may eſcape, if the other is ſmitten. *Note*, Though God hath given us his promiſe, we are nevertheleſs called to the uſe of all prudent means.

9. ¶ And Jacob ſaid, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Iſaac, the LORD which ſaidſt unto me, [d] Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: 10. † I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant; for with my ſtaff I paſſed over this Jordan, and now I am become *two* bands. 11. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Eſau: for I fear him, leſt he will come and ſmite me, *and* [e] the mother ‡ with the children. 12. And [f] thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee good, and make thy ſeed as the ſand of the ſea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

[d] Chap. xxxi. 13.

† Heb. I am leſs than all, &c.

[e] Hoſea x. 14.

‡ Heb. Upon.

[f] Chap. xxviii. 13, 14.

v. 9—12. Jacob had made the beſt diſpoſition his circumſtances would admit of; but he depended more upon the effects of prayer, than upon the arm of fleſh. Accordingly we find him upon his knees, pouring out his diſtreſs before God. *Note*, The more danger preſſes us, the more loud ſhould be our cry to God; for in him is our help. A glorious prayer this was, and well worth notice: his plea is urgent, and his arguments forcible. He approaches God as his covenant God, having the entail of the bleſſings promiſed to Abraham and Iſaac. He pleads God's warrant for his journey, and therefore God's honour engaged for his protection. He acknowledges his own unworthineſs of any favour, yet with thankfulneſs mentions the great mercies he had received, as an argument to hope for more. He then ſpeaks his fears and diſtreſs from his apprehenſions of Eſau; and ſince he had no proſpect of help elſewhere, commits his cauſe with earneſt importunity into his hand, who was able to ſave him, and cloſes with his plea of God's faithfulneſs; not ſo much to remind him of his promiſe, as to encourage his own heart to depend upon it. Learn hence, (1.) In all our trials, to ſpread them before the Lord. (2.) To come to God as our covenant God, believing his readineſs to hear and help us. (3.) When in the way of our duty, we may boldly claim the fulfilment of his promiſe. (4.) Never let us forget our own vileneſs and ſinfulneſs. (5.) Nor the great and repeated mercies we have already received, that no preſent diſtreſs may prevent our grateful acknowledgments. (6.) We cannot be too particular in our prayers, mentioning to God perſons and circumſtances, as to a friend who can be touched with the feeling of our diſtreſſes. (7.) To riſe from our knees with confidence in the unchangeableneſs of God in his promiſes.

13. ¶ And he lodged there that ſame night; and took of that which came to his hand, a preſent for Eſau his brother; 14. Two hundred ſhe-goats, and twenty he-goats, two hundred ews and twenty rams. 15. Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty ſhe-aſſes and ten foles. 16. And he delivered *them* into the hand of his ſervants, every drove by themſelves; and ſaid unto his ſervants, Paſs over before me, and put a ſpace betwixt drove and drove. 17. And he commanded the foremoſt, ſaying, When Eſau my brother meeteth thee, and aſketh thee, ſaying, Whoſe *art* thou, and whither goeſt thou? and whoſe *are* theſe before thee? 18. Then thou ſhalt ſay, Theſe *be* thy ſervant Jacob's; it *is* a preſent ſent unto my lord Eſau: and behold alſo he *is* behind us. 19. And ſo commanded he the ſecond and the third, and all that followed the droves, ſaying, On this manner ſhall you ſpeak unto Eſau, when you find him. 20. And ſay ye moreover, Behold, thy ſervant Jacob *is* behind us: For he ſaid, I will appeaſe him with the preſent that goeth before me, and afterwards I will ſee his face; peradventure he will accept of † me.

† Heb. My face.

v. 13—20. Jacob having poured out his ſoul to God in prayer, in dependance on his care, takes the moſt likely methods to appeaſe his brother's reſentment.

1. By a conſiderable preſent, ſo divided into ſeveral droves, as both ſet them off, and ſerved, from their repeated approach, to ſtay Eſau for enquiry; thus giving him time to think, and ſuch matter to muſe upon, as might allay the fury of his anger. *Note*, (1.) A preſent is a good letter of recommendation to a worldly mind. (2.) We cannot buy peace too dear. (3.) It is wiſdom to preſent a part, if that can preſerve the whole. Some through covetouſneſs to ſpare a ſhilling often loſe a pound.

2. By a ſubmiſſive meſſage. Eſau muſt be called my lord, and Jacob his ſervant. *Note*, It tickles vain minds to have their titles repeated to them. Every ſervant pays his reſpects in Jacob's name, and adds, that Jacob himſelf was behind. *Note*, (1.) In danger it is uſually ſafeſt to put on a good countenance. (2.) Apparent confidence in a man's goodneſs lays him under a kind of obligation to ſhew it.

21. So went the preſent over before him: and himſelf lodged that night in the company. 22. And he roſe up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-ſervants, and his eleven ſons, and [g] paſſed over the ford Jabbok. 23. And he took them, and † ſent them over the brook, and ſent over that he had. 24. ¶ And Jacob was left alone; and there wreſtled a man with him, until the ‡ breaking of the day. 25. And when he ſaw that he prevailed not againſt him, he touched the hollow of his thigh: and [h] the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wreſtled with him. 26. And [i] he ſaid, Let me go, for the day breaketh: And he ſaid, [k] I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me. 27. And he ſaid unto him, What *is* thy name? And he ſaid, Jacob. 28. And he ſaid, [l] Thy name ſhall be called no more Jacob, but Iſrael: for as a prince haſt thou power with God and with men, and haſt prevailed. 29. And Jacob aſked *him*, and ſaid, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name: And he ſaid, [m] Wherefore *is* it, *that* thou doſt aſk after my name? And he bleſſed him there. 30. And Jacob called the name of the place † Peniel: for [n] I have ſeen God face to face, and my life is preſerved. 31. And as he paſſed over Penuel, the ſun roſe upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. 32. Therefore the children of Iſrael eat not *of* the ſinew which ſhrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: becauſe he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, in the ſinew that ſhrank.

[g] Deut. iii. 16.

‡ Heb. Cauſed to paſs.

§ Heb. Aſcending of the morning.

[h] See Mat. xxvi. 41. 2 Cor. xii. 7.

[i] See Luke xxiv. 28.

[k] Hoſ. xii. 4.

[l] Chap. xxxv. 10. 2 Kings, xvii. 34.

[m] Judg. xiii. 18.

† i. e. The face of God.

[n] Chap. xvi. 13. Exod. xxiv. 11. & xxxiii. 20. Deut. v. 24. Judg. vi. 22. & xiii. 22. Iſa. vi. 5.

v. 21—32. Having diſmiſſed his ſervants, he next takes care to remove his family and children over the brook, Jacob chuſing to ſpend that night alone with God in prayer and ſupplication. *Note*, Whilſt we are uſing means, we muſt be looking up to God for a bleſſing on them. We have hereupon a very ſingular occurrence.

1. A man wreſtled with him. A man in form, but more than man in nature; even the great God-man, the angel of the covenant. Jacob now had a ſore conflict to ſuſtain, which extorted from him ſtrong crying and tears; for whilſt he ſtruggled he wept, and made ſupplications to the angel. *Note*, They who would prevail in temptation, muſt firſt wreſtle in prayer with God.

2. Jacob's perſeverance. He who wreſtled with him upheld his ſtrength, and but oppoſed to make his victory more glorious. *Note*, If God exerciſes us with ſore conflicts, we may have confidence in him, that as our day is, our ſtrength ſhall be.

3. The angel's touch disjointing his thigh. Probably without pain, yet incapacitating him for corporal ſtruggle; however not inducing him to quit his hold, or give up the conteſt. *Note*, When we are weak, then are we ſtrong: the deepeſt ſenſe of our own inſufficiency gives our faith more hold of Chriſt, and determined truſt in him.

4. The angel's requeſt to be gone, becauſe the day breaks. He who had disjointed his thigh, might have disjointed his arms too; but he ſeeks not to prevail, but to exerciſe Jacob's faith and conſtancy. His family calls, buſineſs approaches; and theſe uſually oblige us to leave the cloſet of prayer for the employments of our profeſſion. But,

5. He will not let him go without a bleſſing. He knew with whom he had to do, and reſolves, though he was ſlain, to truſt in him, and by a holy importunity extorts his benediction. *Note*, Chriſt loves importunate fervent prayer.

6. His prayer is granted, and, in token of it, his name is changed into Iſrael, a Prince with God. *Note*, (1.) Perſeverance will certainly be crowned with victory. (2.) Let every Iſraelite indeed ſhew by his prayers his relation to the patriarch.

7. Jacob having anſwered to his own name, would know his antagoniſt's in return; but this is denied him. It would anſwer no end. We muſt not be curious, but content with what God hath revealed. If we have the angel's bleſſing, we need not aſk his name.

8. In grateful acknowledgment of the mercy ſhewn him, the place is called Peniel. They who have received moſt from God, will never value themſelves on their own prayers or piety, but wonder at God's pity and condeſcenſion to them.

9. On parting at ſun-riſing he finds his halting. In the heat of conteſt the hurt is leſs felt. But it is an honourable ſcar, and well repaid, by the conſtant remembrance of the mercy, the inconvenience it occaſioned. *Note*, It were happy for Chriſtians, if the riſing ſun found them not on beds of ſloth, but riſing from the place of prayer.

10. The cuſtom obſerved by poſterity, to continue the memory of God's goodneſs to their father Jacob. *Note*, Children's children ſhould look back upon their father's mercies as their own.

CHAP. XXXIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A very friendly meeting between Jacob and Eſau*, ver. 1—4. *Since God is his friend, Eſau ſhall not be his enemy.* 2. *Their conference*, (1.) *About Jacob's family*, ver. 5—7. (2.) *About the preſent he had ſent*, ver. 8—11. (3.) *About the progreſs of their journey*, ver. 12—15. 3. *Jacob's ſettlement in Canaan, his houſe, ground, and altar*, ver. 16—20.

1. AND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, [a] Eſau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. 2. And he put the handmaids and their children foremoſt, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joſeph hindermoſt. 3. And he paſſed over before them, and bowed himſelf to the ground ſeven times, until he came near to his brother. 4. And Eſau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kiſſed him: and they wept.

[a] Chap. xxxii. 6.

v. 1—4. At laſt the danger approaches, and now, as his father Abraham before him, he finds Jehovah Jireh, God will take care of him in his perilous ſituation. *Note*, They who have confidence in God, may chearfully wait the iſſue of every trial. Obſerve,

1. Jacob's order of march. If flight was needful, the moſt beloved are hindmoſt, and likelieſt to eſcape.

2. His approach to Eſau, full of deep reſpect to him as his ſuperior. He mentions nothing of the birth-right, but pays the

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duty he owed to him as an elder brother. *Note*, (1.) It is wiſe to keep out of view whatever would open old ſores. (2.) A ſubmiſſive conduct mollifies offended pride.

3. The unexpected reception he met with. God, who had reſtrained Laban, had now changed Eſau's purpoſe; for he hath in his hands the hearts of all men. *Note*, How often, through God's bleſſing, do we find the iſſue of our trials much better than our fears ſuggeſted?

4. Inſtead of fierce wrath, kiſſes of kindneſs; and for drops of blood in anger, tears of joy mingle on their cheeks. Happy meeting! may every difference among brethren be thus accommodated!

† Heb. To thee.

‡ Heb. What is all this band to thee?

|| Be that to thee that is thine.

5. And he lift up his eyes, and ſaw the women and the children; and ſaid, Who *are* thoſe † with thee? And he ſaid, The children which God hath graciouſly given thy ſervant. 6. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themſelves. 7. And Leah alſo with her children came near, and bowed themſelves: and after came Joſeph near and Rachel, and they bowed themſelves. 8. And he ſaid, ‡ What meaneſt thou by all this drove which I met? And he ſaid, *Theſe are* to find grace in the ſight of my lord. 9. And Eſau ſaid, I have enough; my brother, || keep that thou haſt unto thyſelf. 10. And Jacob ſaid, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy ſight, then receive my preſent at my hand: for therefore I have ſeen thy face, as though I had ſeen the face of God, and thou waſt pleaſed with me. 11. Take, I pray thee, [b] my bleſſing that is brought to thee; becauſe God hath dealt graciouſly with me, and becauſe I have § enough: and he urged him, and he took *it*.

[b] Judg. i. 15. 1 Sam. xxv. 27. & xxx. 26. 2 Kings, v. 15.

§ Heb. All things.

v. 5—11. Nothing but friendſhip now breathed in his diſcourſe. Eſau's enquiries are as kind, as Jacob's anſwers are pious and reſpectful. He enquires,

1. Regarding his children. They are, ſays Jacob, the children which God hath graciouſly given thy ſervant. *Note*, A good man, when he ſpeaks of ordinary things, may be known by the conſtant remembrance he has of God.

2. Regarding the droves of cattle. They are a preſent for his lord Eſau. Eſau pleads his abundance: he hath enough. Jacob preſſes his acceptance, as a thankful acknowledgment of his favourable countenance towards him: he eſteems it the greateſt bleſſing next to the divine regard. Eſau acquieſces, and thus their friendſhip is cemented. *Note*, (1.) When a man hath enough of his own, he ought civilly to refuſe needleſs obligations. (2.) A Chriſtian's heart, like Jacob's, is ever open and generous. (3.) Whatever we gain in the world, it is well ever to remember that it is the bleſſing of the Lord which maketh rich. (4.) We are to take care, that the pride of not being obliged does not make us ſlight the favours of our friends.

12. And he ſaid, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. 13. And he ſaid unto him, My lord knoweth that the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds with young *are* with me; and if men ſhould over-drive them one day, all the flock will die. 14. Let my lord, I pray thee, paſs over before his ſervant: and I will lead on ſoftly, according † as the cattle that goeth before me, and the children be able to endure; until I come unto my lord [c] unto Seir. 15. And Eſau ſaid, Let me now ‡ leave with thee *ſome* of the folk that *are* with me: And he ſaid, || What needeth it? [d] Let me find grace in the ſight of my lord.

† Heb. According to the foot of the work, &c. and according to the foot of the children.

[c] Chap. xxxii. 3.

‡ Heb. Set, or place.

|| Heb. Wherefore *is* this?

[d] Chap. xxxiv. 11.

v. 12—15. Eſau now is become a friend nearer than a brother, offers his houſe to entertain and his ſervants to guard him. Jacob modeſtly excuſes himſelf, and expreſſes his full ſatisfaction in the grace he had found in his ſight. He pleads,

1. The weakneſs of the children and the flocks with young: they could not keep pace with Eſau without danger. *Note*, When children are young, parents ſhould be peculiarly careful not to burden them with religion as a taſk. How many have been led to hate the ſervice, by being over-driven?

2. His intention to viſit him ſhortly. *Note*, We ſhould never be behind in acts of civility.

3. That he needed not his ſervants, and therefore would not trouble him. He had experienced enough of the divine protection, to reſt upon it in perfect ſafety.

4. His favour was the greateſt obligation he could confer on him: of this he begs the continuance. *Note*, If we have found grace in God's ſight, what more can we need?

16. ¶ So Eſau returned that day on his way unto Seir. 17. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an houſe, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called † Succoth. 18. ¶ And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of [e] Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city. 19. And [f] he bought a parcel of a field, where he had ſpread his tent, at the hand of the children of [g] Hamor Shechem's father, for an hundred ‡ pieces of money. 20. And he erected there an altar, and [h] called it || El-elohe-Iſrael.

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† i. e. Booths.

[e] Called, Acts vii. 16. Sychem.

[f] Joſh. xxiv. 32.

[g] Acts vii. 16.

‡ Or lambs.

[h] Chap. xxxv. 7.

|| i. e. God, the God of Iſrael.

v. 16—20. Eſau being returned, Jacob gives ſome reſt to his fatigued family in booths at Succoth, and from thence goes on to Shalem, a city of Shechem, or rather to a city of Shechem, in peace. His dangers are paſt, and he is now ſafe arrived in Canaan. *Note*, Perils of journies eſcaped, and ſafe arrival home, deſerve a thankful mention. What joy will it give, when, after eſcaping the dangers of this world, we come to our reſt in the heavenly Canaan! Two things he doth:

1. He buys a field. Though the land be his by promiſe, it is not yet his in poſſeſſion.

2. He builds an altar, that God may be remembered wherever he ſojourns, and his houſe be taught the good ways of the Lord. *Note*, Wherever we have a houſe, God muſt have an altar. It is a heathen family where God's worſhip is neglected. He calls the altar, God the God of Iſrael. He was called Iſrael, a prince with God; but his higheſt honour is to have God for his God and king. *Note*, Whatever honours a true Iſraelite enjoys, this is the greateſt, Iſrael's God is Iſrael's glory.

CHAP. XXXIV.

At this chapter begins the ſtory of Jacob's afflictions in his children, which were very great, and are recorded to ſhew, 1. *The vanity of this world: that which is deareſt to us, may prove our greateſt vexation, and we may meet with the greateſt croſſes in thoſe things, of which we ſaid,* the ſame ſhall comfort us. 2. *The common griefs of good people. Jacob's children circumciſed, were well taught and prayed for, and had very good examples ſet them, yet ſome of them proved very untoward, for* the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong. *In this chapter we have,* 1. *Dinah debauched,* ver. 1—5. 2. *A treaty of marriage between her and Shechem, who had defiled her,* ver. 6—19. 3. *The circumciſion of the Shechemites, purſuant to that treaty,* ver. 20—24. 4. *The perfidious and bloody revenge which Simeon and Levi took upon them,* ver 25—31.

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[a] Chap. xxx. 21.

1. AND [a] Dinah the daughter of Leah, *which* ſhe bare unto Jacob, went out to ſee the daughters of the land. 2. And when Shechem the ſon of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, ſaw her, he took her, and lay with her, and † defiled her. 3. And his ſoul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damſel, and ſpake ‡ kindly unto the damſel. 4. And Shechem ſpake unto his father Hamor, ſaying, Get me this damſel to wife. 5. And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter, (now his ſons were with his cattle in the field:) and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

† Heb. Humbled her.

‡ Heb. To the heart of the damſel. See Iſa. xl. 2. Hoſea ii. 14.

v. 1—5. Dinah was young, about ſixteen, an only daughter, and therefore perhaps too much indulged; and, as is too often the caſe, proves a great trouble to her parents. She went out to ſee the daughters of the land, at ſome entertainment, perhaps to learn their faſhions and join in their amuſements; not without ſome little vanity to figure as a ſtranger, and be ſeen of the ſons of the land, as well as viſit the daughters. *Note*, Young people's vanity is their firſt ſnare; pleaſure then opens the door of temptation, and paſſion undoes them. Such was Dinah's caſe: Shechem's ſon ſeduces her, and lies with her. How dangerous thoſe places, and how pernicious thoſe pleaſures, where dance and ſong warm the paſſions, and nothing but opportunity and importunity are wanting for the ruin of every thoughtleſs maid? But though wicked the deed, he does not, as many, baſely abandon the injured fair; he would repair the offence by marriage, and ſollicits his father's conſent. *Note*, Though ſin cannot be recalled before God, it is our duty, to our utmoſt, to make reparation to man. Tidings of it reach afflicted Jacob: he ſmothers his indignation, and waits to inform his ſons of the diſhonour done the family. *Note*, Let not a godly father think his lot hard, or ſingular, if ſuch an unhappy ſtep diſturbs his family quiet.

6. ¶ And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him. 7. And the ſons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard *it*, and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth: becauſe he [b] had wrought folly in Iſrael, in lying with Jacob's daughter;

[b] Joſh. vii. 15.

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daughter; which thing ought not to be done. 8. And Hamor communed with them, ſaying, The ſoul of my ſon Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife. 9. And make ye marriages with us, *and* give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you. 10. And ye ſhall dwell with us: and the land ſhall be before you; dwell and trade you therein, and get you poſſeſſions therein. 11. And Shechem ſaid unto her father, and unto her brethren, [c] Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye ſhall ſay unto me I will give. 12. Aſk me never ſo much dowry and gift, and I will give according as you ſhall ſay unto me: but give me the damſel to wife. 13. And the ſons of Jacob anſwered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and ſaid, (becauſe he had defiled Dinah their ſiſter) 14. And they ſaid unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our ſiſter to one that is uncircumciſed: for [d] that were a reproach unto us. But in this will we conſent unto you: If ye will be as we *be*, that every male of you be circumciſed: 16. Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. 17. But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumciſed, then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

c Chap. xxxiii. 15.

d Joſh. v. 9.

v. 6—17. We have here,

1. The reſentment of Jacob's ſons; highly provoked at the diſhonour done the family, and, like many others, more incenſed at the ſhame, than grieved at the ſin. They call it *folly*, for ſin deſerves that name. What ſo fooliſh, as for a beaſtial indulgence to offend the holy God, and wound not our own ſouls only, but every friend and relation? and how much more ſcandalous in a houſe where religion is profeſſed? Oh did we know all the miſeries of ſin before we commit it, that we feel afterwards, nothing could tempt us to it.

2. Hamor's propoſal to heal the breach by marriage, with the moſt generous offer of any dowry. Jacob's ſons, under a pretence moſt ſpecious, but with hearts burning with revenge, conſent to the propoſal, on condition of their becoming circumciſed. They cannot, they ſay, intermarry with the uncircumciſed; that would be a reproach to them. *Note*, The moſt bloody deſigns have been often covered with the cloak of religion; but God ſeeth and judgeth: hypocriſy with him will be counted the deadlieſt of crimes.

18. And their words pleaſed Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's ſon. 19. And the young man deferred not to do the thing, becauſe he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he *was* more honourable than all the houſe of his father. 20. ¶ And Hamor and Shechem his ſon came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, ſaying, 21. Theſe men *are* peaceable with us, therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, *it is* large enough for them: let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22. Only herein will the men conſent unto us, for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumciſed, as they *are* circumciſed. 23. *Shall* not their cattle, and their ſubſtance, and every beaſt of theirs *be* ours? only let us conſent unto them, and they will dwell with us. 24. And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his ſon hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city: and every male was circumciſed, all that went out of the gate of his city.

v. 18—24. The argument which Hamor uſes to perſuade his ſubjects, is as wrong, as the deſign of Jacob's ſons in their propoſal. To profeſs religion on worldly motives is abominable, and never like to proſper. However they conſent, and without informing themſelves of the reaſons and deſign of circumciſion, ſubmit to it. *Note*, How many baptized perſons is it to be feared among us, know as little of the religion they profeſs, as the circumciſed Shechemites?

25. ¶ And it came to paſs on the third day, when they were ſore, that two of the ſons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's Brethren, took each man his ſword, and came upon the city boldly, and [e] ſlew all the males. 26. And they ſlew Hamor and Shechem his ſon with the † edge of the ſword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's houſe, and went out. 27. The ſons of Jacob came upon the ſlain, and ſpoiled the city, becauſe they had defiled their ſiſter. 28. They took their ſheep, and their oxen, and their aſſes, and that which *was* in the city, and that which *was* in the field, 29. And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and ſpoiled even all that *was* in the houſe. 30. And Jacob ſaid to Simeon and Levi, [f] Ye have troubled me, [g] to make me to ſtink among the inhabitants of the land, amongſt the Canaanites, and the Perizzites: and [h] I *being* few in number, they ſhall gather themſelves together againſt me, and ſlay me, and I ſhall be deſtroyed, I and my houſe. 31. And they ſaid, Should he deal with our ſiſter as with an harlot?

e Chap. xlix. 6.
† Heb. Mouth.

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f Chap. xlix. 6.
g Exod. v. 21.
h Deut. iv. 27. Pſal. cv. 12.

v. 25—31. We have here,

1. The cruel and treacherous murder of the men of Shechem. However juſt it might be in God to puniſh them for their profane abuſe of the ſeals of his covenant, it takes nothing from the guilt of the murderers. Inflamed with paſſion, and ſpurred on by revenge, they ſally forth to perpetrate the horrid deed. Though Shechem had made every reparation, and his ſubjects at leaſt were innocent; though reſtrained by the moſt ſolemn promiſe, and doubly bound by that holy ordinance they had propoſed; no conſiderations can bind their curſed anger. Hamor and Shechem bleed the firſt under their ſwords; treacherouſly ſurprized, the innocent inhabitants fall the victims of their unrelenting cruelty. Simeon and Levi are foremoſt in the ravage; but the other ſons of Jacob, not content with the reſcue of Dinah, ruſh upon the ſpoil; and, whilſt the men lie weltering in blood, their wives are captives, and their ſubſtance devoured. *Note*, The men of Shechem hoped to ſhare Iſrael's ſpoil; but unjuſt attempts upon our neighbour's property prove often the ruin of our own.

2. Jacob's diſpleaſure at the deed. They had caſt the higheſt ſcandal on his religion; the very Canaanite might juſtly loath it, if this was their way; and how great was their danger alſo, when ſurrounded by thoſe who might ſo juſtly avenge this ſhocking action. *Note*, (1.) Wicked children are a bitter grief and reproach to their parents. (2.) Sin and ruin are near allied. The prodigal ſon fears no conſequences, but the wiſer father trembles for him.

3. Their inſolent reply. No acknowledgment of their fault, but rather a reflection on the tameneſs of their father. *Note*, They who are violent themſelves, are ready to reproach the gentle, as mean-ſpirited.

CHAP. XXXV.

In this chapter, 1. *God orders Jacob to Beth-el*, ver. 1. 2. *His journey after purging his houſe of idols*, ver. 2—5. 3. *The altar he builds*, ver. 6—7. 4. *Deborah's death and funeral*, ver. 8. 5. *God appears again, and confirms his covenant with him*, ver. 9—13. 6. *His grateful acknowledgment of it*, ver. 14—15. 7. *Rachel's travail and death*, ver. 16—20. 8. *Reuben's inceſt*, ver. 21—25. 9. *Iſaac's death*, ver. 27—29. *Laſtly, an account of Jacob's ſons*, ver. 23—26.

1. AND God ſaid unto Jacob, Ariſe, Go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, [a] that appeared unto thee when [b] thou fleddeſt from the face of Eſau thy brother. 2. Then Jacob ſaid unto his houſhold, and to all that *were* with him, Put away [c] the ſtrange gods that *are* among you, and be clean, and [d] change your garments: 3. And let us ariſe, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who anſwered me in the day of my diſtreſs, and was with me in the way which I went. 4. And they gave unto Jacob all the ſtrange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* ear-rings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under [e] the oak which *was* by Shechem.

a Chap. xxviii. 13.
b Chap. xxvii. 43.
c Chap. xxxi. 19-34. Joſh. xxiv. 2.
d Exod. xix. 10.

e Joſh. xxiv. 26. Judg. ix. 6.

v. 1—4. Jacob ſeems to have forgot his vow, *chap.* xxxviii. 19, 20. and God reminds him of it. *Note*, Mercies are apt to be forgotten; and promiſes made in diſtreſs, to be unfulfilled in proſperity. Hereupon,

1. We have Jacob's preparation for his journey: better late than never. And as his abode muſt be at Bethel, his family muſt go with him: but firſt they muſt get ready for the worſhip there to be performed, (1.) By putting away their idols. *Note*, There is no drawing near God with acceptance, with allowed ſin in the heart. (2.) By waſhing their garments, typical of that ſpiritual purity, which becomes the worſhippers of Jehovah. *Note*, We muſt have the fine linen white and clean, which is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints, or our ſervices cannot pleaſe God.

2. Their obedience. It was ſtrange in Jacob's family, that ſuch idol vanities ſhould be found. But in the moſt religious houſes, there will be idols in ſecret. It was happy they ſo rea-

dily

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dily conſented to part from them: had he commanded it before, he might have ſucceeded. *Note*, Much might be done, more than we imagine, if we had a greater zeal for God. All now are given up, even to their ear-rings, ſtamped with idol images, or worn as charms, and they are buried that they might never be found. *Note*, When we part from our ſins, it muſt be with a purpoſe of heart, never to return to them.

5. And they journeyed: and [f] the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round about them, and they did not purſue after the ſons of Jacob. 6. ¶ So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan (that *is* Beth-el) he and all the people that *were* with him. 7. And he built there an altar, and [g] called the place † El-beth-el: becauſe there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother. 8. But [h] Deborah Rebekah's nurſe died, and ſhe was buried beneath Beth-el, under an oak: and the name of it was called ‡ Allon-bachuth.

[f] Exod. xv. 16. & xxiii. 27. & xxxiv. 24. Deut. xi. 25. Joſh. ii. 9. & v. 1. 1 Sam. xiv. 15. 2 Chron. xiv. 14.
[g] Chap. xxviii. 19.
† i. e. God of Beth-el.
[h] Chap. xxiv. 59.
‡ i. e. The oak of weeping.

v. 5—8. Having thus made the needful preparations, they journey in ſafety. Though juſtly incenſed, God puts his fear upon the nations around; and as they had now put away their idols, and were going to God's altar, none ſhall hurt them. *Note*, When we are about God's work, we are under his ſpecial care. And now they arrive,

1. He builds an altar, and with his family, worſhip the God of Beth-el. It is our comfort in the church of God, to enjoy the preſence and communion of the God of the church.

2. He buries Rebekah's nurſe: probably Rebekah died before; and reſpect for an aged ſervant, made her welcome to Jacob's houſe; and when ſhe dies, it is cauſe of ſorrow, as the name Allon-Bachuth ſignifies the Oak of Weeping. *Note*, An old and faithful ſervant in a family deſerves reſpect, and ſhould be lamented as a friend or a brother.

9. ¶ And [i] God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram; and bleſſed him. 10. And God ſaid unto him, Thy name *is* Jacob: thy name ſhall not be called any more Jacob, but [k] Iſrael ſhall be thy name: and he called his name Iſrael. 11. And God ſaid unto him, [l] I *am* God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply, [m] a nation and a company of nations ſhall be of thee: and kings ſhall come out of thy loins. 12. And the land [n] which I gave Abraham and Iſaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy ſeed after thee will I give the land. 13. And God went up from him, in the place where he talked with him. 14. And Jacob [o] ſet up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, *even* a pillar of ſtone: and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. 15. And Jacob called the name of the place where God ſpake with him, [p] Beth-el.

[i] Hoſ. xii. 5.
[k] Chap. xxxii. 28.
[l] Chap. xvii. 1. & xlviii. 3.
[m] Chap. xvii. 5. & vi. 16. & xxviii. 3. & xlviii. 4.
[n] Chap. xii. 7. & xiii. 15. & xxvi. 3, 4.
[o] Chap. xxviii. 18.
[p] Chap. xxviii. 19.

v. 9—15. We have here,

1. God's appearance to him the ſecond time in Beth-el. When we are found waiting upon God, he will not fail to meet us in his ways. God now confirms his name of Iſrael, as a new ſupport againſt the fears of the Canaanites, and renews his covenant with him, reſpecting the land and the ſeed to inherit it, as the Almighty God, able to fulfil his promiſes to the uttermoſt. *Note*, God hath given us Chriſt the ſeed, and promiſed us heaven as the land. May we with Jacob rejoice in hope.

2. No ſooner was the appearance of God's glory gone up from over him, than Jacob erects a noble memorial of the favour, and confirms the name of Beth-el to the place. How little did Jacob think, that this houſe of God ſhould one day become Bethaven, a houſe of iniquity, and Jeroboam's calf be fixed perhaps on this very pillar? *Note*, How many a church, when the faithful Jacob, the paſtor, is gone, hath experienced theſe awful changes!

16. ¶ And they journeyed from Beth-el: and there was but † a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and ſhe had hard labour. 17. And it came to paſs when ſhe was in hard labour, that the midwife ſaid unto her, Fear not; thou ſhalt have this ſon alſo. 18. And it came to paſs as her ſoul was in departing (for ſhe died) that ſhe called his name ‡ Benoni: but his father called him ‖ Benjamin. 19. And [q] Rachel died, and was buried in the way to [r] Ephrath, which *is* Beth-lehem. 20. And Jacob ſet a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of [s] Rachels grave unto this day.

† Heb. A little piece of ground. 2 King. v. 19.
1729.
‡ i. e. The ſon of my ſorrow.
‖ i. e. The ſon of the right hand.
[q] Chap. xlviii 7.
[r] Ruth, i. 2. & iv. 11.
[s] 1 Sam. x. 2.

v. 16—20. We have here Rachel's death in child-bed. One death had made a breach in Jacob's family; another ſtill more afflicting ſucceeds. Death often thus repeats his ſtrokes. Rachel impatient for children, would die if ſhe had them not, but little thought ſhe ſhould die with them: our perverſe wiſhes indulged, are often fatal to us. The midwife would comfort her with a ſon born, but now ſhe feels her burden ſo heavy, ſhe cannot rejoice in him; ſhe calls him Benoni, the ſon of her ſorrow. *Note*, When we are dying, nothing in this world can any longer comfort us. Jacob however changes his name; his love for Rachel lives in Benjamin, the ſon of his right hand: the laſt of our children is uſually the fondling. Rachel ſcarce names her ſon, but ſhe departs. *Note*, (1.) The ſoul muſt return to God that gave it. (2.) As child-bearing in ſorrow is the effect of ſin, frequent death in child-bearing more ſtrongly marks the wages due to it: but there is a child born who can ſave the dying mother. Jacob buries her on the ſpot, and in memory of her, erects a mournful pillar. *Note*, A grave ſtone may be made a uſeful remembrancer, and a continual ſermon.

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21. And Iſrael journeyed, and ſpread his tent beyond the [t] tower of Edar. 22. And it came to paſs when Iſrael dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and [u] lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Iſrael heard *it*. Now the ſons of Jacob were twelve. 23. The ſons of Leah; [x] Reuben Jacobs firſt-born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Iſſachar, and Zebulun. 24. The ſons of Rachel; Joſeph and Benjamin. 25. And the ſons of Bilhah, Rachel's hand-maid; Dan and Naphtali. 26. And the ſons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad and Aſher. Theſe *are* the ſons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram. 27. ¶ And Jacob came unto Iſaac his father unto [y] Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, (which *is* Hebron) where Abraham and Iſaac ſojourned. 28. And the days of Iſaac were an hundred and fourſcore years. 29. And Iſaac gave up the ghoſt, and died, and [z] was gathered unto his people, *being* old and full of days: and his ſons Eſau and Jacob [a] buried him.

[t] Mic. iv. 8.
[u] Chap. xlix. 4. 1 Chron. v. 1. See 2 Sam. xvi. 22. & xx. 3. 1 Cor. v. 1.
[x] Exod. i. 2.
[y] Chap. xiii. 18. & xxiii. 2.
1716.
[z] Chap. xv. 15. & xxv. 8.
[a] Chap. xlix. 31.

v. 21—29. Jacob, like his father, was but a pilgrim in the land of promiſe, and he had enough to try his faith and patience in his children. *Note*, A man's family contains uſually his greateſt trials. Here is,

1. Reuben's inceſt. As his father was now old, and Bilhah much younger, ſhe perhaps liked the ſon, and might be moſt criminal in the intrigue. *Note* (1.) It is a dangerous thing for a young woman to marry an old man. (2.) The eldeſt ſon, becauſe the heir, is uſually ſet moſt by, but often the greateſt plague of the family. They thought, no doubt, to conceal their crime, but Jacob heard it: ſuch vile deeds come ſtrangely out; and for it he is afterwards ſeverely puniſhed, *chap.* xlix. 4. 2. An account of all Jacob's ſons. 3. His viſit to his father at Hebron. 4. The death of Iſaac, the oldeſt of all the patriarchs. The longeſt livers, muſt die at laſt. 5. His burial by his two ſons. God had now made a perfect reconciliation between them. *Note*, The bittereſt enemies ſometimes become the firmeſt friends.

CHAP. XXXVI.

In this chapter we have an account of the poſterity of Eſau, who from him were called Edomites. Here is, 1. *Eſau's wives*, ver. 1—5. 2. *His remove to mount Seir*, ver. 6—8. 3. *The names of his ſons*, ver. 9—14. 4. *The dukes which deſcended of his ſons*, ver. 15—19. 5. *The dukes of the Horites*, ver. 20—30. 6. *The kings and dukes of Edom*, ver. 31. ad finem.

1. NOW theſe *are* the generations of Eſau, who *is* Edom. 2. [a] Eſau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and [b] Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite: 3. And [c] Baſhemath, Iſhmael's daughter, ſiſter of Nebajoth. 4. And [d] Adah bare to Eſau, Eliphaz: and Baſhemath bare Reuel. 5. And Aholibamah bare Jeuſh, and Jaalam, and Korah: Theſe *are* the ſons of Eſau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan. 6. And Eſau took his wives, and his ſons, and his daughters, and all the † perſons of his houſe, and his cattle, and all his beaſts, and all his ſubſtance which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country, from the face of his brother Jacob. 7. For [e] their riches were more than that they might dwell together: and [f] the land wherein they were ſtrangers could not bear them, becauſe of their cattle. 8. Thus dwelt Eſau in [g] mount Seir: Eſau *is* Edom.

[a] Chap. xxvi. 34.
1796.
[b] Ver. 25.
About 1759.
[c] Chap. xxviii. 9.
[d] 1 Chron. i. 35.
† Heb. Souls.
[e] Chap. xiii. 6—11.
[f] Chap. xvii. 8. & xxviii. 4.
[g] Joſh. xxiv. 4.

v. 1—8. We have here an account of Eſau and his poſterity, and therein the promiſe in part fulfilled to Abraham, that he ſhould be the father of many nations. He is called Edom, or red, in memory of the profane ſale of his birthright, for the red pottage. *Note*, If men by ill doings, get an ill name, they muſt thank themſelves for it. His wives and family are mentioned, and his place of abode Mount Seir: there he fixes, and leaves Jacob in peaceable poſſeſſion of Canaan. Probably God had now convinced him of the unchangeableneſs of the decree, and he ſubmitted to it. Though God hated him in this ſenſe, as excluding him from the ſucceſſion, it ſeems not certain he was eternally loſt. *Note*, The counſel of God muſt ſtand, and they who moſt oppoſe it, muſt in the end ſubmit.

9. ¶ And theſe *are* the generations of Eſau the father of † the Edomites, in mount Seir. 10. Theſe *are* the names of Eſau's ſons; [h] Eliphaz the ſon of Adah the wife of Eſau, Reuel the ſon of Baſhemath the wife of Eſau. 11. And the ſons of Eliphaz, were Teman, Omar, ‡ Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. 12. And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Eſau's ſon; and ſhe bare to Eliphaz Amalek: theſe *were* the ſons of Adah Eſau's wife. 13. And theſe *are* the ſons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: theſe were the ſons of Baſhemath Eſau's wife. 14. ¶ And theſe were the ſons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon Eſau's wife: and ſhe bare to Eſau, Jeuſh, and Jaalam, and Korah. 15. ¶ Theſe *were* dukes of the ſons of Eſau: the ſons of Eliphaz the firſt-born *ſon* of Eſau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, 16. Duke Korah, duke Gatam, *and* duke Amalek: Theſe *are* the dukes *that came* of Eliphaz, in the land of Edom: theſe *were* the ſons of Adah. 17. ¶ And theſe *are* the ſons of Reuel Eſau's ſon; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah. Theſe *are* the dukes that came of Reuel, in the land of Edom: theſe *are* the ſons of Baſhemath Eſau's wife. 18. ¶ And theſe *are* the ſons of Aholibamah Eſau's wife; duke Jeuſh, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: theſe *were* the dukes *that came* of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah Eſau's wife. 19. Theſe *are* the ſons of Eſau (who *is* Edom) and theſe *are* their dukes.

† Heb. Edom.
h 1 Chron. i. 35, &c.
‡ Or Zephi. 1 Chron. i. 36.

v. 9—19. Eſau's family is numerous and great. God often diſpenſing to thoſe who are out of his church, moſt of the world's good, and its titles of honour: but as they are no part of God's people, they are ſlightly mentioned: it is not the great, but the good whom God regards. The meaneſt circumciſed ſervant of Jacob's, is greater in God's ſight, than the dukes of Edom.

20. ¶ [i] Theſe *are* the ſons of Seir [k] the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, 21. And Diſhon, and Ezer, and Diſhan: theſe *are* the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. 22. And the children of Lotan were, Hori, and [l] Heman: and Lotan's ſiſter *was* Timna. 23. And the children of Shobal *were* theſe; [m] Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, [n] Shepho, and Onam. 24. And theſe *are* the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this *was that* Anah that found the [o] mules in the wilderneſs, as he fed the aſſes of Zibeon his father. 25. And the children of Anah *were* theſe; Diſhon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah. 26. And theſe *are* the children of Diſhon; † Hemdan, and Eſhban, and Ithran, and Cheran. 27. The children of Ezer *are* theſe; Bilhan, and Zaavan and ‡ Achan. 28. The children of Diſhan *are* theſe; Uz and Aran. 29. Theſe *are* the dukes *that came* out of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, 30. Duke Diſhon, duke Ezer, duke Diſhan: theſe *are* the dukes *that came* of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir.

i 1 Chron. i. 38.
k Deut. ii. 22.
l 1 Chron. i. 39.
m 1 Chron. i. 40.
n Ibid.
o See Lev. xix. 19.
† Called Amram. 1 Chron. i. 41.
‡ Or Jakan. 1 Chron. i. 42.

v. 20—30. The genealogy of the Horites, who inhabited Seir, are here mentioned. By Eſau's intermarriage, they ſoon became one people; and it is to be feared had one religion. Bad connections by marriage, uſually end in our following our wives gods. Anah is diſtinguiſhed from the reſt, for his ingenuity in having firſt found out mules, or as the ſame word ſignifies, hot baths. A duke is not too great to be employed in ſome uſeful invention or reſearch.

31. ¶ And [p] theſe *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Iſrael. 32. And Bela the ſon of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. 33. And Bela died, and Jobab the ſon of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his ſtead. 34. And Jobab died, and Huſham of the land of Temani reigned in his ſtead. 35. And Huſham died, and Hadad the ſon of Bedad (who ſmote Midian in the field of Moab) reigned in his ſtead: and the name of his city *was* Avith. 36. And Hadad died, and Samlah of Maſrekah reigned in his ſtead. 37. And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth *by* the river reigned in his ſtead. 38. And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the ſon of Achbor reigned in his ſtead. 39. And Baal-hanan the ſon of Achbor died, and [q] Hadar reigned in his ſtead: and the name of his city *was* Pau; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. 40. And theſe *are* [r] the names of the dukes *that came* of Eſau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth, 41. Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, 42. Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, 43. Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: theſe *be* the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations, in the land of their poſſeſſion; he *is* Eſau the father of † the Edomites.

p 1 Chron. i. 43.
q 1 Chron. i. 50.
r 1 Chron. i. 51.
† Heb. Edom.

v. 31—43. In external proſperity, Jacob is far behind. A numerous race of kings reign in Edom, whilſt Jacob's poſterity are ſervants in Egypt. *Note*, We muſt wait with patience for the fulfilment of the promiſes. Eſau has a preſent poſſeſſion, Jacob only a land in proſpect. Let us not envy the children of the world; they have their all in hand, whilſt we have our all in hope; and death, which muſt caſt them out of their poſſeſſions, ſhall bring us to our *inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reſerved for us in heaven.*

CHAP. XXXVII.

Joſeph's hiſtory begins, and in his humiliation and exaltation, we have an eminent type of Chriſt and every true chriſtian, who bears the croſs before he wears the crown. In this chapter we have, 1. *The malice of his brethren.* (1.) *Becauſe he informed his father of their wickedneſs,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *Becauſe his father loved him,* ver. 3, 4. (3.) *Becauſe he dreamed of his dominion over them,* ver. 5—11. 2. *The miſchiefs they did him.* (1.) *His kind viſit gave them an opportunity,* ver. 12—17. (2.) *They firſt deſigned to ſlay him, then determined to ſtarve him,* ver. 18—24. (3.) *They changed their purpoſe, and ſold him for a ſlave,* ver. 25—28. (4.) *They made their father believe that he was torn in pieces,* ver. 29—35. (5.) *He was ſold into Egypt to Potiphar,* ver. 36. *And all this was working together for good.*

1. AND Jacob dwelt in the land † [a] wherein his father was a ſtranger, in the land of Canaan. 2. Theſe *are* the generations of Jacob: Joſeph *being* ſeventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren, and the lad *was* with the ſons of Bilhah, and with the ſons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joſeph brought unto his father their evil report. 3. Now Iſrael loved Joſeph more than all his children, becauſe he *was* the ſon of his old age: and he made him a coat of *many* † colours. 4. And when his brethren ſaw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, [b] they hated him, and could not ſpeak peaceably unto him.

† Heb. Of his father's ſojournings.
a Chap. xxxvi. 7. Hebr. xi. 9.
† Or pieces. See Judg. v. 30. 2 Sam. xiii. 18.
b Chap. xlix. 23.

v. 1—4. Nothing of the pathetic ever equalled the hiſtory of Joſeph, which makes the principal part of the following book. The variety of the events, and the different diſtreſſes, with the happy concluſion of the whole, contain one of the moſt affecting and pleaſing relations, which ever was penned. (1.) His father's love began preſently to appear towards him, as the peculiarity of his circumſtances and conduct ſeemed to deſerve. He was the ſon of his old age, the ſon of beloved Rachel, a dutiful ſon, induſtrious and diligent; and better, a pious ſon, who joined not in his brethren's evil, but for their good informed his father, that they might receive that admonition which from a younger brother would have been deſpiſed. This procured him diſtinction from Jacob, and his variegated coat beſpoke at once the affection of the father, the deſert of the ſon, and awakened the envy of his brethren. *Note*, Though one child may juſtly deſerve more than another, it is dangerous for a parent to appear partial.

2. His brethren's anger appeared alſo. The coat of many colours was a ſad eye-ſore, and his information of their wickedneſs ſtill more provoking. *Note*, (1.) Fine cloaths are, as often as any thing, apt to excite envy. Children of one houſe ſhould be dreſſed

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on an equality. (2.) Thoſe who are deſirous to have ſin reproved, muſt often expect for their kindneſs to get ill will.

5. ¶ And Joſeph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6. And he ſaid unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. 7. For [c] behold we *were* binding ſheaves in the field, and lo, my ſheaf aroſe, and alſo ſtood upright; and behold, your ſheaves ſtood round about, and made obeiſance to my ſheaf. 8. And his brethren ſaid unto him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or ſhalt thou indeed have dominion over us? and they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words. 9. ¶ And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and ſaid, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more, and, behold, [d] the ſun and the moon, and the eleven ſtars made obeiſance to me. 10. And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and ſaid unto him, What *is* this dream that thou haſt dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourſelves to thee, to the earth? 11. And [e] his brethren envied him: but [f] his father obſerved the ſaying.

c Chap. xlii. 6, 9. & xliii. 26. & xliv. 14.
d Chap. xlvi. 29.
e Acts vii. 9.
f Dan. vii. 28. Luke ii. 19, 51.

v. 5—11. Joſeph begins to enjoy divine communications.

1. We have two prophetical dreams, ſignifying that advancement for which God deſigned him. His brethren and his father muſt become his ſupplicants: theſe in ſimplicity he relates, little ſuſpecting the conſequence. *Note*, Many young people ſetting out in life, dream of nothing but proſperity, and overlook the trouble in the way to it.

2. His brethren are highly exaſperated, and give his dreams an interpretation, true in its iſſue, but contemptuous in their account. *Note*, They who now deſpiſe the government of Jeſus, muſt one day bow to it as obedient ſervants, or as condemned criminals.

3. His father is not pleaſed. Perhaps he might blame himſelf, for having put high thoughts in the young man's head. *Note*, It is right for thoſe parents, who are moſt fond, never to ſpare the needful rebuke, eſpecially when their partiality may have given occaſion to pride. But he obſerves the ſaying, being no ſtranger to the divine notices, frequently conveyed in viſions of the night.

12. ¶ And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13. And Iſrael ſaid unto Joſeph, Do not thy brethren feed *the flock* in Shechem? Come, and I will ſend thee unto them. And he ſaid unto him, Here *am I*. 14. And he ſaid to him, Go, I pray thee, † ſee whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again. So he ſent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. 15. ¶ And a certain man found him, and behold *he was* wandring in the field; and the man aſked him, ſaying, What ſeekeſt thou? 16. And he ſaid, I ſeek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed *their flocks*. 17. And the man ſaid, They are departed hence: for I heard them ſay, Let us go to Dothan. And Joſeph went after his brethren, and found them in [g] Dothan. 18. And when they ſaw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conſpired againſt him, to ſlay him. 19. And they ſaid one to another, Behold, this † dreamer cometh. 20. Come now therefore and let us ſlay him, and caſt him into ſome pit: and we will ſay, Some evil beaſt hath devoured him: and we ſhall ſee what will become of his dreams. 21. And [h] Reuben heard *it*, and he delivered him out of their hands; and ſaid, Let us not kill him. 22. And Reuben ſaid unto them, Shed no blood, *but* caſt him into this pit that *is* in the wilderneſs, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

† Heb. See the peace of thy brethren, &c.
g 2 Kings, vi. 13.
† Heb. Maſter of dreams.
h Chap. xlii. 22.

v. 12—22. Malice only waits for opportunity, and now it is come.

1. Jacob ſends Joſeph to enquire after his brethren, and he, like a dutiful ſon, and an affectionate brother, chearfully haſtes to ſeek them; and when he was diſappointed at Shechem, where he expected to find them, he enquires them out diligently, and follows them to Dothan. *Note*, (1.) Joſeph's dutiful obedience muſt be every ſon's example. (2.) It were happy if his love to thoſe who hated him, were alſo more imitated by every Chriſtian.

2. His brethren's conſpiracy againſt him. His coat eaſily diſtinguiſhed him at a diſtance; ſo dangerous often are our honours, and rouſed the latent ſparks into a flame. They reſolve inſtantly on his death, whilſt a lie ſhould conceal the murder, and then there would be an end of his dreams. *Note*, (1.) All anger is murder in the heart. (2.) Thoſe who mock at God's deſigns, and think to diſappoint them, will only expoſe themſelves to ſhame at laſt. (3.) We ſee how natural a lying ſpirit is to men. We have hardly yet had a wicked action, but there hath been a lie to conceal it.

3. God raiſes him a friend in Reuben. He appears the moſt ſuſceptive of tender paſſions, and averſe to blood. To reſcue Joſeph, had been impracticable: he therefore propoſes to divert the rage he ſaw, by caſting him into a pit, where they muſt conclude he would die, but from whence he reſolved afterwards to recover him. *Note*, By yielding ſomething to raging paſſions, we may better prevail, than by direct oppoſition.

23. ¶ And it came to paſs when Joſeph was come unto his brethren, that they ſtript Joſeph out of his coat, his coat of *many* † colours that *was* on him. 24. And they took him, and caſt him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it. 25. And [i] they ſat down to eat bread: and they lift up their eyes, and looked, and behold a company of [k] Iſhmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing ſpicery, and [l] balm, and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt. 26. And Judah ſaid unto his brethren, What profit *is it* if we ſlay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27. Come, and let us ſell him to the Iſhmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother, and our fleſh: and his brethren † were content. 28. Then there paſſed by [m] Midianites, merchantmen; and they drew and lift up Joſeph out of the pit, and [n] ſold Joſeph to the Iſhmaelites for [o] twenty *pieces* of ſilver: and they brought Joſeph into Egypt. 29. ¶ And Reuben returned unto the pit; and behold, Joſeph *was* not in the pit: and he [p] rent his clothes. 30. And he returned unto his brethren, and ſaid, The child *is* not: and I, whither ſhall I go?

† Or pieces.
i Amos vi. 6.
k See ver. 28—36.
l Jer. viii. 22.
† Heb. Harkened.
m Judg. vi. 3.
n Pſal. cv. 17. Wiſd. x. 13. Acts vii. 9.
o See Mat. xxvii. 9.
p Job i. 20.

v. 23—30. Now the envied coat is torn from his back; remorſe or pity find no place in theſe invenomed hearts: in vain his prayers, his tears, his anguiſh; they drag him to the pit, and caſt him in, intending a death of famine more dreadful than the ſword; then, hardened and relentleſs, ſit down in comfort to eat bread; and whilſt they ſatisfy their own hunger, never think on Joſeph's affliction. *Note*, (1.) God's providences appear darkeſt, when deliverance is neareſt. (2.) Crying ſins often ſtupify the conſcience to the moſt amazing pitch of inſenſibility. But now, an unexpected event delivers Joſeph from the pit: a caravan of merchants going to Egypt, paſſes by; Judah propoſes to ſell, rather than kill him; he would be as effectually, they thought, ſent out of the way, and thus they gratify their covetouſneſs, as well as their revenge. The bargain is made, and Joſeph from the captivity of the pit, is ſent as a ſlave into Egypt. Learn, (1.) How exactly God makes common events of providence become critical, for purpoſes of his glory. (2.) God over-rules wicked men, and makes one ſin a bridle to a greater: covetouſneſs ſaves from bloodſhed. Reuben was not of the counſel, perhaps now on a circuit, in order to come unobſerved to the pit: but how great his grief to find Joſeph gone! *Note*, The diſappointment of our well-meant endeavours, are afterwards ſeen to be in mercy.

31. And they took Joſeph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood. 32. And they ſent the coat of *many* colours, and they brought *it* to their father; and ſaid, This have we found: know now whether it *be* thy ſon's coat or no. 33. And he knew it, and ſaid, *It is* my ſon's coat; [q] an evil beaſt hath devoured him: Joſeph is without doubt rent in pieces. 34. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put ſackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his ſon many days. 35. And all his ſons, and all his daughters roſe up to comfort him; but he refuſed to be comforted; and he ſaid, For [r] I will go down into the grave unto my ſon, mourning: thus his father wept for him. 36. And [s] the Midianites ſold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an † officer of Pharaoh's, *and* ‡ ‖ captain of the guard.

q Chap. xliv. 28.
r Chap. xlii. 38. & xliv. 29, 31.
s Chap. xxxix. 1.
† Or Eunuch, or chamberlain, or courtier.
‡ Heb. Chief of the execution.
‖ Or chief marſhal.

v. 31—36. They made a plauſible ſtory: there could be no ſuſpicion of them: whilſt the coat they ſent, indulged their revenge, and aggravated Jacob's ſorrow. A thouſand dire imaginations now ruſh in, and tear his heart with greater violence, than the beaſt the limbs of his ſuppoſed devoured Joſeph. His ſons, adepts in hypocriſy, pretend to comfort him; but inconſolable in his ſorrows, his heart refuſes conſolation, and he reſolves to go

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down mourning to his grave. *Note*, (1.) Immoderate love is generally puniſhed with immoderate grief. I never ſee the doating affection of a parent, but I tremble for the idol child. (2.) Obſtinate ſorrow is very ſinful, as it reflects on God's goodneſs. (3.) Many of our bittereſt griefs are as imaginary as Jacob's was. Joſeph ſtill lives, though a bond-man in Egypt, in the houſe of Potiphar, an officer of Pharoah's: and diſagreeable as his lot is caſt, bleſſes God it was no worſe. *Note*, It is good to remember, how much worſe it might have been with us, as a means to reconcile us to every trial.

In this whole chapter, we have in Joſeph a type of the beloved ſon of God, ſent of his father, rejected of his brethren, ſold by another Judas, and ſtript of his ſeamleſs coat, whilſt they cry, Come, let us kill him. To all this, and more, he ſubmitted for us men, and our ſalvation.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

This chapter gives us an account of Judah and his family, and ſuch an account it is, that one would wonder, that of all Jacob's ſons, our Lord ſhould ſpring out of Judah, *Heb.* vii. 14. *But God will ſhew that his choice is of grace, and not of merit, and that Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, even the chief, and is not aſhamed to be allied to them. We have in this chapter,* 1. *Judah's marriage and iſſue, and the untimely death of his two eldeſt ſons,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Judah's inceſt with his daughter-in-law Tamar, incognito,* ver. 12—23. 3. *His confuſion when it was diſcovered,* ver. 24—26. 4. *The birth of his twin ſons, in whom his family was built up,* ver. 27, ad finem.

[a] 1 Chron. ii. 3.
[b] Numb. xxvi. 19.
[c] Numb. xxvi. 20.
[d] Numb. xxvi. 19.
[e] Deut. xxv. 5.
† Heb. Was evil in the eyes of the Lord.

1. AND it came to paſs at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whoſe name *was* Hirah. 2. And Judah ſaw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whoſe name *was* [a] Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her. 3. And ſhe conceived, and bare a ſon; and he called his name [b] Er. 4. And ſhe conceived again, and bare a ſon; and ſhe called his name Onan. 5. And ſhe yet again conceived, and bare a ſon; and called his name [c] Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when ſhe bare him. 6. And Judah took a wife for Er his firſt-born, whoſe name *was* Tamar. 7. And [d] Er Judah's firſt-born was wicked in the ſight of the LORD; and the LORD ſlew him. 8. And Judah ſaid unto Onan, Go in unto [e] thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raiſe up ſeed to thy brother. 9. And Onan knew that the ſeed ſhould not be his; and it came to paſs, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he ſpilled *it* on the ground, leſt that he ſhould give ſeed to his brother. 10. And the thing which he did, † diſpleaſed the LORD: wherefore he ſlew him alſo. 11. Then ſaid Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow at thy father's houſe, till Shelah my ſon be grown; (for he ſaid, Leſt peradventure he die alſo as his brethren *did:*) and Tamar went and dwelt in her father's houſe.

v. 1—11. Jacob is ſtill more unhappy in his children. We have here,

1. Judah's ill conduct. He leaves his brethren, and gets a Canaanite friend, one Hirah: bad connections for young people are very dangerous: Evil communication corrupts good manners. There he meets a Canaanitiſh woman, and marries her. How many a youth hath been thus trapanned by idle companions, into a ſcandalous marriage, not only to the wounding of their conſcience, but to the ruin of their future peace? How much wiſer they who conſult their parents, and make them their friends.

2. Judah by his wife has three ſons; and, as might be expected, they partook more of the wickedneſs of Canaan, than the ways of Iſrael. He had married young and haſtily himſelf, and ſeems to have committed the ſame fault with his children. Er, his eldeſt, notoriouſly wicked, was quickly ſlain. God ſometimes makes, even here, monuments of his vengeance. Onan, in duty bound to raiſe up ſeed unto his brother, abuſed his own body to prevent it, and God ſlew him alſo on the ſpot. *Note*, Thoſe ſins which diſhonour the body, if not viſited by immediate judgments, are often in their iſſue, the cauſe of untimely death. Judah afraid of the like viſitation, with-held his youngeſt for a ſeaſon, and ſent Tamar to live a widow in her father's houſe. *Note*, Forced continence is a dangerous thing; they that muſt not marry, will burn. Hence, all the abominations of convents and nunneries.

† Heb. The days were multiplied.
[f] Judg. xiv. 1.
‡ Heb. The door of eyes, or of Enajim
† Heb. A kid of the goats.
† Or in Enajim.
† Heb. Become a contempt.

12. ¶ And † in proceſs of time, the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died: and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his ſheep-ſhearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13. And it was told Tamar, ſaying, Behold, thy father-in-law goeth up [f] to Timnath, to ſhear his ſheep. 14. And ſhe put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herſelf, and ſat in ‡ an open place, which *is* by the way to Timnath: for ſhe ſaw that Shelah was grown, and ſhe was not given unto him to wife. 15. When Judah ſaw her, he thought her *to be* an harlot; becauſe ſhe had covered her face. 16. And he turned unto her by the way, and ſaid, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee (for he knew not that ſhe *was* his daughter-in-law) and ſhe ſaid, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayeſt come in unto me? 17. And he ſaid, I will ſend *thee* † a kid from the flock: and ſhe ſaid, Wilt thou give *me* a pledge, till thou ſend *it?* 18. And he ſaid, What pledge ſhall I give thee? And ſhe ſaid, Thy ſignet, and thy bracelets, and thy ſtaff that *is* in thine hand; and he gave *it* her, and came in unto her, and ſhe conceived by him. 19. And ſhe aroſe and went away, and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood. 20. And Judah ſent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not. 21. Then he aſked the men of that place, ſaying, Where *is* the harlot that *was* † openly by the way-ſide? And they ſaid, There was no harlot in this *place*. 22. And he returned to Judah, and ſaid, I cannot find her; and alſo the men of the place ſaid, *that* there was no harlot in this *place*. 23. And Judah ſaid, Let her take *it* to her, leſt we † be aſhamed: behold, I ſent this kid, and thou haſt not found her.

v. 12—23. They who have not the gift of continence, ſhould marry. We have here a ſhocking inſtance of the danger of fleſhly luſts.

1. Tamar's wicked policy to enſnare Judah. She had been kept in expectation of Shelah, but he was not given her; therefore on a day of feſtivity, when Judah's heart was open with wine and feaſting on his ſhearing day, ſhe expoſed herſelf as an harlot, in an open place, and too grievouſly ſucceeded. Strange to think! from ſuch a woman Jeſus deſcends. Surely, it was to ſhew, that the vileſt need not deſpair.

2. Judah's infamous lewdneſs. Though ignorantly guilty of inceſt, yet vile enough to turn in thus to a common ſtrumpet; ſuch leſſons he had learnt from his bad friend Hirah. He makes a ſcandalous purchaſe of theſe ſtolen pleaſures, and with equal folly pledges his jewels for the payment. *Note*, (1.) They who buy a momentary enjoyment of their luſts, by everlaſting torments in hell, will be found to have made a fooliſh bargain indeed. (2.) When men are violently ſet on the gratification of their paſſions, they act as if infatuated, and expoſe themſelves to every reproach.

3. His diſappointment on ſending the promiſed kid. The harlot is gone, and his jewels loſt. However, he deſiſts from farther enquiry, leſt his own ſhame ſhould come out. *Note*, (1.) Moſt men are more concerned about their ſhame, than their ſin: leaſt we be aſhamed, weighs more with them, than leaſt we be damned. (2.) The day will come however, when their folly ſhall be manifeſt unto all men, and everlaſting ſhame ſhall cover the face of the laſcivious.

[g] Lev. xxi. 9.
† Or wherefore haſt thou made this breach againſt thee?
‡ i. e. A breach.
[h] 1 Chron. ii. 4. Mat. i. 3.

24. ¶ And it came to paſs about three months after, that it was told Judah, ſaying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath played the harlot; and alſo behold, ſhe *is* with child by whoredom: and Judah ſaid, Bring her forth, and [g] let her be burnt. 25. When ſhe *was* brought forth, ſhe ſent to her father-in-law, ſaying, By the man whoſe theſe *are*, *am* I with child: and ſhe ſaid, Diſcern, I pray thee, whoſe *are* theſe, the ſignet and bracelets, and ſtaff. 26. And Judah acknowledged *them*, and ſaid, She hath been more righteous than I; becauſe that I gave her not to Shelah my ſon: and he knew her again no more. 27. ¶ And it came to paſs in the time of her travail, that behold twins *were* in her womb. 28. And it came to paſs when ſhe travailed, that *the one* put out *his* hand; and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a ſcarlet thread, ſaying, This came out firſt. 29. And it came to paſs as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out; and ſhe ſaid, † How haſt thou broken forth? *this* breach *be* upon thee: therefore his name was called ‡ [h] Pharez. 30. And afterwards came out his brother that had the ſcarlet thread upon his hand; and his name was called Zarah.

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v. 24—30. None uſually ſo ſevere in the puniſhment of others, as thoſe who, whilſt they indulge the ſame ſins, would keep up an opinion of their own innocence. We have here,

1. Judah's raſh judgment on Tamar's crime. Let her be ſtigmatized, or burnt in the forehead, that her ſin and ſhame may appear unto all men. Or perhaps, Let her be burnt to death, and ſo get rid of her, that he may marry Shelah to another. *Note*, Malice againſt men's perſons, often puts on the cloak of zeal againſt their ſins.

2. Tamar's vindication of herſelf, to Judah's ſhame and conviction. The bracelets are produced, and Judah is confounded. *Note*, Secret ſins are often blown, and even here go before unto judgment. Judah pleads guilty, acknowledges her leaſt in fault; and, grieved at his conduct, diſmiſſes her without puniſhment, and reſolves to know her no more. *Note*, (1.) They have a right to our compaſſion, whom we have been the means of leading into ſin. (2.) There cannot be true penitence for ſin, without an entire forſaking it.

3. The fruit of this inceſtuous commerce. Two ſons, Pharez and Zarah; like Eſau and Jacob, they ſtruggled in the womb; Pharez prevailed, and got the birthright: they are diſtinguiſhed in our Lord's genealogy. He who came to ſave the chief of ſinners, diſdained not the neareſt alliance with them.

CHAP. XXXIX.

At this chapter we return to the ſtory of Joſeph: We have him here, 1. *A ſervant in Potiphar's houſe*, ver. 1. *and yet there greatly honoured and favoured*, (1.) *By the providence of God, which made him in effect a maſter*, ver. 2—6. (2.) *By the grace of God, which made him more than conqueror over a ſtrong temptation to uncleanneſs*, ver. 7—12. 2. *We have him here a ſufferer, falſly accuſed*, ver. 13—18. *Impriſoned*, ver. 19—20. *And yet his impriſonment made both honourable and comfortable, by the tokens of God's ſpecial preſence with him*, ver. 21—23.

1. AND Joſeph was brought down to Egypt: and [a] Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, [b] bought him of the hands of the Iſhmaelites, which had brought him down thither. 2. And [c] the LORD was with Joſeph, and he was a proſperous man: and he was in the houſe of his maſter the Egyptian. 3. And his maſter ſaw that the LORD *was* with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to proſper in his hand. 4. And Joſeph found grace in his ſight, and he ſerved him: and he made him overſeer of his houſe, and all *that* he had he put into his hand. 5. And it came to paſs from the time that he had made him overſeer in his houſe, and over all that he had, that [d] the LORD bleſſed the Egyptian's houſe for Joſeph's ſake: and the bleſſing of the LORD was upon all that he had, in the houſe, and in the field. 6. And he left all that he had in Joſeph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, ſave the bread which he did eat: and Joſeph was *a* goodly *perſon*, and well-favoured.

[a] Chap. xxxvii. 36. Pſal. cv. 17.
[b] Chap. xxxvii. 28.
[c] Ver. 21. 1 Sam. xvi. 18. & xviii. 28. Acts vii. 9.
[d] Chap. xxx. 27.

v. 1—6. Joſeph is now the ſervant of Potiphar, and a diligent ſervant he is. He was not pining under the ſervitude to which he was reduced, but diligently induſtrious in his ſtation, conforming his mind to his circumſtances. Learn, It is a bleſſed ſymptom of a gracious ſtate, when reduced low, to be content and ſatisfied. Potiphar's houſe was a good ſchool: whilſt he learnt to obey as a ſervant, he learnt alſo to rule as a maſter. God was with him, and the evident bleſſing which attended him haſtened that advancement, which his induſtry and fidelity deſerved. And now, from a purchaſed ſlave he becomes lord of all; and, for Joſeph's ſake, all things proſpered in the Egyptian's houſe. Learn, (1.) If God be with us, it is well where-ever we are. (2.) His bleſſing it is, which maketh rich; without it, we labour in vain, and ſpend our ſtrength for nought. (3.) A godly, truſty ſervant is an ineſtimable treaſure; they who are wiſe, will know how to value and prefer them.

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7. ¶ And it came to paſs after theſe things, that his maſter's wife caſt her eyes upon Joſeph; and ſhe ſaid, Lie with me. 8. But he refuſed, and ſaid unto his maſter's wife, Behold, my maſter wotteth not what *is* with me in the houſe, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand. 9. *There is* none greater in this houſe than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee, becauſe thou *art* his wife: how then can I do this great wickedneſs, and [e] ſin againſt God? 10. And it came to paſs as ſhe ſpake to Joſeph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, *or* to be with her. 11. And it came to paſs about this time, that *Joſeph* went into the houſe to do his buſineſs; and *there was* none of the men of the houſe there within. 12. And ſhe caught him by his garment, ſaying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

[e] Chap. xx. 6. Lev. vi. 2. Pſal. li. 4.

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v. 7—12. Joſeph was handſome, and that is his ſnare. *Note*, Beauty, though ſo highly valued, is oftentimes a dangerous gift, and brings us into many difficulties, which otherwiſe we might have eſcaped.

1. Potiphar's wife beheld the pleaſing youth, and, yielding to the dire temptation, drank in at her eyes what poiſoned her heart. Hurried on by lawleſs paſſion, ſhe preſſes him to her bed, and with ceaſeleſs importunity, loſt to all ſhame and modeſty, wearies him from day to day. *Note*, (1.) When a woman becomes abandoned, ſhe is vile indeed; ſhe forgets to bluſh, and ſticks at nothing to gratify her rage. (2.) They who would keep a guard over their heart, muſt make a covenant with their eyes.

2. Joſeph's reſolute chaſtity. A moſt aſtoniſhing inſtance of virtue, and highly worth imitation. Satan had tried the ſeverity of affliction; he ſupports it: but he fetches now a more fiery dart from his quiver; and how many have fallen hereby, that have withſtood the bittereſt croſſes! A fiery furnace is leſs to be feared, than a beautiful abandoned woman. But what cannot almighty grace effect? Though young and vigorous, living in plenty at his maſter's table, his miſtreſs the tempter, from whoſe favour he had every thing to hope, and from her diſpleaſure every thing to fear; though alone, where no diſcovery could be feared, and even ſuſpicion muſt be baniſhed; though ſollicited, importuned, repeatedly, nay, with violence aſſaulted; he can reſiſt, refuſe, yea, ſuffer every torment, rather than wound his own conſcience, or his maſter's honour. It were baſe ingratitude for the favours he had received; it were unbecoming a ſon of Iſrael; it was a crime of aggravated guilt; and, above all, it was againſt God. Determined therefore, he turns a deaf ear to her intreaties; and when ſhe ſeized his cloak, as one eſcaping for his life, he leaves his garment in her hand. Learn, (1.) Flight is the beſt preſervative from violent temptations to lewdneſs. (2.) Better hazard our life, than wound our conſcience. (3.) A deep ſenſe of the evil of ſin, is the great preſervative againſt it.

13. And it came to paſs, when ſhe ſaw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14. That ſhe called unto the men of her houſe, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us: he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a † loud voice. 15. And it came to paſs, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me and fled, and got him out. 16. And ſhe laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17. And ſhe ſpake unto him according to theſe words, ſaying, The Hebrew ſervant which thou haſt brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me. 18. And it came to paſs, as I lift up my voice, and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

† Heb. Great.

v. 13—19. What ſavage beaſt ſo cruel, as an enraged and ſlighted woman? Whilſt chaſte love is conſtant and unchangeable, diſappointed luſt turns to the fierceſt hatred. The ſervants are called; the affront loudly complained of; the garment laid up as a proof of the guilt; and his maſter no ſooner returned, than informed of the pretended violence, and inſolent aſſault on her honour. *Note*, (1.) There is no protection from a lying tongue. (2.) The beſt of men have been accuſed of the moſt atrocious crimes. (3.) There is ſuch a readineſs to believe evil, eſpecially againſt the profeſſors of religion, that the moſt improbable ſtory gains eaſy credit. (4.) It is the comfort of injured innocence, that the day is coming, when, if not before, God will vindicate their cauſe.

19. And it came to paſs, when his maſter heard the words of his wife, which ſhe ſpake unto him, ſaying, After this manner did thy ſervant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20. And Joſeph's maſter took him and [f] put him into the [g] priſon, a place where the king's priſoners *were* bound: and he was there in the priſon. 21. ¶ But the LORD was with Joſeph, and † ſhewed him mercy, and [h] gave him favour in the ſight of the keeper of the priſon. 22. And the keeper of the priſon committed to Joſeph's hand all the priſoners that *were* in the priſon: and whatſoever they did there, he was the doer *of it*. 23. The keeper of the priſon looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; becauſe the LORD *was* with

[f] Pſal. cv. 18.
[g] Chap. xl. 15. & xli. 14.
† Heb. Extended kindneſs unto him.
[h] Exod. iii. 21. & xi. 3. & xii. 36. Pſal. cvi. 46. Prov. xvi. 7. Dan. i. 9.

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with him: and *that* which he did, the LORD made *it* to proſper.

v. 19—23. Fired with reſentment, the maſter hears; and blinded with paſſion, without examining probabilities, or hearing his plea, wreaks his vengeance on the innocent Joſeph, ſeized, bound, in irons, thruſt into the vileſt dungeon, to linger out a miſerable life, to which death itſelf ſeemed preferable. *Note*, (1.) The bittereſt ſufferings with a good conſcience, are to be preferred to all the pleaſures of ſin. (2.) The perſecutors of God's people are uſually deaf to their plea; but there is one who ſeeth and judgeth. Joſeph is not forgotten even in priſon. God is with him. The jailor convinced probably of his innocence, and won by the amiableneſs of his temper, ſoftens the rigour of his confinement; and finding the bleſſing of God upon him, made him his chief helper, and committed the truſt of all his affairs and the priſoners to him; and every thing proſpered in his hands. *Note*, (1.) No priſon can exclude the preſence of a gracious God. How much happier now is Joſeph in his irons, than in the arms of the moſt beautiful adultereſs? (2.) Myſterious are the ways of God! Who would have thought the king's priſon the neareſt way to be preferred about the king's perſon? In every trial, reſt in hope. (3.) Thus Jeſus was tempted, accuſed, condemned, bound; but God was with him.

CHAP. XL.

In this chapter things are working, though ſlowly, towards Joſeph's advancement. 1. *Two of Pharaoh's ſervants are committed to priſon, and there to Joſeph's care, and ſo become witneſſes of his extraordinary conduct.* ver. 1—4. 2. *They dreamed each of them a dream, which Joſeph interpreted*, ver. 5—19. *The event verified the interpretation*, ver. 20—22. *and ſo they became witneſſes of his extraordinary ſkill.* 3. *Joſeph recommends his caſe to one of them, whoſe preferment he foreſaw*, ver. 14, 15. *but in vain*, ver. 23.

1. AND it came to paſs after theſe things, *that* the butler of the king of Egypt, and *his* baker, had offended their lord the king of Egypt. 2. And Pharaoh was wroth againſt two *of* his officers, againſt the chief of the butlers, and againſt the chief of the bakers. 3. And [a] he put them in ward in the houſe of the captain of the guard, into the priſon, the place where Joſeph *was* bound. 4. And the captain of the guard charged Joſeph with them, and he ſerved them: and they continued a ſeaſon in ward.

[a] Chap. xxxix. 21, 23.

v. 1—4. The favour of princes is an uncertain poſſeſſion. Two chief officers of Pharaoh experience a ſad reverſe of fortune, from a palace to a priſon. They little thought for whoſe ſake they were brought thither: it is for Joſeph's, and into his cuſtody they are committed. The links of the chain of providence are ſtrangely connected, but in wiſdom all. If Potiphar was this captain of the guard, it ſeems he was now convinced of Joſeph's innocence. Time often clears up the characters of the injured.

5. ¶ And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream; the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which *were* bound in the priſon. 6. And Joſeph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and behold they *were* ſad. 7. And he aſked Pharaoh's officers that *were* with him in the ward of his lord's houſe, ſaying, Wherefore † look ye *ſo* ſadly to day? 8. And they ſaid unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it. And Joſeph ſaid unto them, [b] *Do* not interpretations *belong* to God? tell me *them*, I pray you. 9. And the chief butler told his dream to Joſeph, and ſaid unto him, In my dream, behold, a vine *was* before me. 10. And in the vine *were* three branches: and it *was* as though it budded, *and* her bloſſoms ſhot forth; *and* the cluſters thereof brought forth ripe grapes. 11. And Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand: and I took the grapes, and preſſed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. 12. And Joſeph ſaid unto him, This *is* the interpretation of it: The three branches *are* three days. 13. Yet within three days [c] ‡ ſhall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and reſtore thee unto thy place: and thou ſhalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou waſt his butler. 14. But ‖ think on me when it ſhall be well with thee, and ſhew kindneſs, I pray thee, unto me; and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this houſe. 15. For indeed I was ſtolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and [d] here alſo have I done nothing that they ſhould put me into the dungeon. 16. When the chief baker ſaw that the interpretation was good; he ſaid unto Joſeph, I alſo *was* in my dream, and behold *I had* three § white baſkets on my head. 17. And in the uppermoſt baſket *there was* of all manner of * bake-meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the baſket upon my head. 18. And Joſeph anſwered, and ſaid, This *is* the interpretation thereof: The three baſkets *are* three days. 19. Yet within three days ſhall Pharaoh † lift up thy head from off thee, and ſhall hang thee on a tree; and the birds ſhall eat thy fleſh from off thee.

† Heb. *Are* your faces evil, &c.

[b] Chap. xli. 16. Dan. ii. 11, 28.

[c] 2 Kings xxv. 27. Pſal. iii. 3. Jer. lii. 31.

‡ Or, reckon.

‖ Heb. Remember me with thee.

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[d] Chap. xxxix. 20.

§ Or, full of holes.

* Heb. Meat of Pharaoh's, the work of a baker or cook.

† Or, reckon thee, and take thy office from thee.

v. 5—19. We have here,

1. Two extraordinary dreams, which happened to the priſoners under Joſeph's care. Much affected with the viſions on their bed, their countenance bore the deep impreſſion, and Joſeph in the morning, with kind ſollicitude, could not but enquire into the cauſe of their dejection. *Note*, (1.) God has arrows in his quiver, that, without a viſible cauſe, can damp the ſpirits of the mighty. Could we look into ſinners hearts, we ſhould find diſtreſſes there, which only themſelves know. (2.) It is kind to be ſollicitous about our neighbour's happineſs, and eſpecially when they appear dejected, to reach out the tender hand of comfort.

2. They relate their dreams, and Joſeph interprets them. The butler's dream is the happy preſage of his reſtoration; the baker's, of an ignominious death. *Note*, (1.) Communication of our griefs to godly men, is the ready way to receive ſolution of our doubts, or comfort in our afflictions. (2.) There are good dreams and evil ones, and both deſerve notice. A good dream is a mark of a gracious temper; a bad one can have no good interpretation.

3. Joſeph's modeſt requeſt to the butler. As he was innocently a priſoner, he wiſhes for an enlargement, and, without reflecting on his perſecutors, begs only a remembrance of him, when he ſhould be reſtored to his loſt dignity. *Note*, (1.) Though we may be content with ſervitude, yet, if we can be free, we may chuſe it rather. (2.) In exculpating ourſelves, we cannot be too careful to avoid reflecting upon thoſe who have injured us.

20. ¶ And it came to paſs the third day, *which was* Pharaoh's birth-day, that he [e] made a feaſt unto all his ſervants: and he † lifted up the head of the chief butler, and of the chief baker among his ſervants. 21. And he reſtored the chief butler unto his butlerſhip again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. 22. But he hanged the chief baker: as Joſeph had interpreted to them. 23. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joſeph, but forgat him.

[e] Mark vi. 21.

† Or, reckoned.

20—23. Preciſely at the time predicted, the interpretation is fulfilled. Pharaoh, on his birth-day, enquires into their faults, and either, according to their deſerts, the butler is acquitted and reſtored, the baker condemned and executed; or, if both are guilty, he exerciſes his ſovereignty in pardoning the one, and puniſhing the other. Who will queſtion the king's ſovereignty? And ſhall we find fault with God, if he pardons one ſinner, whilſt he leaves another to deſerved judgment? *Note*, Great events lie often in a ſmall compaſs of time. Who knoweth whether his life ſhall continue three days; nay, three hours? His preferment now ſo engages the butler, that Joſeph in his priſon is no more thought of. Great men too commonly have the art of forgetting their obligations and their promiſes; and if Joſeph's heart was buoyed up with the expectation of his doing ſomething for him, the greater muſt be his diſappointment. *Note*, They who depend on great men, will have frequent cauſe to lament their neglects; but they who depend only on the great God, ſhall never be diſappointed of their hope.

CHAP. XLI.

We have in this chapter, 1. *Pharaoh's dreams*, ver. 1—8. 2. *The recommendation of Joſeph to him for an interpreter*, ver. 9—13. 3. *The interpretation of the dreams, with the prudent advice given to Pharaoh thereupon*, ver. 14—36. 4. *The preferment of Joſeph*, ver. 37—45. 5. *The accompliſhment of Joſeph's prediction, and his fidelity to his truſt*, ver. 46, ad finem.

1. AND it came to paſs at the end of two full † years, that Pharaoh dreamed, and behold, he ſtood by the river. 2. And behold there came up out of the river ſeven well-favoured kine, and fat-fleſhed; and they

1715.

† Heb. Years of days.

fed in a meadow. 3. And behold, ſeven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favoured, and lean-fleſhed; and ſtood by the *other* kine, upon the brink of the river. 4. And the ill-favoured and lean-fleſhed kine did eat up the ſeven well-favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. 5. And he ſlept, and dreamed the ſecond time: and behold, ſeven ears of corn came up upon one ſtalk, † rank, and good. 6. And behold, ſeven thin ears, and blaſted with the eaſt-wind, ſprung up after them. 7. And the ſeven thin ears devoured the ſeven rank and full ears: and Pharaoh awoke, and behold *it was* a dream. 8. And it came to paſs in the morning, that [a] his ſpirit was troubled; and he ſent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wiſe-men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but *there was* none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

† Heb. Fat.

[a] Dan. ii. 1.

v. 1—8. When Joſeph began to deſpair of his friend at court, to ceaſe from man, and truſt in God, then ſhall his deliverance be accompliſhed. Two long years had he lain in the houſe of his priſon, when God works not only for his enlargement, but his preferment. Pharaoh's dreams trouble him. Though ſtrange the rovings of his fancy, he felt an impreſſion he could not get rid of: the remembrance was ſtrong upon his mind, and the magicians are called to give the interpretation in vain. *Note*, (1.) The nature of dreams is among the ſecret things. Though not utterly to be overlooked, yet not ſuperſtitiouſly to be attended to. (2.) When patience hath had her perfect work, God can furniſh eaſily the means for the deliverance of his ſervants.

9. ¶ Then ſpake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, ſaying, I do remember my faults this day. 10. Pharaoh was wroth with his ſervants, and [b] put me in ward in the captain of the guard's houſe, *both* me and the chief baker. 11. And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed [c] each man according to the interpretation of his dream. 12. And *there was* there with us a young man, an Hebrew, ſervant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he [d] interpreted to us our dreams: to each man according to his dream he did interpret. 13. And it came to paſs, as he interpreted to us, ſo it was: me he reſtored unto mine office, and him he hanged. 14. ¶ [e] Then Pharaoh ſent and called Joſeph, and they † brought him haſtily out of the dungeon: And he ſhaved *himſelf*, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. 15. And Pharaoh ſaid unto Joſeph, I have dreamed a dream, and *there is* none that can interpret it: and I have heard ſay of thee, *that* ‡ thou canſt underſtand a dream to interpret it. 16. And Joſeph anſwered Pharaoh, ſaying, *It is* not in me: God ſhall give Pharaoh an anſwer of peace.

[b] Chap. xxxix. 20.

[c] Chap. xl. 5.

[d] Chap. xl. 12, &c.

[e] Pſal. cv. 20.

† Heb. Made him run.

‡ Or, When thou heareſt a dream, thou canſt interpret it.

v. 9—16. Pharaoh's dream reminds the butler of his obligations. Hereupon,

1. He acknowledges his faults, whether ſo long in forgetting Joſeph, or as a compliment to Pharaoh's clemency in forgiving them; and then proceeds to give the character of Joſeph, and the experience he had of his ſagacity and wiſdom. *Note*, (1.) It is good to remember our ſins, when God hath forgiven and forgotten them. (2.) If we have been negligent of our duty, it is time to remember, and return to it. Better late than never. (3) God's providence orders all in the beſt time and manner for his people. Joſeph's preferment depended on this delay.

2. Pharaoh's haſte to have Joſeph's interpretation. A dream had brought him a ſlave into Egypt, and now a dream carries him to the king's preſence and favour.

3. Joſeph's humble reply to Pharaoh's queſtion. He aſcribes the power to God, and wiſhes, as if bred a courtier, (for true religion breeds genuine courteſy) Pharaoh's peace and proſperity in the interpretation. *Note*, Great gifts and great graces muſt be adorned with deep humility; then they are doubly amiable and excellent.

17. And Pharaoh ſaid unto Joſeph, In my dream, behold, I ſtood upon the bank of the river. 18. And behold, there came up out of the river ſeven kine, fat-fleſhed, and well-favoured: and they fed in a meadow. 19. And behold, ſeven other kine came up after them, poor, and very ill-favoured, and lean-fleſhed, ſuch as I never ſaw in all the land of Egypt for badneſs. 20. And the lean and the ill-favoured kine did eat up the firſt ſeven fat kine. 21. And when they had † eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them: but they *were* ſtill ill-favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. 22. And I ſaw in my dream, and behold, ſeven ears came up in one ſtalk, full and good. 23. And behold, ſeven ears ‡ withered, thin, *and* blaſted with the eaſt wind, ſprung up after them. 24. And the thin ears devoured the ſeven good ears: and I told *this* unto the magicians; but *there was* none that could declare *it* unto me. 25. ¶ And Joſeph ſaid unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh *is* one: God hath ſhewed Pharaoh what he *is* about to do. 26. The ſeven good kine *are* ſeven years: and the ſeven good ears *are* ſeven years: the dream *is* one. 27. And the ſeven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them, *are* ſeven years; and the ſeven empty ears blaſted with the eaſt-wind, ſhall be [f] ſeven years of famine. 28. This *is* the thing which I have ſpoken unto Pharaoh: What God *is* about to do, he ſheweth unto Pharaoh. 29. Behold, there come ſeven years of great plenty, throughout all the land of Egypt. 30. And there ſhall ariſe after them ſeven years of famine, and all the plenty ſhall be forgotten in the land of Egypt: and the famine ſhall conſume the land. 31. And the plenty ſhall not be known in the land, by reaſon of that famine following: for it *ſhall be* very ‖ grievous. 32. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; *it is* becauſe the thing *is* § eſtabliſhed by God, and God will ſhortly bring it to paſs.

† Heb. Come to the inward parts of them.

‡ Or ſmall.

[f] 2 Kings viii. 1.

‖ Heb. Heavy.

§ Or prepared of God.

v. 17—32. Pharaoh relates, and Joſeph interprets to his full ſatisfaction. The dreams are one, to confirm the certainty of their fulfilment. They predict ſeven years of plenty, and ſeven years of famine, which ſhould ſucceed them: famine ſo ſevere, as ſhould conſume the whole produce of the former years. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt plenty is often ſuceeeded by the greateſt penury; careful œconomy therefore is wiſe and prudent. (2.) All our worldly comforts are like the abundance of Egypt; the evil days come, when we ſhall no longer have pleaſure in them. How ſollicitous ſhould we then be to ſecure a more enduring portion. (3.) What God hath decreed, will ſhortly come to paſs; for time is ſwift, and death and eternity near, even at the door.

33. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man diſcreet and wiſe, and ſet him over the land of Egypt. 34. Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint † officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the ſeven plenteous years. 35. And let them gather all the food of thoſe good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36. And that food ſhall be for ſtore to the land againſt the ſeven years of famine, which ſhall be in the land of Egypt; that the land ‡ periſh not through the famine. 37. ¶ And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his ſervants. 38. And Pharaoh ſaid unto his ſervants, Can we find *ſuch a one* as this *is*? a man [g] in whom the Spirit of God *is*? 39. And Pharaoh ſaid unto Joſeph, Foraſmuch as God hath ſhewed thee all this, *there is* none ſo diſcreet and wiſe as thou *art*. 40. [h] Thou ſhalt be over my houſe, and according unto thy word ſhall all my people ‖ be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41. And Pharaoh ſaid unto Joſeph, See, I have ſet thee over all the land of Egypt. 42. And Pharaoh [i] took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joſeph's hand, and arrayed him in veſtures of § fine linen, and [k] put a gold chain about his neck. 43. And he made him to ride in the ſecond chariot which he had; and [l] they cried before him, * Bow the knee: and he made him *ruler* over all the land of Egypt. 44. And Pharaoh ſaid unto Joſeph, I *am* Pharaoh, and without thee ſhall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. 45. And Pharaoh called Joſeph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Aſenath the daughter of Poti-pherah † prieſt of On: and Joſeph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.

† Or overſeers.

‡ Heb. Be not cut off.

[g] Num. xxvii. 18. Dan. v. 11.

[h] Pſal cv. 21. 1 Mac. ii. 53. Acts vii. 10.

‖ Heb. Be armed, or kiſs.

[i] Eſth. iii. 10. & viii. 2, 8.

§ Or ſilk.

[k] Dan. v. 7, 29.

[l] Eſth. vi. 9.

* Or tender father. Chap. xlv. 8.

† Or Prince.

v. 33—45. 1. Joſeph adds to his interpretation his advice, both evidencing his conſummate wiſdom; to improve the years of plenty, and, under faithful inſpectors, to lay up proviſion againſt the years of famine. *Note*, (1.) There is a day coming, which we ſhall have abundant need to provide againſt. All the grace we can get will be no more than we ſhall need.

(2.) Proviſion for approaching danger muſt be immediate. We, who have ſo little time to ſpend, have none to loſe.

2. Pharaoh is highly pleaſed with the advice, and reſolves on the ſpot to follow it. He extols the wiſdom of Joſeph, and from conviction of the ſuperiority of his genius, advances him to the honourable poſt of governor of the whole land. To him the truſt is committed, to provide againſt the famine he predicts. He is ſolemnly inſtalled. The ring from his finger, and his ſecond chariot beſtowed on Joſeph, proclaim the favour of the king, and the dignity of the miniſter; whilſt they cry before him, Bow the knee. And to all his other honours are added, a noble alliance with the daughter of Poti-pherah, and a new name, Zaphnath-paaneah, The revealer of ſecrets. What a change hath a day brought forth! the morning ſaw him a priſoner in diſtreſs; the noon beheld him apparelled as a king, and chief of all the land of Egypt. Patient ſuffering will certainly one day thus be crowned with glory. *Note*, (1.) It is as honourable to the prince, as happy for the people, when they are preferred, in whom the ſpirit of God is. (2.) Herein Joſeph reſembles the Lord of Glory; exalted from his priſon of death to the right hand of God, the concerns of heaven and earth are intruſted to him alone, and angels, principalities, and powers bow before him.

1715. 46. ¶ And Joſeph *was* thirty years old when he ſtood before Pharaoh king of Egypt: and Joſeph went out from the preſence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. 47. And in the ſeven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. 48. And he gathered up all the food of the ſeven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field which *was* round about every city, laid he up in the ſame. 49. And Joſeph gathered corn as the ſand of the ſea, very much, until he left numbring: for *it was* without number. 50. And [m] unto Joſeph were born two ſons, before the years of famine came: which Aſenath the daughter of Poti-pherah † prieſt of On, bare unto him. 51. And Joſeph called the name of the firſt-born ‡ Manaſſeh: for God, *ſaid he*, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's houſe. 52. And the name of the ſecond called he ‖ Ephraim: for God hath cauſed me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

[m] Chap. xlvi. 20. & xlviii. 5.
† Or Prince. 2 Sam. viii. 18.
‡ i. e. forgetting.
‖ i. e. fruitful.

v. 46—52. Joſeph's diligence is as great as his wiſdom. No ſooner in office, than he executes the truſt repoſed in him. The more a ſtateſman is diſtinguiſhed, the more laborious ſhould he be for the public good. God bleſſes him abundantly in his labour, and adds to the fruitfulneſs of the land, the fruitfulneſs of his houſe. Two ſons are born; *Manaſſeh*, ſo called, becauſe all his former toil and ill uſage at home were forgotten; and *Ephraim*, becauſe God had made him *fruitful*. *Note*, (1.) It is well to acknowledge God in every gift. (2.) Injuries cannot be too ſoon forgiven and forgotten.

1708. 53. ¶ And the ſeven years of plenteouſneſs that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. 54. And [n] the ſeven years of dearth began to come, according as Joſeph had ſaid: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 55. And when all the land of Egypt was famiſhed, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: And Pharaoh ſaid unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joſeph; what he ſaith to you, do. 56. And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joſeph opened † all the ſtore-houſes, and ſold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed ſore in the land of Egypt. 57. And [o] all countries came into Egypt to Joſeph for to buy *corn*; becauſe that the famine was *ſo* ſore in all lands.

[n] Pſal. cv. 16.
† Heb. All wherein *was*.
[o] Deut. ix. 28.

v. 53—57. Joſeph's provident care is now ſenſibly felt. The countries around, under the ſcourge of famine, as well as Egypt, come to buy corn, and are referred to Joſeph, whoſe management, no doubt, in the ſale, was as juſt and equitable, as his prudence in providing had been ſingular. *Note*, It is highly our duty in times of dearth to open our ſtore-houſes; and neither by a fictitious famine, nor an unreaſonable price, to grind the faces of the poor.

CHAP. XLII.

We had in the foregoing chapter the fulfilling of the dreams which Joſeph had interpreted: in this and the following chapters we have the fulfilling of the dreams which Joſeph himſelf had dreamed, that his father's family ſhould do obeiſance to him. We have in this chapter, 1. *The humble application of Jacob's ſons to Joſeph, to buy corn,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The fright Joſeph put them into, for their trial,* ver. 7—20. 3. *The conviction they were now under of their ſin concerning Joſeph long before,* ver. 21—24. 4. *Their return to Canaan with corn, and the great diſtreſs their good father was in, upon the account they gave him of their expedition,* ver. 25, ad finem.

1707. 1. NOW when [a] Jacob ſaw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob ſaid unto his ſons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2. And he ſaid, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may [b] live and not die. 3. ¶ And Joſeph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. 4. But Benjamin, Joſeph's brother, Jacob ſent not with his brethren: for he ſaid, Leſt peradventure miſchief befall him. 5. And the ſons of Iſrael came to buy *corn* among thoſe that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. 6. And Joſeph *was* the governor over the land, *and* he *it was* that ſold to all the people of the land: and Joſeph's brethren came and [c] bowed down themſelves before him, *with* their faces to the earth.

[a] Acts vii. 12.
[b] Chap. xliii. 8. Pſal. cxviii. 17. Iſa. xxxviii. 1.
[c] Chap. xxxvii. 7.

v. 1—6. The famine now began to be ſenſibly felt in Canaan. That land of promiſe had hitherto proved a land of dearth to every ſucceeding patriarch. *Note*, It is good to have the creature embittered, that we may be led to look to a better country, that is, an heavenly. Jacob underſtanding there was corn in Egypt, reproves his ſons for their delay and deſpondence, and haſtens them on their journey. *Note*, When difficulties overtake us, we muſt not lie down and deſpond, or waſte the time in uſeleſs debate, but exert our moſt vigorous efforts for relief. At his command, all except Benjamin immediately ſet off, and arriving ſafely, are introduced to the governor, and with profound obeiſance bow before him. And now the dream begins to be accompliſhed. *Note*, God's counſels will take effect in their own time.

7. And Joſeph ſaw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himſelf ſtrange unto them, and ſpake † roughly unto them; and he ſaid unto them, Whence come ye? And they ſaid, From the land of Canaan to buy food. 8. And Joſeph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. 9. And Joſeph [d] remembred the dreams which he dreamed of them, and ſaid unto them, Ye *are* ſpies; to ſee the nakedneſs of the land you are come. 10. And they ſaid unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy ſervants come. 11. We *are* all one man's ſons: We *are* true men, thy ſervants are no ſpies. 12. And he ſaid unto them, Nay, but to ſee the nakedneſs of the land you are come. 13. And they ſaid, Thy ſervants *are* twelve brethren, the ſons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngeſt is this day with our father, and one [e] *is* not. 14. And Joſeph ſaid unto them, That *is it* that I ſpake unto you, ſaying, Ye *are* ſpies. 15. Hereby ye ſhall be proved: [f] by the life of Pharaoh ye ſhall not go forth hence, except your youngeſt brother come hither. 16. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye ſhall be ‡ kept in priſon, that your words may be proved, whether *there be any* truth in you: or elſe by the life of Pharaoh ſurely ye *are* ſpies. 17. And he ‖ put them all-together into ward, three days. 18. And Joſeph ſaid unto them the third day, This do, and live: *for* [g] I fear God. 19. If ye *be* true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the houſe of your priſon: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houſes. 20. But [h] bring your youngeſt brother unto me; ſo ſhall your words be verified, and ye ſhall not die. And they did ſo.

† Heb. Hard things with them.
[d] Chap. xxxvii. 5.
[e] Lam. v. 7. See chap. xliv. 20.
[f] See 1 Sam. i. 26. & xvii. 55. Judith xi. 7.
‡ Heb. Bound.
‖ Heb. Gathered.
[g] Neh. v. 15.
[h] Chap. xliii. 5. & xliv. 23.

v. 7—20. Little thought the ſons of Jacob who this great man was. Joſeph is now forgotten with his dreams; and though alive, never could they imagine to find him there. But Joſeph knew them, though unknown; and as he had hitherto no doubt been kept by divine direction from ſending to inform them of his eſtate, he will, by concealing it ſtill, make the accompliſhment of his dreams more remarkable. His rough addreſs, his imprecation terrifies them, and his deeds ſtill more. Their deep humiliations before him reſtrain not his ſeverity; they are bound and committed to ſafe cuſtody as ſpies, that they might remember themſelves in the houſe of their priſon, and repent over their own inhuman conduct; while their exculpation alſo informed him of thoſe circumſtances of his family, that, without diſcovering himſelf, he could not elſe have enquired into. At three days end they are releaſed, on condition of bringing down their younger brother, as a proof of their ſimplicity; and he gives the reaſon of this clemency, becauſe he feared God. *Note*, (1.) Where a man fears God, he cannot be unmerciful or unkind. (2.) Harſh providences are often attended with bleſſed effects. Obſtinate diſeaſes call for ſtrong phyſick.

21. ¶ And they ſaid one to another, We *are* verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us; and we would not hear: therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us. 22. And Reuben anſwered them, ſaying, [i] Spake I not unto you, ſaying, Do not ſin againſt the child: and ye would not hear? therefore behold alſo, his blood is required. 23. And they knew not that Joſeph underſtood *them*; for † he ſpake unto them by an interpreter. 24. And he turned himſelf about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. 25. ¶ Then Joſeph commanded to fill their ſacks with corn, and to reſtore every man's money into his ſack, and to give them proviſion for the way: and thus did he unto them. 26. And they laded their aſſes with the corn, and departed thence. 27. And as [k] one of them opened his ſack to give his aſs provender in the inn, he eſpied his money: for behold it *was* in his ſack's mouth. 28. And he ſaid unto his brethren, My money is reſtored; and lo, *it is* even in my ſack; and their heart ‡ failed *them*, and they were afraid, ſaying one to another, What *is* this *that* God hath done unto us?

[i] Chap. xxxvii. 21.

† Heb. An interpreter *was* between them.

[k] Chap. xliii. 21.

‡ Heb. Went forth.

v. 21—28. We have here,

1. The reflections they make on their paſt conduct. For twenty years they ſeem to have forgotten it, or ſtifled the remembrance; but now conſcience does her office, and in their diſtreſs they acknowledge the juſtice of God's hand in thus overtaking them. If they were ſo unrelenting to a brother, what may they not apprehend from a heathen ſtranger? Reuben reminds them of his intreaty for the child; a freſh reproach to their cruelty, though a comfort to his own conſcience. *Note*, (1.) it is a needful ſtroke, that awakens the conſcience to a remembrance of ſin. (2.) When we ſhare with others in calamity, it is a great ſupport to be clear of their guilt. Little did they imagine how nearly he was intereſted, before whom they ſpoke: little were they apprehenſive, that the Egyptian governor, who ſpake by an interpreter, underſtood their language; whilſt he, unable to reſtrain, yet willing to conceal the falling tear, turns aſide, to diſcharge the tender meltings of an affectionate heart. Are ſuch the tender mercies of a man? What then are the compaſſions of our God towards repenting ſinners!

2. Simeon is bound for a hoſtage till their return, and they diſmiſſed with their lading. But how great their aſtoniſhment, when one, on opening his ſack, finds the purchaſe-money returned! Guilt immediately awakens their fears, and they tremble with the apprehenſions that God is now about to viſit them for their ſins. They who ſold their own brother unjuſtly for twenty pieces of ſilver, may well fear, leſt judgment overtake them as thieves. *Note*, A guilty conſcience is ſubject to perpetual alarms.

29. ¶ And they came unto Jacob their father, unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befel unto them, ſaying, 30. The man *who is* the lord of the land, ſpake † roughly to us, and took us for ſpies of the country. 31. And we ſaid unto him, We *are* true men; we are no ſpies. 32. We *be* twelve brethren, ſons of our father: one *is* not, and the youngeſt *is* this day with our father in the land of Canaan. 33. And the man the lord of the country ſaid unto us, Hereby ſhall I know that ye *are* true men; leave one of your brethren *here* with me, and take *food for* the famine of your houſholds, and be gone. 34. And bring your youngeſt brother unto me: then ſhall I know that you *are* no ſpies, *but* that you *are* true men: *ſo* will I deliver you your brother, and ye ſhall traffick in the land. 35. ¶ And it came to paſs as they emptied their ſacks, that behold every man's bundle of money *was* in his ſack: and when *both* they and their father ſaw the bundles of money, they were afraid. 36. And Jacob their father ſaid unto them, Me have ye bereaved *of my children*: Joſeph *is* not, and Simeon *is* not, and ye will take Benjamin *away*: all theſe things are againſt me. 37. And Reuben ſpake unto his father, ſaying, Slay my two ſons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. 38. And he ſaid, My ſon ſhall not go down with you: for his brother is dead, and he is left alone; [l] if miſchief befal him by the way in the which ye go, then ſhall ye [m] bring down my gray hairs with ſorrow to the grave.

† Heb. With us hard things.

[l] Chap. xliv. 20.

[m] Chap. xxxvii. 35. & xliv. 31.

v. 29—38. The report of their journey was afflictive news to Jacob. The circumſtances compared, the impriſonment of Simeon, the demand of Benjamin, and, above all, the money returned, made him apprehend ſome ill deſign; not without ſuſpicions of the bad conduct of his ſons, which to his ſorrow he had ſo often experienced. All things he concludes are now againſt him. He reſolves not to part with Benjamin, however; nor can be at all ſatisfied with Reuben's fooliſh offer. His life is ſo bound up in the child, that miſchief befalling him, (and what reaſon had he to fear in their company?) grief would quickly bring his grey hairs to the grave. *Note*, (1.) In proportion to our love to the creature, will be our fears of loſing, and our diſtreſs in parting from it. Thus inordinate affection is its own puniſhment. (2.) We are often needleſsly diſtreſſed, and afraid, when God is moſt working for us, that all things are againſt us. (3.) Wicked children bring the bittereſt griefs upon their aged parents.

CHAP. XLIII.

Here the ſtory of Joſeph's brethren is carried on, and very particularly related, 1. *Their melancholy parting with their father Jacob in Canaan,* ver 1—14. 2. *Their pleaſant meeting with Joſeph in Egypt,* ver. 15, to the end.

1. AND the famine *was* ſore in the land. 2. And it came to paſs when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father ſaid unto them, Go again, buy us a little food. 3. And Judah ſpake unto him, ſaying, The man † did ſolemnly proteſt unto us, ſaying, Ye ſhall not ſee my face, except [a] your brother *be* with you. 4. If thou wilt ſend our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food. 5. But if thou wilt not ſend *him*, we will not go down: for the man ſaid unto us, Ye ſhall not ſee my face, except your brother *be* with you. 6. And Iſrael ſaid, Wherefore dealt ye *ſo* ill with me, *as* to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? 7. And they ſaid, The man ‡ aſked us ſtraitly of our ſtate, and of our kindred, ſaying, *Is* your father yet alive? have ye *another* brother? and we told him according to the ‖ tenour of theſe words: § Could we certainly know that he would ſay, Bring your brother down? 8. And Judah ſaid unto Iſrael his father, Send the lad with me, and we will ariſe and go; that we may live and not die, both we, and thou, *and* alſo our little ones. 9. I will be ſurety for him; of my hand ſhalt thou require him: [b] if I bring him not unto thee, and ſet him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever. 10. For except we had lingred, ſurely now we had returned † the ſecond time.

† Heb. Proteſting proteſted.

[a] Chap. xlii. 20. & xliv. 23.

‡ Heb. Aſking aſked us.

‖ Heb. Mouth.

§ Heb. Knowing could we know, &c.

[b] Chap. xliv. 32.

† Or, twice by this.

v. 1—10. The famine being ſevere, their corn is quickly ſpent. Jacob, with tender regard for his family, preſſes them to go; but Judah convinces him of the hopeleſſneſs of their journey, unleſs he will ſpare Benjamin, ſolemnly engaging to be ſurety for his return in ſafety. *Note*, In difficult circumſtances, where ſomething dear to us is at ſtake, it is wiſdom to take the advice of others, who, as leſs intereſted, muſt have leſs prejudice.

11. And their father Iſrael ſaid unto them, If it *muſt be* ſo now, do this: take of the beſt fruits in the land in your veſſels, and carry down the man a preſent, a little balm, and a little honey, ſpices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds. 12. And take double money in your hand: and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your ſacks, carry *it* again in your hand; peradventure it *was* an overſight. 13. Take alſo your brother, and ariſe, go again unto the man. 14. And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may ſend away your other brother and Benjamin: [c] † If I be bereaved *of my children*, I am bereaved.

[c] Eſth. iv. 16.

† Or, And I, as I have been, &c.

v. 11—14. The caſe was deſperate; neceſſity forces Jacob to comply. *Note*, We may alter our reſolutions, without being guilty of a lie, when we diſcover new reaſons againſt them. He takes every prudent means for the ſecurity of the journey.

The money returned is ſent back: he concluded ſome overſight, and honeſty will correct miſtakes. Double money is added, that there may be enough for any extraordinary occaſion, and beſides, a preſent for the lord of the land, of the produce of Canaan, *v.* 11. and, over all, he puts his benediction and prayer, with his reſignation of himſelf and children into God's hand. *Note,* (1.) What a bleſſing is bread! neither the mines of India, nor the ſpices of Arabia, can ſupply the want of it. (2.) Submiſſion to God's will is not only moſt for his glory, but for our own comfort alſo. (3.) Prayer ſhould ſanctify all our journies. If God Almighty go with us, mercy will compaſs us on every ſide.

15. ¶ And the men took that preſent, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and roſe up, and went down to Egypt, and ſtood before Joſeph. 16. And when Joſeph ſaw Benjamin with them, he ſaid to the ruler of his houſe, Bring *theſe* men home, and † ſlay and make ready: for *theſe* men ſhall ‡ dine with me at noon. 17. And the man did as Joſeph bade: and the man brought the men into Joſeph's houſe. 18. And the men were afraid, becauſe they were brought into Joſeph's houſe, and they ſaid, Becauſe of the money that was returned in our ſacks at the firſt time, are we brought in; that he may ‖ ſeek occaſion againſt us, and fall upon us, and take us for bond-men, and our aſſes. 19. And they came near to the ſteward of Joſeph's houſe, and they communed with him at the door of the houſe, 20. And ſaid, O ſir, [d] § we came indeed down at the firſt time to buy food. 21. And [e] it came to paſs when we came to the inn, that we opened our ſacks, and behold, *every* man's money *was* in the mouth of his ſack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. 22. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our ſacks. 23. And he ſaid, Peace *be* to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father hath given you treaſure in your ſacks: † I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them. 24. And the man brought the men into Joſeph's houſe, and [f] gave *them* water, and they waſhed their feet, and he gave their aſſes provender. 25. And they made ready the preſent againſt Joſeph came at noon: for they heard that they ſhould eat bread there.

† Heb. Kill a killing.
‡ Heb. Eat.
‖ Heb. Roll himſelf upon us.
[d] Chap. xlii. 3.
§ Heb. Coming down, we came down.
[e] Chap. xlii. 27, 35.
† Heb. Your money came to me.
[f] Chap. xviii. 4. & xxiv. 32.

v. 15—25. Once more they are ſafe arrived, nor grudge their pain to relieve their hunger. When there is a famine of the word, ſhall we take leſs pains to travel for it? They are kindly received, invited to Joſeph's houſe; and this, inſtead of comforting, terrifies them. Fear makes every mole-hill a mountain, and creates ſuſpicion even of our mercies. They reſolve to prevent all accuſation, by informing the ſteward of the money which was returned, with offers to repay it; but he quiets their fears with an acknowledgment of its receipt, bids them regard it as a gift from God, and takes all imaginable care of them till his maſter came home. *Note,* (1.) Honeſty will be found the beſt policy. (2.) Every ſucceſs in buſineſs ſhould be regarded as treaſure given of God.

26. ¶ And when Joſeph came home, they brought him the preſent which *was* in their hand into the houſe, and [g] bowed themſelves to him to the earth. 27. And he aſked them of *their* † welfare, and ſaid, ‡ *Is* your father well, the old man of whom ye ſpake? *Is* he yet alive? 28. And they anſwered, Thy ſervant our father *is* in good health, he *is* yet alive: and they bowed down their heads, and made obeiſance. 29. And he lift up his eyes, and ſaw his brother Benjamin, his mother's ſon, and ſaid, *Is* this your younger brother, [i] of whom ye ſpake unto me? And he ſaid, God be gracious unto thee, my ſon. 30. And Joſeph made haſte; for his bowels did yern upon his brother: and he ſought *where* to weep, and he entered into *his* chamber, and wept there. 31. And he waſhed his face, and went out, and refrained himſelf, and ſaid, Set on bread. 32. And they ſet on for him by himſelf, and for them by themſelves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themſelves: becauſe the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that *is* [k] an abomination unto the Egyptians. 33. And they ſat before him, the firſt-born according to his birth-right, and the youngeſt according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. 34. And he took *and ſent* meſſes unto them from before him: But Benjamin's meſs was five times ſo much as any of theirs. And they drank, and § were merry with him.

[g] Chap. xxxvii. 7, 10.
† Heb. Peace.
‡ Heb. *Is there* peace to your father?
[h] Chap. xlii. 11, 13.
[i] Chap. xlii. 13.
[k] Chap. xlvi. 34. Exod. viii. 26.
§ Heb. Drank largely. See Hag. i. 6. Joh. ii. 10.

v. 26—34. At dinner Joſeph returns: his brethren renew their lowly obeiſance, and, in their father's name, bow down before him as his ſervants. The ſight of Benjamin awakens all his tenderneſs. With a heart melted with love, (and how could he refrain?) he enquires after the good old man: Is he alive? And now unable longer to ſtand the moving ſcene, after an affectionate bleſſing on the lad, he haſtens to his chamber, to give vent in tears to thoſe tender paſſions, that burſt involuntary from his throbbing heart. When thus the commotion in his boſom was ſomewhat abated, he waſhes, and returns to entertain them. The tables are ſpread ſeverally for him and them, and the Egyptians, for the reaſon given, *v.* 32. and whilſt they wonder at the diſpoſition made according to their ſeveral ages, they are nobly entertained, forget their fears and cares, and make merry before him. Benjamin is diſtinguiſhed by a peculiar meſs, but it ſeems neither to awaken their ſuſpicion of the cauſe, nor jealouſy of the favour. *Note,* (1.) The tendereſt paſſions poſſeſs the nobleſt ſouls. (2.) A prayer for a bleſſing upon the ſoul, is a better gift than even Benjamin's diſtinguiſhed meſs: in ſuch charity, a poor man may be very rich. (3.) If others, weak or ſcrupulous, chuſe not to eat bread in communion with us, after our manner, we ſhould learn as Joſeph with the Egyptians, to bear with them in love.

CHAP. XLIV.

1. *We have Joſeph's innocent device to try his brethren's regard for Benjamin, as well as the ſincerity of their repentance for what they had done againſt him,* ver. 1—17. 2. *The good ſucceſs of the experiment,* ver. 18—34.

1. AND he commanded † the ſteward of his houſe ſaying, Fill the men's ſacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his ſack's mouth. 2. And put my cup, the ſilver cup, in the ſack's mouth of the youngeſt, and his corn-money: and he did according to the word that Joſeph had ſpoken. 3. As ſoon as the morning was light, the men were ſent away, they and their aſſes. 4. *And* when they were gone out of the city, *and* not *yet* far off, Joſeph ſaid unto his ſteward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou doſt overtake them, ſay unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? 5. *Is* not this *it* in which my lord drinketh? and whereby indeed he † divineth? ye have done evil in ſo doing. 6. ¶ And he overtook them, and he ſpake unto them theſe ſame words. 7. And they ſaid unto him, Wherefore ſaith my lord theſe words? God forbid that thy ſervants ſhould do according to this thing. 8. Behold the money which we found in our ſack's mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then ſhould we ſteal out of thy lord's houſe ſilver or gold? 9. With whom *ſoever* of thy ſervants it be found, *both* [a] let him die, and we alſo will be my lord's bond-men. 10. And he ſaid, Now alſo *let* it *be* according unto your words: he with whom it is found ſhall be my ſervant; and ye ſhall be blameleſs. 11. Then they ſpeedily took down every man his ſack to the ground, and opened every man his ſack. 12. And he ſearched, *and* began at the eldeſt, and left at the youngeſt: and the cup was found in Benjamin's ſack. 13. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his aſs, and returned to the city. 14. ¶ And Judah and his brethren came to Joſeph's houſe (for he *was* yet there) and they fell before him on the ground. 15. And Joſeph ſaid unto them, What deed *is* this that ye have done? wot ye not, that ſuch a man as I can certainly † divine? 16. And Judah ſaid, What ſhall we ſay unto my lord? what ſhall we ſpeak? or how ſhall we clear ourſelves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy ſervants: behold, we *are* my lord's ſervants, both we, and *he* alſo with whom the cup is found. 17. And he ſaid, God forbid that I ſhould do ſo: *but* the man in whoſe hand the cup is found, he ſhall be my ſervant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

† Heb. Him that *was* over his houſe.
† Or maketh trial?
[a] Chap. xxxi. 32.
† Or make trial?

v. 1—17. After their hoſpitable entertainment, their fears are over, their beaſts loaded, and home they are travelling, little ſuſpecting the danger which ſeems to threaten them. An expreſs arrives, charges them with a theft, as ungrateful as bare-faced; they deny it ſolemnly; ſearch is made, the cup is found on Benjamin, and he is arreſted; they dare not leave their brother, nor make any plea to excuſe him. They regard God's hand in the affliction, as juſt in puniſhing them for former ſins, and return, to yield themſelves up ſervants to Joſeph. Thus (1.) They moſt eminently fulfilled their own prediction, *Shalt thou have dominion over us?* They are not only ſuitors for favour, but bondſmen for life. (2.) They ſhewed that regard for Benjamin, and that concern for Jacob, which Joſeph wiſhed. *Note*, Though once bad, it may not be always ſo. God can change men's hearts, and make them the reverſe of what they have been.

18. ¶ Then Judah came near unto him, and ſaid, O
my lord, let thy ſervant, I pray thee, ſpeak a word in
my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn againſt thy
ſervant: for thou *art* even as Pharaoh. 19. My lord
aſked his ſervants, ſaying, Have ye a father, or a brother?
20. And we ſaid unto my lord, We have a father, an
old man, and a child of his old age, a little one: and
his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother,
and his father loveth him. 21. And thou ſaidſt unto
thy ſervants, [b] Bring him down unto me, that I may ſet
mine eyes upon him. 22. And we ſaid unto my lord,
The lad cannot leave his father; for if he ſhould leave
his father, *his father* would die. 23. And thou ſaidſt
unto thy ſervants, [c] Except your youngeſt brother come
down with you, you ſhall ſee my face no more. 24.
And it came to paſs, when we came up unto thy ſervant
my father, we told him the words of my lord. 25. And
[d] our father ſaid, Go again, *and* buy us a little food. 26.
And we ſaid, We cannot go down: if our youngeſt
brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may
not ſee the man's face, except our youngeſt brother *be*
with us. 27. And thy ſervant my father ſaid unto us,
Ye know that [e] my wife bare me two *ſons*. 28. And the
one went out from me, and I ſaid, [f] Surely he is torn in
pieces; and I ſaw him not ſince. 29. And if ye take
this alſo from me, and [g] miſchief befal him, ye ſhall
bring down my grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave. 30.
Now therefore when I come to thy ſervant my father,
and the lad *be* not with us; (ſeeing [h] that his life is bound
up in † the lad's life) 31. It ſhall come to paſs, when
he ſeeth that the lad *is* not *with us*, that he will die: and
thy ſervants ſhall bring down the grey hairs of thy ſervant
our father with ſorrow to the grave. 32. For thy
ſervant became ſurety for the lad unto my father, ſaying,
[i] If I bring him not unto thee, then I ſhall bare the blame
to my father for ever. 33. Now therefore, I pray thee,
let thy ſervant abide inſtead of the lad, a bondman to my
lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. 34. For
how ſhall I go up to my father, and the lad *be* not with
me? leſt peradventure I ſee the evil that ſhall † come on
my father.

[b] Chap. xlii. 15.
[c] Chap. xliii. 3, 5.
[d] Chap. xliii. 2.
[e] Chap. xlvi. 19.
[f] Chap. xxxvii. 33.
[g] Chap. xlii. 38.
[h] 1 Sam. xviii. 1.
† Heb. His.
[i] Chap. xliii. 9.
† Heb. Find my father.

v. 18—34. Bitter was the diſtreſs that now diſtracted their minds. What ſhall they ſay? To confeſs the charge, is to acknowledge guilt they did not believe; to deny it, were ſtill more dangerous, as a reflection on the governor's juſtice. In this dilemma, Judah, as moſt engaged, with rhetoric, ſuch as diſtreſs and nature taught, addreſſes with humbleſt ſubmiſſion, the ſuppoſed offended ruler; and pleads with arguments, that I doubt not, filled Joſeph's boſom with deeper agitation, than even Judah felt. Benjamin's youth, the only ſon of a beloved mother; another brother he had, but dead; the aged father's life is bound up in the darling boy; it was at his command he was brought with reluctance; extorted from his father: ſhould they return without him, death would inſtantly ſeize the good old man, and they be acceſſary to it: himſelf had become ſurety for the lad, and begs now to exchange; himſelf the bondman, if Benjamin might be free. The thought of his father's ſorrow recurs upon him; he can never think of ſeeing his face without the lad: thus caſts himſelf upon the mercy of the judge, and waits with terrible ſuſpenſe to receive that ſentence, on which the happineſs or miſery of Jacob's family depended. *Note*, (1.) Every good child will make his parent's comfort one great buſineſs of his life. (2.) When we addreſs a ruler, title and honour are his due. (3.) Lies may be told, as this of Joſeph's death, till the maker of them believes them true.

CHAP. XLV.

It is pity this chapter and that foregoing ſhould be parted. Here is, 1. *Joſeph's diſcovery of himſelf to his brethren, and his diſcourſe with them upon that occaſion*, ver. 1—15. 2. *The orders Pharaoh hereupon gave to fetch Jacob and his family down to Egypt, and Joſeph's diſpatch of his brethren accordingly to his father with thoſe orders*, ver. 16—24. 3. *The joyful tidings of this brought to Jacob*, ver. 25—28.

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1. THEN Joſeph could not refrain himſelf before
all them that ſtood by him; and he cried,
Cauſe every man to go out from me: and there ſtood
no man with him, while Joſeph made himſelf known
unto his brethren. 2. And he † wept aloud: and the
Egyptians and the houſe of Pharaoh heard. 3. And
Joſeph ſaid unto his brethren, [a] I *am* Joſeph; Doth my
father yet live? and his brethren could not anſwer him;
for they were ‡ troubled at his preſence. 4. And Joſeph
ſaid unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you;
and they came near; and he ſaid, I *am* Joſeph your brother,
[b] whom ye ſold into Egypt. 5. Now therefore be
not grieved ‖, nor angry with yourſelves, that ye ſold me
hither: for [c] God did ſend me before you, to preſerve
life. 6. For theſe two years *hath* the famine *been* in
the land: and yet *there are* five years in the which *there*
ſhall neither *be* earing nor harveſt. 7. And God ſent me
before you, † to preſerve you a poſterity in the earth, and
to ſave your lives by a great deliverance. 8. So now it
was not you *that* ſent me hither, but God: and he hath
made me [d] a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his houſe,
and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. 9. Haſte
you and go up to my father, and ſay unto him, Thus
ſaith thy ſon Joſeph, God hath made me lord of all
Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not. 10. And [e] thou
ſhalt dwell in the land of Goſhen, and thou ſhalt be
near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's
children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that
thou haſt. 11. And there will I nouriſh thee, (for yet
there are five years of famine) leſt thou and thy houſhold,
and all that thou haſt, come to poverty. 12. And behold,
your eyes ſee, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin,
that *it is* my mouth that ſpeaketh unto you. 13. And
you ſhall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of
all that you have ſeen; and ye ſhall haſte, and [f] bring
down my father hither. 14. And he fell upon his brother
Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept
upon his neck. 15. Moreover, he kiſſed all his brethren,
and wept upon them: and after that, his brethren talked
with him.

† Heb. Gave forth his voice in weeping.
[a] Acts vii. 13.
‡ Or terrified.
[b] Chap. xxxvii. 28.
‖ Heb. Neither let there be anger in your eyes.
[c] Chap. l. 20. Pſal. cv. 16, 17. See 2 Sam. xvi 10. Acts iv. 24.
† Heb. To put for you a remnant.
[d] Chap. xli. 45.
[e] Chap. xlvii. 1.
[f] Acts vii. 14.

v. 1—15. An addreſs ſo affecting, could not fail of moving any heart, not a ſtranger to the feelings of humanity; and how much more Joſeph's, ſo deeply intereſted in every argument, and pierced with every word of Judah's expreſſive anguiſh. The ſervants inſtantly diſmiſſed, a burſt of tears, no longer to be reſtrained, gives vent to the overflowing tenderneſs of his ſoul. His brethren, who ſtood in tremulous ſuſpenſe of inſtant doom, are aſtoniſhed at the ſight; and how, beyond all imagination ſurprized, when words begin to find a paſſage, and he cries, I am Joſeph—Is my father yet alive? Confounded, they are dumb; guilt troubles them: but oh! how far is Joſeph's heart from anger or revenge. He draws then near; comforts, inſtead of reflecting on them; bids them ſee God's hand bringing good out of their evil; and haſtens them to carry his dear and aged father the ſtrange tidings, and bring him down, to ſpend in plenty, in the land of Goſhen, the remaining years of famine. With mutual kiſſes and embraces, he ſeals the happy meeting, whilſt tears of joy bedew each others neck, and teſtify firm reconciliation. Reader, thy heart is unfeeling, if thy tears mingle not with theirs. *Note*, (1.) We have here a beautiful emblem of God's compaſſions towards the ſinful ſons of men. (2.) An aſtoniſhing diſplay of his providence! how glorious and how merciful the diſpenſation! Bleſſed are they that truſt in him. (3.) It is not only the duty, but ſhould be the delight of children to ſupport their parents in their old age. (4.) As Joſeph ſays, come down to me, Jeſus ſaith, come up to me; and Pharaoh's kingdom cannot provide ſuch a dwelling, as thoſe manſions he hath prepared for us, in our father's houſe in heaven.

16. ¶ And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's
houſe, ſaying, Joſeph's brethren are come: and it † pleaſed
Pharaoh well, and his ſervants. 17. And Pharoah
ſaid unto Joſeph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye;
lade your beaſts, and go, get you unto the land of
Canaan, 18. And take your father, and your houſeholds,
and come unto me: and I will give you the
good of the land of Egypt, and ye ſhall eat the [g] fat
of the land. 19. Now thou art commanded, this
do ye: take you waggons out of the land of Egypt

† Heb. Was good in the eyes of Pharaoh.
[g] Chap. xxvii. 28.

for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20. Alſo † regard not your ſtuff: for the good of all the land of Egypt *is* yours. 21. And the children of Iſrael did ſo; and Joſeph gave them waggons, according to the ‡ commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them proviſion for the way. 22. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment: but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of ſilver, and five changes of raiment. 23. And to his father he ſent after this *manner*; ten aſſes ‖ laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten ſhe-aſſes laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way. 24. So he ſent his brethren away, and they departed: and he ſaid unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

† Heb. Let not your eye ſpare, &c.
‡ Heb. Mouth.
‖ Heb. Carrying.

v. 16—24. We have here, 1. Joſeph in haſte to have his father with him; and Pharaoh well pleaſed with the event, orders his brethren all neceſſaries for their journey, and promiſes them the beſt of the land, ſo that they need not regard their ſtuff which they could not remove from Canaan; Egypt had enough for them. *Note*, Heaven is before us, the ſtuff of the world ſhould be little in our eyes; we ſhall there have enough and to ſpare.

2. Joſeph's diſmiſſion of them loaded with preſents, attended with carriages for their removal; to his father he ſends a particular cargo of the beſt things of the land, to comfort him by the way, and as an earneſt of the greater gifts he had in ſtore for him; and he adds one needful admonition, that they fall not out by the way. They might be apt, after what had paſſed, to upbraid one another for their wickedneſs: but as he had forgiven them, and was reconciled, they muſt forgive and love one another. *Note*, (1.) In our way to heaven, we ſhould carefully avoid diſputes; we are brethren. (2.) To forgive, becomes thoſe who are forgiven. (3.) We ſhall give the Egyptians, the men of this world, a bad opinion of our religion, if we quarrel among ourſelves.

25. ¶ And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, 26. And told him, ſaying, Joſeph *is* yet alive, and he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt. And † Jacob's heart fainted, for he [h] believed them not. 27. And they told him all the words of Joſeph, which he had ſaid unto them; and when he ſaw the waggons which Joſeph had ſent to carry him, the ſpirit of Jacob their father revived. 28. And Iſrael ſaid, *It is* enough; Joſeph my ſon *is* yet alive: I will go and ſee him before I die.

[h] Job xxix. 24. Pſal. cxxvi. 1. Luke xxiv. 41.
† Heb. His.

v. 25—28. With eager haſte, they fly to their father with this tranſporting meſſage, Joſeph is yet alive. Overcome with the tranſport, Jacob's heart faints, and trembling in hope, ſuſpects it too good news to be true. But when the evidence is undoubted, and the waggons come in view, his ſpirit revives, exultation and joy burſt from his aged heart, and ſince Joſeph is alive, it is enough; this is the ſummit of his worldly bliſs, he will go and ſee him before he dies. *Note*, (1.) The waggons of death are coming to remove us to Jeſus, let not our trembling hearts faint, but revive at their approach. (2.) A ſight of their gracious children is among the greateſt comforts an aged parent knows. (3.) To keep death in our view, is always uſeful; for old men, it is doubly needful; it cannot be long before they die.

CHAP. XLVI.

Jacob is here removing to Egypt in his old age, forced thither by a famine, and invited thither by a ſon. 1. *God ſends him thither*, ver. 1—4. 2. *All his family goes with him*, ver. 5—27. 3. *Joſeph bids him welcome*, ver. 28—34.

1. AND Iſrael took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-ſheba, and offered ſacrifices [a] unto the God of his father Iſaac. 2. And God ſpake unto Iſrael in the viſions of the night, and ſaid, Jacob, Jacob: And he ſaid, Here *am* I. 3. And he ſaid, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation. 4. I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will alſo ſurely bring thee up *again*: and [b] Joſeph ſhall put his hand upon thine eyes.

[a] Chap. xxvi. 24, 25. & xxviii. 10.
[b] Chap. l. 1.

v. 1—4. We have here Jacob removing, bag and baggage, to Egypt, with ſome ſingular events in the way.

1. His ſolemn ſacrifice offered at Beer-ſheba. It was a place where his fathers had enjoyed ſweet communion with God; and he hoped there to enjoy the preſence of the God of his fathers. With thankfulneſs, thus he acknowledges the paſt, and particularly his late mercies, and begged the continuance of his bleſſing on his removal. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not neglect to worſhip God on a journey: as we need then peculiarly his care, we have a new call to intreat his protection. (2.) Thanks for paſt mercies, are an earneſt of greater in ſtore for us.

2. God graciouſly meets him there. *Note*, If our communion with God be interrupted, we muſt lay it to the door of our ſloth and negligence. He calls him by his name, with the moſt gracious condeſcenſion, and ſpeaks to him in terms of heart-reviving confidence. He is his covenant God, and will take care of him. 1. He ſilences his fears. Many fears muſt needs attend ſuch a change: fear for himſelf, an old man, and little able to bear the journey; fear for his family, leaſt they ſhould be ſo well pleaſed with Egypt, as to forget Canaan; or remembring Abraham's viſion, fearing this land of plenty may become a houſe of bondage. But one word from God quiets all. *Note*, If God ſays, fear not, we may well be at reſt, whatever our difficulties are. 2. He encourages him with promiſes. His family ſhall increaſe, God's preſence ſhall be with him, and he will ſurely bring him back again, his bones ſhall lie in Canaan, his ſeed return to this land of their poſſeſſion, and Joſeph ſhall cloſe his dying eyes. *Note*, (1.) It is an unſpeakable comfort to a ſervant of Jeſus going down to the grave, to have his promiſes to preſerve him there, and bring him up from thence in a reſurrection day. (2.) It is pleaſing even in death, when filial piety is at hand, to pay the laſt kind office to the beloved departing parent. It is a wiſh as natural as innocent, *ille meos oculos comprimat*, Let him cloſe my dying eyes.

5. And [c] Jacob roſe up from Beer-ſheba: and the ſons of Iſrael carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the waggons which Pharaoh had ſent to carry him. 6. And they took their cattle and their goods which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, [d] Jacob, and all his ſeed with him. 7. His ſons, and his ſon's ſons with him, his daughters, and his ſon's daughters, and all his ſeed brought he with him into Egypt. 8. ¶ And [e] theſe *are* the names of the children of Iſrael, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his ſons: [f] Reuben, Jacob's firſt-born. 9. And the ſons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi. 10. ¶ And [g] the ſons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the ſon of a Canaanitiſh woman. 11. ¶ And the ſons of [h] Levi; Gerſhon, Kohath, and Merari. 12. ¶ And the ſons of [i] Judah; [k] Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zerah: but Er, and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And [l] the ſons of Pharez, were Hezron and Hamul. 13. ¶ And [m] the ſons of Iſſachar; Tola, and † Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron. 14. ¶ And the ſons of Zebulun, Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel. 15. Theſe *be* the ſons of Leah, which ſhe bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the ſouls of his ſons and his daughters, *were* thirty and three. 16. ¶ And the ſons of Gad; [n] Ziphion, and Haggai, Shuni, and † Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli. 17. ¶ And [o] the ſons of Aſher; Jimnah, and Iſhuah, and Iſui, and Beriah, and Serah their ſiſter: And the ſons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel. 18. [p] Theſe *are* the ſons of Zilpah, [q] whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter: and theſe ſhe bare unto Jacob, *even* ſixteen ſouls. 19. The ſons of Rachel [r] Jacob's wife; Joſeph, and Benjamin. 20. And unto Joſeph in the land of Egypt were born Manaſſeh and Ephraim, [s] which Aſenath the daughter of Poti-pherah † prieſt of On bare unto him. 21. ¶ And [t] the ſons of Benjamin *were* Belah, and Becher, and Aſhbel, Gerah, and Naaman, [u] Ehi, and Roſh, [x] Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard. 22. Theſe *are* the ſons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the ſouls *were* fourteen. 23. ¶ And [y] the ſons of Dan; † Huſhim. 24. ¶ And [z] the ſons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem. 25. [a] Theſe *are* the ſons of Bilhah, [b] which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and ſhe bare theſe unto Jacob: all the ſouls *were* ſeven. 26. [c] All the ſouls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his ‡ loins, beſides Jacob's ſon's wives, all the ſouls *were* threeſcore and ſix; 27. And the ſons of Joſeph which were born him in Egypt, *were* two ſouls: [d] all the ſouls of the houſe of Jacob, which came into Egypt, *were* threeſcore and ten.

[c] Acts vii. 15.
[d] Joſh. xxiv. 4. Pſal. cv. 23. Iſa. lii. 4.
[e] Exod. i. 1. & vi. 14.
[f] Numb. xxvi. 5. 1 Chron. v. 1.
[g] Exod. vi. 15. 1 Chron. iv. 24.
[h] 1 Chron. vi. 1, 16.
[i] 1 Chron. ii. 3. & iv. 21.
[k] Chap. xxxviii. 3, 7, 10, 29, 30.
[l] 1 Chron. ii. 5.
[m] 1 Chron. vii. 1.
† Or Puah and Jaſhub.
[n] Numb. xxvi. 15.
† Or Ozni.
[o] 1 Chron. vii. 30.
[p] Chap. xxx. 10.
[q] Chap. xxix. 24.
[r] Chap. xliv. 27.
[s] Chap. xli. 50.
† Or prince.
[t] 1 Chron. vii. 6. & viii. 1.
[u] Numb. xxvi. 38, 39. Ahiram.
[x] Numb. xxvi. 39. Shupham. 1 Chron. vii. 12. Shuppim.
[y] 1 Chron. vii. 12.
† Or Shuham. Numb. xxvi. 42.
[z] 1 Chron. vii. 13.
[a] Chap. xxx. 5.
[b] Chap. xxix. 29.
[c] Exod. i. 5.
‡ Heb. Thigh.
[d] Deut. x. 22. See Acts vii. 4.

v. 5—27.

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v. 5—27. Jacob and his family proceed on their journey. They amount to ſixty-ſix, beſides himſelf, his ſon Joſeph, and his children Ephraim and Manaſſeh, which make up ſeventy: a ſmall increaſe conſidering the promiſe, during the ſpace of 215 years, but now they quickly become a great multitude. *Note,* After we have met God, and obtained his bleſſing, we may well go on our way rejoicing.

28. ¶ And he ſent Judah before him unto Joſeph, to direct his face unto Goſhen; and they came into the land of Goſhen. 29. And Joſeph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Iſrael his father, to Goſhen; and preſented himſelf unto him: and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. 30. And Iſrael ſaid unto Joſeph, [e] Now let me die, ſince I have ſeen thy face, becauſe thou *art* yet alive. 31. And Joſeph ſaid unto his brethren, and unto his father's houſe, I will go up, and ſhew Pharaoh, and ſay unto him, My brethren, and my father's houſe, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me: 32. And the men *are* ſhepherds, for † their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks and their herds, and all that they have. 33. And it ſhall come to paſs when Pharaoh ſhall call you, and [f] ſhall ſay, What *is* your occupation? 34. That ye ſhall ſay, Thy ſervant's trade hath been about cattle, from our youth even until now, both we *and* alſo our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goſhen; for every ſhepherd [g] *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians.

[e] Luke ii. 29.

† Heb. They are men of cattle.

[f] Chap. xlvii. 2, 3.

[g] Chap. xliii. 32. Exod. viii. 26.

28—34. We have here, 1. The happy meeting of Jacob and Joſeph. Judah having informed him of his father's arrival, Joſeph's chariot is made ready, and he goes to meet him. *Note,* When a man's ſtation entitles him to it, a fine equipage is as innocent for him, as a waggon for his inferior. Joſeph's filial reverence and love equal Jacob's exultation: they embrace, and weep for joy, whilſt now the aged Patriarch thinks he hath lived enough, ſince he hath ſeen this happy day, and is content to die. *Note,* (1.) However the ſon may be advanced, it is his duty to reverence his parents, and not to grow above his own houſe. (2.) No joys here are without allay: when we embrace in heaven, the joy being perfect, every tear will be wiped from our eyes. (3.) That is a happy man, who can ſay with comfort, When God pleaſes, let me die.

2. His inſtructions how to behave before Pharaoh. He wiſhed them to ſettle near Canaan, becauſe they muſt return thither again; he deſires not to introduce them at court, leaſt they be infected with the idols of Egypt, or expoſed to the envy of the natives: beſides that he would keep them united in a family, and employed in their own profeſſion. Goſhen, in all reſpects, ſuited this deſign; and as the Egyptians hated ſhepherds, he bids them profeſs their occupation, that the land of Goſhen might more readily be allotted them. *Note,* (1.) High places are ſlippery; we ſhould rather keep at diſtance from advancement, than court it. (2.) An honeſt calling is no diſparagement to ourſelves or relations.

CHAP. XLVII.

In this chapter we have inſtances, 1. *Of Joſeph's kindneſs and affection to his relations, preſenting his brethren firſt, and then his father to Pharaoh,* ver. 1—10. *ſettling them in Goſhen, and providing for them there,* ver. 11, 12. *paying his reſpects to his father when he ſent for him,* ver. 27—31. 2. *Of Joſeph's juſtice between prince and people,* ver. 13—26.

1. THEN Joſeph came and told Pharaoh, and ſaid, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and behold, they *are* in [a] the land of Goſhen. 2. And he took ſome of his brethren, *even* five men, and preſented them unto Pharaoh. 3. And Pharaoh ſaid unto his brethren, What *is* your occupation? And they ſaid unto Pharaoh, [b] Thy ſervants *are* ſhepherds, both we *and* alſo our fathers. 4. They ſaid moreover unto Pharaoh, For to ſojourn in the land are we come: for thy ſervants have no paſture for their flocks, for the famine *is* ſore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy ſervants dwell in the land of Goſhen. 5. And Pharaoh ſpake unto Joſeph, ſaying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee. 6. The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the beſt of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell, in the land of Goſhen let them dwell: and if thou knoweſt any man of activity amongſt them, then make them rulers over my cattle. 7. And Joſeph brought in Jacob his father, and ſet him before Pharaoh; and Jacob bleſſed Pharaoh. 8. And Pharaoh ſaid unto Jacob, † How old *art* thou? 9. And Jacob ſaid unto Pharaoh, [c] The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. 10. And Jacob bleſſed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

[a] Chap. xlv. 10.

[b] Chap. xlvi. 34.

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† Heb. How many *are* the days of the years of thy life?

[c] Hebr. xi. 9, 13.

v. 1—10. Jacob's family being arrived, Joſeph acquaints Pharaoh. Whereupon,

1. We have their introduction to Pharaoh. Joſeph was not like many a great man now-a-days, aſhamed of his poor relations; he calls them brethren, and preſents them at court. *Note,* Chriſt is not aſhamed of the meaneſt of his brethren, nor will refuſe to preſent them before the throne of God, with exceeding great joy.

2. Pharaoh's kind reception of them. He enquires their occupation; and having received their anſwer, and heard the deſign of their coming, he appoints them the land of Goſhen for their flocks, and bids Joſeph prefer any man among them who was active over the royal herds. *Note,* (1.) For our Jeſus ſake, we ſhall find favour in the preſence of the heavenly king. (2.) Every member of the commonwealth, muſt by his occupation contribute to its welfare: no idle vagrants, no drones ſhould live in the hive. (3.) Activity and ingenuity in our profeſſion, is the way to preferment in it.

3. The particular regard paid to old Jacob. Pharaoh kindly enquires after his age, for hoary locks engage reſpect. Jacob replies, *v.* 9. with the ſubmiſſion of an inferior, and with the piety of a patriarch bleſſes Pharaoh. *Note,* (1.) Every Chriſtian counts life his pilgrimage. (2.) The longeſt age is but a few days compared with eternity, and the happieſt life full of evil, to which man now is born, as the ſparks fly upward. (3.) That our days are conſiderably ſhortned; they are now, compared with thoſe of old, but a ſpan long. (4.) An old man's benediction is to be regarded; and the prayers of aged miniſters and ſaints much to be valued.

11. ¶ And Joſeph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a poſſeſſion in the land of Egypt, in the beſt of the land, [d] in the land of Rameſes, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12. And Joſeph nouriſhed his father and his brethren, and all his father's houſhold with bread, ‡ ‖ according to *their* families.

[d] Exod. i. 11. & xii. 37.

‡ Or as a little child that is nouriſhed.

‖ Heb. According to the little ones.

v. 11—12. By Joſeph's care, they are ſettled in the beſt of the land, and ſupplied abundantly with every neceſſary. Bleſſed be God for that better Jeſus, who ſatisfies the ſouls of his people with plenteouſneſs.

13. ¶ And *there was* no bread in the land: for the famine *was* very ſore, ſo that the land of Egypt and *all* the land of Canaan fainted by reaſon of the famine. 14. And Joſeph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joſeph brought the money into Pharaoh's houſe. 15. And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joſeph, and ſaid, Give us bread: for why ſhould we die in thy preſence? for the money faileth. 16. And Joſeph ſaid, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. 17. And they brought their cattle unto Joſeph: And Joſeph gave them bread *in exchange* for horſes, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the aſſes; and he † fed them with bread, for all their cattle, for that year. 18. When that year was ended, they came unto him the ſecond year, and ſaid unto him, We will not hide *it* from my lord, how that our money is ſpent, my lord alſo hath our herds of cattle: there is not ought left in the ſight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands. 19. Wherefore ſhall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be ſervants unto Pharaoh: and give *us* ſeed that we may live and not die, that the land be not deſolate. 20. And Joſeph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians ſold every man his field, becauſe the famine prevailed over them: ſo the land became Pharaoh's. 21. And as for the people, he removed them to cities from *one* end of the borders of Egypt, even to the *other* end thereof. 22. [e] Only the land of the †

priests

1702.

† Heb. Led them.

1701.

[e] Ezra vii. 24.

† Or princes,

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prieſts bought he not: for the prieſts had a portion *aſſigned them* of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they ſold not their lands. 23. Then Joſeph ſaid unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day, and your land for Pharaoh: lo *here is* ſeed for you, and ye ſhall ſow the land. 24. And it ſhall come to paſs in the increaſe, that you ſhall give the fifth *part* unto Pharaoh, and four parts ſhall be your own for ſeed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your houſholds, and for food for your little ones. 25. And they ſaid, Thou haſt ſaved our lives: let us find grace in the ſight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's ſervants. 26. And Joſeph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, *that* Pharaoh ſhould have the fifth *part*; except the land of the † prieſts only, *which* became not Pharaoh's.

† Or princes.

v. 13—16. Buſineſs muſt interrupt the pleaſing intercourſe of friends: now Jacob is ſettled, Joſeph returns to his employment. The famine was ſevere; the years of plenty had been neglected by the improvident people, and now they are ready to die for want: their money, their ſtock, their land, are firſt parted with; and rather than periſh, they offer themſelves for meat: better live ſervants, they thought, than die of famine. Joſeph here diſplayed his prudence and goodneſs; he makes a compromiſe with them, as advantageous to his maſter as to the people: he removes them as a mark of his right, but gives them lands and corn to ſow, on condition of paying a fifth to Pharaoh and his ſucceſſors for ever. The prieſts lands only are excepted, and preſerved to them entire. Learn, (1.) How ſuddenly all our worldly comforts may leave us. If God with-holds but the dew of heaven from us, all we poſſeſs could not keep us from ſtarving. (2.) Behold in Joſeph the character of a wiſe and honeſt miniſter, ſupporting the prerogative of the king, whilſt he maintained the liberty and property of the ſubject. (3.) To defraud the prieſthood, or render it deſpicable by want, was regarded even by the heathens as impious. Let thoſe remember, who poſſeſs the revenues of churches, where the miniſter ſcarce eats bread from the altar which he ſerves, and they who pay a ſcandalous pittance for the ſervice, whilſt themſelves live on the fleeces of the ſheep they never feed, that even the Egyptian Pharaoh ſhall riſe up in judgment to condemn them.

27. ¶ And Iſrael dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goſhen; and they had poſſeſſions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly. 28. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt ſeventeen years: ſo † the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and ſeven years. 29. And the time drew nigh that Iſrael muſt die: and he called his ſon Joſeph, and ſaid unto him, If now I have found grace in thy ſight, [f] put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; [g] bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt. 30. But I will lie with my fathers, and thou ſhalt carry me out of Egypt, and [h] bury me in their burying-place. And he ſaid, I will do as thou haſt ſaid. 31. And he ſaid, Swear unto me: And he ſware unto him. And [i] Iſrael bowed himſelf upon the bed's-head.

1689.

† Heb. The days of the years of his life.

[f] Chap. xxiv. 2.

[g] Chap. l. 25.

[h] Chap. xlix. 29.

[i] Chap. xlviii. 2. 1 Kings i. 47. Hebr. xi. 21.

v. 27—31. Whilſt others pined with want, Jacob and his family lived in plenty. His old age paſſed on as peaceful and ſerene, as his former days had been tempeſtuous. *Note*, It is a peculiar bleſſing to age, to have eaſe and reſt, becauſe it is moſt unfit for toil and labour. And now the time was come when Iſrael muſt die, this is the certain end of the longeſt life: happy they who ſee the approaches of death, and prepare for it accordingly. One great concern now engaged the patriarch's heart, and that was the diſpoſal of his corpſe. He deſires to lie in the land of promiſe, as a confirmation to his poſterity of their poſſeſſion of it, and as a token of his own hope in that better reſt which remained for the people of God. Joſeph at his deſire therefore viſits him, and ſwears to fulfil this his dying command; then Iſrael is ſatisfied, and bows in acknowledgment of the mercy. *Note*, When we can with confidence truſt the divine promiſe, and reſt on the divine oath, we ſhall with pleaſure ſay, Now let thy ſervant depart in peace.

CHAP. XLVIII.

In this chapter dying Iſrael takes leave of his grand-children by Joſeph. 1. *Joſeph hearing of his father's ſickneſs, goes to viſit him, and takes his two ſons with him,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Jacob ſolemnly adopts them,* ver. 3—7. 3. *He bleſſeth them,* ver. 8—16. 4. *He explains and juſtifies the croſſing of his hands in bleſſing them,* ver. 17—20. 5. *He leaves a particular legacy to Joſeph,* ver. 21, 22.

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1. AND it came to paſs after theſe things, that *one* told Joſeph, Behold, thy father *is* ſick; and he took with him his two ſons, Manaſſeh and Ephraim. 2. And *one* told Jacob, and ſaid, Behold, thy ſon Joſeph cometh unto thee: and Iſrael ſtrengthned himſelf, and ſat upon the bed. 3. And Jacob ſaid unto Joſeph, God Almighty appeared unto me at [a] Luz in the land of Canaan, and bleſſed me, 4. And ſaid unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and will give this land to thy ſeed after thee, *for* an everlaſting poſſeſſion. 5. ¶ And now [b] thy two ſons, Ephraim and Manaſſeh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, *are* mine: as Reuben and Simeon, they ſhall be mine. 6. And thy iſſue which thou begetteſt after them, ſhall be thine, *and* ſhall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance. 7. And as for me, when I came from Padan, [c] Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, in the way, when yet *there was* but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath, the ſame *is* Beth-lehem.

[a] Chap. xxviii. 13. & xxxv. 6.

[b] Chap. xli. 50. & xlvi. 20. Joſh. xiii. 7. & xiv. 4.

[c] Chap. xxxv. 19.

v. 1—7. Joſeph no ſooner hears of Jacob's illneſs, than he ſets out to viſit him, with his two ſons; and he hoped his children might receive inſtruction that would be the more affecting and abiding, as from the dying lips of the holy patriarch. *Note*, As it is our duty to viſit the ſick, ſo it is a peculiar mercy to be preſent at the departure of dying ſaints; as it is fabled of the dying ſwan, they often then ſing ſweeteſt, and leave behind them a deep remembrance of their words. We have here,

1. Jacob's reception of Joſeph and his children: he made his laſt effort to ariſe and welcome him; his ſons are introduced to him, and he ſolemnly adopts them as his own: they ſhall, as the heads of two tribes, ſhare with his other ſons; and leaſt the glare of the world's pomp might ſeem to make the favour deſpicable, he recites the promiſe God had made him, to encourage them, notwithſtanding preſent appearances, to prefer the hope of Iſrael to the honours of Egypt. *Note*, They who, with dependance on God's promiſes, renounce the world, to ſuffer reproach and affliction with the people of God, will find in the end, the wiſdom of their choice. If Joſeph hath other ſons, they are to fall into their brethren's lot. *Note*, We cannot be too exact in our wills, to prevent diſputes when we are dead.

2. His mention of Joſeph's beloved mother. True lovers never forget: it is Jacob's comfort now, he ſhall meet her in glory, whom he loſt in Canaan.

8. And Iſrael beheld Joſeph's ſons, and ſaid, Who *are* theſe? 9. And Joſeph ſaid unto his father, They *are* my ſons, whom God hath given me in this *place*: And he ſaid, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bleſs them. 10. (Now [d] the eyes of Iſrael were † dim for age, *ſo that* he could not ſee:) And he brought them near unto him; and he kiſſed them, and embraced them. 11. And Iſrael ſaid unto Joſeph, I had not thought to ſee thy face: and lo, God hath ſhewed me alſo thy ſeed. 12. And Joſeph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himſelf with his face to the earth. 13. And Joſeph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand towards Iſrael's left-hand, and Manaſſeh in his left hand towards Iſrael's right-hand, and brought *them* near unto him. 14. And Iſrael ſtretched out his right-hand, and laid *it* upon Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left-hand upon Manaſſeh's head: guiding his hands wittingly; for Manaſſeh *was* the firſt-born. 15. ¶ And [e] he bleſſed Joſeph, and ſaid, God, [f] before whom my fathers Abraham and Iſaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, 16. The angel [g] which redeemed me from all evil, bleſs the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Iſaac, and let them † grow into a multitude in the midſt of the earth. 17. And when Joſeph ſaw that his father laid his right-hand upon the head of Ephraim, it diſpleaſed him: and he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manaſſeh's head. 18. And Joſeph ſaid unto his father, Not ſo, my father: for this *is* the firſt-born; put thy right-hand upon his head. 19. And his father refuſed, and ſaid, I know *it*, my ſon, I know *it*; he alſo ſhall become a people, and he alſo ſhall be great, but truly his [h] younger brother ſhall be greater than he, and his

[d] Chap. xxvii. 1. † Heb. Heavy.

[e] Hebr. xi. 21.

[f] Chap. xvii. 1. & xxiv. 40.

[g] Chap. xxviii. 15. & xxxi. 11, 13. † Heb. As fiſhes do increaſe. See Numb. xxvi. 34, 37.

[h] Numb. i. 33, 35. & ii. 19, 21. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Rev. vii. 6, 8.

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ſeed ſhall become a † multitude of nations. 20. And he bleſſed them that day, ſaying, [i] In thee ſhall Iſrael bleſs, ſaying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manaſſeh: and he ſet Ephraim before Manaſſeh. 21. And Iſrael ſaid unto Joſeph, Behold, I die; but God ſhall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. 22. Moreover, [k] I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of [l] the Amorite with my ſword and with my bow.

† Heb. Fulneſs.
[i] Ruth iv. 11, 12.
[k] Joſh. xxiv. 32. John iv. 5.
[l] Chap. xv. 16. & xxxiv. 22.

8—22. The good old Iſrael was ſinking faſt under the infirmities of age, the eyes of his body were dim, but the eyes of his faith bright and piercing. The ſons of Joſeph are brought near to him, and they are embraced with tendereſt affection, and deep acknowledgment of God's goodneſs, *v.* 11. *Note*, God often exceeds all his people's hopes, and therefore deſerves all their praiſes. We have here,

1. The bleſſing pronounced upon them. That God, whoſe tender mercies he and his fathers had experienced, who had delivered them out of every affliction, and before whom they had walked, ſhould bleſs the lads, and make them, according to the covenant of promiſe, a great people. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us to bear teſtimony for God in a dying hour, for the encouragement of others, as well as to teſtify our thankful acknowledgment to him. (2.) They who are redeemed from the evil of ſin, have no evil to fear in death. (3.) If we deſire the bleſſing of our pious parents upon us, we muſt be careful to follow their ſteps.

2. The croſſing of Jacob's hands. Joſeph would have the right hand on the eldeſt, but ſuch was not the order of bleſſing, Ephraim ſhall excel Manaſſeh in greatneſs. *Note*, (1.) In providence and grace, God beſtows according to the purpoſes of his own will. As we have no right to any of his gifts, he may ſurely do what he will with his own. (2.) Though God may invert the order of birthright, we may not.

3. The comfortable parting with Joſeph. He left him in confidence of God's care, and with a peculiar legacy, a parcel of land, which firſt by purchaſe, and afterwards by conqueſt, he took from the Amorite, and Ephraim afterwards enjoyed it, over and above his allotted portion. *Note*, (1.) When creature-comforts fail, ſtill God is with us; and though the deſire of our eyes by death is taken from us, we are encouraged to hope we ſhall ſhortly go to them, to this land of our fathers, though they cannot return to us. (2.) Every father may make diſtinctions in the portions of their children; peculiar deſert ſhould have peculiar reward.

CHAP. XLIX.

Jacob is here upon his death-bed, making his will: he ſpake as the ſpirit gave him utterance, who choſe this time that divine ſtrength might be perfected in his weakneſs. Here is, 1. *The preface*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The prediction concerning each tribe*, ver. 3—28. 3. *The charge repeated concerning his burial*, ver. 29—32. 4. *His death*, ver. 33.

1. AND Jacob called unto his ſons, and ſaid, Gather yourſelves together, that I may tell you *that* which ſhall befal you [a] in the laſt days. 2. Gather yourſelves together, and hear, ye ſons of Jacob; and hearken unto Iſrael your father. 3. ¶ Reuben, thou *art* [b] my firſt-born, my might, and [c] the beginning of my ſtrength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. 4. Unſtable as water, † [d] thou ſhalt not excel, becauſe thou [e] wenteſt up to thy father's bed, then defiledſt thou *it*; ‡ he went up to my couch.

[a] Deut. iv. 30. Numb. xxiv. 14. Iſa. ii. 2. & xxxviii. 8, 16. Jer. xxiii. 20. Dan. ii. 29. Acts ii. 17. Hebr. i. 2.
[b] Chap. xxix. 32.
[c] Deut. xxi. 17. Pſal. lxxviii. 51.
† Heb. Do not thou excel.
[d] 1 Chron. v. 1.
[e] Chap. xxxv. 22. 1 Chron. v. 1.
‡ Or my couch is gone.

v. 1—4. The dying patriarch aſſembles his ſons, to inform them concerning their poſterity. They come at his command, and he enjoins them ſolemn attention, as to matters in which they were highly intereſted. *Note*, (1.) The words of dying parents ſhould deeply affect their children, and be long remembered by them. (2.) Tho' we cannot prophecy with Jacob: we can from God's word, admoniſh men of what will be the final iſſue of their conduct in this world. They who do good, ſhall go into life everlaſting; and they who do evil, into everlaſting fire. Reuben, as firſt-born, is called; his birthright, his excellence, and ſuperiority, are mentioned, but he is ſolemnly degraded into the loweſt place: no judge, prince, or prophet ſprings from that tribe: his crime is remembred to his confuſion, and his unſtable temper marked with indelible reproach. *Note*, Though ſin may be forgiven of God, groſs acts of lewdneſs leave a brand that is never forgotten among men.

5. ¶ [f] Simeon and Levi *are* brethren: † [g] inſtruments of cruelty *are in* their habitations. 6. O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret; unto their aſſembly, [h] mine honour, be not thou united: for [i] in their anger they ſlew a man, and in their ſelf-will they ‡ digged down a wall. 7. Curſed *be* their anger for *it was* fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: [k] I will divide them in Jacob, and ſcatter them in Iſrael.

[f] Chap. xxix. 33, 34.
† Or their ſwords are weapons of violence.
[g] Chap. xxvii. 3.
[h] Pſal. xvi. 19.
[i] Chap. xxxiv. 25.
‡ Or houghed oxen.
[k] Joſh. xix. 1. & xxi. 5, 6, 7. 1 Chron. iv. 24, 39.

v. 5—7. Simeon and Levi have ſtill a ſeverer judgment pronounced on them. They were men of a bloody mind, utterly unlike their peaceable father: and the murder of the Shechemites through a proſperous wickedneſs, meets now its recompence: ſince they will not be reſtrained by their father's advice, they ſhall lie under his curſe. With abhorrence of their deeds, he profeſſes his innocence, and brands their cruel wrath with deepeſt deteſtation: though by Providence preſerved from being ſcattered by the inraged Canaanites, yet God will viſit them, and ſcatter them among the tribes. Simeon's lot was diſperſed, and his poſterity made no figure; whilſt Levi had no portion with his brethren, God having fixed the ſacerdotal office in that family, and ſcattered them through all the tribes. *Note*, (1.) The beſt fathers cannot frequently reſtrain their children from vile deeds. (2.) The greateſt diſſimilarity of children from their parents, is obſervable; the meekeſt man has often a moſt paſſionate child. (3.) Though wickedneſs ſeems to ſucceed for a time, we may be aſſured the curſe is coming. (4.) We muſt diſclaim all fellowſhip with wicked men, and their deeds. (5.) As all anger is murder, God will reckon it as ſuch, in the judgment day, *Mat.* v. 22.

8. ¶ [l] Judah, thou *art he* whom thy brethren ſhall praiſe; [m] thy hand *ſhall be* in the neck of thine enemies: [n] thy father's children ſhall bow down before thee. 9. Judah *is* a lion's whelp; from the prey, my ſon, thou art gone up: [o] he ſtooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who ſhall rouſe him up? 10. [p] The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor [q] a law-giver from between his feet, [r] until Shiloh come, and [s] unto him *ſhall* the gathering of the people *be*. 11. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his aſſes colt unto the choice vine; he waſhed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. 12. His [t] eyes *ſhall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

[l] Chap. xxix. 35.
[m] Pſal. xviii. 40.
[n] 1 Chron. v. 2.
[o] Numb. xxiii. 24. & xxiv. 9.
[p] Numb. xxiv. 17. Jer. xxx. 21. Zech. x. 11.
[q] Pſal. lx. 7. & cviii. 8. or Numb. xxi. 8.
[r] Ezek. xxi. 27. Luke i. 32.
[s] Iſa. xlii. 4. Hag. ii. 7.
[t] Prov. xxiii. 29.

v. 8—12. Judah inherits the birth-right of Reuben: his brethren ſhall praiſe him; victorious over his enemies, and chief among the tribes, valiant as a young lion to ſeize his prey, and ſtrong as an old lion to preſerve it: his land ſo plenteous, that vines ſhould be common as the thorn in the hedge, and their produce ſo abundant, that wine ſhould be plenty as water, and milk in equal abundance. Above all, the ſcepter ſhall be in his family; nor, which was the greateſt of bleſſings, depart from him, till the Meſſiah ſhould come: all which we ſhall ſee exactly fulfilled. *Note*, In a more glorious ſenſe, Jeſus is this lion of the tribe of Judah, head over all, to whom his enemies muſt bow, and whom his ſaints adore. He is the law-giver; to him will the gathering of the people be; and in him are the rivers of wine and milk, every goſpel bleſſing, richly and freely diſperſed without money and without price.

13. ¶ [u] Zebulun ſhall dwell at the haven of the ſea: and he *ſhall be* for an haven of ſhips; and his border *ſhall be* unto Zidon. 14. ¶ Iſſachar *is* a ſtrong aſs, couching down between two burdens. 15. And he ſaw that reſt *was* good, and the land, that *it was* pleaſant; and bowed [x] his ſhoulder to bear, and became a ſervant unto tribute. 16. ¶ [y] Dan ſhall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Iſrael. 17. [z] Dan ſhall be a ſerpent by the way, † an adder in the path; that biteth the horſe-heels, ſo that his rider ſhall fall backward. 18. [a] I have waited for thy ſalvation, O LORD. 19. ¶ [b] Gad, a troop ſhall overcome him: but he ſhall overcome at the laſt. 20. ¶ [c] Out of Aſher his bread *ſhall be* fat, and he ſhall yield royal dainties. 21. ¶ [d] Naphtali *is* a hind let looſe: he giveth goodly words.

[u] Deut. xxxiii. 18. Joſh. xix. 10, 11.
[x] 1 Sam, x. 9.
[y] Deut. xxxiii. 22.
[z] Judg. xviii. 27.
† Heb. An arrow-ſnake.
[a] Pſal. cxix. 166. Iſa. xxv. 9.
[b] Deut. xxxiii. 20. 1 Chron. v. 18.
[c] Deut. xxxiii. 24. Joſh. xix. 24.
[d] Deut. xxxiii. 23.

v. 13—21. A variety of mercies are allotted the ſeveral fathers, and each fulfilled in its time to the children.

1. Zebulun's lot was at the ſea, and Zidon being a famous mart, his tribe were the chief mariners.

2. Iſſachar's lot was tillage; and being rich with corn, was taxed high. *Note*, The huſbandman need not grudge to pay thoſe for his reſt at home, who fight for him abroad.

3. Dan was famed for policy; from him aroſe Sampſon, in whoſe deſtruction of the Philiſtines, living and dying, this prophecy was eminently fulfilled.

4. Jacob pauſes to make a warm ejaculation; with prophetic light, he ſees the predictions, as if already fulfilled, and his waiting ſoul now chearfully is yielded up to God. *Note*, They

who wait for God's ſalvation, ſhall never be diſappointed: they will by faith, enjoy it in time, and be put in full poſſeſſion of it in eternity.

5. Gad was often, by his ſituation, expoſed to the inroads of his neighbours, the Moabites and Ammonites, but in the reign of David, they were wholly ſubdued. *Note*, Let us not deſpair, though the troops of our corruptions ſometimes overcome us, we ſhall be more than conquerors in the end.

6. Aſher is a tribe of plenty; not only fulneſs of bread, but abundance of dainties. *Note*, Dainties are God's gifts, and therefore not to be refuſed: a king, or a great man, may as lawfully enjoy the delicacies of food, as the poor eat bread.

7. Naphtali's lot is rich in paſture, and the tempers of the people, ſweet and affable. *Note*, There are a variety of natural diſpoſitions, and theſe, like the ſeveral parts of the body, compoſe a more beautiful figure. Let every man improve his own gift, and neither envy nor deſpiſe thoſe who differ from him.

22. ¶ Joſeph *is* a fruitful bough; *even* a fruitful bough by a well; *whoſe* † branches run over the wall. 23. The archers have ſorely grieved him, and ſhot *at him*, and hated him. 24. But his [e] bow abode in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands were made ſtrong, by the hands of [f] the mighty *God* of Jacob: from thence *is* [g] the ſhepherd, [h] the ſtone of Iſrael. 25. [i] *Even* by the God of thy father, who ſhall help thee, and [k] by the Almighty, [l] who ſhall bleſs thee with bleſſings of heaven above, bleſſings of the deep that lieth under, bleſſings of the breaſts, and of the womb. 26. The bleſſings of thy father have prevailed [m] above the bleſſings of my progenitors, unto the utmoſt bound of the everlaſting hills; they ſhall be on the head of Joſeph, and [n] on the crown of the head of him that was ſeparate from his brethren. 27. ¶ Benjamin ſhall raven *as* a wolf: [o] in the morning he ſhall devour the prey, and [p] at night he ſhall divide the ſpoil.

† Heb. Daughters.
[e] Job. xxix. 20.
[f] Pſal. cxxxii. 2.
[g] Pſal. lxxx. 1.
[h] Iſa. xxviii. 16.
[i] Chap. xxviii. 13. & xxxv. 11.
[k] Chap. xvii. 1.
[l] Deut. xxxiii. 13.
[m] Deut. xxxiii. 15. Hab. iii. 6.
[n] Deut. xxxiii. 16.
[o] Judg. i. 8, 21.
[p] Numb. xxiii. 24. Ezek. xxxix. 10. Zech. xiv. 1, 7.

v. 22—27. Joſeph being the beloved child, comes in for a peculiar bleſſing. His ſons are theſe branches of the ſpreading tree. Though ſore afflictions had been his lot, ſeverely treated by his brethren, and more ſeverely tempted by his miſtreſs; (what fiery darts ſo ſharp!) yet firm he ſtood, unmoved, unſhaken; nor is it ſtrange, when the everlaſting arms are under him. *Note*, If Chriſt ſtrengthen us, none ſhall pluck us out of his hands. Joſeph is Jacob's ſhepherd, to feed him in the time of dearth, and the ſupport of his ſinking family, and his reward ſhall be accordingly. God, his father's God, ſhall make his ſeed victorious, the beſt of bleſſings ſhall deſcend upon him, and greater than thoſe of his progenitors, in the immediate vaſt increaſe of his poſterity, and all thoſe bleſſings ſhould be enduring as the mountains. Thus, though ſeparated from and hated of his brethren, a crown of excellence is beſtowed upon him. *Note*, On the ſpiritual ſeed of Jeſus, the hated of his brethren, ſhall be theſe bleſſings of heaven above. They ſhall be fed with breaſts of preſent conſolations, and have their manſion on thoſe mountains which are truly everlaſting, ſeparated from the world which lieth in wickedneſs, and bleſt with the tranſcendantly glorious favour of Jacob's God. My ſoul, may this bleſſing be thine, and then every preſent trial will be light, every ſuffering joyous.

2. Benjamin ſhall be a warlike tribe; and eminently it was fulfilled in him. He ravened among his foes, and once among his friends, *Jud.* xx. 14. till they roſe up as one man againſt him, almoſt to his utter extirpation.

28. ¶ All theſe *are* the twelve tribes of Iſrael: and this *is it* that their father ſpake unto them, and bleſſed them; every one according to his bleſſing he bleſſed them. 29. And he charged them, and ſaid unto them, I am to be [q] gathered unto my people: [r] bury me with my fathers, in [s] the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite. 30. In the cave that *is* in the field of Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, [t] which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a poſſeſſion of a burying-place. 31. ([u] There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, [x] there they buried Iſaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah.) 32. The purchaſe of the field, and of the cave that *is* therein, *was* from the children of Heth. 33. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his ſons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghoſt, and was gathered unto his people.

[q] Chap. xv. 15. & xxv. 9.
[r] Chap. xlvii. 30.
[s] Chap. l. 13.
[t] Chap. xxiii. 16.
[u] Chap. xxiii. 19. & xxv. 9.
[x] Chap. xxxv. 30.

v. 28—33. Thus the prophetic bleſſings end: each has ſomething: thoſe who are corrected, are not caſt off. *Note*, Though we are rebuked for our ſins, we muſt not deſpair under them; there is yet hope. And now he hath but one word to ſpeak, and die.

1. He charges them where he will be buried, as he had exacted an oath of Joſeph before, both in faith of the promiſe, and to remind them of it. *Note*, It is good with our dying lips, to teſtify the ſure truſt of our ſouls.

2. His death. He gathered up his feet from his ſitting poſture, into the bed; with a peaceful reſignation yielded up his ſoul to God, and went to that bleſſed aſſembly of his people, the ſouls of the faithful, who, after they are delivered from the burden of the fleſh, are in joy and felicity. May my laſt end be like unto his!

CHAP. L.

Here is, 1. *The preparation for Jacob's funeral*, ver. 1—6. 2. *The funeral itſelf*, ver. 7—14. 3. *The ſettling of a good underſtanding between Joſeph and his brethren, after the death of Jacob*, ver. 15—21. 4. *The age and death of Joſeph*, ver. 22—26. *Thus the book of Geneſis, which began with the originals of light and life, ends with nothing but death and darkneſs, ſo ſad a change has ſin made.*

1. AND Joſeph [a] fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kiſſed him. 2. And Joſeph commanded his ſervants the phyſicians to [b] embalm his father: and the phyſicians embalmed Iſrael. 3. And forty days were fulfilled for him, (for ſo are fulfilled the days of thoſe which are embalmed) and the Egyptians † mourned for him threeſcore and ten days.

[a] Chap. xlvi. 4.
[b] 2 Chron. xvi. 14. Joh. xix. 40.
† Heb. Wept.

v. 1—3. Joſeph's love extends even to the clay-cold corpſe of his departed father. 1. He kiſſes, and weeps over it; pious tears, that teſtify the dutiful and affectionate child. *Note*, They who live reſpected, will die lamented. 2. He orders the body to be embalmed, in order to be preſerved for burial in Canaan. We have vile bodies, and have need be humble in them, when we know they will be quickly loathſome to our deareſt friends. 3. There was a ſolemn mourning, in which the Egyptians, to do honour to Joſeph, partook threeſcore and ten days. *Note*, It is kind, and a duty, by partaking to alleviate the ſorrows of the afflicted.

4. And when the days of his mourning were paſt, Joſeph ſpake unto the houſe of Pharaoh, ſaying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, ſpeak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, ſaying, 5. [c] My father made me ſwear, ſaying, Lo, I die: in my grave [d] which I have digged for me, in the land of Canaan, there ſhalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. 6. And Pharaoh ſaid, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee ſwear. 7. ¶ And Joſeph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the ſervants of Pharaoh, the elders of his houſe, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. 8. And all the houſe of Joſeph, and his brethren, and his father's houſe: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goſhen. 9. And there went up with him both chariots and horſemen, and it was a very great company. 10. And they came to the threſhing-floor of Atad, which *is* beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very ſore lamentation: and [e] he made a mourning for his father ſeven days. 11. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, ſaw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they ſaid, This *is* a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called † Abel-mizraim, which *is* beyond Jordan. 12. And his ſons did unto him according as he commanded them. 13. For [f] his ſons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah; [g] which Abraham bought with the field for a poſſeſſion of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. 14. ¶ And Joſeph returned into Egypt, he and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

[c] Chap. xlvii. 29.
[d] 2 Chron. xvi. 14. Iſa. xxii. 16. Mat. xxvii. 60.
[e] 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Job ii. 13.
† i. e. The mourning of the Egyptians.
[f] Chap. xlix. 30. Acts vii. 16.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 16.

v. 4—14. Joſeph ſollicits leave of abſence, and Pharaoh kindly conſents he ſhould fulfil his oath to his father. Hereupon he immediately proceeds to Canaan.

1. The funeral was moſt honourably attended; not only all Jacob's family who could travail, went, but in reſpect to Joſeph, the great men of Pharaoh's houſhold, and the chief of the Egyptians, chariots and horſemen, a great company. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who have been eminent in their day, deſerve to be honourably

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nourably attended to their grave. (2.) When we attend the funerals of others, it becomes us ſeriouſly to think of our own.

2. Their great ſorrow, *v.* 10, 11. brings a name on the place, the mourning of the Egyptians. Who could have thought they who thus lamented the father, could ſo ſorely have afflicted the children. *Note,* The death of a great good man is not only a loſs to his family, but to his country.

3. Joſeph's return according to his promiſe. *Note,* We muſt not give way to over much ſorrow: the living call for our regard, and our tears cannot profit the dead.

15. ¶ And when Joſeph's brethren ſaw that their father was dead, they ſaid, Joſeph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. 16. And they † ſent meſſengers unto Joſeph, ſaying, Thy father did command before he died, ſaying. 17. So ſhall ye ſay unto Joſeph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the treſpaſs of thy brethren, and their ſin; for they did unto thee evil: And now, we pray thee, forgive the treſpaſs of the ſervants of the God of thy father. And Joſeph wept when they ſpake unto him. 18. And his brethren alſo went and fell down before his face; and they ſaid, Behold we *be* thy ſervants. 19. And Joſeph ſaid unto them, [h] Fear not: for [i] *am* I in the place of God? 20. [k] But as for you, ye thought evil againſt me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to paſs, as *it is* this day, to ſave much people alive. 21. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nouriſh you and your little ones. And he comforted them, and ſpake † kindly unto them.

‡ Heb. Charged.

h Chap. xlv. 5.
i Rom. xii. 19.
k Iſa. x. 7.

† Heb. To their hearts.

v. 15—21. Conſcious guilt awakens the fears of Joſeph's brethren: their father's death they look upon as an open door for Joſeph's revenge. How apt are we to judge of others, by our own wicked hearts. We have,

1. Their application to him thereupon. With deep humility they acknowledge their ſin, and ſupplicate that forgiveneſs they knew they deſerved not. *Note,* We ſhould never forget, nor ceaſe to bewail the iniquities of our former days. They plead their common father's command, who no doubt enjoined it, not out of ſuſpicion of Joſeph, but to prove the repentance of his brethren: and more than that, they plead their common relation to their father's God; a prevalent plea they knew, with pious Joſeph. Learn, (1.) They who would have forgiveneſs, ſhould humble themſelves to aſk it. (2.) We are bound to treat them with eſpecial tenderneſs, who are worſhippers of the ſame God, and ſharers in the ſame covenant.

2. Joſeph's kind and affectionate reply. He wept with joy to ſee their ſubmiſſion, or that they ſhould have a ſuſpicion of his regard; and humbly directs them to God: his forgiveneſs is their great concern. *Note,* Though we ſhould be careful to humble ourſelves to men, when we have offended, our chief concern ſhould be to repent of the ſin which God only can forgive. He extenuates their offence againſt himſelf, in the view of the good which God produced from it, and bids them fear not, but be aſſured of his continual care and regard, with every kind expreſſion which could comfort their down-caſt hearts. *Note,* (1.) God, though never the author of evil, can bring good out of evil; not that ſin thereby is leſs malignant, but he appears more glorious. (2.) Broken ſpirits need kind words. (3.) A brotherly heart will be not only ready to forgive the injurious, but the firſt to comfort them, when deſponding.

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22. ¶ And Joſeph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's houſe: and Joſeph lived an hundred and ten years. 23. And Joſeph ſaw Ephraim's children [l] of the third *generation:* [m] the children alſo of Machir, the ſon of Manaſſeh, [n] were † brought up upon Joſeph's knees. 24. And Joſeph ſaid unto his brethren, I die: and [o] God will ſurely viſit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land [p] which he ſware to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob. 25. And [q] Joſeph took an oath of the children of Iſrael, ſaying, God will ſurely viſit you, and ye ſhall carry up my bones from hence. 26. So Joſeph died, *being* an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

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l Job xlii. 16.
m Numb. xxxii. 39.
n Chap. xxx. 3.
† Heb. Born.
o Exod. iii. 16. Heb. xi. 22.
p Chap. xv. 14. & xxvi. 3. & xxxv. 12. & xlvi. 4.
q Exod. xiii. 19. Joſh. xxiv. 32. Acts vii. 16.

v. 22—26. Joſeph was long ſpared through mercy, to fulfill his promiſe to his brethren. Here is,

1. His bleſſing in his children. He ſaw his ſon's ſons, to the third generation: it is the comfort of age, to ſee an increaſing and proſperous family.

2. His laſt injunctions to his brethren, when he perceived his death approaching. He confirms them in the fulfilment of God's promiſes, *v.* 24. Bids them expect their removal, and neither be induced by proſperity to ſettle in Egypt, nor faint under any adverſity, for God would bring them up. He charges them to take his bones along with them: though he dies in Egypt, he will not be buried there, but expreſſes his own faith, and ſtrengthens theirs by this pledge, and the oath he required of them. He then expires content, in a good old age; and after embalming, is laid in his coffin, ready for removal, when God's appointed time ſhall call them into the promiſed land. *Note,* (1.) When we loſe our beſt friends, and are lying down in our coffins, our comfort is, that God will ſurely bring us up again in a reſurrection day. (2.) A decent care ought to be had of the corpſe, not for any effect it can produce on the departed ſoul, but in honour to its having been once the temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and in proſpect of its riſing again a glorious body, to be the companion of ſaints and angels to eternity.

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THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the Second Book of MOSES called
EXODUS.

*M*OSES *having, in the firſt book of his hiſtory, preſerved and tranſmitted the records of the Church, while it exiſted in private families, comes in this ſecond book to give us an account of its growth into a great nation; and as the former furniſheth us with the beſt Oeconomics, ſo this with the beſt Politics. The Greek tranſlators called this book* Exodus, *which ſignifies a* departure, *or* going out, *becauſe it begins with the ſtory of the going out of the children of Iſrael from Egypt. This book gives us,* 1. *The accompliſhment of the promiſes made before to Abraham,* to chap. xix. *And then,* 2. *The eſtabliſhment of the ordinances, which were afterwards obſerved by Iſrael:* thence to the end. *Moſes in this book begins, like Ceſar, to write his own Commentaries; nay a greater, a far greater, than Ceſar is here: But henceforward the penman is himſelf the hero, and gives us the hiſtory of thoſe things which he was himſelf an eye and ear-witneſs of,* et quorum pars magna fuit. *There are more types of Chriſt in this book, than perhaps in any other of the Old Teſtament, for Moſes wrote of him,* John v. 46. *And the way of man's reconciliation to God, and coming into covenant and communion with him by a Mediator, is here variouſly repreſented; and it is of great uſe to us for the illuſtration of the New Teſtament, as we have that to aſſiſt us in the explication of the Old.*

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CHAP. I.

We have here, 1. *God's kindneſs to Iſrael, in multiplying them exceedingly,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The Egyptians wickedneſs to them,* 1. *Oppreſſing and enſlaving them,* ver. 8—14. 2. *Murdering their children,* ver. 15—22. *Thus whom the God of heaven bleſſed, the people of Egypt curſed, and for that reaſon.*

[a] Jer. xlvi. 8. Chap. vi. 14. 1. NOW [a] theſe *are* the names of the children of Iſrael, which came into Egypt, every man and his houſhold came with Jacob. 2. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 3. Iſſachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 4. Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Aſher.
† Heb. Thigh. 5. And all the ſouls that came out of the † loins of
[b] Gen. xlvi. 27. Deut. x. 22. Jacob, were [b] ſeventy ſouls: for Joſeph was in Egypt *already*. 6. And [c] Joſeph died, and all his brethren, and
[c] Gen. l. 26. all that generation. 7. ¶ And [d] the children of Iſrael
[d] Deut. xxvi. 5. Acts vii. 17. were fruitful, and increaſed abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

v. 1—7. The names of the twelve patriarchs, who are now to become twelve tribes, are here recited. They quickly followed Joſeph: death, when it once enters, makes great ravages in families. But though that generation paſſed away, a more numerous one aroſe: and as the time drew nearer, God began more evidently to fulfil the promiſe made to Abraham. *Note,* Living or dying, we may be ſure of this, God's promiſes never fail.

8. Now there aroſe up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joſeph. 9. And he ſaid unto his people, Behold, [e] the people of the children of Iſrael *are* more and mightier than we. 10. Come on, [f] let us deal wiſely with them: leſt they multiply, and it come to paſs, that when there falleth out any war, they join alſo unto our enemies, and fight againſt us, and *ſo* get them up out of the land. 11. Therefore they did ſet over them taſkmaſters, [g] to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treaſure cities, Pithom [h] and Raamſes. 12. † But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved becauſe of the children of Iſrael. 13. And the Egyptians made the children of Iſrael to ſerve with rigour. 14. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, [i] in morter, and in brick, and in all manner of ſervice in the field: all their ſervice wherein they made them ſerve, *was* with rigour.

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[e] Pſal. cv. 24.
[f] Acts vii. 19.
[g] Gen. xv. 13.
[h] Gen. xlvii. 11.
† Heb. And as they afflicted them, ſo they multiplied, &c.
[i] Pſal. lxxxi. 6.

v. 8—14. We muſt not promiſe ourſelves long proſperity in this world. Where we have found the warmeſt love, we may ſoon experience the bittereſt hatred: ſo paſſing is the faſhion of ſublunary comforts. We have,

1. The great unkindneſs ſhewn to the Iſraelites in a ſucceeding reign: not by Pharaoh's immediate ſucceſſor, but one, who at a conſiderable diſtance of time, had forgotten the obligations the land lay under to Joſeph. *Note,* We ſhall often find men ungrateful and unmindful of the kind offices we have done them, but what is done for God, will be had in everlaſting remembrance. The poor Iſraelites are now become obnoxious to the ſtate; their multitude is a plea for their oppreſſion, as if they were a dangerous people; they pretend to fear, leſt they revolt to their enemies, or, according to the tradition which was well known, ſhould ſecede into Canaan. *Note,* The

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The people of God have been often miſrepreſented as enemies to the ſtate, in order to countenance oppreſſion and perſecution againſt them. With crafty politics they therefore harraſs them with taxes, burdens, buildings, to break their ſpirits, diminiſh their numbers, and perhaps with a view to force them to incorporate with the Egyptians, in order to avoid the afflictions of their brethren. *Note*, (1.) The moſt deep-laid ſchemes of the wicked, however wiſe in their own eyes, will appear folly at the laſt. (2.) Where men attempt to defeat God's counſels, their very efforts againſt them ſhall ſooner produce their accompliſhment.

2. The great increaſe of the Iſraelites under their oppreſſion. A perſecuted church is ever a thriving one.

15. And the king of Egypt ſpake to the Hebrew midwives (of which the name of one *was* Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:) 16. And he ſaid, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and ſee *them* upon the ſtools; if it *be* a ſon, then ye ſhall kill him, but if it *be* a daughter, then ſhe ſhall live. 17. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but ſaved the men-children alive. 18. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and ſaid unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have ſaved the men-children alive? 19. And [k] the midwives ſaid unto Pharaoh, Becauſe the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women: for they *are* lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. 20. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. 21. And it came to paſs, becauſe the midwives feared God, that [l] he made them houſes. 22. And Pharaoh charged all his people, ſaying, [m] Every ſon that is born, ye ſhall caſt into the river, and every daughter ye ſhall ſave alive.

[k] See Joſh. ii. 4, &c. 2 Sam. xvii. 19, 20.

[l] See 1 Sam. ii. 35. 2 Sam. xii. 11, 27, 29. 1 Kings ii. 24, & xi. 38. Pſ. cxxvii. 1.

[m] Acts vii. 19.

v. 15—22. We have here, 1. The inhuman attempt which this tyrant king makes to deſtroy the children in the birth, by engaging the midwives as inſtruments of his cruelty. *Note*, When God's people are the objects of enmity, perſecutors often diveſt themſelves not only of pity, but humanity. 2. The midwives diſobedience. No commands could influence, no bribes perſuade them to comply. Where we muſt diſobey God or man, there can be no heſitation. He that fears God, as theſe midwives, will rather riſque the loſs of man's favour, nay, of life too, than of his own ſoul by ſin. 3. The reaſons they gave to excuſe themſelves, when called upon, *v.* 19. *Note*, It is wiſer to avert a ſtorm, by an excuſe conſiſtent with truth, than irritate it by a flat denial. 4. God's kindneſs to them. None who ſerve his people, ſhall do it without wages, eſpecially in ſuffering ſeaſons. God built them houſes, gave them a return in kind, for the mercies they had ſhewn. 5. The enraged king ſeeing his deſigns diſappointed, publiſhes a bloody edict for the immediate deſtruction of every Hebrew male child that ſhould be born. *Note*, (1.) Diſappointed rage uſually makes men more furious. (2.) The patience of the ſaints muſt be proved by trial upon trial.

CHAP. II.

This chapter begins the ſtory of Moſes, the moſt remarkable type of Chriſt, as Prophet, Saviour, Lawgiver, and Mediator, in all the Old Teſtament. In this chapter we have, 1. *The perils of his birth and infancy,* ver. 1—4. 2. *His preſervation through thoſe perils, and the preferment of his childhood and youth,* ver. 5—10. 3. *The pious choice of his riper years, which was to own the people of God.* (1.) *He offered them his ſervice at preſent, if they would have accepted it,* ver. 11—14. (2.) *He retired, that he might reſerve himſelf for farther ſervice hereafter,* ver. 15—22. 4. *The dawning of the day of Iſrael's deliverance,* ver. 23, 24, 25.

1. AND there went [a] a man of the houſe of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi. 2. And the woman conceived, and bare a ſon; and when ſhe ſaw him that he *was a* goodly *child*, ſhe [b] hid him three months. 3. And when ſhe could not longer hide him, ſhe took for him an ark of bulruſhes, and daubed it with ſlime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and ſhe laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink. 4. And [c] his ſiſter ſtood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

[a] Chap. vi. 20. Numb. xxvi. 59. 1 Chron. xxiii. 13.

[b] Acts vii. 20. Heb. xi. 23.

[c] Numb. xxvi. 59.

v. 1—4. It ſeems, Moſes was born juſt at the time when the edict was publiſhed, and cruelly put in execution; though probably afterwards there was ſome abatement of its rigour. His parents, both of the tribe of Levi, had other children before: Moſes now comes in a diſtreſſing ſeaſon; ſo nearly allied are the comforts and the ſorrows of children. They obſerved his uncommon beauty, and determined at all hazards to attempt his preſervation. *Note*, There are often ſtrong impreſſions, even in the cradle, and in the earlieſt infancy, on thoſe who are deſigned for great exploits. Obſerve,

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1. The methods they took. They hid him for three months; but it becoming, we may be aſſured, impracticable to conceal him longer; 2. They are obliged to expoſe him, and truſt him into the hand of providence; not without hope, as the watch they ſet intimated, that ſome way God might ſave him from his danger. As faith, *Heb.* xi. 23. encouraged them not to fear in concealing him, ſo, now that the caſe grew deſperate, faith enabled them to expoſe him. *Note*, There are ſeaſons, when we are driven to venture all on God's providence, and we ſhould do it with chearfulneſs and confidence. This is not to tempt him, but to truſt him.

5 ¶ And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to waſh herſelf at the river, and her maidens walked along by the river ſide; and when ſhe ſaw the ark among the flags, ſhe ſent her maid to fetch it. 6. And when ſhe had opened *it*, ſhe ſaw the child: and behold, the babe wept. And ſhe had compaſſion on him, and ſaid, This is one of the Hebrew's children. 7. Then ſaid his ſiſter to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go, and call to thee a nurſe of the Hebrew women, that ſhe may nurſe the child for thee? 8. And Pharaoh's daughter ſaid unto her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. 9. And Pharaoh's daughter ſaid unto her, Take this child away and nurſe it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nurſed it. 10. And the child grew, and ſhe brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her ſon. And ſhe called his name † Moſes: and ſhe ſaid, Becauſe I drew him out of the water.

† i. e. Drawn out.

v. 5—10. How admirable are the diſpoſitions of God's providence, in time, manner, means; all exact, critical, and wonderful! Obſerve,

1. The diſcovery of him by Pharaoh's daughter. Struck with his beauty and innocent tears, compaſſion moved her to ſave the child. *Note*, (1.) The helpleſſneſs and innocence of infancy awakens pity in the hardeſt hearts. (2.) When Pharaoh is deſtroying the people, his daughter is preſerving their deliverer. God can thus by his very enemies carry on his wiſe deſigns. (3.) Nothing happens by chance. The greateſt events depend on circumſtances, to our appearance, utterly trivial and fortuitous, but planned with deep deſign in the mind of the all-wiſe God.

2. The nurſe provided. His own mother. No breaſt ſo natural as her's who bore him. No wonder the child thrived. How may mothers, by refuſing their breaſts, become acceſſary to the death of their own offspring.

3. The Child at weaning is brought home, called Moſes, *Drawn out of the water*; and, as Pharaoh's daughter's ſon, educated in all the learning of Egypt, and in all the politeneſs of a court, and thus prepared for that part he was afterwards to act, both as the hiſtorian and leader of Iſrael. Providence not only raiſes great men from obſcurity, but, by the ſteps of their advancement, wonderfully prepares them for the place for which they are intended.

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11. ¶ And it came to paſs in thoſe days, [d] when Moſes was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he ſpied an Egyptian ſmiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12. And he looked this way and that way; and when he ſaw that *there was* no man, he ſlew the Egyptian, and hid him in the ſand. 13. And when [e] he went out the ſecond day, behold, two men of the Hebrews ſtrove together: and he ſaid to him that did the wrong, Wherefore ſmiteſt thou thy fellow? 14. And he ſaid, Who made † thee a prince and judge over us? intendeſt thou to kill me, as thou killedſt the Egyptian? And Moſes feared, and ſaid, Surely this thing is known. 15. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he ſought to ſlay Moſes. But Moſes [f] fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he ſat down by a well.

[d] Acts vii. 23. Heb. xi. 24.

[e] Acts vii. 26.

† Heb. A man, a prince.

[f] Acts vii. 29.

v. 11—15. Moſes now probably received ſome divine admonition to leave the court; for it is ſaid, *Heb.* xi. 24. He refuſed by faith to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter, and left eaſe and honour, to ſhare with his brethren in affliction; to be their partner in it, or their deliverer from it. Hereupon,

1. We find him interpoſing in a quarrel between an Egyptian and an Hebrew, and ſlaying the Egyptian. An act of juſtice, no doubt, for which he had divine warrant; and hereby giving his people a ſpecimen of God's deſigns towards them.

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Note, When we diſregard divine admonitions, as Iſrael did, we ſhall ſuffer for it.

2. His deſire next day to accomodate a quarrel between two of his brethren. He mildly reaſoned with the aggreſſor, and meets not only with an inſolent reply, but a malicious inſinuation, *v.* 14. which gave him to know his yeſterday's work was diſcovered, and that he would ſoon be in danger for it. Learn, (1.) The injurious is uſually the firſt to quarrel with him who would make peace. (2.) Even ſufferings will not unite the people of God; and they who riſe up to their help, find often as much trouble in reconciling their differences, as in reſcuing them from their oppreſſors. (3.) A faithful miniſter muſt not be diſcouraged, if his well-meant endeavours are by ſome ungratefully returned.

3. His flight hereupon. Egypt was now become a dangerous abode. The hint given him in anger, proved a warning of mercy; and as a juſt puniſhment of his brethren's neglect, as well as to qualify him for future ſervice, he is ſent into Midian, a fugitive like his fathers, that in the exerciſe of their faith he might come to their honour.

16. [g] Now the † prieſt of Midian had ſeven daughters: and [h] they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock 17. And the ſhepherds came and drove them away: but Moſes ſtood up and helped them, and watered their flock. 18. And when they came to [i] Reuel their father, he ſaid, How *is it that* you are come ſo ſoon to day? 19. And they ſaid, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the ſhepherds, and alſo drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock. 20. And he ſaid unto his daughters, And where *is* he? Why *is* it *that* ye have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread. 21. And Moſes was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moſes Zipporah his daughter. 22. And ſhe bare *him* a ſon, and he called his name [k] Gerſhom: for he ſaid, I have been [l] a ſtranger in a ſtrange land.

[g] Chap. iii. 1.
† Or prince, as Gen. xli. 45.
[h] Gen. xxiv. 11.
[i] Numb. x. 29.
1530.
[k] Chap. xviii. 3.
[l] Heb. xi. 13, 14.

v. 16—22. An occurrence of providence, graciouſly ordered, introduces him into the family of Reuel, elſewhere called Jethro, a prieſt or prince of Midian. *Note*, Every man ſhould be both prince and prieſt in his own houſe. We have,

1. His meeting of Reuel's daughters at the well. Some ſhepherds behaving rudely to them, Moſes aſſiſts them to water their flocks. No man is too great to do a kind act for the diſtreſſed.

2. Their report of it to their father. Though ſenſible of the kindneſs, they were too modeſt to aſk him home, till their father was acquainted with it. *Note*, Nothing ſo hateful in a woman as forwardneſs, nothing ſo pleaſing as modeſty.

3. Moſes is kindly entertained by Reuel, eſpouſes his daughter, and hath by her a ſon, called Gerſhom, as a remembrance of his being *a ſtranger there*. Here he finds a retreat, and whilſt he feeds his father's flocks, is prepared, by communion with God, and his appearances to him, for the great work he had appointed him. *Note*, There are greater enjoyments to be obtained in the wilderneſs with God, than in all the pleaſures in the courts of princes.

23. ¶ And it came to paſs [m] in proceſs of time, that the king of Egypt died, and the children of Iſrael [n] ſighed by reaſon of the bondage, and they cried; and [o] their cry came up unto God, by reaſon of the bondage. 24. And God heard their groaning, and God remembred his [p] covenant with Abraham, with Iſaac, and with Jacob. 25. And God looked upon the children of Iſrael, and God † [q] had reſpect unto them.

[m] Chap. vii. 7. Acts vii. 30.
[n] Numb. xx. 16.
[o] Gen. xviii. 20. Chap. xxii. 23, 27. Deut. xxiv. 15. Jam. v. 4.
[p] Gen. xv. 14. & xlvi. 4.
† Heb. Knew.
[q] Chap. iii. 7.

v. 23—25. The Iſraelites, who had neglected their deliverer, now groan under aggravated bondage. God will often long and ſeverely rebuke his own people, for their humiliation. Hereupon,

1. They cry unto God. Had they thought of him before, probably they had not groaned ſo long. It is a ſign God is beginning to ſave, when he pours out a ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication upon us.

2. God's attention to them, and his remembrance of them. No priſoner's ſighs are unnoticed, no burthened ſinner's groans diſregarded by him; he will hear their cry, and will help them.

CHAP. III.

Here is, 1. *The diſcovery God was pleaſed to make of his glory to Moſes at the buſh*, ver. 1—5. 2. *A general declaration of God's grace and good-will to his people*, ver. 6. 3. *A particular notification of God's purpoſe concerning the deliverance of Iſrael out of Egypt.* 1. *He aſſures Moſes it ſhould now be done*, ver. 7, 8, 9. 2. *He gives him a commiſſion to act in it, as his ambaſſador both to Pharaoh*, ver. 10. *and to Iſrael*, ver. 16. 3. *He anſwers the objection Moſes made of his own unworthineſs*, ver. 11, 12. 4. *He gives him full inſtructions what to ſay, both to Pharaoh and to Iſrael*, ver. 13—18. 5. *He tells him beforehand what the iſſue would be*, ver. 19—22.

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1. NOW Moſes kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the [a] prieſt of Midian: and he led the flock to the back-ſide of the deſert, and came to [b] the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb. 2. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a [c] flame of fire out of the midſt of a buſh: and he looked, and behold, the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh *was* not conſumed. 3. And Moſes ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt. 4. And when the LORD ſaw that he turned aſide to ſee, God called unto him [d] out of the midſt of the buſh, and ſaid, Moſes, Moſes. And he ſaid, Here *am* I. 5. And he ſaid, Draw not nigh hither: [e] put off thy ſhoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt *is* holy ground. 6. Moreover he ſaid, [f] I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moſes hid his face: for [g] he was afraid to look upon God.

1491.
[a] Chap. ii. 16.
[b] Chap. xviii. 5. 1 Kings xix. 8.
[c] Deut. xxxiii. 16. Acts. vii. 30.
[d] Deut. xxxiii. 16.
[e] Joſh. v. 15. Acts vii. 33.
[f] Mat. xxii. 32. Mark xii. 26. Luke xx. 37. Acts vii. 32.
[g] So 1 Kings xix. 13. Iſa. vi. 2, 5.

v. 1—6. Moſes now ſeems to have forgotten Egypt, and Iſrael to be no more remembered of their God; but this is the day of ſalvation. Moſes, as uſual, was attending his father's flocks, buried in obſcurity, and humbly acquieſcing in his employment. Learn, 1. When we can ſee God's call, obſcurity becomes our duty, and the meaneſt occupation muſt be welcome. 2. If God be long before he calls us forth, it is becauſe he is preparing us for what he hath prepared for us.

1. God appears to him in a flame of fire in a buſh; and Moſes, ſtruck with the uncommon appearance, draws near to ſee this ſight, a buſh burning, yet unconſumed. The church of Chriſt is like this buſh, ever in affliction, yet never to be deſtroyed.

2. God ſpeaks to him out of the fire, and Moſes anſwers. He is hereupon directed how to approach, with reverence and godly fear, in order to hear the revelation God is about to make to him. *Note*, (1.) Attention to providences is a great means of keeping up communion with God. (2.) An obedient ear is ever open to inſtruction. (3.) In our appearances before God, the poſture of our body ſhould comport with the deep abaſement and ſacred awe which is upon our mind.

3. He makes himſelf known to him, as the covenant God of his fathers, to encourage his faith, and to engage his obedience. All live to God. Thoſe whom we reckon among the dead, are only removed into that better world, where life eternal reigns, *Luke* xx. 37.

4. Moſes is deeply affected with what he ſees and hears. A ſenſe of our own great unworthineſs may well cover our faces with ſhame, when we appear before God, and the more a ſaint of God experiences of his love, the deeper will be his humiliation before him.

7. ¶ And the LORD ſaid, I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have [h] heard their cry, by reaſon of their taſk-maſters: for I know their ſorrows. 8. And [i] I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land, unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey: unto the place of [k] the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites. 9. Now therefore behold, the cry of the children of Iſrael is come unto me: and I have alſo ſeen the oppreſſion wherewith the Egyptians oppreſs them. 10. [l] Come now therefore, and I will ſend thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayeſt bring forth my people the children of Iſrael out of Egypt.

[h] Chap. ii. 23.
[i] Gen. xi. 5, 7. & xviii. 21.
[k] Gen. xv. 18.
[l] Pſ. cv. 26.

v. 7—10. 1. God here begins to open his deſigns towards his people. He obſerves their ſorrows and oppreſſion, and hears their cry, and will not only deliver them from it, but bring them into the land promiſed to their fathers, and of ſlaves make them princes. Thus ſhall Jeſus bring us not only from the bondage of our corruptions, but raiſe us up to be kings on thrones of glory.

2. He ſends Moſes his ambaſſador to demand their releaſe. The weak things in God's hands are mighty. A ſhepherd brings Iſrael from Egypt; afterwards, a few deſpiſed fiſhermen lay the foundations of the Chriſtian church, againſt which all the powers of earth, or malice of devils, never could, and never ſhall prevail.

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11. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto God, [m] Who *am* I, that I ſhould go unto Pharaoh, and that I ſhould bring forth the children of Iſrael out of Egypt? 12. And he ſaid, [n] Certainly I will be with thee; and this *ſhall be* a token unto thee, that I have ſent thee: When thou haſt brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye ſhall ſerve God upon this mountain. 13. And Moſes ſaid unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Iſrael, and ſhall ſay unto them, The God of your fathers hath ſent me unto you, and they ſhall ſay to me, What *is* his name? What ſhall I ſay unto them? 14. And God ſaid unto Moſes, I AM THAT I AM: And he ſaid, Thus ſhalt thou ſay unto the children of Iſrael, [o] I AM hath ſent me unto you. 15. And God ſaid moreover unto Moſes, Thus ſhalt thou ſay unto the children of Iſrael, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob, hath ſent me unto you: this *is* [p] my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations.

[m] See Iſa. vi. 58. Jer. i. 6.
[n] Joſh. i. 5.
[o] Chap. vi. 3. 2 Cor. i. 20. Heb. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 4.
[p] Pſ. cxxxv. 13.

v. 11—15. Moſes ſtarts at the propoſal.

1. He pleads his inſufficiency for the taſk, *v.* 11. perhaps *out of humility.* Highly qualified as a man may be to miniſter before the Lord, lowly thoughts become him. Who is ſufficient for theſe things? Perhaps *out of fear.* The eſſay was dangerous, and he muſt put his life in his hand. Fear of man is a great hindrance to the work of God.

2. God ſilences his objection, *v.* 12, and promiſes him ſucceſs. If God be with us, our weakneſs ſhall become ſtrength, our folly wiſdom, and every mountain of difficulty be level as a plain; nor can we fail of ſucceeding under ſuch a leader.

3. Moſes begs farther inſtructions for his proceedings, *v.* 13. He expected they would call upon him to prove his miſſion, and who ſent him. *Note*, We muſt not run without our meſſage. They who are to ſpeak for God, need earneſtly enquire at his word, that they may be able to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh a reaſon of the hope which is in them.

4. The ſatisfaction he receives, *v.* 14, 15. God is the great *I am*, ſelf-exiſtent, unchangeable in his purpoſes, and all-ſufficient to accompliſh them. He is their father's God, and they ſhould remember the covenant which for the father's ſake they were intereſted in. Conſiderations admirably ſuited to engage their dependance on him, and make them ready to welcome their deliverer. *Note*, The remembrance of what God is, to his covenant people, is the great motive to hear him, truſt him, love him, and follow him.

16. Go and [q] gather the elders of Iſrael together, and ſay unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, ſaying, [r] I have ſurely viſited you, and *ſeen* that which is done to you in Egypt. 17. And I have ſaid, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. 18. And [s] they ſhall hearken to thy voice: and thou ſhalt come, thou and the elders of Iſrael, unto the king of Egypt, and you ſhall ſay unto him, The LORD [t] God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go (we beſeech thee) three days journey into the wilderneſs, that we may ſacrifice to the LORD our God. 19. ¶ And I am ſure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, † no, not by a mighty hand. 20. And I will ſtretch out my hand, and ſmite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midſt thereof: and after that he will let you go. 21. And I will give this people favour in the ſight of the Egyptians: and it ſhall come to paſs, that when ye go, ye ſhall not go empty: 22. But [u] every woman ſhall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that ſojourneth in her houſe, jewels of ſilver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye ſhall put *them* upon your ſons, and upon your daughters; and [x] ye ſhall ſpoil ‡ the Egyptians.

[q] Chap. iv. 29.
[r] Gen. l. 24.
[s] Chap. iv. 31.
[t] Chap. v. 3.
† Or, but by ſtrong hands.
[u] Gen. xv. 14. Chap. xi. 2. & xii. 35.
[x] Ezek. xxxix. 10.
‡ Or Egypt.

v. 16—22. Moſes is farther directed in his work.

1. He muſt aſſemble the elders of the people, and aſſure them of the fulfilment of God's promiſe, *v.* 17. and they ſhall hearken to it. *Note*, (1.) The faithful report of God's word is every miniſter's duty. (2.) When we do ſo, it is God's work to make it ſucceſsful, and we have God's promiſe to aſſure us he will, *Matt.* xxviii. 20.

2. He muſt ſpeak to Pharaoh, and the requeſt is moſt reaſonable, *v.* 18, but Pharaoh will not hearken. Learn hence, (1.) The obſtinacy of a ſinner's heart, that turns a deaf ear to the kindeſt pleas and remonſtrances. (2.) That God warns the impenitent, to leave them inexcuſable.

3. God will bring them out in ſpite of Pharaoh, *v.* 20, and not only free, but enriched with the ſpoils of the Egyptians; a juſt recompence for their hard ſervitude. Learn, (1.) Oppoſition againſt God is vain. (2.) Whether we have juſtice in this world or no, we know the day is near, when God will judge according to truth.

Before Chriſt 1491.

CHAP. IV.

1. *Moſes objects the people's unbelief, and is anſwered by the miracles he ſhould work*; ver. 1—9. 2. *He objects his ſlowneſs of ſpeech*, ver. 10. *God promiſes his preſence*, ver. 11, 12. *and joins Aaron in commiſſion with him*, ver. 14, 15, 16. *and conſecrates his rod*, ver. 17. 3. *He, with his father's leave, goes*, ver. 18. 4. *Receives farther inſtructions*, ver. 19—23. 5. *Takes his family*, ver. 20. 6. *Circumciſes his ſon*, ver. 24—26. 7. *Meets Aaron*, ver. 27—28. 8. *Produces his commiſſion*, ver. 29—31.

1. AND Moſes anſwered and ſaid, But behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will ſay, the LORD hath not appeared unto thee. 2. And the LORD ſaid unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he ſaid, [a] A rod. 3. And he ſaid, Caſt it on the ground; and he caſt it on the ground, and it became a ſerpent: and Moſes fled from before it. 4. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail: and he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand. 5. That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. 6. ¶ And the LORD ſaid furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy boſom; and he put his hand into his boſom: and when he took it out, behold his hand *was* leprous [b] as ſnow. 7. And he ſaid, Put thine hand into thy boſom again: and he put his hand into his boſom again, and plucked it out of his boſom, and behold, it was turned again as his *other* fleſh. 8. And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the firſt ſign, that they will believe the voice of the latter ſign. 9. And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will not believe alſo theſe two ſigns, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou ſhalt take of the water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry land: and [c] the water which thou takeſt out of the river, † ſhall become blood upon the dry land.

[a] Verſe 20.
[b] Num. xii. 10. 2 Kings v. 27.
[c] Chap. vii. 19.
† Heb. Shall be and ſhall be.

v. 1—9. Moſes, from a diffidence of himſelf, and perhaps too from ſome ſinful diſtruſt of God,

1. Suggeſts his fears of the people's unbelief. God had aſſured him of the contrary; but how hard is it to reſt on God's word againſt human probabilities, and our own paſt experience?

2. God's anſwer, *v.* 2—9. The miracles ſhould ſpeak for his miſſion, and gain him credit in his meſſage. Two are performed immediately, for his own ſatisfaction; a third is promiſed, if needful, for theirs. When Jeſus came, the multitude and the nature of his miracles, to a demonſtration, proved him ſent from God. If Iſrael had been inexcuſable to have refuſed theſe evidences, what muſt we be, who are compaſſed about with ſuch a cloud of witneſſes, if we diſbelieve or reject him?

10. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto the LORD, O my LORD, I *am* not † eloquent, neither ‡ heretofore, nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant: but [d] I *am* ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue. 11. And the LORD ſaid unto him, [e] Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the ſeeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD? 12. Now therefore go, and I will be [f] with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay?

† Heb. A man of words.
‡ Heb. Since yeſterday, nor ſince the third day.
[d] Chap. vi. 12.
[e] Pſ. xciv. 9.
[f] Iſa. l. 4. Matt. x. 19. Mark xiii. 11. Luke xii. 11.

v. 10—12. Moſes ſtill objects, and God continues to anſwer him.

1. He is not eloquent. Though a man of great abilities, yet ſlow of ſpeech. God thus diſtributes diverſities of gifts to his ſervants. Some with deep underſtandings want expreſſion and fluency; others, leſs ſolid in judgment, have words at will. Few poſſeſs all excellencies.

2. God reaſons with him on his power and promiſe. The work is God's; he is able to accompliſh it, *v.* 11. It is his will it ſhall be done, *v.* 12. *Note*, Our gifts and graces are all from God; and if the ears are deaf to goſpel calls, or the eyes blind to the things which make for our peace, God will be found juſt in his judgments.

13. And he ſaid, O my LORD, ſend, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou † wilt ſend. 14. And the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Moſes, and he ſaid, *Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can ſpeak well. And alſo, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he ſeeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. 15. And [g] thou ſhalt ſpeak unto him, and put words in his mouth; and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye ſhall do. 16. And he ſhall be thy ſpokeſman unto the people: and he ſhall be, *even* he ſhall be to thee inſtead of a mouth, and [h] thou ſhalt be to him inſtead of God. 17. And thou ſhalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou ſhalt do ſigns.

† Or ſhouldeſt.

[g] Chap. vii. 1, 2.

[h] Chap. vii. 1. & xviii. 19.

v. 13—17. When he cannot get off by objections, he plainly begs to be excuſed. A ſad proof of his unbelief and cowardice. And now God might juſtly have rejected him, and given the honour to another; but his choice is unalterable, and he will overcome the reſiſtance of our perverſe hearts. But,

1. God teſtifies his diſpleaſure againſt him, *v.* 14. *Note*, He ſhews his indignation ſometimes againſt thoſe, whom notwithſtanding he will never caſt away.

2. He joins Aaron in commiſſion with him, to be his ſpokeſman. Thus he had compaſſion on his infirmities, gives him his brother for a yoke-fellow, and promiſes to be their director, to teach them what and how they ought to ſpeak. If God does not teach the moſt eloquent orator, and bleſs his diſcourſes, he will only ſpeak to the air, or at beſt to the ear, not to the heart.

3. He muſt take his rod. The miracles muſt be his chief rhetoric, and his works ſpeak more than his word. *Note*, A miniſter's life, like this rod, will give the greateſt weight to his diſcourſes.

18. ¶ And Moſes went and returned to † Jethro his father in law, and ſaid unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren, which *are* in Egypt, and ſee whether they be yet alive. And Jethro ſaid to Moſes, Go in peace. 19. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for [i] all the men are dead which ſought thy life. 20. And Moſes took his wife, and his ſons, and ſet them upon an aſs, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moſes took [k] the rod of God in his hand. 21. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, When thou goeſt to return into Egypt, ſee *that* thou do all thoſe wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand: but [l] I will harden his heart, that he ſhall not let the people go. 22. And thou ſhalt ſay unto Pharaoh: Thus ſaith the LORD, [m] Iſrael *is* my ſon, *even* [n] my firſt-born. 23. And I ſay unto thee, Let my ſon go, that he may ſerve me: And if thou refuſe to let him go, behold, [o] I will ſlay thy ſon, *even* thy firſt-born.

† Heb. Jether.

[i] Chap. ii. 15, 23. Mat. ii. 20.

[k] Num. xx. 8, 9.

[l] Chap. vii. 3, 13. & ix. 12. & x. 1. & xiv. 8. Deut. ii. 30. Joſh. xi. 20. Iſa. lxiii. 17. John xii. 40. Rom. ix. 18.

[m] Rom. ix. 4.

[n] Jer. xxxi. 9. Jam. i. 18.

[o] Chap. xi. 5. & xii. 29.

v. 18—23. We have here,

1. Moſes taking leave of his father in law. He had received much kindneſs from him; duty therefore and friendſhip required his aſking leave for himſelf and family to depart. We muſt never be wanting in reſpect to our parents, whatever calls of duty may be upon us.

2. God ſpeaks farther to him for his encouragement. His old enemies in Egypt are dead. His fears are thus ſilenced: not that he ſhould find Pharaoh favourable; though the miracles are to be wrought before him, he will be obſtinate; but he ſhall ſuffer for it, *v.* 23. We muſt expect to find in the work of the miniſtry many a heart like Pharaoh's. God calls Iſrael his *firſt-born*; for all are his dear children; he hath a father's heart towards them, and they ſhall find a father's care over them.

3. Moſes takes his family along with him. They who are hearty in God's cauſe, are very willing to hazard all in his ſervice.

24 ¶ And it came to paſs by the way in the inn, that the LORD [p] met him, and ſought to kill him. 25. Then Zipporah took [q] a ſharp † ſtone, and cut off the foreſkin of her ſon, and ‡ caſt *it* at his feet, and ſaid, Surely a bloody huſband *art* thou to me. 26. So he let him go: Then ſhe ſaid, A bloody huſband *thou art*, becauſe of the circumciſion.

[p] Num. xxii. 22.

[q] Joſh. v. 2, 3.

† Or knife.

‡ Heb. And made it touch.

v. 24—26. Moſes in Midian ſeems not to have been circumſpect in the obſervance of God's ordinances: perhaps too his wife was averſe to this bloody rite, and he feared to offend her. Now God meets him, as he met Balaam, and, to reſcue him from inſtant death, Zipporah with indignation haſtes to circumciſe the child, and caſts the foreſkin at his feet, with an angry reproach, and then God let him go in peace. His wife ſeems now to be ſent back to her father. Learn, (1.) How dangerous is abſence from the people of God, and the means of grace. (2.) How apt we are to yield to the fooliſh fondneſs of others, even to the offending God. (3.) That God's people will not eſcape his anger, when they offend him. (4.) When we have neglected duty, we muſt return to it without delay. (5.) The removal of our ſins will uſually alleviate or remove our judgments. (6.) We muſt be content to bear reproach in God's ſervice.

27. ¶ And the LORD ſaid to Aaron, Go into the wilderneſs to meet Moſes. And he went and met him in [r] the mount of God, and kiſſed him. 28. And Moſes told Aaron all the words of the LORD, who had ſent him, and all the ſigns which he had commanded him. 29. ¶ And Moſes and Aaron went, and gathered together all the elders of the children of Iſrael. 30. And Aaron ſpake all the words which the LORD had ſpoken unto Moſes, and did the ſigns in the ſight of the people. 31. And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had viſited the children of Iſrael, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then [s] they bowed their heads and worſhipped.

[r] Chap. iii. 21.

[s] Chap. xii. 27.

v. 27—31. For Moſes's farther comfort, God ſends Aaron to meet him. The interview was affectionate; and Moſes having informed him of God's commiſſion, they proceed together, and are received with joy by the elders and people. *Note*, (1.) Comfortable meeting of friends is a mercy, but the obedient attention of the people to their miniſters, a greater. (2.) We ſhould not be too ſanguine on the firſt promiſing appearances: the fulleſt blown tree bears not always proportionable fruit. (3.) If grace do not touch the heart, miracles can produce but temporary faith.

CHAP. V.

1. *Moſes and Aaron are here dealing with Pharaoh, to get leave of him to go worſhip in the wilderneſs*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He anſwers their requeſt by a flat denial, with farther orders to oppreſs Iſrael*, ver. 2—9. *Theſe cruel orders were*, 1. *Executed by the taſkmaſters*, ver. 10—14. 2. *Complained of to Pharaoh, but in vain*, ver. 15—19. 3. *Complained of by the people to Moſes*, ver. 20, 21. *and by him to God*, ver. 22, 23.

1. AND afterwards Moſes and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Let my people go, that they may hold a feaſt unto me in the wilderneſs. 2. And Pharaoh ſaid, [a] Who *is* the LORD, that I ſhould obey his voice to let Iſrael go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Iſrael go.

[a] 2 Kings xviii. 35. Job. xxi. 15.

v. 1, 2. Moſes and Aaron make no delay.

1. They boldly deliver their meſſage, *v.* 1. God's people are his peculiar portion, and it is at their peril, who injure or oppreſs them. They muſt hold a feaſt to him, and the ſacrifice which points to the atonement is the ſubſtance of the feaſt. Faith in the atoning blood of Jeſus makes the ſweeteſt feaſt for the ſoul.

2. Pharaoh's impious anſwer, and flat denial, *v.* 2. They who oppreſs God's people, will deſpiſe their God; they neither know him nor fear him. *Note*, (1.) The cauſe of every ſin is ignorance of God; for where there is no knowledge, there is no fear of him. (2.) Obſtinate ſinners go from iniquity to impiety; they firſt offend, and then defy the God of Iſrael; but it ſhall be to their coſt.

3. And they ſaid, [b] The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the deſert, and ſacrifice unto the LORD our God; leſt he fall upon us with peſtilence, or with the ſword. 4. And the king of Egypt ſaid unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moſes and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens. 5. And Pharaoh ſaid, Behold, the people of the land now *are* many, and you make them reſt from their burdens. 6. And Pharaoh commanded the ſame day the taſk-maſters of the people, and their officers, ſaying, 7. Ye ſhall no more give the people ſtraw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather ſtraw for themſelves. 8. And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore, you ſhall lay upon them; you ſhall not diminiſh *ought* thereof: for they *be* idle; therefore they cry, ſaying, Let us go *and* ſacrifice to our God. 9. † Let there more

[b] Chap. iii. 18.

† Heb. Let the work be heavy upon the men.

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more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein: and let them not regard vain words.

v. 3—9. Their firſt application being in vain, the ſecond hath as ill ſucceſs. They who have no fear of God, will have little compaſſion for man.

1. They intreat him for three days reſpite, and urge a juſt excuſe, leſt God be angry for the neglect of his ſervice. *Note,* we have need to fear his viſitations, when we are found diſuſing his ordinances.

2. Pharaoh will not part with them for an hour; nay, reproaches them as idle, and adds to their burdens. Nor ſhall Moſes and Aaron fare better than the reſt. Learn, (1.) That faithful miniſters muſt expect, in dangerous times, to be the firſt to ſuffer. (2.) The ſervice of God often bears, from the enemies of it, the reproach of idleneſs. (3.) When we have to deal with men of perverſe minds, like Pharaoh, we muſt expect ſuch unreaſonable demands.

10. ¶ And the taſk-maſters of the people went out, and their officers, and they ſpake to the people, ſaying, Thus ſaith Pharaoh, I will not give you ſtraw. 11. Go ye, get you ſtraw where you can find it: yet not ought of your work ſhall be diminiſhed. 12. So the people were ſcattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt, to gather ſtubble inſtead of ſtraw. 13. And the taſkmaſters haſted *them*, ſaying, Fulfil your works, *your* † daily taſks, as when there was ſtraw. 14. And the officers of the children of Iſrael, which Pharaoh's taſkmaſters had ſet over them, were beaten, *and* demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your taſk in making brick, both yeſterday and to day, as heretofore?

† Heb. A matter of a day in his day.

v. 10—14. Bad men will uſually find bad inſtruments to ſerve them. The taſk-maſters ſeverely urge the people; and though without ſtraw it was impoſſible to fulfil their tale of bricks, they are beaten. What a bleſſing is liberty! how ſhould we value it? *Note,* That miniſter is no better than theſe Egyptians, who, inſtead of the liberty of the goſpel, preaches the bondage of the law, which a fallen ſinner can no more keep, than he can make brick without ſtraw.

15. ¶ Then the officers of the children of Iſrael came and cried unto Pharaoh, ſaying, Wherefore dealeſt thou thus with thy ſervants? 16. There is no ſtraw given unto thy ſervants, and they ſay to us, Make brick: and behold, thy ſervants *are* beaten; but the fault *is* in thine own people. 17. But he ſaid, Ye *are* idle, ye *are* idle: therefore ye ſay, Let us go, *and* do ſacrifice to the LORD. 18. Go therefore now *and* work: for there ſhall no ſtraw be given you, yet ſhall ye deliver the tale of bricks. 19. And the officers of the children of Iſrael did ſee *that* they *were* in evil *caſe*, after it was ſaid, Ye ſhall not miniſh *ought* from your bricks of your daily taſk.

v. 15—19. An evil caſe no doubt. The remonſtrance they made was as juſt and humble, as the anſwer they receive is tyrannical and ſevere.

1. They are his ſervants, willing to labour, and are beaten, when the fault is in Pharaoh's people. It is the lot of God's people ever to ſuffer unjuſtly.

2. They are received with taunts and reproaches. How could they who were dying under hard ſervitude, be reproached with idleneſs? and was their deſire to ſacrifice to God ſuch a crime? *Note,* The world's reproaches are as groundleſs as Pharaoh's; and whatever pretence they may make, the real cauſe is, the inbred enmity of their heart againſt our God and his holy ways.

20. ¶ And they met Moſes and Aaron, who ſtood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh. 21. And [c] they ſaid unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; becauſe you have made our ſavour † to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his ſervants, to put a ſword in their hands to ſlay us. 22. And Moſes returned unto the LORD, and ſaid, Lord, wherefore haſt thou *ſo* evil intreated this people? why *is* it *that* thou haſt ſent me? 23. For ſince I came to Pharaoh to ſpeak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; ‡ neither haſt thou delivered thy people at all.

[c] Chap. vi. 9.
† Heb. To ſtink. Gen. xxxiv. 30.
‡ Heb. Delivering thou haſt not delivered.

v. 20—23. We have here,

1. Their diſpleaſure at Moſes and Aaron. How unjuſt and ill-timed? Are they who put their lives in their hands to ſave them, to be reproached as deſtroyers? The beſt actions will, if not immediately ſucceſsful, expoſe us often to the cenſures of thoſe we meant to ſerve.

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2. Moſes's application to God. He preſented a remonſtrance to Pharaoh in vain; but he ſhall not do ſo to God. He expoſtulates, complains, and begs help in this needful time of trouble. *Note,* (1.) Our ſufferings may increaſe, when God is working moſt for our deliverance. (2.) It is a heavy grief to miniſters, to ſee their labours of love, inſtead of being ſucceſsful, exaſperating the enmity, and ſtirring up the corruptions of their hearers. (3.) The way to be eaſed, is to go and complain to our God.

CHAP. VI.

Much ado there was to bring Moſes to his work, and no leſs to put him forward in it. Witneſs this chapter, in which, 1. *God anſwers his complaints,* ver. 1. 2. *He gives him fuller inſtructions,* ver. 2—8. *But the people diſregard him,* ver. 9. 3. *He ſends him again to Pharaoh,* ver. 10, 11. *But Moſes objects againſt that,* ver. 12. *A ſtrict charge is given to him and his brother, to execute their commiſſion with vigour,* ver. 13. 4. *An abſtract of the genealogy of the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi,* ver. 14—27.

1. THEN the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Now ſhalt thou ſee what I will do to Pharaoh: for [a] with a ſtrong hand ſhall he let them go, and with a ſtrong hand [b] ſhall he drive them out of his land. 2. And God ſpake unto Moſes, and ſaid unto him, I *am* the LORD: 3. And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Iſaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* [c] God Almighty, but by my name [d] JEHOVAH was I not known to them. 4. And [e] I have alſo eſtabliſhed my covenant with them, [f] to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were ſtrangers. 5. And [g] I have alſo heard the groaning of the children of Iſrael, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembred my covenant. 6. Wherefore ſay unto the children of Iſrael, I *am* the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage: and I will redeem you with a ſtretched out arm, and with great judgments. 7. And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye ſhall know that I *am* the LORD your God, which bringeth you out [h] from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8. And I will bring you in unto the land concerning the which † [i] I did ſwear to give it, to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I *am* the LORD. 9. ¶ And Moſes ſpake ſo unto the children of Iſrael: but [k] they hearkned not unto Moſes, for ‡ anguiſh of ſpirit, and for cruel bondage.

[a] Cha. iii. 19.
[b] Chap. xi. 1. & xii. 33, 39.
[c] Gen. xvii. 1. & xxxv. 11. & xlviii. 3.
[d] Chap. iii. 14.
[e] Gen. xvii. 4.
[f] Gen. xvii. 8. & xxviii. 4.
[g] Chap. ii. 24.
[h] Chap. v. 4, 5. Pſal. lxxxi. 6.
† Heb. Lift up mine hand. See Gen. xiv 22. Deut. xxxii. 40.
[i] Gen. xv. 14. & xxvi. 3. & xxxv. 12.
[k] Chap. v. 21.
‡ Heb. Shortneſs, or ſtraitneſs.

v. 1—9. 1. God ſilences Moſes's complaint with aſſurances of ſucceſs. He will work, and who ſhall let it? If his mighty hand of grace or judgment be ſtretched forth, when he begins he will make an end. He was known as *El ſhaddai*, a God all-ſufficient, before; but now he will accompliſh the hope of Iſrael, as Jehovah, the promiſe-fulfilling God. He heard his people's cries before Moſes ſpoke, and their deliverance is both certain and near. Let God's Iſrael then, in their deepeſt diſtreſſes, truſt, and not be afraid.

2. Moſes carries the glad meſſage to the people; but they are ſo dejected, they pay no attention to it. Thus often impatient ſorrow refuſes comfort, and deſpair turns a deaf ear to the promiſes of mercy.

10. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 11. Go in, ſpeak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Iſrael go out of his land. 12. And Moſes ſpake before the LORD, ſaying, Behold, the children of Iſrael have not hearkned unto me; how then ſhall Pharaoh hear me, [l] who *am* of uncircumciſed lips? 13. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Iſrael, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; to bring the children of Iſrael out of the land of Egypt.

[l] Ver. 30. Chap. iv. 10. Jer. i. 6.

v. 10—13. Though ſinners be obſtinate, we muſt not ceaſe to warn them. It may be, God will yet turn their hearts. Moſes is ſent again unto Pharaoh with the ſame meſſage. Hereupon,

1. Moſes objects the improbability of ſucceſs: if his own people will not hear him, much leſs will Pharaoh. Beſides, he urges his own defective utterance to plead their cauſe. *Note,* (1.) It is very diſcouraging, when we find thoſe from whom we expected ſucceſs, untractable. (2.) Though we have God's commiſſion for our work, we are too ready to be diſheartened by

our conſcious inſufficiency for it; but if it be God's work, the power too ſhall be of God.

2. God charges him to go without farther excuſe, and joins Aaron with him. It is not for us to diſpute, but to obey.

14. ¶ Theſe *be* the heads of their father's houſes: [m] The ſons of Reuben the firſt-born of Iſrael; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: theſe *be* the families of Reuben. 15. And [n] the ſons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the ſon of a Canaanitiſh woman: theſe *are* the families of Simeon. 16. ¶ And theſe *are* the names of [o] the ſons of Levi, according to their generations; Gerſhon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi *were* an hundred thirty and ſeven years. 17. [p] The ſons of Gerſhon; Libni and Shimi, according to their families. 18. And [q] the ſons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel: And the years of the life of Kohath *were* an hundred thirty and three years. 19. And [r] the ſons of Merari; Mahali, and Muſhi: theſe *are* the families of Levi, according to their generations. 20. And [s] Amram took him Jochebed his father's ſiſter to wife; and ſhe bare him Aaron and Moſes: and the years of the life of Amram *were* an hundred and thirty and ſeven years. 21. ¶ And [t] the ſons of Izhar; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri. 22. And [u] the ſons of Uzziel; Miſhael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri. 23. And Aaron took him Eliſheba daughter of [x] Aminadab, ſiſter of Naaſhon, to wife; and ſhe bare him [y] Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 24. And the ſons of Korah; Aſſir, and Elkanah, and Abiaſaph: theſe *are* the families of the Korhites. 25. And Eleazar Aaron's ſon took him *one* of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and [z] ſhe bare him Phinehas: theſe *are* the heads of the fathers of the Levites, according to their families. 26. Theſe *are* that Aaron and Moſes, to whom the LORD ſaid, Bring out the children of Iſrael from the land of Egypt, according to their armies. 27. Theſe *are* they which ſpake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Iſrael from Egypt: theſe *are* that Moſes and Aaron.

[m] Gen. xlvi. 9. 1 Chron. v. 3.
[n] 1 Chron. iv. 24.
[o] Numb. iii. 17. 1 Chron. vi. 1, 16.
[p] 1 Chron. vi. 17. & xxiii. 7.
[q] Num. xxvi. 57. 1 Chron. vi. 2, 18.
[r] 1 Chron. vi. 19. & xxiii. 21.
[s] Chap. ii. 1, 2. Num. xxvi. 59.
[t] Num. xvi. 1. 1 Chron. vi. 37, 38.
[u] Lev. x. 4. Num. iii. 30.
[x] Ruth iv. 19, 20. 1 Chron. ii. 10.
[y] Num. iii. 2. & xxvi. 60. 1 Chron. vi. 3. & xxiv. 1.
[z] Num. xxv. 11.

v. 14—27. Moſes and Aaron begin to raiſe up the tribe of Levi from that deſpondence, into which the denunciation of their father Jacob muſt have caſt them. Like a faithful hiſtorian, Moſes ſuppreſſes not his father's unlawful marriage, nor fears to mention the honour God put upon himſelf. Our faults muſt be acknowledged to our humiliation, our favours be aſcribed to God's free grace.

1791. 28. ¶ And it came to paſs, on the day *when* the LORD ſpake unto Moſes in the land of Egypt, 29. That the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, I *am* the LORD: Speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I ſay unto thee. 30. And Moſes ſaid before the LORD, Behold, [a] I *am* of uncircumciſed lips, and how ſhall Pharaoh hearken unto me?

[a] Ver. 12. Chap. iv. 10.

v. 28—30. This is a repetition to connect the hiſtory. God will have his work done, and he has ways of conſtraining the moſt unwilling heart.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter, 1. *The diſpute between God and Moſes finiſhes, and Moſes applies himſelf to the execution of his commiſſion,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The diſpute between Moſes and Pharaoh begins: Moſes in God's name demands Iſrael's releaſe, Pharaoh denies it.* 1. *Moſes confirms the demand he made to Pharaoh, by a miracle, turning his rod into a ſerpent; but Pharaoh hardens his heart againſt this conviction,* ver. 8—13. 2. *He chaſtiſeth his diſobedience by a plague, the firſt of the ten, turning the waters into blood; but Pharaoh hardens his heart againſt this correction,* ver. 14—25.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, See, I have made thee [a] a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother ſhall be thy prophet. 2. Thou ſhalt ſpeak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother ſhall ſpeak unto Pharaoh, that he ſend the children of Iſrael out of his land. 3. And [b] I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my ſigns and my wonders in the land of Egypt. 4. But Pharaoh ſhall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, *and* my people the children of Iſrael, out of the land of Egypt, [c] by great judgments. 5. And the Egyptians ſhall know that I *am* the LORD, when I ſtretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Iſrael from among them. 6. And Moſes and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, ſo did they. 7. And Moſes *was* fourſcore years old, and Aaron fourſcore and three years old, when they ſpake unto Pharaoh. 1491.

[a] Chap. iv. 16. Jer. i. 10.
[b] Chap. iv. 21.
[c] Chap. vi. 6.

v. 1—7. We have here,

1. Moſes enjoined to proceed, and furniſhed with power, as God, to work wonders in the ſight of Pharaoh, and with an aſſiſtant ſpokeſman in his brother Aaron. And though Pharaoh will not hearken, he ſhall feel God's heavy hand, and Iſrael be delivered. *Note,* (1.) The conteſt is very unequal between a worm of earth and the mighty God. (2.) However miniſters may find oppoſition, as many as are ordained unto eternal life ſhall hear them. (3.) They who will not bow before the ſceptre of grace, ſhall break beneath the rod of judgment.

2. Their obedience at laſt, without farther reluctance. It is well if at laſt, though late, we deſire to give ourſelves up wholly to the work and will of God.

8. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, 9. When Pharaoh ſhall ſpeak unto you, ſaying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou ſhalt ſay unto Aaron, [d] Take thy rod and caſt *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it ſhall become a ſerpent. 10. ¶ And Moſes and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did ſo as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron caſt down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his ſervants, and it became a ſerpent. 11. Then Pharaoh alſo [e] called the wiſe-men and [f] the ſorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they alſo did in like manner with their inchantments. 12. For they caſt down every man his rod, and they became ſerpents: but Aaron's rod ſwallowed up their rods. 13. And he hardned Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkned not unto them; [g] as the LORD had ſaid.

[d] Chap. iv. 2, 17.
[e] Gen. xli. 8.
[f] 2 Tim. iii. 8.
[g] Chap. iv. 21.

v. 8—13. God inſtructs them in their proceedings, and, as he knew Pharaoh would aſk for a ſign, he gives them one.

1. Hereupon they go in, the ſign is demanded, and the rod becomes a ſerpent. *Note,* Many demand a miracle, not to yield to it if wrought, but to countenance their unbelief.

2. Pharaoh calls in his magicians, and they do the ſame. Their rods become ſerpents, either from diabolical agency, or, as I am induced to think, from the power of God, working beyond their art, and with a view in juſt judgment to harden Pharaoh's heart, which was the effect. For though Aaron's rod devoured theirs, a ſufficient proof of its ſuperiority, yet thoſe who are prejudiced againſt the truth, readily embrace every ſhadow of argument to countenance their infidelity. *Note,* The heavieſt judgment of God in this world, is to harden ſinners hearts, and this he doth by methods which leave them without excuſe.

14. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [h] Pharaoh's heart *is* hardned, he refuſeth to let the people go. 15. Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning, lo, he goeth out unto the water, and thou ſhalt ſtand by the river's brink, againſt he come: and the rod which was turned to a ſerpent ſhalt thou take in thine hand. 16. And thou ſhalt ſay unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath ſent me unto thee, ſaying, Let my people go, [i] that they may ſerve me in the wilderneſs: and behold, hitherto thou wouldeſt not hear. 17. Thus ſaith the LORD, In this thou ſhalt know that I *am* the LORD: [k] behold, I will ſmite with the rod that *is* in mine hand, upon the waters which *are* in the river, and they ſhall be turned [l] to blood. 18. And the fiſh that *is* in the river ſhall die, and the river ſhall ſtink; and the Egyptians ſhall loath to drink of the water of the river. 19. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and ſtretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their ſtreams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their † pools of water, that they may become blood; and *that* there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *veſſels of* wood, and in *veſſels of* ſtone. 20. And Moſes and Aaron did ſo, as the LORD commanded: and he [m] lift up the rod, and ſmote the waters that *were* in the river, in the ſight of Pharaoh, and in the ſight of his ſervants: and all [n] the waters that *were* in the river, were

turned

[h] Chap. viii. 15. & x. 1, 20, 27.
[i] Chap. iii. 12, 18. & v. 1, 3.
[k] Chap. iv. 9.
[l] Rev. xvi. 6.
† Heb. Gathering of their waters.
[m] Chap. xvii. 5.
[n] Pſ. lxxviii. 44. & cv. 29.

turned to blood. 21. And the fiſh that *was* in the river,
died : and the river ſtank, and the Egyptians could not
drink of the water of the river, and there was blood
o Wiſd. xvii. 7. throughout all the land of Egypt. . 22. And [o] the ma-
gicians of Egypt did ſo with their inchantments : and
Pharaoh's heart was hardned, neither did he hearken
p Ver. 3. unto them ; [p] as the LORD had ſaid. 23. And Pha-
raoh turned and went into his houſe, neither did he
ſet his heart to this alſo. 24. And all the Egyptians
digged round about the river for water to drink : for
they could not drink of the water of the river. 25.
And ſeven days were fulfilled, after that the LORD had
ſmitten the river.

v. 14—24. God gives warning before he ſtrikes. Vengeance is his ſtrange work ; but when admonition is vain, then he draws the glittering ſword.

1. The judgment is heavy. All the water turned into blood, their fiſh deſtroyed, their land threatned thus with dearth, and themſelves to die with thirſt. The waters of the Nile were the cauſe of Egypt's fruitfulneſs, but now they are its plague ; ſo eaſily can God turn our comforts into curſes. They had ſtained its ſtreams with the blood of Hebrew children, and now they ſhall in return have blood to drink. Thus God will repay in kind ; and this done openly for their greater conviction. Truth never needs nor ſeeks the covert. Learn hence, (1.) How ill we can do without the moſt common bleſſings : the want of water only would deſtroy us. (2.) That we muſt blame our ſins as the cauſe of all our ſufferings.

2. The magicians are ready to oppoſe miracles by lies. They ſeem to have juggled in this ; for if all the waters were blood, where ſhould they prove their power ? Had they turned the blood into water, they had been great indeed ; but if any water was found by thoſe who digged for it, God's permitting them to turn it into blood, but aggravated the judgment. However, falſe or real, Pharaoh was perſuaded. *Note,* Every infidel muſt believe things more abſurd and contradictory, to countenance his infidelity, than he can lay to the charge of thoſe whom he calls credulous.

CHAP. VIII.

Three more of the plagues of Egypt are related in this chapter, (1.) *That of the frogs, threatned, inflicted, mimicked by the magicians, removed at the humble requeſt of Pharaoh, who yet hardens his heart, and refuſes to let Iſrael go,* ver. 1—15. (2.) *The plague of lice,* ver. 16, 17. *By which,* 1. *The magicians were baffled,* ver. 18, 19. *and yet,* 2. *Pharaoh was hardned,* ver. 19. (3.) *That of flies :* 1. *Pharaoh is warned of it before,* ver. 20, 21. *and told that the land of Goſhen ſhould be exempt from this plague,* ver. 22, 23. 2. *The plague is brought,* ver. 24. 3. *Pharaoh treats with Moſes, about the releaſe of Iſrael, and humbles himſelf,* ver. 25—29. 4. *The plague is thereupon removed,* ver. 31. *and Pharaoh's heart hardned,* ver. 32.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, Go unto
Pharaoh, and ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the
LORD, Let my people go, that they may ſerve me.
2. And if thou refuſe to let *them* go, behold, I will
a Rev. xvi. 13. ſmite all thy borders with [a] frogs. 3. And the river ſhall
bring forth frogs abundantly, which ſhall go up and
come into thine houſe, and into thy bed-chamber, and
upon thy bed, and into the houſe of thy ſervants, and
upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy
† Or, dough. † kneading-troughs. 4. And the frogs ſhall come up
both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy
ſervants. 5. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, Say
unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over
the ſtreams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and
cauſe frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.
6. And Aaron ſtretched out his hand over the waters
b Pſ. lxxviii. 45. & cv. 30. of Egypt ; and [b] the frogs came up, and covered the
c Wiſd. xvii. 7. land of Egypt. 7. And [c] the magicians did ſo with
their inchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land
d Chap. ix. 28. & x. 17. Num. xxi. 7. 1 Kings xiii. 6. Acts viii. 24. of Egypt. 8. ¶ Then Pharaoh called for Moſes and
Aaron, and ſaid, [d] Intreat the LORD, that he may take
away the frogs from me, and from my people : and I
will let the people go, that they may do ſacrifice unto the
‡ Or, Have this honour over me, &c. LORD. 9. And Moſes ſaid unto Pharaoh, ‡ Glory over
‖ Or, againſt when, &c. me : ‖ when ſhall I intreat for thee and for thy ſervants,
§ Heb. To cut off. and for thy people, § to deſtroy the frogs from thee, and
thy houſes, *that* they may remain in the river only ? 10.
† Or, Againſt to-morrow. And he ſaid, † To-morrow. And he ſaid, *Be it* according
to thy word : that thou mayeſt know, that *there is* none
like unto the LORD our God. 11. And the frogs
ſhall depart from thee, and from thy houſes, and from
thy ſervants, and from thy people ; they ſhall remain
in the river only. 12. And Moſes and Aaron went out
from Pharaoh : and Moſes cried unto the LORD,
becauſe of the frogs which he had brought againſt Pharaoh. 13. And the LORD did according to the word
of Moſes : and the frogs died out of the houſes, out
of the villages, and out of the fields. 14. And they
gathered them together upon heaps : and the land ſtank.
15. But when Pharaoh ſaw that there was reſpite, [e] he e Chap. vii. 14.
hardned his heart, and hearkned not unto them ; as
the LORD had ſaid.

v. 1—15. The ſeven days of the firſt plague being expired, God brings a ſecond. He has many arrows in his quiver. But, 1. He ſends to beg his people's deliverance, for Pharaoh's ſake, as well as theirs : for God delighteth not in the death of a ſinner. He adds threats to his intreaty, but in vain. Hereupon, 2. The plague is inflicted. The frogs come up, as an invading army : no place is free, even to their beds and kneading-troughs. *Note,* When God purſues the guilty conſcience, even his bed cannot give him reſt, nor his meals be in quiet. 3. The magicians imitate or aggravate the Judgment. It is a bad power, which we had better be without, only to be able to do hurt. 4. Pharaoh now at laſt begins for a moment to relent. Moſes and Aaron are called ; he begs their prayers, and promiſes to let the people go. In times of ſuffering, many will call for their help or prayers, which before it may be they deſpiſed. 5. Moſes gives Pharaoh the honour of fixing the time, with aſſurance of their removal. Pharaoh appoints to-morrow. 6. His prayer, and the ſucceſs of it, *v.* 12, 13. *Note,* (1.) If we muſt pray for our perſecutors, how much more for ſuch as give us hopes of penitence. (2.) The prayer of faith is wonderfully effectual. 7. Pharaoh's impenitence : no ſooner reſpited, than again hardned. Like his are moſt ſick-bed promiſes, that with returning health are all forgotten. Neither God's patience, nor his judgments, without his grace, will ſavingly convert the ſinner's heart. The more ſmitten, the more ſpared, the more impenitent.

16. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, ſay unto
Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and ſmite the duſt of the
land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of
Egypt. 17. And they did ſo ; for Aaron ſtretched out
his hand with his rod, and ſmote the duſt of the earth,
and [f] it became lice in man and in beaſt : all the duſt of f Pſ. cv. 31.
the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.
18. And the magicians did ſo with their inchantments
to bring forth lice, but they could not : ſo there were
lice upon man and upon beaſt. 19. Then the magi-
cians ſaid unto Pharaoh, This *is* [g] the finger of God : and g 1 Sam. vi. 3, 9. Pſ. viii. 3. Mat. xii. 28. Luke xi. 20.
Pharaoh's heart was hardned, and he hearkned not
unto them ; as the LORD had ſaid.

v. 16—19. The vileſt and moſt deſpicable of the creatures, when ſent from him, are ſufficient to plague the proudeſt. The frogs are gone, and Pharaoh at eaſe. But now, without warning,

1. The lice come upon him ; nor man nor beaſt is free from this loathſome intruder. They who will not repent of their ſins ſhall be plagued for them.

2. The magicians are baffled in their attempts. They who can bring frogs, can neither bring nor remove the lice. The devil can go no farther than his chain. They are made to own the finger of God. Thus the moſt inveterate of God's enemies have oft-times bore teſtimony to his glory.

3. Pharaoh's determined hardneſs of heart. When God gives a man up to a reprobate mind, nothing can ſave him.

20. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Riſe up early
in the morning, and ſtand before Pharaoh, (lo, he cometh
forth to the water) and ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the
LORD, Let my people go, that they may ſerve me.
21. Elſe if thou wilt not let my people go, behold,
I will ſend † ſwarms *of flies* upon thee, and upon thy ſer- † Or, a mixture of noiſome beaſts, &c.
vants, and upon thy people, and into thy houſes : and
the houſes of the Egyptians ſhall be full of ſwarms *of*
flies, and alſo the ground whereon they *are.* 22. And
‡ I [h] will ſever in that day the land of Goſhen, in which ‡ h Chap. ix. 4, 26. & x. 23. & xii. 13.
my people dwell, that no ſwarms *of flies* ſhall be there :
to the end thou mayeſt know that I *am* the LORD in
the midſt of the earth. 23. And I will put ‖ a diviſion ‖ Heb. A redemption.
between my people and thy people ; § to-morrow ſhall § Or, by to-morrow.
this ſign be. 24. And the LORD did ſo : and [i] there i Pſ. lxxviii. 45. & cv. 31. Wiſd. xvi. 9.
came a grievous ſwarm *of flies* into the houſe of Pharaoh,
and

Before Chriſt 1491.

and *into* his ſervants houſes, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was † corrupted by reaſon of the ſwarm *of flies*. 25 ¶ And Pharaoh called for Moſes and for Aaron, and ſaid, Go ye, ſacrifice to your God in the land. 26. And Moſes ſaid, It is not meet ſo to do: for we ſhall ſacrifice [k] the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: Lo, ſhall we ſacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not ſtone us? 27. We will go [l] three days journey into the wilderneſs, and ſacrifice to the LORD our God, [m] as he ſhall command us. 28. And Pharaoh ſaid, I will let you go, that ye may ſacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderneſs; only you ſhall not go very far away: [n] intreat for me. 29. And Moſes ſaid, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will intreat the LORD, that the ſwarms *of flies* may depart from Pharaoh, from his ſervants, and from his people, to-morrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more, in not letting the people go to ſacrifice to the LORD. 30. And Moſes went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD. 31. And the LORD did according to the word of Moſes, and he removed the ſwarms *of flies* from Pharaoh, from his ſervants, and from his people: there remained not one. 32. And Pharaoh [o] hardned his heart at this time alſo, neither would he let the people go.

† Or, deſtroyed.

[k] Gen. xliii. 32. & xlvi. 34.

[l] Chap. iii. 12.

[m] Chap. iii. 18.

[n] Ver. viii. Chap. ix. 28. 1 Kings xiii. 6.

[o] Ver. 15. Chap. iv. 21.

v. 20—32. 1. Pharaoh is warned of God's reſolution to ſend a grievous ſwarm of flies. He was probably praying at the river to his falſe gods, and here is a meſſage to him from Jehovah. Diſtinction ſhall be made between God's people and his, more evidently to demonſtrate the hand of God in the judgment. Whilſt Egypt is full of flies, Goſhen ſhall be free. *Note*, God is able to ſecure his ſervants from common deſolations here; but if they ſhould now ſink with others in affliction, the day is near, when he will make an awful and eternal ſeparation between the righteous and the wicked.

2. Pharaoh calls for Moſes and Aaron; and, tormented with theſe noiſome inſects, he makes ſome reluctant conceſſions: they ſhall worſhip, but in Egypt. The propoſal is rejected, and the reaſon given, *v.* 26. They inſiſt upon liberty to depart, *v.* 27. and he with unwillingneſs conſents they ſhall go, but not far out of his reach. *Note*, (1.) Sins that we are driven from by a tormented conſcience through fear only, like a miſtreſs caſt off in a paſſion, will ſoon be taken in again. (2) In order to ſerve God acceptably, we muſt be ſeparate from the ways and company of a wicked world. (3) No ſervice can pleaſe him, but what is according to his will and word.

3. Moſes is content to intercede for him, but admoniſhes him not to deal deceitfully. God is not mocked. Forced repentance uſually betrays itſelf; but though we impoſe upon men, we cannot upon God: we can only deceive ourſelves to our ruin.

4. The plague is removed, and Pharaoh's hypocriſy appears. Bad truſting to wicked men's words. The ambition and pride of kings make them often break their ſolemn treaties; but they only thereby court their own deſtruction.

CHAP. IX.

In this chapter we have an account of three more of the plagues of Egypt. 1. *Murrain among the cattle*, ver. 1—7. 2. *Boils upon man and beaſt*, ver. 8—12. 3. *Hail with thunder and lightning.* 1. *Warning is given*, ver. 13—21. 2. *It is inflicted to their great terror*, ver. 22—26. 3. *Pharaoh in a fright renews his treaty with Moſes, but inſtantly breaks his word*, ver. 27—35.

1. THEN the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may ſerve me. 2. For if thou refuſe to let *them* go, and wilt hold them ſtill, 3. Behold the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which *is* in the field, upon the horſes, upon the aſſes, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the ſheep: *there ſhall be* a very grievous murrain. 4. And [a] the LORD ſhall ſever between the cattle of Iſrael, and the cattle of Egypt: and there ſhall nothing die of all *that is* the childrens of Iſrael. 5. And the LORD appointed a ſet time, ſaying, To-morrow the LORD ſhall do this thing in the land. 6. And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and [b] all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Iſrael died not one. 7. And Pharaoh ſent, and behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Iſraelites dead. And [c] the heart of Pharaoh was hardned, and he did not let the people go.

[a] Chap. viii. 22.

[b] Pſ. lxxviii. 50.

[c] Chap. vii. 14.

v. 1—7. Who can ſtand before this holy Lord God? His ſtrokes fall ſtill heavier. The grievous murrain is denounced and comes. The cattle of Egypt die, whilſt thoſe of Iſrael live. Pharaoh ſends to ſee, yet rejects the conviction. Nothing will convince thoſe whom God determines to deſtroy.

8. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of aſhes of the furnace, and let Moſes ſprinkle it towards the heaven in the ſight of Pharaoh. 9. And it ſhall become ſmall duſt in all the land of Egypt, and ſhall be [d] a boil breaking forth *with* blains, upon man, and upon beaſt, throughout all the land of Egypt. 10. And they took aſhes of the furnace, and ſtood before Pharaoh, and Moſes ſprinkled it up toward heaven: and it became [e] a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man, and upon beaſt. 11. And the magicians could not ſtand before Moſes, becauſe of the boil: for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians. 12. And the LORD hardned the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkned not unto them, [e] as the LORD had ſpoken unto Moſes.

[d] Rev. xvi. 2.

[e] Deut. xxviii. 27.

[e] Chap. iv. 21.

v. 8—12. To humble ourſelves under the mighty hand of God, is the way to avert his judgments; to harden our heart, is but to increaſe them. Behold, another plague: *that* affected their cattle, *this* their perſons. A boil, as painful as loathſome. The fire of the furnace never ſcorched the Iſraelites, ſo much as this duſt the body of the Egyptians. Not even the magicians could ſtand before it: their folly is now as manifeſt, as their ſufferings are grievous. *Note*, (1.) God will moſt ſeverely handle thoſe who have been moſt inſtrumental in deceiving and hardening others. (2.) Though the devil delude men into ſin, he cannot preſerve them from ſuffering. Pharaoh ſtill is hardned: he had rejected God's warnings, and now his impenitence is both his puniſhment and crime. *Note*, When men reject God, it is juſt they ſhould be rejected by him.

13. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Riſe up early in the morning, and ſtand before Pharaoh, and ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may ſerve me. 14. For I will at this time ſend all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy ſervants, and upon thy people: that thou mayeſt know that *there is* none like me in all the earth. 15. For now I will ſtretch out my hand, that I may ſmite thee and thy people with peſtilence; and thou ſhalt be cut off from the earth. 16. And in very deed for [f] this *cauſe* have I † raiſed thee up, for to ſhew *in* thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. 17. As yet exalteſt thou thyſelf againſt my people, that thou wilt not let them go? 18. Behold, to-morrow about this time I will cauſe it to rain a very grievous hail, ſuch as hath not been in Egypt ſince the foundation thereof, even until now. 19. Send therefore now, *and* gather thy cattle, and all that thou haſt in the field: *for upon* every man and beaſt which ſhall be found in the field, and ſhall not be brought home, the hail ſhall come down upon them, and they ſhall die. 20. He that feared the word of the LORD amongſt the ſervants of Pharaoh, made his ſervants and his cattle flee into the houſes. 21. And he that ‡ regarded not the word of the LORD, left his ſervants and his cattle in the field.

[f] Rom. ix. 17. See chap. xiv. 17. Prov. xvi. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

† Heb. Made thee ſtand.

‡ Heb. Set not his heart unto.

v. 13—21. Did ever any man harden his heart againſt God, and proſper? Let us read and tremble.

1. A new demand is made, and a more terrible judgment threatened. Bodily plagues are grievous, but heart-plagues the worſt of miſeries. God will be glorified wherever he contends. The wrath and furiouſneſs of man ſhall praiſe him. Pharaoh is raiſed up, on purpoſe to make his power known: dreadful ſummit of dignity, like Lucifer's, only to fall with more diſtinguiſhed ruin. *Note*, The veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction ſhall as certainly ſhew forth the ſovereignty, power, and juſtice of God, as the veſſels of mercy, his diſtinguiſhing grace and love.

2. To thoſe who have any fear of God, time is given to prepare for, and avoid the ſtroke, by taking in their cattle. Mercy here mingles with judgment. *Note*, If a man hear and fear, he may eſcape; for there is in Jeſus Chriſt a covert from the ſtorm for the chief of ſinners. Some, like the maſter, deſpiſed the warning. Wickedneſs in high places affords a moſt pernicious and prevalent example. Some feared, and brought in their

cattle. God hath his ſecret ones in the worſt days, and even in Cæſar's houſhold.

22. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be [g] hail in all the land of Egypt; upon man, and upon beaſt, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. 23. And Moſes ſtretched forth his rod toward heaven, and [h] the LORD ſent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. 24. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, ſuch as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt, ſince it became a nation. 25. And the hail ſmote throughout all the land of Egypt, all that *was* in the field, both man and beaſt: and the hail ſmote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. 26. [i] Only in the land of Goſhen, where the children of Iſrael *were*, was there no hail. 27. ¶ And Pharaoh ſent, and called for Moſes and Aaron, and ſaid unto them, I have ſinned *this* time: the LORD *is* righteous, and I and my people *are* wicked. 28. [k] Intreat the LORD (for it is enough) that there be no *more* † mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye ſhall ſtay no longer. 29. And Moſes ſaid unto him, As ſoon as I am gone out of the city, I will ſpread abroad my hands unto the LORD: *and* the thunder ſhall ceaſe, neither ſhall there be any more hail; that thou mayeſt know, how that *the* [l] earth *is* the LORD's. 30. But as for thee and thy ſervants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God. 31. And the flax and the barley was ſmitten: for the barley *was* in the ear, and the flax *was* bolled. 32. [m] But the wheat and the rye were not ſmitten; for they *were* ‡ not grown up. 33. And Moſes went out of the city from Pharaoh, and ſpread abroad his hands unto the LORD: and the thunders and hail ceaſed, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. 34. And when Pharaoh ſaw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunders were ceaſed, he ſinned yet more, and hardned his heart, he and his ſervants. 35. And [n] the heart of Pharaoh was hardned, neither would he let the children of Iſrael go; as the LORD had ſpoken ‖ by Moſes.

[g] Rev. xvi. 21.

[h] Pſ. lxxviii. 47. & cv. 32.

[i] Chap. viii. 22. & x. 23. & xi. 7. & xii. 13.

[k] Chap. viii. 8, 28. & x. 17. Acts viii. 24.

† Heb. Voices of God.

[l] Pſ. xxiv. 1.

[m] Ruth i. 22. & ii. 23.

‡ Heb. Hidden or dark.

[n] Chap. iv. 21.

‖ Heb. By the hand of Moſes.

v. 22—35. How terrible the ſtorm, how dreadful the havock! Whilſt mighty thunders utter their voices in the heavens, and the lightnings flaſh around, the battering hail, reſiſtleſs in its fury, beats down all before it. Egypt ſeems ſwept with the beſom of deſtruction: men, cattle, trees, corn, lie in promiſcuous ruin. Nothing is left alive, that is expoſed to the devouring tempeſt, whilſt Goſhen enjoys peaceful ſerenity. Pharaoh, aſtoniſhed, humbles himſelf to the duſt, confeſſes his wickedneſs, and intreats forgiveneſs. Moſes immediately goes out. They need not fear, whom God protects. In the midſt of the ſtorm he prays and is heard. *Note,* They who have learnt to pray, are thunder-proof. But no ſooner does the ſtorm ceaſe, than Pharaoh recants. Confeſſions extorted by fear are ſcarce ſooner made than revoked. How many a ſinner hath trembled, like Pharaoh, and, for a moment, owned a God of judgment; and then, when the danger was paſſed, perhaps laughed at his own fears, and carried it off with a bravado.

CHAP. X.

The eighth and ninth of the plagues of Egypt, that of locuſts, and that of darkneſs, are recorded in this chapter. 1. *Concerning the plague of locuſts,* (1.) *God inſtructs Moſes in the meaning of theſe amazing diſpenſations,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *He threatens the locuſts,* ver. 3—6. (3.) *Pharaoh, at the perſuaſion of his ſervants, is willing to treat again with Moſes,* ver. 7, 8, 9. *but they cannot agree,* ver. 10, 11. (4.) *The locuſts come,* ver. 12—15. (5.) *Pharaoh intreats,* ver. 16, 17. *Moſes prays for the removal of the plague,* ver. 18, 19. *Pharaoh ſtill hardned,* ver. 20. 2. *Concerning the plague of darkneſs,* 1. *It is inflicted,* ver. 21, 22, 23. 2. *Pharaoh again treats with Moſes about a ſurrender, but breaks off in a heat,* ver. 24—29.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Go in unto Pharaoh: for [a] I have hardned his heart, and the heart of his ſervants; that I might ſhew theſe my ſigns before him: 2. And that [b] thou mayſt tell in the ears of thy ſon, and of thy ſon's ſon, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my ſigns which I have done amongſt them; that ye may know how that I *am* the LORD. 3. And Moſes and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuſe to humble thyſelf before me? Let my people go, that they may ſerve me. 4. Elſe if thou refuſe to let my people go, behold, to-morrow will I bring the [c] locuſts into thy coaſt. 5. And they ſhall cover the † face of the earth, that one cannot be able to ſee the earth: and [d] they ſhall eat the reſidue of that which is eſcaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and ſhall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field. 6. And they ſhall fill thy houſes, and the houſes of all thy ſervants, and the houſes of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers fathers have ſeen, ſince the day that they were upon the earth, unto this day. And he turned himſelf, and went out from Pharaoh. 7. And Pharaoh's ſervants ſaid unto him, How long ſhall this man be a ſnare unto us? Let the men go, that they may ſerve the LORD their God: Knoweſt thou not yet, that Egypt is deſtroyed? 8. And Moſes and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he ſaid unto them, Go, ſerve the LORD your God: *but* ‡ who *are* they that ſhall go? 9. And Moſes ſaid, We will go with our young, and with our old, with our ſons, and with our daughters; with our flocks, and with our herds will we go: for we *muſt hold* a feaſt unto the LORD. 10. And he ſaid unto them, Let the LORD be ſo with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look *to it,* for evil *is* before you. 11. Not ſo: go now ye *that are* men, and ſerve the LORD, for that you did deſire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's preſence.

[a] Chap. iv. 21. & vii. 14.

[b] Pſ. lxxi. 18. & lxxviii. 5.

[c] Wiſd. xvi. 9.

† Heb. Eye.

[d] Joel i. 4.

‡ Heb. Who and who ſhall, &c.

v. 1—11. God's judgments are ſtanding memorials of his power and juſtice, that the potſherds of the earth may not dare to contend with their Maker. Egypt is almoſt conſumed, but her king is obſtinate as ever. Therefore,

1. Moſes is ſent again to challenge God's people. Before he intreated, now he demands. It required courage indeed to ſtand thus before an incenſed king. Grace makes men as bold as lions. The locuſts are threatened, *v.* 4, 5, and, without waiting for reply, he turns and departs.

2. Pharaoh's ſervants intercede with him, for fear of that evident ruin which muſt attend his refuſal. On this he makes a new propoſal, *v.* 8, but, as they who ſerve God, muſt ſerve him with all they poſſeſs, Moſes inſiſts on leave to depart for themſelves, their children, and their cattle, *v.* 9. This Pharaoh rejects with indignation, and drives them from his preſence in a rage. *Note,* When the Devil gets a ſinner to the precipice, he puſhes him quickly headlong down.

12. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locuſts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, *even* all that the hail hath left. 13. And Moſes ſtretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an eaſt wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night: *and* when it was morning, the eaſt wind brought the locuſts. 14. And [e] the locuſts went up over all the land of Egypt, and reſted in all the coaſts of Egypt: very grievous *were they;* [f] before them there were no ſuch locuſts as they, neither after them ſhall be ſuch. 15. For they covered the face of the whole earth, ſo that the land was darkned, and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees, which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt. 16. ¶ Then Pharaoh † called for Moſes and Aaron in haſte; and he ſaid, I have ſinned againſt the LORD your God, and againſt you. 17. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my ſin only this once, and [g] intreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only. 18. And he went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD. 19. And the LORD turned a mighty ſtrong weſt wind, which took away the locuſts, and ‡ caſt them [h] into the Red-ſea: there remained not one locuſt in all the coaſts of Egypt. 20. But the LORD [i] hardned Pharaoh's heart, ſo that he would not let the children of Iſrael go.

[e] Pſ. lxxviii. 46. & cv. 34.

[f] Joel, ii. 2.

† Heb. Haſtened to call.

[g] Chap. ix. 28.

‡ Heb. Faſtened.

[h] Joel ii. 20.

[i] Chap. iv. 21. & xi. 10.

v. 12—20. The locuſts come, the ſky is darkened, the earth covered, and the little which the hail had left utterly conſumed. How ſoon can God, by the moſt contemptible inſects, make our land a wilderneſs! Hereupon,

1. Pharaoh returns to ſubmiſſion and intreaty, begs pardon of God and his ſervants, and promiſes very largely, *v.* 16, 17. *Note*, (1.) They who deſpiſe God's miniſters, had well aſk their pardon, before they ſtand to accuſe them at the bar of God. (2.) They who are more ſollicitous to remove the threatened death, than their ſin which is the cauſe of it, are certainly hypocritical penitents.

2. Moſes prays, and a weſt wind carries the locuſts away. No ſooner is the plague removed, than Pharaoh returns as the dog to his vomit again. Frequent relapſes into ſin uſually end in final apoſtacy.

21. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Stretch out thine hand towards heaven, that there may be darkneſs over the land of Egypt, † even darkneſs *which* may be felt. 22. And Moſes ſtretched forth his hand toward heaven: and there was [k] a thick darkneſs in all the land of Egypt three days. 23. They ſaw not one another, neither roſe any from his place for three days; but [l] all the children of Iſrael had light in their dwellings. 24. ¶ And Pharaoh called unto Moſes, and ſaid, Go ye, ſerve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be ſtayed: let your little ones alſo go with you. 25. And Moſes ſaid, Thou muſt give ‡ us alſo ſacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may ſacrifice unto the LORD our God. 26. Our cattle alſo ſhall go with us; there ſhall not an hoof be left behind: for thereof muſt we take to ſerve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we muſt ſerve the LORD, until we come thither. 27. ¶ But the LORD [m] hardned Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. 28. And Pharaoh ſaid unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyſelf, ſee my face no more: for in *that* day thou ſeeſt my face, thou ſhalt die. 29. And Moſes ſaid, Thou haſt ſpoken well, [n] I will ſee thy face again no more.

† Heb. That one may feel darkneſs.
k Pſ. cv. 28. Wiſd. xvii. 2.
l Chap. viii. 22. Wiſd. xviii. 1.
‡ Heb. Into our hands.
m Chap. xiv. 4, 8.
n Heb. xi. 27.

v. 21—29. When ſin is not repented of, God's wrath is not turned away; and though there may be intervals of reſpite, yet his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.

1. A more diſmal plague overtakes them; total darkneſs, ſo thick as to be felt, and made more frightful from the terrors of conſcience, which now muſt ſeize them, as well as perhaps from fiends of darkneſs, who, as tradition reports, with horrid yells tormented and haunted thoſe miſerable ſouls. Three days it continued, nor did any ſtir from his place. *Note*, Hell is the place of darkneſs and of torment. They who chuſe the darkneſs of ſin, are doomed to this outer darkneſs, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth. If three days ſo ſpent were dreadful, what muſt it be to ſpend eternity thus?

2. Iſrael had light in their dwellings. How much better the lightſome tent of a Hebrew ſervant, than the darkened palaces of proud Pharaoh? *Note*, The ſoul in a cottage, who enjoys the light of God's countenance, is unſpeakably more happy, than the greateſt monarch that walks in the darkneſs of ſin.

3. Pharaoh again ſounds a parley, advances a little farther, *v.* 24. Moſes is peremptory; a hoof ſhall not be left behind. *Note*, Falſe repentance is always partial, and ſome ſecret ſin is reſerved: true repentance is univerſal, in renouncing every known evil. Allowedly, not a hoof muſt be left behind.

4. Mad with rage, Pharaoh thruſts him out, and threatens him with death, if he dare ever appear in his preſence again. Impotent threats! The ungodly gnaſh with their teeth, and pine away. Moſes conſents to his commands, and leaves him quickly, with juſter indignation. That ſoul, that people, that place, are then paſt recovery, who thruſt out God's miniſters from them, and have the duſt of their feet ſhaken off for a teſtimony againſt them.

CHAP. XI.

Moſes takes his final leave of Pharaoh. 1. *God gives him inſtructions what to do*, ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *The laſt meſſage concerning the death of the firſt-born*, ver. 4—8. 3. *A repetition of the prediction of Pharaoh's hardning his heart*, ver. 9. *and the event anſwering it*, ver. 10.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Yet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: [a] when he ſhall let *you* go, he ſhall ſurely thruſt you out hence altogether. 2. Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, [b] jewels of ſilver, and jewels of gold. 3. And [c] the LORD gave the people favour in the ſight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man [d] Moſes *was* very great in the land of Egypt, in the ſight of Pharaoh's ſervants, and in the ſight of the people.

a Chap. xii. 31, 33, 39.
b Chap. iii. 22. & xii. 35.
c Chap. xii. 36.
d Ecclus xlv. 1.

v. 1—3. They who deſpiſed Moſes at firſt, begin to fear and honour him at laſt. God gives him his laſt directions. Iſrael had ſerved for no wages long enough; God will now repay them in the jewels of Egypt. Some way or other, they who ſuffer for him ſhall obtain their reward. God hath a ſhort work to do; one ſtroke more, and then they ſhall be as earneſt to thruſt them out, as before to hold them priſoners. *Note*, There is one judgment yet to come after this life againſt ſinners, which ſhall humble them, if nothing elſe doth.

4. And Moſes ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, [e] About midnight will I go out into the midſt of Egypt. 5. And [f] all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt ſhall die, from the firſt-born of Pharaoh, that ſitteth upon his throne, even unto the firſt-born of the maid-ſervant that *is* behind the mill; and all the firſt-born of beaſts. 6. And there ſhall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, ſuch as there was none like it, nor ſhall be like it any more. 7. [g] But againſt any of the children of Iſrael [h] ſhall not a dog move his tongue, againſt man or beaſt: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Iſrael. 8. And [i] all theſe thy ſervants ſhall come down unto me, and bow down themſelves unto me, ſaying, Get thee out, and all the people † that follow thee; and after that I will go out: and he went out from Pharaoh in ‡ a great anger. 9. And [k] the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Pharaoh ſhall not hearken unto you; that [l] my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. 10. And Moſes and Aaron did all theſe wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD [m] hardned Pharaoh's heart, ſo that he would not let the children of Iſrael go out of his land.

e Chap. xii. 29.
f Chap. xii. 12.
g Chap. viii. 22.
h Joſh. x. 21.
i Chap. xii. 31, 33.
† Heb. That is at thy feet. So Judg. iv. 10. & viii. 5. 1 Kings xx. 10. 2 Kings iii. 9.
‡ Heb. Heat of anger.
k Chap. iii. 19. & x. 1.
l Chap vii. 3.
m Chap. iv. 21.

v. 4—10. The blow was long ſuſpended, *Exod.* iv. 23. Now it deſcends. God tries leſſer chaſtiſements firſt, to bring men to repentance; but when they are found incorrigible, then vengeance overtakes them to the uttermoſt.

1. The judgment is denounced; the time fixed, at dead of night; the extent of it, from the prince to the ſlave: Iſrael alone is exempted. In their dwellings there ſhall be life and joy, whilſt death and mourning ſhall fill the houſes of the Egyptians. *Note*, Death, as the wages of ſin, can never hurt thoſe who are paſſed from death unto life.

2. It is foretold how ſuppliant the proud perſecutors would grow, *v.* 8, and hereupon Moſes with indignation leaves the devoted palace. *Note*, (1.) The hardneſs of ſinners hearts is a bitter grief to the miniſters of Chriſt. (2.) When ſin is the object of our indignation, we may be angry, and ſin not.

3. The determined hardneſs of Pharaoh's heart, as foretold, continues. *Note*, We are not to wonder at the general rejection of God's truth; it was foretold long ago.

CHAP. XII.

Contains, 1. *The inſtitution of the paſſover*, 2. *The killing and eating of the Paſchal Lamb*, ver. 1—6, 8—11. 3. *The ſprinkling of the blood upon the door-poſts*, ver. 7. *with the reaſon for it*, ver. 11—13. 4. *The feaſt of unleavened bread for ſeven days after*, ver. 14—20. *The people inſtructed in the obſervance*, 1. *Of this firſt paſſover*, ver. 21—23. 2. *Of the after-paſſovers*, ver. 24—27. *And the Iſraelites obedience to theſe orders*, ver. 28. 2. *The judgment on Egypt*, 1. *The firſt-born ſlain*, ver. 29—30. 2. *Orders are given immediately for Iſrael's diſcharge*, ver. 31, 32, 33. 3. *They begin their march*, (1.) *Loaded with their own effects*, ver. 34. (2.) *Enriched with the ſpoils of Egypt*, ver. 35, 36. (3.) *Attended with a mixt multitude*, ver. 37, 38. (4.) *Put to their ſhifts for preſent ſupply*, ver. 39. *This event is dated*, ver. 40—42. *Laſtly, A recapitulation*, (1.) *of this memorable ordinance*, ver. 43—49. (2.) *Of this memorable providence*, ver. 50, 51.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ſaying, 2. This month *ſhall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *ſhall be* the firſt month of the year to you. 3. ¶ Speak ye unto all the congregation of Iſrael, ſaying, In the tenth *day* of this month they ſhall take to them every man a † lamb, according to the houſe of *their* fathers, a lamb for an houſe. 4. And if the houſhold be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his houſe, take *it* according to the number of the ſouls; every man according to his eating, ſhall make your count for the lamb. 5.

† Or kid.

Your

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Your lamb ſhall be [a] without blemiſh, a male ‡ of the firſt year: ye ſhall take *it* out from the ſheep or from the goats. 6. And ye ſhall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the ſame month: and [b] the whole aſſembly of the congregation of Iſrael ſhall kill it ‖ in the evening. 7. And they ſhall take of the blood, and ſtrike *it* on the two ſide-poſts, and on the upper door-poſt of the houſes, wherein they ſhall eat it. 8. And they ſhall eat the fleſh in that night; roſt with fire, and [c] unleavened bread, *and* with bitter *herbs* they ſhall eat it. 9. Eat not of it raw, nor ſodden at all with water, but roſt with fire: his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. 10. And [d] ye ſhall let nothing of it remain until the morning: and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye ſhall burn with fire. 11. ¶ And thus ſhall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your ſhoes on your feet, and your ſtaff in your hand: and ye ſhall eat it in haſte: [e] it *is* the LORD's paſſover. 12. For I will paſs through the land of Egypt this night, and will ſmite all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beaſt: and [f] againſt all the § gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. 13. And the blood ſhall be to you for a token upon the houſes where you *are*: and when I ſee the blood, I will paſs over you, and the plague ſhall not be upon you † to deſtroy *you*, when I ſmite the land of Egypt. 14. And this day ſhall be unto you for a memorial; and you ſhall keep it a feaſt to the LORD throughout your generations! you ſhall keep it a feaſt by an ordinance for ever. 15. [g] Seven days ſhall ye eat unleavened bread, even the firſt day ye ſhall put away leaven out of your houſes: for whoſoever eateth leavened bread, from the firſt day until the ſeventh day, [h] that ſoul ſhall be cut off from Iſrael. 16. And in the firſt day *there ſhall be* an holy convocation, and in the ſeventh day there ſhall be an holy convocation to you: no manner of work ſhall be done in them, ſave *that* which every ‡ man muſt eat, that only may be done of you. 17. And ye ſhall obſerve *the feaſt of* unleavened bread; for in this ſelf-ſame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore ſhall ye obſerve this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. 18. ¶ [i] In the firſt *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye ſhall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. 19. [k] Seven days ſhall there be no leaven found in your houſes: for whoſoever eateth that which is leavened, [l] even that ſoul ſhall be cut off from the congregation of Iſrael, whether he be a ſtranger or born in the land. 20. Ye ſhall eat nothing leavened: in all your habitations ſhall ye eat unleavened bread.

[a] Lev. xxii. 20, 21. Mal. i. 8. Heb. ix. 14. 1 Pet. i. 9.
‡ Heb. Son of a year.
[b] Lev. xxiii. 5. Numb. ix. 3. & xxviii. 16. Deut. xvi. 1.
‖ Heb. Between the two evenings. Deut. xvi. 6.
[c] 1 Cor. v. 8.
[d] Chap. xxiii. 18. & xxxiv. 25.
[e] Deut. xvi. 5.
[f] Num. xxxiii. 4.
§ Or princes.
† Heb. For a deſtruction.
[g] Chap. xiii. 6, & xxiii. 15. & xxxiv. 18, 25.
[h] Gen. xvii. 14.
‡ Heb. Soul.
[i] Lev. xxiii. 5. Num. xxviii. 16.
[k] Exod. xxiii. 15. & xxxiv. 18. Deut. xvi. 3.
[l] Num. ix. 13.

v. 1—20. The deliverance of Iſrael advances. Orders are iſſued out about their departure, and the preparations for it. As they now are to begin new lives, they are to count from this day the new year. *Note*, That is emphatically our birth-day, and the beginning of years, when we begin to eſcape from ſin, and live to God.

1. The paſſover is inſtituted, with particular directions for preſent and future uſe, *v.* 3—14. and the days of unleavened bread are to follow, in memory of this great event, their eſcape from the houſe of their priſon. We muſt begin with God, whatever haſte of buſineſs is upon our hands.

2. God's viſitation upon Egypt and her idols, *v.* 12. All the vain confidence of ſinners muſt periſh with them.

3. The reſpect theſe ordinances have to us in goſpel times. (1.) Chriſt is our paſſover; a lamb without blemiſh, appointed and ſet apart by God to be ſlain; enduring the fierceſt fire of divine wrath, and ſacrificed for all his ſpiritual Iſrael. (2.) His blood muſt by faith be ſprinkled on our conſciences. Wherever it is found, there is no condemnation; and we muſt never be aſhamed to profeſs our open dependance upon him. (3.) The Lamb of God is to be fed upon, as our ſpiritual ſtrength and nouriſhment. As the time is ſhort, we muſt make haſte to draw near to him. The bitter herbs of repentance ſhould attend the feaſt, and give a greater reliſh to the food; and as thoſe who remember how near their departure is, we ſhould be ready, not only to leave our ſins behind, but our bodies in the duſt, whenever he calls us away to his bleſſed ſelf. (4.) Then we ſhall keep the feaſt with holy joy, as pardoned ſinners; with fervent affection, as thoſe who are going to poſſeſs the ſame land; with ſincerity and truth, renouncing the leaven of malice and wickedneſs; and thus perſevering, till we come to ſit down in the true Canaan, the kingdom of eternal glory.

21. ¶ Then Moſes called for all the elders of Iſrael, and ſaid unto them, Draw out and take you a † lamb, according to your families, and kill the paſſover. 22. And [m] ye ſhall take a bunch of hyſſop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the baſon: and ſtrike the lintel and the two ſide-poſts, with the blood that *is* in the baſon: and none of you ſhall go out at the door of his houſe until the morning. 23. For the LORD will paſs through to ſmite the Egyptians, and when he ſeeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two ſide-poſts, the LORD will paſs over the door, and [n] will not ſuffer [o] the deſtroyer to come in unto your houſes to ſmite *you*. 24. And ye ſhall obſerve this thing for an ordinance to thee, and to thy ſons for ever. 25. And it ſhall come to paſs, when ye be come to the land, which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promiſed, that ye ſhall keep this ſervice. 26. And [p] it ſhall come to paſs, when your children ſhall ſay unto you, What mean you by this ſervice? 27. That ye ſhall ſay, it *is* the ſacrifice of the LORD's paſſover, who paſſed over the houſes of the children of Iſrael in Egypt, when he ſmote the Egyptians, and delivered our houſes. And the people [q] bowed the head and worſhipped. 28. And the children of Iſrael went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moſes and Aaron, ſo did they.

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† Or kid.
[m] Heb. xi. 28.
[n] Ezek. ix. 6. Rev. vii. 3. & ix. 4.
[o] 1 Cor. x. 10. Heb. xi. 28.
[p] Joſh. iv. 6.
[q] Chap. iv. 31.

v. 21—28. Moſes enjoins, and Iſrael humbly obeys. The lamb is killed, the lintels ſprinkled with blood. No man muſt go out, leſt he die. *Note*, The ſoul that truſts on any other hope than the blood of ſprinkling, periſhes with the Egyptians. Their children too hereafter muſt be taught the meaning of the ordinance, *v.* 26. When children aſk, (and it is pleaſing indeed to ſee them inquiſitive in matters relating to God) we ſhould take delight to ſpeak to them about the dear Lamb which was ſlain, and his diſtinguiſhing love to his people.

29. ¶ And [r] it came to paſs, that at midnight [s] the LORD ſmote all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt, [t] from the firſt-born of Pharaoh, that ſat on his throne, unto the firſt-born of the captive that *was* in the † dungeon; and all the firſt-born of cattle. 30. And Pharaoh roſe up in the night, he and all his ſervants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for *there was* not a houſe where *there was* not one dead. 31. ¶ And [u] he called for Moſes and Aaron by night, and ſaid, Riſe up, *and* get you forth from amongſt my people, [x] both you and the children of Iſrael: and go, ſerve the LORD, as ye have ſaid. 32. [y] Alſo take your flocks and your herds as ye have ſaid, and be gone: and bleſs me alſo. 33. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might ſend them out of the land in haſte: for they ſaid, We *be* all dead *men*. 34. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their † kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their ſhoulders. 35. And the children of Iſrael did according to the word of Moſes: and they borrowed of the Egyptians [z] jewels of ſilver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. 36. And [a] the LORD gave the people favour in the ſight of the Egyptians, ſo that they lent unto them *ſuch things as they required*: and [b] they ſpoiled the Egyptians.

[r] Chap. xi. 4.
[s] Numb. viii. 17. & xxxiii. 4. Pſal. lxxviii. 51. & cv. 36. & cxxxv. 8. & cxxxvi. 10.
[t] Chap. iv. 23. Wiſd. xviii. 11.
† Heb. Houſe of the pit.
[u] Pſal. cv. 38.
[x] Chap. x. 9.
[y] Chap. x. 26.
† Or dough.
[z] Chap. iii. 22. & xi. 2.
[a] Chap. xi. 3.
[b] Gen. xv. 14. Chap. iii. 22. Pſal. cv. 37.

v. 29—36. Obſerve,

1. Heavy the dreadful ſtroke deſcends. At midnight the deſtroyer comes: one awful groan awakens every family, and one united dolorous cry echoes through the land. What guilty ſinner need not tremble at the thought of ſuch a dread ſurprize? He that cloſes his eyes each night in unrepented ſin upon his bed, is in danger of lifting them up before morning in the torments of hell.

2. Pharaoh haſtens to thruſt them out. Death is at his door; he trembles for himſelf; at midnight they muſt be gone; he cannot reſt till they are departed; and now he ſeeks their bleſſing whom late with imprecations he had driven from his preſence on pain of death. *Note*, The day is coming when men will value their prayers, whom once they reviled. His people are in the ſame mind. The death which had begun, ſtrikes them with a panic, leaſt it ſhould be univerſal. *Note*, Nothing ſhocks a ſinner ſo much, as near views of death; but whether they ſee it or no, every impenitent ſinner is certainly a dead man.

3. To get rid of their company, the Egyptians are glad to part with their gold and their jewels. When life is at ſtake, our goods appear inſignificant things. Iſrael thus as ſervants, receive their wages, and as conquerors, divide the ſpoil. It

was an high act of juſtice from God, and they had his ſpecial order for their proceedings.

37. ¶ And [c] the children of Iſrael journeyed from [d] Rameſes to Succoth, about [e] ſix hundred thouſand on foot *that were* men, beſides children. 38. And † a mixed multitude went up alſo with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle. 39. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough, which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened: becauſe [f] they were thruſt out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themſelves any victual. 40. ¶ Now the ſojourning of the children of Iſrael, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* [g] four hundred and thirty years. 41. And it came to paſs, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the ſelf-ſame day it came to paſs, that all the hoſts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. 42. It *is* † a night to be much obſerved unto the LORD, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt: this *is* that night of the LORD to be obſerved of all the children of Iſrael, in their generation.

[c] Numb. xxxiii. 3, 5.
[d] Gen. xlvii. 11.
[e] Chap. xxxviii. 26. Numb. i. 46. & xi. 21.
† Heb. A great mixture. Numb. xi. 4.
[f] Chap. vi. 1. & xi. 1.
[g] Gen. xv. 13. Acts vii. 6. Gal. iii. 17.
† Heb. A night of Obſervations.

v. 37—42. 1. Moſes embraces the favourable moment. The people march immediately, an immenſe body, ſix hundred thouſand men, and twice or thrice as many women and children; beſide a mixed multitude, that from fear, curioſity, or conviction of the truth, went up with them. *Note*, In the church there is a mix'd multitude of profeſſors, but many Egyptians among them. Their cattle too are no longer with-held, and their dough, for want of time, is taken with them unleavened. Learn, (1.) The ſervants of God muſt not be curious in eating. (2.) If on our firſt awakenings from ſin we find ſome difficulties, we muſt not be diſcouraged; times will ſhortly mend.

2. The memorable night. Juſt 430 years from the date of the promiſe to Abraham. Though mercy is delayed, it is ſure. The Egyptians remembered this night to their ſorrow, the Iſraelites to their unſpeakable joy in their future generations. If temporal deliverances are ſo worthy a memorial, how ſhould we be affected with that eternal redemption which Jeſus hath obtained for his people, from a ſervitude more intolerable than Egyptian, into a country infinitely ſuperior to Canaan?

43. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes and Aaron, This *is* the ordinance of the paſſover: there ſhall no ſtranger eat thereof. 44. But every man's ſervant that is bought for money, when thou haſt circumciſed him, then ſhall he eat thereof. 45. A foreigner and an hired ſervant ſhall not eat thereof. 46. In one houſe ſhall it be eaten, thou ſhalt not carry forth ought of the fleſh abroad out of the houſe: [h] neither ſhall ye break a bone thereof. 47. All the congregation of Iſrael ſhall † keep it. 48. And [i] when a ſtranger ſhall ſojourn with thee, and will keep the paſſover to the LORD, let all his males be circumciſed, and then let him come near, and keep it: and he ſhall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumciſed perſon ſhall eat thereof. 49. One law ſhall be to him that is home-born, and unto the ſtranger that ſojourneth among you. 50. Thus did all the children of Iſrael; as the LORD commanded Moſes and Aaron, ſo did they. 51. And it came to paſs the ſelf-ſame day, *that* the LORD did bring the children of Iſrael out of the land of Egypt, [k] by their armies.

[h] Numb. ix. 12. John xix. 36.
† Heb. Do it.
[i] Numb. ix. 14.
[k] Chap. vi. 26.

v. 43—51. The paſſover being enjoined to all ſucceeding generations, ſome particulars are added. It muſt be kept univerſally, none are to be admitted uncircumciſed, but the circumciſed bondman has the ſame right as the free: it muſt be eaten in the families apart, and none be left till the morrow. *Note*, (1.) He renounces his right to the covenant of grace, who wilfully neglects the ſeals of it in the ſacrament. (2.) If a man be not circumciſed in heart, partaking of bread and wine will be no paſchal ſupper to him. (3.) The goſpel deſtroys all diſtinctions of bond and free; whoſoever will, let him come freely. The law itſelf was here a ſhadow of goſpel liberty,

CHAP. XIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The commands God gave to Iſrael,* (1.) *To ſanctify all their firſt-born to him,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *To remember their deliverance out of Egypt,* ver. 3, 4. *and to keep the feaſt of unleavened bread,* ver. 5—8. (3.) *To tranſmit the knowledge of it with all poſſible care to their children,* ver. 8, 9, 10. (4.) *To ſet apart unto God the firſtlings of their cattle,* ver. 11, 12, 13. *and to explain that alſo to their children,* ver. 14, 15, 16. 2. *The care God took of Iſrael when he had brought them out of Egypt.* (1.) *Chooſing their way for them,* ver. 17, 18. (2.) *Guiding them in the way,* ver. 20, 21, 22. *And their care of Joſeph's bones,* ver. 19.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Sanctify unto me all the firſt-born, whatſoever openeth the womb among the children of Iſrael, *both* of man and of beaſt: it *is* mine. 3. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the houſe of † bondage; for by ſtrength of hand the LORD brought you out from this *place*: there ſhall no leavened bread be eaten. 4. [b] This day came ye out, in the month Abib. 5. ¶ And it ſhall be when the LORD ſhall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites, which he ſware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that [c] thou ſhalt keep this ſervice in this month. 6. [d] Seven days ſhalt thou eat unleavened bread, and in the ſeventh day *ſhall be* a feaſt to the LORD. 7. Unleavened bread ſhall be eaten ſeven days: and there ſhall no leavened bread be ſeen with thee, neither ſhall there be leaven ſeen with thee in all thy quarters. 8. ¶ And thou ſhalt ſhew thy ſon in that day, ſaying, *This is done* becauſe of that *which* the LORD did unto me, when I came forth out of Egypt. 9. And it [e] ſhall be for a ſign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes; that the LORD's law may be in thy mouth: for with a ſtrong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt. 10. Thou ſhalt therefore keep this ordinance in his ſeaſon from year to year.

[a] Chap. xxii. 29. & xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. Numb. iii. 13. & viii. 16, 17. & xviii. 15. Luke ii. 23.
† Heb. Servants.
[b] Chap. xxiii. 15. & xxxiv. 18. Deut. xvi. 1.
[c] Chap. xii. 25, 26.
[d] Chap. xii. 15, 16.
[e] See ver. 16. Numb. xv. 38. Deut. vi. 8. & xi. 18. Prov. i. 9. Iſa. xlix. 16. Jer. xxii. 24. Matt. xxiii. 5.

v. 1—10. 1. God demands of his people a return for his mercies in their firſt-born. He claims, from his preſervation of them, a right in them. *Note*, (1.) The life which God hath reſcued from imminent danger, is doubly obliged to be devoted to his ſervice. (2.) They who truly love God, will ſerve him with the beſt.

2. He bids them remember the day of their deliverance, in the feaſt of unleavened bread, and inſtruct their children after them in the meaning of the ordinance: and very careful are they to this day, to obſerve the letter of the precept, in ſearching their houſes for leaven; may we be as careful to enter into the ſpirit of the command, and ſearch every corner of our hearts, that ſin may be put away from us. *Note*, It is a chief duty with parents to acquaint their children from earlieſt infancy with the ſcriptures, and ſcripture ſtories may be made matter of as pleaſing entertainment to them, as of profitable inſtruction.

11. ¶ And it ſhall be when the LORD ſhall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he ſware unto thee and to thy fathers, and ſhall give it thee, 12. That [f] thou ſhalt † ſet apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix: and every firſtling that cometh of a beaſt, which thou haſt, the males *ſhall be* the LORD's. 13. And [g] every firſtling of an aſs thou ſhalt redeem with a ‡ lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou ſhalt break his neck: and [h] all the firſt born of man amongſt thy children ſhalt thou redeem. 14. ¶ And it ſhall be when thy ſon aſketh thee ‖ in time to come, ſaying, What *is* this? that thou ſhalt ſay unto him, By ſtrength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the houſe of bondage. 15. And it came to paſs when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD ſlew all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt, both the firſt-born of man, and the firſt-born of beaſt: therefore I ſacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firſt-born of my children I redeem. 16. And it ſhall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by ſtrength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.

[f] Chap. xxii. 29. & xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. Numb. viii. 17. Deut. xv. 19. Ezek. xliv. 30.
† Heb. Cauſe to paſs over.
[g] Numb. xviii. 15, 16.
‡ Or kid.
[h] Numb. iii. 46, 47. & xviii. 16.
‖ Heb. To-morrow.

v. 11—16. The firſt-born of beaſts, as well as babes, are God's: the clean muſt be ſacrificed; the unclean killed, or as the children, redeemed. *Note*, Every child is not an innocent, but an unclean thing; and were it not for the redemption of Jeſus, muſt periſh. Repeated injunctions are given to inſtruct their children, to encourage and anſwer their enquiries; talking with them, is the beſt way of teaching them. Thus the remembrance will be preſerved, and each ſucceeding generation count the deliverance their own. Our father's mercies we reap the bleſſing of even in temporals, and how much more of the promiſes made to our fathers in ſpirituals, and accompliſhed in the glorious ſalvation of our redeemer Jeſus, which deſerves and ſhall have a remembrance to eternity.

17. ¶ And it came to paſs, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the Philiſtines, although that *was* near: for God ſaid, Leſt peradventure the people repent when they ſee war, and [l] they return to Egypt. 18. But God [k] led the people about, *through* the way of the wilderneſs of the Red-ſea: and the children of Iſrael went up † harneſſed out of the land of Egypt.

[l] Deut. xvii. 16.
[k] Chap. xiv. 2.
† Or by five in a rank.

v. 17, 18. God is their deliverer, and now becomes their guide: the direct way was ſhort; but God led them not by the ſhorteſt, but the ſafeſt way. If his ways ſeem winding, we may be ſatisfied he is a ſure guide. The Philiſtines were before them, and they muſt not ſee war, as ſoon as they eſcape from ſlavery: they are not fit for ſuch ſervice yet. God knows how to proportion our trials to our ſtrength, nor will ſuffer his people to be tempted above what they are able: beſide, he had much to do among them, both in mercies and judgments, and a wilderneſs was the fitteſt place for his deſigns, as it was the fulfilment alſo of his promiſe, *Chap.* iii. 12. Let us therefore commit all our ways unto the Lord.

19. And Moſes took the bones of Joſeph with him: for he had ſtraitly ſworn the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [l] God will ſurely viſit you; and ye ſhall carry up my bones away hence with you. 20. ¶ And [m] they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderneſs. 21. And [n] the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light: to go by day and night. 22. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

[l] Gen. l. 25. Joſh. xxiv. 32. Acts vii. 16.
[m] Numb. xxxiii. 6.
[n] Chap. xl. 38. Numb. ix. 15. & x. 34. & xiv. 14. Deut. i. 33. Neh. ix. 12, 19. Pſal. lxxviii. 14. & xcix. 7. & cv. 39. 1 Cor. x. 1.

v. 19—22. The army marches in rank and file, and two things are obſervable.

1. The care they took to fulfil their oath to Joſeph, in carrying his bones along with them. See what the greateſt men muſt come to; duſt and dry bones.

2. God's care of them in the way. His preſence was with them, he appeared viſibly to them in a pillar of a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; to be their leader in the pathleſs wilderneſs, their covering from the heat by day, and their chearing light and warmth by night: nor did he ever leave them, till they were ſafe lodged in Canaan. Bleſſed be God, the ſame care is promiſed to us. In our journey through this world, Jeſus by his word and ſpirit is our guide and comforter, our light and protector, and under his direction and influence we ſhall be led by the right way; nor need we fear danger or miſcarriage, when he ſaith, I will never leave nor forſake thee. Happy the ſoul that walks thus!

CHAP. XIV.

Here is, 1. *The extreme diſtreſs and danger that Iſrael was in at the Red-ſea.* (1.) *Notice is given of it to Moſes,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *The cauſe of it,* ver. 5—9. (3.) *Iſrael's conſternation,* ver. 10, 11, 12. (4.) *Moſes endeavours to encourage them,* ver. 13, 14. 2. *Their wonderful deliverance.* 1. *Moſes is instructed concerning it,* ver. 15—18. 2. *Lines that could not be forced, are ſet between the camp of Iſrael and Pharaoh's camp,* ver. 19, 20. 3. *By the divine power the Red-ſea is divided,* ver. 21. *The Iſraelites paſs ſafely,* ver. 22—29. *The Egyptians are drowned,* ver. 23—28. *Laſtly, The impreſſion this made upon the Iſraelites,* ver. 30, 31.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, [a] that they turn and encamp before [b] Pi-hahiroth, between [c] Migdol and the ſea, over againſt Baal-zephon: before it ſhall ye encamp by the ſea. 3. For Pharaoh will ſay of the children of Iſrael, They *are* intangled in the land, the wilderneſs hath ſhut them in. 4. And [d] I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he ſhall follow after them, and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his hoſt; that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD. And they did ſo.

[a] Chap. xiii. 18.
[b] Numb. xxxiii. 7.
[c] Jer. xliv.
[d] Chap. iv. 21.

v. 1—4. They were now got well out of Pharaoh's reach, but God hath farther deſigns for his own glory in his overthrow. He informs Moſes of his purpoſe, and they wheel to the right, to that part hemmed in by the ſea and the wilderneſs, that the difficulties of their ſituation might induce Pharaoh to follow them. God hath wiſe deſigns, even in the ſtraits to which he reduces his people, that in their deliverance he may make his power, grace, and love more evidently appear.

5. ¶ And it was told the king of Egypt, that the people fled: and [e] the heart of Pharaoh and of his ſervants was turned againſt the people, and they ſaid, Why have we done this, that we have let Iſrael go from ſerving us? 6. And he made ready his chariot, and took his people wih him. 7. And he took ſix hundred choſen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. 8. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he purſued after the children of Iſrael: and [f] the children of Iſrael went out with an high hand. 9. But [g] the Egyptians purſued after them, (all the horſes *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horſemen, and his army) and overtook them encamping by the ſea, beſide Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon.

[e] Pſal. cv. 25.
[f] Numb. xxxiii. 3.
[g] Joſh. xxiv. 6. 1 Mac. iv. 9.

v. 5—9. Now the Egyptians begin to recover from their fright, accuſe their own folly in parting with their ſlaves, and call their march a flight, though themſelves had thruſt them out: ſo eaſily can miſrepreſentations be made. Hereupon they determine, horſe and chariots, to purſue, and bring them back to the houſe of their priſon: encouraged by the dangerous encampment they had made, where they quickly found them, and promiſed themſelves an eaſy prey. *Note* (1.) They who are only frighted by God's word, will quickly be ſorry for the little good they did, and be aſhamed even of their pretended repentance. (2.) He that will eſcape out of a ſinful world, muſt expect a hot purſuit from the devil and his ſervants. (3.) He that brings us out with a high hand, can bear us up with everlaſting ſtrength.

10. ¶ And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Iſrael lift up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them, and they were ſore afraid: and the children of Iſrael cried out unto the LORD. 11. And [h] they ſaid unto Moſes, Becauſe *there were* no graves in Egypt, haſt thou taken us away to die in the wilderneſs? Wherefore haſt thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? 12. [i] *Is* not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, ſaying, Let us alone, that we may ſerve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to ſerve the Egyptians, than that we ſhould die in the wilderneſs. 13. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto the people, [k] Fear ye not, ſtand ſtill, and ſee the ſalvation of the LORD, which he will ſhew to you to day: † for the Egyptians whom ye have ſeen to day, ye ſhall ſee them again no more for ever. 14. [l] The LORD ſhall fight for you, and ye ſhall hold your peace.

[h] Pſal. cvi. 7.
[i] Chap. v. 21. & vi. 9.
[k] 2 Chron. xx. 15, 17.
† Or whereas you have ſeen the Egyptians.
[l] Neh. iv. 20.

v. 10—14. How ſoon are the ſongs of liberty turned into the ſorrows of death. Obſerve,

1. The terrible diſmay which ſeizes the Iſraelites. Surrounded with inſurmountable obſtacles, and no door open for eſcape, except the Lord interpoſe. Bleſſed be God, though troubled on every ſide, we can ſtill ſay, *Surſam corda,* Look up and hope. Some did ſo, and they cried unto the Lord. But it is to be feared, it was the cry of anguiſh and deſpair, rather than of faith; for they fell hard on Moſes with reproaches, and ſeem to give themſelves up for loſt. Could not he who had done wonders in Egypt, do as great in the wilderneſs? and had he ſhewn them ſo much grace, to forſake them now? but they are as deſponding of God, as ungrateful to Moſes; and by their murmuring provoke the judgment they otherwiſe need not fear. They were now delivered, but their continued perverſeneſs, after ten provocations, brought on them at laſt, as on the Egyptians, after ten plagues, the ſame deſtruction. Unbelief, if uncured, muſt be fatal at laſt.

2. Moſes encourages them againſt their fears; he does not reproach their cowardice, but pities their weakneſs. Sharp rebukes will not ſuit all ſins; we muſt direct our advice to the circumſtances of the patient. They have but one buſineſs; to reſt upon God; he who hath brought them into danger, will bring them out of it. *Note,* (1.) Sedateneſs in danger, is the moſt likely means to extricate ourſelves from it. (2.) To encourage our heart in God, is the way, not only to remove our fears, but to ſurmount our difficulties.

15. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Wherefore crieſt thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Iſrael, that they go forward. 16. But lift thou up thy rod, and ſtretch out thine hand over the ſea, and divide it: and the children of Iſrael ſhall go on dry ground through the mids of the ſea. 17. And I, behold I will harden the

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hearts of the Egyptians, and they ſhall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his hoſt, upon his chariots, and upon his horſemen. 18. And the Egyptians ſhall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horſemen. 19. ¶ And [m] the angel of God, which went before the camp of Iſrael, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and ſtood behind them. 20. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Iſrael, and [n] it was a cloud and darkneſs *to them*, but it gave light by night *to theſe*: ſo that the one came not near the other all the night.

[m] Chap. xiii. 21. & xxiii. 20.

[n] See Iſa. viii. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 3.

v. 15—20. Moſes ſpeaks the language of confidence to the people, and lifts up his heart in prayer to God. Prayer and faith are mutual helpers; faith quickens prayer, and prayer ſtrengthens faith.

1. Obſerve God's direction to Moſes. He had not ſpoken with his lips, but there is a language of the ſoul which cries moſt forcibly in the ears of God, and his anſwer is, Go forward: Whither, into the ſea? No, to the ſea, and truſt for the reſt. *Note*, However dangerous and dark the way of duty, when we go forward, God will take care of the event. The ſea ſhall be divided, and that which affords a paſſage to Iſrael, ſhall be the grave of the Egyptians. Thus God will get honour from *both*; in his mercies on the one, in his judgments on the other. *Note*, The damnation of the ſinner ſhall as ſurely redound to the glory of God, as the ſalvation of his ſaints.

2. The guard he ſets to preſerve his people from the Egyptians. The cloud removes between them; a light to guide the one through the ſea, and a barrier to prevent the other from approaching to hurt them. This pillar of the cloud ſtill ſtands in the ſame aſpect. To the impenitent ſinner, every proſpect is covered with darkneſs: to the child of God, light ſurrounds his path; and as their preſent ways are directed, ſo will be their end. The darkneſs of ſin will lead down to the darkneſs of eternal death; the light of grace conduct us to eternal life and light in glory.

21. And Moſes ſtretched out his hand over the ſea, and the LORD cauſed the ſea to go *back* by a ſtrong eaſt-wind all that night, and [o] made the ſea dry land, and the waters [p] *were* divided. 22. And [q] the children of Iſrael went into the midſt of the ſea upon the dry ground: and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. 23. ¶ And the Egyptians purſued, and went in after them, to the midſt of the ſea, *even* all Pharaoh's horſes, his chariots, and his horſemen. 24. And it came to paſs, that in the morning-watch [r] the LORD looked unto the hoſt of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the hoſt of the Egyptians, 25. And took off their chariot wheels, † that they drave them heavily: ſo that the Egyptians ſaid, Let us flee from the face of Iſrael; for the LORD fighteth for them againſt the Egyptians. 26. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Stretch out thine hand over the ſea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horſemen. 27. And Moſes ſtretched forth his hand over the ſea, and the ſea returned to his ſtrength, when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled againſt it: and the LORD ‡ overthrew the Eyptians in the midſt of the ſea. 28. And [s] the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horſemen, *and* all the hoſt of Pharaoh that came into the ſea after them: [t] there remained not ſo much as one of them. 22. But [u] the children of Iſrael walked upon dry-land in the midſt of the ſea: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30. Thus the LORD ſaved Iſrael that day out of the hand of the Egyptians: and Iſrael ſaw the Egyptians dead upon the ſea-ſhore. 31. And Iſrael ſaw that great work † which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and [x] believed the LORD, and his ſervant Moſes.

[o] Pſal. lxvi. 6.
[p] Joſh. iii. 15. & iv. 23. Neh. ix. 11. Pſal. lxxiv. 13. & cvi. 9. & cxiv. 3.
[q] Numb. xxxiii. 8. Pſal. lxxviii. 13. 1 Cor. x. 1. Hebr. xi. 29.
[r] See Pſal. lxxvii. 17, &c.
† Or made them to go heavily.
‡ Heb. Shook off. Deut. xi. 4. Pſal. lxxviii. 53.
[s] Hab. iii. 8, 13.
[t] Pſal. cvi. 11.
[u] Pſal. lxxvii. 20.
† Heb. Hand.
[x] Pſal. cvi. 12.

v. 21—31. Now the full meaſure of Egypt's ſin is come, and her puniſhment is accordingly.

1. God's own people are ſecured. Moſes, as commanded, ſtretches out his rod; ſtrait the eaſt wind ariſeth, the ſtormy billows part their curling heads, and deep divided foam around above them, whilſt Iſrael's hoſts ſafe under his wings, whom winds and waves obey, march fearleſs through; nor, though amidſt the darkneſs of the night, with ſuch a guide and ſuch a light, need apprehend miſtake or danger. *Note*, God's people in every age have found him a very preſent help in trouble, and ſhall we not remember the days of old, and truſt him? Surely we ſhall never be aſhamed when we do ſo.

2. The preſumption of ſinners is their ruin. The Egyptians, infatuated with rage, drive furiouſly between the parted waters, and madly preſs to overtake thoſe who were born, as it were, on eagles wings: but in their mid career, terrors overtake them; one look from the offended God of Iſrael, ſtrikes every heart with dire diſmay: their chariots hang entangled in the ſands, their wheels ſtart from their axles, their way is embarraſſed, they can neither fly nor purſue. Too late convinced, they fain would turn, but now the approaching watery walls prevent eſcape: in vain they cry, in vain they urge the fiery ſteed, or preſs towards the diſtant ſhore; every avenue is cloſed; advancing ſlow, the overwhelming waves firſt kill with fear, then burſt impetuous on theſe devoted heads. Proud Pharaoh and his horſemen now lie low, no more the terror of the mighty, but breathleſs corpſes floating on the waters. Learn, (1.) To tremble before an offended God: if his wrath be kindled but for a moment, who can abide it? (2.) It is too late for the ſinner to cry for mercy, or fly for life, when death unbars the gates of the grave. (3.) They muſt fall at laſt, who are found fighting againſt God.

3. Iſrael's triumph over them. Their bodies are caſt on ſhore, deſpicable now, as once feared. Oh what alterations doth the cold hand of death make! Now they gratefully acknowledge the hand of God, and believe in his care, and Moſes' miſſion from him. Who would have thought ſuch a ſcene could have been forgotten, or that theſe ſhould ever again refuſe credence to his word? We are ready in our proſperity to ſay, I ſhall never be removed, ſhall never doubt again, but the ſenſible impreſſions of preſent mercies decay, and unbelief, like theſe mighty waters, returneth to its ſtrength again. Lord, not only remove my unbelief, but preſerve the faith thou doſt beſtow!

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The ſong of Moſes,* ver. 1—21. 2. *Iſrael marches forward in the wilderneſs,* ver. 22. *and there obſerve,* 1. *Their diſcontent at the waters of Marah,* ver. 23, 24. *and the relief granted them,* ver. 25, 26. 2. *Their ſatisfaction in the waters of Elim,* ver. 27.

1. THEN [a] ſang Moſes and the children of Iſrael this ſong unto the LORD, and ſpake, ſaying, I will ſing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed glorioúſly; the horſe and his rider hath he thrown into the ſea. 2. The LORD *is* my ſtrength and [b] ſong, and he is become my ſalvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. 3. The LORD *is* a man of war: the LORD *is* his name. 4. Pharaoh's chariots and his hoſt hath he caſt into the ſea: his choſen captains alſo are drowned in the Red ſea. 5. The depths have covered them: [c] they ſank into the bottom as a ſtone. 6. [d] Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath daſhed in pieces the enemy. 7. And in the greatneſs of thine excellency thou haſt overthrown them that roſe up againſt thee: thou ſenteſt forth thy wrath, *which* conſumed them [e] as ſtubble. 8. And [f] with the blaſt of thy noſtrils the waters were gathered together: [g] the floods ſtood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the ſea. 9. [h] The enemy ſaid, I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoil: my luſt ſhall be ſatisfied upon them, I will draw my ſword, my hand ſhall † deſtroy them. 10. Thou didſt blow with thy wind, the ſea covered them: [i] they ſank as lead in the mighty waters. 11. [k] Who *is* like unto thee, O LORD, amongſt ‖ the gods? who *is* like thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful *in* praiſes, doing wonders? 12. Thou ſtretchedſt out thy right hand, the earth ſwallowed them. 13. Thou in thy mercy haſt led forth the people *which* thou haſt redeemed: thou haſt guided *them* in thy ſtrength unto thy holy habitation. 14. [l] The people ſhall hear, *and* be afraid: ſorrow ſhall take hold on the inhabitants of Paleſtina. 15. [m] Then [n] the dukes of Edom ſhall be amazed, [o] the mighty men of Moab, trembling ſhall take hold upon them: [p] all the inhabitants of Canaan ſhall melt away. 16. [q] Fear and dread ſhall fall upon them, by the greatneſs of thine arm they ſhall be *as* ſtill as a ſtone: till thy people paſs over, O LORD, till

[a] Wiſd. x. 20.
[b] Deut. x. 21. Pſal. xviii. 2. & xxii. 3. & cix. 1. & cxviii. 14. Iſa. xii. 2.
[c] Neh. ix. 11.
[d] Pſal. cxviii. 15, 16.
[e] Iſa. v. 24. & xlvii. 14.
[f] Chap. xiv. 21. Job iv. 9. 2 Theſſ. ii. 8.
[g] Pſal. lxxviii. 13.
[h] Judg. v. 30.
† Or repoſſeſs.
[i] Ver. 5.
[k] 2 Sam. vii. 22. 1 Kings viii. 23. Pſal. lxxxvi. 8. & lxxxix. 6. Jer. x. 6. & xlix. 19.
‖ Or mighty ones.
[l] Numb. xiv. 14. Deut. ii. 25. Joſh. ii. 9.
[m] Gen. xxxvi. 40.
[n] Deut. ii. 4.
[o] Numb. xxiii. 3. Hab. iii. 6.
[p] Joſh. v. 1.
[q] Deut. ii. 25. & xi. 25. Joſh. ii. 9.

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till the people paſs over, [r] *which* thou haſt purchaſed. 17. Thou ſhalt bring them in, and [s] plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, *in* the place, O LORD, *which* thou haſt made for thee to dwell in: *in* the ſanctuary, O LORD, *which* thy hands have eſtabliſhed. 18. [t] The LORD ſhall reign for ever and ever. 19. For the horſe of Pharaoh went in with his chariots, and with his horſemen into the ſea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the ſea upon them: but the children of Iſrael went on dry-land in the mids of the ſea. 20. ¶ And Miriam [u] the propheteſs, the ſiſter of Aaron, [x] took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her, [y] with timbrels, and with dances. 21. And Miriam anſwered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriouſly; the horſe and his rider hath he thrown into the ſea.

[r] Chap. xix. 5. Deut. xxxii. 9. 2 Sam. vii. 23. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[s] Pſal. xliv. 2. & lxxx. 8.
[t] Pſal. cxlvi. 10. Iſa. lvii. 15.
[u] 1 Sam. x. 5.
[x] 1 Sam. xviii. 6.
[y] Judg. xi. 34. & xxi. 21. 2 Sam. vi. 16. Pſal. lxviii. 11, 25.

v. 1—21. Prayer and praiſe uſually go together: the mercies we have in faith deſired, we ſhall in ſong acknowledge; and a noble and enlivening part is this of divine worſhip. Nothing is a ſurer proof of a dead heart, a dead congregation, and a dead church, than negligence and careleſſneſs in ſinging God's praiſes.

1. Moſes opens with the triumphs of Jehovah, whoſe right hand had ſaved them. He proclaims his honour, as the God of ſovereign power, grace, and love; the Saviour of his people, and the avenger of his enemies: he mentions with exultation, the late diſplay of his mighty arm, and burſts into a queſtion of expreſſive wonder, Who is like unto thee? *v.* 11. *Note,* (1.) We cannot enough, in our praiſes, exalt the great and glorious name of our God. (2.) We ſhould ever profeſs our dependance upon him, and paſt experience ſhould confirm our preſent confidence.

2. The victory is deſcribed with the moſt ſublime expreſſions; the vain confidence of the Egyptians in their purſuit, and their cruelty in the threatned deſtruction; but how unequal in the conteſt, when all creation riſes at God's command, and they ſink as lead in the mighty waters? *Note,* (1.) The ſurer the ſelf-deceiver thinks himſelf of heaven, the more terrible will be his diſappointment, when he ſinks down to hell. (2.) They who are moſt expoſed for the goſpel ſake, will by and by remember their difficulties with greateſt delight; as making their deliverance more illuſtrious, and their obligations the greater to the God of their ſalvation.

3. The encouragement he draws from it, *v.* 14—17. Their enemies would hear and tremble: diſpirited by their fears, they would fall an eaſy prey, as was the caſe; and this beginning of mercy enſured the perfection of it, in the promiſed land, *v.* 17. For Jehovah their God for ever reigns, and reigns to protect and bleſs his favoured people: well may every humble believer rejoice in this conſideration, His God is not only a preſent Saviour, but will be the author of his eternal ſalvation.

4. The ſolemn manner of performing this anthem of praiſe. Though the women cannot weild the ſword, they can rejoice in the ſong: probably choirs of men and women joined in alternate reſponſes. Moſes led the way, and Miriam anſwered. They who are the firſt in leading God's people to victory, ſhould be the firſt in exciting them to gratitude, and the leaders of the ſong of thankſgiving. David, that great king and conqueror, as well as Moſes, added this to all their glories. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 1.

22. So Moſes brought Iſrael from the Red-ſea, and they went out into the wilderneſs of [z] Shur, and they went three days in the wilderneſs and found no water. 23. ¶ And when they came to [a] Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called † Marah. 24. And the people murmured againſt Moſes, ſaying, What ſhall we drink? 25. And he cried unto the LORD, and the LORD ſhewed him a [b] tree, [c] *which* when he had caſt into the waters, the waters were made ſweet: there [d] he made for them a ſtatute and an ordinance, and there [e] he proved them, 26. And ſaid, If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his ſight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his ſtatutes; [f] I will put none of theſe diſeaſes upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the LORD [g] that healeth thee. 27. ¶ And they came to Elim, where *were* twelve wells of water, and threeſcore and ten palm-trees: and [h] they encamped there by the waters.

[z] Gen. xvi. 7. & xxv. 18.
[a] Numb. xxxiii. 8.
† i. e. Bitterneſs.
[b] Eccluſ. xxxviii. 5.
[c] See 2 Kings iv. 41.
[d] See Joſh. xxiv. 25.
[e] Chap. xvi. 4.
[f] Deut. vii. 15.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 25. Pſal. ciii. 3. & cxlvii. 3.
[h] Numb. xxxiii. 9.

v. 22—27. They who will go to heaven, muſt expect rubs in their way. They no ſooner begin their journey, than, 1. They are in want of water, and to a marching army what more dangerous? Nor was their condition much mended at Marah, where, though there was plenty, it was bitter, or brackiſh, and not fit for drink. Our expected comforts are thus in the poſſeſſion often embittered, in order to lead us to the fountain of living waters. 2. Their impatience, *v.* 23. They who live by ſenſe, not by faith, will not long continue in a chearful frame: every new difficulty will deject them. 3. The ſupply granted at Moſes' prayer. A tree is pointed out, whoſe property either was to ſweeten the waters, or which by miraculous power God uſed, as Moſes' rod to work the wonder. There is not a uſeful plant for food or phyſic, but we ſhould read in it God's goodneſs and wiſdom. 4. The charge given them. Twice they had begun to ſhow their murmuring ſpirit: God now expects their confidence, promiſes them his bleſſing, and freedom from the plagues of Egypt, if they are obedient; and therein intimates, that if they ſhould join with Egypt in rebellion, they would ſhare with it in ſuffering. *Note,* God is no reſpecter of perſons; if his own people ſin, they muſt ſmart for it. 5. Another march brings them to Elim, where they have water in abundance, and ſhady palms to cover them. *Note,* (1.) If our comforts are delayed, yet we ſhould poſſeſs our ſouls in patience. (2.) God is uſually better to us, than our wiſhes. (3.) When we are moſt proſperous, we ſhould remember we are marching to the grave; that we may ſit as looſe to our comforts, as content under our croſſes.

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CHAP. XVI.

This chapter gives us an account of the victualling of the camp of Iſrael. 1. *Their complaint for want of bread,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The notice of the proviſion God intends to make for them,* ver. 4—12. 3. *The ſending of the manna,* ver. 13—15. 4. *The laws and orders concerning the manna.* 1. *They muſt gather it daily,* ver. 16—21. 2. *They ſhould gather a double portion on the ſixth day,* ver. 22—26. 3. *They muſt expect none on the ſeventh day,* ver. 27—31. 4. *That they ſhould preſerve a pot of it for a memorial,* ver. 32.

1. AND they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Iſrael came unto [a] the wilderneſs of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the ſecond month, after their departing out of the land of Egypt. 2. And the whole congregation of the children of Iſrael murmured againſt Moſes and Aaron in the wilderneſs. 3. And the children of Iſrael ſaid unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, [b] when we ſat by the fleſh-pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderneſs, to kill this whole aſſembly with hunger. 4. ¶ Then ſaid the LORD unto Moſes, Behold, I will rain [c] bread from heaven for you; and the people ſhall go out and gather † a certain rate every day, that I may [d] prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no. 5. And it ſhall come to paſs, that on the ſixth day they ſhall prepare *that* which they bring in; and [e] it ſhall be twice as much as they gather daily. 6. And Moſes and Aaron ſaid unto all the children of Iſrael, [f] At even, then ye ſhall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt. 7. And in the morning, then ye ſhall [g] ſee the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings againſt the LORD: And what *are* we, that ye murmur againſt us? 8. And Moſes ſaid, *This ſhall be* when the LORD ſhall give you in the evening fleſh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur againſt him: And what *are* we? your murmurings *are* not againſt us, but [h] againſt the LORD. 9. ¶ And Moſes ſpake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Iſrael, Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings. 10. And it came to paſs, as Aaron ſpake unto the whole congregation of the children of Iſrael, that they looked toward the wilderneſs, and behold, [i] the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. 11. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 12. I have heard the murmurings of the children of Iſrael; ſpeak unto them, ſaying, At even ye ſhall eat fleſh, and in the morning ye ſhall be filled with bread: and ye ſhall know that I *am* the LORD your God.

[a] Numb. xxxiii. 11.
[b] Numb. xi. 4, 5.
[c] Pſal. lxxviii. 24, 25. & cv. 40. John vi. 31, 32. 1 Cor. x. 3.
† Heb. The portion of a day in his day. Prov. xxx. 8. Mat. vi. 11.
[d] Chap. xv. 25. Deut. viii. 2, 16.
[e] See Lev. xxv. 21.
[f] Ver. 13.
[g] Ver. 10.
[h] See 1 Sam. viii. 7. Luke x. 16. Rom. xiii. 2.
[i] Chap. xiii. 21.

v. 1—12. Freſh difficulties produce freſh murmurs. We have here,

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1. The deſpairing impatience of the people for want of bread. Their proviſion being exhauſted, they ſee nothing but death before them, and charge Moſes as the murderer. What? had God ſo eminently ſpared their lives, to bring them to their graves in the wilderneſs? And had Moſes any concern at heart but their good? Yet ſo deaf are they to reaſon, that they baſely wiſh to be in Egypt again, though they died there under the plague. Aſtoniſhing perverſeneſs! *Note*, (1.) Diſcontent uſually villifies what it hath, and magnifies what it loſes. (2.) It is a great aggravation of our diſtruſts, when we have experienced much mercy, and are promiſed ſo much greater in ſtore for us.

2. The diſpleaſure God hath againſt them. He heard their murmurings, and regarded their complaints againſt his ſervants, as a charge againſt himſelf. Let thoſe who find fault with God's miniſters, remember they but deliver the meſſage, and that to be diſpleaſed with them, is to fly in the face of their maſter.

3. The gracious ſupply, of which God firſt informs Moſes. Himſelf appearing in the cloud, to give the greater rebuke to the murmurers, and put honour upon his ſervants, commands him to promiſe, that to-morrow he would give bread for their hoſts. God knows our wants, and will not ſuffer us to lack any manner of thing which is needful for us: though how many pretend to truſt God with their ſouls for heaven, and yet, like Iſrael, diſtruſt his providing bread for their bodies in the way thither?

[k] Numb. xi. 31. Pſal. cv. 40.
[l] Numb. xi. 7. Neh. ix. 15. Pſal. lxxviii. 24. & cv. 40. Wiſd. xvi. 20.
† Or what is this? or it is a portion.
[m] John vi. 31. 1 Cor. x. 3.
‡ Heb. By the poll or head.
‖ Heb. Souls.
[n] 2 Cor. viii. 15.

13. And it came to paſs, that at even [k] the quails came
up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew
lay round about the hoſt. 14. And when [l] the dew that
lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderneſs
there lay a ſmall round thing, *as* ſmall as the hoar froſt on
the ground. 15. And when the children of Iſrael ſaw *it*,
they ſaid one to another, † It *is* manna: for they wiſt not
what it *was*. And Moſes ſaid unto them, [m] This *is* the
bread which the LORD hath given you to eat. 16. ¶
This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded,
Gather of it every man, according to his eating: an omer
‡ for every man, *according to* the number of your ‖ perſons,
take ye every man for *them* which *are* in his tents.
17. And the children of Iſrael did ſo, and gathered, ſome
more, ſome leſs. 18. And when they did mete it with
an omer, [n] he that gathered much, had nothing over,
and he that gathered little, had no lack: they gathered
every man according to his eating. 19. And Moſes
ſaid, Let no man leave of it till the morning. 20. Notwithſtanding
they hearkened not unto Moſes, but ſome
of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms
and ſtank: And Moſes was wroth with them. 21. And
they gathered it every morning, every man according to
his eating: and when the ſun waxed hot it melted.

v. 13—21. The manna and quails are ſent; not only neceſſaries, but delicacies. God exceeds their expectations.

1. The nature of their food, quails. Some fowl, though perhaps not the ſame which bears this name with us; and manna, a congealed dew, like hoar froſt, ſweet as honey to the taſte, and ſtrengthening as bread. *Note*, He who gives us appetite for our food, hath given our food pleaſing qualities to gratify it. We have his proviſion, not merely as ſlaves fed with bread and water to live upon, but as children richly to enjoy.

2. They muſt gather it every day, for we muſt uſe the means whilſt we are depending on the divine bleſſing: *As much as they needed*, and no more; becauſe we may not abuſe God's gifts, by needleſs hoarding, or luxurious profuſion: *None muſt be left till morning*, becauſe we ought every day to truſt upon God for daily bread; not that we are forbidden a provident care for our families, but we muſt avoid anxious diſtruſt.

3. The diſobedience of ſome. They ſaved it out of covetouſneſs, or unbelief, and it bred worms and ſtunk, which juſtly provoked Moſes' anger, though the meekeſt man upon earth. *Note*, (1.) Covetouſneſs is God's abhorrence. (2.) A holy jealouſy in a miniſter's heart for the people's ſouls, will vent itſelf in juſt diſpleaſure againſt their ſins.

[o] Gen. ii. 3.
[p] Numb. xi. 7.

22. ¶ And it came to paſs *that* on the ſixth day they
gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man*:
and all the rulers of the congregation came and told
Moſes. 23. And he ſaid unto them, This *is that* which
the LORD hath ſaid, To morrow *is* [o] the reſt of the holy
ſabbath unto the LORD: bake *that* which ye will bake,
to day, and ſeethe that ye will ſeethe; and that which remaineth
over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning.
24. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moſes
bade: and it did not ſtink, neither was there any worm
therein. 25. And Moſes ſaid, Eat that to day; for to
day *is* a ſabbath unto the LORD: to day ye ſhall not find
it in the field. 26. Six days ye ſhall gather it, but on the
ſeventh day *which is* the ſabbath, in it there ſhall be none.
27. ¶ And it came to paſs, *that* there went out *ſome* of
the people on the ſeventh day for to gather, and they
found none. 28. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes,
How long refuſe ye to keep my commandments and my
laws? 29. See, for that the LORD hath given you
the ſabbath, therefore he giveth you on the ſixth day
the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place,
let no man go out of his place on the ſeventh day. 30.
So the people reſted on the ſeventh day. 31. And the
houſe of Iſrael called the name thereof manna; And [p] it
was like coriander ſeed, white; and the taſte of it *was*
like wafers *made* with honey.

v. 22—31. Before the law was given, the Sabbath was obſerved. This was an inſtitution from the beginning, not peculiar to the Jewiſh oeconomy, but univerſally binding.

1. On the ſixth day, a double portion of manna is given, and what is preſerved, does not corrupt as before. To ſhew them alſo that this manna proceeded not from natural cauſes, working uniformly, none is ſent on the ſabbath. God will thus point out to them their duty; they muſt reſt from their works, as he from his. *Note*, (1.) No man was ever a loſer by a conſcientious obſervation of the Lord's day, whilſt the abuſe of it hath brought a curſe upon many a violator of it. (2.) The leſs we have to do on Sabbath-days, to divert us from the immediate work and ſervice of God, the better.

2. Some of them go out notwithſtanding, and God juſtly reſents their perverſeneſs. They are rebuked, and enjoined ſtrict obedience: God will have his day hallowed; they who diſhonour it, do it at their peril. Let thoſe who ſpend theſe ſacred hours, in idle company, parties of pleaſure, or works of wickedneſs, remember that God will viſit for theſe things.

[q] 1 Kings viii. 9. Heb. ix. 4.
[r] Numb. xxxiii. 38. Deut. viii. 2, 3.
[s] Joſh. v. 12. Neh. ix. 15.

32. ¶ And Moſes ſaid, This *is* the thing which the
LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for
your generations; that they may ſee the bread wherewith
I have fed you in the wilderneſs, when I brought you
forth from the land of Egypt. 23. And Moſes ſaid unto
Aaron, [q] Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna
therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for
your generations. 34. As the LORD commanded
Moſes, ſo Aaron laid it up before the teſtimony, to be
kept. 35. And the children of Iſrael did eat manna [r]
forty years, [s] until they came to a land inhabited: they
did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the
land of Canaan. 36. Now an omer *is* the tenth *part* of
an ephah.

v. 32—36. A pot of this manna is laid up before the Lord as a memorial: for we muſt leave behind us monuments of God's mercy, to awaken the praiſes of future generations: forty years they are fed, till they come to Canaan. God will not ceaſe his care over us, till he has ſafely lodged us in his eternal reſt. This manna is the type of Chriſt, given us from heaven, to nouriſh our famiſhed ſouls, to be fed upon by faith, as the ſtrength and comfort of our hearts, and not only ſatisfies our hunger, but ſaves us from death. He that eateth this bread, ſhall never die: well may we cry with the diſciples, Lord, evermore give us this bread!

CHAP. XVII.

Two paſſages of ſtory are recorded in this chapter, 1. *The watering of the hoſt of Iſrael.* (1) *In the wilderneſs they wanted water,* ver. 1. (2.) *In their want they chid with Moſes,* ver. 2, 3. (3.) *Moſes cried to God,* ver. 4. (4.) *God ordered him to ſmite the rock, and fetch water out of that, and he did ſo,* ver. 5, 6. (5.) *The place named from it,* ver. 7. 2. *The defeating of the hoſt of Amalek.* 1. *The victory obtained by the prayer of Moſes,* ver. 8—12. 2. *By the ſword of Joſhua,* ver. 13. 3. *A record kept of it,* ver. 14—16.

[a] Chap. xvi. 1. Num. xxxiii. 12, 13.
[b] Num. xx. 3, 4.
[c] Pſ. lxxviii. 41. 1 Cor. x. 9.

1. AND [a] all the congregation of the children of Iſrael
journeyed from the wilderneſs of Sin, after
their journeys, according to the commandment of the
LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no
water for the people to drink. 2. [b] Wherefore the people
did chide with Moſes, and ſaid, Give us water that
we may drink. And Moſes ſaid unto them, Why chide
you with me? wherefore do [c] ye tempt the LORD?
3. And the people thirſted there for water; and the
people murmured againſt Moſes, and ſaid, Wherefore *is*
this

this *that* thou haſt brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us, and our children, and our cattle with thirſt? 4. And Moſes cried unto the LORD, ſaying, What ſhall I do unto this people? they be almoſt ready to ſtone me. 5. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Iſrael: and thy [d] rod wherewith thou ſmoteſt the river, take in thine hand, and go. 6. [e] Behold, I will ſtand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, and thou ſhalt ſmite the rock, and there ſhall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moſes did ſo in the ſight of the elders of Iſrael. 7. And he called the name of the place [f] † Maſſah, and ‡ Meribah, becauſe of the chiding of the children of Iſrael, and becauſe they tempted the LORD, ſaying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

[d] Chap. vii. 20.
[e] Num. xx. 9. Pſ. lxxviii. 15. & cv. 41. & cxiv. 8. Wiſd. xi. 4. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[f] Num. xx. 13. Pſ. lxxxi. 7. & xcv. 8. Heb. iii. 8.
† i. e. Temptation.
‡ i. e. Chiding, or ſtrife.

v. 1—7. In the way of duty we may meet with difficulties.

1. The children of Iſrael again want water, and as before but too impatient, quarrel with their beſt friend, and queſtion, after all they had ſeen, the reality of God's care and providence. *Note*, (1.) It is no uncommon thing for the greateſt kindneſſes to be thus ill requited. (2.) Who hath not ſometimes felt the ſame provoking queſtions of unbelief under diſtreſſing circumſtances, even to the very doubt of the providence, perhaps of the being of God? Such is man's fallen nature.

2. Moſes rebukes their unbelief, flies to God, caſts his burdens before him, for they threatened his life, and begs his aſſiſtance in their preſent perilous ſituation. Such dangers muſt they ſometimes run, who ſtand up eminently for God. *Note*, Prayer is the beſt means to compoſe our ſpirits under every diſturbance, and to obtain direction in all our difficulties.

3. God hears and anſwers. Inſtead of pouring out his wrath on the rebellious, he pours out his water on the thirſty, and floods on the dry ground. Moſes is commanded to ſmite the rock; inſtant the copious torrent flowed. Deep drank the parched Iſraelites of theſe living ſtreams; nor only quenched their preſent thirſt, but all the deſert through, the rock follows them, and pours around its miraculous waters. *Note*, (1.) God can open in our deepeſt diſtreſſes the moſt abundant ſupplies. (2.) Every believer ſpiritually experiences the ſame favour. This rock is Chriſt, ſmitten by the rod of God for our offences, opening a fountain in his ſide, quenching the thirſt of the guilty ſoul, ſatisfying the heart with the abundance of his conſolations, and never leaving us, *but ſpringing up in our hearts as a well of water unto everlaſting life.*

4. The name of the place, *v.* 7. Maſſah, *Temptation*, and Meribah, *Strife*. We ſhould long remember our ſins, and the places where and when committed, for our conſtant humiliation, and for our future caution.

8. ¶ [g] Then came Amalek, and fought with Iſrael in Rephidim. 9. And Moſes ſaid unto [h] Joſhua, Chooſe us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will ſtand on the top of the hill, with [i] the rod of God in mine hand. 10. So Joſhua did as Moſes had ſaid to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moſes, Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill. 11. And it came to paſs when Moſes held up his hand, that Iſrael prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12. But Moſes's hands *were* heavy, and they took a ſtone, and put *it* under him, and he ſat thereon: and Aaron and Hur ſtayed up his hands, the one on the one ſide, and the other on the other ſide; and his hands were ſteady until the going down of the ſun. 13. And Joſhua diſcomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the ſword. 14. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearſe *it* in the ears of Joſhua: for [k] I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. 15. And Moſes built an altar, and called the name of it † JEHOVAH-niſſi. 16. For he ſaid, ‡ Becauſe ‖ the LORD hath ſworn, *that* the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation.

[g] Deut. xxv. 17. 1 Sam. xv. 2. Wiſd. xi. 3.
[h] Called Jeſus, Acts vii. 45.
[i] Chap. iv. 20.
[k] Num. xxiv. 20. 1 Sam. xv. 3, 7. & xxx. 1, 17. 2 Sam. viii. 12. Ezra ix. 14.
† i. e. The Lord my banner. See Judg. vi. 24.
‡ Or, becauſe the hand of Amalek is againſt the throne of the Lord, therefore, &c.
‖ Heb. The hand upon the throne of the Lord.

v. 8—16. The firſt mention is now made of Iſrael's wars, and of Joſhua, who from henceforth becomes ſo eminent.

1. The Amalekites, the poſterity of Eſau, and heirs of their father's quarrel againſt Jacob, attack their rear; a viſitation for their late murmurings, and a proof, how ſoon the death they feared might find them, if God but withdrew his care of them.

2. The engagement under the conduct of Joſhua, and the prayers of Moſes. A detachment of ſelected men go forth to fight, and Moſes goes up to the mount, with the rod of God in his hand, to encourage them, by this banner on the hill, with the aſſurance of victory, and by his prayers to ſecure it. *Note*, The prayers of the faithful can do more than the drawn ſword, in turning to flight the armies of the aliens. Weary at laſt, his hands begin to fail, his rod declines, and Amalek ſeems to riſe victorious. *Note*, Fervent prayer is a wearineſs to the fleſh, and too apt are we to faint and grow tired of the bleſſed work; and whenever this is the caſe, ſin infallibly prevails. But now Aaron and Hur ſtay up his arms, and the day is crowned with a compleat victory. *Note*, (1.) They who continue inſtant in prayer, cannot fail to be conquerors in the end. (2.) Chriſt is to us inſtead of all; he is our unwearied and prevailing advocate, better than Moſes; our almighty captain, greater than Joſhua, on whoſe banners victory ſits enthroned; and our Aaron too, who holds up our fainting arms and feeble knees, that we may be enabled to perſevere in faith and prayer, until the ſun of life ſhall ſet, and death, our laſt enemy, be overcome.

3. The monument raiſed to God in the altar, acknowledging under whoſe banner they fought and conquered. Let it be ever remembered, in our victory over our corruptions, to the praiſe of the glory of God, that it is *not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* It is entred alſo upon record, that Amalek ſhall rue the day. Their enmity againſt Iſrael ſhall receive deſerved judgment: the deſtruction now begins, and their name ſhall finally be blotted out from under heaven. Let aſſurance of victory inſpire us with courage. Chriſt ſhall ſurely and ſhortly bruiſe all his enemies and ours under his feet.

CHAP. XVIII.

This chapter is concerning Moſes himſelf, and the affairs of his own family. 1. *Jethro his father-in-law brings him his wife and children, ver.* 1—6. 2. *Moſes entertains him, ver.* 7—12. 3. *Jethro adviſeth him about the management of his buſineſs as a judge in Iſrael, ver.* 13—23. *and Moſes, after ſome time, takes his counſel, ver.* 24—26. *ſo they part, ver.* 27.

1. WHEN [a] Jethro the prieſt of Midian, Moſes's father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moſes, and for Iſrael his people, *and* that the LORD had brought Iſrael out of Egypt: 2. Then Jethro, Moſes's father-in-law, took [b] Zipporah Moſes's wife, after he had ſent her back. 3. And her two ſons, of which [c] the name of the one *was* † Gerſhom (for he ſaid, I have been an alien in a ſtrange land). 4. And the name of the other *was* ‡ Eliezer (for the God of my father, *ſaid he*, *was* mine help, and delivered me from the ſword of Pharaoh). 5. And Jethro, Moſes's father-in-law, came with his ſons and his wife unto Moſes into the wilderneſs, where he encamped [d] at the mount of God. 6. And he ſaid unto Moſes, I thy father-in-law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two ſons with her.

[a] Chap. ii. 16. & iii. 1.
[b] Chap. iv. 25, 26.
[c] Chap. ii. 22.
† i. e. A ſtranger there.
‡ i. e. My God is an help.
[d] Chap. iii. 1.

v. 1—6. Jethro hearing of Moſes's proſperity, brings him his wife and children. It would be a great comfort to him to take them along with him, as it was a great duty not to be needleſſly ſeparated from them. The names of the children are mentioned, Gerſhom, *a ſtranger*, and Eliezer, *God is my help*, expreſſive of the ſtate of Moſes in Midian, and his confidence in God's care of him. *Note*, We are all ſtrangers upon earth, as our fathers were; but we have a child born unto us, to comfort us, the true Eliezer, even Emmanuel, the incarnate God, our helper.

7. ¶ And Moſes went out to meet his father-in-law, and did obeiſance, and kiſſed him, and they aſked each other of *their* † welfare: and they came into the tent. 8. And Moſes told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh, and to the Egyptians for Iſrael's ſake, *and* all the travel that had ‡ come upon them by the way, and *how* the LORD delivered them. 9. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodneſs which the LORD had done to Iſrael: whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. 10. And Jethro ſaid, Bleſſed *be* the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. 11. Now I know that the LORD *is* greater than all gods: for [f] in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, *he was* above them. 12. And Jethro Moſes's father-in-law took a burnt-offering and ſacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Iſrael, to eat bread with Moſes's father-in-law before God.

† Heb. Peace.
‡ Heb. Found them.
[e] Chap. i. 10, 16, 22. & v. 7. & xiv. 18.

v. 7—12. Moſes meets his father with affection and reſpect; for though he is become great, he is not become proud with it. As his heart is full of God's mercy, he begins immediately, on the firſt ſalutation, to recount God's dealings. *Note*, It is our duty, and ſhould be our delight, to tell of the things God hath done for our ſouls, for the encouragement and comfort of our brethren. Jethro is happy at the news, and bleſſes God for it. We muſt thus ever rejoice in the felicity of God's choſen, and give God the glory due to his name. And hereupon he makes a ſolemn profeſſion of his faith in Iſrael's God, convinced of his greatneſs above all the powers of man, as well as the inchantments of Egypt and her idols. In token of his faith he offers ſacrifice to God, and entertains all the elders of Iſrael. Though not an Iſraelite born, yet by faith of the Iſrael of God. *Note*, It is well when friends meet, not only to welcome them to our board, but to bring them to the altar. Our meetings will be joyful, and our feaſts ſanctified, when the word of God, and Christian converſation, and praiſe, and prayer, are our employment.

13. ¶ And it came to paſs on the morrow, that Moſes ſat to judge the people: and the people ſtood by Moſes, from the morning unto the evening. 14. And when Moſes's father-in-law ſaw all that he did to the people, he ſaid, What *is* this thing that thou doſt to the people? Why ſitteſt thou thyſelf alone, and all the people ſtand by thee from morning unto even? 15. And Moſes ſaid unto his father-in-law, Becauſe [f] the people come unto me to enquire of God. 16. When they have a matter, they come unto me, and I judge between † one and another, and I do make *them* know the ſtatutes of God and his laws. 17. And Moſes's father-in-law ſaid unto him, The thing that thou doſt *is* not good. 18. ‡ Thou wilt ſurely wear away, both thou, and this people that *is* with thee: for this thing *is* too heavy for thee; [g] thou art not able to perform it thyſelf alone. 19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counſel, and God ſhall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayſt bring the cauſes unto God: 20. And thou ſhalt teach them ordinances and laws, and ſhalt ſhew them the way wherein they muſt walk, and the work that they muſt do. 21. Moreover, thou ſhalt provide out of all the people, [h] able men, ſuch as fear God, men of truth, hating covetouſneſs, and place *ſuch* over them, *to be* rulers of thouſands, *and* rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22. And let them judge the people at all ſeaſons: and [i] it ſhall be, *that* every great matter they ſhall bring unto thee, but every ſmall matter they ſhall judge: So ſhall it be eaſier for thyſelf, and they ſhall bear *the burden* with thee. 23. If thou ſhalt do this thing, and God command thee *ſo*, then thou ſhalt be able to endure, and all this people ſhall alſo go to their place in peace. 24. So Moſes hearkned to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had ſaid. 25. And [k] Moſes choſe able men out of all Iſrael, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thouſands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 26. And they judged the people at all ſeaſons: the hard cauſes they brought unto Moſes, but every ſmall matter they judged themſelves. 27. ¶ And Moſes let his father-in-law depart; and [l] he went his way into his own land.

[f] Lev. xxiv. 12. Num. xv. 34.
† Heb. A man and his fellow.
‡ Heb. Fading thou wilt fade.
[g] Num. xi. 14. Deut. i. 9.
[h] Deut. i. 16. & xvi. 18. 2 Chron. xix. 7, 9.
[i] Deut. i. 17. & xvii. 8.
[k] Deut. i. 15.
[l] Num. x. 29—32.

v. 13—27 Moſes was their law-giver and judge, as well as their deliverer; and faithful was he in the truſt committed to him.

1. Obſerve how he is employed, to decide in all matters of controverſy, and to inform them in all doubtful caſes concerning the will of God. Eaſy of acceſs, diligent and laborious in his office, and never diverted from the calls of buſineſs by any avocations. The greater a man is, the more uſeful he ſhould labour to be. The ſervant of the public muſt not ſeek his own pleaſure, but the good of the people.

2. Jethro's obſervation hereupon. It was inconvenient for the people, and is too much for himſelf. The multitude of buſineſs was attended with delay, and the greatneſs of the fatigue would kill him ſhortly. *Note*, (1.) A zealous miniſter is apt ſometimes to forget that his bones are not braſs, nor his ſinews iron, and even in well-doing to deſtroy himſelf: but this is neither for God's glory, nor the people's good. The continuance of his life and miniſtry is more deſirable; and God is too great a maſter to need, and too good a maſter to require, us to labour above our ſtrength.

3. His advice, with ſubmiſſion to God's direction, *v.* 23. is to reſerve himſelf for the weightier matters relating to the things of God, and the more difficult controverſies, and to appoint judges for the more ordinary affairs, reſerving an appeal to himſelf in thoſe of importance. Behold here the character of a good judge: of abilities to diſcern, of a clear underſtanding, and quick penetration; conſcientious, and one that fears God; who cannot be over-awed by authority, nor ſwayed by influence; of ſtrict integrity, whoſe word is ſacred, and whoſe fidelity is tried; eſpecially above the ſordid attachment to intereſt, whom bribes not only cannot corrupt, but who abhors the thought of ſuch unrighteous gain. Happy the land, where ſuch men ſit on the ſeat of judgment!

4. Moſes approves of it, for the wiſeſt men are moſt ready to receive good counſel. The judges are appointed in ſeveral diviſions, and in ſubordination one to another. *Note*, As we have reaſon to be thankful for the adminiſtration of juſtice, it is a farther privilege, that we have a right of appeal to higher courts, where wrong determinations may be reverſed, and equity ſoften the rigour of the letter of the law.

5. Jethro returns. It is pleaſing to be with our friends; but we have calls at home that demand our preſence, and we may then part with comfort, when, like Moſes and Jethro, we have profited by each other's converſation.

CHAP. XIX.

This chapter preſents us with one of the moſt ſenſible appearances of the Divine Glory, that ever was in this lower world. Here is, 1. *The circumſtances of time and place,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The gracious propoſal God makes to his people,* ver. 3—6. *And their conſent to it,* ver. 7, 8. 3. *Notice is given three days before of God's deſign to give the law out of a thick cloud,* ver. 9. *Orders to prepare for it,* ver. 10—13. *and care taken to execute thoſe orders,* ver. 14, 15. 4. *A terrible appearance of God's glory upon mount Sinai,* ver. 16—20. 5. *A ſtrict charge given to the people,* ver. 21—25.

1. IN the third month, when the children of Iſrael were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the ſame day [a] came they *into* the wilderneſs of Sinai. 2. For they were departed [b] from Riphidim, and were come *to* the deſert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderneſs, and there Iſrael camped before the mount. 3. And [c] Moſes went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, ſaying, Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the houſe of Jacob, and tell the children of Iſrael; 4. [d] Ye have ſeen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* [e] I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myſelf. 5. Now [f] therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then [g] ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all people: for [h] all the earth *is* mine. 6. And ye ſhall be unto me [i] a kingdom of prieſts, and an holy nation. Theſe *are* the words which thou ſhalt ſpeak unto the children of Iſrael. 7. ¶ And Moſes came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all theſe words which the LORD commanded him. 8. And [k] all the people anſwered together, and ſaid, All that the LORD hath ſpoken, we will do. And Moſes returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

[a] Numb. xxxiii. 15.
[b] Chap. xvii. 1, 8.
[c] Acts vii. 38.
[d] Deut. xxix. 2.
[e] Deut. xxxii. 11. Iſa. lxiii. 9. Rev. xii. 14.
[f] Deut. v. 2.
[g] Deut. iv. 20. & vii. 6. & xiv. 2, 21. & xxvi. 18. & xxxii. 8, 9. Pſ. cxxxv. 4. Cant. viii. 12. Iſa. xliii. 1. Jer. x. 16. Mal. iii. 17. Tit. ii. 14.
[h] Deut. x. 14. Pſ. xxiv. 1. & l. 12.
[i] Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. Rev. i. 6. & v. 10. & xx. 6.
[k] Chap. xxiv. 3, 7. Deut. v. 27. & xxvi. 17.

v. 1—8. About fifty days after their departure from Egypt, when they had marched to Sinai, God appears in glory on the mount, and calls up Moſes to communicate his deſigns reſpecting the people.

1. A covenant is propoſed. It is an act of God's free grace, and the tenor of the agreement as advantageous for Iſrael, as juſt reſpecting their Maker. *Note*, All the mercies we enjoy in time or eternity are purely owing to the ſovereign grace and undeſerved love of God. They are reminded of God's care and protection of them, *v.* 4, and therefore, as they are ſo much obliged to him, obedience is doubly their duty: this therefore he expects from them, aſſuring them hereupon of his diſtinguiſhing regard, and the honour he deſigns them, as ſovereignly choſen out from the nations of the earth, to be his peculiar people, a nation of prieſts unto him. *Note*, (1.) God's favours are as great as they are gracious. (2.) Every faithful ſervant of Jeſus is predeſtinated to be a prieſt and king before God, to be holy and glorious to eternity.

2. The ready acceptance of this propoſal, *v.* 8, which Moſes, as mediator, reports to God. *Note*, Like Iſrael we are ready to be haſty in our promiſes; but when the performance is called for, how backward to obey the voice of the Lord our God?

9. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Lo, I come unto thee [l] in a thick cloud, [m] that the people may hear when I ſpeak with thee, and [n] believe thee for ever. And Moſes told the words of the people unto the LORD. 10. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Go unto the people, and ſanctify them to-day, and to-morrow, and let them [o] waſh their clothes, 11. And be ready againſt the third day: for the third day [p] the LORD

[l] Ver. 16. Chap. xx. 21. & xxiv. 15, 16. Pſ. xviii. 11, 12.
[m] Deut. iv. 12, 36.
[n] Chap. xiv. 31.
[o] Ver. 14. Gen. xxxv. 2. Lev. xv. 5.
[p] Chap. xxxiv. 5. Deut. xxxiii. 2.

Before Chriſt 1491.

LORD will come down in the ſight of all the people
upon mount Sinai. 12. And thou ſhalt ſet bounds un-
to the people round about, ſaying, Take heed to your-
ſelves, *that ye* go *not* up into the mount, or touch the
border of it: [q] whoſoever toucheth the mount, ſhall be
ſurely put to death. 13. There ſhall not an hand touch
it, but he ſhall ſurely be ſtoned, or ſhot through; whe-
ther *it be* beaſt, or man, it ſhall not live: when the
† trumpet ſoundeth long, they ſhall come up to the
mount. 14. ¶ And Moſes went down from the mount
unto the people, and ſanctified the people, and [r] they
waſhed their clothes. 15. And he ſaid unto the peo-
ple, Be ready againſt the third day: [s] come not at
your wives.

[q] Heb. xii. 20.
† Or cornet.
[r] Ver. 10.
[s] 1 Sam. xxi. 4, 5. Zech. vii. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 5.

v. 9—15. The Lord informs Moſes of his appearing, and the intention of it, *v.* 9, and orders him to ſpeak to the people to prepare for this awful ſolemnity.

1. They muſt be ſanctified. They who approach God, ſhould ſeek to be ſeparated not only from the groſſer pollutions of ſin, but from the intruſion of vain thoughts, worldly buſineſs and cares, and whatever would interrupt our communion with him. Their cloaths muſt be waſhed, in token of that internal purity which becomes God's worſhippers; and even their lawful enjoyments muſt be abſtained from, that they may without diſtraction give themſelves up more entirely to the exerciſes of devotion.

2. They muſt not go up into the mount, nay, not ſo much as touch it; but when the trumpet ſounded long, they may draw near, as humble hearers, that God might ſpeak with them face to face. *Note*, No prohibition now forbids the neareſt acceſs to God. Chriſt Jeſus hath opened a way into the holieſt of all; we are no more called in terror to hear a fiery law, but invited by the goſpel's ſilver trumpet to draw near to a crucified Jeſus, and look and live.

16. And it came to paſs on the third day in the
morning, that there were [t] thunders and lightnings, and
a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the
trumpet exceeding loud; ſo that all the people that *was*
in the camp trembled. 17. And [u] Moſes brought forth
the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they
ſtood at the nether part of the mount. 18. And [x] mount
Sinai was altogether on a ſmoke, becauſe the LORD
deſcended upon it in fire: and [y] the ſmoke thereof
aſcended as the ſmoke of a furnace, and [z] the whole
mount quaked greatly. 19. And when the voice of the
trumpet ſounded long, and waxed louder and louder,
[a] Moſes ſpake, and [b] God anſwered him by a voice. 20.
And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the
top of the mount: and the LORD called Moſes *up* to
the top of the mount, and Moſes went up. 21. And
the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Go down, † charge the
people, leſt they break through unto the LORD [c] to
gaze, and many of them periſh. 22. And let the prieſts
alſo which come near to the LORD, ſanctify themſelves,
leſt the LORD break forth upon them. 23. And Mo-
ſes ſaid unto the LORD, The people cannot come up
to mount Sinai: for thou chargedſt us, ſaying, Set
bounds about the mount, and ſanctify it. 24. And the
LORD ſaid unto him, Away, get thee down, and
thou ſhalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but
let not the prieſts and the people break through to come
up unto the LORD, leſt he break forth upon them.
25. So Moſes went down unto the people, and ſpake
unto them.

[t] Heb. xii. 18.
[u] Deut. iv. 10.
[x] Deut. iv. 11. & xxxii. 2. Judg. v. 4. Pſ. lxviii. 7, 8. Hab. iii. 3.
[y] Gen. xv. 17.
[z] Heb. xii. 26.
[a] Heb. xii. 21.
[b] Neh. ix. 13. Pſ. lxxxi. 7.
† Heb. Conteſt.
[c] See 1 Sam. vi. 19.

v. 16—25. The third, the memorable day appears, uſhered in with thunderings and lightnings, and blaſts of the archangel's trumpet, like thoſe that ſhortly muſt awake the dead. The people are drawn out, and now the Lord deſcends, accompanied with his mighty angels; a fiery cloud his chariot, and Sinai trembles at his preſence, whilſt blaſts more loud and terrible proclaim the preſent deity. Even Moſes quakes with fear. God ſpeaks to him, *v.* 20, encourages him to approach. Moſes draws near, is ſent to repeat the former ſolemn injunctions, not to break through, nor gaze with vain curioſity. God knows their wilfulneſs; he muſt go down to prevent them, leſt they periſh through their preſumption. *Note*, (1.) Where God hath wrapped a ſacred veil around his ſecrets, to be contentedly ignorant, is our higheſt wiſdom. (2.) The boundaries God hath fixed are for our good: our folly or perverſeneſs, if unreſtrained, would deſtroy us. (3.) Whenever we approach him in his ordinances, let us remember his glory, that we may appear before him as becomes us, with reverence and godly fear.

CHAP. XX.

Before Chriſt 1491.

We have in this chapter, 1. *The ten commandments, as God himſelf ſpake them upon mount Sinai,* ver. 1—17. 2. *The impreſſions made upon the people thereby,* ver. 18—21. 3. *Some particular instructions, which God gave privately to Moſes, to be by him communicated to the people, relating to his worſhip,* ver. 22—26.

1. AND God ſpake all theſe words, ſaying, 2. [a] I
am the LORD thy God, which have brought
thee out of the land of Egypt, [b] out of the houſe of
† bondage. 3. Thou ſhalt have no other gods before
me. 4. [c] Thou ſhalt not make unto thee any graven
image, or any likeneſs *of any thing* that *is* in heaven
above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the
water under the earth. 5. Thou ſhalt not bow down
thyſelf to them, nor ſerve them: for I the LORD thy
God *am* [d] a jealous God, [e] viſiting the iniquity of the
fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *gene-
ration* of them that hate me: 6. And [f] ſhewing mercy
unto thouſands of them that love me, and keep my com-
mandments. 7. [g] Thou ſhalt not take the name of the
LORD thy God in vain: for [h] the LORD will not hold
him guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain. 8. Remem-
ber the ſabbath-day, to keep it holy. 9. [i] Six days
ſhalt thou labour, and do all thy work. 10. But the
ſeventh day *is* the ſabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it*
thou ſhalt not do any work, thou, nor thy ſon, nor thy
daughter, thy man-ſervant, nor thy maid-ſervant, nor
thy cattle, [k] nor thy ſtranger that *is* within thy gates.
11. For [l] *in* ſix days the LORD made heaven and earth,
the ſea, and all that in them *is*, and reſted the ſeventh
day: wherefore the LORD bleſſed the ſabbath-day, and
hallowed it.

[a] Lev. xxvi. 1. Deut. v. 6. Pſ. lxxxi. 10. Hoſ. xiii. 4.
[b] Chap. xiii. 3.
† Heb. Servants.
[c] Lev. xxvi. 1. Deut. iv. 15. Pſ. xcvii. 7.
[d] Chap. xxxiv. 14. Deut. vi. 15. Joſh. xxiv. 19. Neh. i. 2.
[e] Chap. xxxiv. 7. Lev. xx. 5. & xxvi. 39, 40. Num. xiv. 18, 33. 1 Kings, xxi. 29. Job v. 4. & xxi. 19. Pſ. lxxix. 8. & cix. 14. Iſa. xiv. 20, 21. & lxv. 6, 7. Jer. ii. 9. & xxxii. 18.
[f] Deut. vii. 9. Pſ. lxxxix. 34.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 1. Lev. xix. 12. Deut. v. 11. Pſ. xv. 3. Mat. v. 33.
[h] Mic. vi. 11.
[i] Chap. xxiii. 12. & xxxi. 14. & xxxiv. 21. Lev. xxiii. 3. Ezek. xx. 12. Luke xiii. 14.
[k] Neh. xiii. 16.
[l] Gen. ii. 2.

v. 1—11. Never before, or ſince, was ſuch an auditory, or ſuch a ſpeaker. God himſelf appears from heaven, to promulge that ſacred law which once was written on the heart, but by ſin defaced and obliterated. Obſerve,

1. The preface, *v.* 2. He is the Lord, who hath a right to demand the obedience he enjoins; and their God, in a covenant of peculiar favour, who would never be wanting in every inſtance of regard, which almighty power, joined with boundleſs love, could ſhew. He had manifeſted himſelf to them already in their deliverance from Egypt, and this is the earneſt of what he further could and would do for them. *Note*, That dear Redeemer, who hath delivered us from bondage worſe than Egyptian, may juſtly claim our bounden duty and ſervice in return.

2. The moral law. It opens with the duty we owe to God our Creator; enjoins his worſhip, ſervice, and obedience.

1. God muſt alone be the object of our worſhip, no other may be joined with him; for there is no other God beſides him, and on him muſt be placed our ſupreme confidence, fear, and love. To ſet them on any creature or thing, in preference to him, is immediately to become idolaters. How few are worſhippers then of the true God, when pleaſure, gain, honour, and the whole train of worldly gratifications, afford ſo many gods to the idol heart of fallen man!

2. God muſt be worſhipped, not under any repreſentation, but as a ſpirit, in ſpirit and in truth. No image muſt be made of him, nor religious worſhip be paid through any creature to him. We are not, even in our minds, to liken him to any object that is ſeen; and he is to be ſerved with the internal affections of the ſoul, and with the outward ſervice of prayer and praiſe. He threatens as a jealous God to viſit offenders. They who neglect his worſhip, or walk contrary to his command herein, ſhall be treated as haters of him; and children's children ſhall ſuffer for it; who, taught by their fathers example, ſhall ſhare in their viſitations: whilſt they who ſerve him in his preſcribed way, ſhall find his mercy, and entail their bleſſing on generations yet to come. *Note*, (1.) The idolatry of the Romiſh church, in ſuch groſs violations of this commandment, which they artfully would conceal from the people, by omitting the ſecond commandment in their catechiſms, and joining the reaſons againſt idolatry here given, to the firſt. (2.) The neceſſity of the conſcientious and conſtant worſhip of God, without which we never can be enabled to love him, and keep his commandments.

3. God's name muſt not be taken in vain, by hypocritical prayers, which never come from the heart, or by vows of fidelity to him we are negligent to keep; by any raſh or falſe ſwearing, or by light and irreverent uſe of his holy name in our ordinary converſation. And however little attended to this commandment may now be, the ſame ſanction guards it as ever. God will not hold the tranſgreſſor guiltleſs; and it is a fearful thing to meet him in wrath.

4. The

4. The ſabbath-day muſt be kept holy. Nothing ſhould break in to diſturb the ſacred reſt; all worldly buſineſs muſt be laid aſide, and the whole employed in the more immediate ſervice of God. And not only ourſelves, but all under our roof, muſt ceaſe from labour, and join with us in the celebration of the holy day: and this in memory of God's finiſhed work of creation, and becauſe he hath choſen it, and ſet it apart for his own. *Note*, (1.) We need many a remembrance, ſo apt are we to forget God and his laws. (2.) Nothing will conduce more, as a means to our preparation for the eternal reſt, which remaineth for the people of God, than a ſerious and conſtant obſervation of the ſeventh day.

12. ¶ [m] Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 13. [n] Thou ſhalt not kill. 14. [o] Thou ſhalt not commit adultery. 15. Thou ſhalt not ſteal. 16. [p] Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour. 17. [q] Thou ſhalt not covet thy neighbour's houſe, [r] thou ſhalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-ſervant, nor his maid-ſervant, nor his ox, nor his aſs, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

[m] Chap. xxiii. 26. Lev. xix. 3. Deut. v. 16. Jer. xxxv. 7. Mat. xv. 4. Eph. vi. 2.
[n] Mat. v. 21. Rom. xiii. 9.
[o] Mat. v. 27.
[p] Deut. xix. 16.
[q] Acts xx. 33.
[r] Job xxxi. 9.

v. 12—17. The firſt table related to God; the ſecond reſpects our neighbour. When we conſcientiouſly ſerve the one, we ſhall infallibly deſire to walk upright before the other.

1. The fifth commandment enjoins the reverence due to our parents, and in them to all ſuperiors; a reſpectful carriage towards them; obedient ſubmiſſion to their juſt commands; patience under their corrections; teachableneſs under their inſtructions; and readineſs to help and ſuccour them at all times, according to our abilities. The promiſe annexed to it, is long poſſeſſion of the promiſed land. *Note*, The career of a diſobedient child is often ſhort, and even in this world has a miſerable end.

2. The ſixth commandment forbids murder in every kind and degree, of others or ourſelves; and not only reſtrains from the outward act, but equally condemns the raſh anger that leads to it, whether in thought, word, or deed. *Note*, He that reads, *Mat*. v. 22. will need humble his ſoul for the murder he hath committed.

3. The ſeventh commandment reſpects our own, and our neighbour's chaſtity. Not only it condemns the groſſer act, but every deſire, thought, look, word, or action, which would lead to impurity.

4. The eighth commandment enjoins all honeſty and fidelity; condemns every act of injuſtice, fraud, or oppreſſion, whether to individuals or the public, and alſo that profuſion or covetouſneſs, which naturally leads to the breach of it.

5. The ninth commandment forbids all perjury, all lying, backbiting, ſlandering, equivocation, and whatever would deceive, or be to the injury of our neighbour.

6. The tenth commandment is the ſpirituality of all the reſt in one, and ſtrikes at the root of all that ſelfiſhneſs which is in the corrupted nature of man, forbidding the wandrings of vain deſire, and the imaginations of luſt and covetouſneſs. Well will it be for us, if the deep views of this holy law affect our hearts, both with a ſenſe of our need of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, to ſave us from the violations of it, and of the ſpirit of Chriſt, to enable us to perform any acceptable obedience to it.

18. ¶ And [s] all the people [t] ſaw the thundrings, and the lightnings, and the noiſe of the trumpet, and the mountain ſmoaking: and when the people ſaw *it*, they removed, and ſtood afar off. 19. And they ſaid unto Moſes, [u] Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God ſpeak with us, leſt we die. 20. And Moſes ſaid unto the people, Fear not: for [x] God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye ſin not. 21. And the people ſtood afar off, and Moſes drew near unto the [y] thick darkneſs where God *was*.

[s] Heb. xii. 18.
[t] Rev. i. 12.
[u] Deut. v. 24. & xviii. 16. Gal. iii. 19, 20. Hebr. xii. 19.
[x] Deut. xiii. 3.
[y] Chap. xix. 16. Deut. v. 5. 1 Kings viii. 12.

v. 18—21. With pomp of terrible majeſty God thus proclaims his holy will. An emblem of the diſpenſation they were under, begetting terror and bondage, and deſigned to make the reception of the grace and truth, which comes by Jeſus Chriſt, the more welcome. Obſerve,

1. The people's apprehenſions. They are now cured of their curioſity; and trembling retreat, even from the nearneſs permitted them; ſo fearful are they of the preſence of God. They entreat Moſes to be their mediator, whoſe terror cannot make them afraid. Who would have thought, after ſuch a ſcene, the golden calf could on that ſpot have ever reared its guilty head? *Note*, Legal terrors will never cure men of their ſins.

2. Moſes encourages them. Dejected hearts muſt be ſupported againſt their fears: God was come to prove, not to puniſh them; to put his fear before them, that they ſin not. A filial fear of offending, is the great preſervative from evil.

3. Moſes, at God's command, returns to the thick darkneſs to commune with God. It is the property of divine faith, to ſee through the thick cloud of ſenſe, and hold communion with him that is inviſible.

22. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Thus thou ſhalt ſay unto the children of Iſrael, Ye have ſeen that [z] I have talked with you from heaven. 23. Ye ſhall not make [a] with me gods of ſilver, neither ſhall ye make unto you gods of gold. 24. ¶ An altar of earth thou ſhalt make unto me, and ſhalt ſacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings, [b] thy ſheep, and thine oxen: In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bleſs thee. 25. And [c] if thou wilt make me an altar of ſtone, thou ſhalt not † build it of hewn ſtone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou haſt polluted it. 26. Neither ſhalt thou go up by ſteps unto mine altar, that thy nakedneſs be not diſcovered thereon.

[z] Deut. iv. 36. Neh. ix. 13.
[a] See 1 Sam. v. 4, 5. 2 Kings xvii. 33. Ezek. xx. 39. & xliii. 8. Zeph. i. 4, 5. 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16.
[b] Lev. i. 2.
[c] Deut. xxvii. 5. Joſh. viii. 31. 1 Mac. iv. 47.
† Heb. Build them with hewing.

v. 22—26. Idolatry being the ſin to which God ſaw the people moſt inveterately addicted, he gives Moſes ſome particular directions to guard them from it.

1. All images are forbidden: the moſt coſtly are an abomination in the ſight of God. The moſt expenſive worſhip, if not according to God's commandment, is but a more ſplendid iniquity.

2. Their altars muſt be plain, unadorned, of earth or unhewn ſtone, and low, for the reaſon given, *v.* 26. God muſt be worſhipped in ſpirit, and gorgeous ornaments are there ſuperfluous, where the heart is to be regarded. The ſhowy pageantry of the Romiſh church, is but as the finery of a whore; that though it may draw in the unwary, is the ſignal to the wiſe to turn away.

3. God will meet thoſe who wait upon him in his ways, and will bleſs them, in every place where his name ſhould be worſhipped, according to his own inſtitution. Now they were allowed as many altars as they choſe; afterwards their ſacrifices were all to be offered at Jeruſalem; but ſince the true Lamb of God was ſlain there, this peculiarity is deſtroyed; and now in every place, God is near thoſe who call upon him out of a pure heart fervently.

CHAP. XXI.

1. *Here are ſeveral enlargements upon the fifth commandment*, (1.) *The duty of maſters towards their men-ſervants*, ver. 2—6. *and maid-ſervants*, ver. 7—11. (2.) *The puniſhment of diſobedient children that ſtrike their parents*, ver. 15. *or curſe them*, ver. 17. 2. *Upon the ſixth commandment*, 1. *Concerning murder*, ver. 12—14. 2. *Manſtealing*, ver. 16. 3. *Aſſault and battery*, ver. 18, 19. 4. *Correcting a ſervant*, ver. 20, 21. 5. *Hurting a woman with child*, ver 22, 23. 6. *The law of retaliation*, ver. 24, 25. 7. *Maiming a ſervant*, ver. 26, 27. 8. *An ox goring*, ver. 26—32. 9. *Damage done by opening a pit*, ver. 33, 34. 10. *Cattle fighting*, ver. 35, 36.

1. NOW theſe *are* the judgments which thou ſhalt [a] ſet before them. 2. [b] If thou buy an Hebrew ſervant, ſix years ſhall he ſerve: and in the ſeventh he ſhall go out free for nothing. 3. If he came in † by himſelf, he ſhall go out by himſelf: if he were married, then his wife ſhall go out with him. 4. If his maſter have given him a wife, and ſhe have born him ſons or daughters; the wife and her children ſhall be her maſter's, and he ſhall go out by himſelf. 5. And [c] if the ſervant ‡ ſhall plainly ſay, I love my maſter, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free: 6. Then his maſter ſhall [d] bring him unto the judges; he ſhall alſo bring him to the door, or unto the door-poſt: and his maſter ſhall bore his ear through with an awl, and he ſhall ſerve him for ever. 7. ¶ And if a man ſell his daughter to be a maid-ſervant, ſhe ſhall not go out as the men-ſervants do. 8. If ſhe † pleaſe not her maſter, who hath betrothed her to himſelf, then ſhall he let her be redeemed: to ſell her unto a ſtrange nation he ſhall have no power, ſeeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her. 9. And if he have betrothed her unto his ſon, he ſhall deal with her after the manner of daughters. 10. If he take him another *wife*; her food, her raiment, and [e] her duty of marriage ſhall he not diminiſh. 11. And if he do not theſe three unto her, then ſhall ſhe go out free without money.

[a] Chap. xxiv. 3, 4. Deut. iv. 14.
[b] Lev. xxv. 39. Deut. xv. 12. Jer. xxxiv. 14.
† Heb. With his body.
[c] Deut. xv. 16.
‡ Heb. Saying, ſhall ſay.
[d] Chap. xxii. 28.
† Heb. Be evil in the eyes of.
[e] 1 Cor. vii. 5.

v. 1—11. God was himſelf the head of the Jewiſh ſtate, and governed them in an eſpecial manner, by laws immediately given from himſelf. We have here, ordinances concerning ſervants: they had been ſervants themſelves, and therefore are peculiarly called to exerciſe gentleneſs towards ſuch. Though they had ſuffered, they muſt not play the tyrant in their turn.

1. Of the man-ſervant, *v.* 2—6. He muſt be free every ſeventh year, unleſs he chuſe to ſtay; on which, in the preſence of the judges, *v.* 6. his ear was bored, and he was then a ſervant for life, or till the year of jubilee. *Note,* Voluntary ſervitude will ſeldom be found among men; but they who have taſted the bleſſed freedom of God's ſervice, are happy to be confirmed in his houſe for ever, and deſire to go out no more.

2. Of the maid-ſervants, *v.* 7—11. The meaneſt of Iſrael's daughters are honourably taken care of: thus Jeſus firſt bought the church with his blood; then, mean and unequal as was the match, eſpouſed her to himſelf in mercy, and liberally endowed her with all the rich bleſſings of his grace.

12. ¶ [f] He that ſmiteth a man, ſo that he die, ſhall be ſurely put to death. 13. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver *him* into his hand; then [g] I will appoint thee a place whither he ſhall flee. 14. But if a man come preſumptuouſly upon his neighbour, to ſlay him with guile; [h] thou ſhalt take him from mine altar, that he may die. 15. ¶ And he that ſmiteth his father, or his mother, ſhall ſurely be put to death. 16. ¶ And [i] he that ſtealeth a man, and ſelleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he ſhall ſurely be put to death. 17. ¶ And [k] he that † curſeth his father, or his mother, ſhall ſurely be put to death.

[f] Gen. ix 6. Lev. xxiv. 17. Mat. xxvi. 52.
[g] Numb. xxxv. 11. Deut. xix. 3. Joſh. xx. 2.
[h] 1 Kings ii. 28. 2 Kings xi. 15.
[i] Deut. xxiv. 7.
[k] Lev. xx. 9. Prov. xx. 20. Mat. xv. 4. Mark vii. 10.
† Or revileth.

v. 12—17. Three capital crimes are laid down. Murder, man-ſtealing, and ſtriking or curſing of parents. *Note,* (1.) If the murderer will find no ſanctuary even at God's altar, ſurely he ſhould find none elſewhere. Mercy to a murderer, is cruelty to mankind. (2.) Though the behaviour of an undutiful ſon under our laws, meets not ſuch exemplary puniſhment, God will ſurely take vengeance, either in time or eternity.

A proviſion is made for manſlaughter: where there was no malice prepenſe, but God delivered him into his hand, a city of refuge ſhall be provided. *Note,* Nothing is accidental: if a ſparrow falls not to the ground, without Divine direction, much leſs doth a man.

18. ¶ And if men ſtrive together, and one ſmite ‡ another with a ſtone, or with *his* fiſt, and he die not, but keepeth *his* bed: 19. If he riſe again, and walk abroad upon his ſtaff, then ſhall he that ſmote *him* be quit: only he ſhall pay *for* ‖ the loſs of his time, and ſhall cauſe *him* to be thoroughly healed. 20. ¶ And if a man ſmite his ſervant, or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand; he ſhall be ſurely † puniſhed. 21. Notwithſtanding, if he continue a day or two, he ſhall not be puniſhed: for [l] he *is* his money. 22. ¶ If men ſtrive, and hurt a woman with child, ſo that her fruit depart *from her*, and yet no miſchief follow: he ſhall be ſurely puniſhed, according as the woman's huſband will lay upon him; and he ſhall pay as the judges *determine*. 23. And if *any* miſchief follow, then thou ſhalt give life for life, 24. [m] Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25. Burning for burning, wound for wound, ſtripe for ſtripe. 26. ¶ And if a man ſmite the eye of his ſervant, or the eye of his maid, that it periſh; he ſhall let him go free for his eye's ſake. 27. And if he ſmite out his man-ſervant's tooth, or his maid-ſervant's tooth; he ſhall let him go free for his tooth's ſake.

‡ Or his neighbour.
‖ Heb. His ceaſing.
† Heb. Avenged.
[l] Lev. xxv. 46.
[m] Ibid. xxiv. 20. Deut. xix. 21. Mat. v. 38.

v. 18—27. We have here, 1. Satisfaction for damage in quarrels, *v.* 18, 19. 2. What was to be done, if a ſlave died under correction, or lived a day or two after it, *v.* 20, 21. *Note,* Though laws may not puniſh every inſtance of cruelty, there is a maſter in heaven, with whom there is no reſpect of perſons. 3. The penalty of hurting a woman with child, ſo as to miſcarry, *v.* 22. 4. General directions for judges, regarding the laws of retaliation, though private perſons may not avenge themſelves, the judges may and ought to decree reparation, according to the damage. 5. A ſervant ſtruck by his maſter, ſo as to be maimed, or even loſe a tooth, was to be free. Self-intereſt would thus reſtrain paſſionate maſters from uſing violence; at leaſt the injured ſervant would be recompenſed with his liberty.

28. ¶ If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die, then [n] the ox ſhall be ſurely ſtoned, and his fleſh ſhall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *ſhall be* quit. 29. But if the ox were wont to puſh with his horn in time paſt, and it hath been teſtified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox ſhall be ſtoned, and his owner alſo ſhall be put to death. 30. If there be laid on him a ſum of money, then he ſhall give for [o] the ranſom of his life, whatſoever is laid upon him. 31. Whether he have gored a ſon, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment ſhall it be done unto him. 32. If the ox ſhall puſh a man-ſervant, or maid-ſervant; he ſhall give unto their maſter [p] thirty ſhekels of ſilver, and the ox ſhall be ſtoned. 33. ¶ And if a man ſhall open a pit, or if a man ſhall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an aſs fall therein; 34. The owner of the pit ſhall make *it* good, *and* give money unto the owner of them; and the dead *beaſt* ſhall be his. 35. ¶ And if one man's ox hurt another's that he die, then they ſhall ſell the live ox, and divide the money of it, and the dead *ox* alſo they ſhall divide. 36. Or if it be known that the ox hath uſed to puſh in time paſt, and his owner hath not kept him in; he ſhall ſurely pay ox for ox, and the dead ſhall be his own.

[n] Gen. ix. 5.
[o] Numb. xxxv. 31.
[p] See Mat. xxvi. 15. Phil. ii. 7.

v. 28—36. We have ſundry directions concerning damage done to life or limb by cattle; damage done by cattle fighting; damage ſuſtained by a pit being uncovered: In which we may obſerve, 1. The care God hath of man's life, even the ox muſt be ſtoned that kills a man. 2. That they who are acquainted with the miſchievouſneſs of their cattle, and take not proper care of them, are looked upon as acceſſary to the hurt done by them. Not to reſtrain the evil that is in our power, is to commit it. 3. We deſerve to be puniſhed for negligence, as well as miſchief. They who put a ſtumbling block in their brother's way, perhaps deſign no harm; but when harm is done, that will be no excuſe.

CHAP. XXII.

The laws of this chapter relate, 1. *To the eighth commandment, concerning theft,* ver. 1—4. *Treſpaſs by cattle,* ver. 5. *Damage by fire,* ver. 6. *Truſts,* ver. 7—13. *Borrowing cattle,* ver. 14, 15. *or money,* ver. 25—27. 2. *To the ſeventh commandment. Againſt fornication,* ver. 16, 17. *Beſtiality,* ver. 19. 3. *To the firſt table, forbidding witchcraft,* ver. 18. *Idolatry,* ver. 20. *Commanding to offer the firſt-fruits,* ver. 29, 30. 4. *To the poor,* ver. 21—24. 5. *To the civil government,* ver. 28. 6. *To the peculiarity of the Jewiſh nation,* ver. 31.

1. IF a man ſhall ſteal an ox or a † ſheep, and kill it, or ſell it; he ſhall reſtore five oxen for an ox, and [a] four ſheep for a ſheep. 2. ¶ If a thief be found breaking up, and be ſmitten that he die, *there ſhall* no blood *be ſhed* for him. 3. If the ſun be riſen upon him, *there ſhall be* blood *ſhed* for him: *for* he ſhould make full reſtitution; if he have nothing, then he ſhall be ſold for his theft. 4. If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or aſs, or ſheep; he ſhall reſtore double. 5. ¶ If a man ſhall cauſe a field or vineyard to be eaten, and ſhall put in his beaſt, and ſhall feed in another man's field: of the beſt of his own field, and of the beſt of his own vineyard ſhall he make reſtitution. 6. ¶ If fire break out, and catch in thorns ſo that the ſtacks of corn, or the ſtanding-corn, or the field be conſumed *therewith*; he that kindled the fire ſhall ſurely make reſtitution.

† Or goat.
[a] 2 Sam. xii. 6. Luke xix. 8. See Prov. vi. 31.

v. 1—6. Laws concerning theft, 1. For an ox ſtolen, if killed, or ſold, five muſt be reſtored; for a ſheep, four; if found alive, in his cuſtody, double. If the thief hath nothing to pay, he muſt be ſold for a ſlave. *Note,* No man was ever at laſt the richer, for what he got by thieving. 2. If a thief broke a houſe at night, and was killed, no blood was to be ſhed for him: but if in the day, unleſs in ſelf-defence, he that ſlew him was anſwerable for it. Obſerve, we ſhould be tender, even to ſhed the blood of a robber. 3. Concerning treſpaſs, *v.* 5. Reſtitution muſt be made of our beſt. 4. For fire ſpread by thorns, though undeſigned, damages muſt be made good, *v.* 6. Thoſe who by tattling, ſlander, &c. injure their neighbour, though they may plead they did not intend harm, will find in God's court a ſevere account laid for idle words.

7. ¶ If a man ſhall deliver unto his neighbour money or ſtuff to keep, and it be ſtolen out of the man's houſe; if the thief be found, let him pay double. 8. If the thief be not found, then the maſter of the houſe ſhall be brought unto the judges, *to ſee* whether he have put his

hand unto his neighbour's goods. 9. For all manner of treſpaſs, *whether it be* for ox, for aſs, for ſheep, for raiment, *or* for any manner of loſt thing, which *another* challengeth to be his: the cauſe of both parties ſhall come before the judges; *and* whom the judges ſhall condemn, he ſhall pay double unto his neighbour. 10. If a man deliver unto his neighbour an aſs, or an ox, or a ſheep, or any beaſt to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man ſeeing *it*: 11. *Then* ſhall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods: and the owner of it ſhall accept *thereof*, and he ſhall not make *it* good. 12. And [b] if it be ſtolen from him, he ſhall make reſtitution unto the owner thereof. 13. If it be torn in pieces; *then* let him bring it *for* witneſs, *and* he ſhall not make good that which was torn. 14. ¶ And if a man borrow *ought* of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it; he ſhall ſurely make *it* good. 15. *But* if the owner thereof *be* with it, he ſhall not make *it* good: if it *be* an hired *thing*, it came for his hire.

b Gen. xxxi. 39.

v. 7—15. Farther laws are given, 1. Concerning truſts. If ought be loſt or ſtolen, and the thief be found, or the truſtee privy to it, he ſhall pay double. If he prove his innocence by evidence, or oath, before the judges to their ſatisfaction, he ſhould be free. *Note*, (1.) To betray a truſt, is to add ingratitude to injuſtice. (2.) The great diſhoneſty of the world makes oaths neceſſary. (3.) A man muſt be advanced to a daring pitch of wickedneſs, that can ſolemnly make a falſe appeal to the avenging God.

2. Concerning loans, *v.* 14, 15. If a man hired ought, and the owner was with it, the care was repoſed on him. If it was lent freely, and received injury, it was to be made good. What we borrow, we ſhould be twice careful of, out of gratitude to the lender.

16. ¶ And [c] if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her; he ſhall ſurely endow her to be his wife. 17. If her father utterly refuſe to give her unto him, he ſhall † pay money according to the dowry of virgins. 18. ¶ [d] Thou ſhalt not ſuffer a witch to live. 19. ¶ [e] Whoſoever lieth with a beaſt, ſhall ſurely be put to death. 20. ¶ [f] He that ſacrificeth unto *any* god, ſave unto the LORD only, he ſhall be utterly deſtroyed. 21. ¶ [g] Thou ſhalt neither vex a ſtranger, nor oppreſs him: for ye were ſtrangers in the land of Egypt.

c Deut. xxii. 28.
† Heb. Weigh.
d Lev. xix. 26, 31. & xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 10, 11. 1 Sam. xxviii. 9.
e Lev. xviii. 23. & xx. 15.
f Deut. xiii. 1, 6, 13, 14, 15. & xvii. 2. 1 Mac. ii. 24.
g Ex. xxiii. 9. Lev. xix. 33. & xxv. 35.

v. 16—21. We have,

1. The reſtitution to be made to a maiden, who ſhould be debauched. The perſon muſt marry her; or if her father refuſed his conſent, make her a ſatisfaction in money.

2. Three capital crimes; witchcraft, buggery, and idolatry. They who forſake God in ſpirit, or thus abuſe their own bodies, are no longer fit to live.

22. ¶ [h] Ye ſhall not afflict any widow, or fatherleſs child. 23. If thou afflict them in any wiſe, and they cry at all unto me: I will ſurely hear their cry; 24. And my wrath ſhall wax hot, and I will kill you with the ſword; and [i] your wives ſhall be widows, and your children fatherleſs. 25. [k] If thou lend money to *any of* my people *that is* poor by thee, thou ſhalt not be to him as an uſurer, neither ſhalt thou lay upon him uſury. 26. [l] If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou ſhalt deliver it unto him by that the ſun goeth down: 27. For that *is* his covering only, it *is* his raiment for his ſkin: wherein ſhall he ſleep? and it ſhall come to paſs, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear: for I *am* gracious.

h Deut. x. 18. & xxiv. 17. & xxvii. 19. Iſa. i. 17. Zech. vii. 10. Jam. i. 27.
i Pſal. cix. 9.
k Lev. xxv. 35, 36, 37. Deut. xxiii. 19. Neh. v. 7. Pſal. xv. 5. Ezek. xviii. 8, 17.
l Deut. xxiv. 6, 10, 13. Job xxiv. 3, 9. Prov. xx. 16. & xxii. 27. Amos ii. 8.

v. 22—27. 1. Strangers muſt not be oppreſſed, *v.* 21. neither advantage taken of their ignorance, or partiality ſhewn to them in judgment; or any affront or unkindneſs offered them. Strangers have a double title to our protection and humanity, as from their circumſtances they muſt be more expoſed, and liable to impoſition or oppreſſion. 2. The fatherleſs and widows are under God's peculiar care: woe to thoſe who give cauſe for their cries, by unkindneſs to them, or by any injuries done them. If among men they find no helper, God will be the avenger of all ſuch. 3. A law againſt uſury. It was wholly forbidden among the Jews, though allowed reſpecting ſtrangers. All extorted premiums, or exorbitant gain from loans to the neceſſitous, are contrary not only to the laws of God, but puniſhable alſo by the judges. But if he who borrows, does it to make a more conſiderable advantage to himſelf, it is as reaſonable he ſhould pay for the uſe of money, as of land. 4. Againſt retaining cloaths for a pledge, *v.* 26, 27. When we lie warm ourſelves, let us remember thoſe who want cloaths to cover them; and never add affliction to the needy, but ſtudy how to relieve it.

28. ¶ [m] Thou ſhalt not revile the † gods, nor curſe the ruler of thy people. 29. ¶ Thou ſhalt not delay *to offer* ‡ the firſt of thy ripe fruits, and of thy ‖ liquors: [n] the firſt-born of thy ſons ſhalt thou give unto me. 30. Likewiſe ſhalt thou do with thine oxen, *and* with thy ſheep: [o] ſeven days it ſhall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou ſhalt give it me. 31. ¶ And ye ſhall be holy men unto me: [p] neither ſhall ye eat *any* fleſh that *is* torn of beaſts in the field: ye ſhall caſt it to the dogs.

m Eccleſ. x. 20. Acts xxiii. 5. Jude viii.
† Or judges, Pſal. lxxxii. 6.
‡ Heb. Thy fulneſs.
‖ Heb. Tear.
n Chap. xiii. 2, 12. & xxxiv. 19. Deut. xv. 19.
o Lev. xxii. 27.
p Ibid. 8. Ezek. xliv. 31.

v. 28—31. 1. A law againſt contempt of magiſtrates, *v.* 28. They are cloathed with their character from God. To oppoſe or revile them, is to revile and oppoſe the ordinance of God. *Note*, A faithful magiſtrate muſt expect malignant tongues. 2. Concerning the firſt-fruits, *v.* 29—30. They muſt not delay to offer them: nothing ſo dangerous as procraſtination: how many ſouls have periſhed, by putting off to a more convenient ſeaſon, what preſent duty required? Happy they, who offer their youngeſt days to God, and devote to him not the dregs of age, but the prime of life. 3. They muſt not eat what was torn of beaſts, *v.* 31. for they are holy: they muſt remember their dignity. A chriſtian will no more do a mean and baſe thing, than a ſinful one.

CHAP. XXIII.

Contains, 1. *Some laws of univerſal obligation againſt bearing falſe witneſs*, ver. 1: *and giving falſe judgment*, ver. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8. *Alſo of doing good to our enemies*, ver. 4, 5. *and not oppreſſing ſtrangers*, ver. 9. 2. *Some laws peculiar to the Jews: The ſabbatical year*, ver. 10, 11. *the three annual feaſts*, ver. 14—17. *with ſome laws pertaining thereto.* 3. *Promiſes to them, if obedient*, ver. 20—24. *That he would proſper all they had*, ver. 25, 26. *That he would put them in poſſeſſion of Canaan*, ver. 27—31. *But they muſt not mingle themſelves with the nations*, ver. 32, 33.

1. [a] THOU ſhalt not † raiſe a falſe report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witneſs. 2. ¶ [b] Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to *do* evil; neither ſhalt thou ‡ ſpeak in a cauſe, to decline after many, to wreſt *judgment*: 3. ¶ [c] Neither ſhalt thou countenance a poor man in his cauſe. 4. ¶ [d] If thou meet thine enemies ox or his aſs going aſtray, thou ſhalt ſurely bring it back to him again. 5. [e] If thou ſee the aſs of him that hateth thee, lying under his burden, † and wouldſt forbear to help him; thou ſhalt ſurely help him. 6. Thou ſhalt not wreſt the judgment of thy poor in his cauſe. 7. Keep thee far from a falſe matter: and the innocent and righteous ſlay thou not: for [f] I will not juſtify the wicked. 8. ¶ And [g] thou ſhalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth † the wiſe, and perverteth the words of the righteous. 9. ¶ Alſo [h] thou ſhalt not oppreſs a ſtranger: for ye know the † heart of a ſtranger, ſeeing ye were ſtrangers in the land of Egypt.

a Pſal. xv. 3.
† Or receive.
b Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17.
‡ Heb. Anſwer.
c Pſal. lxxii. 2.
d Deut. xxii. 1. Job xxxi. 29. Prov. xxiv. 17. & xxv. 21. Mat. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20.
e Deut. xxii. 4.
† Or, wilt thou ceaſe to help him? or, And wouldſt ceaſe to leave thy buſineſs for him; thou ſhalt ſurely leave it to join with him.
f Chap. xxxiv. 7.
g Deut. xvi. 19. Prov. xvii. 8, 23. Ecclus xx. 29.
† Heb. The ſeeing.
h Chap. xxii. 21. Deut. x. 19. & xxiv. 14, 17. & xxvii. 19.
† Heb. Soul.

v. 1—9. We have here ſundry laws of univerſal obligation:

1. Againſt falſe accuſation: not only by perjury, in a court of judicature, but by every ſcandal propagated in common converſation. *Note*, To ſpeak evil of any man behind his back, or to hear it, without vindicating the injured and the abſent, is to be guilty of a great act of injuſtice, as well as uncharitableneſs. 2. Every judge muſt act from conſcience, and not be influenced by any conſideration of the might or multitude of thoſe who may be againſt him. It is generally bad following the multitude: they who are going with the crowd, infallibly periſh. 3. No pity for a poor man, muſt prevent the execution of juſtice againſt him. 4. Kindneſs muſt be ſhewn to enemies, in helping their beaſt when fallen, or bringing it back, if gone aſtray. *Note*, To love, and be kind to thoſe who hate us, is no new commandment. 5. The poor muſt have juſtice done them, *v.* 6. It is enough to be poor, they ought not to be oppreſſed too. 6. All approach to injuſtice muſt be guarded againſt, *v.* 7. They who would keep from evil, muſt abſtain from the appearance of it. 7. No bribe muſt be taken; juſtice muſt be adminiſtered freely, as well as impartially. 8. The ſtranger muſt not be oppreſſed: this is enforced upon them, from their having experienced the diſadvantages ſuch labour under, in Egypt. Similarity of diſtreſſes ſhould teach us compaſſion. *Haud ignara mali*, &c.

10. And [i] ſix years thou ſhalt ſow thy land, and ſhalt gather in the fruits thereof: 11. But the ſeventh *year* thou ſhalt let it reſt and lie ſtill; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave, the beaſt of the field ſhall eat. In like manner thou ſhalt deal with thy vineyard, *and* with thy † olive-yard. 12. [k] Six days thou ſhalt do thy work, and on the ſeventh day thou ſhalt reſt: that thine ox and thine aſs may reſt, and the ſon of thy handmaid, and the ſtranger may be refreſhed. 13. And in all *things* that I have ſaid unto you, be circumſpect: and [l] make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.

[i] Lev. xxv. 3.
† Or olive-trees.
[k] Chap. xx. 8. Deut. v. 13. Luke xiii. 14.
[l] Numb. xxxii. 38. Deut. xii. 3. Joſh. xxiii. 7. Pſal. xvi. 4. Hoſ. ii. 17. Zech. xiii. 2.

10—13. We have here,

1. The ſabbatical year. Every ſeventh year the land was neither plowed nor ſown, nor their vineyards or oliveyards gathered: the poor had a right to the increaſe. A tender concern for the needy will ſtill be in every true Iſraelite. 2. The ſabbath-day, as before, ſtrictly to be obſerved. 3. A caution againſt the very mention of idol gods. How many, who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, by their invocations, oaths, &c. in the name of theſe idols, ſhew the heatheniſm of their hearts?

14. ¶ [m] Three times thou ſhalt keep a feaſt unto me in the year. 15. [n] Thou ſhalt keep the feaſt of unleavened bread: thou ſhalt eat unleavened bread ſeven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib: for in it thou cameſt out from Egypt: and [o] none ſhall appear before me empty: 16. And [p] the feaſt of harveſt, the firſt-fruits of thy labours, which thou haſt ſown in the field: and the feaſt of in-gathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou haſt gathered in thy labours out of the field. 17. [q] Three times in the year all thy males ſhall appear before the LORD God. 18. [r] Thou ſhalt not offer the blood of my ſacrifice with leavened bread, neither ſhall the fat of my † ſacrifice remain until the morning. 19. [s] The firſt of the firſt-fruits of thy land thou ſhalt bring into the houſe of the LORD thy God. [t] Thou ſhalt not ſeethe a kid in his mother's milk.

[m] Chap. xxxiv. 23. Lev. xxiii. 5. Deut. xvi. 16.
[n] Chap. xii. 15. & xiii. 3. & xxxiv. 18.
[o] Chap. xxxiv. 20. Deut. xvi. 16. Ecclus xxxv. 4.
[p] Deut. xvi. 13.
[q] Chap. xxxiv 23. Deut. xvi. 16.
[r] Chap. xxxiv. 25. Lev. ii. 11. Deut. xvi. 4.
† Or feaſt.
[s] Chap. xxii. 29. & xxxiv. 26. Num. xviii. 13.
[t] Deut. xiv. 21.

v. 14—19. Three ſolemn feaſts are enjoined, the paſſover, pentecoſt, and the feaſt of tabernacles. They muſt at theſe ſeaſons all appear, not empty handed, but with their oblations, and rejoice together before the Lord. *Note*, (1.) God will have his people happy: they who worſhip him, ſhall feaſt before him. (2.) Grateful acknowledgments of God's mercies, are our bounden duty. (3.) All ſuperſtitious uſages, ſuch as that mentioned, *v.* 19. muſt be baniſhed.

20. ¶ [u] Behold, I ſend an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. 21. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions: for my name *is* in him. 22. But if thou ſhalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I ſpeak; then [x] I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and † an adverſary unto thine adverſaries. 23. For [y] mine angel ſhall go before thee, and [z] bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, *and* the Hivites, and the Jebuſites: and I will cut them off. 24. Thou ſhalt not bow down to their gods, nor ſerve them,[a] nor do after their works: but [b] thou ſhalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images. 25. And ye ſhall ſerve the Lord your God, and [c] he ſhall bleſs thy bread, and thy water: and [d] I will take ſickneſs away from the midſt of thee. 26. ¶ [e] There ſhall nothing caſt their young, nor be barren in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil. 27. I will ſend my fear before thee, and will deſtroy all the people to whom thou ſhalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their † backs unto thee. 28. And [f] I will ſend hornets before thee, which ſhall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee. 29. [g] I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; leſt the land become deſolate, and the beaſts of the field multiply againſt thee. 30. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increaſed, and inherit the land. 31. And [h] I will ſet thy bounds from the Red ſea even unto the ſea of the Philiſtines, and from the deſert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand: and thou ſhalt drive them out before thee. 32. [l] Thou ſhalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. 33. They ſhall not dwell in thy land, leſt they make thee ſin againſt me: for if thou ſerve their gods, [k] it will ſurely be a ſnare unto thee.

[u] Chap. xiv. 19. & xxxiii. 14. Num. xx. 16. Joſh. v. 13. & vi. 2. Iſa. lxiii. 9.
[x] Gen. xii. 3. Deut. xxx. 7. Jer. xxx. 20.
† Or I will afflict them that afflict thee.
[y] Ver. xx. Chap. xxxiii. 2.
[z] Joſh. xxiv. 11.
[a] Lev. xviii. 3. Deut. xii. 31.
[b] Chap. xxxiv. 13. Num. xxxiii. 52. Deut. vii. 5, 25. & xii. 3.
[c] Deut. xxviii. 5, 8.
[d] Chap. xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15.
[e] Ibid. 14.
† Heb. Neck.
[f] Deut. vii. 20. Joſh. xxiv. 12. Wiſd. xii. 8.
[g] Deut. vii. 22.
[h] Gen. xv. 18. Num. xxxiv. 3. Deut. xi. 24. Joſh. i. 4. 1 Kings iv. 21, 24. Pſal. lxxii. 8.
[l] Chap. xxxiv. 15. Deut. vii. 2.
[k] Chap. xxxiv. 12. Deut. vii. 16. Joſh. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 3. 1 Sam. xviii. 21. Pſal. cvi. 36.

20—33. God having explained his judgments, concludes with moſt encouraging promiſes, and ſolemn warnings.

1. He promiſes, that the angel of the covenant, the great head of his church, ſhall go before them; under his conduct, their enemies ſhould fear and fall before them, till they were conſumed; yet not all at once, but by little and little, till they were able to occupy the whole land. Mean time, every earthly bleſſing, of health, riches, long life, and enjoyment of the creatures, is aſſured to them: God's people have even here ſometimes a peculiar portion. *Note*, (1.) It is the comfort of every true Iſraelite, that he is under the guidance of the great Redeemer, and therefore ſhall be conducted ſafe to the promiſed poſſeſſion of eternal reſt. (2.) Though corruption, like theſe Canaanites, dies but by degrees, yet its power ſhall be immediately broken, and it ſhall be rooted out at the laſt.

2. The injunctions given them to be obedient, and hear his voice. Chriſt muſt be not only truſted upon as a Saviour, but ſerved as our Lord and Maſter: and how reaſonable to yield to him a grateful return for all we are and have, ſince to his love we are indebted for all?

3. The care to be taken in deſtroying all monuments of Idolatry, and avoiding all connection with Idolaters, *v.* 24. and *v.* 33, 34. Removal of all temptations to ſin is neceſſary, in order to be preſerved from it. Nothing is more dangerous than evil companions, and we muſt ſhun their company, if we would eſcape their wickedneſs.

CHAP. XXIV.

Moſes, in this chapter, (1.) *Comes down to the people, acquaints them with the laws he had received,* ver. 3. *who repeat their conſent,* ver. 4, 7. *and then by ſacrifice, and the ſprinkling of blood, ratifies the covenant between God and them,* ver. 5, 6, 8. (2.) *He returns to God again, as commanded,* ver. 1, 2. *with ſeventy of the elders, to whom God made a diſcovery of his glory,* ver. 9—11. *Moſes is ordered up into the mount,* ver. 12, 13. *the reſt are ordered down to the people,* ver. 14. *The cloud of glory is ſeen by all the people on the top of mount Sinai,* ver. 15—17. *and Moſes is there with God forty days, and forty nights,* ver. 18.

1. AND he ſaid unto Moſes, Come up unto the LORD, thou and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and [a] ſeventy of the elders of Iſrael: and worſhip ye afar off. 2. And Moſes alone ſhall come near the LORD: but they ſhall not come nigh, neither ſhall the people go up with him. 3. ¶ And Moſes came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people anſwered with one voice, and ſaid, [b] All the words which the LORD hath ſaid, will we do. 4. And Moſes wrote all the words of the LORD, and roſe up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Iſrael. 5. And he ſent young men of the children of Iſrael, which offered burnt-offerings, and ſacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the LORD. 6. And Moſes took half of the blood, and put *it* in baſons; and half of the blood he ſprinkled on the altar. 7. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they ſaid, [c] All that the LORD hath ſaid, will we do, and be obedient. 8. And Moſes took the blood, and ſprinkled *it* on the people, and ſaid, Behold, [d] the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you, concerning all theſe words.

[a] Chap. i. 5.
[b] Ver. 7. Chap. xix. 8. Deut. v. 27.
[c] Ver. 3.
[d] Heb. ix. 20. & xiii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 2.

v. 1—8. Moſes is now diſmiſſed to carry down theſe ordinances, and bring back with him ſeventy of the elders of Iſrael, to behold the glory of God, and confirm the people in their obedience. They muſt come and worſhip in the mount, but far off; Moſes alone muſt come near. *Note*, Every believer muſt aſcend into the mount of prayer, to ſee God's glory, and we may now boldly draw nigh, thro' our mediator Jeſus Chriſt: this honour have all his ſaints. Moſes hereupon,

1. Comes down, rehearſes, and writes in a book, for ſtanding uſe, theſe ordinances. The people ſolemnly conſent to them. It was as much their intereſt as duty to do ſo. *Note*, Many are convinced of their duty, and haſtily reſolve to follow it, but going forth in their own ſtrength, quickly fail in their promiſes, and forget their vows.

2. A ſolemn covenant is made between God and Iſrael, Moſes being mediator. An altar ſtands for Jehovah, and twelve

pillars on behalf of the twelve tribes. Sacrifices are offered, for without an atonement, there can be no intercourſe between God and ſinners: and the blood ſprinkled partly on the altar, partly on the people, ſignified the ſealing and ratification of the terms agreed upon. *Note*, Chriſt is the true ſacrifice which makes peace between God and us; his blood confirms the covenant of grace. He ſprinkles it on our conſciences by faith, and as our high prieſt appears with it before the altar of God in heaven, at all times to plead that covenant of redemption, he hath on our behalf fulfilled, by his obedience unto death, even the death of the croſs.

e Ezek. i. 26. & x. 1. f Chap. xxxiii. 20. Gen. xvi. 13. & xxxii. 30. Deut. iv. 33. Judg. xiii. 23.

9. ¶ Then went up Moſes and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and ſeventy of the elders of Iſrael. 10. And they ſaw the God of Iſrael: and *there was* under his feet as it were a paved work of [e] a ſapphire-ſtone, and as it were the body of heaven in *his* clearneſs. 11. And upon the nobles of the children of Iſrael he laid not his hand: alſo [f] they ſaw God, and did eat and drink.

v. 9—11. The covenant being thus ſigned and ſealed, Moſes returns to God, with ſeventy elders: and they are admitted to approach his preſence.

1. God made ſome awful manifeſtation of his glory unto them. They beheld his footſtool onſy, and it afforded the moſt ſtupenduous admiration, *v.* 10. *Note*, We may not repreſent even in idea any image of the inviſible God. His glory exceeds angelic comprehenſion; our higheſt thoughts, nay even our moſt enlarged conceptions, are ſtill infinitely below him.

2. He neither overwhelmed them with his dazzling brightneſs, as worms, nor laid an avenging hand on them as ſinners, but they did eat and drink before him, in token of the friendſhip eſtabliſhed in the covenant between them. It will be among the bleſſings enjoyed in the better mount of God, to behold much more than Moſes even ſaw, when we ſit and eat bread in the company of him, who is the brightneſs of his father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.

g Chap. xxxi. 18. xxxii. 16. h Chap. xxxii. 7.

12. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee [g] tables of ſtone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayeſt teach them. 13. And Moſes roſe up, and [h] his miniſter Joſhua: and Moſes went up into the mount of God. 14. And he ſaid unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: And behold, Aaron and Hur *are* with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them. 15. And Moſes went up into the mount, and [i] a cloud covered the mount. 16. And [k] the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it ſix days: and the ſeventh day he called unto Moſes out of the midſt of the cloud. 17. And the ſight of the glory of the LORD *was* like [l] devouring fire on the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Iſrael. 18. And Moſes went into the midſt of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and [m] Moſes was in the mount forty days, and forty nights.

i Chap. xix. 9, 16. k Numb. xiv. 10.

l Deut. iv. 36. Hebr. xii. 29.

m Chap. xxxiv. 28. Deut. ix. 9.

v. 12—18. Moſes hath now another call to come up higher. Hereupon Aaron and Hur are entruſted with the management of affairs in his abſence. Joſhua is taken with him, that, being deſigned for his ſucceſſor, peculiar honour might be put upon him. Six days Moſes waited for the Lord, whilſt the fiery cloud, the emblem of the Divine Preſence, appeared upon the mount. On the ſeventh, Moſes is called up into the midſt of this awful appearance, and fears not to dwell in this devouring fire, *v.* 17. There he continued alone forty days and forty nights. Learn, (1.) They who are found faithful in God's ſervice, he will bring nearer to himſelf. (2.) We muſt wait upon God patiently, till he is pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf to us, as he doth not unto the world. (3.) Though God be a conſuming fire to his enemies, his faithful people may draw near with boldneſs. (4.) The time ſpent with God will never be thought long by a believing ſoul; for the ſake of this honour and comfort, he would forget to eat his bread.

CHAP. XXV.

Here are, 1. *Orders given for a collection to be made among the people for erecting the tabernacle,* ver. 1—9. 2. *Particular inſtructions,* (1.) *Concerning the ark of the covenant,* ver. 10—22. (2.) *The table of ſhew-bread,* ver. 23—30. (3.) *The golden candleſtick,* ver. 31. to the end.

† Heb. Take for me. ‡ Or heave-offering. a Chap. xxxv. 5.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, that they † bring me an ‡ offering: [a] of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye ſhall take my offering. 3. And this *is* the offering which ye ſhall take of them: gold, and ſilver, and braſs, 4. And blue and purple, and ſcarlet, and ‖ fine linen, and goats *hair*. 5. And ram-ſkins died red, and badger's ſkins, and ſhittim-wood, 6. [b] Oil for the light, [c] ſpices for anointing oil, and for [d] ſweet incenſe, 7. Onyx-ſtones, and ſtones to be ſet in [e] the ephod, and in the [f] breaſt-plate. 8. And let them make me a ſanctuary; that [g] I may dwell amongſt them. 9. According to all that I ſhew thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the inſtruments thereof, even ſo ſhall ye make *it*.

1 Chron. xxix. 3, 5, 9, 14. Ezra ii. 68. & iii. 5. Neh. xi. 2. ‖ Or ſilk. b Chap. xxvii. 20. c Chap. xxx. 23. d Chap. xxx. 34. e Chap. xxviii. 4, 6. f Chap. xxviii. 15. g Chap. xxix. 45. 1 Kings vi. 13. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Heb. iii. 6. Rev. xxi. 3.

v. 1—9. Moſes begins to receive from God directions for the tabernacle which ſhould be erected, as the palace for the King of Glory.

1. The people muſt furniſh him with the materials, and that by a free-will-offering, *v.* 1—7. Whatever we have, it is the Lord's, and whenever his ſervice and glory requires it, moſt readily ſhould we open our heart and hand. A true chriſtian needs no argument to extort his liberality in God's cauſe, not only to his power, but *above his power he is willing*.

2. The exact pattern muſt be followed, which God would ſhew him. In God's ſervice, we muſt beware of will-worſhip, and be guided by his revealed word.

3. The deſign of this tabernacle: for God's dwelling, there to manifeſt his preſence in the midſt of them, and travel with them as their king and their leader, through the wilderneſs. This tabernacle was typical of the incarnation of the Lord Jeſus. He was the true tabernacle, he dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory. In him was the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily; and he ſtill makes the hearts of his people the throne of his ſanctuary, reigning in them, and over them, and ſubduing before them all their enemies.

4. All their oblations muſt be offered there, and there they muſt enquire after him, as at the place where his honour dwelleth. *Note*, All our prayers and ſervices are only then acceptable with God, when they are preſented in and through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

h Chap. xxxvii. 1. Heb. ix. 4.

10. ¶ And [h] they ſhall make an ark *of* ſhittim-wood: two cubits and a half *ſhall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the heighth thereof. 11. And thou ſhalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without ſhalt thou overlay it: and ſhalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. 12. And thou ſhalt caſt four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings *ſhall be* in the one ſide of it, and two rings in the other ſide of it. 13. And thou ſhalt make ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and over-lay them with gold. 14. And thou ſhalt put the ſtaves into the rings, by the ſides of the ark, that the ark may be born with them. 15. [i] The ſtaves ſhall be in the rings of the ark: they ſhall not be taken from it. 16. And thou ſhalt put into the ark [k] the teſtimony which I ſhall give thee. 17. And [l] thou ſhalt make a mercy-ſeat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *ſhall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. 18. And thou ſhalt make two cherubims *of* gold: *of* beaten work ſhalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-ſeat. 19. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: *even* † of the mercy-ſeat ſhall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. 20. And [m] the cherubims ſhall ſtretch forth *their* wings on high, covering the mercy-ſeat with their wings, and their faces *ſhall look* one to another: toward the mercy-ſeat ſhall the faces of the cherubims be. 21. And [n] thou ſhalt put the mercy-ſeat above upon the ark, and in the ark thou ſhalt put the teſtimony that I ſhall give thee. 22. And [o] there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-ſeat, from [p] between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the teſtimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Iſrael.

i 1 Kings viii. 8.

k Chap. xvi. 34. & xxxi. 18. Deut. x. 2. 1 Kings viii. 9. Heb. ix. 4. l Chap. xxxvii. 6. † Or of the matter of the mercy-ſeat. m 1 Kings viii. 7. 1 Chron. xxviii 18. Heb. ix. 5.

n Chap. xxvi. 34.

o Chap. xxix. 42. & xxx. 36. Lev. xvi. 2. Numb. xvii. 4. p Numb. vii. 89.

v. 10—22. Few words relate the glorious work of the creation of all things; here every particular is nicely deſcribed and inſiſted upon. *Note*, The church of God is more precious in his account, than all the other works of his hands.

1. The ark of the teſtimony is deſcribed; ſo called, as containing God's teſtimony of his will and their duty. The furniture of the moſt holy place is firſt appointed, and this is the moſt diſtinguiſhed part. A cheſt over-laid within and without with gold, capable of containing the two tables of ſtone, on

which the law was to be written, a corniſh of gold ſurrounded it at the top, and four golden rings were placed at the corners, for its more convenient carriage. Learn, (1.) Our hearts ſhould be this ark of gold, purified by divine grace, and full of love, which is the fulfilling of the law. (2.) Where God's preſence is with any ſoul, obedience will be his delight. (3.) Whenever the law of God is truly made our rule of conduct, and we delight in it after the inner man, it is a teſtimony of our ſimplicity, and God's approbation.

2. The mercy-ſeat was the covering of the ark, and made of ſolid gold, *v.* 17—21. whereon the blood of atonement was ſprinkled. Chriſt is the true mercy-ſeat, ſtanding between a holy law, and an offended God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of his people.

3. The cherubims of gold: they were emblematical figures of angels, bending towards the mercy-ſeat, in token of adoration, or deep contemplation of the myſteries of grace therein contained; and winged, to ſignify the ſpeed, alacrity, and delight, with which they obey the Divine commands. From between theſe cherubims, above the mercy-ſeat, God promiſes to meet, and commune with them. *Note*, They who draw near to God, in his appointed way, will find him ever ready to hear and anſwer them.

[q] Chap. xxxvii. 10. 1 Kings vii. 48. 2 Chron. iv. 8.

23. ¶ [q] Thou ſhalt alſo make a table *of* ſhittim-wood: two cubits *ſhall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and half the height thereof. 24. And thou ſhalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. 25. And thou ſhalt make unto it a border of an hand-breadth round about, and thou ſhalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about. 26. And thou ſhalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that *are* on the four feet thereof. 27. Over againſt the border ſhall the rings be for places of the ſtaves to bear the table. 28. And thou ſhalt make the ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and over-lay them with gold, that the table may be born with them. 29. And thou ſhalt make [r] the diſhes thereof, and ſpoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, † to cover withal: *of* pure gold ſhalt thou make them. 30. And thou ſhalt ſet upon the table [s] ſhew-bread before me alway.

[r] Num. iv. 7.
† Or to pour out withal.
[s] Lev. xxiv. 5.

v. 23—30. The table of ſhew bread and its appurtenances, are directed to be made, to ſtand in the holy place without the vail. Twelve loaves were placed upon it continually, in token of their thankfulneſs for the proviſion in the wilderneſs, and afterwards for their abundance in Canaan. *Note*, (1.) Our daily bread is God's, and ſhould be ſanctified by daily prayer and thankful acknowledgment.

2. They who viſit God's houſe, ſhall be fed with his bread. He hath conſolations to beſtow ſweeter than manna, and more ſtrengthning to our ſoul, than bread to our bodies.

[t] Chap. xxxvii. 17. 1 Kings vii. 49. Zech. iv. 2. Rev. i. 12. & iv. 5.

31. ¶ And [t] thou ſhalt make a candleſtick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten work ſhall the candleſtick be made: his ſhaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers ſhall be of the ſame. 32. And ſix branches ſhall come out of the ſides of it: three branches of the candleſtick out of the one ſide, and three branches of the candleſtick out of the other ſide. 33. Three bowls made like unto almonds, *with* a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, *with* a knop and a flower: ſo in the ſix branches that come out of the candleſtick. 34. And in the candleſtick *ſhall be* four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers. 35. And *there ſhall be* a knop under two branches of the ſame, and a knop under two branches of the ſame, and a knop under two branches of the ſame, according to the ſix branches that proceed out of the candleſtick. 36. Their knops and their branches ſhall be of the ſame: all it *ſhall be* one beaten work *of* pure gold. 37. And thou ſhalt make the ſeven lamps thereof: and [u] they ſhall † light the lamps thereof, that they may [x] give light over againſt ‡ it. 38. And the tongs thereof, and the ſnuff-diſhes thereof, *ſhall be of* pure gold. 39. *Of* a talent of pure gold ſhall he make it, with all theſe veſſels. 40. And [y] look that thou make *them* after their pattern, ‖ which was ſhewed thee in the mount.

[u] Chap. xxvii. 21. & xxx. 8. Lev. xxiv. 3, 4.
† Cauſe to aſcend.
[x] Num. viii. 2.
‡ Heb. The face of it.
[y] Chap. xxvi. 30. Num. viii. 4. 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 19. Acts vii. 44. Hebr. viii. 5.
‖ Which thou waſt cauſed to ſee.

31—40. 1. The tabernacle being without a window, light was neceſſary, and a moſt noble candleſtick of gold of ſeven branches, highly ornamented, muſt be provided. Chriſt is to his church, and to every individual believer, what this candleſtick was to the tabernacle. He ſhines in the temple of his grace, to ſhew them the way to the preſence and throne of God, who dwelleth between the cherubims.

2. Moſes is charged not to deviate from the divine pattern, in any particular. In God's ordinances, we muſt abide by his expreſs inſtitutions.

CHAP. XXVI.

Moſes here receives inſtructions, (1.) *Concerning the inner curtains and the coupling,* ver. 1—6. (2.) *Concerning the outer curtains which were of goats hair, to ſtrengthen the former,* ver. 7—13. (3.) *Concerning the cover to ſecure it from the weather,* ver. 14. (4.) *Concerning the boards to ſupport the curtains, with their bars and ſockets,* ver. 15—30. (5.) *The partition between the holy place, and the moſt holy,* ver. 31—35. (6.) *The vail for the door,* ver. 36, 37.

1. MOreover, [a] thou ſhalt make the tabernacle *with* ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and ſcarlet: *with* cherubims † of cunning work ſhalt thou make them. 2. The length of one curtain *ſhall be* eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain, four cubits: and every one of the curtains ſhall have one meaſure. 3. The five curtains ſhall be coupled together one to another: and *other* five curtains *ſhall be* coupled one to another. 4. And thou ſhalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain, from the ſelvedge in the coupling: and likewiſe ſhalt thou make in the uttermoſt edge of *another* curtain, in the coupling of the ſecond. 5. Fifty loops ſhalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops ſhalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that *is* in the coupling of the ſecond; that the loops may take hold one of another. 6. And thou ſhalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it ſhall be one tabernacle.

[a] Chap. xxxvi. 8.
† Heb. The work of a cunning workman, or embroiderer.

v. 1—6. The furniture being deſcribed, the covering is ordered. There muſt be a tabernacle or tent made, with curtains richly embroidered, and united by loops and claſps of gold. *Note*, (1.) We dwell at preſent in tabernacles of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt; but if God is with us, his preſence ſhall comfort us, till he brings us to the promiſed inheritance. (2.) All true chriſtians, whatever their denomination may be, are united in love to Jeſus Chriſt and one another, like theſe curtains of the tabernacle, and make one truly glorious catholic and apoſtolic church.

7. ¶ And [b] thou ſhalt make curtains *of* goat's *hair* to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains ſhalt thou make. 8. The length of one curtain *ſhall be* thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains *ſhall be all* of one meaſure. 9. And thou ſhalt couple five curtains by themſelves, and ſix curtains by themſelves, and ſhalt double the ſixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle. 10. And thou ſhalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain *that is* outmoſt in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the ſecond. 11. And thou ſhalt make fifty taches of braſs, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the † tent together, that it may be one. 12. And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half-curtain that remaineth, ſhall hang over the back-ſide of the tabernacle. 13. And a cubit on the one ſide, and a cubit on the other ſide ‡ of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it ſhall hang over the ſides of the tabernacle, on this ſide, and on that ſide, to cover it. 14. And [c] thou ſhalt make a covering for the tent, *of* rams ſkins died red, and a covering above *of* badgers ſkins.

[b] Chap. xxxvi. 14.
† Or covering.
‡ Heb. In the remainder, or ſurpluſage.
[c] Chap. xxxvi. 19.

v. 7—14. Three other coverings provided, to preſerve the rich curtains within.. The firſt of goat's hair, with braſs claſps, the next of rams ſkins dyed red; and the outermoſt of all, badgers ſkin, or as it is elſewhere tranſlated, very fine leather, *Ezek.* xv. 10. *Note*, (1.) A coarſe garment covers often a precious ſoul. (2.) A true chriſtian is beſt within, whilſt a hypocrite ſeeks only outward ſhow. (3.) They who take refuge in God's true ſanctuary, Jeſus Chriſt, have a ſafe and glorious covert from all the ſtorms of wrath, and the tempeſts of ſin.

15. ¶ And thou ſhalt make boards for the tabernacle, *of* ſhittim-wood, ſtanding up. 16. Ten cubits *ſhall be*

the length of a board, and a cubit and a half *ſhall be* the breadth of one board. 17. Two † tenons *ſhall there be* in one board, ſet in order one againſt another: thus ſhalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle. 18. And thou ſhalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the ſouth ſide, ſouthward. 19. And thou ſhalt make forty ſockets of ſilver under the twenty boards: two ſockets under one board for his two tenons, and two ſockets under another board for his two tenons. 20. And for the ſecond ſide of the tabernacle on the north-ſide, *there ſhall be* twenty boards. 21. And their forty ſockets *of* ſilver, two ſockets under one board, and two ſockets under another board. 22. And for the ſides of the tabernacle weſt-ward, thou ſhalt make ſix boards. 23. And two boards ſhalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle, in the two ſides. 24. And they ſhall be ‡ coupled together beneath, and they ſhall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus ſhall it be for them both; they ſhall be for the two corners. 25. And they ſhall be eight boards, and their ſockets *of* ſilver, ſixteen ſockets: two ſockets under one board, and two ſockets under another board. 26. ¶ And thou ſhalt make bars *of* ſhittim-wood: five for the boards of the one ſide of the tabernacle, 27. And five bars for the boards of the other ſide of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the ſide of the tabernacle for the two ſides weſt-ward. 28. And the middle bar in the mids of the boards ſhall reach from end to end. 29. And thou ſhalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings *of* gold *for* places for the bars: and thou ſhalt overlay the bars with gold. 30. And thou ſhalt rear up the tabernacle [d] according to the faſhion thereof, which was ſhewed thee in the mount.

† Heb. Hands.

‡ Heb. Twined.

[d] Chap. xxv. 9, 40. & xxvii. 8. Acts vii. 44. Hebr. viii. 5.

v. 15—30. Directions are given for the boards and frame-work, on which the curtains ſhould be ſupported. They are richly adorned, and ſtrongly mortiſed. Beauty and ſtrength unite in the church of Chriſt: beauty that renders it the admiration of angels; and ſtrength, that defies all the malice of devils.

31. ¶ And [e] thou ſhalt make a vail *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims ſhall it be made. 32. And thou ſhalt hang it upon four pillars of ſhittim-*wood*, overlaid with gold: their hooks *ſhall be of* gold, upon the four ſockets of ſilver. 33. ¶ And thou ſhalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayeſt bring in thither within the vail, the ark of the teſtimony: and the vail ſhall divide unto you, between [f] the holy *place* and the moſt holy. 34. And thou ſhalt put the mercy-ſeat upon the ark of the teſtimony, in the moſt holy place. 35. And [g] thou ſhalt ſet the table without the vail, and the candleſtick over againſt the table on the ſide of the tabernacle toward the ſouth: and thou ſhalt put the table on the north-ſide. 36. And [h] thou ſhalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. 37. And thou ſhalt make for the hanging, five pillars of ſhittim-*wood*, and [i] overlay them with gold, *and* their hooks *ſhall be of* gold: and thou ſhalt caſt five ſockets of braſs for them.

[e] Chap. xxxvi. 35. 2 Chron. iii. 14. Mat. xxvii. 51. Hebr. ix. 3.

[f] Heb. ix. 2, 3.

[g] Heb. ix. 2.

[h] Chap. xxxvi. 37.

[i] Ibid. 38.

v. 31—37. Two vails of partition are ordered; one to ſeparate the moſt holy place, where was the ark and mercy-ſeat: none muſt enter it, on pain of death, ſave the high-prieſt once a year: the other, to ſeparate the outer tent from the court around it; thither the prieſts came every day to miniſter. *Note*, No vail of ſeparation now keeps us from the holieſt of all; it was rent when the Saviour ſuffered; and ſince the great High Prieſt is entered into the heavens, every believer is conſecrated a prieſt, and may with boldneſs approach the mercy-ſeat, thro' the blood of Jeſus. Bleſſed be God for his unſpeakable gift!

CHAP. XXVII.

In this chapter directions are given, 1. *Concerning the brazen altar for burnt-offerings,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Concerning the court of the tabernacle, with the hangings of it,* ver. 9—19. 3. *Concerning oil for the lamp,* ver. 20, 21.

1. AND thou ſhalt [a] make an altar *of* ſhittim-wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad: the altar ſhall be four ſquare, and the height thereof *ſhall be* three cubits. 2. And thou ſhalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns ſhall be of the ſame: and [b] thou ſhalt overlay it with braſs. And thou ſhalt make his pans to receive his aſhes, and his ſhovels, and his baſons, and his fleſh-hooks, and his fire-pans: all the veſſels thereof thou ſhalt make of braſs. 4. And thou ſhalt make for it a grate of net-work of braſs; and upon the net ſhalt thou make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof. 5. And thou ſhalt put it under the compaſs of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midſt of the altar. 6. And thou ſhalt make ſtaves for the altar, ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and overlay them with braſs. 7. And the ſtaves ſhall be put into the rings, and the ſtaves ſhall be upon the two ſides of the altar to bear it. 8. Hollow with boards ſhalt thou make it: [c] as † it was ſhewed thee in the mount, ſo ſhall they make *it*.

[a] Chap. xxxviii. 1. Ezek. xliii. 13.

[b] See Num. xvi. 38.

[c] Chap. xxv. 40. & xxvi. 30.

† Heb. He ſhewed.

v. 1—8. The tabernacle being compleat, the court and its furniture are next ordered. The moſt material part is the brazen altar here deſcribed, on which all the offerings of the children of Iſrael are to be offered, and there accepted as a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour. It was the type of Chriſt, who is both altar and ſacrifice; and who by one oblation of himſelf, once offered, hath obtained eternal redemption for us. Our ſacrifices of prayer and praiſe, are acceptable only as offered up through him, who is the true altar which ſanctifieth the gift. And to him, under the continual accuſations of ſin, we muſt fly as the malefactor did to the horns of the altar, and then we ſhall be ſafe.

9. ¶ And [d] thou ſhalt make the court of the tabernacle for the ſouth ſide ſouthward: *there ſhall be* hangings for the court *of* fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one ſide. 10. And the twenty pillars thereof, and their twenty ſockets *ſhall be of* braſs: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *ſhall be of* ſilver. 11. And likewiſe for the north ſide in length, *there ſhall be* hangings of an hundred *cubits* long, and his twenty pillars, and their twenty ſockets *of* braſs: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *of* ſilver. 12. ¶ And *for* the breadth of the court, on the weſt ſide, *ſhall be* hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their ſockets ten. 13. And the breadth of the court on the eaſt ſide, eaſtward, *ſhall be* fifty cubits. 14. The hangings of one ſide *of the gate ſhall be* fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their ſockets three. 15. And on the other ſide *ſhall be* hangings, fifteen *cubits*: their pillars three, and their ſockets three. 16. ¶ And for the gate of the court, *ſhall be* an hanging of twenty cubits, *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needle-work: *and* their pillars *ſhall be* four, and their ſockets four. 17. All the pillars round about the court *ſhall be* filleted with ſilver: their hooks *ſhall be of* ſilver, and their ſockets *of* braſs. 18. ¶ The length of the court *ſhall be* an hundred cubits, and the breadth † fifty every where, and the height five cubits *of* fine twined linen, and their ſockets *of* braſs. 19. All the veſſels of the tabernacle in all the ſervice thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court *ſhall be of* braſs.

[d] Chap. xxxviii. 9.

† Heb. Fifty by fifty.

v. 9—19. This court ſurrounded the tabernacle, and is typical of the church of chriſt, incloſed from the reſt of the world, and brought into a nearer ſtate of communion with his bleſſed ſelf. It was about fifty yards long, and twenty-five broad; ſmall, compared with the wide camp of Iſrael. Thus, among the profeſſors of Chriſt, a ſmall compaſs will contain the faithful; for many are called, but few choſen.

20. ¶ And [e] thou ſhalt command the children of Iſrael, that they bring thee pure oil-olive beaten, for the light, to cauſe the lamp to † burn always. 21. In the tabernacle of the congregation [f] without the vail, which *is* before the teſtimony, [g] Aaron and his ſons ſhall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever unto their generations, on the behalf of the children of Iſrael.

[e] Lev. xxiv. 2.

† Heb. To aſcend up.

[f] Chap. xxvi. 31, 33.

[g] Chap. xxx. 8. 1 Sam. iii. 3. 2 Chron. xiii. 11.

v. 20—21. Proviſion is here made for the continual ſupply of the lamps in the golden candleſtick, and Aaron and his ſons muſt attend them. The oil ſignifies the graces of God's ſpirit, which ſhine forth in the converſation of his people; and Aaron's care is to remind every faithful miniſter, how diligent he ſhould be in his labours towards the flock, of which the Holy Ghoſt hath made him overſeer.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

In this chapter, (1.) *God pitcheth upon the perſons who ſhould be his ſervants,* ver. 1. (2.) *He appoints their garments,* ver. 2—5. 1. *Of the high-prieſt,* (1.) *An ephod and girdle,* ver. 6—14. (2.) *A breaſt-plate of judgment,* ver. 15—29, *in which muſt be put the Urim and Thummim,* ver. 30. (3.) *The robe of the ephod,* ver. 31—35. (4.) *The mitre,* ver. 36—39. 2. *Of the inferior prieſts,* ver. 40—43. *And theſe alſo were ſhadows of good things to come.*

[a] Heb. v. 1, 4.

[b] Chap. xxix. 5. & xxxix. 2.

[c] Chap. xxxvi. 1.

[d] Chap. xxxi. 3. & xxxv. 30.

1. AND take thou unto thee [a] Aaron thy brother, and his ſons with him, from among the children of Iſrael, that he may miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's ſons. 2. And [b] thou ſhalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty. 3. And [c] thou ſhalt ſpeak unto all *that are* wiſe-hearted, [d] whom I have filled with the ſpirit of wiſdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to conſecrate him, that he may miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office. 4. And theſe *are* the garments which they ſhall make; a breaſt-plate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they ſhall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his ſons, that he may miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office. 5. And they ſhall take gold, and blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine linen.

v. 1—5. The altar being prepared, they who muſt miniſter at it are appointed, with their robes.

1. Aaron and his ſons. His deſcendants are preferred to Moſes's own children. God chuſes his own ſervants. *Note,* It is bad intruding into the miniſtry without a divine call. No man may take this office, but he who is called of God, as was Aaron.

2. Their garments muſt be glorious and beautiful, not only in the preciouſneſs of the materials, but alſo in the exquiſiteneſs of the work. Theſe magnificent garments, 1. Signify the tranſcendent excellence and glory of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. 2. The beauty of holineſs, which God puts on every believer, when he is conſecrated a prieſt unto him. 3. The eminence of gifts and graces, which every goſpel miniſter ſhould poſſeſs.

† Or embroidered.

[e] Wiſd. xviii. 24.

6. ¶ And they ſhall make the ephod *of* gold, *of* blue, and *of* purple, *of* ſcarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. 7. It ſhall have the two ſhoulder-pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and *ſo* it ſhall be joined together. 8. And the † curious girdle of the ephod which *is* upon it, ſhall be of the ſame, according to the work thereof; *even of* gold, *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen. 9. And thou ſhalt take two onyx-ſtones, and grave on them the names of the children of Iſrael: 10. Six of their names on one ſtone, and *the other* ſix names of the reſt on the other ſtone, according to their birth. 11. [e] With the work of an engraver in ſtone, *like* the engravings of a ſignet, ſhalt thou engrave the two ſtones, with the names of the children of Iſrael: thou ſhalt make them to be ſet in ouches of gold. 12. And thou ſhalt put the two ſtones upon the ſhoulders of the ephod, *for* ſtones of memorial unto the children of Iſrael. And Aaron ſhall bear their names before the LORD, upon his two ſhoulders for a memorial. 13. ¶ And thou ſhalt make ouches *of* gold; 14. And two chains *of* pure gold at the ends: *of* wreathen work ſhalt thou make them, and faſten the wreathen chains to the ouches.

v. 6—14. The high-prieſt's cloathing is peculiar. The other prieſts wore an ephod (or ſhort coat without ſleeves) of linen; his was embroidered with gold, and his girdle of the ſame. On the ſhoulders it was faſtened with jewels ſet in gold, with the names of the twelve tribes engraven on them. Thus Chriſt appears, *Rev.* i. 13. ever living to make interceſſion for his people. He preſents their names, not merely engraven on ſtones of onyx, but more deeply on his heart, in characters of unchangeable love.

[f] Chap. xxxix. 8.

[g] Chap. xxxix. 10, &c.

† Heb. Fill in it fillings of ſtone.

‡ Or, Ruby.

|| Heb. Fillings.

15. ¶ And [f] thou ſhalt make the breaſt-plate of judgment, with cunning work after the work of the ephod thou ſhalt make it; *of* gold, *of* blue, and *of* purple, and *of* ſcarlet, and *of* fine twined linen ſhalt thou make it. 16. Four-ſquare it ſhall be, *being* doubled; a ſpan *ſhall be* the length thereof, and a ſpan *ſhall be* the breadth thereof. 17. And [g] thou ſhalt † ſet in it ſettings of ſtones, *even* four rows of ſtones: *the firſt* row *ſhall be* a ‡ ſardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: *this ſhall be* the firſt row. 18. And the ſecond row *ſhall be* an emerald, a ſapphire, and a diamond. 19. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyſt. 20. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jaſper: they ſhall be ſet in gold in their || incloſings. 21. And the ſtones ſhall be with the names of the children of Iſrael, twelve, according to their names: *like* the engravings of a ſignet, every one with his name ſhall they be, according to the twelve tribes. 22. ¶ And thou ſhalt make upon the breaſt-plate chains at the ends, *of* wreathen work, *of* pure gold. 23. And thou ſhalt make upon the breaſt-plate two rings of gold, and ſhalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breaſt-plate. 24. And thou ſhalt put the two wreathen *chains* of gold in the two rings *which are* on the ends of the breaſt-plate. 25. And *the other* two ends of the two wreathen *chains*, thou ſhalt faſten in the two ouches, and put *them* on the ſhoulder-pieces of the ephod before it. 26. ¶ And thou ſhalt make two rings of gold, and thou ſhalt put them upon the two ends of the breaſt-plate, in the border thereof, which *is* in the ſide of the ephod inward. 27. And two *other* rings of gold thou ſhalt make, and ſhalt put them on the two ſides of the ephod, underneath towards the fore part thereof, over-againſt the *other* coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. 28. And they ſhall bind the breaſt-plate by the rings thereof, unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that *it* may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breaſt-plate be not looſed from the ephod. 29. And Aaron ſhall bear the names of the children of Iſrael in the breaſt-plate of judgment, upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a memorial before the LORD continually.

v. 15—29. This was another diſtinguiſhed part of the high-prieſt's dreſs; the breaſt-plate of judgment, to be worn when Aaron went into the holy place. On it were fixed precious ſtones, engraven with the names of the children of Iſrael; and it was faſtened to the ephod by the golden chains. *Note,* (1.) Though the holy place of heaven is not yet acceſſible, yet, our high-prieſt bearing our names there, we are, in virtue thereof, already ſaid to be ſet down with him in heavenly places. (2.) The ſpiritual graces adorning particular ſaints, make them like theſe ſtones: all are jewels, though each ſhine with ſome different and peculiar luſtre.

[h] Lev. viii. 8. Num. xxvii. 21. Deut. xxxiii. 8. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. Ezra ii. 63. Neh. vii. 65.

30. ¶ And [h] thou ſhalt put in the breaſt-plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they ſhall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron ſhall bear the judgment of the children of Iſrael upon his heart, before the LORD continually.

v. 30. Many have been the conjectures of learned men reſpecting theſe words, Urim and Thummim; ſome conceiving it a part of the high-prieſt's cloathing; others, that it ſignified ſome bright appearance of the precious ſtones of the breaſt-plate; others, that it meant no more than the peculiar gifts which ſhould be communicated to the high-prieſt, when thus cloathed he ſhould appear to enquire of God: which latter ſenſe ſeems moſt probable. The words ſignify Illuminations and Perfections, and may well imply the clear anſwers, and perfect direction, which in all caſes of difficulty God would give the high-prieſt, either by ſecret impulſe, or an audible voice. The written word of God is now our Urim and Thummim; and when we are enquiring there of his will, he can, and ſtill doth, by divine irradiation on our minds, inform and comfort us under every difficulty.

[i] Chap. xxxix. 22.

† Or ſkirts.

[k] Ecclus xlv. 9.

31. ¶ And [i] thou ſhalt make the robe of the ephod all *of* blue. 32. And there ſhall be an hole in the top of it, in the midſt thereof: it ſhall have a binding of woven work, round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent. 33. ¶ And *beneath* upon the † hem of it thou ſhalt make pomegranates *of* blue, and *of* purple, and *of* ſcarlet, round about the hem thereof, and bells of gold between them round about. 34. A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. 35. And [k] it ſhall be upon Aaron, to miniſter: and his ſound ſhall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy

[l] Chap. xxxix. 30.

holy *place* before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not. 36. ¶ And [l] thou ſhalt make a plate *of* pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a ſignet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37. And thou ſhalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre: upon the fore-front of the mitre it ſhall be. 38. And it ſhall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Iſrael ſhall hallow in all their holy gifts: and it ſhall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD. 39. ¶ And thou ſhalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou ſhalt make the mitre *of* fine linen, and thou ſhalt make the girdle *of* needle-work.

v. 31—39. The other parts of the high-prieſt's garments are here deſcribed.

1. The robe of the ephod, all of blue, without ſleeves, reaching to the knees, ſurrounded with bells, and woven work like pomegranates. Aaron, on peril of death, muſt not dare to draw near to God without it. *Note*, A peculiar as well as decent garb becomes thoſe who miniſter in holy things.

2. The golden plate on his forehead, with its engraving, *v.* 36—38, teaching us, 1. That God's miniſters muſt never be aſhamed of their profeſſion. 2 That they who appear before God, ſhould have holineſs written on their hearts. 3. That true holineſs is not a ſuperficial thing, but deep engraven, and durable. 4. That in our beſt duties, ſo much corruption cleaves to them, that, were it not for our great high-prieſt's advocacy, our very prayers would deſtroy us; whilſt in him all our ſervices are ſacrifices of a ſweet ſmell.

3. His other garments; his inſide embroidered coat, which reached to his feet, and to his wriſts, with a girdle of needle-work around it, and a linen mitre, or diadem, on his head. Our High-prieſt is alſo our King: he not only atones for our ſins, but will ſubdue all our enemies without or within us.

[m] Chap. xxviii. 8, 9. & xxxix. 28, 41. Ezek. xliv. 18.
[n] Chap. xxix. 7. & xxx. 30. & xl. 15. Lev. x. 7.
† Heb. Fill their hand.
‡ Heb. Fleſh of their nakedneſs.
‖ Heb. Be.
[o] Chap. xxix. 29, 30.

40. ¶ And [m] for Aaron's ſons thou ſhalt make coats, and thou ſhalt make for them girdles, and bonnets ſhalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. 41. And thou ſhalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his ſons with him: and ſhalt [n] anoint them, and † conſecrate them, and ſanctify them, that they may miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office. 42. And thou ſhalt make them linen breeches to cover ‡ their nakedneſs: from the loins even unto the thighs they ſhall ‖ reach. 43. And they ſhall be upon Aaron, and upon his ſons, when [o] they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to miniſter in the holy *place*; that they bear not iniquity, and die. *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever unto him, and his ſeed after him.

v. 40—43. The inferior prieſts muſt be cloathed nearly as to faſhion in the ſame dreſs for beauty and glory, though not equal to the high-prieſt. It is well for us, if at an humble diſtance, we are in any thing like our glorious head; and they are enjoined, on penalty of death, never to appear before God but in theſe garments. *Note*, (1.) The righteouſneſs of our divine Redeemer can only cover our iniquity: if we preſume with any other plea to draw near to God, we die. (2.) When a miniſter of known immorality approaches God's altar, or preaches to others what he hath never practiſed himſelf, this is to expoſe his nakedneſs to the people.

CHAP. XXIX.

Particular orders are given in this chapter, 1. *Concerning the conſecration of the prieſts, and the ſanctification of the altar,* 1—37. 2. *Concerning the daily ſacriſice,* ver. 38—41. *To which gracious promiſes are annexed, that God would own and bleſs them in all their ſervices,* ver. 42—46.

[a] Lev. ix. 2.
[b] Lev. vi. 20.
[c] Lev. viii. 6.
[d] Chap. xxviii. 2.

1. AND this *is* the thing that thou ſhalt do unto them, to hallow them, to miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office: [a] take one young bullock, and two rams without blemiſh, 2. And [b] unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: *of* wheaten flour ſhalt thou make them. 3. And thou ſhalt put them into one baſket, and bring them in the baſket, with the bullock and the two rams. 4. And Aaron and his ſons thou ſhalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and [c] ſhalt waſh them with water. 5. And [d] thou ſhalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breaſt-plate, and gird him with [e] the curious girdle of the ephod. 6. And [f] thou ſhalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. 7. Then ſhalt thou take [g] the anointing oil, and pour *it* upon his head, and anoint him. 8. And thou ſhalt bring his ſons, and put coats upon them. 9. And thou ſhalt gird them with girdles (Aaron and his ſons) and † put the bonnets on them: and the prieſt's office ſhall be theirs for a perpetual ſtatute: and thou ſhalt ‡ [h] conſecrate Aaron and his ſons. 10. And thou ſhalt cauſe a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation; and [i] Aaron and his ſons ſhall put their hands upon the head of the bullock. 11. And thou ſhalt kill the bullock before the LORD, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 12. And thou ſhalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put *it* upon [k] the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beſide the bottom of the altar. 13. And [l] thou ſhalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the ‖ caul *that is* above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and burn *them* upon the altar. 14. But [m] the fleſh of the bullock, and his ſkin, and his dung, ſhalt thou burn with fire without the camp: it *is* a ſin-offering. 15. ¶ [n] Thou ſhalt alſo take one ram, and Aaron and his ſons ſhall put their hands upon the head of the ram. 16. And thou ſhalt ſlay the ram, and thou ſhalt take his blood, and ſprinkle *it* round about upon the altar. 17. And thou ſhalt cut the ram in pieces, and waſh the inwards of him, and his legs, and put *them* unto his pieces, and § unto his head. 18. And thou ſhalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it *is* a burnt-offering unto the LORD: it *is* a ſweet ſavour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 19. ¶ And [o] thou ſhalt take the other ram, and Aaron and his ſons ſhall put their hands upon the head of the ram. 20. Then ſhalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put *it* upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his ſons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and ſprinkle the blood upon the altar round about. 21. And thou ſhalt take of the blood that *is* upon the altar, and of [p] the anointing oil, and ſprinkle *it* upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his ſons, and upon the garments of his ſons with him: and [q] he ſhall be hallowed, and his garments, and his ſons, and his ſons garments with him. 22. Alſo thou ſhalt take of the ram the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and the right ſhoulder; for it *is* a ram of conſecration: 23. And [r] one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the baſket of the unleavened bread, that *is* before the LORD. 24. And thou ſhalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his ſons; and ſhalt † wave them *for* a wave-offering before the LORD. 25. And [s] thou ſhalt receive them of their hands, and burn *them upon* the altar for a burnt-offering, for a ſweet ſavour before the LORD: it *is* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 26. And thou ſhalt take [t] the breaſt of the ram of Aaron's conſecrations, and wave it *for* a wave-offering before the LORD: and [u] it ſhall be thy part. 27. And thou ſhalt ſanctify [x] the breaſt of the wave-offering, and the ſhoulder of the heave-offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up of the ram of the conſecration, *even* of *that* which *is* for Aaron, and of *that* which *is* for his ſons. 28. And it ſhall be Aaron's and his ſons by a ſtatute for ever, from the children of Iſrael: for it *is* an heave-offering: and [y] it ſhall be an heave-offering from the children of Iſrael of the ſacrifice of their peace-offerings, *even* their heave-offering unto the LORD. 29. ¶ And the holy garments of Aaron ſhall be his ſons after him, [z] to be anointed therein, and to be conſecrated in them. 30. *And* ‡ [a] that ſon that is prieſt in his ſtead ſhall put them on ſeven days, when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation, to miniſter in the holy *place*. 31. ¶ And thou ſhalt take the ram of the conſecration, and ſeethe his fleſh in the holy place. 32. And Aaron and his ſons ſhall eat the fleſh of the ram, and [b] the bread that *is* in the baſket, by the door of the ta-

[e] Chap. xxviii. 8.
[f] Lev. viii. 9.
[g] Chap. xxx. 25.
† Heb. Bind.
‡ Heb. Fill the hand of.
[h] Chap. xxviii. 41.
[i] Lev. i. 4. & viii. 14.
[k] Chap. xxvii. 2. & xxx. 2.
[l] Lev. iii. 3.
‖ Or midriff.
[m] Lev. iv. 11, 12, 21. Heb. xiii. 11.
[n] Lev. viii. 18.
§ Or upon.
[o] Ver. 3. Lev. viii. 22.
[p] Chap. xxx. 25, 31.
[q] Heb. ix. 22.
[r] Lev. viii. 26.
† Heb. Shake to and fro.
[s] Lev. viii. 28.
[t] Lev. viii. 29.
[u] Pſ. xcix. 6.
[x] Lev. vii. 34. Numb. xviii. 18. Deut. xviii. 3.
[y] Lev. vii. 34.
[z] Num. xviii. 8. & xxxv. 25.
‡ Heb. He, of his ſons.
[a] Num. xx. 28.
[b] Lev. viii. 31. Matt. xii. 4.

bernacle of the congregation. 33. And they ſhall eat thoſe things wherewith the atonement was made, to conſecrate *and* to ſanctify them: but a ſtranger ſhall not eat *thereof*, becauſe they *are* holy. 34. And if ought of the fleſh of the conſecrations, or of the bread remain unto the morning; then thou ſhalt burn the remainder with fire: it ſhall not be eaten, becauſe it *is* holy. 35. And thus ſhalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his ſons, according to all *things* which I have commanded thee: [c] ſeven days ſhalt thou conſecrate them. 36. And thou ſhalt offer every day a bullock *for* a ſin-offering for atonement: and thou ſhalt cleanſe the altar, when thou haſt made an atonement for it, and [d] thou ſhalt anoint it to ſanctify it. 37. Seven days thou ſhalt make an atonement for the altar, and ſanctify it: and [e] it ſhall be an altar moſt holy: [f] whatſoever toucheth the altar ſhall be holy.

[c] Exod. xl. 12. Lev. viii. 33, 34.
[d] Chap. xxx. 29. & xl. 10.
[e] Chap. xl. 10.
[f] Chap. xxx. 29. Matt. xxiii. 10.

v. 1—37. The conſecration of Aaron and his ſons ſucceeds the preparation of the ſanctuary, where they are to miniſter. The manner is ſolemn, to intimate the greatneſs of the charge committed to them, and the ſurrender they are called upon to make of themſelves to God. Moſes is employed as an extraordinary miniſter from God for the purpoſe, and he begins the ceremonial,

1. With bringing them to the door of the tabernacle, as perſons ſelected of God. 2. By a general ablution, *v.* 4. God will be ſanctified in thoſe who come nigh him. How can an unholy miniſter dare approach the Holy God? 3. By robing them, *v.* 5, 6, &c. They who would miniſter before the Lord, muſt be cloathed with righteouſneſs, as a garment. 4. By anointing the high prieſt with holy oil, *v.* 7. The unction from the Holy One can only qualify a miniſter for the diſcharge of his office. 5. By a variety of ſacrifices. A ſin-offering precedes, *v.* 10—14, for, as men, they firſt needed to offer for their own ſins, before they could make atonement for the ſins of others. The burnt-offering followed, *v.* 15—18, intimating the warmth of holy love in their hearts, inclining them to yield themſelves up as living ſacrifices to God. The peace-offering, *v.* 19, &c. compleated the conſecration. (1.) The blood of it muſt be put upon them, and, with the holy anointing oil, be ſprinkled upon them. The blood of Jeſus Chriſt muſt be thus applied to our hearts; and when we would appear before God with acceptance, it muſt be with our robes made white in this blood of the Lamb. (2.) The prieſts hands muſt be filled with the parts devoted to God, and thus they begin their miniſtrations. If we miniſter acceptably before God, it muſt be given us; he muſt fill our hands, or we cannot feed the people; and when he doth, every miniſter will find buſineſs in abundance. No time will be left for idling or vanity. (3.) God's part muſt be burnt; afterward, the prieſts portion is aſſigned them, *v.* 24—28. They who ſerve the altar, have a right to live by the altar. (4.) The remainder muſt be eaten by Aaron and his ſons, in token of their joyful acceptance of the mercy beſtowed on them. They who are called to communion with Chriſt, whilſt they commemorate his ſacrifice, ſhould feed upon him with thankſgiving. (5.) Seven days were to be employed in the conſecration, and peculiar ſacrifices every day. It requires ſolemn deliberation to ordain a miniſter of the ſanctuary; and they have abundant need, who are to preach remiſſion of ſins to others, to gain ſome ſure and certain hope, that their own are pardoned. (6.) The altar too muſt be conſecrated, *v.* 36, 37, to intimate the univerſal pollution which reigns by ſin, and that without atoning blood, nothing can be an acceptable ſervice to God. Laſtly, we have in this, 1. A type of Chriſt, who is both prieſt and altar, and ſacrifice together, conſecrated of God, with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows, cloathed with ſpotleſs purity, and by his own blood perfecting the atonement. 2. Of every faithful ſoul, who is called, choſen, waſhed in the blood, and cloathed with the righteouſneſs of the Redeemer; and thus by grace enabled to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt.

38. ¶ Now this *is that* which thou ſhalt offer upon the altar; [g] two lambs of the firſt year, [h] day by day continually. 39. The one lamb thou ſhalt offer in the morning: and the other lamb thou ſhalt offer at even. 40. And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil: and the fourth part of an hin of wine *for* a drink-offering. 41. And the other lamb thou ſhalt offer at even, and ſhalt do thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a ſweet ſavour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 42. *This ſhall be* [i] a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD: [k] where I will meet you, to ſpeak there unto thee. 43. And there will I meet with the children of Iſrael, and † *the tabernacle* ſhall be ſanctified by my glory. 44. And I will ſanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will ſanctify alſo both Aaron and his ſons, to miniſter to me in the prieſts office. 45. ¶ And [l] I will dwell amongſt the children of Iſrael, and will be their God. 46. And they ſhall know that I *am* the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell amongſt them: I *am* the LORD their God.

[g] Num. xxviii. 3.
[h] See Dan. ix. 27. & xii. 11.
[i] Chap. xxx. 8.
[k] Chap. xxx. 36. Num. xvii. 4.
† Or Iſrael.
[l] Exod. xxv. 8. Lev. xxvi. 12. Zech. ii. 10. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. xxi. 3.

v. 38—46. The prieſts and altar being conſecrated, their continual daily employment is appointed them.

1. The daily ſacrifice; to intimate the neceſſity of daily pardon for our ſins, and our obligations to the conſtant worſhip of God. Chriſt was not only once offered, but, as the Lamb newly ſlain, continually preſents his own blood before the mercy-ſeat: and we are every day called upon, morning and evening, without ceaſing, to offer up our ſupplications and prayers, in virtue of this atoning blood before the throne of God. Neglect of prayer is the ſure proof of contempt of God.

2. God promiſes to meet them whilſt they wait upon him, and bleſs them, and dwell in the midſt of them, and be their God. *Note*, (1.) A life of prayer will be a life of communion with God. (2.) He will ever be preſent in the congregations of his people to bleſs them. (3.) The greateſt of bleſſings is to have a portion in a covenant God.

CHAP. XXX.

Moſes is in this chapter further inſtructed, 1. *Concerning the altar of incenſe,* ver. 1—10. 2. *Concerning the ranſom money,* ver. 11—16. 3. *Concerning the laver of braſs,* ver. 17—21. 4. *Concerning the anointing oil,* ver. 22—33. 5. *Concerning the incenſe and perfume, to be burned on the golden altar,* ver. 34—38.

1. AND thou ſhalt make [a] an altar [b] to burn incenſe upon: *of* ſhittim-wood ſhalt thou make it. 2. A cubit *ſhall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof (four ſquare ſhall it be) and two cubits *ſhall be* the height thereof: the horns thereof *ſhall be* of the ſame. 3. And thou ſhalt overlay it with pure gold, the † top thereof and the ‡ ſides thereof round about, and the horns thereof: and thou ſhalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. 4. And two golden rings ſhalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two ‖ corners thereof, upon the the two ſides of it ſhalt thou make *it*: and they ſhall be for places for the ſtaves to bear it withal. 5. And thou ſhalt make the ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and overlay them with gold. 6. And thou ſhalt put it before the vail, that *is* by the ark of the teſtimony; before the mercy-ſeat, that *is* over the teſtimony, where I will meet with thee. 7. And Aaron ſhall burn thereon § ſweet incenſe every morning: when [c] he dreſſeth the lamps he ſhall burn incenſe upon it. 8. And when Aaron † lighteth the lamps ‡ at even, he ſhall burn incenſe upon it; a perpetual incenſe before the LORD, throughout your generations. 9. Ye ſhall offer no ſtrange incenſe thereon, nor burnt-ſacrifice, nor meat-offering; neither ſhall ye pour drink-offering thereon. 10. And [d] Aaron ſhall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year, with the blood of the ſin-offering of atonements: once in the year ſhall he make atonement upon it, throughout your generations: it *is* moſt holy unto the LORD.

[a] Chap. xxxvii. 25.
[b] See ver. 10. Lev. iv. 7, 18.
† Heb. Roof.
‡ Heb. Walls.
‖ Heb. Ribs.
§ Heb. Incenſe of ſpices.
[c] Chap. xxvii. 20.
† Heb. Cauſeth to aſcend.
‡ Heb. Between the two evenings.
[d] Lev. xvi. 14. & xxiii. 27.

v. 1—10. The altar of incenſe ſtood in the tabernable without the vail before the mercy ſeat. Incenſe of God's appointment muſt be burned upon it by Aaron continually, and accompany the daily offering morning and evening. Praiſe for daily mercies is as needful as prayer for daily pardon. And once a year it muſt be ſprinkled with blood on its horns, on the great day of atonement. Our holieſt ſervices need the blood of Chriſt, or they would be regarded of God as an unclean thing. *Note*, Whilſt Chriſt is thus interceding for us in heaven before the golden altar, it becomes us to be found ſending up the incenſe of prayer and praiſe, that, perfumed by him, they may appear before the throne of God as a ſweet ſmelling ſavour.

11. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 12. [e] When thou takeſt the ſum of the children of Iſrael, after † their number; then they ſhall give every man a ranſom for his ſoul unto the LORD, when thou

[e] Chap. xxxviii. 25. Num. i. 2, 5. & xxvi. 2.
† Heb. Them that are to be numbered. See Num. xxxi. 50.

numbereſt them: that there be no plague amongſt them, when *thou* numbereſt them. 13. This they ſhall give, every one that paſſeth among them that are numbered; [f] half a ſhekel after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary ([g] a ſhekel *is* twenty gerahs) an half ſhekel *ſhall be* the offering of the LORD. 14. Every one that paſſeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, ſhall give an offering unto the LORD. 15. The rich ſhall not ‡ give more, and the poor ſhall not ‖ give leſs than half a ſhekel, when *they* give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your ſouls. 16. And thou ſhalt take the atonement money of the children of Iſrael, and [h] ſhalt appoint it for the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Iſrael before the LORD, to make an atonement for your ſouls.

[f] Matt. xvii. 24.
[g] Lev. xxvii. 25. Num. iii. 47. Ezek. xlv. 12.
‡ Heb. Multiply.
‖ Heb. Diminiſh.
[h] Chap. xxxviii. 25.

v. 11—16. This ranſom is ſuppoſed to have been yearly paid. It was in value about fifteen pence, and employed wholly for the uſe of God's ſanctuary. They who value the goſpel, will never grudge to contribute for the ſupport of it. The rich and poor payed alike; for it coſts the ſame to redeem one ſoul as another, and in God's ſight they are equally precious.

17. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 18. [i] Thou ſhalt alſo make a laver *of* braſs, and his foot *alſo of* braſs, to waſh *withal:* and thou ſhalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou ſhalt put water therein. 19. For Aaron and his ſons [k] ſhall waſh their hands and their feet thereat. 20. When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they ſhall waſh with water, that they die not: or when they come near to the altar to miniſter, to burn an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 21. So they ſhall waſh their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it ſhall be a ſtatute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his ſeed throughout their generations.

[i] Chap. xxxviii. 8.
[k] Pſ. xxvi. 6. Iſa. lii. 11. Heb. x. 22.

v. 17—21. In theſe waſhings God would repreſent to them the neceſſity of ſpiritual purity in their miniſtrations. We contract defilement every day, and muſt therefore daily come to the laver of Chriſt's blood, that we may ſtand before God without fear.

22. ¶ Moreover, the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 23. Take thou alſo unto thee principal ſpices, of pure myrrh five hundred *ſhekels*, and of ſweet cinnamon half ſo much, *even* two hundred and fifty *ſhekels*, and of ſweet calamus two hundred and fifty *ſhekels*. 24. And of caſſia five hundred *ſhekels*, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, and of oil-olive [l] an hin. 25. And thou ſhalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the † apothecary: it ſhall be an holy anointing oil. 26. And [m] thou ſhalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the teſtimony. 27. And the table and all his veſſels, and the candleſtick and his veſſels, and the altar of incenſe, 28. And the altar of burnt-offering with all his veſſels, and the laver and his foot. 29. And thou ſhalt ſanctify them, that they may be moſt holy: [n] whatſoever toucheth them, ſhall be holy. 30. And [o] thou ſhalt anoint Aaron and his ſons, and conſecrate them, that *they* may miniſter unto me in the prieſts office. 31. And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, This ſhall be an holy anointing oil unto me, throughout your generations. 32. Upon man's fleſh ſhall it not be poured, neither ſhall ye make *any other* like it, after the compoſition of it: it *is* holy, *and* it ſhall be holy unto you. 33. Whoſoever compoundeth *any* like it, or whoſoever putteth *any* of it upon a ſtranger, [p] ſhall even be cut off from his people. 34. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [q] Take unto thee ſweet ſpices, ſtacte, and onycha, and galbanum; *theſe* ſweet ſpices with pure frankincenſe: of each ſhall there be a like *weight*. 35. And thou ſhalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, ‡ tempered together, pure *and* holy. 36. And thou ſhalt beat *ſome* of it very ſmall, and put of it before the teſtimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, [r] where I will meet with thee: it ſhall be unto you moſt holy. 37. And *as for* the perfume which thou ſhalt make, you ſhall not make to yourſelves according to the compoſition thereof: it ſhall be unto thee holy for the LORD. 38. Whoſoever ſhall make like unto that, to ſmell thereto, ſhall even be cut off from his people.

[l] Chap. xxix. 40.
† Or perfumer.
[m] Chap. xl. 9. Lev. viii. 10. Num. vii. 10.
[n] Chap. xxix. 37.
[o] Chap. xxix. 7. &c.
[p] Gen. xvii. 14.
[q] Chap. xxv. 6.
‡ Heb. Salted.
[r] Chap. xxix. 37, 42. Lev. xvi. 2.

v. 22—38. We have,

1. The preſcription for the anointing oil, *v.* 22—33. The riches and fragrance of theſe materials repreſented that more glorious unction of the Holy Ghoſt, which every ſoul conſecrated to God receives.

2. The ingredients for the incenſe, *v.* 34—36. They muſt be bruiſed, that they may more abundantly yield their perfume. *Note,* No fragrance ſo pleaſing, as the cry which aſcends from a broken and contrite heart.

CHAP. XXXI.

God here concludes what he had to ſay to Moſes. 1. *He appoints what workmen ſhould be employed in the building and furniſhing of the tabernacle,* ver. 1—11. 2. *He repeats the law of the ſabbath, and the religious obſervation of it,* ver. 12—17. 3. *He delivers him the two tables of the teſtimony at parting,* ver. 18.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] See, I have called by name Bezaleel the [b] ſon of Uri, the ſon of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: 3. And [c] I have filled him with the ſpirit of God, in wiſdom, and in underſtanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanſhip, 4. To deviſe cunning works, to work in gold, and in ſilver, and in braſs. 5. And in cutting of ſtones, to ſet *them*, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanſhip. 6. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab the ſon of Ahiſamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are wiſe-hearted I have put wiſdom: that they may make all that I have commanded thee: 7. The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the teſtimony, and the mercy-ſeat that *is* thereupon, and all the † furniture of the tabernacle, 8. And the table and his furniture, and the pure candleſtick with all his furniture, and the altar of incenſe. 9. And the altar of burnt-offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot, 10. And [d] the clothes of ſervice, and the holy garments for Aaron the prieſt, and the garments of his ſons, to miniſter in the prieſts office. 11. And [e] the anointing oil, and ſweet incenſe for the holy *place:* according to all that I have commanded thee, ſhall they do.

[a] Chap. xxxv. 30.
[b] 1 Chron. ii. 20.
[c] 1 Kings, vii. 14.
† Heb. Veſſels.
[d] Chap. xxix, 1, 41. Num. iv. 6, &c.
[e] Chap. xxx, 25, 31.

v. 1—11. The work was deſcribed in the former chapter, the workmen now are divinely appointed alſo. They had not in their long ſervitude, we may be ſure, been ever engaged in ſuch curious arts, as were required for the furniture of the tabernacle; but God, who appoints the perſons, qualifies them for the work. The chief perſons are Bezaleel and Aholiab, and they are furniſhed with abilities for the ſervice, and with aſſiſtants under them to execute their commands. Learn, (1.) When God hath work to do, he will find inſtruments, and fit them for their employment. (2.) All ſkill and excellence in every buſineſs is the gift of God, and ſhould be acknowledged to his glory. (3.) When we admire the inſtruments God makes uſe of, we muſt beware of aſcribing too much to the man, and too little to his maker. (4.) They who are employed in the ſervice of the tabernacle, under a divine call, may with comfort and confidence enter upon it. He who calls them to the work, will ſupport and own them in it.

12. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes ſaying, 13. Speak thou alſo unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [f] Verily my ſabbaths ye ſhall keep: for it *is* a ſign between me and you, throughout your generations; that *ye* may know that I *am* the LORD that doth ſanctify you. 14. [g] Ye ſhall keep the ſabbath therefore: for it *is* holy unto you. Every one that defileth it, ſhall ſurely be put to death: for [h] whoſoever doth *any* work therein, that ſoul ſhall be cut off from amongſt his people. 15. Six days may work be done, but in the ſeventh *is* the ſabbath of reſt, † holy to the LORD: whoſoever doth *any* work in the ſabbath-days he ſhall ſurely be put to death. 16. Wherefore the children of Iſrael ſhall keep the ſabbath, to obſerve the ſabbath throughout their generations, *for* a perpetual covenant. 17. It *is* a ſign between me and the children of Iſrael for ever: for [i] *in* ſix days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the ſeventh day he reſted, and was refreſhed.

[f] Lev. xix. 3, 30. & xxvi. 2. Ezek. xx. 12, 20.
[g] Chap. xx. 8. Deut. v. 12. Ezek. xx. 12.
[h] Chap. xxxv. 2. Num. xv. 34.
† Heb. Holineſs.
[i] Gen. i. 31. & ii. 2.

v. 12—17. The ſabbath is again ſtrictly enjoined. It was the diſtinguiſhing badge of their ſeparation from the reſt of the world. As long as they religiouſly obſerved it, it was a ſign of God's favour to them, and a conſtant evidence of their obedience to him. Next to the repeated warnings againſt idolatry, we find no injunctions ſo frequent as thoſe which regard the ſabbath. Theſe indeed have the moſt immediate connection with each other, nothing being ſo effectual to preſerve them from turning to falſe gods, as the ſtrict and religious obſervance of that day, which was devoted to the worſhip of the true God. And as it was the means of ſanctifying them, it hath ſtill the ſame gracious tendency to us; nor doth any thing conduce more to the ſanctification of our hearts and lives, than the careful obſervance of this holy day; whilſt, on the contrary, the neglect of it is the moſt evident proof of a mind eſtranged from God, and the inlet to every abomination which naturally flows from forgetfulneſs of him. The breach of the ſabbath was, among the Jews, puniſhed with death: our laws too make it penal, and many who have been brought to an ignominious death, have confeſſed this to be the beginning of their ruin. But though men elude human penalties, and with impunity continue in pleaſure, buſineſs, idleneſs, gaming, the ſervice of their luſts, and indulgence of their appetites, to profane theſe ſacred hours, the time approaches, when a judge ſhall ſit upon the throne, with whom there is no reſpect of perſons; when every ſabbath-breaker will find, to his unutterable ſorrow, that the wages of his ſin is everlaſting death.

18. ¶ And he gave unto Moſes, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, [k] two tables of teſtimony, tables of ſtone, written with the finger of God.

[k] Chap. xxxii. 16. & xxxiv. 28. Deut. ix. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 3.

v. 18. Moſes is now diſmiſſed, and the tables of the covenant given him to lay up in the ark, for a perpetual remembrance. The ſtones on which the commandments were written, fitly repreſent the hardneſs of men's hearts; and the finger of God, that Almighty Grace, which can, even on ſuch hearts as ours, inſcribe his holy law. The ſtones indeed, however durable, were quickly broken; but if the fleſhly tables of our hearts bear the divine impreſſion, the writing ſhall never be obliterated: it is an everlaſting covenant, which God, who makes with us, will keep us from breaking.

CHAP. XXXII.

The ſtory of this chapter is very afflictive. Hitherto things went on admirably well towards a happy ſettlement. God had ſhewed himſelf very favourable, and the people were tractable; Moſes is now returning, to eſtabliſh God's ordinances and worſhip, and to ſet up the tabernacle, where the Lord promiſed to dwell in the midſt of them; but behold, the meaſures are broken; the ſin of Iſrael puts a ſtop to the current of God's favours, and brings heavy judgments upon them. Here is, 1. *The ſin of Iſrael, and Aaron particularly, in making the golden calf for a god,* ver. 1—4. *and worſhipping it,* ver. 5, 6. 2. *The notice which God gave of this to Moſes,* ver. 7, 8. *and the ſentence of his wrath againſt them,* ver. 9, 10. 3. *The interceſſion which Moſes immediately made for them in the mount,* ver. 11, 12, 13. *and the prevalency of that interceſſion,* ver. 14. 4. *His coming down from the mount, when he became an eye-witneſs of their idolatry,* ver. 15—19. *in deteſtation of which, and a juſt indignation at it, he broke the tables,* ver. 19. *and burnt the golden calf,* ver. 20. 5. *The examination of Aaron about it,* ver. 21—24. 6. *Execution done upon the ring-leaders in the idolatry,* ver. 25—29. 7. *The farther interceſſion Moſes made for them, to turn away the wrath of God from them,* ver. 30—32. *and a reprieve granted thereupon, reſerving them for a farther reckoning,* ver. 33—35.

1. AND when the people ſaw that Moſes delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themſelves together unto Aaron, and ſaid unto him, [a] Up, make us gods, which ſhall go before us: for *as for* this Moſes, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

[a] Acts vii. 40.

v. 1. When Moſes is now ready to deſcend from the mount, the perverſeneſs and impatience of the people deſtroy all the bleſſings which were deſigned for them. They had before been often diſtruſtful and diſobedient, but now they break out into open rebellion. They riotouſly aſſemble, and preſent a petition to Aaron, to make them gods to go before them. They were weary of waiting, and though they had want of nothing, are in haſte to be in the promiſed land. *Note*, Haſte makes waſte. When we run before God's providence leads, inſtead of ſeizing the mercy, we uſually fall into a ſnare. Two grievous ſins are the conſequence of this proceeding.

1. Impious idolatry againſt God. They were not ſatisfied with the repeated evidences he had given them of his preſence in the midſt of them. They would have gods of their own making. The idols of Egypt were ſtill in their hearts, and they will go a whoring after them. *Note*, Where the heart is not truly converted to God, though for a time partial reformations may deceive, the old ſins will again break out, and the dog return to his vomit.

2. Baſe ingratitude to Moſes. He had been long their governor; they were moſt highly indebted to him. He was now gone expreſsly on their affairs. As he had God's call to go, they had ſufficient reaſon to expect his return: but ſhould he not, they were at leaſt bound to treat him with reſpect and regard. But they overlook every conſideration, and, with a careleſs mention of their great deliverer, pretend to inſinuate, that he hath forſaken them, and never intends to return. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of men, and the greateſt miniſters, may expect to meet with moſt ungrateful returns from thoſe whom they have ſerved. (2.) They who are inclined to think evil, will pretend, in the cleareſt caſe, not to know what to think. (3.) Forgetfulneſs, and doubt of the return of Jeſus from the mount of glory, is the great means of hardening the ſinner; whilſt it is among the ſoreſt temptations of the true believer, that in times of greateſt difficulty our Lord ſeems to delay his coming; but if he tarry, let us wait for him.

2. And Aaron ſaid unto them, Break off the golden ear-rings which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your ſons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me. 3. And all the people brake off the golden ear-rings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron. 4. And [b] he received *them* at their hand, and faſhioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they ſaid, [c] Theſe *be* thy gods, O Iſrael, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 5. And when Aaron ſaw *it*, he built an altar before it, and Aaron made proclamation, and ſaid, To-morrow *is* a feaſt to the LORD. 6. And they roſe up early on the morrow, and offered burnt-offerings, and brought peace-offerings: and [d] the people ſat down to eat and to drink, and roſe up to play.

[b] 1 Kings xii. 28. Pſ. cvi. 19. [c] Neh. ix. 18. [d] 1 Cor. x. 7.

v. 2—6. Aaron, inſtead of indignation at the propoſal, infamouſly tame conſents to gratify them.

1. He aſks for their golden ear-rings, which, however dear to them, they readily part with; for when men are ſet on ſin, they ſtick at nothing, and think they never pay too dear for the gratification. *Note*, It is a bad ſign, if we are leſs ready to part with our gold to forward God's cauſe, than they were to part with theirs to diſhonour him. Theſe ear-rings were the ſpoil of the Egyptians, with which God had ſo lately enriched them; and now they are abuſed to the vileſt idolatry. How often do the gifts of God thus prove a ſnare to us, and engage our idolatrous affections to them, ſo as to prove a curſe, inſtead of a bleſſing.

2. He makes a molten calf; a ſtrange god indeed! and, dreadful proof of their infatuated blindneſs, to change the glory of the incorruptible God into the ſimilitude of an ox that eateth graſs. *Pſ.* cvi. 20.

3. An altar is built, and a feaſt proclaimed to Jehovah; for they deſigned not to terminate their worſhip in the calf, but regarded it as the repreſentation of the true God; though this we find was not the leaſt exculpation of their guilt. Let the papiſts ſee in their image-worſhip, how exactly conformable is their conduct, and equally abominable their idolatry.

4. The people gladly obey the ſummons, and rejoice in the work of their own hands. The day is ſpent in feaſting, mirth, and jollity. Such ſervice could not ſuit Jehovah; but as the calf was the idol, their belly ſeems to have been their god. *Note*, Though the calf is no more, his worſhippers are ſtill numerous, if ſuch be the ſervice, to ſit down to eat and drink, and riſe up to play.

7. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [e] Go, get thee down: for [f] thy people which thou broughteſt out of the land of Egypt [g] have corrupted *themſelves*. 8. They have turned aſide quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worſhipped it, and have ſacrificed thereunto, and ſaid, [h] Theſe *be* thy gods, O Iſrael, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 9. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [i] I have ſeen this people, and behold, it *is* a ſtiff-necked people. 10. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, and that I may conſume them: and [k] I will make of thee a great nation.

[e] Deut. ix. 12. [f] Chap. xxxiii. 1. Dan. ix. 14. [g] Deut. xxxii. 5. [h] Ver. 4. 1 Kings xii. 28. [i] Chap. xxxiii. 3. Deut. ix. 6, 13. Iſa. xlviii. 4. [k] Num. xiv. 12.

v. 7—10. God informs Moſes of the people's crime, and hereupon, 1. Haſtens him down to them. Had he left them without God's warrant, he had been chargeable for their rebellion. When miniſters unneceſſarily leave their flocks, or maſters their families, and miſchief enſues, they muſt anſwer it to God. 2. He ſeems to caſt them off, and calls them *thy people*, as if he diſclaimed any farther relation to them. Sin makes fearful ſeparations between God and the ſoul. 3. He charges them with corrupting themſelves. They had ſolemn warnings to flee idolatry; but they followed the perverſe imaginations of their own hearts. Every ſinner is ſelf-corrupted, and therefore at the laſt day will appear ſelf-condemned. 4. He upbraids their unfaithfulneſs, that they had ſo ſoon turned aſide, after ſuch diſtinguiſhing favours had been ſhewn them, and ſuch ſolemn engagements made by them. To ſin againſt our vows and our mercies is doubly guilty. 5. He tells him of their groſs idolatry, the proof of their utterly abandoned temper. 6. He adds the perverſeneſs he ſaw in them, as a ſtiff-necked people, whom mercies would neither conſtrain, nor terrors over-awe. It is deſperate indeed with the ſoul, when God declares all methods of dealing with it to be vain. 7. He threatens to deſtroy them in his wrath. Who need not tremble for himſelf, when he thinks how often he hath provoked this wrath, which, if it were kindled, yea but for a moment, who may abide it? Laſtly, He ſeems to reſtrain Moſes from interceding for them, and promiſes to raiſe up to him another nation in their ſtead. But one thing could ſave them from immediate ruin, and that was Moſes's prayer; and here was enough, if he was at all ſelf-intereſted, to lead him to abandon them. But the heart that is filled with charity, as Moſes, will ſhew, that he can love his neighbour even as himſelf, and can forego his own intereſt for their good.

11. And [l] Moſes beſought † the LORD his God, and ſaid, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot againſt thy people, which thou haſt brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? 12. [m] Wherefore ſhould the Egyptians ſpeak and ſay, For miſchief did he bring them out, to ſlay them in the mountains, and to conſume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil againſt thy people. 13. Remember Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael thy ſervants, to whom thou ſwareſt by thine own ſelf, and ſaidſt unto them, [n] I will multiply your ſeed as the ſtars of heaven, and all this land that I have ſpoken of, will I give unto your ſeed, and they ſhall inherit *it* for ever. 14. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

[l] Deut. ix. 18. Pſ. cvi. 23.
† Heb. The face of the Lord.
[m] Num. xiv. 13. Deut. ix. 28. & xxxii. 27.
[n] Gen. xii. 7. & xiii. 15. & xv. 7, 18. & xxvi. 4. & xxviii. 13. & xlviii. 16.

v. 11—14. We have here the prayer of Moſes, and an effectual fervent prayer it is. God, even in the reſtraint he ſeemed to lay, had given a ground of encouragement, and faith knows how to plead every argument. Though their provocations were great, and God might juſtly conſume them, he begs for mercy, and that God would repent of the evil; that he would change the ſentence he was ready to utter: for which purpoſe he urges,

1. The mercy God had ſhewn them. He had brought them from Egypt, and will he now caſt them off? Paſt mercies received are an encouraging ground to hope ſtill. If God hath pardoned and been gracious to us before, let us not deſpair, but apply to him again, however undeſerving. 2. God's glory was concerned. The Egyptians will triumph in their ruin. It lies near upon the heart of a true believer to hear the heathen blaſpheme; and he wiſhes in himſelf and others, to remove every ſuch occaſion. 3. He produces the promiſe made to their fathers. If they were not ſpared on any other conſideration, yet, for his oath to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, let them find mercy. God's promiſes are a ſure ground of hope: whilſt we have them to plead, we may draw near, and not deſpair.

Hereupon God is entreated. He ſpares at Moſes's interceſſion. Behold the power of prayer. And ſhall Moſes be heard for the thouſands of Iſrael, and ſhall not Jeſus in heaven ſucceed for the ſinful ſoul? However deſperate our ſtate may appear, we ſhould not utterly abandon ourſelves: whilſt we have ſuch an advocate with the Father, the moſt miſerable may find mercy.

15. ¶ And Moſes turned and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the teſtimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their ſides: on the one ſide, and on the other *were* they written. 16. And [o] the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God graven upon the tables. 17. And when Joſhua heard the noiſe of the people as they ſhouted, he ſaid unto Moſes, *There is* a noiſe of war in the camp. 18. And he ſaid, *It is* not the voice of *them that* ſhout for maſtery, neither *is it* the voice of *them that* cry for † being overcome: *but* the noiſe of *them that* ſing, do I hear.

[o] Chap. xxxi. 18.
† Heb. Weakneſs.

v. 15—18. How often doth the ſinner in fatal ſecurity thus ſing and dance on the brink of the grave, though all God's fiery law is armed againſt him!

Moſes, with the ſacred charge of the tables of the covenant, now deſcends. Joſhua waited for him, and the noiſe in the camp ſoon reaches their ears. Joſhua was a man of war, and conſtrues it the ſound of war; but Moſes knew the cauſe, and theſe ſongs of melody were in his ears jarring diſcord. Shall the praiſes of a golden calf, ſhall the ſongs of the drunkard, and the wanton ſtrains of pleaſure ring ſo loud? and ſhall we be ſilent to, or aſhamed of, the praiſes of our Immanuel? God forbid!

19. ¶ And it came to paſs aſſoon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he ſaw the calf, and the dancing: and Moſes's anger waxed hot, and he caſt the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. 20. And [p] he took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in the fire, and ground it to powder, and ſtrawed *it* upon the water, and made the children of Iſrael drink *of it*.

[p] Deut. ix. 21.

v. 19, 20. When God's honour is at ſtake, to be lukewarm is to be criminal. Filled with indignation, Moſes beheld the ſhocking ſcene; and though, in his own concerns, the meekeſt of men, now holy anger kindles in his boſom.

1. The ſacred tables he daſhes on the ground. Since they had thus forſaken God's covenant, he would awaken in them a ſenſe of the heinouſneſs of their guilt. The bleſſings God intended them are loſt, and they are left as it were open to every judgment they had provoked. *Note*, The greateſt curſe that can fall upon any people, is the taking from them the word of God: when that is gone, all is gone.

2. He ſeizes the hateful idol, plucks him from his throne in the midſt of the aſtoniſhed multitude, ſtamps it to powder, and ſprinkling the duſt in the water, makes them drink it, to ſhew them the vanity of their wretched god. *Note*, The heart which departs from God, drinks in iniquity like water; but in all its draughts of pleaſurable ſin, the curſe, like this duſt, mixes with it, and leaves a miſery behind, which only they who taſte it know.

21. And Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou haſt brought ſo great a ſin upon them? 22. And Aaron ſaid, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knoweſt the people that they *are ſet* on miſchief. 23. For they ſaid unto me, Make us gods, which ſhall go before us: for *as for* this Moſes, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. 24. And I ſaid unto them, Whoſoever hath any gold, let them break *it* off: So they gave *it* me: then I caſt it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

v. 21—24. Having executed vengeance on the idol, 1. Moſes ſharply rebukes Aaron. He was firſt in office, and therefore firſt in guilt. The ſins which magiſtrates ſuffer through their connivance, or with their conſent, God will heavily reckon for, when he judgeth. He enquires the cauſe which drew him into it, judging, no doubt, that it muſt have been ſome violent temptation. Thus charitably deſirous was he to cover his brother's tranſgreſſion: not that any force can excuſe us; the greateſt ſuffering is preferable to the leaſt ſin. 2. Aaron's excuſe is frivolous and evaſive. Inſtead of condemning his own ſhameful conduct, he ſeeks to caſt off the load, by turning accuſer againſt the people. When we ſin, like Aaron, how naturally does the devil help us to excuſe ourſelves at the expence of others? He could not deny the calf's being made; but he ſpeaks of it with ſuch prevarication, as if it was merely accidental. So do we all ſeek to cover our ſins, and thus ſhew our folly, as well as our wickedneſs. From God they cannot be concealed. Aaron ſeems to have been more ſollicitous to avert Moſes's anger, than God's diſpleaſure. He begs him not to be wroth, as if it were of importance what man thought of him. But how often does the fear of man thus frighten us, more than all the wrath of an offended God. See the deep unbelief of the heart, when hardened by ſin. *Note*, Good men may ſometimes fall thus into grievous ſin, and, like Aaron, for a time be unhumbled; but God is merciful, and when we deſerve judgment, he thinketh upon mercy, that he may ſhew us, to our everlaſting wonder and praiſe, that where ſin abounded, grace doth much more abound.

25. ¶ And when Moſes ſaw that the people *were* [q] naked (for [r] Aaron had made them naked unto *their* ſhame, amongſt † their enemies). 26. Then Moſes ſtood in the gate of the camp, and ſaid, Who *is* on the LORD's ſide? *let him come* unto me. And all the ſons

[q] Chap. xxxiii. 4, 5.
[r] 2 Chron. xxviii. 19.
† Heb. Thoſe that roſe up againſt them.

ſons of Levi gathered themſelves together unto him. 27. And he ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Put every man his ſword by his ſide, *and* go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and [s] ſlay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. 28. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moſes: and there fell of the people that day about three thouſand men. 29. [t] ‡ For Moſes had ſaid, ‖ Conſecrate yourſelves to-day to the LORD, even every man § upon his ſon, and upon his brother: that he may beſtow upon you a bleſſing this day.

[s] Num. xxv. 5. Deut. xxxiii. 9.
[t] Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10.
‡ Or, And Moſes ſaid, &c.
‖ Heb. Fill your hands.
§ Or, againſt his ſon.

v. 25—29. Moſes now turns to the people, and not by words, but deeds, teſtifies his indignation.

1. They were become naked, expoſed to God's judgments, and the ſword of their enemies. Sin is the nakedneſs of the ſoul; and if that be not covered by the blood and righteouſneſs of a Redeemer, the ſword of God's wrath will ſurely find us out.

2. Vengeance is executed upon the ringleaders. Moſes ſtands and charges thoſe who are on God's ſide to come to him: the ſons of Levi obey. They gird on their ſwords, paſs, at Moſes's command, through the camp, and conſecrate themſelves to God in the blood of the rebels. *Note*, (1.) They were on the Lord's ſide, had not joined perhaps with the reſt, or were the firſt to repent of it. We muſt ſide either with God, or with the world and the devil; and it highly concerns us to enquire, whoſe intereſts we ſupport, and whoſe banners we fight under. (2.) They were but few. Comparatively few will the faithful ever be found. (3.) They were fearleſs of danger. They who would miniſter before God in a ſinful world, have need of fortitude. (4.) They met no reſiſtance. Guilt makes men cowards: the very preſence of a godly man ſtrikes an evident awe upon them.

3. Three thouſand fell. The morning opened with ſhouts of joy, the evening cloſed with dying groans. Such changes doth divine judgments ſuddenly make. Tremble, thou joyous ſinner, at that ſword which threatens to deſcend, and turn thy mirth into never-ending miſery.

30. ¶ And it came to paſs on the morrow, that Moſes ſaid unto the people, Ye have ſinned a great ſin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; [u] peradventure I ſhall make an atonement for your ſin. 31. And Moſes returned unto the LORD, and ſaid, Oh this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold. 32. Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their ſin: and if not, [x] blot me, I pray thee, out of [y] thy book which thou haſt written. 33. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [z] Whoſoever hath ſinned againſt me, him will I blot out of my book. 34. Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have ſpoken unto thee: [a] Behold, mine angel ſhall go before thee: nevertheleſs, [b] in the day when I viſit, I will viſit their ſin upon them. 35. And the LORD plagued the people, becauſe they made the calf which Aaron made.

[u] 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Amos v. 15.
[x] Pſ. lxix. 28. Rom. ix. 3.
[y] Pſ. lvi. 8. & cxxxix. 16. Dan. xii. 1. Phil. iv. 3. Rev. iii. v. & xiii. 8. & xx. 12.
[z] Lev. xxiii. 30. Ezek. xviii. 4.
[a] Chap. xxxiii. 2, 14, &c. Num. xx. 16.
[b] Deut. xxxii. 35.

v. 30—35. It was, no doubt, a melancholy night which Iſrael ſpent. The morning comes, and Moſes goes forth,

1. To admoniſh the people of the greatneſs of their ſin. Though God had not executed vengeance upon all, it was not that they did not all deſerve it. Whether God would ſpare the reſt was yet a peradventure; and therefore it became them to be deeply affected with the ſenſe of their ingratitude, whilſt he offered once more to go up to God, and plead for them. *Note*, (1.) To affect the conſcience with a ſenſe of ſin, ſhould be the firſt labour of God's miniſters. (2.) The atonement which the Saviour hath made for ſin, ſhews, in the moſt aſtoniſhing view, its evil and malignity. (3.) It is our comfort, that he who is gone up with his own blood to the preſence of God, to make atonement, not only gives us the peradventure of hope, but the aſſurance of promiſe. (4.) It is ſtill our duty to be found waiting upon him in prayer, that we may receive the atonement.

2. He goes up to the mount, and prays. He confeſſes the greatneſs of the crime: for it is not by extenuating, but by acknowledging our guilt, that we may hope for mercy. He begs hard for pardon; but, if he cannot obtain it, he begs to fall with them, rather than ſurvive the afflicting ſcene. *Note*, The welfare of God's Iſrael is dearer to God's miniſters than every conſideration of their own, yea, even than their own lives: they are ready to lay down that for their ſake.

3. God graciouſly receives his interceſſion, and grants his requeſt, with ſome alarming threatnings however againſt the tranſgreſſors. Death is always the wages of ſin, though not always immediately executed on the ſinner. He may ſpare them for a time, but they ſhall at laſt feel his viſitations. *Note*, Reprieves are not pardons. He conſents to confirm the promiſed land to them, though, inſtead of his own preſence, they are left under Moſes' guidance, and the guard of an angel: nor do they eſcape even thus: the plague of God is among them, for the calf which Aaron made. The calf was Aaron's infirmity, the preſumptuous ſin was theirs. God knoweth how to diſtinguiſh the aggravations of men's ſins, and will accordingly puniſh with more or fewer ſtripes.

CHAP. XXXIII.

1. *Moſes brings a very humbling meſſage from God to them*, ver. 1, 2, 3, 5. *which has a good effect upon them*, ver. 4, 6. 2. *A correſpondence reſtored between God and them: God deſcending in a cloudy pillar, and the people worſhipping at the tent-doors*, ver. 7—12. 3. *Moſes prays, and prevails*, 1. *For a promiſe of his preſence with the people*, ver. 12—17. 2. *For a ſight of his glory for himſelf*, ver. 18—23.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Depart, *and* go up hence, thou and [a] the people which thou haſt brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I ſware unto Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob, ſaying, [b] Unto thy ſeed will I give it: 2. And [c] I will ſend an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebuſite: 3. Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midſt of thee, for thou *art* [d] a ſtiff-necked people: leſt I [e] conſume thee in the way. 4. ¶ And when the people heard theſe evil tidings, they mourned: and [f] no man did put on him his ornaments. 5. For the LORD had ſaid unto Moſes, Say unto the children of Iſrael, Ye *are* a ſtiff-necked people: I will come up into the midſt of thee in a moment, and conſume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

[a] Chap. xxxii. 7.
[b] Gen. xii. 7. Chap. xxxii. 13.
[c] Chap. xxxii. 34. Deut. vii. 22. Joſh. xxiv. 11.
[d] Chap. xxxii. 9. Deut. ix. 13.
[e] Chap. xxiii. 21.
[f] Iſa. xxxii. 11.

v. 1—5. It was a diſcouraging meſſage Moſes brought them, and beſpoke God's high diſpleaſure againſt them. For, 1. God refuſes to go up with them, and leaves them to Moſes and a miniſtring angel; againſt whom their provocations, though continued, might not be ſo aggravated as againſt himſelf in the midſt of them; for the abuſe of greater privileges brings along with it greater guilt. 2. He reproaches them with their ſtubbornneſs, as a ſtiff-necked people: he knew what was in them. *Note*, God ſees our hearts, and of all our ſins, is moſt offended with the inbred alienation of our affections from him. 3. He threatens to conſume them, as juſtly he might. It becomes us to know and feel the juſtice of our condemnation, that we may be more affected with the wonders of God's grace in pardoning. 4. He ſtands, as it were, to conſider how to deal with them, and bids them humble themſelves before him: if ſo be, yet he may have mercy on them. God delights not in the death of a ſinner: he ſtays his deſcending arm, and when he ſees us in the duſt, ſtripped of every hope, then he will magnify his grace unto the uttermoſt.

6. And the children of Iſrael ſtript themſelves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.

v. 6. The people were juſtly confounded at this meſſage: to be forſaken of God, was matter of bitter mourning, and therefore they humble their ſouls, ſtrip off their ornaments, and give every deep expreſſion of a contrite heart. *Note* (1.) To be forſaken of God, is the heavieſt puniſhment which can fall upon us: if he but withdraw the light of his countenance from his people, they go mourning all the day long. (2.) When ſin is committed, ſorrow and ſhame ſhould cover us; and though tears cannot waſh away our guilt, yet it is in the way of humble abaſement we may expect to hear a meſſage of peace.

7. And Moſes took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and [g] called it the tabernacle of the congregation: and it came to paſs, *that* every one which ſought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which *was* without the camp. 8. And it came to paſs, when Moſes went out unto the tabernacle, *that* all the people roſe up, and ſtood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moſes, until he was gone into the tabernacle. 9. And it came to paſs as Moſes entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar deſcended, and ſtood at the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* talked with Moſes. 10. And all the people ſaw the cloudy pillar ſtand at the tabernacle door: and all the people roſe up and worſhipped, every man in his tent door. 11. And [h] the LORD ſpake unto Moſes face to face, as a man ſpeaketh unto his

[g] Chap. xxix. 42, 43.
[h] Gen. xxxii. 30. Numb. xii. 8. Deut. xxxiv. 10.

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his friend. And he turned again into the camp, but his ſervant Joſhua the ſon of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

v. 7—11. Whilſt matters ſtood thus in ſuſpenſe, God ſeparates himſelf from them. The tabernacle where Moſes, as God's vicegerent, uſed to miniſter juſtice, is removed without the camp, in token that he left them: yet not ſo removed, but they, who were diſpoſed, might follow it. Thither the people, whoſe hearts ſought after God, reſorted; and thither Moſes, as their advocate, went to intercede for them. The people followed him with their eyes, and God's appearance in the cloud, at the door of the tabernacle, beſpoke his returning favour to them, and brought each man on his knees at the door of their tents, to beg that mercy they had ſo juſtly forfeited. God there ſpeaks friendly to Moſes, and he returns to encourage the people, whilſt Joſhua remains before the Lord. Learn, (1.) That the removal of God's ordinances are a great judgment upon any people. (2.) Whilſt there is a praying remnant left, there is hope. (3.) The eye of faith which follows Jeſus into the heavenly tabernacle, keeps the ſoul from ſinking under its fears.

12. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto the LORD, See, thou ſayeſt unto me, Bring up this people: and thou haſt not let me know whom thou wilt ſend with me. Yet thou haſt ſaid, [i] I know thee by name, and thou haſt alſo found grace in my ſight. 13. Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy ſight, ſhew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy ſight: and conſider that this nation *is* thy people. 14. And he ſaid, [k] My preſence ſhall go *with thee*, and I will give thee reſt. 15. And he ſaid unto him, [l] If thy preſence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence. 16. For wherein ſhall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy ſight? *Is it* not in that thou goeſt with us? So [m] ſhall we be ſeparated, I and thy people, from all the people that *are* upon the face of the earth. 17. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, I will do this thing alſo that thou haſt ſpoken: for thou haſt found grace in my ſight, and I know thee by name.

[i] Jer. i. 5.
[k] Iſa. lxiii. 9.
[l] Chap. xxxiv. 9.
[m] Chap. xxxiv. 10.

12—17. Moſes now appears before God, pleading for the people, and prevails. He had gained for them already a reſpite from wrath, but he ſeeks the manifeſtation of his preſence and favour.

1. His prayer. Since it pleaſed God to employ him, he begs his preſence with him: though Iſrael had forfeited all favour, he pleads God's gracious expreſſions to himſelf, and that they may appear in the grant of mercy to the people, at his interceſſion. He deſires the divine guidance, as ſenſible he elſe could never lead them aright; and introduces at laſt their covenant relation to God. Though they were rebellious children, he inſinuates God was a father to them ſtill: nay, he inſiſts upon the impoſſibility of advancing, unleſs God go with them, and rather chuſes to die there, than move without him. He then cloſes with an argument drawn from God's glory, for the ſucceſs of his petition, and if the people were unworthy, or himſelf undeſerving, yet for his own great name's ſake, he pleads for his preſence among them. Learn, (1.) Without Divine guidance, we never could find the way to heaven. (2.) If ever we are led thither, we muſt be indebted to the interceſſion of our dear Redeemer, for whoſe ſake alone God can have any reſpect to us. (3.) God's glory being engaged in the ſalvation of his Redeemed people, we may with confidence caſt ourſelves upon him, who will never leave nor forſake us.

2. God's anſwer. He grants his requeſt, promiſes his preſence, and acknowledges the efficacy of his pleadings. *Note*, (1.) When Jeſus is our advocate, we are ſure of prevailing: not only guilt will be pardoned, but grace conferred, and glory ſecured to us. (2.) They will never fail of an anſwer of peace, who thus with Moſes, in humble faith and importunity, make their requeſts known unto God.

18. And he ſaid, I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory. 19. And he ſaid, [n] I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee; and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and [o] will ſhew mercy on whom I will ſhew mercy. 20. And he ſaid, Thou canſt not ſee my face: for [p] there ſhall no man ſee me, and live. 21. And the LORD ſaid, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou ſhalt ſtand upon a rock. 22. And it ſhall come to paſs, while my glory paſſeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock; and will cover thee with my hand while I paſs by. 23. And I will take away mine hand, and thou ſhalt ſee my back-parts: but my face ſhall not be ſeen.

[n] Chap. xxxiv. 5, 6.
[o] Rom. ix. 15.
[p] Gen. xxxii. 30. Deut. v. 24. Judg. xiii. 22. Iſa. vi. 5. Rev. i. 16, 17.

v. 18—23. Mercies received, are an earneſt of greater in ſtore: one prayer anſwered, is the encouragement for renewed ſupplication. Whilſt we are not weary of aſking, God is never weary of granting. Moſes had obtained one favour for the people, now he ſeeks another for himſelf.

1. He begs to ſee God's glory; ſome more eminent diſplay of it than had yet been manifeſted to him. They who have taſted of God's grace, are longing with Moſes to behold God's glory, to ſee him face to face.

2. God is pleaſed to grant him all that can be granted: the full blaze of uncreated glory the angels cannot bear, and much leſs man, who is a worm. But he ſhall ſee as much as he can endure and live. God will make his goodneſs paſs before him, and ſhew him ſome glimpſe of the tranſcendant brightneſs of his train, whilſt hid in the cleft of the rock from the intolerable blaze. *Note*, (1.) The glory God doth moſt diſplay, is his ſovereign mercy. Let others cavil againſt his diſtinguiſhing grace, and his ſovereignty in the choice of ſinners, but let us admire and adore it. (2.) All our views of God in this world, are poor and imperfect. It is reſerved for the felicity of a better ſtate, to ſee him as he is, and to know even as we are known. (3.) Whoever hopes to come to this beatific viſion, muſt remember that there is no way to enjoy it, but by being found in Chriſt, as Moſes in the cleft of this rock which repreſented him. Lord, I beſeech thee, ſhew me the glory of thy grace, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt on earth, and bring me to behold its moſt reſplendent brightneſs, in thy preſence in heaven!

CHAP. XXXIV

God having in the foregoing chapter intimated to Moſes his reconciliation to Iſrael, here gives proof of it, 1. *In the orders he gives to Moſes, to come up to the mount the next morning, and bring two tables of ſtone with him,* ver. 1—4. 2. *His meeting him there,* ver. 6—9. 3. *The inſtructions he gave him,* ver. 10—28. 4. *The honour he put upon him,* ver. 29—35. *In all which God dealt with Moſes as a public perſon, and mediator between him and Iſrael, and a type of the great mediator.*

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [a] Hew thee two tables of ſtone like unto the firſt: and I will write upon *theſe* tables the words that were in the firſt tables which thou brakeſt. 2. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and preſent thyſelf there to me, [b] in the top of the mount. 3. And [c] no man ſhall come up with thee, neither let any man be ſeen throughout all the mount: neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount. 4. ¶ And he hewed two tables of ſtone, like unto the firſt; and Moſes roſe up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of ſtone.

[a] Chap. xxxii. 16, 19. Deut. x. 1.
[b] Chap. xix. 20.
[c] Chap. xix. 12, 13.

v. 1—4. God being reconciled through Moſes' interceſſion, the covenant is renewed.

1. Moſes is commanded to hew new tables for God to write upon, inſtead of thoſe which were broken. *Note*, (1.) Wherever God through Chriſt is reconciled to a ſoul, there he will a-new engrave on the heart the law which ſin had utterly defaced. Though it is not our covenant of life, it muſt become our rule of conduct; and we ſhall be under a dangerous deluſion, if we promiſe ourſelves peace with God, and live in the allowed tranſgreſſion of his commandments. (2.) Whatever pains miniſters may take to hew the table of the heart, it is God alone can write his law there. We cannot aſcribe too little to man in our converſion, nor too much to God.

2. He goes up without delay into the mount of God, whilſt the people with fear and trembling, ſtand at a diſtance, and are left to lament for a ſeaſon their late rebellion againſt God. *Note*, (1.) We can never be in too great haſte to make up the breaches between God and our ſouls. (2.) Though God forgives our ſins, we ought to remember, and in duſt and aſhes repent of them.

5. And the LORD deſcended in the cloud, and ſtood with him there, and [d] proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6. And the LORD paſſed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD [e] God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, 7. [f] Keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion and ſin, and [g] that will by no means clear *the guilty*; viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*.

[d] Chap. xxxiii. 19.
[e] Num. xiv. 18.
[f] Chap. xx. 6. Deut. 5. 10. Pſal. lxxxvi. 15. Jer. xxxii. 18.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 7, 21. Joſh. xxiv. 19. Job x. 14. Mic. vi. 11. Nah. i. 3.

v. 5—7. Moſes is now, at the Divine command, gone up to meet God, and he condeſcends to manifeſt his glory in the cloudy pillar, and proclaims thoſe adorable perfections which

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are not only the hope of Iſrael, but of all the ends of the earth. May we ſeriouſly conſider this glorious character, and be duly affected with the proclamation before us.

The Lord, the Lord God, the Self-exiſtent, and the Almighty, whoſe power is able to the uttermoſt to ſave or to deſtroy, and good as he is great, delighting in the darling attribute of mercy. *Merciful and gracious*, full of ſuch bowels of compaſſion, as even fathers never knew, and freely diſpenſing his grace without reſpect to our deſerts; yea, making the moſt tranſcendent diſplays of it to the moſt undeſerving. *Long-ſuffering*, though our provocations be numberleſs, and our ſins repeated and aggravated, yet his patience is not tired, nor his offers of pardon withheld. *Abundant in goodneſs and truth*; like a mighty river are the ſtreams of his grace, ever flowing, and overflowing: and in his promiſes pledging his word, yea his oath, for the fulfillment of his moſt extenſive engagements of mercy: Yea, *keeping mercy for thouſands*, inexhauſtible the ſource, and endleſs the current; the greatneſs of the number who ſhare it, does not in the leaſt diminiſh the fulneſs of mercy in him, and it runs parallel with the days of eternity. *Forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*, ſo that we may never be afraid to return, after our longeſt or deepeſt falls, ſince He is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, and ſaves to the uttermoſt. But remember withal, he is as juſt as he is merciful; as incapable of clearing the impenitent as of rejecting thoſe who return to him; and therefore He *executes vengeance on his enemies, viſiting their iniquity upon children's children.* How then ſhould we fear, how ſhould we love this great and gracious and holy Lord God?

8. And Moſes made haſte, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worſhipped. 9. And he ſaid, If now I have found grace in thy ſight, O LORD, [h] let my LORD, I pray thee, go amongſt us (for it *is* a ſtiff-necked people) and pardon our iniquity and our ſin, and take us for thine inheritance.

[h] Chap. xxxiii. 15.

v. 8, 9. Moſes receives this proclamation with reverence, thankfulneſs, and ſubmiſſion; and having ſuch grounds, improves them into a prayer for the pardon of Iſrael, and God's preſence among them. The more ſtiff-necked they had been, the more God's patience and power to bear with and convert them, was needful. *Note*, (1.) The ground of all prayer is the promiſes of God. (2.) We have need continually to be crying for pardon of ſin, becauſe we continually need it. (3.) They who have found favour for their own ſouls, ought never to forget their ſtiff-necked neighbours.

10. ¶ And he ſaid, Behold, [i] I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, ſuch as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people amongſt which thou *art*, ſhall ſee the work of the LORD: for it *is* a terrible thing that I will do with thee. 11. Obſerve thou that which I command thee this day: Behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebuſite. 12. [k] Take heed to thyſelf, leſt thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goeſt, leſt it be for a ſnare in the midſt of thee. 13. But ye ſhall deſtroy their altars, [l] break their † images, and [m] cut down their groves. 14. For thou ſhalt worſhip no other God: for the LORD, whoſe name *is* Jealous, *is* [n] a jealous God: 15. Leſt thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do ſacrifice unto their gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his ſacrifice. 16. And [o] thou take of their daughters unto thy ſons, and their daughters [p] go a whoring after their gods, and make thy ſons go a whoring after their gods. 17. [q] Thou ſhalt make thee no molten gods.

[i] Deut. v. 2.
[k] Chap. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 2.
[l] Chap. xxiii. 24. Deut. xii. 3.
† Heb. Statues.
[m] Judg. vi. 25. 2 Kings xviii. 4. & xxiii. 14. 1 Chron. xxxi. 1. & xxxiv. 3.
[n] Chap. xx. 5.
[o] 1 Kings xi. 2. Neh. xiii. 25.
[p] Num. xxv. 1, 2.
[q] Chap. xxxii. 8.

v. 10—17. God graciouſly anſwers Moſes in the renewal of his covenant with them; and an aſtoniſhing inſtance of his mercy it was.

1. He promiſes to go with them, to work his miracles in the midſt of them for their comfort, and for the terror of their enemies; and to bring them into the promiſed land. *Note*, It is a marvellous thing how any ſoul gets ſafe to heaven, and we ſhall be a wonder to ourſelves when we come thither.

2. He ſolemnly enjoins them to beware of Idolatry, leaſt his jealouſy again ſhould be awakened, and burn like fire againſt them. They muſt take care of every occaſion which might lead them aſide. They muſt not only worſhip no other God, nor make any image to repreſent himſelf, but they muſt deſtroy every monument of idolatry, and utterly avoid every connection with thoſe nations who might enſnare them. Learn, (1.) The great danger of being unequally yoked with unbelievers; they will more eaſily ſucceed to turn us aſide from God, than we ſhall to turn them to him. (2.) The neceſſity of removing from us whatever may be a ſnare to us, and particularly of avoiding every occaſion which would ſtir up our eaſily beſetting ſin.

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18. ¶ [r] The feaſt of unleavened bread ſhalt thou keep: Seven days ſhalt thou eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for [s] in the month Abib thou cameſt out from Egypt. 19. [t] All that openeth the matrix *is* mine: and every firſtling among thy cattle, *whether* ox or ſheep, *that is male.* 20. But [u] the firſtling of an aſs thou ſhalt redeem with a † lamb: and if thou redeem *him* not, then ſhalt thou break his neck. All the firſt-born of thy ſons thou ſhalt redeem: and [x] none ſhall appear before me empty. 21. ¶ [y] Six days thou ſhalt work, but on the ſeventh day thou ſhalt reſt: in earing time and in harveſt thou ſhalt reſt. 22. ¶ And [z] thou ſhalt obſerve the feaſt of weeks, of the firſt-fruits of wheat-harveſt, and the feaſt of in-gathering at the ‡ year's end. 23. ¶ [a] Thrice in the year ſhall all your men-children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Iſrael. 24. For I will caſt out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: [b] neither ſhall any man deſire thy land, when thou ſhalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God, thrice in the year. 25. [c] Thou ſhalt not offer the blood of my ſacrifice with leaven, [d] neither ſhall the ſacrifice of the feaſt of paſſover be left unto the morning. 26. [e] The firſt of the firſt-fruits of thy land, thou ſhalt bring unto the houſe of the LORD thy God. [f] Thou ſhalt not ſeethe a kid in his mother's milk.

[r] Chap. xii. 15. & xxiii. 15.
[s] Chap. xiii. 4.
[t] Chap. xiii. 2, 13. & xxii. 29. Ezek. xliv. 30. Luke ii. 23.
[u] Num. xviii. 15.
† Or kid.
[x] Chap. xxiii. 15. Deut. xvi. 16. 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.
[y] Chap. xxiii. 12. Deut. v. 12. Luke xiii. 14.
[z] Chap. xxiii. 16.
‡ Heb. Revolution of the year.
[a] Chap. xxiii. 14, 17. Deut. xvi. 16.
[b] See Gen. xxxv. 5. 2 Chron. xvii. 10. Acts xviii. 10.
[c] Chap. xxiii. 18.
[d] Chap. xii. 10.
[e] Chap. xxiii. 19. Deut. xxvi. 2.
[f] Chap. xxiii. 19. Deut. xiv. 21.

18—27. We have here a repetition of ſundry laws, which had been before enjoined, relating to the ſabbath and the three ſolemn feaſts; and a particular promiſe is added, that during their abſence from home, none ſhould deſire their cities and land then defenceleſs: God will not only bind up the hands, but the hearts of their enemies. *Note*, (1.) When God calls, we may ſafely leave our all in his hands. (2.) Every man is under the reſtraint of a ſuperior hand; even the wicked are confined in bounds they cannot paſs over. (3.) God's ſervice is a ſervice of great gladneſs; they who are faithful in it, find that therein only, true joy is to be found.

27. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [g] Write thou theſe words: for after the tenour of theſe words, I have made a covenant with thee and with Iſrael.

[g] Deut. iv. 13.

v. 27. What was before ſpoken, is now committed to writing; and abundant cauſe have we to bleſs God, that His word is thus tranſmitted to us, and not left to oral tradition. A covenant is entered into between God and Moſes, in behalf of the people of Iſrael: thus peace is re-eſtabliſhed, and Moſes' mediation effectual. As we have a greater mediator than Moſes, we have alſo a part in a better covenant, eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, and ſecured by a better title than our own obedience, even by the finiſhed righteouſneſs of our Divine Lord.

28. And [h] he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights: he did neither eat bread, nor drink water: and [i] he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten † commandments. 29. ¶ And it came to paſs, when Moſes came down from mount Sinai (with the two tables of teſtimony in Moſes' hand, when he came down from the mount) that Moſes wiſt not that [k] the ſkin of his face ſhone while he talked with him. 30. And when Aaron and all the children of Iſrael ſaw Moſes, behold, the ſkin of his face ſhone, and they were afraid to come nigh him. 31. And Moſes called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moſes talked with them. 32. And afterward all the children of Iſrael came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had ſpoken with him in mount Sinai. 33. And *till* Moſes had done ſpeaking with them, [l] he put a vail on his face. 34. But when Moſes went in before the LORD to ſpeak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, *that* which he was commanded. 35. And the children of Iſrael ſaw the face of Moſes, that the ſkin of Moſes' face ſhone: and Moſes put the vail upon his face again until he went in to ſpeak with him.

[h] Chap. xxiv. 18. Deut. ix. 9, 18.
[i] Chap. xxxi. 18. & xxxiv. 1. Deut. iv. 13. & x. 2, 4.
† Heb. Words.
[k] 2 Cor. iii. 7, 13.
[l] 2 Cor. iii. 13.

v. 28—35. Moſes now ſpends another forty days with God, nor needed other refreſhment than what was drawn from the preſence of, and communion with the fountain of his life: no doubt he could ſay, It is good to be here. They who know the bleſſing of communion with God, will never count the time long they ſpend with him, but for the ſake of it, will ſometimes chuſe to rob their bodies of the refreſhments of meat and ſleep. His work being finiſhed,

1. He deſcends with the tables in his hand, and his countenance bearing a divine impreſſion of the glory he had beheld. Thus God put upon him a diſtinguiſhing badge of honour: they who converſe often with God, carry the impreſſion on their countenances, and ſhew it in their converſation. A real chriſtian may be known by the brightneſs and glory of his daily walk, ſhining as a light in a dark world.

2. He knew not that ſuch a glory was upon him, but the people were ſtruck, and terrified with it. *Note*, (1.) The ſaint that is moſt diſtinguiſhed with God's gifts and graces, will have the lowlieſt opinion of himſelf, and be leaſt conſcious of his own excellences. (2.) Others often ſee more of true grace in us, than we can ſee in ourſelves; jealouſy over our hearts leading us to doubt the mercy we have found. (3.) Guilt makes us afraid even of our beſt friends, when ſent with meſſages of kindneſs to us, from the conſciouſneſs of our own deſerts.

3. He veiled his face before the people, that they might talk with him, but when he appeared before the Lord, he uncovered himſelf: true humility will lead us rather to conceal, than make a ſhew of our excellences; and as miniſters, rather ſeek to be uſeful, than to be admired. The vail on Moſes' face was an emblem of the darkneſs of that diſpenſation. In Chriſt, that vail is done away: only there is the vail of ſenſe ſtill around us; but when death takes away this body of fleſh, then, and not till then, ſhall we with open face behold the glory of the Lord.

CHAP. XXXV.

1. *Moſes gives Iſrael thoſe inſtructions he had received*, (1.) *Concerning the ſabbath*, ver. 1, 2, 3. (2.) *Concerning the contribution for the erecting of the tabernacle*, ver. 4—9. (3.) *Concerning the framing of the tabernacle, and the utenſils of it*, ver. 10—19. 2. *The people bring in their contributions*, ver. 20—29. 3. *The head-workmen are appointed*, ver. 30—35.

1. AND Moſes gathered all the congregation of the children of Iſrael together, and ſaid unto them, Theſe *are* the words which the LORD hath commanded, that ye ſhould do them. 2. [a] Six days ſhall work be done, but on the ſeventh day there ſhall be to you † an holy day, a ſabbath of reſt to the LORD: whoſoever doth work therein, ſhall be put to death. 3. [b] Ye ſhall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the ſabbath day. 4. ¶ And Moſes ſpake unto all the congregation of the children of Iſrael, ſaying, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded, ſaying, 5. Take ye from amongſt you an offering unto the LORD: [c] Whoſoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and ſilver, and braſs, 6. And blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine linen, and goat's *hair*, 7. And rams ſkins dyed red, and badgers ſkins, and ſhittim-wood, 8. And oil for the light, and [d] ſpices for anointing oil, and for the ſweet incenſe, 9. And onyx-ſtones, and ſtones to be ſet, for the ephod, and for the breaſt-plate. 10. And [e] every wiſe-hearted among you ſhall come and make all that the LORD hath commanded; 11. [f] The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his ſockets, 12. The ark and the ſtaves thereof, *with* the mercy-ſeat, and the vail of the covering, 13. The table and his ſtaves, and all his veſſels, and [g] the ſhew-bread, 14. The candleſtick alſo for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light, 15. And [h] the incenſe altar, and his ſtaves, and the anointing oil, and the ſweet incenſe, and the hanging for the door at the entring in of the tabernacle, 16. [i] The altar of burnt-offering with his brazen grate, his ſtaves, and all his veſſels, the laver and his foot, 17. The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their ſockets, and the hanging for the door of the court, 18. The pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords, 19. The clothes of ſervice, to do ſervice in the holy *place*, the holy garments for Aaron the prieſt, and the garments of his ſons to miniſter in the prieſt's office.

[a] Chap. xx. 9 & xxxi. 14, 15. Lev. xxiii. 3. Deut. v. 12. Luke xiii. 14.

† Heb. Holineſs.

[b] Chap. xvi. 23.

[c] Chap. xxv. 2.

[d] Ibid. 6.

[e] Chap. xxxi. 6.

[f] Chap. xxvi. 1, &c.

[g] Chap. xxv. 30.

[h] Chap. xxx. 1.

[i] Chap. xxvii. 1.

v. 1—19. God now condeſcending to dwell among them, the tabernacle is to be erected. Moſes delivers all his orders, and is particular on this head; with all convenient ſpeed they muſt begin, yet though the work be urgent, the ſabbath muſt not be infringed, on pain of death: they may not ſo much as kindle a fire for any ſervile work. The ſabbath is a day of ſacred reſt, and to be employed wholly with and for God. The tabernacle is to be built by voluntary contribution; God will be ſerved, not by force, but by choice; and they who love the God of the tabernacle will delight to honour him with their beſt, and be happy to employ their wealth to ſo bleſſed a purpoſe. He hath no part among the true Iſrael, who hath a niggard heart in God's ſervice. The wiſeſt muſt be ſelected; it is not every man is fit for tabernacle work. It is the ſhame of many, that when their children are fit for nothing elſe, they thruſt them into the miniſtry, and count that ſhining talents ſhould have a more gainful employment. But ſurely the greateſt parts, and moſt diſtinguiſhed abilities, can never be ſo becomingly employed, as in the immediate ſervice of God's church and kingdom.

20. ¶ And all the congregation of the children of Iſrael departed from the preſence of Moſes. 21. And they came every one whoſe heart ſtirred him up, and every one whom his ſpirit made willing, *and* they brought the LORD's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his ſervice, and for the holy garments. 22. And they came both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, *and* brought bracelets, and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered, *offered* an offering of gold unto the LORD. 23. And every man with whom was found blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine linen, and goat's *hair*, and red ſkins of rams, and badgers ſkins, brought *them*. 24. Every one that did offer an offering of ſilver and braſs, brought the LORD's offering: and every man with whom was found ſhittim-wood for any work of the ſervice, brought *it*. 25. And all the women that were wiſe-hearted, did ſpin with their hands, and brought that which they had ſpun, *both* of blue, and of purple, *and* of ſcarlet, and of fine linen. 26. And all the women whoſe hearts ſtirred them up in wiſdom, ſpun goats *hair*. 27. And the rulers brought onyx-ſtones, and ſtones to be ſet, for the ephod, and for the breaſt-plate: 28. And [k] ſpice and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the ſweet incenſe. 29. The children of Iſrael brought a willing offering unto the LORD; every man and woman, whoſe heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made, by the hand of Moſes.

[k] Chap. xxx. 23.

v. 20—29. Their ſwift obedience to the command, was a bleſſed proof of the ſincerity of the repentance they had profeſſed. They no ſooner hear, than they obey; delays in duty are dangerous; what we do, we muſt do quickly: their heart was willing, and therefore their hands were open: a genuine principle of love makes a chearful giver. The richeſt jewels are brought in, for they who have taſted of God's grace, think they can never enough teſtify their gratitude to him; it was not indeed in every man's power to bring gold or diamonds, but if it was a ſheep's ſkin, or goat's hair, it was accepted: not the greatneſs of the gift, ſo much as the temper of the giver, is precious in God's ſight. The idol calf had robbed them of much; it is a ſhame to reflect how much we have ſpent upon our ſins: yet the ſpoils of Egypt abundantly ſupplied them; they had better have left behind the gold indeed, than made a god of it: but now they have an opportunity of employing even the unrighteous mammon, in the ſervice of the living God. Whilſt ſome are opening their ſtores, others are at work with their hands; every man has ſomething he can do for God and and his neighbour; and we ſhould remember, that a thread ſpun for the tabernacle, or two mites caſt into the treaſury of God, will prove more durable riches, than if we could fill our coffers with diamonds, or adorn our own houſes with tapeſtry of gold.

30. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, See, [l] the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the ſon of Uri, the ſon of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: 31. And he hath filled him with the Spirit of God, in wiſdom, in underſtanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanſhip; 32. And to deviſe curious works, to work in gold, and in ſilver, and in braſs, 33. And in the cutting of ſtones to ſet *them*, and in carving of wood to make any manner of cunning work. 34. And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, *both* he and

[l] Chap. xxxi. 2.

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Aholiab the ſon of Ahiſamach, of the tribe of Dan. 35. Them hath he filled with wiſdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in ſcarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, *even* of them that do any work, and of thoſe that deviſe cunning work.

v. 30—35. The workmen are now appointed according to the Divine choice, and qualified for their work: wiſe to contrive, diligent to execute, and able to teach others alſo. *Note,* (1.) In the church of God, they who are diſtinguiſhed in ſtation, ſhould be more diſtinguiſhed for abilities, zeal, and labour. (2.) Whoever are truly called to the work of the miniſtry, God will give them the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, to know how rightly to divide the word of truth. (3.) Whatever learning or abilities we are poſſeſſed of, if there be not a communication of them for the inſtruction of others, they become as uſeleſs, as the candle under a buſhel.

CHAP. XXXVI.

In this chapter, 1. *The work of the tabernacle is begun,* ver. 1—4. 2. *A ſtop put to the people's contributions,* ver. 5—7. 3. *A particular account is given of the making of the tabernacle itſelf; the fine curtains,* ver. 8—13. *The coarſe ones,* ver. 14—19. *The boards,* ver. 20—30. *The bars,* ver. 31—34. *The partition vail,* ver. 35, 36. *and the hanging for the door,* ver. 37, 38.

1490. 1. THEN wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wiſe-hearted man, in whom the LORD put wiſdom and underſtanding, to know how to work all manner of work for the ſervice of the ſanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded. 2. And Moſes called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wiſe-hearted man, in whoſe heart the LORD had put wiſdom, *even* every one whoſe heart ſtirred him up to come unto the work to do it. 3. And they received of Moſes all the offering which the children of Iſrael had brought for the work of the ſervice of the ſanctuary, to make it *withal.* And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning. 4. And all the wiſe men that wrought all the work of the ſanctuary, came every man from his work which they made. 5. ¶ And they ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, The people bring much more than enough for the ſervice of the work which the LORD commanded to make. 6. And Moſes gave commandment, and they cauſed it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, ſaying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the ſanctuary. So the people were reſtrained from bringing. 7. For the ſtuff they had was ſufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

v. 1—7. The appointment is no ſooner made, than the workmen begin. They are pleaſed with the employment, and that makes the toil a pleaſure. *Note,* To ſpend, and be ſpent in the ſervice of God and immortal ſouls, is the happineſs of the faithful labourer: whilſt to be forced to miniſter in holy things, without any reliſh for, or rather with a loathing of the work, is ſurely the moſt wretched drudgery that can be conceived.

There was no want of materials. Every morning the people liberally continued to increaſe the ſtock, and now there was abundance, the honeſt workmen ſay there is enough, and Moſes ſtays the people from farther contributions. *Note,* (1.) The great honeſty of theſe workmen: they were not like thoſe privileged robbers, who fleece the church or ſtate, and whilſt they pretend to ſerve the public, mean only their own baſe ends and intereſts, and think they never have enough; no, they wanted not to enrich themſelves, but to be faithful to their truſt. (2.) The reſtraint laid on the people: their hands were open, becauſe their hearts were engaged: They think they can never do enough for God and his ſervice, who hath done ſo much for them. But alas, how are times changed! few now a-days need a bridle, many a ſpur.

8. ¶ And [a] every wiſe-hearted man, among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle, made ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and ſcarlet: with cherubims of cunning work made he them. 9. The length of one curtain *was* twenty and eight cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: the curtains *were* all of one ſize. 10. And he coupled the five curtains one unto another: and *the other* five curtains he coupled one unto another. 11. And he made loops of blue on the edge of one curtain, from the ſelvedge in the coupling: likewiſe he made in the uttermoſt ſide of *another* curtain, in the coupling of the ſecond. 12. [b] Fifty loops made he in one curtain, and fifty loops made he in the edge of the curtain which *was* in the coupling of the ſecond: the loops held one *curtain* to another. 13. And he made fifty taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the taches. So it became one tabernacle. 14. ¶ And he made curtains *of* goat's *hair,* for the tent over the tabernacle: eleven curtains he made them. 15. The length of one curtain *was* thirty cubits, and four cubits *was* the breadth of one curtain: the eleven curtains *were* of one ſize. 16. And he coupled five curtains by themſelves, and ſix curtains by themſelves. 17. And he made fifty loops upon the uttermoſt edge of the curtain in the coupling, and fifty loops made he upon the edge of the curtain, which coupleth the ſecond. 18. And he made fifty taches *of* braſs to couple the tent together, that it might be one. 19. And he made a covering for the tent, *of* rams ſkins dyed red, and a covering *of* badgers ſkins above *that.* 20. ¶ And he made boards for the tabernacle, *of* ſhittim-wood, ſtanding up. 21. The length of a board *was* ten cubits, and the breadth of a board one cubit and a half. 22. One board had two tenons, equally diſtant one from another: thus did he make for all the boards of the tabernacle. 23. And he made boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the ſouth-ſide, ſouthward. 24. And forty ſockets of ſilver he made under the twenty boards: two ſockets under one board for his two tenons, and two ſockets under another board for his two tenons. 25. And for the other ſide of the tabernacle *which is* toward the north corner, he made twenty boards, 26. And their forty ſockets of ſilver: two ſockets under one board, and two ſockets under another board. 27. And for the ſides of the tabernacle weſtward, he made ſix boards. 28. And two boards made he for the corners of the tabernacle in the two ſides. 29. And they were † coupled beneath, and coupled together at the head thereof, to one ring: thus he did to both of them in both the corners. 30. And there were eight boards, and their ſockets *were* ſixteen ſockets of ſilver, ‡ under every board two ſockets. 31. ¶ And he made [c] bars *of* ſhittim-wood: five for the boards of the one ſide of the tabernacle, 32. And five bars for the boards of the other ſide of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the ſides weſtward. 33. And he made the middle bar to ſhoot through the boards from the one end to the other. 34. And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their rings *of* gold *to be* places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold. 35. ¶ And he made [d] a vail *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twiſted linen: *with* cherubims made he it of cunning work. 36. And he made thereunto four pillars of ſhittim-*wood,* and overlaid them with gold: their hooks *were of* gold, and he caſt for them four ſockets of ſilver. 37. ¶ And he made [e] an hanging for the tabernacle door, *of* blue and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen, † of needle-work. 38. And the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he overlaid their chapiters, and their fillets with gold: but their five ſockets *were of* braſs.

Before Christ 1490.

[a] Chap. xxvi. 3, 4. & xxxi. 6. & xxxv. 10.

[b] Chap. xxvi. 10.

† Heb. Twined.

‡ Heb. Two ſockets under one board.

[c] Chap. xxv. 28. & xxx. 5.

[d] Chap. xxvi. 31.

[e] Ibid. 36.

† Heb. The work of the needle-worker or embroiderer.

v. 8—38. We have here,

1. The tabernacle compleated, *v.* 8—13. The inſide is finiſhed firſt. *Note,* Our firſt care muſt be about the hidden man of the heart.

2. The coverings are prepared to guard it from the injuries of the weather. They who dwell under the ſhadow of Jeſus, the true tabernacle, have ſuch a covert, that no ſtorms of wrath, nor blaſts of temptation, will ever be able to hurt them.

3. The two vails are hung on their pillars, to ſeparate the holieſt of all from the holy place, and the firſt tabernacle from the court of the congregation. The people then might not draw near; but now by the body of Jeſus, the vail is rent from the top to the bottom, and every worſhipper may approach with boldneſs the mercy-ſeat.

CHAP. XXXVII.

1. *The ark finiſhed with the mercy-ſeat and the cherubims,* ver. 1—9. 2. *The table with its veſſels,* ver. 10—16. 3. *The candleſtick with its appurtenances,* ver. 17—24. 4. *The golden altar for incenſe,* ver. 25—28. 5. *The holy oil and incenſe,* ver. 29.

1. AND

Before Chriſt 1490.

a Chap. xxv. 10.

1. AND Bezaleel [a] made the ark *of* ſhittim-wood: two cubits and a half *was* the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it. 2. And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about. 3. And he caſt for it four rings of gold, *to be ſet* by the four corners of it: even two rings upon the one ſide of it, and two rings upon the other ſide of it. 4. And he made ſtaves *of* ſhittim wood, and overlaid them with gold. 5. And he put the ſtaves into the rings, by the ſides of the ark, to bear the ark. 6. ¶ And he [b] made the mercy-ſeat *of* pure gold: two cubits and an half *was* the length thereof, and one cubit and an half the breadth thereof. 7. And he made two cherubims *of* gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy-ſeat. 8. One cherub † on the end on this ſide, and another cherub on the *other* end on that ſide: out of the mercy-ſeat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof. 9. And the cherubims ſpread out *their* wings on high, *and* covered with their wings over the mercy-ſeat, with their faces one to another; *even* to the mercy-ſeat-ward were the faces of the cherubims.

b Chap. xxv. 17.

† Or out of, &c.

v. 1—9. In God's work, great exactneſs is needful; we muſt follow his written word, neither adding thereto, nor diminiſhing therefrom: thus did Moſes.

The furniture of the moſt holy place is finiſhed: the ark, the cherubims, and mercy-ſeat; theſe are inſeparable. *Note*, Where Jeſus, the true mercy-ſeat, is in our hearts, there ſhall we ſee the favourable countenance of God over us, and within us the deep engravings of his holy mind and will.

c Chap. xxv. 23.

10. ¶ And he [c] made the table *of* ſhittim-wood: two cubits *was* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. 11. And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereunto a crown of gold round about. 12. Alſo he made thereunto a border of an hand-breadth, round about: and made a crown of gold for the border thereof round about. 13. And he caſt for it four rings of gold, and put the rings upon the four corners that *were* in the four feet thereof. 14. Over againſt the border were the rings, the places for the ſtaves, to bear the table. 15. And he made the ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold to bear the table. 16. And he made the veſſels which *were* upon the table, his [d] diſhes and his ſpoons, and his bowls, and his covers † to cover withal, *of* pure gold.

d Ibid. 29.

† Or to pour out withal.

10—16. God's table and its veſſels were rich with gold, but the proviſion which was placed upon it, was far more precious. The gold might decay, and its beauty be tarniſhed, but the ſoul that feeds upon Chriſt, that living bread, which the loaves there placed repreſented, ſhall outlive that gold in duration, outſhine it in luſtre, and outweigh it in excellence.

e Chap. xxv. 31.

17. ¶ And he [e] made the candleſtick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten work made he the candleſtick, his ſhaft and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers were of the ſame. 18. And ſix branches going out of the ſides thereof: three branches of the candleſtick out of the one ſide thereof, and three branches of the candleſtick out of the other ſide thereof. 19. Three bowls made after the faſhion of almonds, in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls made like almonds, in another branch, a knop and a flower: ſo throughout the ſix branches, going out of the candleſtick. 20. And in the candleſtick *were* four bowls made like almonds, his knops and his flowers. 21. And a knop under two branches of the ſame, and a knop under two branches of the ſame, and a knop under two branches of the ſame, according to the ſix branches going out of it. 22. Their knops and their branches were of the ſame: all of it *was* one beaten work *of* pure gold. 23. And he made his ſeven lamps, and his ſnuffers, and his ſnuff-diſhes, *of* pure gold. 24. *Of* a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the veſſels thereof.

17—24. The word of God is this golden candleſtick, pure in itſelf, without alloy, and ſerving to enlighten us for all the ſpiritual ſervices whereunto we are conſecrated. May we know how to value the ineſtimable bleſſing, and never provoke God to remove his bleſſed and holy word from us, by our ſins againſt the light of it.

Before Chriſt 1490.

f Chap. xxx. 1.

25. ¶ And he [f] made the incenſe-altar *of* ſhittim-wood: the length of it *was* a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit (*it was* four-ſquare), and two cubits *was* the height of it; the horns thereof were of the ſame. 26. And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* the top of it, and the ſides thereof round about, and the horns of it: alſo he made unto it a crown of gold round about. 27. And he made two rings of gold for it, under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two ſides thereof, to be places for the ſtaves to bear it withal. 28. And he made the ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold. 29. ¶ And he made [g] the holy anointing oil, and the pure incenſe of ſweet ſpices, according to the work of the apothecary.

g Chap. xxx. 23, 35.

v. 25—29. Jeſus is our altar, offered on whom our prayers and praiſes become a ſweet ſmelling ſavour. The incenſe was a compound; confeſſion, ſupplication, interceſſion, thankſgiving are the ſeveral ingredients, kindled by the holy fire of love in the centre of the heart.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Here is an account, 1. *Of the making of the brazen altar*, ver. 1—7. *and the laver*, ver. 8. 2. *The preparing of the hangings for the incloſing of the court in which the tabernacle was to ſtand*, ver. 9—20. 3. *A ſummary account of the gold, ſilver, and braſs, that was contributed to, and uſed in the preparing of the tabernacle*, ver. 21—31.

a Chap. xxvii. 1.

1. AND he [a] made the altar of burnt-offering *of* ſhittim-wood: five cubits *was* the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof, (*it was* four-ſquare) and three cubits the height thereof. 2. And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it: the horns thereof were of the ſame, and he overlaid it with braſs. 3. And he made all the veſſels of the altar, the pots, and the ſhovels, and the baſons, *and* the fleſh-hooks, and the fire-pans: all the veſſels thereof made he *of* braſs. 4. And he made for the altar a brazen grate of net-work, under the compaſs thereof, beneath unto the midſt of it. 5. And he caſt four rings for the four ends of the grate of braſs, *to be* places for the ſtaves. 6. And he made the ſtaves *of* ſhittim-wood, and over-laid them with braſs. 7. And he put the ſtaves into the rings on the ſides of the altar, to bear it withal; he made the altar hollow with boards. 8. ¶ And he [b] made the laver *of* braſs, and the foot of it *of* braſs, of the † looking-glaſſes of the *women* ‡ aſſembling, which aſſembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

b Chap. xxx. 18.

† Or brazen glaſſes.

‡ Heb. Aſſembling by troops, as 1 Sam. ii. 22.

v. 1—8. The brazen altar for the ſacrifices, and the laver for the prieſts, is next faſhioned. Both typical of him who made the one atonement for ſin, and whoſe blood can only cleanſe our ſouls from the guilt, or the defilement of it. This laver was made of the looking-glaſſes of the devout women who frequently aſſembled to worſhip at the door of the congregation. Be it remembered to their honour, *Note*, (1.) They who appear often before the ſanctuary, and in the glaſs of God's holy law ſee the deformity of their nature, will never ſpend their time at their toilette, in admiring their perſons. (2.) When God's ſervice requires it, we ſhould be willing to part with any thing, however uſeful to us, or precious, and count that beſt beſtowed, which is employed for his glory. (3.) When we go to the laver of Chriſt's blood, we muſt look into the glaſs of the law, and then we ſhall ſee more diſtinctly in the one, how much we want the other.

c Chap. xxvii. 9.

9. ¶ And he [c] made the court: on the ſouth-ſide, ſouthward, the hangings of the court *were of* fine twined linen, an hundred cubits. 10. Their pillars *were* twenty, and their brazen ſockets twenty: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *were of* ſilver. 11. And for the north-ſide, the *hangings were* an hundred cubits, their pillars *were* twenty, and their ſockets of braſs twenty: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *of* ſilver. 12. And for the weſt-ſide *were* hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their ſockets ten: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *of* ſilver. 13. And for the eaſt-ſide, eaſtward, fifty cubits. 14. The hangings of the one ſide *of the gate were* fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their ſockets three. 15. And for the other ſide of the court gate, on this hand and that hand, *were* hangings of fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their ſockets three. 16. All the hangings of the court round

about, *were* of fine twined linen. 17. And the ſockets for the pillars *were of* braſs; the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets, *of* ſilver; and the overlaying of their chapiters *of* ſilver; and all the pillars of the court *were* filleted with ſilver. 18. And the hanging for the gate of the court *was* needle-work, *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen: and twenty cubits *was* the length, and the height in the breadth *was* five cubits, anſwerable to the hangings of the court. 19. And their pillars *were* four, and their ſockets *of* braſs four, their hooks *of* ſilver, and the overlaying of their chapiters, and their fillets, *of* ſilver. 20. And all [d] the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, *were of* braſs.

[d] Chap. xxvii. 19.

v. 9—20. Behold a figure of the church of God. A little incloſure, with Chriſt in the midſt of it, and his worſhippers around him, ſeparated from the world, and ready to remove out of it. Death is coming to fold up the curtains, and then we ſhall have a more durable abode, tranſlated from the church militant on earth, to the church triumphant in heaven.

21. ¶ This is the ſum of the tabernacle, *even* of the tabernacle of teſtimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moſes, *for* the ſervice of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, ſon to Aaron the prieſt. 22. And Bezaleel the ſon of Uri, the ſon of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moſes. 23. And with him *was* Aholiab, ſon of Ahiſamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in ſcarlet, and fine linen. 24. All the gold that was occupied for the work, in all the work of the holy *place*, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and ſeven hundred and thirty ſhekels, after [e] the ſhekel of the ſanctuary. 25. And the ſilver of them that were numbered of the congregation, *was* an hundred talents, and a thouſand ſeven hundred and threeſcore and fifteen ſhekels, after the ſhekels of the ſanctuary. 26. [f] A bekah for † every man, *that is*, half a ſhekel, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for [g] ſix hundred thouſand and three thouſand and five hundred and fifty *men*. 27. And of the hundred talents of ſilver, were caſt [h] the ſockets of the ſanctuary, and the ſockets of the vail; an hundred ſockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a ſocket. 28. And of the thouſand ſeven hundred ſeventy and five *ſhekels*, he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted them. 29. And the braſs of the offering *was* ſeventy talents, and two thouſand and four hundred ſhekels. 30. And therewith he made the ſockets to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the veſſels of the altar. 31. And the ſockets of the court round about, and the ſockets of the court-gate, and all the pins of the tabernacle, and all the pins of the court round about.

[e] Chap. xxx. 13.
[f] Ibid. 15.
† Heb. A poll.
[g] Num. i. 46.
[h] Chap. xxvi. 19, 21, 25, 32.

v. 21—31. They who are entruſted with the gold for the uſe of the tabernacle, ought to keep fair accounts. When the great audit comes, woe to the unfaithful ſteward. The employment of the whole which the workmen received, is here produced, amounting to a very conſiderable ſum, and ſhews both the generoſity of the people, and the fidelity of the ſervants. *Note*, The church of Chriſt cannot fail of riſing in beauty and glory, when there is ſo happy a concurrence of a willing mind in the people, and of uprightneſs and diligence in the miniſters.

CHAP. XXXIX.

This chapter gives us an account of the finiſhing of the work of the tabernacle. 1. *The holy garments. The ephod and its curious girdle*, ver. 1—5. *The onyx-ſtones for the ſhoulders*, ver. 6, 7. *The breaſt-plate with the precious ſtones in it*, ver. 8—21. *The robe of the ephod*, ver. 22—26. *The coats, bonnets, and breeches for the inferior prieſts*, ver. 27—29. *And the plate of the holy crown*, ver. 30, 31. 2. *A ſummary account of the whole work, as it was preſented to Moſes when it was all finiſhed*, ver. 32—43.

1. AND of the blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, they made clothes of ſervice, to do ſervice in the holy *place*, and [a] made the holy garments for Aaron; [b] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 2. And he made the ephod *of* gold, blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen. 3. And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut *it into* wires; to work *it* in the blue, and in the purple, and in the ſcarlet, and in the fine linen, *with* cunning work. 4. They made ſhoulder-pieces for it, to couple *it* together: by the two edges was it coupled together. 5. And the curious girdle of his ephod that *was* upon it, *was* of the ſame, according to the work thereof; *of* gold, blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 6. ¶ And [c] they wrought onyx-ſtones incloſed in ouches of gold, graven as ſignets are graven, with the names of the children of Iſrael. 7. And he put them on the ſhoulders of the ephod, *that they ſhould be* ſtones for [d] a memorial to the children of Iſrael; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 8. ¶ And he made the breaſt-plate *of* cunning work, like the work of the ephod; *of* gold, blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, and fine twined linen. 9. It was four-ſquare, they made the breaſt-plate double: a ſpan *was* the length thereof, and a ſpan the breadth thereof, *being* doubled. 10. And [e] they ſet in it four rows of ſtones: *the firſt* row *was* a † ſardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this *was* the firſt row. 11. And the ſecond row, an emerald, a ſapphire, and a diamond. 12. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyſt. 13. And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jaſper: *they were* incloſed in ouches of gold in their incloſings. 14. And the ſtones *were* according to the names of the children of Iſrael, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a ſignet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes. 15. And they made upon the breaſt-plate chains, at the ends, *of* wreathen work *of* pure gold. 16. And they made two ouches *of* gold, and two gold rings, and put the two rings in the two ends of the breaſt-plate. 17. And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breaſt-plate. 18. And the two ends of the two wreathen chains, they faſtened in the two ouches, and put them on the ſhoulder-pieces of the ephod, before it. 19. And they made two rings of gold, and put *them* on the two ends of the breaſt-plate upon the border of it, which *was* on the ſide of the ephod inward. 20. And they made two *other* golden rings, and put them on the two ſides of the ephod, underneath, toward the fore-part of it, over-againſt the *other* coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. 21. And they did bind the breaſt-plate by his rings unto the rings of the ephod, with a lace of blue, that it might be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breaſt-plate might not be looſed from the ephod; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 22. ¶ And he made the robe of the ephod *of* woven work, all *of* blue. 23. And *there was* a hole in the midſt of the robe, as the hole of an habergeon, *with* a band round about the hole, that it ſhould not rent. 24. And they made upon the hems of the robe, pomegranates *of* blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, *and* twined *linen*. 25. And they made [f] bells *of* pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates, upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates. 26. A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe to miniſter *in*; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 27. ¶ And they made coats *of* fine linen, *of* woven work, for Aaron and for his ſons. 28. And [g] a mitre *of* fine linen, and goodly bonnets *of* fine linen, and [h] linen breeches *of* fine twined linen. 29. And a girdle *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and ſcarlet, *of* needle-work; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 30. ¶ And they made the plate of the holy crown, *of* pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, *like to* the engravings of a ſignet, [i] HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 31. And they tied unto it a lace of blue, to faſten *it* on high upon the mitre; as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[a] Chap. xxxi. 10. & xxxv. 19.
[b] Chap. xxviii. 4.
[c] Chap. xxviii. 9.
[d] Ibid. 12.
[e] Ibid. 17, &c.
† Or ruby.
[f] Chap. xxviii. 33.
[g] Ezek. xliv. 18.
[h] Chap. xxviii. 42.
[i] Ibid. 36.

v. 1—31. The ſacerdotal garments are provided for the prieſts to miniſter before the Lord: they were badges of their ſervice, and honourable marks of diſtinction. *Note*, If we have the honour of wearing God's livery, it ſhould remind us of our obligations to miniſter before him. Many, it is to be feared, covet the mitre, who care not how little they ſerve the pulpit and the altar.

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32. ¶ Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finiſhed: and the children of Iſrael did according to all that the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo did they. 33. ¶ And they brought the tabernacle unto Moſes, the tent, and all his furniture, his taches, his boards, his bars, and his pillars, and his ſockets, 34. And the covering of rams ſkins dyed red, and the covering of badgers ſkins, and the vail of the covering; 35. The ark of the teſtimony, and the ſtaves thereof, and the mercy-ſeat, 36. The table, *and* all the veſſels thereof, and the ſhew-bread, 37. The pure candleſtick, *with* the lamps thereof, *even with* the lamps to be ſet in order, and all the veſſels thereof, and the oil for light, 38. And the golden altar, and the anointing oil, and † the ſweet incenſe, and the hanging for the tabernacle door, 39. The brazen altar, and his grate of braſs, his ſtaves, and all his veſſels, the laver and his foot, 40. The hangings of the court, his pillars, and his ſockets, and the hanging for the court-gate, his cords, and his pins, and all the veſſels of the ſervices of the tabernacle, for the tent of the congregation. 41. The clothes of ſervice to do ſervice in the holy *place*, and the holy garments for Aaron the prieſt, and his ſons garments to miniſter in the prieſt's office. 42. According to all that the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo the children of Iſrael made all the work. 43. And Moſes did look upon all the work, and behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded, even ſo had they done it: and Moſes bleſſed them.

† Heb. The incenſe of ſweet ſpices.

v. 32—43. 1. The whole is compleatly finiſhed. The time was ſhort, ſcarce more than five months; but the workmen were hearty and unanimous; and much may be done in little time, when we ſet about it with a good will. It is want of unanimity among the builders, and want of zeal in the labourers, that makes church-work ſo ſlow.

2. They bring the ſeveral pieces to Moſes, and he approves of them, as exactly correſponding to the pattern ſhewed them. God, who gave the model, has added the wiſdom to copy it. *Note*, If we are enabled to walk and to pleaſe God, we muſt aſcribe it to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, who worketh in us both to will and to do.

3. Moſes in the name of God bleſſes them, and this was ſufficient wages. They were now working for God; the enjoyment of his preſence in the tabernacle would amply recompence their toil. *Note*, No work of faith, or labour of love, ſhall loſe its reward. When we appear in the preſence of Jeſus our judge, he will pronounce the bleſſing on his ſervants, and admit them into the everlaſting joy of their Lord.

CHAP. XL.

In this chapter, 1. *The tabernacle is ſet up*, ver. 1—8. *The conſecrating of it*, ver. 8—11. *and of the prieſts*, ver. 12—15. 2. *Care taken to do all this, and as it was appointed to be done*, ver. 16—33. 3. *God's taking poſſeſſion of it by the cloud*, ver. 34—38.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. On the firſt day of the firſt month ſhalt thou ſet up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation; 3. And thou ſhalt put therein the ark of the teſtimony, and cover the ark with the vail: 4. And [a] thou ſhalt bring in the table, and ſet in order † the things that are to be ſet in order upon it, and thou ſhalt bring in the candleſtick, and light the lamps thereof. 5. And thou ſhalt ſet the altar of gold for the incenſe before the ark of the teſtimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle. 6. And thou ſhalt ſet the altar of the burnt-offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. 7. And [b] thou ſhalt ſet the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and ſhalt put water therein. 8. And thou ſhalt ſet up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court-gate. 9, And thou ſhalt take the anointing oil, and [c] anoint the tabernacle, and all that *is* therein, and ſhalt hallow it, and all the veſſels thereof: and it ſhall be holy. 10. And thou ſhalt anoint the altar of the burnt-offering, and all his veſſels, and ſanctify the altar: and [d] it ſhall be an altar ‡ moſt holy. 11. And thou ſhalt anoint the laver and his foot, and ſanctify it. 12. And [e] thou ſhalt bring Aaron and his ſons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and waſh them with water. 13. And thou ſhalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and [f] anoint him, and ſanctify him; that he may miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office. 14. And thou ſhalt bring his ſons, and clothe them with coats: 15. And thou ſhalt anoint them, as thou didſt anoint their father, that they may miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office: for their anointing ſhall ſurely be an everlaſting prieſthood, throughout their generations. 16. Thus did Moſes: according to all that the LORD commanded him, ſo did he.

[a] Chap. xxvi. 35.
† Heb. The order thereof.
[b] Chap. xxx. 18.
[c] Chap. xxx. 26.
[d] Chap. xxix. 36, 37.
‡ Heb. Holineſs of holineſſes.
[e] Lev. viii. 1, 13.
[f] Chap. xxviii. 41.

v. 1—16. The whole being compleat, is ordered to be ſet up.

1. The time; on the firſt day of the new year; and a happy new-year's day to them it was. Almoſt a year had elapſed ſince their departure from Egypt; a year full of God's mercies and their unfaithfulneſs. Now God is come to dwell in the midſt of them, it is to be hoped, a new life will begin with a new year. *Note*, New years ſhould begin with humbling reviews of the paſt, and humble purpoſes of amendment for the future.

2. The conſecration. The whole was ſolemnly ſet apart for God's uſe and ſervice. When we are raiſed from beds of ſickneſs, and when we ariſe from beds of ſleep, we ſhould anew conſecrate and devote to his ſervice the tabernacle of our bodies.

3. Aaron and his ſons are ordained for the ſervice. As there muſt be a call from God, there muſt alſo be an ordination from men lawfully appointed, before a man preſume to exerciſe the prieſt's office.

17. ¶ And it came to paſs, in the firſt month in the ſecond year, on the firſt *day* of the month, *that* [g] the tabernacle was reared up. 18. And Moſes reared up the tabernacle, and faſtned his ſockets, and ſet up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. 19. And he ſpread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 20. ¶ And he took and [h] put the teſtimony into the ark, and ſet the ſtaves on the ark, and put the mercy-ſeat above upon the ark. 21. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and [i] ſet up the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the teſtimony; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 22. ¶ [k] And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the ſide of the tabernacle northward, without the vail. 23. And he ſet the bread in order upon it before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moſes. 24. ¶ And he put the candleſtick in the tent of the congregation, over-againſt the table, on the ſide of the tabernacle ſouthward. 25. And he lighted the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moſes. 26. ¶ And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation, before the vail. 27. [l] And he burnt ſweet incenſe thereon, as the LORD commanded Moſes. 28. ¶ And he ſet up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle. 29. And he put the altar of burnt-offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering; [m] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 30. ¶ And he ſet the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to waſh *withal.* 31. And Moſes, and Aaron, and his ſons, waſhed their hands and their feet thereat. 32. When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they waſhed; [n] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 33. And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and ſet up the hanging of the court gate: ſo Moſes finiſhed the work.

[g] Num. vii. 1.
[h] Chap. xxv. 16.
[i] Chap. xxxv. 12.
[k] Chap. xxvi. 35.
[l] Chap. xxx. 7.
[m] Chap. xxx. 9.
[n] Chap. xxx. 19.

v. 17—33. Moſes ſets up the glorious fabric, and begins the ſervice of the ſanctuary. The candleſtick is lighted up, the table covered, the incenſe ſmoaking, the offering on the altar. Thus he taught the prieſts the method of their ſervice; and himſelf, and Aaron and his ſons, waſhed in the laver: for they who miniſter before a holy God, muſt purge themſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit: and as even in our duties ſin is incurred, whenever we would approach God, we muſt firſt waſh in the open fountain of a Saviour's blood, without which we never can draw near with acceptance to him.

34. ¶ [o] Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35. And Moſes was not able to enter into the

[o] Lev. xvi. 2. Num. ix. 15. 1 Kings viii. 10. 2 Chron. v. 13. & vii. 2. Iſa. vi. 4. Rev. xv. 8.

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tent of the congregation, becauſe the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 36. And [p] when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Iſrael † went onward in all their journeys: 37. But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not, till the day that it was taken up. 38. For [q] the cloud of the LORD *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the ſight of all the houſe of Iſrael, throughout all their journeys.

[p] Num. x. 11.

† Heb. Journeyed.

[q] Chap. xiii. 21.

v. 34—38. No ſooner is the tent pitched, than the divine inhabitant comes to take up his reſidence in it; declaring hereby his favour towards them, and his acceptance of their ſervices. All the glory of the tabernacle had been uſeleſs pomp, without the preſence of the Deity: all the gifts and greatneſs of man, without the in-dwelling of the true Shechinah, are no better than the miſerable ruins of a deſolate palace. The ſoul is only truly glorious and happy, when it becomes a living temple, an habitation of God through the ſpirit.

1. There was an awful diſplay of the Divine Majeſty. The cloudy pillar from the top of Sinai deſcends, enters the tabernacle, and paſſes to the throne between the cherubims; and ſo tranſplendent was the brightneſs, that for a while Moſes cannot enter. But though Moſes is weak through the fleſh, He, who from eternity dwells in the light which no man can approach unto, is now, in our nature, for us entered into the holy place; and not only ſo, but will open a way for us to follow him, and ſtrengthen us to bear the brighteſt coruſcations of the divine light and glory.

2. This cloud covered the tent, viſible to all the hoſt; a conſtant proof, that God was in the midſt of them, and as conſtant a pledge of his protection. *Note*, If the Spirit of God and of glory reſteth upon us, we may well be comforted; neither ſin nor Satan ſhall be able to deſtroy us.

3. The cloud directed their journeyings, and guided them in the way, hovering over their tabernacle, till they reſted at laſt in Canaan. Such to every believer is the word of God in his journey to glory. Under its guidance he ſets out, and by its light ſhall he be conducted, till he ſhall take his laſt Exodus, his final departure from this ſublunary ſcene, to his manſion in the ſkies, and his eternal and fixed abode with God in glory.

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THE

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the Third Book of MOSES called
LEVITICUS.

THIS book is chiefly taken up with the laws concerning their ſacrifices and offerings, their meats and drinks, and divers waſhings, and other peculiarities, by which God ſet the people of Iſrael apart for himſelf, and diſtinguiſhed them from other nations: all which were ſhadows of good things to come, which are realized and ſuperſeded by the goſpel of Chriſt.——We call the book Leviticus, *becauſe it contains the laws and ordinances of the levitical prieſthood: The Levites were principally charged with theſe inſtitutions, both to do their part, and to teach the people theirs.——We read in the cloſe of the foregoing book, of the ſetting up of the tabernacle, which was to be the place of worſhip; and as that was framed according to the pattern, ſo muſt the ordinances of worſhip be, which were there to be adminiſtred. In theſe the divine appointment was as particular as in the former, and muſt be as punctually obſerved. The remaining record of theſe abrogated laws is of uſe to us, for the ſtrengthening of our faith in Jeſus Chriſt, as* the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world; *and for the increaſe of our thankfulneſs to God, that by him we are freed from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and live in the times of reformation.*

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CHAP. I.

This book begins with the laws concerning ſacrifices, of which the moſt ancient were the burnt-offerings. Orders are here given how that ſort of ſacrifice muſt be managed. 1. *If it were a bullock,* ver. 3—9. 2. *If it were a ſheep or goat, a lamb or kid,* ver. 10—13. 3. *If it were a turtle-dove, or a young pigeon,* ver. 14—17. *And whether the offering were more or leſs valuable in itſelf, if it was offered in faith, it was accepted of God.*

AND the LORD called unto Moſes, and ſpake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [a] If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye ſhall bring your offering of the cattle, *even* of the herd, and of the flock.

[a] Chap. xxii. 18.

v. 1, 2. God having taught the firſt man, after his fall, the neceſſity of atonement for ſin by ſacrifice, we find it faithfully tranſmitted to his poſterity; and when the true religion was loſt in idolatry, the ſacrifices ſtill remained. When God therefore takes a people to himſelf, he both teaches them the uſe of ſacrifices, and directs them in the choice of ſuch as were moſt ſignificant of the one great ſacrifice, which in the fulneſs of time ſhould be offered. The thunders of Sinai uſhered in that law which only gave the knowledge of ſin; but now, when ſacrifices of peace are enjoined, God ſpeaks in milder accents from the mercy-ſeat. The law is a voice of terror; the goſpel, of grace and love.

3. If his offering *be* a burnt-ſacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemiſh; he ſhall offer it of his own voluntary will, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. 4. [b] And he ſhall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering: and it ſhall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. 5. And he ſhall kill the bullock before the LORD: and [c] the prieſts Aaron's ſons ſhall bring the blood, and [d] ſprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that *is* by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 6. And he ſhall ſlay the burnt-offering, and cut it into his pieces. 7. And the ſons of Aaron the prieſt ſhall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire. 8. And the prieſts Aaron's ſons ſhall lay the parts, the head and the fat, in order upon the wood that *is* on the fire, which *is* upon the altar. 9. But his inwards and his legs ſhall he waſh in water: and the prieſt ſhall burn all on the altar, *to be* a burnt-ſacrifice, an offering made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD.

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[b] Chap. iv. 15. & iii. 2, 8, 13. & viii. 14, 22. & xvi. 21. Exod. xxix. 10, 15.

[c] 2 Chron. xxxv. 11.

[d] Chap. iii. 8.

v. 3—9. The ſacrifice, if of the herd, muſt be a male without blemiſh. God requires and deſerves we ſhould offer him our beſt. The blind and lame ſervices of negligent prayers are not a ſacrifice, but an abomination. The oblation muſt be voluntary. That is only acceptable obedience, which flows from love as its principle. He muſt come with it to the door of the tabernacle, as one unworthy to enter, yet deſiring to draw near unto God. He muſt lay his hand on the head of the beaſt, intimating his acknowledgement of his deſerving that death by reaſon of ſin, to which this bullock was devoted, and his faith in the acceptance of this ſacrifice in his ſtead. The beaſt was then to be ſlain, and his blood ſprinkled by the prieſts upon the altar, as typical of the death of the great ſacrifice, who bore our ſins, and of that atoning blood of Jeſus, which is ſprinkled on the guilty conſcience. The whole then, properly divided and cleanſed, muſt be burnt with fire, as a ſweet ſavour to the Lord. And thus Jeſus on the croſs offered up himſelf to be conſumed by the fierce wrath of God, a ſacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour, by which peace and reconciliation are obtained for the ſinner, and his perſon and ſervices become acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt.

10. ¶ And if his offering *be* of the flocks, *namely* of the ſheep, or of the goats, for a burnt-ſacrifice, he ſhall bring it a male without blemiſh. 11. And he ſhall kill it on the ſide of the altar northward before the LORD; and the prieſts Aaron's ſons ſhall ſprinkle his blood round about upon the altar. 12. And he ſhall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the prieſt ſhall lay them in order on the wood that *is* on the fire which *is* upon the altar. 13. But he ſhall waſh the inwards and the legs with water: and the prieſts ſhall bring *it* all, and burn *it* upon the altar: it *is* a burnt-ſacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 14. ¶ And if the burnt-ſacrifice for his offering to the LORD *be* of fowls, then he ſhall bring his offering of [e] turtle-doves, or of young pigeons. 15. And the prieſt ſhall bring it unto the altar, and † wring off his head, and burn *it* on the altar: and the blood thereof ſhall be wrung out at the ſide of the altar. 16. And he ſhall pluck away his crop with ‡ his feathers, and caſt it beſide the altar on the eaſt part, by the place of the aſhes. 17. And he ſhall cleave it, with the wings thereof, *but* [f] ſhall not divide *it* aſunder: and the prieſt ſhall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that *is* upon the fire: it *is* a burnt-ſacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD.

[e] Chap. v. 7.
† Or pinch off the head with the nail.
‡ Or the filth thereof.
[f] Gen. xv. 10.

v. 10—17. They who had flocks and herds, could afford to offer of them; but as all who needed the ſame atonement had not theſe more expenſive ſacrifices, a turtle-dove, or pigeon, ſhould be to them as effectual, as the bullock or the ram. *Note*, (1.) All are in the ſame condemnation, and need the ſame atonement. (2.) Chriſt Jeſus is alike the Saviour of high and low, rich and poor. (3.) In all our ſervices, God requires we ſhould offer according as he hath bleſſed us. He that hath much, muſt give much; he that hath little, ſhould chearfully give of that little. (4.) God regards not the expenſiveneſs of the gift, but the faith and love of the offerer. A pigeon with theſe, is better than the ſtalled ox without them.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter we have the law concerning the meat-offering. 1. *The matter of it*, ver. 1—7. 2. *The management of it*, ver. 8, 9, 10. 3. *Some particular rules concerning it, that leaven and honey muſt never be admitted*, ver. 11, 12. *and ſalt never omitted in the meat-offering*, ver. 13. 4. *The law concerning the offering of firſt-fruits in the ear*, ver. 14, 15, 16.

1. AND when any will offer [a] a meat-offering unto the LORD, his offering ſhall be *of* fine flour; and he ſhall pour oil upon it, and put frankincenſe thereon. 2. And he ſhall bring it to Aaron's ſons the prieſts: and he ſhall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincenſe thereof; and [b] the prieſt ſhall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, *to be* an offering made by fire, of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 3. And [c] the remnant of the meat-offering *ſhall be* Aaron's and his ſons: [d] *it is* a thing moſt holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire. 4. ¶ And if thou bring an oblation of a meat-offering baken in the oven, *it ſhall be* unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers [e] anointed with oil. 5. ¶ And if thy oblation *be* a meat-offering *baken* † in a pan, it ſhall be *of* fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil. 6. Thou ſhalt part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: it *is* a meat-offering. 7. ¶ And if thy oblation *be* a meat-offering *baken* in the frying-pan, it ſhall be made *of* fine flour with oil. 8. And thou ſhalt bring the meat-offering, that is made of theſe things, unto the LORD: and when it is preſented unto the prieſt, he ſhall bring it unto the altar. 9. And [f] the prieſt ſhall take from the meat-offering a memorial thereof, and ſhall burn *it* upon the altar: *it is* [g] an offering made by fire, of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 10. And that which is left of the meat-offering, *ſhall be* Aaron's and his ſons: *it is* a thing moſt holy, of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.

[a] Chap. vi. 14. & ix. 17. Num. xv. 4.
[b] Ver. 2 & Chap. v. 12. & vi. 15. & xxiv. 7. Iſa. lxvi. 3. Ecclus xlv. 16.
[c] Chap. vii. 6. & x. 12. Ecclus vii. 31.
[d] Exod. xxix. 37. Num. xviii. 9.
[e] Exod. xxix. 2.
† Or, on a flat plate or ſlice.
[f] Ver. 2.
[g] Exod. xxix. 18.

v. 1—10. As we are indebted to God for every bit of bread we put in our mouths, it is but reaſonable and juſt we ſhould acknowledge his kind proviſion for us, by offering a part to his ſervice. Though we have no longer the earthly ſanctuary, we have the poor always with us; and when we break our bread to the hungry, God will accept the offering as done unto himſelf.

The ingredients of the meat-offering muſt be fine flour and oil, if dreſſed; if undreſſed, frankincenſe was to be added. It was brought to the prieſts, and part burnt on the altar, as a ſweet ſavour to the Lord; the reſt belonged to Aaron and his ſons. *Note*, (1.) The leaſt acknowledgment which flows from a grateful heart is acceptable to God. (2.) It is highly reaſonable, that they who miniſter in holy things, ſhould live by the altars they ſerve: but it is now the juſt grief of the people, to be obliged to pay the indolent and ambitious, who ſeldom or never miniſter unto them; and the great ſin of the prieſts, to devour the meat for which they have never laboured. *Pudent hæc opprobria.*

11. No meat-offering, which ye ſhall bring unto the LORD, ſhall be made [h] with leaven: for ye ſhall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire. 12. ¶ [i] As for the oblation of the firſt-fruits, ye ſhall offer them unto the LORD: but they ſhall not † be burnt on the altar for a ſweet ſavour. 13. And every oblation of thy meat-offering [k] ſhalt thou ſeaſon with ſalt; neither ſhalt thou ſuffer [l] the ſalt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering; with all thine offerings thou ſhalt offer ſalt. 14. And if thou offer a meat-offering of thy firſt-fruits unto the LORD, thou ſhalt offer for the meat-offering of thy firſt-fruits, green ears of corn dried by the fire, *even* corn beaten out of full ears. 15. And thou ſhalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincenſe thereon: it *is* a meat-offering. 16. And the prieſt ſhall burn the memorial of it, *part* of the beaten corn thereof, and *part* of the oil thereof, with all the frankincenſe thereof: *it is* an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

[h] See Mat. xvi. 12. Mark viii. 15. Luke xii. 1. 1 Cor. v. 8. Gal. v. 9.
[i] Exod. xxii. 29.
† Heb. Aſcend.
[k] Mark ix. 49.
[l] Num. xviii. 19.

v. 11—16. 1. Honey and leaven are forbidden in all their offerings on the altar, and ſalt commanded always to be ſprinkled on them. *Note*, (1.) They who ſerve God, muſt purge out the old leaven of malice and wickedneſs, and bring the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth. (2.) Unleſs the ſalt of divine grace be in our offerings, all we can bring of our own will be unſavory. (3.) Salt, being the ſymbol of friendſhip, intimates, that we ſhould in all our offerings exerciſe faith in God, as our reconciled friend.

2. The firſt-fruits were for the prieſts maintenance, and with them leaven and honey might be offered: but if a man made a free-will offering of firſt-fruits, beſides thoſe mentioned *Deut.* xxvi. 2. then theſe were to be treated as the other meat-offering with oil and frankincenſe. If the corn offered was from green ears, they muſt be the faireſt in the field, dried and threſhed out; to intimate, 1. That our green days of infancy and youth ſhould be devoted to God, and that God accepts with delight ſuch offerings. 2. In youth the fire of zeal, and fervency in religious duties, is becoming, and, in one ſenſe, natural. 3. The blood of Jeſus is the ſweet frankincenſe to which we are indebted for every acceptable ſervice.

CHAP. III.

In this chapter we have the law concerning the peace-offerings, whether they were, 1. *Of the herd, a bullock or a heifer*, ver. 1—5. *Or*, 2. *Of the flock, either a lamb*, ver. 6—11. *or a goat*, ver. 12—17.

1. AND if his oblation *be* [a] a ſacrifice of peace-offering, if he offer *it* of the herd, whether *it be* a male or female, he ſhall offer it without blemiſh before the LORD. 2. And [b] he ſhall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's ſons the prieſts ſhall ſprinkle the blood upon the altar round about. 3. And he ſhall offer of the ſacrifice of the peace-offering, an offering made by fire unto the LORD; [c] the † fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that *is* upon the inwards: 4. And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* on them, which *is* by the

[a] Chap. vii. 11, 29. & xxii. 18, 21.
[b] Exod. xxix. 10. Chap. i. 4.
[c] Exod. xxix. 13, 22.
† Or ſuet.

Before Chriſt 1490.

‡ Or Midriff over the liver and over the kidneys.

d Chap. vi. 12.

flanks: and the ‡ caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it ſhall he take away. 5. And Aaron's ſons [d] ſhall burn it on the altar, upon the burnt-ſacrifice, which *is* upon the wood that *is* on the fire: *it is* an offering made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD.

v. 1—5. Peace-offerings were either to expreſs their grateful acknowledgments for mercies received, or to ſecond their prayers for ſome good which was deſired. It was called a peace-offering, becauſe God was regarded therein as in a ſtate of reconciliation with them. *Note*, Chriſt is our peace, and it is to him we may make our requeſts with confidence of being heard, and offer our praiſes, aſſured they will pleaſe God.

The ſame formalities were obſerved as before. The offerer laid his hand on the victim's head, expreſſive of the ſenſe of his own deſerts. The beaſt is killed, and the blood ſprinkled upon the altar; intimating, that in our very ſacrifices of prayer and praiſe, we need pardon from God; and then the beaſt is divided. Part is the Lord's portion, *v.* 3, 4. of the remainder, part was the prieſt's, the reſt to be eaten by the offerer and his family, *See chap.* vii. Two things are to be obſerved, 1. The fat muſt be burned on the altar. So ſhould every corrupt affection of our hearts continually be conſuming by the fire of divine love. 2. It was burned upon the daily burnt-offering; for it is with a conſtant eye to the Lamb that was ſlain, that we can hope to keep up any peaceful intercourſe and communion with the holy God.

e See chap. xxi. 6, 8, 17, 21, 22, & xxii. 25. Ezek. xliv. 7. Mal. i. 7, 12.

f Chap. vii. 23, 25.

g Gen. ix. 4. Chap. vii. 23, 26. & xvii. 10, 14. Deut. xii. 16. 1 Sam. xiv. 33. Ezek. xliv. 7.

6. ¶ And if his offering for a ſacrifice of peace-offering unto the LORD be *of* the flock, male or female; he ſhall offer it without blemiſh. 7. If he offer a lamb for his offering, then ſhall he offer it before the LORD. 8. And he ſhall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's ſons ſhall ſprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar. 9. And he ſhall offer of the ſacrifice of the peace-offering, an offering made by fire unto the LORD: the fat thereof, *and* the whole rump, it ſhall he take off hard by the back-bone: and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that *is* upon the inwards. 10. And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it ſhall he take away. 11. And the prieſt ſhall burn it upon the altar: *it is* [e] the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD. 12. ¶ And if his offering *be* a goat, then he ſhall offer it before the LORD. 13. And he ſhall lay his hand upon the head of it, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation; and the ſons of Aaron ſhall ſprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar round about. 14. And he ſhall offer thereof his offering, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that *is* upon the inwards. 15. And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it ſhall he take away. 16. And the prieſt ſhall burn them upon the altar: *it is* the food of the offering made by fire, for a ſweet ſavour. [f] All the fat is the LORD's. 17. *It ſhall be* a perpetual ſtatute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat [g] nor blood.

v. 6—17. The ſame proceſs was to attend the leſſer ſacrifices of peace-offerings. The rump of the ſheep only was added to the fat. An expreſs prohibition is alſo added of eating either any of the fat of the inwards or blood. As the blood was typical of the atonement, it muſt be regarded as ſacred; and the fat being God's portion of the ſacrifices, muſt not be uſed as a common thing. As the ſhadows are now paſſed away in Chriſt, the reaſon of the prohibition ceaſes; only one command remains, that we live in holy temperance to the glory of God, not luxuriouſly eating the fat, and riotouſly drinking the blood of the ſlain.

CHAP. IV.

This chapter is concerning the offering for a ſin committed through ignorance; either, 1. *By the prieſt himſelf,* ver. 1—12. *Or,* 2. *By the whole congregation,* ver. 13—21. *Or,* 3. *By a ruler,* ver. 22—26. *Or,* 4. *By a private perſon,* ver. 27—35.

a Num. xv. 22.

b Chap. viii. 12.

c Chap. ix. 2.

d Chap. i. 4.

e Chap. xvi. 14. Num. xix. 4.

f Chap. v. 9.

g Chap. iii. 3.

h Exod xxix. 14. Num. xix. 5.

† Heb. To without the camp.

i Chap. vi. 11.

k Hebr. xiii. 11.

‡ Heb. At the pouring out of the aſhes.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [a] If a ſoul ſhall ſin through ignorance againſt any of the commandments of the LORD (*concerning things* which ought not to be done) and ſhall do againſt any of them: 3. [b] If the prieſt that is anointed, do ſin according to the ſin of the people; then let him bring for his ſin which he hath ſinned, [c] a young bullock without blemiſh unto the LORD for a ſin-offering. 4. And he ſhall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and [d] ſhall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD. 5. And the prieſt that is anointed, [e] ſhall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation. 6. And the prieſt ſhall dip his finger in the blood, and ſprinkle of the blood ſeven times before the LORD, before the vail of the ſanctuary. 7. And the prieſt ſhall put *ſome* of the blood upon the horns of the altar of ſweet incenſe before the LORD, which *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation, and ſhall [f] pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering, which *is* at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8. And he ſhall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the ſin-offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that *is* upon the inwards: 9. And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it ſhall he take away, 10. [g] As it was taken off from the bullock of the ſacrifice of peace-offerings: and the prieſt ſhall burn them upon the altar of the burnt-offering. 11. [h] And the ſkin of the bullock, and all his fleſh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, 12. Even the whole bullock ſhall he carry forth † without the camp, unto a clean place, [i] where the aſhes are poured out, [k] and burn him on the wood with fire: ‡ where the aſhes are poured out, ſhall he be burnt.

v. 1—12. The wages of ſin, wherever it is found, is death: even ſins of ignorance and infirmity are mortal, without an atonement. We have here therefore an expreſs appointment of a ſin-offering for the ſoul that ſins through ignorance. The ſin is ſuppoſed to be an outward act, committed either through ignorance of the law, or ſurprize. There may be alleviations of guilt, but no excuſe for ſin.

The ſacrifice for the ſin of the high-prieſt is firſt appointed. They were men, and therefore compaſſed about with infirmity. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not expect too much from ſinful men, however holy their calling, or high their attainments. (2.) Yet a prieſt's ſin is ever moſt aggravated, ſince he who is appointed to guide others, is peculiarly bound to ſet them an example.

The ſin-offering is a bullock, to be offered with the uſual form. Confeſſion of guilt, and dependance on that blood, without which there is no remiſſion, is the only way of obtaining pardon for ſin. The blood was ſprinkled before the vail, and on the horns of the golden altar; to ſignify, that all his ſervices were polluted, till his iniquity was done away. The fat, &c. as in the peace-offering, was burned on the altar; to ſignify, that God accepted the ſacrifice, and was reconciled to the offender; and the whole of the beaſt that remained, was burned without the camp, as a deteſtable thing. Thus Jeſus, when he made his ſoul an offering for ſin, ſuffered without the camp; and, in the ſharpneſs of his ſorrows, and the ignominy he endured, ſhewed us the dreadful evil of ſin, whilſt he thus took it away by the ſacrifice of himſelf.

l Num. xv. 24.

m Chap. v. 2, 3, 4.

13. ¶ [l] And if the whole congregation of Iſrael ſin through ignorance, [m] and the thing be hid from the eyes of the aſſembly, and they have done *ſomewhat againſt* any of the commandments of the LORD, *concerning things* which ſhould not be done, and are guilty: 14. When the ſin which they have ſinned againſt it is known, then the congregation ſhall offer a young bullock for the ſin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation. 15. And the elders of the congregation ſhall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock ſhall be killed before the LORD. 16. And the prieſt that is anointed ſhall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation. 17. And the prieſt ſhall dip his finger in *ſome of* the blood, and ſprinkle *it* ſeven times before the LORD, *even* before the vail. 18. And he ſhall put *ſome* of the blood upon the horns of the altar which *is* before the LORD, that *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation, and ſhall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering, which *is* at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 19. And he ſhall take all his fat from

him, and burn *it* upon the altar. 20. And he ſhall do with the bullock as [a] he did with the bullock for a ſin-offering, ſo ſhall he do with this: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for them, and it ſhall be forgiven them. 21. And he ſhall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the firſt bullock: it *is* a ſin-offering for the congregation.

[a] Ver. 3.

v. 13—21. Whatever is human, is liable to error. Nations and churches are all fallible, and therefore an atonement for national ſins of ignorance is provided. The offering is the ſame as for the prieſt, as moſt likely their ſins would be the ſame. *Note*, If the people live in ignorance and ſin, much is to be feared for their teachers.

22. ¶ When a ruler hath ſinned, and done *ſomewhat* through ignorance *againſt* any of the commandments of the LORD his God, *concerning things* which ſhould not be done, and is guilty; 23. Or if his ſin, wherein he hath ſinned, come to his knowledge: he ſhall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemiſh. 24. And he ſhall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt-offering before the LORD: *it is* a ſin-offering. 25. And the prieſt ſhall take of the blood of the ſin-offering with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and ſhall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offering. 26. And he ſhall burn all his fat upon the altar, [o] as the fat of the ſacrifice of peace-offerings: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him as concerning his ſin, and it ſhall be forgiven him.

[o] Chap. iii. 5.

v. 22—26. However ſin comes to our knowledge, we ſhould be thankful for the notice. Rulers have need often to open their ears to admonition; they may, even when they mean well, do ill. A kid ſufficed for the atonement; intimating, that though the offence were the ſame, the crime was not ſo aggravated, or pernicious in its conſequence, as that of the high-prieſt or congregation. *Note*, Though all ſins are not alike evil in their effects to others, they are all mortal to the ſinful ſoul, without an atonement.

27. ¶ And [p] if † any one of the ‡ common people ſin through ignorance, while he doth *ſomewhat againſt* any of the commandments of the LORD, *concerning things* which ought not to be done, and be guilty; 28. Or if his ſin which he hath ſinned, come to his knowledge: then he ſhall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemiſh, for his ſin which he hath ſinned. 29. And he ſhall lay his hand upon the head of the ſin-offering, and ſlay the ſin-offering in the place of the burnt-offering. 30. And the prieſt ſhall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and ſhall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. 31. [q] And he ſhall take away all the fat thereof, [r] as the fat is taken away from off the ſacrifice of peace-offerings; and the prieſt ſhall burn *it* upon the altar, for [s] a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD, and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him, and it ſhall be forgiven him. 32. And if he bring a lamb for a ſin-offering, he ſhall bring it a female without blemiſh. 33. And he ſhall lay his hand upon the head of the ſin-offering, and ſlay it for a ſin-offering in the place where they kill the burnt-offering. 34. And the prieſt ſhall take of the blood of the ſin-offering with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and ſhall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. 35. And he ſhall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the ſacrifice of the peace-offerings: and the prieſt ſhall burn them upon the altar, [t] according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for his ſin that he hath committed, and it ſhall be forgiven him.

[p] Num. xv. 27.
† Heb. Any ſoul.
‡ Heb. People of the land.
[q] Chap. iii. 14.
[r] Chap. iii. 3.
[s] Exod. xxix. 18.
[t] Chap. iii. 5.

v. 27—35. The offering of a private perſon reſembles the ruler's, ſave that he may uſe a lamb or a kid, and a female inſtead of a male. *Note*, (1.) No ſinner is too little to be overlooked, or too great to be excuſed. (2.) All alike need the atoning blood of Chriſt. (3.) Every application to Chriſt for pardon of ſin, lays an obligation upon us to forſake ſin. There is no atonement to be made for wilful diſobedience. (4.) The ſenſe of the deſert of ſin will affect our hearts with deep ſorrow for it. The tears of penitence ſhould always mingle with the blood of atonement.

CHAP. V.

Concerns the treſpaſs-offering. 1. *A variety of caſes of treſpaſs*, ver. 1—19. 2. *The treſpaſs-offerings*, (1.) *Of the flock*, ver. 5, 6. (2.) *Of fowls*, ver. 7—10. (3.) *Of flour*, ver. 11—13. *but chiefly a ram without blemiſh*, ver. 15, 16, 18, 19.

1. AND if a ſoul ſin, and [a] hear the voice of ſwearing, and *is* a witneſs, whether he hath ſeen or known *of it*; if he do not utter *it*, then he ſhall bear his iniquity. 2. Or [b] if a ſoul touch any unclean thing, whether *it be* a carcaſe of an unclean beaſt, or a carcaſe of unclean cattle, or the carcaſe of unclean creeping things, and *if* it be hidden from him, he alſo ſhall be unclean and guilty. 3. Or if he touch the uncleanneſs of man, [c] whatſoever uncleanneſs *it be* that a man ſhall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him, when he knoweth *of it*, then he ſhall be guilty. 4. Or if a ſoul ſwear, pronouncing with *his* lips [d] to do evil, or [e] to do good; whatſoever *it be* that a man ſhall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth *of it*, then he ſhall be guilty in one of theſe. 5. And it ſhall be, when he ſhall be guilty in one of theſe *things*, that [f] he ſhall confeſs that he hath ſinned in that *thing*. 6. And he ſhall bring his treſpaſs-offering unto the LORD for his ſin which he hath ſinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a ſin-offering: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him concerning his ſin.

[a] 1 Kings viii. 31.
[b] Chap. xi. 24, 28, 31, 39.
[c] Chap. xii. & xiii. & xv.
[d] As 1 Sam. xxv. 22. Acts xxiii. 12.
[e] As Mark vi. 23.
[f] Num. v. 7.

v. 1—6. Three inſtances of treſpaſs are mentioned. 1. Concealing the truth, when adjured by the judges. In all caſes of an oath, we muſt ſpeak the whole truth, as well as nothing but the truth: to hide it, is as criminal as to add to it. 2. Contracting ceremonial uncleanneſs, *v.* 2, 3, and not waſhing according to law before he comes unto the tabernacle. When it comes to his knowledge, he muſt confeſs his ſin, and bring his offering. *Note*, When God's ſpirit awakens the conſcience, we begin to ſee ourſelves guilty, where we never ſuſpected harm. 3. Raſhly ſwearing, either to do what is unlawful or impracticable. Though a raſh vow may be better broken than kept, yet, like a two-edged ſword, it cuts both ways. No member needs ſtricter government than the tongue.

An offering in theſe caſes muſt be brought, accompanied with humble and particular confeſſion of the ſin. True penitents never deal in general acknowledgments, but in diſtinct and particular enumeration of their ſins. Then the prieſt made the atonement, and the ſin was pardoned. Though our repentance be not the cauſe of our acceptance, but Chriſt's blood alone, yet they are inſeparable: true faith produces ever true penitence.

7. And [g] if † he be not able to bring a lamb, then he ſhall bring for his treſpaſs which he hath committed, two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a ſin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering. 8. And he ſhall bring them unto the prieſt, who ſhall offer *that* which *is* for the ſin-offering firſt, and [i] wring off his head from his neck, but ſhall not divide *it* aſunder. 9. And he ſhall ſprinkle of the blood of the ſin-offering upon the ſide of the altar; and [k] the reſt of the blood ſhall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it *is* a ſin-offering. 10. And he ſhall offer the ſecond *for* a burnt-offering, according to the ‡ [l] manner: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him, for his ſin which he hath ſinned, and it ſhall be forgiven him. 11. ¶ But if he be not able to bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons; then he that ſinned ſhall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a ſin-offering: [m] he ſhall put no oil upon it, neither ſhall he put *any* frankincenſe thereon: for it *is* a ſin-offering. 12. Then ſhall he bring it to the prieſt, and the prieſt ſhall take his handful of it, [n] *even* a memorial thereof, and burn *it* on the altar, [o] according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a ſin-offering. 13. And the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him, as touching his ſin that he hath ſinned in one of theſe, and it ſhall be forgiven him: and [p] *the remnant* ſhall be the prieſt's, as a meat-offering.

[g] Chap. xii. 8. & xiv. 21.
† Heb. His hand cannot reach to the ſufficiency of a lamb.
[h] Chap. i. 14.
[i] Chap. i. 15.
[k] Chap. iv. 7, 18, 30, 34.
‡ Or, Ordinance.
[l] Chap. i. 14.
[m] Num. v. 15.
[n] Chap. ii. 2.
[o] Chap. iv. 35.
[p] Chap. ii. 3.

v. 7—13. As many needed the atonement, who through poverty were unable to afford a lamb, for them a pair of turtles or pigeons were accepted, or the ſtill cheaper offering of ſome fine flour. *Note*, Poverty is no bar to heaven.

If two pigeons or doves were offered, one ſerved for a ſin-offering, and was killed firſt; the other was a burnt-offering. Atonement muſt firſt be made; then thankſgiving is pleaſing as dutiful. If flour was offered, it muſt be without oil or frankincenſe. *Note*, Sin muſt be as unſavory to the ſoul, as this offering was on the altar.

14. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 15. [q] If a ſoul commit a treſpaſs, and ſin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD, then he ſhall bring for his treſpaſs unto the LORD a ram without blemiſh out of the flocks, with thy eſtimation by ſhekels of ſilver, after [r] the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, for a treſpaſs-offering. 16. And he ſhall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and [s] ſhall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the prieſt: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him with the ram of the treſpaſs-offering, and it ſhall be forgiven him. 17. ¶ And [t] if a ſoul ſin, and commit any of theſe things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; [u] though he wiſt *it* not, yet is he guilty, and ſhall bear his iniquity. 18. And he ſhall bring a ram without blemiſh out of the flock, with thy eſtimation for a treſpaſs-offering, unto the prieſt: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him, concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wiſt *it* not; and it ſhall be forgiven him. 19. It *is* a treſpaſs-offering: he hath certainly treſpaſſed againſt the LORD.

[q] Chap. xxii. 14.

[r] Exod. xxx. 13.

[s] Chap. xxii. 14. & xxvii. 13, 15, 27. Num. v. 7.

[t] Chap. iv. 2.

[u] Luke xii. 48.

v. 14—19. As ſacrilege is a very heinous ſin, a more coſtly atonement is enjoined for it. Whoever through ignorance with-held the tythes or offerings due to the ſanctuary, or any holy things dedicated to God, when he found it out, muſt bring a ram for an offering, and the whole value of the thing in money, and a fifth part over. Or if he but ſuſpected a miſtake, he was to chuſe the ſafer ſide, and make the oblation and full reſtitution. *Note*, (1.) Men think it is no ſin to cheat God's miniſters of their lawful dues; but if ſins of this kind, even when committed through ignorance, needed ſuch an atonement, what will be the puniſhment of deſigned fraud? (2.) To make reſtitution for injuſtice, is a very mortifying exerciſe; but there can be no hope of pardon, whilſt the wages of unrighteouſneſs is kept back.

CHAP. VI.

1. *Farther laws concerning treſpaſſes, which belong to the former chapter*, ver. 1—7. 2. Ver. 8, *begins a new ſection, relative to other rites and ſacrifices.* 1. *The burnt-offering*, ver. 8—13. 2. *The meat-offering*, ver. 14—18. *particularly that at the conſecration of the prieſt*, ver. 19—23. 3. *The ſin-offering*, ver. 24—30.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. If a ſoul ſin, and commit a treſpaſs againſt the LORD, and lye unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or † in fellowſhip, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour; 3. Or hath found that which was loſt, and lyeth concerning it, and [a] ſweareth falſly; in any of all theſe that a man doth, ſinning therein: 4. Then it ſhall be, becauſe he hath ſinned, and is guilty, that he ſhall reſtore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the loſt thing which he found, 5. Or all that about which he hath ſworn falſly; [b] he ſhall even reſtore it in the principal, and ſhall add the fifth part more thereto, *and* give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, ‡ in the day of his treſpaſs-offering. 6. And [c] he ſhall bring his treſpaſs-offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemiſh, out of the flock, with thy eſtimation, for a treſpaſs-offering, unto the prieſt. 7. And the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him, before the LORD; and it ſhall be forgiven him, for any thing of all that he had done, in treſpaſſing therein.

† Heb. Putting of the hand, i. e. dealing.

[a] Num. v. 6.

[b] Chap. v. 16.

‡ Heb. In the day of his treſpaſs, i. e. when he is found guilty.

[c] Chap. v. 15.

v. 1—7. A variety of treſpaſſes againſt our neighbour are mentioned, which, though immediately affecting them, are yet ſins againſt God, as being breaches of his law, *v.* 2. Theſe are either denying what was lent us; or defrauding our partners; or impoſing upon others by unjuſt commendation of our wares; or not returning what we find to the owner; or diſowning it, when we are charged with any of theſe things. In ſuch caſes, 1. Reſtitution muſt be made to the injured perſon, and a fifth part of the value added. 2. A treſpaſs-offering muſt be brought to God. *Note*, (1.) All ſacrifice for ſin is vain, till, to the utmoſt of our power, reſtitution is made unto man. (2.) When we have done all in our power to indemnify our neighbour, we are ſtill debtors to the law, and muſt periſh, unleſs we plead the treſpaſs-offering of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

8. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 9. Command Aaron and his ſons, ſaying, This *is* the law of the burnt-offering: (It *is* the burnt-offering, † becauſe of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar ſhall be burning in it.) 10. [d] And the prieſt ſhall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches ſhall he put upon his fleſh, and take up the aſhes which the fire hath conſumed with the burnt-offering on the altar, and he ſhall put them [e] beſides the altar. 11. And he ſhall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the aſhes without the camp, [f] unto a clean place. 12. And the fire upon the altar ſhall be burning in it, it ſhall not be put out: and the prieſt ſhall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt-offering in order upon it, and he ſhall burn thereon [g] the fat of the peace-offerings. 13. The fire ſhall ever be burning upon the altar: it ſhall never go out.

† Or for the burning.

[d] Chap. xvi. 4. Exod. xxviii. 40, 41, 43.

[e] Chap. i. 16.

[f] Chap. iv. 12.

[g] Chap. iii. 3, 9. 14.

v. 8—13. Directions are given for the prieſts in their miniſtrations.

1. To take care of the aſhes of the altar. A perpetual burnt-offering of a lamb was offered morning and evening, and on it the fat of the peace-offering was burned. There were beſides through the day continual ſacrifices: theſe conſumed much wood, the aſhes of which was laid beſide the altar, till the morning, when the prieſt took off his holy garments, and put on his ordinary cloaths, and carried the aſhes into a clean place without the camp. They who are above ſtooping to the meaneſt offices for God's glory, are unfit to miniſter before him.

2. To keep the fire always burning. The fire came down from heaven, and was never permitted to go out. They attended it by night as well as by day; and thus this ſacred fire continued burning till the Babyloniſh captivity. *Note*, (1.) If God hath kindled up the fire of divine love in our hearts, it becomes us day and night to feed it with the fuel of prayer and praiſe. And let us remember, (2.) That when it is kindled, we are under the care of that watchful prieſt, who will keep it burning to eternity.

14. ¶ [h] And this *is* the law of the meat-offering: the ſons of Aaron ſhall offer it before the LORD, before the altar. 15. And he ſhall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat-offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincenſe which *is* upon the meat-offering, and ſhall burn *it* upon the altar, *for* a ſweet ſavour, *even* [i] the memorial of it unto the LORD. 16. And [k] the remainder thereof ſhall Aaron and his ſons eat: with unleavened bread ſhall it be eaten in the holy place: [l] in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they ſhall eat it. 17. It ſhall not be baken with leaven: [m] I have given it *unto them for* their portion of my offerings made by fire: [n] *it is* moſt holy, *as is* the ſin-offering, and as the treſpaſs-offering. 18. All the males among the children of Aaron ſhall eat of it: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the LORD made by fire: [o] Every one that toucheth them ſhall be holy.

[h] Chap. ii. 1. Num. xv. 4.

[i] Chap. ii. 2, 9.

[k] Chap. ii. 3.

[l] Chap. x. 12.

[m] Num. xviii. 9. 10.

[n] Chap. ii. 3. Exod. xxix. 37.

[o] Chap. xxii. 4, 5, 6. Exod. xxix. 37.

v. 14—18. The chief part of the meat-offering made by the people belonged to the prieſts. They are commanded to eat it unleavened, in the holy place, with their ſons only, not their daughters; and both the perſons muſt be free from all ceremonial uncleanneſs, and the utenſils only employed in ſacred uſes. *Note*, (1.) They who ſerve at the altar, ſhould be partakers with the altar. (2.) The miniſters of God muſt not be nice in their diet; unleavened bread was often their food. (3.) Holineſs of heart ſhould always accompany the ſacredneſs of office.

19. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 20. [p] This *is* the offering of Aaron and of his ſons, which they ſhall offer unto the LORD, in the day when

[p] Exod. xxix. 2.

he is anointed; the tenth part of [q] an ephah of fine flour for a meat-offering perpetual, half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night. 21. In a pan it ſhall be made with oil, *and when it is* baken, thou ſhalt bring it in: *and* the baken pieces of the meat-offering ſhalt thou offer *for* a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 22. And the prieſt of his ſons [r] that is anointed in his ſtead, ſhall offer it: *It is* a ſtatute for ever unto the LORD, [s] it ſhall be wholly burnt. 23. For every meat-offering for the prieſt ſhall be wholly burnt: it ſhall not be eaten.

q Exod. xvi. 36.
r Chap. iv. 3.
s Exod. xxix. 25.

v. 19—23. The conſecration meat-offering of the high-prieſt was to be wholly burnt, and it was to be perpetual; either to be offered by every anointed prieſt at his conſecration, or, as the Jews ſay, every day by the high-prieſt continually, with the morning and evening ſacrifice. *Note*, They whom God advances to his ſervice, are bound to a particular and perpetual oblation of themſelves to him.

24. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 25. Speak unto Aaron and to his ſons, ſaying, [t] This *is* the law of the ſin-offering: [u] In the place where the burnt-offering is killed, ſhall the ſin-offering be killed before the LORD: [x] it *is* moſt holy. 26. [y] The prieſt that offereth it for ſin, ſhall eat it: in the holy place ſhall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. 27. Whatſoever ſhall touch the fleſh thereof ſhall be holy: and when there is ſprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou ſhalt waſh that whereon it was ſprinkled, in the holy place. 28. But the earthen veſſel wherein it is ſodden, [z] ſhall be broken: and if it be ſodden in a brazen pot, it ſhall be both ſcoured, and rinſed in water. 29. All the males among the prieſts ſhall eat thereof: it *is* moſt holy. 30. [a] And no ſin-offering whereof *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile *withal* in the holy *place*, ſhall be eaten: it ſhall be burnt in the fire.

t Chap. iv. 2.
u Ibid. i. 3, 5, 11. & iv. 24, 29, 33.
x Ibid. xxi. 22.
y Numb. xviii. 9.
z Chap. xi. 33.
a Chap. iv. 7, 11, 12, 18, 21. & xvi. 27. Heb. xiii. 11.

v. 24—30. In thoſe particular offerings for ſin, on the great day of atonement, or for a prieſt, or the whole congregation where the blood was brought into the tabernacle, no part was to be eaten, but the ſacrifice burnt with fire, tho' in general the ſin-offering belonged to the prieſts. It was to be killed where the burnt-offering was killed, and eaten by them, and their ſons, in the court of the tabernacle; if any blood of it was ſprinkled on their cloaths, it muſt be waſhed out; and the veſſel it was boiled in, if earthen, broken; if braſs, ſcoured and rinſed with water. *Note*, (1.) Every chriſtian, as a ſpiritual prieſt, is fed by the ſacrifices he offers before the Lord. (2.) They who draw near to the table of the Lord, need examine themſelves, leaſt by their prophane approach, the blood of the covenant be found on their garments to condemn them, inſtead of on their conſcience to comfort them.

CHAP. VII.

Here is, 1. *The law of the treſpaſs-offering,* ver. 1—7. *with ſome farther directions concerning the burnt-offering and the meat-offering,* ver. 8, 9, 10. 2. *The law of the peace-offering. The eating of it,* ver. 11—21. *on which occaſion the prohibition of eating of fat or blood is repeated,* ver. 22—27. *And the prieſts ſhare of it,* ver. 28—34. 3. *The concluſion of theſe inſtitutions,* ver. 35—38.

1. LIkewiſe [a] this *is* the law of the treſpaſs-offering: [b] it *is* moſt holy. 2. [c] In the place where they kill the burnt-offering, ſhall they kill the treſpaſs-offering: and the blood thereof ſhall he ſprinkle round about upon the altar. 3. And he ſhall offer of it, [d] all the fat thereof; the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, 4. And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* on them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul *that is* above the liver, with the kidneys, it ſhall he take away. 5. And the prieſt ſhall burn them upon the altar, *for* an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a treſpaſs-offering. 6. [e] Every male among the prieſts ſhall eat thereof: it ſhall be eaten in the holy place: [f] it *is* moſt holy. 7. As the ſin-offering *is,* [g] ſo *is* the treſpaſs-offering: *there is* one law for them: the prieſt that maketh atonement therewith, ſhall have *it.* 8. And the prieſt that offereth any man's burnt-offering, *even* the prieſt ſhall have to himſelf the ſkin of the burnt-offering which he hath offered. 9. And [h] all the meat-offering that is baken in the oven, and all that is dreſſed in the frying-pan, and † in the pan, ſhall be the prieſt's that offereth it. 10. And every meat-offering mingled with oil, and dry, ſhall all the ſons of Aaron have, one *as much* as another.

a Ver. 6. Chap. xiv. 13.
b Ibid. xxi. 22.
c Ibid. i. 3, 5, 11. & iv. 24, 29, 33.
d Chap. iii. 4, 10. & iv. 8, 9. Exod. xxix. 13.
e Numb. xviii. 9, 10.
f Chap. xiv. 13.
g Ibid. vi. 26.
h Chap. ii. 3, 10. Numb. xviii. 9.
† Or on the flat plate or ſlice.

v. 1—10. The treſpaſs-offering was diſpoſed of as the ſin-offering. It was the prieſt's who offered it, as was alſo the hide of the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering which was dreſſed, but the undreſſed meat-offerings were divided among all the prieſts in waiting. *Note*, (1.) They who labour moſt in the ſervice of God, deſerve to be beſt paid. (2.) They who ſerve at the ſame altar, ſhould be careful to communicate one to another of their good things: a covetous prieſt is a monſter in the ſanctuary!

11. And [i] this *is* the law of the ſacrifice of peace-offerings, which he ſhall offer unto the LORD. 12. If he offer it for a thankſgiving, then he ſhall offer with the ſacrifice of thankſgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers [k] anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour fried. 13. Beſides the cakes, he ſhall offer *for* his offering leavened bread, with the ſacrifice of thankſgiving of his peace-offerings. 14. And of it he ſhall offer one out of the whole oblation, *for* an heave-offering unto the LORD, *and* it ſhall be the prieſts that ſprinkleth the blood of the peace-offerings. 15. And the fleſh of the ſacrifice of his peace-offerings for thankſgiving, ſhall be eaten the ſame day that it is offered: he ſhall not leave any of it until the morning. 16. But [l] if the ſacrifice of his offering *be* a vow, or a voluntary offering, it ſhall be eaten the ſame day that he offereth his ſacrifice: and on the morrow alſo the remainder of it ſhall be eaten. 17. But the remainder of the fleſh of the ſacrifice on the third day, ſhall be burnt with fire. 18. And if *any* of the fleſh of the ſacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it ſhall not be accepted, neither ſhall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it ſhall be an abomination, and the ſoul that eateth of it, ſhall bear his iniquity. 19. And the fleſh that toucheth any unclean *thing*, ſhall not be eaten, it ſhall be burnt with fire: and as for the fleſh, all that be clean ſhall eat thereof. 20. But the ſoul that eateth *of* the fleſh of the ſacrifice of peace-offerings, that *pertain* unto the LORD, [m] having his uncleanneſs upon him, even [n] that ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people. 21. Moreover, the ſoul that ſhall touch any unclean *thing*, *as* [o] the uncleanneſs of man, or *any* [p] unclean beaſt, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the fleſh of the ſacrifice of peace-offerings, which *pertain* unto the LORD, even that ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people.

i Chap. iii. 1. & xxii. 18, 21.
k Ibid. ii. 4. Numb. vi. 15.
l Ibid. xix 6, 7, 8.
m Ibid. xv. 3.
n Gen. xvii. 14.
o Chap. xii. & xiii. & 15.
p Ibid. xi. 24, 28.

v. 11—21. Farther directions about peace-offerings. They were offered on occaſion of ſome particular deliverance, or as a vow, or to ſupplicate ſome mercy. With them, leavened bread was offered, as well as the unleavened meat-offering: they muſt be eaten the ſame day they were offered, if a thankſgiving; and at fartheſt the next, if a vow; if ought remained, it muſt be burnt. When the offering of God's part on the altar was made, the reſt was permitted to be eaten at home by the prieſts, and offerers and their families, not having any ceremonial uncleanneſs; only if in removing it to their houſes it touched any unclean thing, it muſt not be eaten, but burnt. Learn hence, (1.) Though we are left at liberty about our peace-offerings, the grateful heart needs no command, but is willing of its own accord. (2.) Let thoſe who come to feaſt before God, examine themſelves, leaſt, inſtead of a bleſſing, they eat and drink their own damnation.

22. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 23. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [q] Ye ſhall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of ſheep, or of goat. 24. And the fat of the † beaſt that dieth of itſelf, and the fat of that which is torn with beaſts, may be uſed in any other uſe: but ye ſhall in no wiſe eat of it. 25. For whoſoever eateth the fat of the beaſt, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, even the ſoul that eateth *it*, ſhall be cut off from his people. 26. [r] Moreover, ye ſhall eat no manner of blood, *whether it be* of fowl, or of beaſt, in any of your dwellings. 27. Whatſoever ſoul *it be* that eateth any manner of blood, even that ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people. 28. ¶

And

q Chap. iii. 17.
† Heb. Carcaſe.
r Gen. ix. 4. Chap. iii. 17. & xvii. 14.

And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 29. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, He that offereth the ſacrifice of his peace-offerings unto the LORD, ſhall bring his oblation unto the LORD, of the ſacrifice of his peace offerings. 30. [s] His own hands ſhall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the fat with the breaſt; it ſhall he bring, that [t] the breaſt may be waved *for* a wave-offering before the LORD. 31. And the prieſt ſhall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breaſt ſhall be Aaron's and his ſons. 32. And the right ſhoulder ſhall ye give unto the prieſt *for* an heave-offering, of the ſacrifices of your peace-offerings. 33. He among the ſons of Aaron that offereth the blood of the peace-offerings, and the fat, ſhall have the right ſhoulder for *his* part. 34. For [u] the wave-breaſt and the heave-ſhoulder have I taken of the children of Iſrael, from off the ſacrifices of their peace-offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the prieſt, and unto his ſons, by a ſtatute for ever, from among the children of Iſrael.

[s] Chap. iii. 3, 4, 9, 14.
[t] Exod. xxix. 24, 27.
[u] Chap. x. 14. Exod. xxix. 28. Numb. xviii. 18. Deut. xviii. 3.

v. 22—34. We have here,

1. The prohibition of fat and blood repeated. They muſt not eat the fat of any beaſt that was offered in ſacrifices, though of the other clean beaſts they might eat the fat; but the blood of every creature is expreſsly forbidden. In reverence to God's altar, they muſt abſtain from the fat, but the atonement for the ſoul rendered the blood ſtill more ſacred.

2. The prieſt's part in the ſacrifice is deſcribed, and the manner of its being preſented: the prieſt cut off the ſhoulder and neck from the beaſt, and laid them with the fat, on the offerer's hands, and he brought them to the door of the tabernacle, and waved them in token of dedication to the Lord. The fat was the Lord's, and burnt; the ſhoulder was the portion of the prieſt who ſacrificed, and the breaſt belonged to the high-prieſt and his family. *Note*, (1.) They who honour God, will have a regard about the becoming maintenance of his miniſters, and ſhare their morſel with them. (2.) The Lord's ſupper is a feaſt upon a ſacrifice, where blood is ſhed, and a feaſt of mercies provided for miniſters and people. Let us then together often keep the feaſt.

35. ¶ This *is the portion* of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his ſons, out of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, in the day *when* he preſented them to miniſter unto the LORD in the prieſts office: 36. Which the LORD commanded to be given them of the children of Iſrael, [x] in the day that he anointed them, *by* a ſtatute for ever, throughout their generations. 37. This *is* the law of the burnt-offering, of the meat-offering, and of the ſin-offering, and of the treſpaſs-offering, and of the conſecrations, and of the ſacrifice of the peace-offerings: 38. Which the LORD commanded Moſes in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Iſrael to offer their oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderneſs of Sinai.

[x] Chap. viii. 12, 30. Exod. xl. 13, 15.

v. 35—38. It was a juſt proviſion thus to care for the ſons of Aaron, and an unalterable law that Iſrael ſhould offer their oblations. God's worſhip and ſervice are ſtill our indiſpenſible duty, and God's miniſters have a right to a worthy portion; which though they may be defrauded of by the impiety of men, they ſhall not fail to find in God, who will remember them for good.

CHAP. VIII.

This chapter gives us an account of the ſolemn and public conſecration of Aaron and his ſons, according to God's appointment, ver. 1—5. (1.) *They were waſhed and dreſſed*, ver. 1—9, 13. (2.) *The tabernacle and the utenſils of it were anointed, and then the prieſts*, ver. 10—12. (3.) *A ſin-offering was offered for them*, ver. 14—17. (4.) *A burnt-offering*, ver. 18—21. (5.) *The ram of conſecration*, ver. 22—30. (6.) *The continuance of this ſolemnity for ſeven days*, ver. 31—36.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Take Aaron and his ſons with him, and [b] the garments, and [c] the anointing oil, and a bullock for the ſin-offering, and two rams, and a baſket of unleavened bread. 3. And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 4. And Moſes did as the LORD commanded him, and the aſſembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 5. And Moſes ſaid unto the congregation, [d] This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded to be done. 6. And Moſes brought Aaron and his ſons, and [e] waſhed them with water. 7. And [f] he put upon him the coat, and girded him with a girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound *it* unto him therewith. 8. And he put the breaſt-plate upon him: alſo [g] he put in the breaſt-plate the Urim and Thummim. 9. And [h] he put the mitre upon his head: alſo upon the mitre, *even* upon his fore-front did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; [i] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 10. [k] And Moſes took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle, and all that *was* therein, and ſanctified them. 11. And he ſprinkled thereof upon the altar ſeven times, and anointed the altar, and all his veſſels, both the laver and his foot, to ſanctify them. 12. [l] And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him to ſanctify him. 13. [m] And Moſes brought Aaron's ſons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and † put bonnets upon them; as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[a] Exod. xxix. 1.
[b] Ibid. xxviii. 2, 4.
[c] Ibid. xxx. 24.
[d] Exod. xxix. 4.
[e] Ibid. ib.
[f] Ibid. xxviii. 4. & xxix. 5.
[g] Ibid. xxviii. 30.
[h] Ibid. xxix. 6.
[i] Ibid. xxviii. 37, &c.
[k] Ibid. xxx. 26.
[l] Chap. xxi. 10, 12. Exod. xxix. 7. & xxx. 30. Pſal. cxxxiii. 2. Ecclus xlv. 15.
[m] Exod. xxix. 8.
† Heb. Bound.

v. 1—13. Aaron and his ſons are here conſecrated. The people are called to the door of the tabernacle, to grace the ſolemnity, and by their prayers, to implore the divine benediction. Moſes, according to God's directions, proceeds in the conſecration; he firſt waſhes them. They who are to preach the efficacy of the blood of Chriſt, muſt firſt themſelves be waſhed by it, and ſhew by their own examples the purity they teach. Aaron is cloathed with the beautiful garments and diadem, and anointed with the holy oil, as is alſo the tabernacle, and all the veſſels of the ſanctuary. *Note*, (1.) Every believer in Jeſus hath brighter robes provided for him, even garments of everlaſting righteouſneſs, and crowns of glory never-fading. (2.) The oil ran down from the high-prieſt's head to the ſkirts of his cloathing: the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghoſt, wherewith our great high-prieſt was anointed, deſcend to every member of his body myſtical, who have an anointing from the Holy One.

14. [n] And he brought the bullock for the ſin-offering, and Aaron and his ſons [o] laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the ſin-offering. 15. And he ſlew *it*, and Moſes took the blood, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and [p] purified the altar; and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and ſanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it. 16. And he took all the fat that *was* upon the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moſes burnt *it* upon the altar. 17. But the bullock and his hide, his fleſh and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp; [q] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 18. [r] And he brought the ram for the burnt-offering: and Aaron and his ſons laid their hands upon the head of the ram. 19. And he killed *it*, and Moſes ſprinkled the blood upon the altar round about. 20. And he cut the ram into pieces, and Moſes burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat. 21. And he waſhed the inwards and the legs in water; and Moſes burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it *was* a burnt-ſacrifice for a ſweet ſavour, *and* an offering made by fire unto the LORD; [s] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 22. ¶ [t] And he brought the other ram, the ram of conſecration: and Aaron and his ſons laid their hands upon the head of the ram. 23. And he ſlew *it*, and Moſes took of the blood of it, and put *it* upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. 24. And he brought Aaron's ſons, and Moſes put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moſes ſprinkled the blood upon the altar round about. 25. And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that *was* upon the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right ſhoulder. 26. [u] And out of the baſket of unleavened bread, that *was* before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat, and upon the right ſhoulder. 27 [x] And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and upon his ſons hands, and waved them *for* a wave-offering before

[n] Exod. xxix. 1, 10.
[o] Chap. i. 4.
[p] Exod. xxix. 36.
[q] Chap. iv. 11. Exod. xxix. 14.
[r] Ibid. 15.
[s] Ibid. 18.
[t] Ibid. 19, 31.
[u] Ibid. 23.
[x] Ibid. 24, &c.

the LORD. 28. And Moſes took them from off their hands, and burnt *them* on the altar upon the burnt-offering; they *were* conſecrations for a ſweet ſavour: [y] it *is* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 29. And [z] Moſes took the breaſt and waved it *for* a wave-offering before the LORD: *for* of the ram of conſecration it was Moſes part; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 30. [a] And Moſes took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which *was* upon the altar, and ſprinkled *it* upon Aaron, *and* upon his garments, and upon his ſons, and upon his ſons garments with him, and ſanctified Aaron, *and* his garments, and his ſons, and his ſons garments with him.

[y] Exod. xxix. 25.
[z] Ibid. 26.
[a] Ibid 21. & xxx. 30.

v. 14—30. They who were to offer ſacrifice for the ſins of others, firſt need make atonement for their own. Nothing fits a miniſter to deal with wounded conſciences, or engages him to have compaſſion to the tempted, ſo much as a humbling ſenſe of his own ſins.

A bullock was offered for a ſin-offering, a ram as a burnt-offering, and another for conſecration; the blood of which was partly ſprinkled on the altar, and partly put upon their right ears, thumbs, and great toes, and on their garments; and a cake of the meat-offering was put into their hands with the wave-ſhoulder, and burnt upon the altar. Learn hence, (1.) That they who are called to the office of the miniſtry, ought to be deeply thankful to God for the honour he puts upon them. (2.) Every prieſt is married to the altar, and engages to give up himſelf wholly to the work of the miniſtry. (3.) We ſhall always miniſter with comfort to others, when we have the blood of ſprinkling ſpeaking peace to our own ſouls.

31. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, and to his ſons, Boil the fleſh at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and there [b] eat it with the bread that *is* in the baſket of conſecrations, as I commanded, ſaying, Aaron and his ſons ſhall eat it. 32. And that which remaineth of the fleſh and of the bread, ſhall ye burn with fire. 33. And ye ſhall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation *in* ſeven days, until the days of your conſecration be at an end: for [c] ſeven days ſhall he conſecrate you. 34. As he hath done this day, *ſo* the LORD hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you. 35. Therefore ſhall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night, ſeven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for ſo I am commanded. 36. So Aaron and his ſons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moſes.

[b] Ibid. 31.
[c] Ibid. xxx. 35. Ezek. xliii. 25.

v. 31—36. Seven days the conſecration laſted; every day the ſame ſacrifices were repeated; and they are enjoined, on penalty of death, not to go out of the tabernacle, but to keep the charge of the Lord day and night; and the mean while, their peace-offerings were to be eaten before the Lord, according to the commandment; all which was exactly performed. *Note*, (1.) They who will ſerve the Lord, muſt learn to endure hardneſs, as good ſoldiers, and to diſengage themſelves from the affairs of this life. (2.) They who have the charge of the Lord, have an awful charge indeed. If through their neglect the ſinner die in his iniquity, his blood will be required at their hands. (3.) When we have once ſolemnly given up ourſelves to God, we muſt never look back. (4.) They who give themſelves up to him, ſhall be ſatisfied with the plenteouſneſs of his houſe. God himſelf will be their portion and exceeding great reward.

CHAP. IX.

Aaron and his ſons immediately enter upon the execution of their office. 1. Moſes (no doubt by a direction from God) appoints a meeting between God and his prieſts, and the repreſentatives of his people, aſſuring them that he would appear to them, ver. 1—7. 2. They meet according to the appointment. (1.) Aaron offers a ſin-offering and a burnt-offering for himſelf, ver. 8—14. and then the offerings for the people, whom he bleſſed in the name of the Lord, ver. 15—22. (2.) God ſignifies his acceptance, 1. Of their perſons, by ſhewing them his glory, ver. 23. 2. Of their ſacrifices, by conſuming them with fire from heaven, ver. 24.

1. AND [a] it came to paſs on the eighth day, *that* Moſes called Aaron and his ſons, and the elders of Iſrael: 2. And he ſaid unto Aaron, [b] Take thee a young calf for a ſin-offering, and [c] a ram for a burnt-offering, without blemiſh, and offer *them* before the LORD. 3. And unto the children of Iſrael thou ſhalt ſpeak, ſaying, [d] Take ye a kid of the goats for a ſin-offering, and a calf, and a lamb, *both* of the firſt year, without blemiſh, for a burnt-offering. 4. Alſo a bullock and a ram, for peace-offerings, to ſacrifice before the LORD; and a meat-offering mingled with oil: for [e] to day the LORD will appear unto you. 5. ¶ And they brought *that* which Moſes commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation: and all the congregation drew near and ſtood before the LORD. 6. And Moſes ſaid, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded that ye ſhould do: and the glory of the LORD ſhall appear unto you. 7. And Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and [f] offer thy ſin-offering, and thy burnt-offering, and make an atonement for thyſelf, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded.

[a] Ezek. xliii. 27.
[b] Chap. iv. 3. & viii. 14.
[c] Ibid. viii. 18.
[d] Chap. iv. 23. Ezra vi. 17.
[e] Ver. 23. Exod. xxix. 43.
[f] Hebr. v. 3. & vii. 27. & ix. 7.

v. 1—7. They who are ordained for the ſervice of the miniſtry, muſt know no idleneſs. Wo to the ſlumbering ſhepherds! Aaron and his ſons muſt immediately, on their conſecration, enter on the ſervice.

1. They muſt begin the work of ſacrificing. As their own ſin would be their firſt concern, a calf of atonement is ordered, and a ram for a burnt-offering. To ſave ourſelves, will beſt enable us to ſave thoſe who hear us: the people alſo are enjoined to bring their offering to Aaron, that he may offer it up, as an atonement for them. *Note*, It is among the deepeſt concerns of a faithful miniſter, to bring the people committed to his care into a ſtate of reconciliation with God.

2. God promiſes to manifeſt an eſpecial diſplay of his glory to them, as a token of his good pleaſure towards them. *Note*, (1.) When we go forth to the work of the miniſtry, under a divine call, God will ſenſibly own our labours to our unſpeakable comfort. (2.) When God's people aſſemble in his worſhip, they ſhall ſee his glory. He will manifeſt himſelf to them, as he doth not to the world.

8. ¶ Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and ſlew the calf of the ſin-offering, which *was* for himſelf. 9. And [g] the ſons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipt his finger in the blood, and [h] put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar. 10. [i] But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul *above* the liver of the ſin-offering he burnt upon the altar; [k] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 11. [l] And the fleſh and the hide he burnt with fire without the camp. 12. And he ſlew the burnt-offering, and Aaron's ſons preſented unto him the blood [m] which he ſprinkled round about upon the altar. 13. [n] And they preſented the burnt-offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head, and he burnt *them* upon the altar. 14. [o] And he did waſh the inwards, and the legs, and burnt *them* upon the burnt-offering on the altar. 15. ¶ And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat which *was* the ſin-offering for the people, and ſlew it, and offered it for ſin, as the firſt. 16. And he brought the burnt-offering, and offered it [p] according to the † manner. 17. And he brought [q] the meat-offering, and ‡ took a handful thereof, and burnt *it* upon the altar, [r] beſide the burnt-ſacrifice of the morning. 18. He ſlew alſo the bullock and the ram, *for* [s] a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, which *was* for the people: and Aaron's ſons preſented unto him the blood (which he ſprinkled upon the altar round about.) 19. And the fat of the bullock, and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth *the inwards*, and the kidneys, and the caul *above* the liver. 20. And they put the fat upon the breaſts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar. 21. And the breaſts and the right ſhoulder Aaron waved *for* [t] a wave-offering, before the LORD; as Moſes commanded. 22. And Aaron lift up his hand towards the people, and [u] bleſſed them: and came down from offering of the ſin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and peace-offerings.

[g] Chap. viii. 15.
[h] See Chap. iv. 7.
[i] Chap. viii. 16.
[k] Ibid. iv. 8.
[l] Ibid. 11. & viii. 17.
[m] Ibid. viii. 19.
[n] Ibid. 20.
[o] Ibid. 21.
[p] Ibid. i. 3, 10.
† Or ordinance.
[q] Chap. ii. 1, 2.
‡ Heb. Filled his hand out of it.
[r] Exod. xxix. 38.
[s] Chap. iii. 1.
[t] Ibid. vii. 34. Exod. xxix. 34.
[u] Numb. vi. 23. Deut. xxi. 5.

v. 8—22. Aaron here begins his miniſtrations, and offers the ſeveral different kinds of ſacrifice, according to the commandment of the Lord. *Note*, In all our miniſtrations, we muſt make his word our rule.—The daily burnt ſacrifice was offered, beſides theſe extraordinary ones. Our ſtated ſeaſons of worſhip muſt never be neglected, becauſe of any extraordinary ſervices or buſineſs. When the whole was finiſhed, he, as high-prieſt on God's behalf, gave his benediction to the people.

Before Chriſt 1490.

Where God accepts our offerings, he will leave a bleſſing behind him.

[x] Gen. iv. 4. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 2 Chron. vii. 1. 2 Mac. ii. 10, 11.

23. And Moſes and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and bleſſed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. 24. And [x] there came a fire out from before the LORD, and conſumed upon the altar the burnt-offering, and the fat: *which* when all the people ſaw, they ſhouted, and fell on their faces.

v. 23, 24. Moſes goes with Aaron into the tabernacle, whether to pray for the promiſed manifeſtation of the divine glory, or to inſtruct him in the ſervice. At their return, they join in their benedictions upon the people who waited at the door of the tabernacle, and God ſealed the bleſſing, 1. By a viſible diſplay of his glory from the holy place. We are not told the manner, but probably in ſome auguſt appearance, like the fiery pillar which filled the ſanctuary the day it was ſet up. *Note,* It is good not to be weary of waiting upon God; a glimpſe of his glory, if but at parting, will amply repay our attendance. 2. There came a fire out from before the Lord, (from the appearance of his glory it ſhould ſeem) and conſumed the ſacrifice; moſt probably the evening ſacrifice now ready to be offered, with the fat of the peace-offerings that were to be burnt upon it. A gracious token of God's acceptance of their offerings, and of his conſtant benediction on thoſe who brought the ſacrifices to that altar, the fire of which now kindled by him, was never permitted to go out. *Note,* (1.) The fire of God's ſpirit in our heart, muſt kindle up unquenchable love, and conſume our vile affections. (2.) Unleſs he gives the holy fire of grace, none of our ſervices can pleaſe him. (3.) If it be kindled, we muſt ſupport it with the daily fuel of the word, meditation and prayer. 3. The people, with holy joy and reverential awe, ſhout and fall proſtrate before the Lord. *Note,* (1.) It is matter of great triumph to experience God's ſenſible preſence with our ſouls. (2.) The more we taſte of God's love, the more humble it will make us.

CHAP. X.

The ſtory of this chapter is as ſad an interruption to the inſtitutions of the levitical law, as that of the golden calf was to the account of the erecting of the tabernacle. Here is, 1. *The ſin and death of Nadab and Abihu, the ſons of Aaron,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The quieting of Aaron under this ſore affliction,* ver. 3. 3. *Orders given and obſerved about the funeral, and mourning,* ver. 4—7. 4. *A command to the prieſts not to drink wine when they went in to miniſter,* ver. 8—11. 5. *The care Moſes took that they ſhould go on with their work, notwithſtanding this ruffle,* ver. 12—20.

[a] Num. iii. 3, 4. & xxvi. 61. 1 Chron. xxiv. 2. [b] Chap. xvi. 12.

1. AND [a] Nadab and Abihu, the ſons of Aaron, [b] took either of them his cenſer, and put fire therein, and put incenſe thereon, and offered ſtrange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. 2. And there went out fire from before the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

v. 1, 2. God who preſcribes his own worſhip, will ſee it obſerved, or execute exemplary judgment on the diſobedient; of which we have an awful inſtance in the puniſhment of Nadab and Abihu.

1. Their ſin was offering ſtrange incenſe; not that which God preſcribed, nor in the way, nor at the time he commanded. They ſeem to have been proud of their new office, and in haſte to run before God called them; not without ſuſpicion that they had drank too freely in their feaſts, and thus ruſhed, in their iniquity, into the preſence of the Lord. A drunken prieſt is a monſter indeed.

2. Their puniſhment; immediate death, in the very act of their rebellion. So God ſtops ſometimes the mouth of the profane with the lie and the oath half uttered, and lets the drunkard fall into eternal death. Fire from the Lord devoured them; not burnt up their bodies, but ſlew them, like lightning, without ſingeing even their garments. Thus damned ſinners, tormented with fire from the preſence of the Lord, continue conſuming, yet unconſumed, in everlaſting burnings.

[c] Exod. xix. Iſa. lii. 11. [d] Exod. vi. 18, 22. Num. iii. 19. [e] Chap. xiii. 45. & xxi. 1, 10. Num. vi. 6. Deut. xxxiii. 9. Ezek. xxiv. 16. [f] Exod. xxviii. 41.

3. Then Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, This *is it* that the LORD ſpake, ſaying, [c] I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified: and Aaron held his peace. 4. And Moſes called Miſhael and Elzaphan, the ſons of [d] Uzziel, the uncle of Aaron, and ſaid unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the ſanctuary, out of the camp. 5. So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moſes had ſaid. 6. And Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, and unto Eleazer, and unto Ithamar his ſons, [e] Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes, leſt you die, and leſt wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole houſe of Iſrael, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled. 7. And ye ſhall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, leſt you die; for [f] the anointing oil of the LORD *is* upon you: and they did according to the word of Moſes.

Before Chriſt 1490.

v. 3—7. An aweful ſtroke this, which muſt ſpread a terror around, and particularly affect Aaron and his family. But Moſes beheld the juſtice of the judgment, and therefore takes the proper means to prevent any interruption in the preſent ſolemnity.

1. He endeavours to ſuggeſt arguments of reſignation to Aaron, from the juſtice of the ſentence, and the glory of God therein manifeſted. God had before often admoniſhed them of being holy in their approaches to him; and if they will not glorify him by obedience to his will, he muſt glorify himſelf by ſome exemplary ſtroke, for a warning to others. *Note,* (1.) God's word will ſurely be fulfilled; and it becomes us to acquieſce in it, however nearly concerned therein. (2.) They who draw near to God, muſt remember what a holy God they have to do with, that they may approach him with reverence and godly fear. (3.) When ſinners, eſpecially wicked miniſters, rob him of his glory, by their impiety and profaneneſs, he will ſometimes make them fearful monuments of his holy vengeance.

2. Aaron held his peace. Deeply touched as he was with the death of his ſons, he acknowledged the juſtice of God, and if He was glorified, dared not complain. *Note,* (1.) When God corrects us, it becomes us to be dumb, and not to open our mouths. We muſt always own, we have leſs than our iniquities deſerve. (2.) If our children are wicked, and God breaks forth upon them, parental tenderneſs muſt be ſwallowed up in approbation of the Divine holineſs.

3. Moſes commands the bodies to be removed. Aaron and his ſons might not touch them, leaſt they be defiled: their other near relations therefore take them up, and carry them without the camp, and bury them in their cloaths. Thus God gave the hoſt a ſolemn warning: if he began at his own prieſts, ſurely no other tranſgreſſors may hope to go unpuniſhed. It were greatly to be wiſhed, that our burying-places, like theirs, were farther removed from our churches. It ſeems both diſhonourable to the houſe of God, and cannot but be hurtful to the living, to make the place of worſhip the receptacle of dead corpſes.

4. Aaron and his ſons are forbid to ſhew any token of mourning, on penalty of death, leaſt they ſhould bring down wrath on all the people. They were now no longer their own, the holy anointing oil was upon them, and therefore all private regards muſt give way to their preſent relation to God. *Note,* (1.) They who would ſerve the Lord without diſtraction, muſt forget their worldly cares and ſorrows, when they appear before him. (2.) To repine at God's judgments, is to rebel againſt his government. (3.) The viſitations of God upon others, ſhould beget in our hearts holy jealouſy for ourſelves, not to provoke the like. (4.) The grace of God will reſtrain all immoderate grief: they who know God doth all things right, will kiſs the rod.

5. Though Aaron might not mourn, the people muſt. That fire that was kindled, might have burnt much farther than theſe. They might ſee herein the mercy of God, who had ſpared them, notwithſtanding their own deſerts; and this would lead them to grieve for their paſt provocations, whilſt they beheld what a fearful thing it was to fall in the hands of that God, who is ſuch a conſuming fire. Judgments on others are bleſſings to us, when they lead us to deeper mourning over our own ſins.

[g] Ezek. xliv. 21. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. i. 7. [h] Jer. xv. 19. Ezek. xxii. 26. & xliv. 23.

8. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Aaron, ſaying, 9. [g] Do not drink wine nor ſtrong drink, thou nor thy ſons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, leſt ye die: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever throughout your generations: 10. And that ye may [h] put difference between holy and unholy; and between unclean and clean: 11. And that ye may teach the children of Iſrael all the ſtatutes which the LORD hath ſpoken unto them by the hand of Moſes.

v. 8—11. Aaron now being conſecrated high prieſt, God immediately addreſſes his commands to him. Wine and ſtrong drink are forbidden the prieſts, whenever they go to miniſter in holy things, for then they needed clear heads, as well as clean hearts, that they might rightly diſtinguiſh between holy and unholy, and their tranſgreſſion is threatned to be death: perhaps their brethren owed their ſin and ſuffering to this. *Note,* (1.) Drunkenneſs is highly criminal in all, but it is in miniſters doubly infamous. (2.) Intemperance is often attended with ſudden death. (3.) It is impoſſible they ſhould teach the people ſobriety, whoſe practice gives a lie to their preaching.

12. And Moſes ſpake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar, and unto Ithamar his ſons that were left, [i] Take the meat-offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it [k] with leaven [l] beſide the altar; for [m] it *is* moſt holy. 13. And ye ſhall eat it in the holy place, becauſe it *is* thy due, and thy ſons due of the ſacrifices of the LORD made by fire: for [n] ſo I am commanded. 14. And [o] the wave-breaſt, and heave-ſhoulder ſhall ye eat in a clean place, thou and thy ſons, and thy daughters with thee: for *they be* thy due, and thy ſons due, *which* are given out of the ſacrifice of peace-offerings of the children of Iſrael. 15. [p] The heave-ſhoulder, and the wave-breaſt ſhall they bring, with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave *it for* a wave-offering before the LORD, and it ſhall be thine, and thy ſons with thee, by a ſtatute for ever, as the LORD hath commanded. 16. ¶ And Moſes diligently ſought [q] the goat of the ſin-offering, and behold, it was burnt: and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the ſons of Aaron, *which were* left *alive*, ſaying, 17. [r] Wherefore have ye not eaten the ſin-offering in the holy place, ſeeing it *is* moſt holy, and *God* hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD? 18. Behold, the blood of it was not brought in, within the holy *place*: ye ſhould indeed have eaten it in the holy *place* [s] as I commanded. 19. And Aaron ſaid unto Moſes, Behold, [t] this day have they offered their ſin-offering, and their burnt-offering before the LORD; and ſuch things have befallen me: and *if* I had eaten the ſin-offering to-day, ſhould it have been accepted in the ſight of the LORD? 20. And when Moſes heard *that*, he was content.

[i] Chap. ii. 3, 10. & v. 13. Ezek. xliv. 29.
[k] Chap. ii. 4, 5, 11. & vi. 16, 17.
[l] Ibid vi. 16.
[m] Ibid. ii. 3, 10. & vi. 16.
[n] Ibid. ii. 3. & vi. 16.
[o] Exod. xxix. 24. Chap. vii. 31, 34.
[p] Ibid. 29, 30.
[q] Ibid. ix. 3.
[r] Ibid. vi. 26, 29.
[s] Ibid. 26.
[t] Ibid. ix. 8.

v. 12—20. The ſervice muſt proceed, though the breach was ſo ſad. The remaining prieſts muſt learn greater caution, and ſince they are ſpared, uſe greater diligence. 1. Moſes repeats the former directions concerning the offerings that were to be eaten before the Lord, and thoſe that were to be eaten at home at their houſes. Miſtakes of ignorance are dangerous, though not ſo deadly as preſumptuous ſins. 2. An error committed in the ſin-offering, *v.* 16. they had burnt the whole without the camp, though the blood had not been brought into the holy place, contrary to the injunction, *chap.* vi. 26. 3. Moſes enquires concerning it, and is angry with Aaron and his ſons. Holy zeal in God's cauſe, is laudible: but though we condemn, we ſhould hear what may be alledged in mitigation of the offender. 4. Aaron's excuſe: he pleads his affliction, *v.* 19. and how could he feaſt with ſuch a mourning heart? He ſubmitted as an Iſraelite, but he felt as a father. *Note*, (1.) We are not forbidden to feel, though we are forbidden to find fault with God's dealings. (2.) Worldly ſorrows are often great interruptions to our holy duties: the bitter remembrance breaks in, and diſcompoſes us. 5. Moſes is ſatisfied with the plea: either he thought the matter juſtified by Aaron's circumſtances, or that as his intention was to pleaſe God in what he did, the Lord would pardon his infirmity. Jeſus our high-prieſt, is a gracious maſter, and is tenderly touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

CHAP. XI.

This chapter appoints the different kinds of fleſh, which might or might not be eaten. 1. Of beaſts, *ver.* 1—8. 2. Of fiſhes, *ver.* 9—12. 3. Of birds, *ver.* 13—19. 4. Of creeping things, *which are diſtinguiſhed into two ſorts*, flying creeping things, *ver.* 20—28. *and creeping things* upon the earth, *ver.* 29—43. *And the law concludes with the general rule of holineſs, and reaſons for it*, ver. 44—47.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes and to Aaron, ſaying unto them, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [a] Theſe *are* the beaſts which ye ſhall eat among all the beaſts that *are* on the earth. 3. Whatſoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed, *and* cheweth the cud among the beaſts, that ſhall ye eat. 4. Nevertheleſs, theſe ſhall ye not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: *as* the camel, becauſe he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you. 5. And the cony, becauſe he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you. 6. And the hare, becauſe he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you. 7. And [b] the ſwine, though he divide the hoof, and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; [c] he *is* unclean to you. 8. Of their fleſh ſhall ye not eat, and their carcaſe ſhall ye not touch: [d] they *are* unclean unto you.

[a] Deut. xiv. 4. Acts x. 12, 14.
[b] 2 Mac. vi. 18. & vii. 1.
[c] Iſa. lxv. 4. & lxvi. 3, 17.
[d] See Acts x. 14, 15. & xv. 29. Rom. xiv. 14, 17. 1 Cor. viii. 8. Col. ii. 21.

v. 1—8. The diſtinction of clean and unclean beaſts was before the flood, and, no doubt, continued afterwards, *See Gen.* xliii. 32. God now expreſsly preſcribes rules to his people in this point, *v.* 3; and if they had no other reaſon than God's will, it were ſufficient for them to acquieſce in his diſpoſition. But the beaſts forbidden were either for the moſt part unwholeſome, or diſagreeable; and God would make the fence ſtrong between his people and the nations around them, who either regarded many of theſe beaſts as holy to their deities, or uſed them for food, which would prevent the Iſraelites from frequenting their houſes and tables. *Note*, (1.) God's people muſt always be ſeparated from the world. Though theſe ceremonial diſtinctions are ceaſed, yet the table of the godly man, and of the profane, will afford as great a difference ſtill; not only in the temperance of the one and the luxury of the other, but alſo in the prayer which conſecrates the one, and the impious neglect of it which profanes the other. (2.) The beaſts which anſwered but half the deſcription, *v.* 3, were unclean. Thoſe who with ſome marks of children of God, carry evident proofs of the want of others, are only almoſt Chriſtians, and as ſurely periſh, unleſs altogether ſuch, as they who make no pretences to religion. (3.) They muſt not touch, when dead at leaſt, what they may not eat when living, *v.* 8. If we keep not out of the way of temptation, we ſhall not long keep from evil.

9. ¶ Theſe ſhall ye eat of all that *are* in the waters: whatſoever hath fins and ſcales in the waters, in the ſeas, and in the rivers, them ſhall ye eat. 10. And all that have not fins nor ſcales in the ſeas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing, which *is* in the waters, they *ſhall be* an abomination unto you. 11. They ſhall be even an abomination unto you: ye ſhall not eat of their fleſh, but you ſhall have their carcaſes in abomination. 12. Whatſoever hath no fins nor ſcales in the waters, that *ſhall be* an abomination unto you.

v. 9—12. A general rule concerning fiſhes, *v.* 9, 10. We never heard of unclean fiſh before; but the Jews, who were to be kept ſeparate for God, were fenced with peculiar reſtraints. *Note*, God's Iſrael will ſtill deny themſelves many things, in which others indulge themſelves.

13. ¶ And theſe *are they which* ye ſhall have in abomination among the fowls, they ſhall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, and the oſſifrage, and the oſpray, 14. And the vulture, and the kite after his kind: 15. Every raven after his kind: 16. And the owl, and the night-hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind: 17. And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, 18. And the ſwan, and the pelican, and the gier-eagle, 19. And the ſtork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

v. 13—19. The fowls which are unclean, are particularly ſpecified. Their names are uncertain now, and the inſtitution has ceaſed. They were in general birds of prey, or unclean feeders, or birds of the night. *Note*, God's people muſt not be rapacious, nor allow themſelves in any deeds of impurity or darkneſs. Theſe are ſtill forbidden things.

20. All fowls that creep going upon *all* four *ſhall be* an abomination unto you. 21. Yet theſe may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon *all* four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth: 22. *Even* theſe of them ye may eat: [e] the locuſt after his kind, and the bald locuſt after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the graſhopper after his kind. 23. But all *other* flying creeping things, which have four feet, *ſhall be* an abomination unto you. 24. And for theſe ye ſhall be unclean: whoſoever toucheth the carcaſe of them ſhall be unclean until the even. 25. And whoſoever beareth *ought* of the carcaſe of them, ſhall [f] waſh his clothes, and be unclean until the even. 26. *The carcaſes* of every beaſt which divideth the hoof, and *is* not cloven-footed, nor cheweth

[e] Mat. iii. 4. Mark i. 6.
[f] Chap. xiv. 8, 27. & xxviii. 40. Num. xix. 10, 22. & xxxi. 24.

the cud, *are* unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them ſhall be unclean. 27. And whatſoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beaſts, that go on *all* four, thoſe *are* unclean unto you: whoſo toucheth their carcaſe, ſhall be unclean until the even. 28. And he that beareth the carcaſe of them, ſhall waſh his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they *are* unclean unto you. 29. ¶ Theſe alſo *ſhall be* unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth: the weaſel, and [g] the mouſe, and the tortoiſe after his kind. 30. And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the ſnail, and the mole. 31. Theſe *are* unclean to you among all that creep; whoſoever doth touch them when they be dead, ſhall be unclean until the even. 32. And upon whatſoever *any* of them when they are dead doth fall, it ſhall be unclean, whether *it be* any veſſel of wood, or raiment, or ſkin, or ſack, whatſoever veſſel *it be*, wherein *any* work is done, it muſt be put into water, and it ſhall be unclean until the even; ſo it ſhall be cleanſed. 33. And every earthen veſſel whereinto *any* of them falleth, whatſoever *is* in it ſhall be unclean, and [h] ye ſhall break it. 34. Of all meat which may be eaten, *that* on which *ſuch* water cometh, ſhall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every *ſuch* veſſel, ſhall be unclean. 35. And every *thing*, whereupon *any part* of their carcaſe falleth, ſhall be unclean; *whether it be* oven, or ranges for pots, they ſhall be broken down; *for* they *are* unclean, and ſhall be unclean unto you. 36. Nevertheleſs, a fountain or pit, † wherein there *is* plenty of water, ſhall be clean: but that which toucheth their carcaſe ſhall be unclean. 37. And if *any part* of their carcaſe fall upon any ſowing ſeed which is to be ſown; it *ſhall be* clean. 38. But if *any* water be put upon the ſeed, and *any part* of their carcaſe fall thereon; it *ſhall be* unclean unto you. 39. And if any beaſt of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcaſe thereof ſhall be unclean until the even. 40. [i] And he that eateth of the carcaſe of it, ſhall waſh his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he alſo that beareth the carcaſe of it, ſhall waſh his clothes, and be unclean until the even. 41. And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, *ſhall be* an abomination: it ſhall not be eaten. 42. Whatſoever goeth upon the belly, and whatſoever goeth upon *all four*, or whatſoever ‡ hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye ſhall not eat: for they *are* an abomination.

[g] Iſa. lxvi. 17.

[h] Chap. vi. 28. & xv. 12.

† Heb. A gathering together of water.

[i] Chap. xvii. 15. & xxii. 8. Deut. xiv. 21. Ezek. iv. 14. & xliv. 31.

‡ Heb. Doth multiply feet.

v. 20—42. Further laws concerning inſects, *v.* 20—23. Flying creeping animals are all forbidden, and particular injunctions given concerning their carcaſes. Every one who touched them was unclean; and whatever they touched or fell upon muſt be waſhed, or, if earthen, muſt be broken, and the liquor ſpilt, except it be a fountain or pit, where there was plenty of water. And if a clean beaſt die, he who removed him was unclean till the even that he waſhed himſelf. In all which, God's Iſrael muſt learn the neceſſity of a holy walk and converſation. We ought at leaſt to be as careful of moral defilement, as they were of ceremonial.

43. [k] Ye ſhall not make † yourſelves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither ſhall ye make yourſelves unclean with them, that ye ſhould be defiled thereby. 44. For I *am* the LORD your God: ye ſhall therefore ſanctify yourſelves, and [l] ye ſhall be holy, for I *am* holy: neither ſhall ye defile yourſelves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 45. For I *am* the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye ſhall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy. 46. This *is* the law of the beaſts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: 47. To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beaſt that may be eaten, and the beaſt that may not be eaten.

[k] Chap. xx. 25.

† Heb. Your ſouls.

[l] Chap. xix. 2. & xx. 7. 1 Theſ. iv. 7. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

v. 43—47. The great reaſon of all theſe injunctions is here given: Be ye holy, for I am holy. God deſigns in his ordinances to ſanctify his people for himſelf; and he who had ſeparated them, by bringing them forth from Egypt, might well enjoin them thus to ſeparate themſelves from the heathen around them. *Note*, (1.) They who are God's people, deſire conformity to him in holineſs. (2.) For this end they carefully obſerve all his inſtitutions, that in the means of grace they may grow in grace. (3.) We need be thankful that all theſe ceremonies are aboliſhed, and that now nothing is unclean of itſelf. When their forbidden meat comes on our tables, it ſhould excite freſh gratitude. (4.) Let us beware only of making that unholy by intemperance or forgetfulneſs of God, which in itſelf is good, when ſanctified by the word of God and prayer.

CHAP. XII.

The ceremonial uncleanneſs of women in childbirth, ver. 1—5. *And their purification from that uncleanneſs*, ver. 6—8.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [a] If a woman have conceived ſeed, and born a man-child, then ſhe ſhall be unclean ſeven days; according to the days of the ſeparation for her infirmity ſhall ſhe be unclean. 3. And [b] in the eighth day, the fleſh of his foreſkin ſhall be circumciſed. 4. And ſhe ſhall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days: ſhe ſhall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the ſanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. 5. But if ſhe bear a maid-child, then ſhe ſhall be unclean two weeks, as in her ſeparation, and ſhe ſhall continue in the blood of her purifying threeſcore and ſix days.

[a] Luke ii. 22.

[b] Gen. xvii. 12. Luke i. 59. & ii. 21. John vii. 22.

v. 1—5. Women in child-bed were ceremonially unclean; as were alſo their attendants. If the child were a male, they were counted unclean ſeven days, till the child was circumciſed. If a female, fourteen; during which their huſbands came not near them; and thirty-three days more for a ſon, and twice as long for a daughter, they were ſeparated from the ſanctuary, and from all holy things. As the woman was firſt in the tranſgreſſion, ſhe ſuffers by child-bearing; and her ſeparation from the ſanctuary ſhews us the juſt deſert of every ſoul that now comes into the world, who is more than ceremonially unclean, even born in ſin, and conceived in wickedneſs, and therefore deſerving death from the womb.

6. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a ſon, or for a daughter; ſhe ſhall bring a lamb † of the firſt year for a burnt-offering, and [c] a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a ſin-offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the prieſt: 7. Who ſhall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her, and ſhe ſhall be cleanſed from the iſſue of her blood. This *is* the law for her that hath born a male or a female. 8. And if † ſhe be not able to bring a lamb, then ſhe ſhall bring [d] two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt-offering, and the other for a ſin-offering: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for her, and ſhe ſhall be clean.

† Heb. A ſon of his year.

[c] Ver. viii. Luke ii. 24.

† Heb. Her hand find not ſufficiency of.

[d] Ver. 6.

v. 6—8. When her days were fulfilled, ſhe muſt bring her offerings: 1. A thankſgiving for mercies; and a great mercy it is to be delivered from the pain and peril of child-birth. 2. A ſacrifice for her ſin. They who come from the bed of labour, have need to acknowledge the ſin that makes their ſufferings, and their impatience or unthankfulneſs under them.

The offering was according to the quality of the perſons; for the rich, a lamb and a pigeon; for the poor, a pair of pigeons or turtles. The mother of our Lord was reduced to the meaneſt ſacrifice; but it was her honour, that ſhe bore him, who taketh away the ſin of the world.

CHAP. XIII.

The ceremonial uncleanneſs of leproſy. (1.) *Rules by which the prieſt muſt judge whether a man had the leproſy or no*, 1. *If it was a ſwelling, a ſcab, or a bright ſpot*, ver. 1—17. 2. *If it was a bile*, ver. 18—23. 3. *If it was an inflammation*, ver. 24—28. 4. *If it was in the head or beard*, ver. 29—37. 5. *If it was a bright ſpot*, ver. 38, 39. 6. *If it was in a bald head*, ver. 40—44. (2.) *Direction is given how the leper muſt be diſpoſed of*, ver. 45, 46. (3.) *Concerning the leproſy in garments*, ver. 47—59.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron, ſaying, 2. When a man ſhall have in the ſkin of his fleſh a † riſing, a ſcab, or bright ſpot, and it be in the ſkin of his fleſh *like* the plague of leproſy, [a] then he

† Or ſwelling.

[a] Deut. xvii. 8. xxiv. 8.

ſhall be brought unto Aaron the prieſt, or unto one of
his ſons the prieſts. 3. And the prieſt ſhall look on the
plague in the ſkin of the fleſh: and *when* the hair in
the plague is turned white, and the plague in ſight *be*
deeper than the ſkin of his fleſh; it *is* a plague of leproſy:
and the prieſt ſhall look on him, and pronounce him
unclean. 4. If the bright ſpot *be* white in the ſkin of
his fleſh, and in ſight *be* not deeper than the ſkin, and
the hair thereof be not turned white; then the prieſt ſhall
ſhut up *him that hath* the plague, ſeven days. 5. And
the prieſt ſhall look on him the ſeventh day: and behold,
if the plague in his ſight be at a ſtay, *and* the plague
ſpread not in the ſkin; then the prieſt ſhall ſhut him up
ſeven days more. 6. And the prieſt ſhall look on him
again the ſeventh day: and behold, *if* the plague *be*
ſomewhat dark, and the plague ſpread not in the ſkin;
the prieſt ſhall pronounce him clean: it *is but* a ſcab, and
he ſhall waſh his clothes, and be clean. 7. But if the
ſcab ſpread much abroad in the ſkin, after that he hath
been ſeen of the prieſt for his cleanſing; he ſhall be ſeen
of the prieſt again. 8. And *if* the prieſt ſee, that behold
the ſcab ſpreadeth in the ſkin, then the prieſt ſhall
pronounce him unclean: it *is* a leproſy. 9. ¶ When the
plague of leproſy is in a man, then he ſhall be brought
unto the prieſt. 10. And the prieſt ſhall ſee *him*: and
behold, *if* the riſing *be* white in the ſkin, and it have
turned the hair white, and *there be* † quick raw fleſh in the
riſing; 11. It *is* an old leproſy in the ſkin of his fleſh,
and the prieſt ſhall pronounce him unclean, and ſhall not
ſhut him up: for he *is* unclean. 12. And if a leproſy
break out abroad in the ſkin, and the leproſy cover all the
ſkin of *him that hath* the plague, from his head even to
his foot, whereſoever the prieſt looketh; 13. Then the
prieſt ſhall conſider: and behold, *if* the leproſy have covered
all his fleſh, he ſhall pronounce *him* clean *that hath*
the plague: it is all turned white: he *is* clean. 14. But
when raw fleſh appeareth in him, he ſhall be unclean.
15. And the prieſt ſhall ſee the raw fleſh, and pronounce
him to be unclean: *for* the raw fleſh *is* unclean: it *is* a
leproſy. 16. Or if the raw fleſh turn again, and be
changed unto white, he ſhall come unto the prieſt: 17.
And the prieſt ſhall ſee him: and behold, *if* the plague
be turned into white, then the prieſt ſhall pronounce *him*
clean *that hath* the plague: he *is* clean.

† Heb. The quickening of living fleſh.

v. 1—17. We have here the treatment of the plague of leproſy. This ſeems to have been rather an uncleanneſs, than a diſeaſe; and, if a diſeaſe, not of the ſame kind with what at preſent paſſes under this name, but inflicted by the hand of God as a puniſhment, and therefore coming more properly under the inſpection of the prieſt than the phyſician. In it he was to uſe the greateſt circumſpection and deliberation. Raſh cenſures, or haſty concluſions, ill become God's miniſters. God lays down his rule of judgment. By the word of God muſt every man's ſpiritual eſtate be determined. Not every ſpot or ſore was a leproſy: if it were no more than ſkin-deep, nor had ſpread after being ſhut up, the perſon is clean. Infirmities attend the beſt of God's people; but every ſpot is not reprobacy. But if, after being ſhut up, it were deep, and ſpread, then he was pronounced unclean. Scandalous ſins are a juſt cauſe of excluſion from the church of God; and when, inſtead of mending after reproof, the evil ſpreads, then there is little hope. No time need be ſpent in waiting, where raw fleſh appeared in the ſore. Pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs are evident marks of a confirmed ſtate of ſpiritual leproſy. But if he were white all over, he was pronounced clean. They who ſee and feel their univerſal depravity and corruption, will come to Chriſt to be made whole. After inſpection, though clean, he muſt waſh his clothes. We need not only have our ſins once pardoned thro' the blood of the Lamb, but muſt every day come to the ſame fountain, to waſh away the ſpots which daily appear upon us.

18. ¶ The fleſh alſo, in which, *even* in the ſkin thereof
was a bile, and is healed, 19. And in the place of the bile
there be a white riſing, or a bright ſpot white, and ſomewhat
reddiſh, and it be ſhewed to the prieſt; 20. And if
when the prieſt ſeeth it, behold, it *be* in ſight lower than
the ſkin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the prieſt
ſhall pronounce him unclean: it *is* a plague of leproſy
broken out of the bile. 21. But if the prieſt look on it,
and behold, *there be* no white hairs therein, and *if* it be
not lower than the ſkin, but *be* ſomewhat dark; then the
prieſt ſhall ſhut him up ſeven days. 22. And if it ſpread
much abroad in the ſkin, then the prieſt ſhall pronounce
him unclean; it *is* a plague. 23. But if the bright ſpot
ſtay in his place, *and* ſpread not, it *is* a burning bile; and
the prieſt ſhall pronounce him clean. 24. ¶ Or if there be
any fleſh, in the ſkin whereof *there is* † a hot burning, and
the quick *fleſh* that burneth have a white bright ſpot, ſomewhat
reddiſh, or white; 25. Then the prieſt ſhall look
upon it: and behold, *if* the hair in the bright ſpot be turned
white, and it *be* in ſight deeper than the ſkin; it *is* a
leproſy broken out of the burning: wherefore the prieſt
ſhall pronounce him unclean: it *is* the plague of leproſy.
26. But if the prieſt look on it, and behold, *there be* no
white hair on the bright ſpot, and it *be* no lower than the
other ſkin, but *be* ſomewhat dark; then the prieſt ſhall
ſhut him up ſeven days. 27. And the prieſt ſhall look
upon him the ſeventh day: *and* if it be ſpread much abroad
in the ſkin, then the prieſt ſhall pronounce him unclean:
it *is* the plague of leproſy. 28. And if the bright ſpot
ſtay in his place, *and* ſpread not in the ſkin, but it *be* ſomewhat
dark; it *is* a riſing of the burning, and the prieſt
ſhall pronounce him clean: for it *is* an inflammation of
the burning. 29. ¶ If a man or woman hath a plague
upon the head or the beard; 30. Then the prieſt ſhall
ſee the plague: and behold, if it *be* in ſight deeper than
the ſkin, and *there be* in it a yellow thin hair; then the
prieſt ſhall pronounce him unclean: it *is* a dry ſcall, *even*
a leproſy upon the head or beard. 31. And if the prieſt
look on the plague of the ſcall, and behold, it *be* not in
ſight deeper than the ſkin, and *that there is* no black hair
in it; then the prieſt ſhall ſhut up *him that hath* the plague
of the ſcall, ſeven days. 32. And in the ſeventh day
the prieſt ſhall look on the plague: and behold, *if* the
ſcall ſpread not, and there be in it no yellow hair, and the
ſcall *be* not in ſight deeper than the ſkin; 33. He ſhall be
ſhaven, but the ſcall ſhall he not ſhave: and the prieſt ſhall
ſhut up *him that hath* the ſcall ſeven days more. 34. And
in the ſeventh day the prieſt ſhall look on the ſcall: and behold,
if the ſcall be not ſpread in the ſkin, nor *be* in ſight
deeper than the ſkin, then the prieſt ſhall pronounce him
clean: and he ſhall waſh his clothes, and be clean. 35.
But if the ſcall ſpread much in the ſkin after his cleanſing;
36. Then the prieſt ſhall look on him; and behold,
if the ſcall be ſpread in the ſkin, the prieſt ſhall not ſeek
for yellow hair: he *is* unclean: 37. But if the ſcall be in
his ſight at a ſtay, and *that* there is black hair grown up
therein; the ſcall is healed, he *is* clean: and the prieſt
ſhall pronounce him clean.

† Heb. A burning of fire.

v. 18—37. What bodies of corruption do we bear about with us? How abominable to be proud of that which may be ſhortly ſo loathſome? Other appearances of leproſy are mentioned in an old ulcer, or burn, or ſcald-head, with directions for the prieſt's judgment. *Note*, (1.) Old ſins breaking out afreſh, are a bad ſymptom of the uncured leproſy of ſin. (2.) A froward ſpirit, like the burn in the fleſh, continuing unſubdued, is a plain proof of the unſoundneſs of the heart.

38. ¶ If a man alſo or a woman have in the ſkin of their
fleſh bright ſpots, *even* white bright ſpots; 39. Then the
prieſt ſhall look: and behold, *if* the bright ſpots in the
ſkin of their fleſh *be* darkiſh white; it *is* a freckled ſpot *that*
groweth in the ſkin: he *is* clean. 40. And the man whoſe
† hair is fallen off his head, he *is* bald: *yet is* he clean. 41.
And he that hath his hair fallen off, from the part of his
head toward his face, he *is* forehead-bald: *yet is* he clean.
42. And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead,
a white reddiſh ſore; it *is* a leproſy ſprung up in his bald
head or his bald forehead. 43. Then the prieſt ſhall look
upon it; and behold, *if* the riſing of the ſore *be* white
reddiſh in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the
leproſy appeareth in the ſkin of the fleſh; 44. He *is* a
leprous man, he *is* unclean: the prieſt ſhall pronounce
him utterly unclean, his plague *is* in his head. 45. And
the leper in whom the plague *is*, his clothes ſhall be rent,
and his head bare, and he ſhall put a covering upon his
upper lip, and ſhall cry [b] Unclean, unclean. 46. All the
days wherein the plague *ſhall be* in him, he ſhall be defiled;
he *is* unclean: [c] he ſhall dwell alone, without the
camp *ſhall* his habitation *be*.

† Heb. Head is pilled.

[b] See Job xl. 4. Iſa. vi. 5. & lxiv. 6.

[c] Num. v. 2. & xii. 14. 2 Kings vii. 3. & xv. 5. 2 Chron. xxvi. 21.

v. 38—46. A bald head, or freckled face, muſt not be miſtaken for leproſy. Not every failing is the proof of a bad heart.

But if in the bald head the plague is found, he is utterly unclean. A conſcience defiled with ſin makes a man unclean; but a head filled with infidelity, and enmity againſt the goſpel, for the moſt part renders the ſtate utterly deſperate. The leper convicted muſt,

1. Cry out, Unclean, unclean; and no doubt it was an exceeding bitter cry, when from that hour, in a ſort, he was buried alive, by his excluſion from human ſociety, and removal from the congregation of God's people. Every ſoul convinced of ſin will adopt the leper's cry, and own himſelf, through actual ſin, and more eſpecially through original corruption, unclean, unclean, juſtly deſerving to be caſt out from God to all eternity.

2. He muſt dwell alone, or only with lepers like himſelf, without the camp, and none muſt approach him, for fear of defilement. *Note*, (1.) It is dangerous to come into the company of open ſinners, leſt, ſomehow, by ſeeing and partaking of their ſins, we partake of their plagues. (2.) The ſoul that dies in an unconverted ſtate, with the leproſy of ſin not cured by the blood of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of the Living God, will be for ever baniſhed from the preſence of God and his people, and ſhut up with ſinners like himſelf in the belly of hell.

47. ¶ The garment alſo, that the plague of leproſy *is* in, *whether it be* a woollen garment, or a linen garment, 48. Whether *it be* in the warp, or woof, of linen or of woollen, whether in a ſkin, or in any † thing made of ſkin; 49. And if the plague be greeniſh or reddiſh in the garment, or in the ſkin, either in the warp or in the woof, or in any ‡ thing of ſkin: it *is* a plague of leproſy, and ſhall be ſhewed unto the prieſt. 50. And the prieſt ſhall look upon the plague, and ſhut up *it that hath* the plague ſeven days. 51. And he ſhall look on the plague on the ſeventh day: if the plague be ſpread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a ſkin, *or* in any work that is made of ſkin; the plague *is* a fretting leproſy: it *is* unclean. 52. He ſhall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of ſkin, wherein the plague is: for it *is* a fretting leproſy: it ſhall be burnt in the fire. 53. And if the prieſt ſhall look, and behold, the plague be not ſpread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of ſkin; 54. Then the prieſt ſhall command that they waſh *the thing* wherein the plague *is*, and he ſhall ſhut it up ſeven days more. 55. And the prieſt ſhall look on the plague after that it is waſhed: and behold, *if* the plague have not changed his colour, and the plague be not ſpread, it *is* unclean, thou ſhalt burn it in the fire: it *is* fret inward, † *whether* it *be* bare within or without. 56. And if the prieſt look, and behold the plague *be* ſomewhat dark after the waſhing of it, then he ſhall rend it out of the garment, or out of the ſkin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof: 57. And if it appear ſtill in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of ſkin, it *is* a ſpreading *plague*: thou ſhalt burn that wherein the plague *is*, with fire. 58. And the garment, either warp, or woof, or whatſoever thing of ſkin *it be*, which thou ſhalt waſh, if the plague be departed from them, then it ſhall be waſhed the ſecond time, and ſhall be clean. 59. This *is* the law of the plague of leproſy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp, or woof, or any thing of ſkins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean.

† Heb. Work of.

‡ Heb. Veſſel, or inſtrument.

‡ Heb. Whether it be bald in the head thereof, or in the forehead thereof.

v. 47—59. The plague of leproſy in garments ſeems to be peculiar to Iſrael, and a judgment from heaven upon the perſon or family. The examination is preſcribed, and the deciſion to be made with deliberation, as before. *Note*, The leproſy of ſin cleaves to the very garments which cover us, when abuſed to the ſervice of pride and luſt; and not the garments, but they that wear them, muſt ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

CHAP. XIV.

We have here, 1. *The ſolemn declaration of the leper's being clean, with the ſignificant ceremony attending it*, ver. 1—9. 2. *The ſacrifices which he was to offer to God eight days after*, ver. 10—32. 3. *The management of a houſe, in which appeared ſigns of a leproſy*, ver. 33—53. *And the concluſion and ſummary of this whole matter*, ver. 54—57.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. This ſhall be the law of the leper, in the day of his cleanſing: [a] he ſhall be brought unto the prieſt: 3. And the prieſt ſhall go forth out of the camp; and the prieſt ſhall look, and behold, *if* the plague of leproſy be healed in the leper; 4. Then ſhall the prieſt command to take for him that is to be cleanſed, two † birds alive, *and* clean, and [b] cedar-wood, and [c] ſcarlet, and [d] hyſſop. 5. And the prieſt ſhall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen veſſel, over running water. 6. As for the living bird, he ſhall take it and the cedar-wood, and the ſcarlet, and the hyſſop, and ſhall dip them and the living bird, in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water. 7. And he ſhall ſprinkle upon him that is to be cleanſed from the leproſy ſeven times, and ſhall pronounce him clean, and ſhall let the living bird looſe ‡ into the open field. 8. And he that is to be cleanſed ſhall waſh his clothes, and ſhave off all his hair, and [e] waſh himſelf in water, that he may be clean: and after that he ſhall come into the camp, and [f] ſhall tarry abroad out of his tent ſeven days. 9. But it ſhall be on the ſeventh day, that he ſhall ſhave all his hair off his head, and his beard, and his eye-brows, even all his hair he ſhall ſhave off, and he ſhall waſh his clothes, alſo he ſhall waſh his fleſh in water, and he ſhall be clean.

[a] Mat. viii. 2, 4. Mark i. 40, 44. Luke v. 12, 14. & xvii. 14.

† Or ſparrows.

[b] Num. xix. 6.

[c] Heb. ix. 19.

[d] Pſ. li. 7.

‡ Heb. Upon the face of the field.

[e] Chap. xi. 25.

[f] Num. xii. 15.

v. 1—9. As the leproſy was a diſeaſe of God's inflicting, it ſeems only curable by the ſame hand. No methods of cure are preſcribed therefore, but the method of cleanſing. *Note*, It is not in the power of means or miniſters to cure men of ſin: this muſt be effected by the power and grace of Chriſt alone.

In caſe any leper appeared to be cured, the prieſt went forth to him to view him. Though a ſinner be for a time given up to his own heart's luſts, yet, when he is by grace deſirous of returning, we muſt charitably lend our helping hand. After careful inſpection, if he appeared clean, the prieſt was to pronounce him ſuch, after the proper ſolemnities were performed. We may neither be too ſuſpicious, nor too credulous, reſpecting the reality of grace in men's hearts, but, after ſerious obſervation, judge according to our beſt knowledge, agreeably to God's word.

1. Two birds are to be brought, one of them killed, his blood mixed with water: the other, with the ſcarlet wool and hyſſop, were dipped therein, and the leper ſprinkled therewith ſeven times: then the living bird was let looſe, and the prieſt pronounced the perſon clean. *Note*, (1.) If our ſoul be ſprinkled with that blood and water which flowed from the Saviour's wounded ſide, then ſhall we be preſented before the tabernacle of God, without ſpot, or blemiſh, or any ſuch thing. (2.) They who are delivered from the power and guilt of ſin, as birds eſcaped from the ſnare of the fowler, rejoice in their liberty, and fly away on wings of faith and love towards the heavens.

2. The perſon cleanſed was to waſh, and ſhave off all his hair, and this repeatedly at the end of ſeven days, that ſo no remaining infection might be lodged about him. Thus they who are ſaved by the blood of Jeſus, will give diligence to cleanſe themſelves, that they may appear, in the congregation of God's people, to have put off the old man, and to have put on the new man, which after Chriſt is renewed in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

10. And on the eighth day he ſhall take two he-lambs without blemiſh, and one ewe-lamb † of the firſt year without blemiſh, and three tenth-deals of fine flour *for* [g] a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil. 11. And the prieſt that maketh *him* clean, ſhall preſent the man that is to be made clean, and thoſe things before the LORD, *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 12. And the prieſt ſhall take one he-lamb, [h] and offer him for a treſpaſs-offering, and the log of oil, and [i] wave them *for* a wave-offering before the LORD. 13. And he ſhall ſlay the lamb [k] in the place where he ſhall kill the ſin-offering, and the burnt-offering, in the holy place: for [l] as the ſin-offering *is* the prieſts, *ſo is* the treſpaſs-offering: [m] it *is* moſt holy. 14. And the prieſt ſhall take *ſome* of the blood of the treſpaſs-offering, and the prieſt ſhall put *it* [n] upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleanſed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. 15. And the prieſt ſhall take *ſome* of the log of oil, and pour *it* into the palm of his own left hand: 16. And the prieſt ſhall dip his right finger in the oil that *is* in his left hand, and ſhall ſprinkle of the oil with his finger, ſeven times before the LORD. 17. And of the reſt of the oil that is in his hand, ſhall the prieſt put upon

† Heb. The daughter of her year.

[g] Chap. ii. 1. Num. xv. 4, 15.

[h] Chap. iv. 2.

[i] Exod. xxix. 24.

[k] Ibid. xxix. 11 Chap. iii. 8. & iv. 4, 24.

[l] Chap. vii. 7.

[m] Chap. vii. 1, 6.

[n] Exod. xxix. 20. Chap. viii. 23.

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upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleanſed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the treſpaſs-offering. 18. And the remnant of the oil that *is* in the prieſt's hand, he ſhall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleanſed: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him before the LORD. 19. And [o] the prieſt ſhall offer the ſin-offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleanſed from his uncleanneſs, and afterward he ſhall kill the burnt-offering. 20. And the prieſt ſhall offer the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering upon the altar: and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him, and he ſhall be clean.

[o] Chap. iv. 20, 26, 35. & ver. 29, 31.

v. 10—20. When God hath reſtored us again from ſickneſs, or journeyings to viſit his tabernacle, it becomes us to appear with our grateful acknowledgments for the mercies. The leper was before pronounced clean; now he is introduced as ſuch to the door of the congregation, with his three lambs, a meat-offering, and log (about a half-pint) of oil. The treſpaſs-offering is firſt killed, and the blood applied to the ear, thumb, and toe of the perſon; ſignifying now his being wholly clean, and typifying the application of the blood of atonement by Jeſus, the great high-prieſt, to the conſcience by faith: then the oil is put upon it, in token of his healing. The oil of Divine Grace ever accompanies the ſprinkling of atoning blood. Hereupon his ſin-offering is accepted for atonement; and his burnt-offering is a ſweet ſavour of thankſgiving, and now he is free among the people. *Note*, They whoſe ſin is pardoned, and whoſe leproſy is cleanſed, however before they may have been ſeparated from the faithful, will now be received with joy into the boſom of the church, and every true Iſraelite.

21. And [p] if he *be* poor, and † cannot get ſo much; then he ſhall take one lamb *for* a treſpaſs-offering, ‡ to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering, and a log of oil: 22. And two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, ſuch as he is able to get; and the one ſhall be a ſin-offering, and the other a burnt-offering. 23. And he ſhall bring them on the eighth day, for his cleanſing unto the prieſt, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD. 24. And the prieſt ſhall take the lamb of the treſpaſs-offering, and the log of oil, and the prieſt ſhall wave them *for* a wave-offering before the LORD. 25. And he ſhall kill the lamb of the treſpaſs-offering, and the prieſt ſhall take *ſome* of the blood of the treſpaſs-offering, and put *it* upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleanſed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. 26. And the prieſt ſhall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand. 27. And the prieſt ſhall ſprinkle with his right finger, *ſome* of the oil that *is* in his left hand, ſeven times before the LORD. 28. And the prieſt ſhall put of the oil that *is* in his hand, upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleanſed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot; upon the place of the blood of the treſpaſs-offering. 29. And the reſt of the oil that *is* in the prieſt's hand, he ſhall put upon the head of him that is to be cleanſed, to make an atonement for him before the LORD. 30. And he ſhall offer the one of the turtle-doves, or of the young pigeons, ſuch as he can get: 31. *Even* ſuch as he is able to get, the one *for* a ſin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, with the meat-offering. And the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him that is to be cleanſed before the LORD. 32. This *is* the law *of him* in whom *is* the plague of leproſy, [q] whoſe hand is not able to get *that which pertaineth* to his cleanſing.

[p] Chap. v. 7.
† Heb. His hand reach not.
‡ Heb. For a waving.
[q] Ver. 21.

v. 21—32. A gracious proviſion for the poor. God ever teſtifies an eſpecial care for them, and provides, that however deſtitute they may be of things temporal, they ſhall not lack the ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus.

33. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes and unto Aaron, ſaying, 34. When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a poſſeſſion, and I put the plague of leproſy in a houſe of the land of your poſſeſſion; 35. And he that owneth the houſe ſhall come and tell the prieſt, ſaying, It ſeemeth to me *there is* as it were a plague in the houſe: 36. Then the prieſt ſhall command that they † empty the houſe, before the prieſt go *into it* to ſee the plague: that all that *is* in the houſe be not made unclean: and afterward the prieſt ſhall go in to ſee the houſe. 37. And he ſhall look on the plague, and behold, *if* the plague *be* in the walls of the houſe, with hollow ſtrakes, greeniſh or reddiſh, which in ſight *are* lower than the wall; 38. Then the prieſt ſhall go out of the houſe, to the door of the houſe, and ſhut up the houſe ſeven days. 39. And the prieſt ſhall come again the ſeventh day, and ſhall look: and behold, *if* the plague be ſpread in the walls of the houſe; 40. Then the prieſt ſhall command that they take away the ſtones in which the plague *is*, and they ſhall caſt them into an unclean place without the city. 41. And he ſhall cauſe the houſe to be ſcraped within round about, and they ſhall pour out the duſt that they ſcrape off, without the city, into an unclean place. 42. And they ſhall take other ſtones, and put *them* in the place of thoſe ſtones, and he ſhall take other morter, and ſhall plaiſter the houſe. 43. And if the plague come again, and break out in the houſe, after that he hath taken away the ſtones, and after he hath ſcraped the houſe, and after it is plaiſtered: 44. Then the prieſt ſhall come, and look: and behold, *if* the plague be ſpread in the houſe, it *is* a fretting leproſy in the houſe: it *is* unclean. 45. And he ſhall break down the houſe, the ſtones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the morter of the houſe: and he ſhall carry *them* forth out of the city into an unclean place. 46. Moreover, he that goeth into the houſe all the while that it is ſhut up, ſhall be unclean until the even. 47. And he that lieth in the houſe, ſhall waſh his clothes: and he that eateth in the houſe, ſhall waſh his clothes. 48. And if the prieſt ‡ ſhall come in, and look *upon it*, and behold, the plague hath not ſpread in the houſe, after the houſe was plaiſtered: then the prieſt ſhall pronounce the houſe clean, becauſe the plague is healed. 49. And he ſhall take to cleanſe the houſe [r] two birds, and cedar-wood, and ſcarlet, and hyſſop. 50. And he ſhall kill the one of the birds in an earthen veſſel, over running water. 51. And he ſhall take the cedar-wood and the hyſſop, and the ſcarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the ſlain bird, and in the running water, and ſprinkle the houſe ſeven times. 52. And he ſhall cleanſe the houſe with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar-wood, and with the hyſſop, and with the ſcarlet. 53. But he ſhall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the houſe: and it ſhall be clean.

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† Heb. Prepare.
‡ Heb. In coming in ſhall come in.
[r] See ver. 4.

v. 33—53. Leproſy of the houſe, like that of the cloaths, appears to be a judgment from God. On information, the prieſt muſt examine; if the infected ſtones taken out ſtopped its ſpreading, it was cleanſed and ſpared: if inveterate, it was pulled down, and made a dunghill. *Note*, (1.) Maſters of families ſhould look well to their houſes, and ſeek to ſtop the firſt appearances of ſin. (2.) We ſhould remove thoſe from us, whoſe converſation is dangerous and infectious. (3.) If error or corruption have ſeized generally upon a church or ſtate, their ruin is near. (4.) Becauſe corruption hath got ſuch hold of our body, perfect deliverance from it can only be obtained by deſtruction of the fleſhly tabernacle in the grave.

54. This *is* the law for all manner of plague of leproſy and [s] ſcall. 55. And for the leproſy of a garment, and of an houſe, 56. And for a riſing, and for a ſcab, and for a bright ſpot: 57. To teach † when *it is* unclean, and when *it is* clean: this *is* the law of leproſy.

[s] Chap. xiii. 30.
† Heb. In the day of the unclean, and in the day of the clean.

v. 54—57. The particular notice taken of this plague of leproſy, ſhould teach us, if ceremonial defilement was ſo odious, how much more abominable the filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit is in the eyes of a Holy God, and how much need we have to cleanſe ourſelves from theſe, that we may be veſſels fit and meet for the maſter's uſe.

CHAP. XV.

Laws concerning ceremonial uncleanneſſes contracted by bodily diſeaſe, or ſome natural incidents, and this either, 1. *in men,* ver. 1—18. *Or,* 2. *In women,* ver. 19—33. *We need not be at all curious in explaining theſe antiquated laws; it is enough if we obſerve their general deſign; but we have need to be very cautious, leſt* *ſin take occaſion by the commandment to become more exceeding ſinful; and exceeding ſinful it is, when luſt is kindled by ſparks of fire from God's altar. The caſe is bad with the ſoul when it is putrified by that which ſhould purify it.*

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and to Aaron, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [a] When any man hath a † running iſſue out of his fleſh, becauſe of his iſſue he *is* unclean. 3. And this ſhall be his uncleanneſs in his iſſue: whether his fleſh run with his iſſue, or his fleſh be ſtopped from his iſſue: it *is* his uncleanneſs. 4. Every bed whereon he lieth that hath the iſſue is unclean: and every ‡ thing whereon he ſitteth, ſhall be unclean. 5. And whoſoever toucheth his bed, ſhall waſh his clothes, and [b] bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 6. And he that ſitteth on *any* thing whereon he ſat that hath the iſſue, ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 7. And he that toucheth the fleſh of him that hath the iſſue, ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 8. And if he that hath the iſſue ſpit upon him that is clean; then he ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 9. And what ſaddle ſoever he rideth upon that hath the iſſue, ſhall be unclean. 10. And whoſoever toucheth any thing that was under him, ſhall be unclean until the even: and he that beareth *any of* thoſe things, ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 11. And whomſoever he toucheth that hath the iſſue (and hath not rinſed his hands in water) he ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 12. And [c] the veſſel of earth that he toucheth which hath the iſſue, ſhall be broken: and every veſſel of wood ſhall be rinſed in water. 13. And when he that hath an iſſue is cleanſed of his iſſue; then [d] he ſhall number to himſelf ſeven days for his cleanſing, and waſh his clothes, and bathe his fleſh in running water, and ſhall be clean. 14. And on the eighth day [e] he ſhall take to him two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the prieſt. 15. And the prieſt ſhall offer them, the one *for* a ſin-offering, and the other *for* a burnt-offering; and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him before the LORD, for his iſſue.

[a] Num. v. 2.
† Or, Running of the reins.
‡ Or veſſel.
[b] See Chap. ix. 25. & xiv. 8, 27. & xxviii. 40. Num. xix. 10, 22. & xxxi. 24.
[c] Chap. vi. 28. & xi. 32, 33.
[d] Chap. xiv. 10.
[e] Chap. xiv. 22.

v. 1—15. The euphemiſm of the ſcripture is beautiful, and to be imitated. Even when it ſpeaks of evil things, it is in ſuch a way as to avoid exciting evil ideas.

The loathſome diſeaſe here mentioned is uſually the conſequence and puniſhment of impurity, leaving a rotten carcaſs, and a guilty conſcience. It rendered a man incapable of appearing at the ſanctuary, it made him ſhunned by every body around him, and whatever he touched was unclean. When he was healed he waſhed, and after ſeven days waiting gave full confirmation of his cure, he might bring his ſacrifice. *Note,* (1.) Though the ſervants of their luſts may count it a light affair to be cut off from the congregation of the Lord, where they ſeldom care to appear, they will find it a terrible thing to be cut off from it in eternity. (2.) Nothing wars more dangerouſly againſt the ſoul than fleſhly luſts. (3.) The company of ſuch perſons are more to be avoided than of him that hath the plague. (4.) Yet the vileſt need not deſpair; when he returns to the blood of Jeſus, there is hope in his end.

16. And [f] if any man's ſeed of copulation go out from him, then he ſhall waſh all his fleſh in water, and be unclean until the even. 17. And every garment and every ſkin whereon is the ſeed of copulation, ſhall be waſhed with water, and be unclean until the even. 18. The woman alſo with whom man ſhall lie with ſeed of copulation, they ſhall *both* bathe *themſelves* in water, and be unclean until the even.

[f] Deut. xxiii. 10.

v. 16—18. Even what may be involuntary in ſleep is not without ceremonial defilement; and uſually moral guilt is involved therein, from impure imaginations before entertained. *Ver.* 18. ſeems not to relate to the uſe of the marriage-bed, but to a perſon diſeaſed as above-deſcribed.

19. ¶ And [g] if a woman have an iſſue, *and* her iſſue in her fleſh be blood, ſhe ſhall be † put apart ſeven days: and whoſoever toucheth her ſhall be unclean until the even. 20. And every thing that ſhe lieth upon in her ſeparation, ſhall be unclean: every thing alſo that ſhe ſitteth upon, ſhall be unclean. 21. And whoſoever toucheth her bed, ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 22. And whoſoever toucheth any thing that ſhe ſat upon, ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 23. And if it *be* on *her* bed, or on any thing whereon ſhe ſitteth, when he toucheth it; he ſhall be unclean until the even. 24. And [h] if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he ſhall be unclean ſeven days; and all the bed whereon he lieth, ſhall be unclean. 25. And [i] if a woman have an iſſue of her blood many days, out of the time of her ſeparation, or if it run beyond the time of her ſeparation; all the days of the iſſue of her uncleanneſs ſhall be as the days of her ſeparation: ſhe *ſhall be* unclean. 26. Every bed whereon ſhe lieth all the days of her iſſue, ſhall be unto her as the bed of her ſeparation: and whatſoever ſhe ſitteth upon ſhall be unclean, as the uncleanneſs of her ſeparation. 27. And whoſoever toucheth thoſe things ſhall be unclean, and ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even. 28. But if ſhe be cleanſed of her iſſue, then ſhe ſhall number to herſelf ſeven days, and after that ſhe ſhall be clean. 29. And on the eighth day ſhe ſhall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the prieſt, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 30. And the prieſt ſhall offer the one *for* a ſin-offering, and the other *for* a burnt-offering; and the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for her before the LORD, for the iſſue of her uncleanneſs. 31. Thus ſhall ye ſeparate the children of Iſrael from their uncleanneſs; that they die not in their uncleanneſs, when they defile my tabernacle that *is* among them. 32. This *is* the law of him that hath an iſſue, and *of him* whoſe ſeed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith: 33. And of her that is ſick of her flowers, and of him that hath an iſſue, of the man, and of the woman, and of him that lieth with her which is unclean.

[g] Chap. xii. 7.
† Heb. In her ſeparation.
[h] Chap. xx. 18.
[i] Matt. ix. 20. Mark v. 25. Luke viii. 43.

v. 19—33. The ſame uncleanneſs and its effects were occaſioned by the iſſues of women, whether natural, or diſeaſed, and to be atoned for in the ſame way. It was death thus to approach the ſanctuary. And hereby veneration and awe was kept up in their minds for the tabernacle, and more for that holy God who dwelt in it; if even natural or involuntary infirmities were offenſive, how much had they need fear to provoke his holineſs by wilful impurities? Though theſe ordinances have ceaſed with the worldly ſanctuary, the uſe of them is permanent. To warn us of the defiling nature of ſin, to engage us to keep the body as well as the ſoul pure for the Lord; and thus to be always ready to appear before him, whether in his tabernacle on earth, or before his throne in heaven.

CHAP. XVI.

The inſtitution of the annual ſolemnity of the day of atonement, or expiation has much of the goſpel in it, Heb. ix. 7, &c. *The whole ſervice of the day is committed to the high-prieſt.* (1.) *He muſt never come into the moſt holy place but upon this day,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *He muſt come dreſſed in the linen garments,* ver. 4. (3.) *He muſt bring a ſin-offering and a burnt-offering for himſelf,* ver. 3. *offer his ſin-offering,* ver. 6—11. *then go within the vail with ſome of the blood of his ſin-offering, burn incenſe, and ſprinkle the blood before the mercy-ſeat,* ver. 12, 13, 14. (4.) *Two goats muſt be provided for the people, lots caſt upon them, and,* 1. *One of them muſt be a ſin-offering for the people,* ver. 5, 7, 8, 9. *and the blood of it muſt be ſprinkled before the mercy-ſeat,* ver. 15, 16, 17. *And then ſome of the blood of both the ſin-offerings muſt be ſprinkled upon the altar,* ver. 18, 19. 2. *The other muſt be a ſcape-goat,* ver. 10. *the ſins of Iſrael muſt be confeſſed over him, and then he muſt be ſent away into the wilderneſs,* ver. 20, 21, 22. *and he that led him away muſt be ceremonially unclean.* (5.) *The burnt offerings were then to be offered, the fat of the ſin-offerings burnt on the altar, and their fleſh burnt without the camp,* ver. 23, 24, 25, 27, 28. (6.) *The people were to obſerve the day religiouſly by a holy reſt, and holy mourning for ſin; and this was to be a ſtatute for ever,* ver. 29—34.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes after [a] the death of the two ſons of Aaron, when they offered

[a] Chap. x. 2.

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ed before the LORD, and died: 2. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that [b] he come not at all times into the holy *place* within the vail, before the mercy-ſeat, which *is* upon the ark; that he die not: for [c] I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-ſeat. 3. Thus ſhall Aaron come into the holy *place*; [d] with a young bullock for a ſin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering. 4. [e] He ſhall put on the holy linen coat, and he ſhall have the linen breeches upon his fleſh, and ſhall be girded with the linen girdle, and with the linen mitre ſhall he be attired: theſe *are* holy garments; therefore [f] ſhall he waſh his fleſh in water, and *ſo* put them on.

[b] Exod. xxx. 10. Chap. xxiii. 27. Heb. ix. 7.
[c] Exod. xl. 35. 1 Kings viii. 12.
[d] Chap iv. 3.
[e] Exod. xxviii. 39, 43. Chap. vi. 10.
[f] Exod. xxx. 20.

v. 1—4. Aaron had ſuſtained a heavy loſs in his two ſons, and might well fear to miniſter before ſuch a jealous God. He is therefore now to begin to make the annual atonement for himſelf and his houſe, as well as the people. One day in a year only muſt he come before the mercy-ſeat, where God appeared in the cloud; and then alone, with the blood of the ſin-offering, in his ordinary garments of ſervice, to denote that, as a ſinner, he was on a footing with his brethren. Such was the bondage, darkneſs, and diſtance of that diſpenſation. But now, ſince Jeſus is once for us entered, every believer hath boldneſs and acceſs to the mercy-ſeat continually; and, inſtead of fearing death from the preſence of the Lord, finds his nearneſs the true and happy life of his ſoul.

5. And he ſhall take of the congregation of the children of Iſrael, two kids of the goats for a ſin-offering, and one ram for a burnt-offering. 6. And Aaron ſhall offer his bullock of the ſin-offering, which *is* for himſelf, and [g] make an atonement for himſelf, and for his houſe. 7. And he ſhall take the two goats, and preſent them before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8. And Aaron ſhall caſt lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for † the ſcape-goat. 9. And Aaron ſhall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot ‡ fell, and offer him *for* a ſin-offering. 10. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the ſcape-goat, ſhall be preſented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, *and* to let him go for a ſcape-goat into the wilderneſs. 11. And Aaron ſhall bring the bullock of the ſin-offering which *is* for himſelf, and ſhall make an atonement for himſelf, and for his houſe, and ſhall kill the bullock of the ſin-offering, which *is* for himſelf. 12. [h] And he ſhall take a cenſer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of [i] ſweet incenſe, beaten ſmall, and bring *it* within the vail. 13. And he ſhall put the incenſe upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incenſe may cover the mercy-ſeat that *is* upon the teſtimony, that he die not. 14. And [k] he ſhall take of the blood of the bullock, and [l] ſprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy-ſeat, eaſtward: and before the mercy-ſeat ſhall he ſprinkle of the blood with his finger ſeven times.

[g] Heb. vii. 27, 28. & ix. 7.
† Heb. Azazel.
‡ Heb. went up.
[h] Chap. x. 1.
[i] Exod. xxx. 34.
[k] Heb. ix. 13, 25. & x. 4.
[l] Chap. iv. 6.

v. 5—14. The whole buſineſs of this day pertained to the high-prieſt alone; or, in caſe of ſickneſs or uncleanneſs, to his deputy. After the daily burnt ſacrifice (which always was offered after dreſſing the lamps and burning incenſe) he began the extraordinary ſervice with changing his garments and waſhing, which was often repeated; he then brought his ſin-offering for himſelf, his hands being laid on the head of the bullock, with ſolemn confeſſion of his own ſins, and thoſe of his houſe. The two goats for the people's ſin-offering were next preſented before the Lord; lots are caſt on them, and the ſcape-goat a ſecond time preſented. Then the bullock for the ſin-offering was killed, and whilſt the blood was ſtirred to keep it fluid, Aaron carried a cenſer with incenſe within the vail, the ſmoke and perfume of which filled the place: on this he retired, and immediately returned with the blood of his ſin-offering, and with his finger ſprinkled it ſeven times before the mercy-ſeat. *Note*, Jeſus, our better high-prieſt, is for us entered into the holy place, with nobler blood, even his own; an atonement which, once offered, is compleat and everlaſting; and having no perſonal ſins to atone for, he hath by one oblation perfected his people for ever. Bleſſed be God for ſuch an high-prieſt!

15. ¶ Then ſhall he kill the goat of the ſin-offering that *is* for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and ſprinkle it upon the mercy-ſeat, and before the mercy-ſeat. 16. And [m] he ſhall make an atonement for the holy *place*, becauſe of the uncleanneſs of the children of Iſrael, and becauſe of their tranſgreſſions in all their ſins: and ſo ſhall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that † remaineth among them, in the midſt of their uncleanneſs. 17. [n] And there ſhall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himſelf, and for his houſhold, and for all the congregation of Iſrael. 18. And he ſhall go out unto the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make an atonement for it, and ſhall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about. 19. And he ſhall ſprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger ſeven times, and cleanſe it, and hallow it from the uncleanneſs of the children of Iſrael.

[m] See Exod. xxix. 36. Heb. ix. 23.

Before Chriſt 1490.

† Heb. dwelleth.
[n] Luke i. 10.

v. 15—19. Having made atonement for his own ſins and his houſe, the people's ſin-offering is ſlain, with the blood of which he again returns into the moſt holy place, ſprinkling it as before; and when he comes out he muſt mix the blood of the bullock with that of the goat, and ſprinkle the outer tabernacle therewith ſeven times, and with his finger put ſome of this blood mixed around the golden altar of incenſe on its horns, to ſignify the purifying of all theſe from the uncleanneſs contracted by ſtanding in the midſt of ſuch a people. During this whole ſolemnity all the prieſts ſtood without, as unworthy to enter till the atonement had thus been made. *Note*, (1.) Our moſt ſolemn ſervices need pardon; even our prayers and duties muſt be ſprinkled with the blood of Jeſus. (2.) When Jeſus gave himſelf for us, of the people there was none with him. The work was all his own, and to him be all the glory of it aſcribed.

20. ¶ And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he ſhall bring the live goat: 21. And Aaron ſhall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confeſs over him all the iniquities of the children of Iſrael, and all their tranſgreſſions in all their ſins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and ſhall ſend *him* away by the hand of † a fit man into the wilderneſs. 22. And the goat ſhall bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a land ‡ not inhabited: and he ſhall let go the goat in the wilderneſs. 23. And Aaron ſhall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and ſhall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy *place*; and ſhall leave them there. 24. And he ſhall waſh his fleſh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt-offering, and the burnt-offering of the people, and make an atonement for himſelf, and for the people. 25. And [o] the fat of the ſin-offering ſhall he burn upon the altar. 26. And he that let go the goat for the ſcape-goat, ſhall waſh his clothes, and [p] bathe his fleſh in water, and afterward come into the camp. 27. [q] And the bullock *for* the ſin-offering, and the goat *for* the ſin-offering, whoſe blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy *place*, ſhall *one* carry forth without the camp, and they ſhall burn in the fire their ſkins, and their fleſh, and their dung. 28. And he that burneth them, ſhall waſh his clothes, and bathe his fleſh in water, and afterward he ſhall come into the camp.

† Heb. A man of opportunity.
‡ Heb. of ſeparation.
[o] Chap. iv. 10.
[p] Chap. xv. 5.
[q] Chap. iv. 12, 21. & vi. 30. Heb. xiii. 11.

v. 20—28. The work of reconciliation within the tabernacle being finiſhed; the ſcape-goat is brought to the door of the tabernacle. Aaron, with both his hands on his head, confeſſes all the tranſgreſſions of the people, and transfers them to this devoted beaſt. Thus all the iniquities of his Iſrael are laid on their great Redeemer and Saviour by imputation. The goat hereupon was ſent and let go into the wilderneſs, bearing their burdens. And thus hath our divine Lord carried away our ſins into the land of forgetfulneſs; where they ſhall never more be found to condemn us. The high-prieſt hereupon, atonement being compleated, put off his robes of humiliation, and waſhed. After this he put on his beautiful garments, and offered the burnt-offerings of thankſgiving: for pardoning mercies juſtly deſerve ſacrifices of praiſe. The fleſh of the ſin-offerings was then removed, and burnt without the camp; for our ſins, when forgiven of God, muſt be renounced and caſt out by us. The perſons who performed this office, as well as he who led the ſcape-goat into the wilderneſs, were unclean, and muſt waſh their clothes and bathe, before they preſumed to come into the camp. Such is the defiling nature of ſin. At laſt the high-prieſt, having brought out the cenſer from within the vail, retires; and the evening ſacrifice cloſes the ſolemnity of the day.

29. ¶ And *this* ſhall be a ſtatute for ever unto you: *that* [r] in the ſeventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, ye ſhall afflict your ſouls, and do no work at all; *whether it be* one of your own country, or a ſtranger that ſojourneth among you. 30. For on that day ſhall *the prieſt* make an atonement for you, to cleanſe you, *that* ye may be clean from all your ſins before the LORD. 31. It *ſhall be* a ſabbath of reſt unto you; and ye ſhall afflict your ſouls by a ſtatute for ever: 32. [s] And the prieſt whom he ſhall anoint, and whom he ſhall † conſecrate, to miniſter in the prieſt's office in his father's ſtead, ſhall make the atonement, and ſhall put on the linen clothes, *even* the holy garments. 33. And he ſhall make an atonement for the holy ſanctuary, and he ſhall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar: and he ſhall make an atonement for the prieſts, and for all the people of the congregation. 34. And this ſhall be an everlaſting ſtatute unto you, [t] to make an atonement for the children of Iſrael, for all their ſins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[r] Exod. xxx. 10. Chap. xxiii. 27. Num. xxix. 7.
[s] Chap. iv. 3, 5, 16.
† Heb. fill his hand.
[t] Exod. xxx. 10. Heb. ix. 7.

v. 29—34. The perpetual obſervation of this ſolemnity is rejoined; it muſt be a day of ſacred reſt, and faſting, and humiliation. *Note,* (1.) They who receive the pardon of ſins will ever loath and abhor themſelves in their own ſight, even when God is pacified towards them. (2.) Whilſt we are in this body we ſhall be continually repenting and grieving for our daily and yearly tranſgreſſions: though the redemption is compleated, we are yet in the valley of humiliation; 'tis only when in glory ſin ſhall be utterly deſtroyed in us, as well as for us, that ſorrow and ſighing ſhall be no more. (3.) We muſt never forget that 'tis not our own repentant ſorrows, but the efficacy of our divine ſacrifice that can cleanſe us from all our ſins, and open a way for us into the preſence of God.

CHAP. XVII.

No ſacrifice muſt be offered by any other but the prieſts, nor any where but at the door of the tabernacle, and this upon pain of death, ver. 1—9. *no blood muſt be eaten, nor any thing that dieth of itſelf,* 10—16.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto Aaron, and unto his ſons, and unto all the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded, ſaying, 3. What man ſoever *there be* of the houſe of Iſrael, [a] that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat in the camp, or that killeth *it* out of the camp, 4. [b] And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD, before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood ſhall be imputed unto that man, he hath ſhed blood, and that man ſhall be cut off from among his people: 5. To the end that the children of Iſrael may bring their ſacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the prieſt, and offer them *for* peace-offerings unto the LORD. 6. And the prieſt ſhall ſprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a [c] ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 7. And they ſhall no more offer their ſacrifices [d] unto devils, after whom they [e] have gone a whoring: This ſhall be a ſtatute for ever unto them throughout their generations. 8. ¶ And thou ſhalt ſay unto them, Whatſoever man *there be* of the houſe of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers which ſojourn among you, that offereth a burnt-offering or ſacrifice, 9. And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD, even that man ſhall be cut off from among his people.

[a] See Deut. xii. 5, 15, 21.
[b] Deut. xii. 13.
[c] Exod. xxix. 18. Chap. iv. 31.
[d] Deut. xxxii. 17. 2 Chron. xi. 15. Iſaiah xiii. 21. Rev. ix. 20.
[e] Ezek. xxiii. 8.

v. 1—9. Before the erection of the tabernacle they had liberty to ſacrifice where they choſe, and this had opened the door to abominable idolatries: to prevent this ſpiritual adultery for the future, God having now eſpouſed them to himſelf, and ſet up his abode among them,

1. They are commanded to kill all their ſacrifices at the door of the tabernacle, and no where elſe. Some have thought that every beaſt that was deſigned for common food, is included in the command, but that ſeems rather improbable. 2. Death is the puniſhment of the tranſgreſſor, whether an Iſraelite or a proſelyte. God will thus remove temptation to idolatry from them, and unite them in one holy worſhip to himſelf, the only worthy object of worſhip. *Note,* (1.) As there is no acceſs to or acceptance with God but through Jeſus Chriſt, all our ſervices muſt be brought to him, to be preſented before the Lord. (2.) We ſhould maintain unity of worſhip: our unhappy variances are much to be lamented; whilſt we are praying for their healing, let us endeavour to be drawing nearer to each other in love, which will be the readieſt way to unite us, that with one mouth, as well as one heart, we may glorify God.

¶ 10. [f] And whatſoever man *there be* of the houſe of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers that ſojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; [g] I will even ſet my face againſt that ſoul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11. For the life of the fleſh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your ſouls: for [h] it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the ſoul. 12. Therefore I ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, No ſoul of you ſhall eat blood, neither ſhall any ſtranger that ſojourneth among you, eat blood. 13. And whatſoever man *there be* of the children of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers that ſojourn among you, † which [i] hunteth and catcheth any beaſt or fowl that may be eaten; he ſhall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with duſt: 14. [k] For *it is* the life of all fleſh, the blood of it *is* for the life thereof: therefore I ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, Ye ſhall eat the blood of no manner of fleſh: for the life of all fleſh *is* the blood thereof: whoſoever eateth it, ſhall be cut off. 15. [l] And every ſoul that eateth ‡ that which died *of itſelf*, or that which was torn *with beaſts* (*whether it be* one of your own country, or a ſtranger) [m] he ſhall both waſh his clothes, [n] and bathe *himſelf* in water, and be unclean until the even: then ſhall he be clean. 16. But if he waſh *them* not, nor bathe his fleſh, then he ſhall bear his iniquity.

[f] Gen. ix. 4. Chap. vii. 26. & xix. 26. Deut. xii. 16, 23. and xv. 23. 1 Sam. xiv. 33. Ezek. xliv. 7.
[g] Jer. xliv. 11.
[h] Heb. ix. 22.
† Heb. that hunteth any hunting.
[i] Chap. vii. 26.
[k] Gen. ix. 4. Deut. xii. 23.
[l] Exod. xxii. 31. Chap. xxii. 8. Ezek. xliv. 31.
‡ Heb. A carcaſe.
[m] Chap. xi. 25.
[n] Chap. xv. 5.

v. 10—16. The former law, concerning blood, is again repeated: God threatens to ſet his face againſt the tranſgreſſor; and woe to the man againſt whom his wrath be kindled, yea but for a moment. The reaſon is, becauſe the blood, which is the life of the beaſt, is appointed as the atonement for the ſouls of men. The ſinner's life was forfeited to God; He accepted the life of the beaſt inſtead of it. Becauſe of this vicarious ſubſtitution, the blood was ſacred. But ſince the true blood is ſhed, which cleanſeth from all ſin, the reaſon of the prohibition ceaſes. And they who are now called to feed upon Chriſt's blood ſpiritually, need fear no uncleanneſs from eating blood, properly prepared for food, and temperately uſed.

v. 13. Some precepts are added, with reſpect to the ſame thing; they muſt cover the blood of the beaſt or fowl they took in hunting. And becauſe what died of itſelf, or was torn of a beaſt, could not be cleanſed properly of its blood, they muſt abſtain from it. If they did ignorantly eat it, they were ceremonially defiled, and muſt waſh themſelves and their clothes, and be unclean till even; neglect of which being wilful diſobedience, was to be puniſhed ſeverely. *Note,* If our iniquity be not taken away by the waſhing of regeneration, it will be a burden we can never bear ourſelves, but which muſt cruſh us into the belly of hell.

CHAP. XVIII.

Here is, 1. *A general law againſt all conformity to the corrupt uſages of the heathen,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Particular laws,* (1.) *Againſt inceſt,* ver. 6—18. (2.) *Againſt beaſtly luſts, and barbarous idolatries,* ver. 19—23. 3. *The enforcement of theſe laws from the ruin of the Canaanites,* ver. 24—30.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, I *am* the LORD your God. 3. After the doings of the land of Egypt wherein ye dwelt, ſhall ye not do: and [a] after the doings of the land of Canaan whither I bring you, ſhall ye not do: neither ſhall ye walk in their ordinances. 4. Ye ſhall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I *am* the LORD your God. 5. Ye ſhall therefore keep my ſtatutes and my judgments: [b] which if a man do, he ſhall live in them: I *am* the LORD.

[a] Chap. xx. 23.
[b] Ezek. xx. 11, 13. Luke x. 28. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.

v. 1—5. The moral precepts are binding, though the ceremonial are aboliſhed. Such are the injunctions here given. God, as the Lord, has a right to command obedience; as our God reconciled in Jeſus Chriſt, has reaſon to expect it. They were going into a land as idolatrous as that they had come out of; and as they were but too prone to their old practices, they had need of repeated ſolemn warnings. *Note*, Becauſe ſin hath ſuch deep hold on our hearts, and old habits are ſo hardly eradicated, we have need of line upon line, and precept upon precept. God charges them to remember his commandments to do them, and promiſes a happy and long life to the obedient. They who in ſimplicity follow God will find themſelves no loſers thereby.

Note, 1. As perfection of obedience is not to be found in man, therefore eternal life cannot be obtained by our own obedience. But, 2. In Chriſt Jeſus there is that univerſal righteouſneſs which the law demands; and they who believe in him, have this imputed to them, and are rewarded as if it were their own. 3. We are not leſs bound hereby to perſonal obedience, but farther urged thereto, as well as aſſiſted therein through faith, which worketh by love.

† Heb. remainder of his fleſh.
c Chap. xx. 11.
d Chap. xx. 11. Deut. xxii. 30. & xxvii. 20. Ezek. xxii. 10. Amos ii. 5. 1 Cor. v. 1.
e Chap. xx. 17. 2 Sam. xiii. 12. Ezek. xxii. 11.
f Chap. xx. 19.
g Chap. xx. 20.
h Chap. xx. 12. Ezek. xxii. 11.
i Chap. xx. 21. Matth. xiv. 4. See Deut. xxv. 5.
k Cha. xx. 14.
‡ Or, one wife to another.

6. ¶ None of you ſhall approach to any that is † near
of kin to him, to uncover *their* nakedneſs: I *am* the
LORD. 7. [c] The nakedneſs of thy father, or the na-
kedneſs of thy mother, ſhalt thou not uncover; ſhe *is*
thy mother, thou ſhalt not uncover her nakedneſs. 8.
[d] The nakedneſs of thy father's wife ſhalt thou not un-
cover: it *is* thy father's nakedneſs. 9. [e] The nakedneſs
of thy ſiſter, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of
thy mother, *whether ſhe be* born at home, or born abroad,
even their nakedneſs thou ſhalt not uncover. 10. The
nakedneſs of thy ſon's daughter, or of thy daughter's
daughter, *even* their nakedneſs thou ſhalt not uncover:
for theirs *is* thine own nakedneſs. 11. The nakedneſs of
thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, (ſhe
is thy ſiſter) thou ſhalt not uncover her nakedneſs. 12.
[f] Thou ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of thy father's
ſiſter: ſhe *is* thy father's near kinſwoman. 13. Thou
ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of thy mother's ſiſter,
for ſhe *is* thy mother's near kinſwoman. 14. [g] Thou
ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of thy father's brother,
thou ſhalt not approach to his wife: ſhe *is* thine aunt.
15. [h] Thou ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of thy daugh-
ter-in-law: ſhe *is* thy ſon's wife, thou ſhalt not uncover her
nakedneſs. 16. [i] Thou ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs
of thy brother's wife: it *is* thy brother's nakedneſs. 17.
[k] Thou ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of a woman and
her daughter, neither ſhalt thou take her ſon's daughter,
or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedneſs;
for they *are* her kinſwomen: it *is* wickedneſs. 18. Nei-
ther ſhalt thou take ‡ a wife to her ſiſter to vex *her*,
to uncover her nakedneſs, beſides the other in her life-
time.

v. 6—18. God forbids,

1. All marriages between perſons within the degrees of kindred here ſpecified; which equally affects women as well as men. The very heathens, in general, deteſted theſe inceſtuous connexions; and they are not only poſitive commands of God, but highly reaſonable in themſelves.

2. All indecent familiarities between ſuch near relatives. The living together in the ſame houſe, and being on ſuch a footing of intimacy, would expoſe them to much temptation, unleſs their minds were impreſſed with particular horror at the thought of any lewd intercourſe. Let near relations be doubly on their guard. The corrupt heart of man is deſperately wicked.

l Chap. xx. 18. Ezek. xviii. 6. & xxii. 11.
m Exod. xx. 14. Chap. xx. 10.
n Chap. xx. 2. 1 Kings xi. 33. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. xix. 5. Exek. xxiii. 37, 39.
o Called Acts vii. 43. Moloch.
p Chap. xx. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 1 Tim. i. 10.
q Exod. xxii. 19. Chap. xx. 15, 16.

19. [l] Alſo thou ſhalt not approach unto a woman to
uncover her nakedneſs, as long as ſhe is put apart for
her uncleanneſs. 20. Moreover, [m] thou ſhalt not lie car-
nally with thy neighbour's wife to defile thyſelf with her.
21. And thou ſhalt not let any of thy ſeed [n] paſs through
the fire to [o] Molech, neither ſhalt thou profane the name
of thy God: I *am* the LORD. 22. [p] Thou ſhalt not
lie with mankind as with womankind: it *is* abomination.
23. [q] Neither ſhalt thou lie with any beaſt, to defile
thyſelf therewith: neither ſhall any woman ſtand before
a beaſt to lie down thereto: it *is* confuſion. 24. Defile
not you yourſelves in any of theſe things: for in all
theſe the nations are defiled which I caſt out before you.
25. And the land is defiled: therefore I do viſit the ini-
quity thereof upon it, and the land itſelf vomiteth out
her inhabitants. 26. [r] Ye ſhall therefore keep my ſta-
tutes and my judgments, and ſhall not commit *any* of
theſe abominations; *neither* any of your own nation, nor
any ſtranger that ſojourneth among you: 27. (For all
theſe abominations have the men of the land done, which
were before you, and the land is defiled) 28. [s] That
the land ſpue not you out alſo, when ye defile it, as it
ſpued out the nations that *were* before you. 29. For
whoſoever ſhall commit any of theſe abominations, even
the ſouls that commit *them*, ſhall be cut off from among
their people. 30. Therefore ſhall ye keep mine ordi-
nance, [t] that *ye* commit not *any one* of theſe abominable
cuſtoms, which were committed before you, and that
ye defile not yourſelves therein: I *am* the LORD your
God.

r Chap. xx. 22.
s Jer. ix. 19. Ezek. xxxvi. 13, 17.
t Ver. 3. Chap. xx. 23.

v. 19—30. Here are,

1. Other laws againſt impurity. 1. Againſt an unſeaſonable uſe of the marriage-bed. *Note*, They who are lawfully married may be very criminally lewd. 2. Againſt adultery; a ſin of the blackeſt die. 3. Againſt the abominable idolatry of conſecrating their children to Moloch, by paſſing them between two fires, and ſometimes burning them. 4. Againſt ſodomy and beaſtiality; crimes, the mention of which are ſhocking: and it is among the dire proofs of the deſperate corruptneſs of man's nature, that ever ſuch wretches ſhould exiſt, or that ſuch prohibitions ſhould be neceſſary.

2. Awful warnings againſt theſe ſins. 1. The offender ſhall be cut off, *v.* 29. not only his body doomed to death, but his ſoul to everlaſting burnings. The fire of luſt, and the fire of hell, are kindled for each other. 2. The nation ſhall be deſtroyed where ſuch abominations are committed. They themſelves are now going to Canaan, to be God's executioners upon that devoted people, for theſe very ſins; and therefore, with ſuch an inſtance before them, they need take warning not to defile themſelves with ſuch wickedneſs; for if they did, they would ſink in the ſame deſtruction. *Note*, Nothing fills up the meaſure of a nation's guilt faſter than theſe abominable and unnatural luſts.

3. A ſolemn charge to keep God's ordinances, and avoid theſe hateful cuſtoms. *Note*, The world we live in is like Canaan, and its cuſtoms ſcarce leſs deteſtable; we have need tremble, leaſt we ſhould ſwim with the ſtream, and loſe the horror of ſin by beholding the commonneſs of the practice; from which nothing can ſo effectually preſerve us as a conſtant attention to God's word, and daily application for his grace, to keep us from the pollutions that are in the world through luſt. And in this way we ſhall find ſuch genuine pleaſures to be enjoyed, as will make us loath the deceitful and ſoul-deſtroying pleaſures of ſin.

CHAP. XIX.

Some ceremonial precepts there are in this chapter, but moſt of them are moral. (1.) *The laws peculiar to the Jews, are,* 1. *Concerning their peace-offerings,* ver. 5—8. 2. *Concerning the gleanings of their fields,* ver. 9, 10. 3. *Againſt mixtures of their cattle, ſeed, and cloth,* ver. 19. 4. *Concerning their trees,* ver. 23—25. 5. *Againſt ſome ſuperſtitious uſages,* ver. 26—28. (2.) *Precepts moral obligatory upon all.* 1. *The ſum of all the commandments in general,* ver. 2, 18. 2. *Something of each commandment.* 1. *A prohibition of enchantment,* ver. 26. *and witchcraft,* ver. 31. *which make a god of the devil, and are a breach of the firſt commandment.* 2. *Of idolatry againſt the ſecond commandment,* ver. 4. 3. *Profanation of God's name againſt the third,* ver. 12. 4. *Sabbath ſanctification is preſſed,* ver. 3, 30. 5. *Children are required to honour their parents,* ver. 3. *and the aged,* ver. 32. 6. *Hatred and revenge are here forbidden,* ver. 17, 18. 7. *Adultery,* ver. 20—22. *and whoredom,* ver. 29. 8. *Juſtice required,* ver. 15. *theſt forbidden,* ver. 11. *fraud, and withholding dues,* ver. 13. *and falſe weights,* ver. 35, 36. 9. *Lying,* ver. 11. *Slandering,* ver. 14. *Tale-bearing, and falſe witneſs,* ver. 16. 10. *The tenth commandment, laying a reſtraint upon the heart; ſo doth that,* ver. 17. Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thine heart. *And here is a ſolemn charge to obſerve all theſe ſtatutes,* ver. 37. *Now theſe are things which need not much help for the underſtanding of them, but require conſtant care and watchfulneſs for the obſerving of them.* A good underſtanding have all they that do theſe commandments.

a Chap. xi. 44. & xx. 7, 26. 1 Pet. i. 16.
b Exod. xx. 12.
c Exod. xx. 8. & xxxi. 13.
d Exod. xx. 4.
e Exod. xxxiv. 17. Deut. xxvii. 15.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2.
Speak unto all the congregation of the children
of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [a] Ye ſhall be holy: for I
the LORD your God *am* holy. 3. ¶ [b] Ye ſhall fear
every man his mother and his father, and [c] keep my ſab-
baths: I *am* the LORD your God. 4. [d] Turn ye not
unto idols, [e] nor make to yourſelves molten gods: I *am*
the

the LORD God. 5. ¶ And [f] if ye offer a ſacrifice of
peace-offerings unto the LORD; ye ſhall offer it at your
own will. 6. It ſhall be eaten the ſame day ye offer it,
and on the morrow: and if ought remain until the third
day, it ſhall be burnt in the fire. 7. And if it be eaten
at all on the third day, it *is* abominable; it ſhall not
be accepted. 8. Therefore *every one* that eateth it, ſhall
bear his iniquity, becauſe he hath profaned the hallowed
thing of the LORD: and that ſoul ſhall be cut off from
among his people. 9. ¶ [g] And when ye reap the harveſt
of your land, thou ſhalt not wholly reap the corners of
thy field, neither ſhalt thou gather the gleanings of thy
harveſt. 10. And thou ſhalt not glean thy vineyard,
neither ſhalt thou gather *every* grape of thy vineyard;
thou ſhalt leave them for the poor and ſtranger: I *am*
the LORD your God.

[f] Chap. vii. 16.

[g] Chap. xxiii. 22. Deut. xxiv. 19. Ruth ii. 15, 16.

v. 1—10. It was Moſes's concern to make God's will known to all the people; and a faithful ſteward he was in God's houſe.

1. A general command is given, including all the reſt. Be ye holy. The deſign of both law and goſpel, next to God's glory, is the holineſs and happineſs of his people. For there can be no enjoyment of God, in which true happineſs conſiſts, without conformity to him.

2. Particular commands, wherein this holineſs muſt be expreſſed 1. In fearing father and mother. Implying that filial affection, dutiful obedience, diligence to pleaſe, and dread of offending, which every ſon of Iſrael muſt ſhew to both his parents. 2. In ſanctifying the ſabbath. They ſhew themſelves truly children of God, who join piety towards their Father in heaven, to dutifulneſs to their parents on earth. To deſpiſe father or mother, or to profane God's ſabbaths, is the ſure mark of a reprobate ſon. 3. No idols muſt be worſhipped. 4. Their ſacrifices of peace-offerings muſt not be eat beyond the preſcribed time. 5. They muſt conſider and leave a portion for the poor in the harveſt-field, and at the vintage. *Note*, (1.) There can be no true piety towards God, where there is not charity towards men. A covetous heart can never have written upon it, *Holineſs to the Lord.* (2.) The prayers of the poor, who partake of our bleſſings, will make us ample amends for the handful we leave them. No gain ſo great, or ſure, as what is thus lent to the Lord.

11. ¶ [h] Ye ſhall not ſteal, neither deal falſly, neither
lie one to another. 12. ¶ And [i] ye ſhall not ſwear by
my name falſly, neither ſhalt thou profane the name of
thy God: I *am* the LORD. 13. ¶ [k] Thou ſhalt not
defraud thy neighbour, neither rob *him*: [l] the wages of
him that is hired, ſhall not abide with thee all night until
the morning. 14. ¶ Thou ſhalt not curſe the deaf,
[m] nor put a ſtumbling-block before the blind, but ſhalt
fear thy God: I *am* the LORD. 15. ¶ Ye ſhall do no
unrighteouſneſs in judgment; [n] thou ſhalt not reſpect the
perſon of the poor, nor honour the perſon of the mighty;
but in righteouſneſs ſhalt thou judge thy neighbour. 16.
¶ [o] Thou ſhalt not go up and down *as* a tale-bearer among
thy people; neither ſhalt thou ſtand againſt the blood of
thy neighbour: I *am* the LORD. 17. ¶ [p] Thou ſhalt
not hate thy brother in thine heart: [q] thou ſhalt in any
wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, † and not ſuffer ſin upon
him. 18. ¶ Thou ſhalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge
againſt the children of thy people, [r] but thou ſhalt love
thy neighbour as thyſelf: I *am* the LORD.

[h] Exod. xx. 15. & xxii. 1, 7, 10. Chap. vi. 2.

[i] Exod. xx. 7. Chap. vi. 3. Deut. v. 11. Mat. v. 34. Jam. v. 12.

[k] Ecclus. x. 6.

[l] Deut. xxiv. 14,15. Mal. iii. 5. Job iv. 14. Jam. v. 4.

[m] Deut. xxvii. 18.

[n] Exod. xxiii. 3. Deut. i. 17. & xvi. 19. & xxvii. 19. Prov. xxiv. 23. Jam. ii. 9.

[o] Exod. xxiii. 1. Pſ. xv. 3. & xl. 20. Prov. xi. 13. & xx. 19.

[p] 1 John ii. 11. & iii. 15.

[q] Ecclus. xix. 13. Mat. xviii. 15. Luke xvii. 3. Gal. vi. 1. Eph. v. 11. 1 Tim. v. 20.

† Or, that thou bear not ſin for him. See Rom. i. 32. 1 Cor. v. 2. Eph. v. 11. 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 John 10. 11.

[r] Prov. xx. 22. Mat. v. 43. & xxii. 39. Rom. xiii. 9. Gal. v. 14. Jam. ii. 8.

v. 11—18. Farther moral precepts. 1. Againſt theft, fraud, and lying. 'Tis a bad world we are in. Every trade almoſt is now ſo mixed with injuſtice, and ſo ſupported by lies, that 'tis hard for an honeſt man to live: but the ſtraiter the gate the more ſhould we ſtrive to enter. And in the end, at leaſt, honeſty and truth will prove the beſt policy. 2. Againſt falſe-ſwearing, or an irreverent uſe of the names of God. Which, to the ſhame of chriſtians, is now made ſo common in ordinary converſation. 3. To be punctual in our payments. To detain a juſt debt, or wages, beyond the time agreed, is to defraud our neighbour. 4. We may not curſe the deaf, nor make the blind to ſtumble. To ſport with man's natural infirmities is a high reflection upon God. 5. Juſtice muſt be adminiſtered with impartiality. No compaſſion for the perſon of the poor, nor fear of the mighty, muſt have the leaſt influence on our deciſions. 6. The tale-bearer condemned. A vile character! that picks up his neighbour's faults for the pleaſure of relating them. To hurt a man's reputation thus is more injurious than to rob his houſe. 7. We may not bear falſe teſtimony ourſelves, nor ſtand ſilent by and ſee the innocent condemned. 8. We owe our neighbour the rebuke of love. Nothing ſo friendly, nothing ſo faithful as theſe wounds, *Prov.* xxvii. 5. *Note*, To ſee our brother ſin, and not reprove him, is the greateſt injury we can do him, and brings great guilt upon our own ſouls. 9. All ſecret reſentment is forbidden, and all revenge. We muſt forgive and forget every injury; and ſo far from deſiring to hurt our enemy in return, muſt not ceaſe to pray that God would forgive and forget his ſin. 10. We have the whole in a word: we muſt love our neighbour as ourſelves. Love will make us honeſt, true, juſt, tender, kind, jealous for his good, and ſincerely deſirous of, and laborious for his welfare in body and ſoul, as for our own. Lord ſhed abroad this love in my heart!

19. ¶ Ye ſhall keep my ſtatutes: Thou ſhalt not let
thy cattle gender with a divers kind: [s] Thou ſhalt not
ſow thy field with mingled ſeed: [t] neither ſhall a garment
mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.
20. ¶ And whoſoever lieth carnally with a woman that
is a bond-maid † betrothed to an huſband, and not at
all redeemed, nor freedom given her, ‡ ſhe ſhall be
ſcourged: they ſhall not be put to death, becauſe ſhe
was not free. 21. [u] And he ſhall bring his treſpaſs-offering
unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle
of the congregation, *even* a ram for a treſpaſs-offering.
22. And the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him
with the ram of the treſpaſs-offering before the LORD,
for his ſin which he hath done: and the ſin which he
hath done ſhall be forgiven him. 23. ¶ And when ye
ſhall come into the land, and ſhall have planted all manner
of trees for food, then ye ſhall count the fruit thereof
as uncircumciſed: three years ſhall it be as uncircumciſed
unto you; it ſhall not be eaten of. 24. But in the
fourth year all the fruit thereof ſhall be ‖ holy to praiſe
the LORD *withal.* 25. And in the fifth year ſhall ye
eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the
increaſe thereof: I *am* the LORD your God. 26. ¶
[x] Ye ſhall not eat *any thing* with the blood: [y] neither
ſhall ye uſe inchantment, nor obſerve times. 27. [z] Ye
ſhall not round the corners of your heads, neither ſhalt
thou mar the corners of thy beard. 28. [a] Ye ſhall not
make any cuttings in your fleſh for the dead, nor print
any marks upon you: I *am* the LORD. 29. ¶ [b] Do
not § proſtitute thy daughter, to cauſe her to be a whore:
leſt the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full
of wickedneſs.

[s] Deut. xxii. 9, 10.

[t] Deut. xxii. 11.

† Heb. Reproached by or for man.

‡ Heb. there ſhall be a ſcourging.

[u] Chap. v. 15.

‖ Heb. Holineſs of praiſes to the Lord.

[x] Chap. xvii. 10. &c. Deut. xii. 23.

[y] Deut. xviii. 10. 1 Sam. xv. 23.

[z] Chap. xxi. 5. Jer. ix. 26. & xlviii. 37.

[a] Deut. xiv. 1. Jer. xvi. 6. & xlviii. 37.

[b] Deut. xxiii. 17.

§ Heb. profane.

v. 19—29. Sundry laws. 1. Againſt mixtures between different cattle, in which is ſomething unnatural; againſt ſowing mingled corn, or wearing linſey woolſey garments. Iſrael muſt be kept pure from mingling with the heathen in their uſages. *Note*, All blending works with faith, as conducing to our juſtification, is making this hateful and forbidden mixture. 2. The puniſhment and ſacrifice for ſeducing an eſpouſed bond-woman. They who give way to their fleſhly luſts muſt ſuffer for it, by the ſcourgings of repentance now, or by the arm of the tormentor for ever. 3. Concerning fruit-trees. Three years after their planting they muſt not eat of them; the fourth their produce was ſacred, and given to God's prieſts; afterwards it was their own. When we have ſerved God with a part of our ſtore firſt, we may hope for a bleſſing and comfort in what we uſe ourſelves. 4. Againſt ſuperſtitious cuſtoms. Such as eating round the blood of their ſacrifices, in honour of demons; or uſing inchantments, or obſerving ſuperſtitiouſly days and times, or rounding their heads, or cutting their beards, in honour of idols; or making inciſions in their fleſh, or prints in their ſkin for the dead, or to appeaſe the infernal deities. Let theſe vain and ſinful cuſtoms admoniſh us of the folly and ſin of fortune-telling, ſeeking to gypſies, conjurers, &c. all amulets, charms, &c. fearing croſs days, or croſs knives and forks, or ſpilt ſalt, and ſuch fooleries. Shall the dregs of paganiſm enter amidſt the profeſſion of chriſtianity? To have any dependance on theſe Elilim, (nothings) is ſtill to have fellowſhip with devils. 5. Againſt proſtitution of their children, as was common in ſome lewd rites of the heathen gods. Theſe gods are renounced; but he who deludes the unwary, and ſacrifices injured beauty to his own vile luſts, is ſtill the votary of theſe unclean ſpirits.

30. ¶ [c] Ye ſhall keep my ſabbaths, and reverence my
ſanctuary: I *am* the LORD. 31. ¶ [d] Regard not them
that have familiar ſpirits, neither ſeek after wizards, to be
defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God. 32. ¶
[e] Thou ſhalt riſe up before the hoary head, and honour
the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I *am* the
LORD. 33. ¶ And [f] if a ſtranger ſojourn with thee in
your land, ye ſhall not † vex him. 34. [g] *But* the ſtranger

[c] Chap. xxvi. 2.

[d] Chap. xx. 6,27. Deut. xviii. 10. Iſa. viii. 19. Acts xvi. 6.

[e] 1 Tim. v. 1.

[f] Exod. xxii. 21. & xxiii. 9.

† Or oppreſs.

[g] Exod. xxiii. 9.

Before Christ 1490.

that dwelleth with you, ſhall be unto you as one born amongſt you, and [h] thou ſhalt love him as thyſelf; for ye were ſtrangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God. 35. ¶ Ye ſhall do no unrighteouſneſs in judgment, in mete-yard, in weight, or in meaſure. 36. [i] Juſt balances, juſt † weights, a juſt ephah, and a juſt hin ſhall ye have: I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt. 37. Therefore ſhall ye obſerve all my ſtatutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I *am* the LORD.

h Deut. x. 19.
i Ibid. xxv. 13. Prov. xi. 1. & xvi. 11. & xx. 10.
† Heb. Stones.

v. 30—37. 1. God's ſabbaths muſt be kept, and his ſanctuary reverenced. Wherever Chriſtians aſſemble for worſhip, there is the divine Shechinah. 2. A warning againſt wizards, or ventriloquiſts, who either had, or pretended to have more than human ſight; they muſt neither be ſought to for advice, nor feared in their predictions. 3. Age muſt be honoured: the younger muſt riſe up before the elder, and ſhew him the reſpect due to his years and wiſdom. 4. Strangers are to be treated kindly. The remembrance of their own ſtate in Egypt muſt teach them to pity others. They muſt not be oppreſſed, nor defrauded, nor reproached, but loved as a brother, and treated with equal affection. They who are ſtrangers, have a right to peculiar kindneſs: it is enough that they are removed from their domeſtic comforts, they need not have their abſence more embittered by ill uſage. 5. Juſtice muſt be obſerved, in meaſures, weights, and ſcales. To ſell leſs than weight or meaſure, is at leaſt equally criminal with other acts of theft, which though man may never diſcover, ſhall be ſeverely viſited, when God weighs ſuch in his balances, and finds them wanting. 6. All God's ſtatutes muſt be obſerved and done; head, heart, and hand, muſt concur. *Note*, No man ſincerely obeys God, who makes any reſerves; and he will never really pleaſe him by obedience to any one command, who does not in ſimplicity ſeek to obſerve them all.

CHAP. XX.

The laws which before were made, are in this chapter repeated, and penalties annexed to them; that they who would not be deterred from ſin by the fear of God, might be deterred from it by the fear of puniſhment. 1. *Many particular crimes that are made capital,* 1. *Giving their children to Moloch*, ver. 1—5. 2. *Conſulting witches*, ver. 6, 27. 3. *Curſing parents*, ver. 9. 4. *Adultery*, ver. 10. 5. *Inceſt*, ver. 11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21. 6. *Unnatural luſts*, ver. 13, 15, 16, 18. 2. *General commands given to be holy*, ver. 7, 8, 22—26.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Again, thou ſhalt ſay to the children of Iſrael, [b] Whoſoever *he be* of the children of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers that ſojourn in Iſrael, that giveth *any* of his ſeed unto Molech, he ſhall ſurely be put to death; the people of the land ſhall ſtone him with ſtones. 3. And [c] I will ſet my face againſt that man, and will cut him off from among his people: becauſe he hath given of his ſeed unto Molech, to defile my ſanctuary, and to profane my holy name. 4. And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his ſeed unto Molech, and kill him not: 5. Then [d] I will ſet my face againſt that man, and [e] againſt his family, and will cut him off, and all that [f] go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people. 6. ¶ And [g] the ſoul that turneth after ſuch as have familiar ſpirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even ſet my face againſt that ſoul, and will cut him off from among his people. 7. ¶ [h] Sanctify yourſelves therefore, and be ye holy: for I *am* the LORD your God. 8. And ye ſhall keep my ſtatutes, and do them: I *am* the LORD which ſanctify you. 9. [i] ¶ For every one that curſeth his father or his mother, ſhall be ſurely put to death: he hath curſed his father or his mother; his blood *ſhall be* upon him.

a Chap. xviii. 21.
b Deut. xviii. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 17. & xxiii. 10. Jer. xxxii. 35.
c Chap. xvii. 10.
d Ibid.
e Exod. xx. 5.
f Chap. xvii. 7.
g Ibid. xix. 31.
h Ibid. xi. 44. & xix. 2. 1 Pet. i. 16.
i Exod. xxi. 17. Deut. xxvii. 16. Prov. xx. 20. Mat. xv. 4.

v. 1—9. The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die. The former laws are here armed with their ſanction, and we need hear and fear before this holy Lord God.

1. The firſt is ſacrificing their children to Moloch: idolatry as inhuman as impious. When we ſee the votaries of ſin in general ſerving the devil with ſuch loſs and ſuffering, how ought we to value the perfect freedom of God's ſervice? The puniſhment is ſtoning to death; and there is no eſcape for the criminal: for if his friends connived at him, and refuſed to inform againſt him, or the judge acquitted him, notwithſtanding proof made, God would then take the matter into his own hand, and cut him off by ſome fearful judgment. *Note*, Sinners may eſcape the hand of juſtice here, but at God's tribunal they muſt ſtand, and none can deliver them out of his hand—Nor ſhall the abettors of the idolater ſhare a milder judgment; God will viſit their ſin upon them and their families, and they ſhall die by the ſame ſecret hand. *Note*, (1.) The character of an informer is often ſtamped with infamy, but there are offences where ſilence involves us in the guilt of the crime we conceal; and it is at our peril if we hold our tongue. (2.) A negligent magiſtrate is a moſt criminal character, and they who will not judge *for* God, ſhall be judged *by* him.

2. Conſulting a witch is a capital offence. It is called going a whoring from God, as it implies the alienation of the heart from him, and a dependance on the devil for advice and direction.

3. To curſe father or mother, is death; to inſult paternal authority, is rebellion againſt God, and ſhall meet with the ſame puniſhment as idolatry.

4. A general charge given to ſanctify themſelves for God, *i. e.* ſeparate themſelves from the ways and company of ſinners; and the reaſons given, 1. Becauſe God is their lord and maſter, and they muſt ſerve him only. 2. Becauſe they thus anſwer his deſigns of grace upon them: I am he that ſanctifieth you. *Note*, (1.) Sanctification is God's work: he muſt give the power, or elſe impotent would be the command. (2.) All God's people are a holy people: though the meaſure of their attainments differ, yet univerſal ſanctification of heart and life is the prayer and purpoſe of every gracious ſoul. (3.) Becauſe God is pleaſed to work in us, we are both inclined and enabled to work out our own ſalvation.

10. ¶ And [k] the man that committeth adultery with *another* man's wife, *even he* that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adultereſs ſhall ſurely be put to death. 11. [l] And the man that lieth with his father's wife, hath uncovered his father's nakedneſs: both of them ſhall ſurely be put to death; their blood *ſhall be* upon them. 12. [m] And if a man lie with his daughter-in-law, both of them ſhall ſurely be put to death: they have wrought confuſion; their blood *ſhall be* upon them. 13. [n] If a man alſo lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they ſhall ſurely be put to death: their blood *ſhall be* upon them. 14. [o] And if a man take a wife and her mother, it *is* wickedneſs: they ſhall be burnt with fire, both he and they, that there be no wickedneſs among you. 15. [p] And if a man lie with a beaſt, he ſhall ſurely be put to death; and ye ſhall ſlay the beaſt. 16. And if a woman approach unto any beaſt, and lie down thereto, thou ſhalt kill the woman and the beaſt: they ſhall ſurely be put to death; their blood *ſhall be* upon them. 17. [q] And if a man ſhall take his ſiſter, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and ſee her nakedneſs, and ſhe ſee his nakedneſs; it *is* a wicked thing; and they ſhall be cut off in the ſight of their people: he hath uncovered his ſiſter's nakedneſs, he ſhall bear his iniquity. 18. [r] And if a man ſhall lie with a woman having her ſickneſs, and ſhall uncover her nakedneſs; he hath † diſcovered her fountain, and ſhe hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them ſhall be cut off from among the people. 19. [s] And thou ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of thy mother's ſiſter, nor of thy father's ſiſter: for he uncovereth his near kin: they ſhall bear their iniquity. 20. [t] And if a man ſhall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedneſs: they ſhall bear their ſin, they ſhall die childleſs. 21. [u] And if a man ſhall take his brother's wife, it *is* † an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedneſs, they ſhall be childleſs.

k Chap. xviii. 20. Deut. xxii. 22. John viii. 4, 5.
l Chap. xviii. 8.
m Ibid. 15. Deut. xxvii. 23.
n Chap. xviii. 22.
o Ibid. 27. Deut. xxvii. 21.
p Chap. xviii. 23. Deut. xxvii. 21.
q Chap. xviii. 9. Deut. xxvii. 22.
r Chap. xviii. 19. See Chap. xv. 24.
† Heb. Made naked.
s Chap. xviii. 12, 13.
t Ibid. 14.
u Ibid. 16.
† Heb. A ſeparation.

v. 10—21. Nothing needs ſeverer reſtraints than the luſts which naturally reign in our mortal bodies; no ſins have ſeverer puniſhments denounced on their indulgence. 1. The adulterer and adultereſs muſt periſh together. The wrong is irreparable to the injured, the peace of conſcience for ever deſtroyed to the guilty, and the avenging wrath of God provoked, by ſuch a daring violation of his ordinance of marriage. 2. Inceſt is a capital crime, whether with a mother, mother-in-law, or ſiſter, or daughter, or daughter-in-law: near relations muſt love, but with all purity. 3. Sodomy and Beaſtiality, crimes that make us ſhudder but to mention, are to be puniſhed with death; and the beaſt muſt be ſlain alſo, in deteſtation of ſuch abominations. 4. Lying with a woman ſet apart for uncleanneſs, is death for both. Lawleſs luſt will meet with an aveng-

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ing God. 5. Some inceſtuous copulations between more diſtant relations, are to be puniſhed with barrenneſs, as the preſent judgment. And they ſhall alſo bear their iniquity, when God maketh inquiſition for ſin.

22. ¶ Ye ſhall therefore keep all my † ſtatutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land whither I bring you to dwell therein, [y] ſpue you not out. 23. [z] And ye ſhall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I caſt out before you: for they committed all theſe things, and [a] therefore I abhorred them. 24. But I have ſaid unto you, Ye ſhall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to poſſeſs it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I *am* the LORD your God, which have ſeparated you from *other* people. 25. [b] Ye ſhall therefore put difference between clean beaſts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye ſhall not make your ſouls abominable by beaſt or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that || creepeth on the ground, which I have ſeparated from you as unclean. 26. And ye ſhall be holy unto me; [c] for I the LORD *am* holy, and have ſevered you from *other* people, that ye ſhould be mine. 27. ¶ [d] A man alſo or woman that hath a familiar ſpirit, or that is a wizard, ſhall ſurely be put to death: they ſhall ſtone them with ſtones: their blood *ſhall be* upon them.

† Chap. xviii. 26.
y Ibid. 25. 28.
z Ibid. 3, 30.
a Ibid. 27. Deut. ix. 5.
b Chap. xi. 2. Deut. xiv. 4.
|| Or moveth
c Ver. 7. Chap. xix. 2. 1 Pet. i. 16.
d Exod. xxii. 18. Chap. xix. 31. Deut. xviii. 10, 11. 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, 8.

v. 22—27. We cannot be too often admoniſhed, when we are ſo prone to err. 1. God repeats his ſolemn charge to them, to keep all his ſtatutes, to obſerve the diſtinctions of clean and unclean, to beware of the nations around them, and not make their ſouls abominable. *Note*, Sin is the abominable thing which God hates, and we muſt flee from. The more evil examples are around us, the more we need watch and pray. 2. The arguments again repeated: God's right in and over them, and the neceſſity of being like him in holineſs, if they would have any relation to him as their God; and his ſeparation of them from others, that they might ſeparate themſelves for him. *Note*, Chriſt's are a peculiar people, and they muſt ſee that their converſation proves them ſuch. 3. The ruin which diſobedience would bring on them. The nations whither they were going, were examples to them of God's judgments againſt ſin; and after all the mercies they had experienced, they could not, if they corrupted themſelves, expect lighter viſitations. *Note*, Fellowſhip in ſin, will bring fellowſhip in ſuffering: only as we ſin againſt greater mercies and knowledge, ſo much heavier will be our condemnation.

The chapter concludes with the puniſhment of every witch or wizard with death. They who hold communion with the devil, or pretend to do it, are only fit to be with him in his place of torment.

CHAP. XXI.

The deſign of this chapter is to preſerve the dignity of the prieſthood. 1. The inferior prieſts are charged concerning their mourning, their marriages, and their children, ver. 1—9. 2. The high-prieſt is reſtrained more than any of them, ver. 10—15. 3. Neither the one nor the other muſt have any blemiſh, ver. 16—24.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Speak unto the prieſts the ſons of Aaron, and ſay unto them, [a] There ſhall none be defiled for the dead among his people. 2. But for his kin, that is near unto him, *that is*, for his mother, and for his father, and for his ſon, and for his daughter, and for his brother, 3. And for his ſiſter a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no huſband: for her may he be defiled. 4. *But* † he ſhall not defile himſelf, *being* a chief man among the people, to profane himſelf. 5. [b] They ſhall not make baldneſs upon their head, neither ſhall they ſhave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their fleſh. 6. They ſhall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* [c] the bread of their God they do offer: therefore they ſhall be holy. 7. [d] They ſhall not take a wife *that is* a whore, or profane; neither ſhall they take a woman put away from her huſband: for he *is* holy unto his God. 8. Thou ſhalt ſanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God: he ſhall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD which ſanctify you, *am* holy. 9. ¶ And [e] the daughter of any prieſt, if ſhe profane herſelf by playing the whore, ſhe profaneth her father: ſhe ſhall be burnt with fire.

a Ezek. xliv. 25.
† Or being an huſband among his people, he ſhall not defile himſelf for his wife. See Ezek. xxiv. 16, 17.
b Chap. xix. 27, 28. Deut. xiv. 1. Ezek. xliv. 20.
c See Chap. iii. 11.
d Ezek. xliv. 22.
e Gen. xxxviii. 24.

v. 1—9. Particular injunctions are given to the prieſts:

1. Reſpecting their mourning. (1.) The perſons for whom they may mourn, *v.* 2, 3. As all approach to a dead corpſe rendered mourners ceremonially unclean, they would be hereby prevented from executing the functions of their office. Though therefore God permits their abſence for their neareſt relations, yet he will not allow it for any other. Natural affection cannot but make us mourn over the loſſes of our houſe and family, but we muſt remember there are ſervices to be performed for the living, which it were evil to interrupt by continued ſorrow. (2.) The manner of their mourning: not extravagant and immoderate, but ſerious and temperate. They muſt not cut themſelves, or ſuperſtitiouſly devote their hair, as a propitiation to any ſuppoſed infernal deity, nor indulge exceſs of ſorrow, but practice themſelves the ſubmiſſion they inculcate on others. *Note*, Miniſters muſt be examples to their flock, and when God exerciſes them with ſevereſt trials, they are called to eminent reſignation.

2. Reſpecting their marriages. They may not marry a whore, or a profane perſon; one who had been ſeduced, though not openly common, nor a woman divorced, becauſe her conduct was ſuſpicious. The dignity of the prieſthood muſt be maintained in the exemplarineſs, and irreproachable character of their wives. *Note*, Miniſters ſhould be very cautious in their choice; a light and vain woman will be a diſcredit to themſelves, a reproach to the ſervice they are engaged in, and a hindrance to their labours.

3. Reſpecting their children. Severeſt puniſhments ſhall accompany their ſins, as they are ſuppoſed to be better inſtructed, to act againſt greater light, and to bring a diſhonour upon their holy family. A prieſt's daughter that plays the whore, ſhall be burnt with fire: an offence in a miniſter's family, is doubly criminal and ſcandalous.

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10. And *he that is* the high prieſt among his brethren, upon whoſe head [f] the anointing oil was poured, and [g] that is conſecrated to put on the garments, [h] ſhall not uncover his head, nor rent his clothes. 11. Neither ſhall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himſelf for his father or for his mother. 12. [i] Neither ſhall he go out of the ſanctuary, nor profane the ſanctuary of his God; for [k] the crown of the anointing oil of his God *is* upon him: I *am* the LORD. 13. And [l] he ſhall take a wife in her virginity. 14. A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, *or* an harlot, theſe ſhall he not take: but he ſhall take a virgin of his own people to wife. 15. Neither ſhall he profane his ſeed among his people: for I the LORD do ſanctify him.

f Exod. xxx. 30.
g Ibid. xxviii. 2. Chap. xvi. 32.
h Ibid. x. 6.
i Ibid. 7.
k Exod. xxviii. 36.
l Ezek. xliv. 22.

v. 10—15. As the high-prieſt excelled in dignity, he muſt keep himſelf under greater reſtrictions, than even the prieſts his brethren.

1. He may not defile himſelf for the dead, even for his neareſt relations, *v.* 11. nor expreſs any of the uſual ſymptoms of mourning, not even to uncover his head. When God's ſanctuary calls for our attendance, the deepeſt ties that would withdraw us from it muſt be broken through.

2. Beſides the reſtrictions in common with the reſt, he muſt not marry a widow, but a virgin. Every believer muſt be preſented to Jeſus the great high-prieſt a chaſte virgin; and he is counted ſuch, when having waſhed his ſoul in the blood of the lamb, with fervent affection he cleaves to him alone.

3. He muſt not profane his ſeed, by marrying himſelf contrary to God's ordinances, which would incapacitate his children from ſucceeding him, or by giving them in marriage to any profane perſon, which would reflect diſhonour on himſelf and the prieſthood. *Note*, (1.) There is a propriety in perſons marrying in their own rank and ſtation. (2.) Miniſters muſt, for their children's ſake, avoid a profane partner, as their families are in more danger of being corrupted by the ill converſation of the one, than by the good converſation of the other.

16. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 17. Speak unto Aaron, ſaying, Whoſoever *he be* of thy ſeed in their generations, that hath *any* blemiſh, let him not approach to offer the † bread of his God: 18. For whatſoever man *he be* that hath a blemiſh, he ſhall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat noſe, or any thing [m] ſuperfluous. 19. Or a man that is broken-footed or broken-handed. 20. Or crook-backt, or ‡ a dwarf, or that hath a blemiſh in his eye, or be ſcurvy, or ſcabbed, or hath his ſtones broken: 21. No man that hath a blemiſh, of the ſeed of Aaron the prieſt, ſhall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire; he hath a blemiſh, he ſhall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God. 22. He ſhall eat the bread of

† Or food.
m Chap. xxii. 23.
‡ Or too ſlender.

his God, *both* of the moſt holy, and of the holy. 23. Only he ſhall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, becauſe he hath a blemiſh; that he profane not my ſanctuaries: for I the LORD do ſanctify them. 24. And Moſes told *it* unto Aaron, and to his ſons, and unto all the children of Iſrael.

v. 16—24. All natural blemiſhes and deformities of body incapacited the ſons of Aaron and Levi from the exerciſe of the ſacerdotal function; whether they were curable or incurable, as long as they continued, they were unfit to miniſter. God will have the people reſpect the perſon, as well as the office of his prieſts: not that their natural defects ſhould morally, or ceremonially defile them: though with-held from the ſervice, they are alike to be maintained at the altar, and ſhare with the other prieſts the holy things. *Note,* (1.) Though under the goſpel perſonal blemiſhes, where abilities and zeal are found, may not diſqualify a man for the miniſtry; yet it is ſtill deſirable to avoid ordaining ſuch, whoſe ſtriking deformity may make their perſons appear deſpicable. (2.) If natural defects make men unqualified for the prieſthood, how much more ought moral turpitude to do ſo? A miniſter ſpiritually blind, or halting in his opinions, or perverſe in his walk, or vicious in his temper, ought for ever to be baniſhed from God's altar.

CHAP. XXII.

In this chapter we have divers laws concerning the prieſts and ſacrifices, all for the preſerving the honour of the ſanctuary, 1. *That the prieſts ſhould not eat of the holy things in their uncleanneſs,* ver. 1—9. 2. *That no ſtranger ſhould eat of the holy things,* ver. 10—13. *if he did it unwittingly, he muſt make reſtitution,* ver. 14—16. 3. *That the ſacrifices that were offered, muſt be without blemiſh,* ver. 17—25. 4. *That they muſt be more than eight days old,* ver. 26—28. *And that the ſacrifices of thankſgiving muſt be eaten the ſame day they were offered,* ver. 29—33.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto Aaron, and to his ſons, that they ſeparate themſelves from the holy things of the children of Iſrael, and that they profane not my holy name, *in thoſe things* which they hallow unto me: I *am* the LORD. 3. Say unto them, Whoſoever *he be* of all your ſeed, among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things which the children of Iſrael hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanneſs upon him, that ſoul ſhall be cut off from my preſence: I *am* the LORD. 4. What man ſoever of the ſeed of Aaron *is* a leper, or hath [a] a † running iſſue, he ſhall not eat of the holy things [b] until he be clean. And [c] whoſo toucheth any thing *that is* unclean *by* the dead, or [d] a man whoſe ſeed goeth from him: 5. Or [e] whoſoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or [f] a man of whom he may take uncleanneſs, whatſoever uncleanneſs he hath: 6. The ſoul which hath touched any ſuch, ſhall be unclean until even, and ſhall not eat of the holy things, unleſs he waſh his fleſh with water. 7. And when the ſun is down, he ſhall be clean, and ſhall afterward eat of the holy things, becauſe it *is* his food. 8. [g] That which dieth of itſelf, or is torn *with beaſts*, he ſhall not eat to defile himſelf therewith: I *am* the LORD. 9. They ſhall therefore keep mine ordinance, leaſt they bear ſin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do ſanctify them.

[a] Chap. xv. 2.
† Heb. Running of the reins.
[b] Chap. xiv. 2. & xv. 13.
[c] Num. xix. 11.
[d] Chap. xv. 16.
[e] Chap. xi. 24.
[f] Ibid. xv. 7, 19.
[g] Exod. xxii. 31. Chap. xvii. 15. Ezek. xliv. 31.

v. 1—9. Holineſs becometh God's houſe. He will ſuffer no unclean prieſt to approach his ſanctuary: if the defilement of leproſy was permanent, he muſt be totally excluded, or till he was cured: if by the touch of any thing he was defiled, he muſt be unclean till the evening, and waſh before he could return to his office. Nothing dying of itſelf, nor torn of beaſts, muſt he taſte, and death is the penalty of diſobedience. *Note,* (1.) It is no light matter to profane with unhallowed touch the ſacred table of the Lord. Many come to the Lord's ſupper, who being unwaſhed from their iniquities, eat and drink their own damnation. (2.) The higher the ſtation, the deeper the fall. A prieſt that periſhes, ſinks into the loweſt pit. (3.) It becomes us with jealouſy, knowing what a God we have to do with, to take heed to our ways in this naughty world, and never to omit daily application to the fountain that is opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs.

10. [h] There ſhall no ſtranger eat *of* the holy thing: a ſojourner of the prieſt, or an hired ſervant ſhall not eat *of* the holy thing. 11. But if the prieſt buy *any* ſoul † with his money, he ſhall eat of it, and he that is born in his houſe: they ſhall eat of his meat. 12. If the prieſt's daughter alſo be *married* unto ‡ a ſtranger, ſhe may not eat of an offering of the holy things. 13. But if the prieſt's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's houſe, [i] as in her youth, ſhe ſhall eat of her father's meat, but there ſhall no ſtranger eat thereof. 14. ¶ And if a man eat *of* the holy thing unwittingly, then he ſhall put the fifth *part* thereof unto it, and ſhall give *it* unto the prieſt, with the holy thing. 15. And they ſhall not profane the holy things of the children of Iſrael, which they offer unto the LORD: 16. Or † ſuffer them to bear the iniquity of treſpaſs, when they eat their holy things: for I the LORD do ſanctify them.

[h] See 1 Sam. xxi. 6.
† Heb. With the purchaſe of his money.
‡ Heb. A man, a ſtranger.
[i] Chap. x. 14.
† Or lade themſelves with the iniquity of treſpaſs in their eating.

v. 10—16. None but the prieſt's family muſt eat the holy things. A ſojourner, or a hired ſervant, are excluded, and their own daughters, if married to one not a prieſt. Though if a widow, or divorced, and without children, on returning to their father's houſe, they were again admitted to partake of them. If a perſon undeſignedly did eat of the holy things who had no right, he muſt make reſtitution to the prieſt, and add a fifth part more than the value of the thing, and atone for his treſpaſs by an offering. It was the prieſt's buſineſs to take care ſuch profaneneſs in his family was not committed. We muſt, to the utmoſt, reſtrain others from ſin, as well as avoid it ourſelves; and as they alone were to bear the treſpaſs of the people, it would be great impiety in others, to pretend to partake with them. There is but one mediator, who is appointed to bear our ſins, and we muſt be careful to join no other with him. His blood and righteouſneſs alone, not any works of our own, or of others, have the leaſt efficacy in obtaining remiſſion of the iniquity of our treſpaſs.

17. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 18. Speak unto Aaron, and to his ſons, and unto all the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [k] Whatſoever *he be* of the houſe of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers in Iſrael, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his free-will offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt-offering: 19. [l] *Ye ſhall offer* at your own will a male without blemiſh of the beeves, of the ſheep, or of the goats. 20. *But* [m] whatſoever hath a blemiſh, *that* ſhall ye not offer: for it ſhall not be acceptable for you. 21. And [n] whoſoever offereth a ſacrifice of peace-offerings unto the LORD, to accompliſh *his* vow, or a free-will offering in beeves or † ſheep, it ſhall be perfect, to be accepted: there ſhall be no blemiſh therein. 22. [o] Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or ſcurvy, or ſcabbed, ye ſhall not offer theſe unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD. 23. Either a bullock, or a † lamb that hath any thing [p] ſuperfluous, or lacking in his parts, that mayeſt thou offer *for* a free-will offering; but for a vow it ſhall not be accepted. 24. Ye ſhall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruiſed, or cruſhed, or broken, or cut: neither ſhall you make *any* offering *thereof* in your land. 25. Neither from a ſtranger's hand ſhall ye offer the bread of your God of any of theſe; becauſe their corruption *is* in them, *and* blemiſhes *be* in them: they ſhall not be accepted for you. 26. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 27. [q] When a bullock, or a ſheep, or a goat is brought forth, then it ſhall be ſeven days under the dam: and from the eighth day and thenceforth, it ſhall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 28. And *whether it be* cow or † ewe, ye ſhall not kill it and [r] her young both in one day. 29. And when ye will offer a ſacrifice of thankſgiving unto the LORD, offer *it* at your own will. 30. On the ſame day it ſhall be eaten up, ye ſhall leave [s] none of it until the morrow: I *am* the LORD. 31. Therefore ſhall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I *am* the LORD. 32. Neither ſhall ye profane my holy name, but [t] I will be hallowed among the children of Iſrael: I *am* the LORD which hallow you, 33. That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD.

[k] Chap. i. 2, 3, 10.
[l] Ibid. 3.
[m] Deut. xv. 21. & xvii. 1. Mal. i. 8.
[n] Chap. iii. 1.
† Or goats.
[o] Ver. 20.
† Or kid.
[p] Chap. xxi. 18.
[q] Exod. xxii. 30. & xxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 26. Deut. xiv. 21.
† Or ſhe-goat.
[r] Deut. xxii. 6.
[s] Chap. vii. 15.
[t] Ibid. x. 3.

v. 17—33. Curſed is the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and offereth and ſacrificeth a corrupt thing unto the Lord. God will be ſerved with the beſt, or not at all. Therefore,

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1. Every blemiſhed beaſt is forbidden to be offered. The blemiſhes are pointed out, *v.* 22. an exception is made, *v.* 23. in caſe of a free-will offering; but for a vow, it muſt not be accepted, even from a ſtranger. The prieſts therefore carefully examined the beaſts, and rejected thoſe, where ſuch blemiſhes were found. *Note,* (1.) Our Lord Jeſus was thus a lamb without ſpot or blemiſh, and when examined, no fault was found in him. (2.) It is but mockery, inſtead of ſervice, to appear before God with blind devotion and lame formality: unleſs our ſouls are engaged, and our hearts given up to him, the reſt is no better than abomination.

2. Other regulations concerning the ſacrifice. It muſt be eight days old; the dam and her young muſt not be ſacrificed together. *Note,* God teaches us humanity, even in his ſacrifices.

3. The offerings of thankſgiving muſt be eaten the ſame day they were offered, as before enjoined, with the reaſon, He is their God. No obligation ſo forcible to engage our hearts to keep his commandments, as a ſenſe of his redeeming love.

CHAP. XXIII.

The ſolemn feaſts enjoined, 1. *The weekly feaſt of the ſabbath,* ver. 3. 2. *The yearly feaſts.* (1.) *The paſſover, and the feaſt of unleavened bread,* ver. 4–8. *to which was annexed the offering of the ſheaf of firſt fruits,* ver. 9—14. (2.) *The Pentecoſt,* ver. 15—22. (3.) *The ſolemnities of the ſeventh month. The feaſt of trumpets on the firſt day,* ver. 23—25. *The day of atonement on the tenth day,* ver. 26—32. *And the feaſt of tabernacles on the fifteenth,* ver. 33—44.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, *Concerning* the feaſts of the LORD, which ye ſhall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *even* theſe *are* my feaſts. 3. [a] Six days ſhall work be done, but the ſeventh day *is* the ſabbath of reſt, an holy convocation; ye ſhall do no work *therein:* it *is* the ſabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

[a] Exod. xx. 9. & xxiii. 12. & xxxi. 13. & xxxiv. 21. Chap. xix. 3. Deut. v. 13. Luke xiii. 14.

v. 1—3. The holy ſolemnities are appointed. On thoſe days there was a convocation of the people to the door of the tabernacle, to join with united voices in prayer and praiſe.

The ſabbath was a weekly feaſt, and ſtill is ſuch, to every true believer, who eſpecially feaſts then on God's word and ordinances. A holy reſt was to be obſerved. We muſt reſt from ſin as from labour. There was on it to be a holy convocation. Nothing on that day muſt keep us from waiting in the courts of God's houſe together, nothing but works of neceſſity. *Note,* If ſervants are kept from church to provide for our bodies, when they ſhould be feeding their own ſouls, the guilt of ſabbath-breaking will be againſt the heads of that family—And not only by a convocation, but in their dwellings the ſabbath muſt be kept: public duties are but a part of the ſervice; on that day every houſe muſt be a temple, and reſound with prayer and praiſe. To proſtitute the hours of the evening in vanity, or viſiting, or idleneſs, is to profane the day, as much as when we forſake the aſſembly of God's people.

4. ¶ Theſe *are* the feaſts of the LORD, *even* holy convocations, which ye ſhall proclaim in their ſeaſons. 5. [b] In the fourteenth *day* of the firſt month at even, *is* the LORD's paſſover. 6. And on the fifteenth day of the ſame month, *is* the feaſt of unleavened bread unto the LORD: ſeven days ye muſt eat unleavened bread. 7. In the firſt day ye ſhall have an holy convocation: ye ſhall do no ſervile work therein. 8. But ye ſhall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD ſeven days: in the ſeventh day *is* an holy convocation, ye ſhall do no ſervile work *therein.* 9. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 10. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [c] When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and ſhall reap the harveſt thereof, then ye ſhall bring † a ſheaf of the firſt fruits of your harveſt unto the prieſt: 11. And he ſhall wave the ſheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the ſabbath the prieſt ſhall wave it. 12. And ye ſhall offer that day when ye wave the ſheaf, an he-lamb without blemiſh, of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering unto the LORD. 13. And the meat-offering thereof *ſhall be* two tenth-deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD *for* a ſweet ſavour: and the drink-offering thereof *ſhall be* of wine, the fourth *part* of an hin. 14. And ye ſhall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the ſelf ſame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.

[b] Exod. xii. 18. & xiii. 3. & xxiii. 15. & xxxiv. 18. Num. ix. 2. & xxviii. 16. Deut. xvi. 1.

[c] Exod. xxiii. 16. & xxxiv. 22. Num. xxviii. 26. Deut. xvi. 9. Joſh. i. 15.

† Heb. An mer.

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v. 4—14. The annual feaſts are next enjoined. The chief of theſe being the paſſover, that is firſt mentioned. It had been before appointed, for the commemoration of their wondrous deliverance from Egypt: Divine mercies ſhould never be forgotten. During the ſeven days of unleavened bread which followed, extraordinary ſacrifices were offered, *Num.* xxviii. 19—24. They who come to acknowledge divine mercies, ſhall have their ſouls refreſhed, as with marrow and fatneſs. The firſt and laſt days were holy convocations. On the ſecond day, the firſt fruits were offered, with a lamb for a ſacrifice, in thanks for the produce of the field, and to obtain the Divine bleſſing upon their harveſt. *Note,* (1.) Holy ſeaſons ſhould be obſerved in a holy manner. (2.) God has a right to his ſheaf: we muſt honour him with part of our ſubſtance, if we would have his bleſſing on the reſt. (3.) Theſe firſt fruits were typical of Jeſus riſing, as the firſt fruits from the dead, on this very day, and thereby aſſuring us of our own reſurrection.

15. ¶ And [d] ye ſhall count unto you from the morrow after the ſabbath, from the day that ye brought the ſheaf of the wave-offering; ſeven ſabbaths ſhall be complete: 16. Even unto the morrow after the ſeventh ſabbath ſhall ye number fifty days, and ye ſhall offer a new meat-offering unto the LORD. 17. Ye ſhall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves, of two tenth-deals: they ſhall be of fine flour, they ſhall be baken with leaven, *they are* [e] the firſt-fruits unto the LORD. 18. And ye ſhall offer with the bread ſeven lambs without blemiſh, of the firſt year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they ſhall be *for* a burnt-offering unto the LORD, with their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, *even* an offering made by fire of ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 19. Then ye ſhall ſacrifice [f] one kid of the goats, for a ſin-offering, and two lambs of the firſt year, for a ſacrifice of [g] peace-offerings. 20. And the prieſt ſhall wave them with the bread of the firſt-fruits, *for* a wave-offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: [h] they ſhall be holy to the LORD for the prieſt. 21. And ye ſhall proclaim on the ſelf-ſame day, *that* it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye ſhall do no ſervile work *therein: It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations. 22. ¶ And [i] when ye reap the harveſt of your land, thou ſhalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field, when thou reapeſt, [k] neither ſhalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harveſt: thou ſhalt leave them unto the poor, and to the ſtranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

[d] Chap. xxv. 8. Deut. xvi. 9.

[e] Exod. xxiii. 16, 19. & xxii. 29. & xxxiv. 26. Numb. xv. 17. & xxviii. 26. Deut. xxvi. 1.

[f] Chap. iv. 2.

[g] Ibid. iii. 1.

[h] Num. xviii. 12. Deut. xviii. 4.

[i] Chap. xix. 9.

[k] Deut. xxiv. 19.

v. 15—22. The feaſt of Pentecoſt was ſeven weeks after the paſſover. The harveſt was then gathered in, and they brought their grateful acknowledgments in the two loaves of wheaten bread, for firſt-fruits to the Lord, with a burnt-offering of thankſgiving, a ſin-offering to intimate their unworthineſs of theſe mercies, and peace-offerings to implore a bleſſing on the fruits they had gathered. That harveſt will yield well, where the reapers have ſuch a regard to God: a holy convocation was kept on this day, and all the men required to appear before the Lord, in memory of God's giving them the law from Sinai. It was at this feaſt, that the Holy Ghoſt afterwards was poured out on the apoſtles, and three thouſand ſouls converted as firſt-fruits to God and the Lamb.

The charge of leaving a portion for the poor is repeated. They who will honour God with ſacrifice, muſt alſo have pity on the needy; and God will accept with greater delight the feeding his hungry ſaints, than the feeding the fire of his altar with the fat of bullocks or rams.

23. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 24. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, In [l] the ſeventh month, in the firſt *day* of the month, ſhall ye have a ſabbath, [m] a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. 25. Ye ſhall do no ſervile work *therein;* but ye ſhall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 26. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 27. [n] Alſo on the tenth *day* of this ſeventh month, *there ſhall be* a day of atonement, it ſhall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye ſhall afflict your ſouls and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 28. And ye ſhall do no work in that ſame day: for it *is* a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29. For whatſoever ſoul *it be*

[l] Num. xxix. 1.

[m] Chap. xxv. 9.

[n] Ibid. xvi. 30. Num. xxix. 7.

that ſhall not be afflicted in that ſame day, [o] he ſhall be cut off from among his people. 30. And whatſoever ſoul *it be* that doeth any work in that ſame day, [p] the ſame ſoul will I deſtroy from among his people. 31. Ye ſhall do no manner of work: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32. It *ſhall be* unto you a ſabbath of reſt, and ye ſhall afflict your ſouls in the ninth *day* of the month at even: from even unto even ſhall ye † celebrate your ſabbath.

[o] Gen. xvii. 14.
[p] Chap. xx. 3, 5, 6.
† Heb. Reſt.

v. 23—32. 1. The feaſt of trumpets inſtituted. Every new moon was uſhered in with trumpets, but this day they blew from morning until evening. As the jubilee year began with this ſeventh month, it might prefigure that joyful ſound of goſpel grace which ſhould go forth into all lands. The Jews ſay it was a preparation call for the day of atonement, which was on the ninth; and need there is, that we ſhould have loud calls to ſhake off ſpiritual ſloth, and awake to ſerious attention about our everlaſting concerns.

2. The day of atonement muſt be obſerved as a day of ſacred reſt, to be ſpent wholly in reflection upon, and humiliation for the ſins of the preceding year. A day of faſting: the body, as well as ſoul, muſt be afflicted, as both ſhare in guilt; and the whole day, from even unto even, muſt be ſpent in thoſe exerciſes of deep abaſement, which anſwered the inſtitution. *Note*, (1.) They who feel the burden of ſin, will be careful to beat down the body, as well as to humble the ſoul under it. (2.) Solemn ſeaſons for the review of paſt tranſgreſſions, cannot but have a bleſſed effect upon the heart. (3.) When we would afflict our bodies with faſting, there ſhould be total abſtinence from all kinds of meat. To keep a faſt on rich fiſh, and high ſauces, is ridiculous mockery, inſtead of a holy faſt.

33. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 34. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [q] The fifteenth day of this ſeventh month *ſhall be* the feaſt of tabernacles *for* ſeven days unto the LORD: 35. On the firſt day *ſhall be* an holy convocation: ye ſhall do no ſervile work *therein.* 36. Seven days ye ſhall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: [r] on the eighth day ſhall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye ſhall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a † [s] ſolemn aſſembly, *and* ye ſhall do no ſervile work *therein.* 37. Theſe *are* the feaſts of the LORD, which ye ſhall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt-offering, and a meat offering, a ſacrifice, and drink-offerings, every thing upon his day: 38. Beſide the ſabbaths of the LORD, and beſide your gifts, and beſide all your vows, and beſide all your free-will offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. 39. Alſo in the fifteenth day of the ſeventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye ſhall keep a feaſt unto the LORD ſeven days: on the firſt day *ſhall be* a ſabbath, and on the eighth day *ſhall be* a ſabbath. 40. And [t] ye ſhall take you on the firſt day the † boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook: and ye ſhall rejoice before the LORD your God ſeven days. 41. And ye ſhall keep it a feaſt unto the LORD ſeven days in the year: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever in your generations, ye ſhall celebrate it in the ſeventh month. 42. Ye ſhall dwell in booths ſeven days; all that are Iſraelites born, ſhall dwell in booths: 43. That your generations may know that I made the children of Iſrael to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God. 44. And Moſes declared unto the children of Iſrael the feaſts of the LORD.

[q] Exod. xxiii. 16. Num. xxix. 12. Deut. xvi. 13.
[r] Joh. vii. 37.
† Heb. A day of reſtraint.
[s] 2 Chron. vii. 9.
[t] Neh. viii. 15.
† Heb. Fruit.

v. 33—44. The ſorrows of repentance are the certain forerunners of peace and joy in believing. The humiliation of the day of atonement prepared for the feaſt of tabernacles, one of the three great feſtivals, celebrated for eight days, with every expreſſion of gladneſs, with many ſacrifices, and two days of ſolemn convocation. During ſeven days, they lived in booths, made of the branches of trees; the eighth was a holy day of reſt and joy. They thus remembered their long abode in tents, in the wilderneſs, and God's care of them there: and as the fruits of the whole year were now gathered in, this added to their thankfulneſs. *Note*, (1.) When we come to our true land of reſt, it will ever warm our hearts with peculiar gratitude, to remember the hardſhips we have endured in the wilderneſs, and from which the Lord delivered us. (2.) If the joy of harveſt was ſo great, how much greater will it be when we ſhall reap the harveſt of eternal glory? (3.) We, in this world, dwell in booths, but in a few days we ſhall return to our houſe, which is from heaven, and then everlaſting joy will be upon our heads.

Theſe ſolemnities were annually obſerved, beſide their ſabbaths and free-will offerings; for nothing muſt interrupt our ordinary duties, and we are never reſtrained from adding any farther portion of our time and ſubſtance to the immediate ſervice of God, if we find our hearts inclined, and our circumſtances enabling us.

CHAP. XXIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A repetition of the laws concerning the lamps and the ſhew-bread,* ver. 1—9. 2. *A violation of the law againſt blaſphemy, with the impriſonment, trial, condemnation, and execution of the blaſphemer,* ver. 10—14. *with* ver. 23. 3. *The law againſt blaſphemy re-enforced,* ver. 15, 16. *with ſundry other laws,* ver. 17—22.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Command the children of Iſrael that they bring unto thee pure oil-olive, beaten, for the light †, to cauſe the lamps to burn continually. 3. Without the vail of the teſtimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, ſhall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning, before the LORD continually: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever in your generations. 4. He ſhall order the lamps upon [b] the pure candleſtick before the LORD continually. 5. ¶ And thou ſhalt take fine flour, and bake twelve [c] cakes thereof: two tenth-deals ſhall be in one cake. 6. And thou ſhalt ſet them in two rows, ſix in a row, upon the pure table, before the LORD. 7. And thou ſhalt put pure frankincenſe upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 8. Every ſabbath he ſhall ſet it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Iſrael, by an everlaſting covenant. 9. And [d] it ſhall be Aaron's and his ſons, and they ſhall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* moſt holy unto him, of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual ſtatute.

[a] Exod. xxvii. 20.
† Heb. To cauſe to aſcend.
[b] Exod. xxxi. 8.
[c] Ibid. xxv. 30.
[d] Ibid. xxix. 33. Chap. viii. 31. 1 Sam. xxi. 6. Mat. xii. 4.

v. 1—9. We have here,

1. Proviſion for the lamps to be kept conſtantly burning. The oil muſt be of the fineſt ſort, provided at the public expence, and the prieſts are carefully to repleniſh them morning and evening, ſnuff them, and keep them clean. *Note*, (1.) They who would enjoy the light of the goſpel, ſhould gladly ſupport a godly miniſtry. (2.) They who ſerve in God's ſanctuary, muſt be careful not to adulterate the oil of divine truth, but make the light ſhine bright in the fervency of their miniſtrations, and the exemplarineſs of their own conduct.

2. The ſhew-bread muſt be ſupplied continually. Twelve loaves, according to the twelve tribes, in two piles, with a ſaucer of frankincenſe by each of them. The frankincenſe was burnt on the altar of incenſe, when the loaves were renewed every ſabbath-day; and thoſe that were removed, eaten by the prieſts in the holy place. *Note*, (1.) They who come to God will find a table ſpread for them even in the wilderneſs. (2.) They who eat of his bread, ſhould remember their obligations to ſerve him. (3.) Every ſabbath-day miniſters muſt provide freſh food for the ſouls of the people, and not lazily put them off with ſtale diſcourſes.

10. ¶ And the ſon of an Iſraelitiſh woman, whoſe father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Iſrael, and this ſon of the Iſraelitiſh *woman*, and a man of Iſrael ſtrove together in the camp. 11. And the Iſraelitiſh woman's ſon blaſphemed the name *of the LORD*, and curſed: and they brought him unto Moſes (and his mother's name *was* Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) 12. And they [e] put him in ward, † that the mind of the LORD might be ſhewed them. 13. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 14. Bring forth him that hath curſed without the camp, and let all that heard *him* [f] lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation ſtone him. 15. And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, Whoſoever curſeth his God, ſhall bear his ſin. 16. And [g] he that blaſphemeth the name of the LORD, he ſhall ſurely be put to death, *and* all the congregation ſhall certainly ſtone him: as well the ſtranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blaſphemeth the name *of the LORD*, ſhall be put to death.

[e] Num. xv. 34.
† Heb. To expound unto them, according to the mouth of the Lord.
[f] Deut. xiii. 9. & xvii. 7.
[g] 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13.

v. 10—23.

Before Chriſt 1490.

v. 10—16, 23. This is the firſt capital crime and execution ſince the giving the law. The offence was blaſphemy, occaſioned by a quarrel between an Iſraelite and a man born of an Egyptian father and Iſraelitiſh mother. *Note*, (1.) Quarrels always end ill. (2.) When an Iſraelitiſh woman marries an Egyptian, or a Chriſtian an unbeliever, no wonder the children turn after the worſt ſide. It ſhould ſeem, he wanted to dwell among the Danites, becauſe his mother was of that tribe; and, when oppoſed by one of the tribe, brought his cauſe before the judges, and was caſt: in indignation and wrath againſt which deciſion, he blaſphemed probably God himſelf, or imprecated ſome curſe on the judge, or the Iſraelite his adverſary. Anger and blaſphemy are uſually allied, and both mortal ſins. If we would avoid the one, we ſhould ſuppreſs the other. Hereupon the matter is brought before Moſes, that in a caſe of ſuch importance they might be directed how to proceed according to the mind of God, and, till this is known, the blaſphemer is put in priſon. When life or death are at ſtake, judges need much deliberation, and humbly to look up to God for wiſdom to judge aright, knowing, that at his bar they muſt give account. God commands immediate execution to be done upon him. He is to be dragged out of the camp, as a profanation to it, and all the congregation muſt ſtone him, to teſtify their abhorrence of his ſin, when the witneſſes had laid their hands on his head, as free from his blood. *Note*, Blaſphemers are now ſo common, that ſtones would almoſt be wanting to caſt at them; but though they find impunity for a moment, there is a judgment near, when they ſhall die a more terrible death, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The execution of this offender produces a ſtanding law for the future puniſhment of the like crime. It muſt in no caſe be diſpenſed with; and even a ſtranger living among them, is as liable to the ſame penalty, as the Iſraelite born. God is a jealous God, and will in no wiſe ſpare the blaſphemer: and when we hear ſuch dreadful language, we ſhould tremble for thoſe who have no fear for themſelves.

17. ¶ [h] And he that † killeth any man, ſhall ſurely be put to death. 18. And he that killeth a beaſt, ſhall make it good; ‡ beaſt for beaſt. 19. And if a man cauſe a blemiſh in his neighbour, [i] as he hath done, ſo ſhall it be done unto him. 20. Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath cauſed a blemiſh in a man, ſo ſhall it be done to him *again*. 21. [k] And he that killeth a beaſt, he ſhall reſtore it: and he that killeth a man, he ſhall be put to death. 22. Ye ſhall have [l] one manner of law, as well for the ſtranger, as for one of your own country: for I *am* the LORD your God. 23. ¶ And Moſes ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, that they ſhould bring forth him that had curſed, out of the camp, and ſtone him with ſtones: and the children of Iſrael did as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[h] Exod. xxi. 12. Numb. xxxv. 31. Deut. xix. 21.
† Heb. Smiteth the life of a man.
‡ Heb. Life for life.
[i] Exod. xxi. 24. Deut. xix. 21. Mat. v. 38.
[k] Exod. xxi. 33.
[l] Ibid. xii. 49.

v. 17—22. We have here a repetition of former laws. The murderer muſt be put to death. He that killed a beaſt muſt reſtore it; for God will have no injury done to our bodies, or to our goods. The law of retaliation is enjoined; not that any private perſon might avenge himſelf, but the judge muſt give him damages equal to his hurt. *Note*, Though in general the goſpel teaches us leſſons of forgiveneſs towards thoſe who injure or miſuſe us, yet ſometimes, for the ſake of others and the public, it would be wrong not to claim that redreſs to which we are entitled. Strangers, as well as Jews, were bound by thoſe laws. It is highly equitable, that they who live among us, as they have a right to the protection, ought to be alike obnoxious to the penalties of the law.

CHAP. XXV.

The law of this chapter concerns the lands and eſtates of the Iſraelites in Canaan. 1. *Every ſeventh year muſt be a ſabbatical year*, ver. 1—7. *Thus God tried their faith in his providence*, ver. 18—22. 2. *Every fiftieth year muſt be a year of jubile, that is*, (1.) *A year of releaſe of debts and mortgages, and return to the poſſeſſion of their alienated lands*, ver. 8—17. *Particular directions are given*, 1. *Concerning the ſale and redemption of lands*, ver. 23—28. 2. *Of houſes in cities and villages, with a proviſo for Levite cities*, ver. 29—34. (2.) *A year of releaſe of ſervants and bond-ſlaves.* (1.) *Here is inſerted, a law for the kind uſage of poor debtors*, ver. 35—38. (2.) *Then comes the law for the diſcharge of all Iſraelites that were ſold for ſervants in the year of jubile.* (1.) *If they were ſold to Iſraelites*, ver. 39—46. *And*, (2.) *If ſold to proſelytes*, ver. 47—55.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes in mount Sinai, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then ſhall the land † keep [a] ſabbath unto the LORD. 3. Six years thou ſhalt ſow thy field, and ſix years thou ſhalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof. 4. But in the ſeventh year ſhall be a ſabbath of reſt unto the land, a ſabbath for the LORD: thou ſhalt neither ſow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. 5. [b] That which groweth of its own accord of thy harveſt, thou ſhalt not reap, neither gather the grapes ‡ of thy vine undreſſed: *for* it is a year of reſt unto the land. 6. And the ſabbath of the land ſhall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy ſervant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired ſervant, and for thy ſtranger that ſojourneth with thee, 7. And for thy cattle, and for the beaſt that *are* in thy land, ſhall all the increaſe thereof be meat.

Before Chriſt 1491.

† Heb. Reſt.
[a] Exod. xxiii. 11. See Chap. xxvi. 34.
[b] 2 Kings xix. 29.
‡ Heb. Of thy ſeparation.

v. 1—7. As every ſeventh day was a day of reſt, every ſeventh year was ſabbatical. It began in September, and that year there was no ſeed-time nor harveſt, no pruning vineyards or olives, or any vintage; but what was ſpontaneouſly produced, was common for all. God thus, as the proprietor, taught them to remember, that they held all at his grant, and obliged them to live upon his providence. They were thus more at leiſure to attend upon God, and taught, by having the land in common, to remember their brethren, as being of one family, and to communicate with them their good things. *Note*, (1.) The ſalvation of the goſpel is a common ſalvation, and all the great and precious promiſes of pardon, righteouſneſs, adoption, ſtrength, conſolation, &c. which grow in the field of grace, as they ſpring up without our labour, are to be gathered freely: whoſoever will, let him come. (2.) When we have for the few years of life toiled to ſubdue the ſtubborn ſoil of our hearts, we ſhall at laſt ſet down, and reſt from our labours, in the enjoyment of an eternal ſabbath in glory.

8. ¶ And thou ſhalt number ſeven ſabbaths of years unto thee, ſeven times ſeven years, and the ſpace of the ſeven ſabbaths of years ſhall be unto thee forty and nine years. 9. Then ſhalt thou cauſe the trumpet † of [c] the jubile to ſound on the tenth *day* of the ſeventh month; in [d] the day of atonement ſhall ye make the trumpet ſound throughout all your land. 10. And ye ſhall hallow the fiftieth year, and [e] proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof: it ſhall be a jubile unto you, and [f] ye ſhall return every man unto his poſſeſſion, and [g] ye ſhall return every man unto his family. 11. A jubile ſhall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye ſhall not ſow, neither reap that which groweth of itſelf in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undreſſed. 12. For it *is* the jubile, it ſhall be holy unto you: ye ſhall eat the increaſe thereof out of the field. 13. In the year of this jubile, ye ſhall return every man unto his poſſeſſions. 14. And if thou ſell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyeſt *ought* of thy neighbour's hand, ye ſhall not oppreſs one another. 15. According to the number of years after the jubile thou ſhalt buy of thy neighbour, *and* according unto the number of years of the fruits he ſhall ſell unto thee: 16. According to the multitude of years thou ſhalt increaſe the price thereof, and according to the fewneſs of years thou ſhalt diminiſh the price of it: for *according* unto the number *of the years* of the fruits doth he ſell unto thee. 17. Ye ſhall not therefore oppreſs one another: but thou ſhalt fear thy God: For I *am* the LORD your God. 18. ¶ Wherefore ye ſhall do my ſtatutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye ſhall dwell in the land in ſafety. 19. And the land ſhall yield her fruit, and [h] ye ſhall eat your fill, and dwell therein in ſafety. 20. And if ye ſhall ſay, What ſhall we eat the ſeventh year? behold, we ſhall not ſow, nor gather in our increaſe: 21. Then I will command my bleſſing upon you in the ſixth year, and it ſhall bring forth fruit for three years. 22. And ye ſhall ſow the eighth year, and eat *yet* of old fruit, until the ninth year; until her fruits come in, ye ſhall eat *of* the old *ſtore*.

† Heb. Loud of ſound.
[c] Chap. xxvii. 17, &c. Numb. xxxvi. 4. See Iſa. lxi. 2. Luke iv. 19.
[d] Chap. xxiii. 27, &c.
[e] See Iſa. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18.
[f] Ver. 13, 28, 41.
[g] Ver. 41, 54.
[h] Chap xxvi. 5

v. 8—22. As every ſeventh was a ſabbatical year, every fiftieth was a jubile, when the land muſt reſt, and no work of agriculture be performed. Proclamation of it was made throughout the land, on the evening of the day of atonement; and thereupon an immediate reſtoration of liberty and property commenced. Thus when the trump of goſpel grace proclaims pardon to the guilty, then peace of conſcience, and deliverance from the bondage of ſin, begins; and when the trump of judgment ſhall awake the dead, a yet more glorious jubile will commence ; when every true Iſraelite ſhall receive his inheritance, unalienable and eternal in the heavens.

1. Every man's eſtate returned to his heirs, without fee or reward, in the ſtate it had been mortgaged : by which proviſion every tribe was kept diſtinct, and every family careful of their genealogy. None were ſuffered to increaſe their eſtates, ſo as to lord it over his brethren ; nor any family, through the extravagance of a member of it, reduced to poverty for ever. *Note*, Though Adam, like an extravagant father, ſold his patrimony, Chriſt hath reſtored the loſt inheritance to all his Iſrael.

2. Every ſlave was at liberty ; no contract extended longer than this period. Though we have ſold ourſelves to work wickedneſs, and juſtly deſerve perpetual ſervitude, yet, bleſſed be God, we are, through the blood of redemption, delivered from the bondage of corruption, and reſtored to the houſhold of God.

3. Every bargain was to be made with a view to this year. According to the nearneſs or diſtance of it, the value of a purchaſe was to be proportionable. Their contracts muſt be made in the fear of God, and then they will neceſſarily be equitable. *Note*, The perſon who is not poſſeſſed with the fear of God, and love of his brother, cannot be an honeſt man.

4. Leſt they ſhould fear a famine, by the want of harveſt for two ſucceſſive years, God promiſes to preſerve them, and give them ſuch extraordinary increaſe on the ſixth year, that they ſhould have enough till the corn was reaped in the ninth. *Note*, (1.) They who follow God's will, may ſafely truſt him for a proviſion. (2.) It would be a ſhame to a Chriſtian, if he has leſs faith than a Jew, and if we ſhould be more afraid of wanting bread than they were. (3.) With the bleſſing of God, a little will go far ; ſo that, like the widow's cruiſe, we ſhall ſtill have enough and to ſpare.

23. ¶ The land ſhall not be ſold † for ever : for the land *is* mine, for ye *are* [i] ſtrangers and ſojourners with me. 24. And in all the land of your poſſeſſion, ye ſhall grant a redemption for the land. 25. ¶ [k] If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath ſold away *ſome* of his poſſeſſion, and if [l] any of his kin come to redeem it, then ſhall he redeem that which his brother ſold. 26. And if the man have none to redeem it, and ‡ himſelf be able to redeem it : 27. Then let him count the years of the ſale thereof, and reſtore the overplus unto the man to whom he ſold it ; that he may return unto his poſſeſſion. 28. But if he be not able to reſtore *it* to him, then that which is ſold, ſhall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it, until the year of jubile : and in the jubile it ſhall go out, and he ſhall return unto his poſſeſſion. 29. And if a man ſell a dwelling-houſe in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is ſold : *within* a full year may he redeem it. 30. And if it be not redeemed within the ſpace of a full year : then the houſe that *is* in the walled city, ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever to him that bought it, throughout his generations : it ſhall not go out in the jubile. 31. But the houſes of the villages which have no walls round about them, ſhall be counted as the fields of the country : || they may be redeemed, and they ſhall go out in the jubile. 32. Notwithſtanding, [m] the cities of the Levites, *and* the houſes of the cities of their poſſeſſion, may the Levites redeem at any time. 33. And if § a man purchaſe of the Levites, then the houſe that was ſold, and the city of his poſſeſſion ſhall go out in the *year of* jubile : for the houſes of the cities of the Levites *are* their poſſeſſion among the children of Iſrael. 34. But the field of the ſuburbs of their cities may not be ſold, for it *is* their perpetual poſſeſſion.

† Heb. For cutting off.
[i] Pſ. cxix. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
[k] Ruth ii. 20. & iv. 6.
[l] See Ruth iii. 2, 9, 12. Jer. xxxii. 7.
‡ Heb. His hand hath attained, and found ſufficiency.
|| Heb. Redemption belongeth unto it.
[m] See Num. xxxv. 2. Joſh. xxi. 2, &c.
§ Or, one of the Levites redeem them.

v. 23—34. The lands were God's, and they only occupants for him ; therefore they muſt never be ſold for perpetuity. The longeſt alienation was till the year of jubile, and they were redeemable at any time before. If the owner himſelf could not redeem his eſtate, his neareſt kinſman might, and thus keep it in the family. If not redeemed, it reverted of courſe at the jubile. Some exceptions are made, reſpecting houſes in walled towns, (for thoſe in the country went as the lands) ; if a man bought a houſe, during a year it might be redeemed ; but afterwards it was his own for ever ; which would encourage artificers and merchants to live among them, ſince they might have a dwelling of their own, though not a landed eſtate. The houſes in the cities of the Levites only were at all times redeemable, and reverted at the jubile, as lands ; and the fields in their ſuburbs never could be alienated at all ; they belonging to the city as a community, being appointed for the maintenance of ſucceeding generations of the prieſthood. We are taught here, 1. In the near kinſman and redeemer to behold Jeſus, fleſh of our fleſh, and bone of our bone, who, when we had ſold all, and were become incapable of recovering our inheritance, hath paid down the purchaſe, and reſtored the loſt title. 2. If God has ſuch care for his church lands, they need fear a reckoning, who continue the ſacrilegious alienation of the tythes devoted to the ſervice of his ſanctuary, and have, in many pariſhes among us, ſcarce left the miniſters a houſe to cover them, or a ſalary to provide them bread.

35. ¶ And if thy brother be waxen poor, and † fallen in decay with thee, then thou ſhalt ‡ relieve him : *yea though he be* a ſtranger, or a ſojourner ; that he may live with thee. 36. [n] Take thou no uſury of him, or increaſe : but [o] fear thy God, that thy brother may live with thee. 37. Thou ſhalt not give him thy money upon uſury, nor lend him thy victuals for increaſe. 38. I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, *and* to be your God.

† Heb. His hand faileth.
‡ Heb. ſtrengthen.
[n] Exod. xxii. 25. Deut. xxiii. 19. Prov. xxviii. 8. Ezek. xviii. 8. & xxii. 12.
[o] Neh. v. 9.

v. 35—38. God will have particular regard paid to his poor people ; and no difference muſt be made between home-born or ſtranger. Wherever poverty is, it is a demand for our aſſiſtance. They muſt pity, and, out of their abundance, ſupply their wants ; and as a ſmall ſum lent the induſtrious poor, is often the greateſt charity which can be done them, as enabling them to work for themſelves, they may not take any uſury for it. Theſe are laws ſtill in force ; for though intereſt from thoſe who uſe our money to traffic and make gain with, is lawful, yet many times the ſame charity that bids us freely give to one, obliges us freely to lend another. The rich muſt not live for themſelves merely, or engroſs all ; God expects, that as he hath given the poor life, we ſhould make their ſubſiſtence comfortable.

39. ¶ And [p] if thy brother *that dwelleth* by thee be waxen poor, and be ſold unto thee ; thou ſhalt not † compel him to ſerve as a bond-ſervant : 40. *But* as an hired ſervant, *and* as a ſojourner, he ſhall be with thee, *and* ſhall ſerve thee unto the year of jubile. 41. And *then* ſhall he depart from thee, *both* he and his children with him, and ſhall return unto his own family, and unto the poſſeſſion of his fathers ſhall he return. 42. For they *are* my ſervants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt : they ſhall not be ſold ‡ as bondmen. 43. [q] Thou ſhalt not rule over him with rigour, but ſhalt fear thy God. 44. Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou ſhalt have, *ſhall be* of the heathen that are round about you ; of them ſhall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. 45. Moreover of the children of the ſtrangers that do ſojourn among you, of them ſhall ye buy, and of their families that *are* with you, which they begat in your land : and they ſhall be your poſſeſſion. 46. And ye ſhall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them for* a poſſeſſion, || they ſhall be your bondmen for ever : but over your brethren, the children of Iſrael, ye ſhall not rule one over another with rigour. 47. ¶ And if a ſojourner or ſtranger § wax rich by thee, and thy brother *that dwelleth* by him wax poor, and ſell himſelf unto the ſtranger *or* ſojourner by thee, or to the ſtock of the ſtranger's family : 48. After that he is ſold, he may be redeemed again ; one of his brethren may redeem him. 49. Either his uncle, or his uncle's ſon may redeem him, or *any* that is nigh of kin unto him of his family, may redeem him ; or if he be able, he may redeem himſelf. 50. And he ſhall reckon with him that bought him, from the year that he was ſold to him, unto the year of jubile : and the price of his ſale ſhall be according to the number of years, according to the time of an hired ſervant ſhall it be with him. 51. If *there be* yet many years *behind*, according unto them he ſhall give again the price of his redemption, out of the money that he was bought for. 52. ¶ And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubile, then he ſhall count with him, *and* according unto his years ſhall he give him again the price of his redemption. 53. *And* as a yearly hired ſervant ſhall he be with him, and *the other* ſhall not rule with rigour over him in thy ſight. 54. And if he be not redeemed † in theſe *years*, then he ſhall go out in the year of jubile, *both* he and his children with him. 55. For unto me the children of Iſrael *are* ſervants,

they

[p] Exod. xxi. 2. Deut. xv. 12. Jer. xxxiv. 14.
† Heb. Serve thyſelf with him with the ſervice, &c.
‡ Heb. With the ſale of a bond-man.
[q] Eph vi. 9. Col. iv. 1.
|| Heb. Ye ſhall ſerve yourſelves with them.
§ Heb. His hand obtain, &c.
† Or, by theſe means.

they *are* my ſervants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

v. 39—55. As God had done ſo much for Iſrael, in bringing them from Egypt, he will no more ſuffer them to live in perpetual ſervitude. The ſoul whom God hath reſcued once from ſpiritual Egypt, though fooliſhly and wickedly he may part with his glorious liberty for a time, God will not ſuffer him to live for ever a bond-ſervant to ſin, but will ſave him from final apoſtacy.

1. A native Iſraelite, who through extreme poverty ſold himſelf to one of his brethren, was to be regarded as a hired ſervant, to be looked upon above a bond-man, as being by and by to go free; and, as a brother, to be treated with gentleneſs. Our ſervants being of the ſame fleſh and blood, have as much a right to our kindneſs and good uſage, as we have to their ſervice and fidelity. He hath never known the gentle ſway of a Saviour's love in his heart, who becoming inſolent, unreaſonable, or fretful, is a lion in his houſe, and frantic among his ſervants. If the Iſraelite were ſold for debt, or a crime, he was free the ſeventh year: if it was his own act, it extended to the year of jubile. Of other nations, except the devoted ones, they might have perpetual bond-ſervants, and theſe the jubile year did not affect. It is only thoſe who are of the election of grace, as Abraham's believing ſeed, that have a right to ſpiritual liberty; the reſt die, as they were born, the ſervants of corruption. Though the ſinner hath ſold himſelf, bleſſed be God, the right of redemption remains good, and we have one of our brethren able and willing to pay the price, and ſet the poor ſoul at liberty from the ſervitude of ſin.

2. If an Iſraelite ſold himſelf to a wealthy ſtranger, beſides the other privileges of going out in common with others at the year of jubile, particular care is taken that his brethren have an eye to him, that he be not uſed with rigour; and alſo any of his relations had a right to redeem him, according to the number of years which remained before the jubile.

CHAP. XXVI.

This chapter is a ſolemn concluſion of the main body of the Levitical law. Here is, 1. *A repetition of two or three of the principal of the commandments,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *An inviting promiſe of all good things, if they would but keep God's commandments,* ver. 3—13. 3. *A terrible threatning of ruining judgments which would be brought upon them, if they were refractory and diſobedient,* ver. 14—39. 4. *A gracious promiſe of the return of mercy to thoſe of them that would repent and reform,* ver. 40, &c. Deut. xxviii. *is parallel to this.*

1. YE ſhall make you [a] no idols, nor graven image, neither rear you up a † ſtanding image, neither ſhall ye ſet up *any* ‡ image of ſtone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God. 2. [b] Ye ſhall keep my ſabbaths, and reverence my ſanctuary: I *am* the LORD. 3. ¶ [c] If ye walk in my ſtatutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; 4. Then I will give you rain in due ſeaſon, and the land ſhall yield her increaſe, and the trees of the field ſhall yield their fruit. 5. And [d] your threſhing ſhall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage ſhall reach unto the ſowing time: and [e] ye ſhall eat your bread to the full, and [f] dwell in your land ſafely. 6. And I will give peace in the land, and [g] ye ſhall lie down, and none ſhall make *you* afraid: and I will ‖ rid evil beaſts out of the land, neither ſhall the ſword go through your land. 7. And ye ſhall chaſe your enemies, and they ſhall fall before you by the ſword. 8. And [h] five of you ſhall chaſe an hundred, and an hundred of you ſhall put ten thouſand to flight: and your enemies ſhall fall before you by the ſword. 9. For I will have reſpect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and eſtabliſh my covenant with you. 10. And ye ſhall eat old ſtore, and bring forth the old becauſe of the new. 11. And [i] I will ſet my tabernacle amongſt you; and my ſoul ſhall not abhor you. 12. [k] And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people. 13. I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye ſhould not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

[a] Exod. xx. 4. Deut. v. 8. & xvi. 12. & xxvii. 15. Pſ. xcvii. 7.
† Or pillar,
‡ Heb. A ſtone of picture, i. e. A pictured ſtone.
[b] Chap. xix. 30.
[c] Deut. xxviii. 1.
[d] Amos ix. 13.
[e] Chap. xxv. 19.
[f] Job xi. 18.
[g] Job xi. 19. Iſa. xxxv. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 25.
‖ Heb. Cauſe to ceaſe.
[h] Deut. xxxii. 30. Joſh. xxiii. 10.
[i] Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27.
[k] 2 Cor. vi. 16.

v. 1—13. God will not prove an unkind maſter to thoſe who ſerve him: none follow him with fidelity, whom he will not follow with bleſſings. We have,

1. A ſolemn repetition of thoſe commands, on the obſervance of which their happineſs eſpecially depended, viz. Abſtaining from idolatry, and keeping holy God's ſabbaths. Whilſt they worſhipped the true God, and in the ways of his own appointments, ſo long they would be a peculiar people to him.

2. Rich promiſes to the obedient. The things ſpecified are temporal; but they look further, even to eternal bleſſings. Plenty ſhall crown the year, and peace be in their borders. Their enemies ſhall bow before them, and their people multiply exceedingly. God's favour ſhall be continually towards them, his preſence in the midſt of them, and his covenant perpetually eſtabliſhed with them. They ſhall be his people, and he will be their God for ever. To the Iſrael of God theſe promiſes are daily fulfilling: the rain of divine grace produces the abundance of ſpiritual gifts and holy diſpoſitions: the peace of God ſhall keep our hearts and minds: our enemies, Satan, ſin, and death, ſhall be vanquiſhed: the in-dwelling preſence of Jeſus in our heart, ſhall exceed the tabernacle glory; and though in ourſelves deſerving God's loathing, we ſhall be the objects of his everlaſting love; the covenant he hath made with us ſhall ſtand faſt to eternity; and in death, and after death he will be our God for ever and ever, and we ſhall be his people. Amen! Amen!

14. [l] But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all theſe commandments; 15. And if ye ſhall deſpiſe my ſtatutes, or if your ſoul abhor my judgments, ſo that ye will not do all my commandments, *but* that ye break my covenant: 16. I alſo will do this unto you, I will even appoint † over you terror, conſumption, and the burning ague, that ſhall conſume the eyes, and cauſe ſorrow of heart: and [m] ye ſhall ſow your ſeed in vain, for your enemies ſhall eat it. 17. [n] And I will ſet my face againſt you, and ye ſhall be ſlain before your enemies: they that hate you ſhall reign over you, and [o] ye ſhall flee when none purſueth you. 18. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will puniſh you [p] ſeven times more for your ſins. 19. And I will break the pride of your power: and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as braſs: 20. And your ſtrength ſhall be ſpent in vain: for your land ſhall not yield her increaſe, neither ſhall the trees of the land yield their fruits. 21. ¶ And if ye walk ‡ contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me, I will bring ſeven times more plagues upon you, according to your ſins. 22. [q] I will alſo ſend wild beaſts among you, which ſhall rob you of your children, and deſtroy your cattle, and make you few in number, and [r] your *high*-ways ſhall be deſolate. 23. And if ye will not be reformed by me by theſe things, but will walk contrary unto me: 24. Then will [s] I alſo walk contrary unto you, and will puniſh you yet ſeven times for your ſins. 25. And I will bring a ſword upon you, that ſhall avenge the quarrel of *my* covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will ſend the peſtilence among you, and ye ſhall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. 26. *And* [t] when I have broken the ſtaff of your bread, ten women ſhall bake your bread in one oven, and they ſhall deliver *you* your bread again by weight: and [u] ye ſhall eat and not be ſatisfied. 27. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me: 28. Then I will walk contrary unto you alſo in fury; and I, even I, will chaſtiſe you ſeven times for your ſins. 29. [x] And ye ſhall eat the fleſh of your ſons, and the fleſh of your daughters ſhall ye eat. 30. And I will deſtroy your high places, and [y] cut down your images, and caſt your carcaſes upon the carcaſes of your idols, and my ſoul ſhall abhor you. 31. And I will make your cities waſte, and [z] bring your ſanctuaries unto deſolation: and I will not ſmell the ſavour of your ſweet odours. 32. And I will bring the land into deſolation: and your enemies which dwell therein ſhall be aſtoniſhed at it. 33. [a] And I will ſcatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a ſword after you: and your land ſhall be deſolate, and your cities waſte. 34. [b] Then ſhall the land enjoy her ſabbaths as long as it lieth deſolate, and ye *be* in your enemies land; *even* then ſhall the land reſt, and enjoy her ſabbaths. 35. As long as it lieth deſolate, it ſhall reſt: becauſe it did not reſt in your [c] ſabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. 36. And upon them that are left *alive* of you, I will ſend a faintneſs into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and [d] the ſound of a † ſhaken leaf ſhall chaſe them; and they ſhall flee, as fleeing from a ſword: and they ſhall fall when none

[l] Deut. xxviii. 15. Lam. ii. 17. Mal. ii. 2.
† Heb. Upon you.
[m] Deut. xxviii. 33. Job. xxxi. 8. Jer. v. 17. & xii. 13.
[n] Chap. xvii. 10.
[o] Pſ. liii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 1.
[p] 1 Sam. ii. 5. Pſ. cxix. 164. Prov. xxiv. 16.
‡ Heb. At all adventures with me. So ver. 24.
[q] Deut. xxxii. 24. Ezek. v. 17.
[r] Judg. v. 6. 2 Chron. xv. 5. Iſa. xxxiii. 8. Lam. i. 4.
[s] 2 Sam. xxii. 27. Pſ. xviii. 26.
[t] Iſa. iii. 1. Ezek. iv. 16. & v. 16. & xiv. 13.
[u] Mic. vi. 14. Hag. i. 6.
[x] Deut. xxviii. 53. Ezek. v. 10. Bar. ii. 3.
[y] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 7. Iſa. xxvii. 9. Ezek. vi. 4, 5, 13.
[z] Pſ. lxxiv. 7. Lam. i. 10. Ezek. ix. 6. & xxi. 7.
[a] Deut. iv. 27. & xxviii. 62, 64.
[b] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.
[c] Chap. xxv. 2.
[d] Prov. xxviii. 1.
† Heb. Driven.

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[e] Iſa. x. 4.

purſueth. 37. And [e] they ſhall fall one upon another, as it were before a ſword, when none purſueth: and ye ſhall have no power to ſtand before your enemies. 38. And ye ſhall periſh among the heathen, and the land of your enemies ſhall eat you up. 39. And they that are left of you, ſhall [f] pine away in their iniquity in your enemies lands; and alſo in the iniquities of their fathers ſhall they pine away with them.

[f] Deut. iv. 29. & xxx. 1. Neh. i. 9. Jer. iii. 25. & xxix. 12, 13. Ezek. iv. 17. & vi. 9. & xx. 44. & xxiv. 23. & xxxiii. 10. & xxxvi. 31. Hoſ. v. 15. Zech. x. 9.

v. 14—39. As God encouraged to obedience by rewards, he threatened the diſobedient with the moſt awful judgments. If mercy will not draw them, at leaſt let terror drive them.

1. The ſins God threatens are, wilful diſobedience perſiſted in, with impenitence under their chaſtiſements. This is ſuppoſed to begin in careleſsneſs and diſregard of God's commandments, the conſequence of which would ſoon be to deſpiſe them. Sin is a down-hill road; the tranſition from evil to worſe is moſt natural. When they began to ſlight religion, deſtruction would haſten apace: they would then loath it, and breaking off every reſtraint, give ſcope to the inſatiable luſts of their corrupted hearts. Such is the uſual proceſs of evil. God will viſit for theſe things; and if his rod of correction is deſpiſed, his ſword of judgment ſhall be unſheathed. Before he ſtrikes, he warns; if they will hearken to the calls of his word, and the pleadings of their conſcience; if they turn from the evil of their way, and reform their courſe of evil, there would be hope; but when his calls were rejected with obſtinacy, and his judgments exaſperated and hardened, inſtead of humbling them, then wo unto them. *Note,* They who reſiſt the calls of God, and convictions of conſcience; and, under the corrections of ſickneſs and affliction, continue unhumbled, impatient, murmuring, and unreformed, have nothing to hope for, but wrath to the uttermoſt.

2. The puniſhments to be inflicted on the rebellious. The firſt and soreſt judgment, and the cauſe of all the reſt, is God's face being ſet againſt them. They who contend with their Maker, will find the ſtruggle moſt unequal. He threatens to croſs their deſigns, and diſappoint their hopes; evil and misfortune ſhall attend them as their ſhadows. Diſeaſes, like a flight of locuſts, ſhall ſeize upon their bodies; unfruitful ſeaſons ſhall make their lands barren, and the ſword of their enemies ſhall be drenched in their blood. If theſe judgments have no effect, greater ſhall follow: God will not ſtay his arm from puniſhment, whilſt we refuſe to bow our hearts in penitence. The beaſts of the earth ſhall devour their children, and, as executioners of God's wrath, make their habitations deſolate. If they remain yet incorrigible, heavier and thicker ſtrokes deſcend. Whilſt the ſinner is out of hell there is hope; but every rejected call haſtens him thither. Famine ſhall ſtalk thro' their barren land, and peſtilence devour and depopulate their cities. God arms thus all creation againſt his enemies, and heaven and earth conſpire to deſtroy them. If, after all, their deſperate hearts reject the warning, and continue impenitent, their ruin ſhall come. When God begins, he will make an end with the ſinner, nor leave him till he is brought to everlaſting burnings. Their cities ſhould be beſieged, and they ſhall eat their ſons and daughters through the famine: their enemies ſhall throw down their walls, and lay their carcaſes on their idols. And whilſt in deſolation forſaken the land enjoys her ſabbaths, the poor remnant ſhall be ſcattered among the heathen, nor even there be at reſt. A ſword ſhall purſue them, and their ſouls withal be as miſerable as their bodies. Continual terror within ſhall torment their coward guilty hearts; and in their iniquities they ſhall pine away, without proſpect of redreſs. Deſpair in this life is the conſummation of a ſinner's guilt, and, in hell, of his torment. Vengeance ſo exemplary ſhall even aſtoniſh their enemies, and they ſhall be ſeen and acknowledged the objects of God's juſt abhorrence. *Note,* (1.) What a dreadful thing is ſin! (2.) How ſure is the ruin of the impenitent ſinner! (3.) How aggravated the guilt of that ſoul, whom mercies cannot engage, nor corrections deter. (4.) How juſt will God appear, to give up thoſe to deſpair, who have given up themſelves to work wickedneſs.

[g] Num. v. 7. 1 Kings viii. 33, 35, 47.

40. [g] If they ſhall confeſs their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their treſpaſs which they treſpaſſed againſt me, and that alſo they have walked contrary unto me; 41. And *that* I alſo have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their [h] uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity: 42. Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and alſo my covenant with Iſaac, and alſo my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. 43. The land alſo ſhall be left of them, and ſhall enjoy her ſabbaths, while ſhe lieth deſolate without them: and they ſhall accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity: becauſe, even becauſe they deſpiſed my judgments, and becauſe their ſoul abhorred my ſtatutes. 44. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, [i] I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them to deſtroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I *am* the LORD their God. 45. But I will for their ſakes remember the covenant of their anceſtors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, in the ſight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD. 46. Theſe are the ſtatutes, and judgments, and laws, [k] which the LORD made between him and the children of Iſrael in mount Sinai, by the hand of Moſes.

[h] See Jer. vi. 10. & ix 25, 26. Rom. ii. 29. Col. ii. 11.

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[i] Deut. iv. 31. Rom. xi. 26.

[k] Chap. xxvii. 34.

v. 40—46. Whilſt there is life, there is hope. It is never too late to return to God. The greatneſs of our provocations, or the length of our rebellions, prevent not his compaſſions towards us. May ſuch patience and goodneſs of God lead us to repentance!

1. Their repentance is here deſcribed. They muſt confeſs their ſins, and acknowledge God's hand in their viſitation. Deep humiliation of heart muſt accompany theſe penitent acknowledgments, in the view of their baſeneſs and ingratitude to their gracious God, with humble acquieſcence in their puniſhment, glorifying God in the juſtice of it. *Note,* (1.) The great evil of ſin is the oppoſition of the heart to God. This carnal mind is the heavieſt burden to the awakened ſoul. (2.) When God's grace joins with his afflictive providences, then the heart is ſoftened to ſenſibility, and bowed into the duſt of humiliation. (3.) The humble ſoul will ever bear the miſeries ſin hath brought upon him with patience, and be more ſollicitous to have the end of the viſitation anſwered, than the burden of it removed.

(2.) Mercy promiſed them. Not indeed for their ſake, or on account of their repentance; but becauſe of that covenant which God had eſtabliſhed with their fathers, he will not utterly caſt them away. He will remember mercy in the midſt of judgment, and, as a tender father, extend to them that favour they have ſo juſtly forfeited. *Note,* All the hopes of the ſinner are bound up in the covenant of grace. It is for Jeſus's ſake, not our own, the leaſt regard can be ſhewed us; and in him there is ſuch fulneſs of merit, and freedom of promiſe, that none need deſpair.

Thus Moſes concludes his meſſage from God, and Iſrael are to prove their obedience. Whilſt they do ſo, God will be in the midſt of them, and they ſhall experience the bleſſings of fidelity.

CHAP. XXVII.

This chapter is added as an appendix: it fixes the price of redemption of what had been conſecrated to God; as, Perſons, ver. 2—8. *Cattle, clean or unclean,* ver. 9—13. *Houſes and lands,* ver. 14—25. *With an exception of firſtlings,* ver. 26, 27. 2. *Concerning what was devoted,* ver. 28, 29. 3. *Concerning tythes,* ver. 30—34.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, When a man ſhall make a ſingular vow, the perſons *ſhall be* for the LORD, by thy eſtimation. 3. And thy eſtimation ſhall be, of the male from twenty years old, even unto ſixty years old; even thy eſtimation ſhall be fifty ſhekels of ſilver, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary. 4. And if *it be* a female, then thy eſtimation ſhall be thirty ſhekels. 5. And if *it be* from five years old, even unto twenty years old, then thy eſtimation ſhall be, of the male twenty ſhekels, and for the female ten ſhekels. 6. And if *it be* from a month old, even unto five years old; then thy eſtimation ſhall be of the male, five ſhekels of ſilver, and for the female, thy eſtimation *ſhall be* three ſhekels of ſilver. 7. And if *it be* from ſixty years old, and above; if *it be* a male, then thy eſtimation ſhall be fifteen ſhekels, and for the female ten ſhekels. 8. But if he be poorer than thy eſtimation, then he ſhall preſent himſelf before the prieſt, and the prieſt ſhall value him: according to his ability that vowed, ſhall the prieſt value him. 9. And if *it be* a beaſt whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD; all that *any man* giveth of ſuch unto the LORD, ſhall be holy. 10. He ſhall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he ſhall at all change beaſt for beaſt, then it and the exchange thereof ſhall be holy. 11. And if *it be* any unclean beaſt, of which they do not offer a ſacrifice unto the LORD; then he ſhall preſent the beaſt before the prieſt: 12. And the prieſt ſhall value it, whether it be good or bad: † as thou valueſt it, *who art* the prieſt, ſo ſhall it be.

† Heb. According to thy eſtimation, O Prieſt, &c.

be. 13. But if he will at all redeem it, then he ſhall add a fifth *part* thereof unto thy eſtimation.

v. 1—13. When in return for ſome ſingular mercy, or out of pious zeal, any man ſhould ſanctify to God any of his family, his lands, or houſes, or cattle, an eſtimation is to be made, and they may be redeemed.

1. If a man conſecrated himſelf, his child, or bond-ſervant, to the ſervice of God at the tabernacle, as by the appointment of the tribe of Levi ſuch ſervice was not needed, the prieſt muſt lay a valuation upon the perſon devoted, according to their age, ſex, and uſefulneſs. The ſhekel of the ſanctuary was to be the coin, ſomewhat leſs than half a crown; and nothing conſecrated muſt be valued at leſs than one, nor more than fifty. But if a man was poor, and unable to pay the valuation of what he had conſecrated, the prieſt, on examination of his circumſtances, ſhould abate according to his ability. *Note*, (1.) A zealous heart is not only willing to its power, but above its power. (2.) We ſhould be careful not to be haſty to vow, leaſt we involve ourſelves in difficulties, and repent of our raſhneſs. There is a zeal not according to knowledge.

2. If the vow was of a beaſt. The clean were not redeemable, but muſt be holy, either offered on the altar, or in caſe of blemiſh belong to the prieſt, or the price of it be for repairs of the ſanctuary. It might not be altered nor changed; and if another was ſubſtituted, both the exchanged and conſecrated beaſt were the Lord's. If the beaſt were unclean, then it was valued and ſold at the price ſet by the prieſt; but if the perſon who vowed it would redeem it, he muſt pay a fifth part more than the valuation. *Note*, We ſhould think before we ſpeak; but when we have vowed unto the Lord, we ſhould pay without reſerve or change: for he loveth the chearful giver.

14. ¶ And when a man ſhall ſanctify his houſe *to be* holy unto the LORD: then the prieſt ſhall eſtimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the prieſt ſhall eſtimate it, ſo ſhall it ſtand. 15. And if he that ſanctified it, will redeem his houſe, then he ſhall add the fifth *part* of the money of thy eſtimation unto it, and it ſhall be his. 16. And if a man ſhall ſanctify unto the LORD *ſome part* of a field of his poſſeſſion; then thy eſtimation ſhall be according to the ſeed thereof: † an homer of barley-ſeed *ſhall be valued* at fifty ſhekels of ſilver. 17. If he ſanctify his field from the year of jubile, according to thy eſtimation it ſhall ſtand. 18. But if he ſanctify his field after the jubile, then the prieſt ſhall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubile, and it ſhall be abated from thy eſtimation. 19. And if he that ſanctified the field will in any wiſe redeem it: then he ſhall add the fifth *part* of the money of thy eſtimation unto it, and it ſhall be aſſured to him. 20. And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have ſold the field to another man; it ſhall not be redeemed any more. 21. But the field, when it goeth out in the jubile, ſhall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted: the poſſeſſion thereof ſhall be the prieſt's. 22. And if a *man* ſanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which *is* not of the fields of his poſſeſſion; 23. Then the prieſt ſhall reckon unto him the worth of thy eſtimation, *even* unto the year of the jubile; and he ſhall give thine eſtimation in that day, *as* a holy thing unto the LORD. 24. In the year of the jubile, the field ſhall return unto him of whom it was bought, *even* to him to whom the poſſeſſion of the land *did belong*. 25. And all thy eſtimation ſhall be according to the ſhekel of the ſanctuary: [a] twenty gerahs ſhall be the ſhekel.

† Or, the land of an homer.

[a] Exod. xxx. 13. Num. iii.47. Ezek. xlv. 12.

v. 14—25. Houſes and lands, as well as perſons and cattle, might be conſecrated, and redeemed at a fixed price.

1. If a houſe was by a vow ſanctified to God, the prieſt fixed the eſtimation, and it was ſold, and the money employed in holy uſes. If the perſon who vowed choſe to be the purchaſer, he muſt give a fifth part more than another. *Note*, Though we need not ſell our houſes now for God's ſervice, it becomes us to ſanctify them to him, by conſtant worſhip, and his fear in the midſt of them.

2. If land were conſecrated. A field which came by deſcent could not be wholly alienated, but only a part. God will have our families to be dear to us, as well as his ſanctuary; we muſt not ſerve the one to the injury of the other. The valuation was according to the quantity of barley required to ſow it: if an homer, containing ten ephahs, it was rated at fifty ſhekels, and ſo in proportion; and a diſcount, according to the diſtance of the jubile year. The owner might redeem it, but at a fifth added to the eſtimation. If the treaſurer of the temple ſold it to another, the perſon who vowed it might not purchaſe it; and at the jubile it reverted not to him, but was the prieſt's for ever. If the lands were a purchaſe and not an inheritance, then the value of them was given by the perſon who conſecrated it, or any other, and at the jubile they returned to the family from which they were purchaſed.

26. ¶ Only [b] the † firſtling of the beaſts, which ſhould be the LORD's firſtling, no man ſhall ſanctify it, whether *it be* ox, or ſheep: it *is* the LORD's. 27. And if *it be* of an unclean beaſt, then he ſhall redeem *it* according to thine eſtimation, and ſhall add a fifth *part* of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it ſhall be ſold according to thy eſtimation. 28. [c] Notwithſtanding, no devoted thing that a man ſhall devote unto the LORD, of all that he hath, *both* of man and beaſt, and of the field of his poſſeſſion, ſhall be ſold or redeemed: every devoted thing *is* moſt holy unto the LORD. 29. [d] None devoted, which ſhall be devoted of men, ſhall be redeemed: *but* ſhall ſurely be put to death. 30. [e] And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the ſeed of the land, *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD's: *it is* holy unto the LORD. 31. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he ſhall add thereto the fifth *part* thereof. 32. And concerning the tithe of the herd or of the flock, *even* of [f] whatſoever paſſeth under the rod: the tenth ſhall be holy unto the LORD. 33. He ſhall not ſearch whether it be good or bad, neither ſhall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof ſhall be holy; it ſhall not be redeemed. 34. [g] Theſe *are* the commandments which the LORD commanded Moſes, for the children of Iſrael, in mount Sinai.

[b] Exod. xiii. 2, 12.

† Heb. Firſt born.

[c] Joſh. vi. 19.

[d] Num. xxi. 2, 3.

[e] Gen. xxviii. 22. Num. xviii. 21, 24. 2 Chron. xxxi. 5, 6, 12. Mal. iii. 8, 10.

[f] See Jer. xxxiii. 13. Ezek xx. 37.

[g] Chap. xxvi. 46.

v. 26—34. 1. The firſtlings of clean beaſts were God's by a former law, and therefore could not be conſecrated. Thoſe of unclean beaſts might be redeemed with a lamb: but if, after redemption, they were again dedicated, then they muſt be ſold at the prieſt's eſtimate, or if redeemed, a fifth of the valuation muſt be added.

2. There was a difference between devoted things or perſons, and ordinary vows. In this caſe they bound themſelves with a ſolemn curſe, never to alienate the perſon or thing from the uſe to which it was devoted. If a perſon or beaſt, it muſt be put to death. The perſons devoted were not ſuch as might be conſecrated to God by a vow, for over them they had no ſuch power of death, but the ſeven devoted nations, or their enemies, with whom they were at war, or thoſe condemned to death by the judges. For theſe there could be no redemption.

3. Tithes of all kinds are to be paid of the land, of the trees, and of the cattle; and as this was to be done according to juſtice, *v.* 32. what was once marked muſt not be changed, on pain of forfeiture of the thing ſubſtituted, and both it and the tithe was then irredeemable; otherwiſe, on adding a fifth to the prieſt's valuation, the perſon might keep his tithes, by compoſition. *Note*, Tithes are of divine appointment, and though the Levitical prieſthood is ceaſed, the goſpel miniſtry does not deſerve a leſs proviſion. Let thoſe who eat thoſe ſacred ſpoils of the church remember, that though law or cuſtom maintain them in poſſeſſion, God may, by and by, diſpute their right, and condemn them for ſacrilege.

4. The book thus concludes; and from the whole of theſe commandments we have much to learn. What thankfulneſs is due for the mercies we enjoy in the clear light of goſpel-day, when theſe ſhadows are paſſed away, and Chriſt the ſon of righteouſneſs ariſen, to guide our feet into the paths of peace? We now no longer ſee through the dark glaſs of types and figures, but face to face behold a reconciled God in Chriſt. The burdenſome ſervices of ceremonial ordinances are ceaſed, and all our preſent required offering is the broken and contrite heart. In this liberty, wherewith Chriſt has made us free, every humble believer rejoices, and whilſt ceremonial uncleanneſs is no longer his concern, he labours more ſollicitouſly to cleanſe himſelf from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, and to perfect holineſs in the fear of God.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the Fourth Book of MOSES called
NUMBERS.

THIS book derives its name from the numbering the children of Iſrael twice in the wilderneſs. It contains the Hiſtory of the Iſraelites during their wanderings there, for the ſpace of thirty-eight years. The principal occurrences recorded in it happened in the ſecond year after their coming from Egypt, and the laſt before they entered the promiſed land. The book contains, beſides the hiſtory of the people, ſundry laws, ceremonial and judicial; not without many general truths, of everlaſting concern, and much goſpel preached to them in the wilderneſs, even as unto us.

Before Chriſt 1490.

CHAP. I.

The government of Iſrael was a theocracy. Moſes as, under God, king in Jeſhurun, is ordered to regulate the good order of the kingdom. 1. *He is to number his ſubjects*, ver. 1—4. 2. *Perſons are nominated to aſſiſt him herein*, ver. 5—16. 3. *The particular number of each tribe, as it was given in to Moſes*, ver. 17—43. 4. *The ſum total of all together*, ver. 44—46. 5. *An exception of the Levites*, ver. 47—54.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, in the wilderneſs of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the firſt *day* of the ſecond month, in the ſecond year, after they were come out of the land of Egypt, ſaying, 2. [a] Take ye the ſum of all the congregation of the children of Iſrael after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, with the number of *their* names, every male by their poll. 3. From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Iſrael: thou and Aaron ſhall number them by their armies. 4. And with you there ſhall be a man of every tribe: every one head of the houſe of his fathers. 5. ¶ And theſe *are* the names of the men that ſhall ſtand with you: Of *the tribe of* Reuben; Elizur the ſon of Shedeur. 6. Of Simeon; Shelumiel the ſon of Zuriſhaddai. 7. Of Judah; Nahſhon the ſon of Amminadab. 8. Of Iſſachar; Nethaneel the ſon of Zuar. 9. Of Zebulun; Eliab the ſon of Helon. 10. Of the children of Joſeph: Of Ephraim; Eliſhama the ſon of Ammihud: Of Manaſſeh; Gamaliel the ſon of Pedahzur. 11. Of Benjamin; Abidan the ſon of Gideoni. 12. Of Dan; Ahiezer the ſon of Ammiſhaddai. 13. Of Aſher; Pagiel the ſon of Ocran. 14. Of Gad; Eliaſaph the ſon of [b] Deuel. 15. Of Naphtali; Ahira the ſon of Enan. 16. [c] Theſe *were* the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thouſands in Iſrael.

[a] Exod. xxx. 12. & xxxviii. 26.

[b] Called Ruel. Chap. ii. 14.

[c] 1 Chron. xxvii. 16.

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v. 1—16. God, as the king, from the royal throne between the cherubims, iſſues his mandate for the numbering the people. A year and ſome days had now elapſed ſince their departure from Egypt; Moſes and Aaron are commiſſioned for the taſk; and God informs them what perſons muſt be regiſtered, and the manner of their procedure.

1. All the males, above twenty years of age, that were fit for war, the Levites excepted, are to be enrolled. The church, in its militant ſtate, muſt be for ever expecting enemies and prepared for battle. 2. Each particular perſon was regiſtered according to the houſe of his fathers, that the ſum of every houſe, every family, every tribe might be particularly known. In the Lamb's book of life his ſpiritual Iſrael are diſtinctly written, and he calleth them all by their names. None of the mixt multitude, which followed the camp, were numbered with them. *Note*, 'Tis not our being among profeſſors, but our being born of God, and Abraham's children by faith, which entitles us to a place in the church of the redeemed. 3. The heads of the ſeveral tribes are appointed to aſſiſt them. They who by their ſtation are moſt exalted, ſhould be beſt qualified to ſerve the public, and moſt ready to employ themſelves in the ſervice.

17. ¶ And Moſes and Aaron took theſe men which are expreſſed by *their* names. 18. And they aſſembled all the congregation together on the firſt *day* of the ſecond month, and they declared their pedigrees after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of their names, from twenty years old and upward, by their poll. 19. As the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo he numbered them in the wilderneſs of Sinai. 20. And the children of Reuben, Iſrael's eldeſt ſon, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their poll, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 21. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Reuben, *were* forty and ſix thouſand, and five hundred. 22. ¶ Of the children of Simeon, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, thoſe that were

numbred of them, according to the number of the names by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 23. Thoſe that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Simeon, *were* fifty and nine thouſand and three hundred. 24. ¶ Of the children of Gad, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 25. Thoſe that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Gad, *were* forty and five thouſand ſix hundred and fifty. 26. ¶ Of the children of Judah, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 27. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Judah, *were* threeſcore and fourteen thouſand and ſix hundred. 28. ¶ Of the children of Iſſachar, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 29. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Iſſachar, *were* fifty and four thouſand and four hundred. 30. ¶ Of the children of Zebulun, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 31. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Zebulun, *were* fifty and ſeven thouſand and four hundred. 32. ¶ Of the children of Joſeph, *namely*, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 33. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Ephraim, *were* forty thouſand and five hundred. 34. ¶ Of the children of Manaſſeh, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 35. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Manaſſeh, *were* thirty and two thouſand and two hundred. 36. ¶ Of the children of Benjamin, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 37. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Benjamin, *were* thirty and five thouſand and four hundred. 38. ¶ Of the children of Dan, by their generations after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 39. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Dan, *were* threeſcore and two thouſand and ſeven hundred. 40. ¶ Of the children of Aſher, by their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 41. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Aſher, *were* forty and one thouſand and five hundred. 42. ¶ Of the children of Napthali, throughout their generations, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war: 43. Thoſe that were numbred of them, *even* of the tribe of Naphtali, *were* fifty and three thouſand and four hundred.

v. 17—43. As they were now about to march, they muſt be regimented. Order in an army is of the laſt importance. Thoſe who were commanded were expeditious in their work, and in leſs than three weeks the review, and regiſter, were completed. Zeal to ſerve God makes quick work. Every tribe gave account of the families in it; every family, of the houſes; every houſe, the number and age of males in it. And in their numbers we ſee the prophecies fulfilled eminently, in Judah's increaſe, in Ephraim's ſurpaſſing Manaſſeh, in Reuben, though the eldeſt, being inferior to many others. Thus they might confirm their faith in future promiſes, by ſeeing the fulfilment of paſt predictions.

44 Theſe *are* thoſe that were numbered, which Moſes and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Iſrael, *being* twelve men: each one was for the houſe of his fathers. 45. So were all thoſe that were numbered of the children of Iſrael, by the houſe of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Iſrael: 46. Even all they that were numbred, were [d] ſix hundred thouſand and three thouſand and five hundred and fifty.

[d] Exod. xxxviii. 26. See Exod. xii. 37. Chap. xxvi. 51.

v. 44—46. The ſum total is 603,550, and exactly the ſame as when they were numbred before, *Exod.* xxviii. 26. If the Levites were then reckoned, ſo many of the other tribes had come of age as equalled their number; or thoſe who died were ſupplied by thoſe who were now paſſed their twentieth year. God's providence continues to keep up a proportion between births and burials; and if one militant ſaint or miniſter is gone, another ſhall ſpring up in his ſtead. We may obſerve here,

1. How fully God accompliſhed his promiſe to Abraham. Againſt every human probability, faith waits patiently, and is ſurely anſwered at laſt.

2. All theſe, except two, died in the wilderneſs for their unbelief. Death, the wages of ſin, makes dreadful havock; let us fear leſt we fall after the ſame example of unbelief.

3. When God's Iſrael ſhall go up to poſſeſs their inheritance in glory, they ſhall be ſuch a multitude as no man can number.

47. ¶ But [e] the Levites, after the tribe of their fathers, were not numbred among them. 48. For the LORD had ſpoken unto Moſes, ſaying, 49. [f] Only thou ſhalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the ſum of them among the children of Iſrael: 50. But thou ſhalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of teſtimony, and over all the veſſels thereof, and over all things that *belong* to it: they ſhall bear the tabernacle, and all the veſſels thereof, and they ſhall miniſter unto it, and ſhall encamp round about the tabernacle. 51. And when the tabernacle ſetteth forward, the Levites ſhall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites ſhall ſet it up: and [g] the ſtranger that cometh nigh, ſhall be put to death. 52. And the children of Iſrael ſhall pitch their tents every man by his own camp, and every man by his own ſtandard, throughout their hoſts. 53. But the Levites ſhall pitch round about the tabernacle of teſtimony; that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Iſrael: and the Levites ſhall keep the charge of the tabernacle of teſtimony. 54. And the children of Iſrael did according to all that the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo did they.

[e] See Chap. iii. & iv. & xxvi. 57. 1 Chron. vi. & xxi. 6.

[f] Chap. xxvi. 62.

[g] Chap. iii. 10, 38. & xviii. 22.

v. 47—54. The Levites being a kind of body guard to the tabernacle, muſt not be numbred with the hoſt. Their office was to take down and carry in their marches the holy things; nor muſt any of the other tribes, on pain of death, intrude into their buſineſs. Whilſt each man pitched their tents under their own ſtandards, the Levites encamped around the tabernacle, to prevent profane intruſion, and to be ready in waiting on the ſervice. *Note* (1.) It muſt be every miniſter's care to reſtrain the people from ſin. (2). They who are called to the ſervice of God, ſhould have no other engagements, that they may give themſelves up wholly to the work of the miniſtry.

CHAP. II.

The thouſands of Iſrael having been muſtered in the former chapter, in this are marſhalled, and a regular diſpoſition made of their camp, by a divine appointment. Here is, 1. *A general order concerning it,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Particular directions for the poſting of each of the tribes, in four diſtinct ſquadrons, three tribes in each ſquadron.* (1.) *In the van-guard, on the eaſt, Judah, Iſſachar, and Zebulon were poſted,* ver. 3—9. (2.) *In the right wing, ſouthward, Reuben, Simeon, and Gad,* ver. 10—16. (3.) *In the rear, weſtward, Ephraim, Manaſſeh, and Benjamin,* ver. 18—24. (4.) *In the left wing, northward, Dan, Aſher, and Naphtali,* ver. 25—31. (5.) *The tabernacle in the center,* ver. 17. *And laſtly, The concluſion of this appointment,* ver. 32—34.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, 2. Every man of the children of Iſrael ſhall pitch by his own ſtandard, with the enſign of their father's houſe: † far off, about the tabernacle of the congregation ſhall they pitch.

† Heb. over-againſt.

Before Chriſt 1490.

v. 1, 2. Order in their march and encampments is here preſcribed. They were a military body, moving to the promiſed land. God's Iſrael, like them, are fighting the good fight of faith, and waiting to change the tabernacle of the body, for the city of God. Each tribe was camped under the enſign of his ſquadron. What colours or figures each bore are uncertain. And each man poſted under his own ſtandard, among his own relations. Thus mutual love would be cultivated, and mutual aſſiſtance be given.—Each ſquadron had a different enſign, but all ſerved in the ſame cauſe. The different denominations of real chriſtians, though their ſtandards differ, are engaged in the ſame warfare. The tabernacle was in the centre. For God is the ſtrength of his Iſrael, their courage and ſucceſs is from him. And each of their camps at a reſpectful diſtance, not too near to diſturb the ſolemn ſervice, nor too diſtant, to make their attendance inconvenient. *Note*, Our wilderneſs-ſtate is ſhort; yet a little while, and we ſhall encamp around the throne of God in glory, and Jeſus, the captain of our ſalvation, ſpread over us the banner of his everlaſting love.

3. ¶ And on the eaſt ſide toward the riſing of the ſun, ſhall they of the ſtandard of the camp of Judah pitch, throughout their armies: and Nahſhon the ſon of Amminadab *ſhall be* captain of the children of Judah. 4. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* threeſcore and fourteen thouſand and ſix hundred. 5. And thoſe that do pitch next unto him, *ſhall be* the tribe of Iſſachar: and Nathaneel the ſon of Zuar *ſhall be* captain of the children of Iſſachar. 6. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred thereof, *were* fifty and four thouſand and four hundred. 7. *Then* the tribe of Zebulun: and Eliab the ſon of Helon *ſhall be* captain of the children of Zebulun. 8. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred thereof, *were* fifty and ſeven thouſand and four hundred. 9. All that were numbred in the camp of Judah, *were* an hundred thouſand and fourſcore thouſand and ſix thouſand and four hundred, throughout their armies: Theſe ſhall firſt ſet forth. 10. ¶ On the ſouth ſide *ſhall be* the ſtandard of the camp of Reuben, according to their armies: and the captain of the children of Reuben *ſhall be* Elizur, the ſon of Shedeur. 11. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred thereof, *were* forty and ſix thouſand and five hundred. 12. And thoſe which pitch by him, *ſhall be* the tribe of Simeon, and the captain of the children of Simeon *ſhall be* Shelumiel the ſon of Zuriſhaddai. 13. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* fifty and nine thouſand and three hundred. 14. Then the tribe of Gad: and the captain of the ſons of Gad *ſhall be* Eliaſaph the ſon of † Reuel. 15. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* forty and five thouſand and ſix hundred and fifty. 16. All that were numbred in the camp of Reuben, *were* an hundred thouſand and fifty and one thouſand and four hundred and fifty, throughout their armies: and they ſhall ſet forth in the ſecond rank. 17. ¶ Then the tabernacle of the congregation ſhall ſet forward with the camp of the Levites, in the midſt of the camp: as they encamp, ſo ſhall they ſet forward, every man in his place by their ſtandards. 18. ¶ On the weſt ſide *ſhall be* the ſtandard of the camp of Ephraim, according to their armies: and the captain of the ſons of Ephraim, *ſhall be* Eliſhama the ſon of Ammihud. 19. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* forty thouſand and five hundred. 20. And by him *ſhall be* the tribe of Manaſſeh: and the captain of the children of Manaſſeh, *ſhall be* Gamaliel the ſon of Pedahzur. 21. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* thirty and two thouſand and two hundred. 22. Then the tribe of Benjamin: and the captain of the ſons of Benjamin, *ſhall be* Abidan the ſon of Gideoni. 23. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* thirty and five thouſand and four hundred. 24. All that were numbred of the camp of Ephraim, *were* an hundred thouſand and eight thouſand and an hundred, throughout their armies: and they ſhall go forward in the third rank. 25. ¶ The ſtandard of the camp of Dan *ſhall be* on the north ſide by their armies: and the captain of the children of Dan, *ſhall be* Ahiezer the ſon of Ammiſhaddai. 26. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* threeſcore and two thouſand and ſeven hundred. 27. And thoſe that encamp by him, *ſhall be* the tribe of Aſher: and the captain of the children of Aſher, *ſhall be* Pagiel the ſon of Ocran. 28. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* forty and one thouſand and five hundred. 29. Then the tribe of Naphtali: and the captain of the children of Naphtali, *ſhall be* Ahira the ſon of Enan. 30. And his hoſt, and thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* fifty and three thouſand and four hundred. 31. All they that were numbred in the camp of Dan, *were* an hundred thouſand and fifty and ſeven thouſand and ſix hundred: they ſhall go hindmoſt with their ſtandards. 32. ¶ Theſe *are* thoſe which were numbred of the children of Iſrael, by the houſe of their fathers, [a] all thoſe that were numbred of the camps throughout their hoſts, *were* ſix hundred thouſand and three thouſand and five hundred and fifty. 33. But [b] the Levites were not numbred among the children of Iſrael; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 34. And the children of Iſrael did according to all that the LORD commanded Moſes: ſo they pitched by their ſtandards, and ſo they ſet forward, every one after their families, according to the houſe of their fathers.

† Deut. Chap. i. 14. & vii. 42, 47. & x. 20.

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[a] Exod. xxxviii. 26. Chap. i. 46.

[b] Chap. i. 47.

v. 3—34. When God himſelf ſettles the precedence, there is no room left for diſpute among themſelves. Thoſe whom God honours we may not envy. Judah leads the van, with Iſſachar and Zebulun, each under captains of their own tribes. Subordination in rank and ſtation is God's appointment, and muſt be obſerved. Nothing but pride makes men levellers. Judah was the tribe whence Shiloh was expected, and therefore juſtly preferred to lead the way to Canaan; as Chriſt his offspring was to be the captain of eternal ſalvation to his people. Reuben, who encamped on the ſouth, followed next with Simeon and Gad. Levi encamped within, between the reſt of the tribes and the tabernacle, and marched in the midſt of them, defended before and behind. Of all things dear to us the church of God ſhould be firſt, and beſt guarded, and her miniſters eſpecially protected. Ephraim, with Manaſſeh and Benjamin, encamped weſtward, and followed the tabernacle, whilſt Dan, with Aſher and Naphtali, encamped on the north, and in the march cloſed the rear; he, next to Judah, was moſt numerous, and therefore fitteſt for the poſt aſſigned. God's diſpoſitions are always wiſe, and juſt, and good. Obedience ready and chearful was paid to all theſe orders. God's word muſt thus regulate our march, as God's providence doth our ſtation; and when the one is chearfully ſubmitted to, and the other carefully followed, then we are ſure of the divine bleſſing, and may go forth boldly, conquering and to conquer all our ſpiritual enemies.

CHAP. III.

We have in this chapter. 1. *A genealogy of the prieſts*, ver. 1—4. 2. *The Levites given them for aſſiſtants, inſtead of the firſt-born*, ver. 5—13. 3. *The ſeveral families of Levi numbred, and their poſts aſſigned*, ver. 14—39. 4. *The firſt-born numbred of the people*, ver 40—45. 5. *What were more than the Levites redeemed*, ver. 46—51.

1. THESE alſo *are* the generations of Aaron and Moſes, in the day *that* the LORD ſpake with Moſes in mount Sinai. 2. And theſe *are* the names of the ſons of Aaron; [a] Nadab the firſt-born, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 3. Theſe are the names of the ſons of Aaron, the prieſts which were anointed, † whom he conſecrated to miniſter in the prieſt's office. 4. [b] And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered ſtrange fire before the LORD, in the wilderneſs of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar miniſtred in the prieſt's office, in the ſight of Aaron their father. 5. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 6. Bring the tribe of Levi near, and preſent them before Aaron the prieſt, that they may miniſter unto him. 7. And they ſhall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation, before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do [c] the ſervice of the tabernacle. 8. And they ſhall keep all the inſtruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Iſrael, to do the ſervice of the tabernacle. 9. And [d] thou ſhalt give the Levites unto Aaron, and to his ſons: they *are* wholly given unto him out of the children of Iſrael. 10. And thou ſhalt appoint Aaron and his ſons, and they ſhall wait on their prieſt's office; and [e] the ſtranger that cometh nigh ſhall be put to death.

[a] Exod. vi. 23.

† Whoſe hand he filled.

[b] Lev. x. 1. Chap. xxvi. 61. 1 Chron. xxiv. 2.

[c] See Chap. i. 50.

[d] Chap. viii. 19.

[e] Ver. xxxviii. Chap. i. 51. & xvi. 40.

death. 11. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 12. And I, behold [f] I have taken the Levites from among the children of Iſrael, inſtead of all the firſt-born that openeth the matrix among the children of Iſrael: therefore the Levites ſhall be mine. 13. Becauſe [g] all the firſt-born *are* mine: [h] *for* on the day that I ſmote all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto me all the firſt-born in Iſrael, both man and beaſt, mine they ſhall be: I *am* the LORD.

[f] Chap. viii. 16. & xviii. 6.
[g] Exod. xiii. 2. Lev. xxvii. 26. Chap. viii. 16. Luke ii. 23.
[h] Exod. xiii. 12, 15.

v. 1—13. The family of Aaron being appointed to the prieſt's office, we have,

1. A particular account of them, Nadab and Abihu periſhed childleſs, for their diſobedience, Eleazar and Ithamar remained. Made cautious by the warning given them, they miniſtered under Aaron's eye. 'Tis good to be under direction of the elder and more experienced. They alone were permitted to enter the holy place, and it was death for any other to come there. *Note*, Intruders into the prieſt's office, who have no divine call, will by and by be met with a terrible enquiry, Friend, how cameſt thou in hither?

2. As there was much work in the tabernacle, and ſo few to miniſter, the tribe of Levi is given to Aaron, as his aſſiſtants. The charge of the tabernacle, and all its appurtenances in their marches, was committed to them; they helped the prieſts about the ſacrifices, kept clean the court, and were the conſtant guard. They were taken of God inſtead of the firſt-born, who were conſecrated to him in return for their deliverance in Egypt, when God ſpared them and ſlew the Egyptians. The lives which God preſerves by his providence, he hath a double right to expect ſhould be employed in his ſervice: and how much more the ſouls redeemed by the death of his own ſon!

14. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes in the wilderneſs of Sinai, ſaying, 15. Number the children of Levi, after the houſe of their fathers, by their families: [i] every male, from a month old and upward, ſhalt thou number them. 16. And Moſes numbred them according to the † word of the LORD, as he was commanded. 17. And [k] theſe were the ſons of Levi, by their names: Gerſhon, and Kohath, and Merari. 18. And theſe *are* the names of the ſons of Gerſhon, by their families: Libni and Shimei. 19. And the ſons of Kohath by their families: [l] Amram, and Izehar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 20. And the ſons of Merari by their families: Mahli, and Muſhi: theſe *are* the families of the Levites, according to the houſe of their fathers. 21. Of Gerſhon *was* the family of the Libnites, and the family of the Shimites: theſe *are* the families of the Gerſhonites. 22. Thoſe that were numbred of them according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *even* thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* ſeven thouſand and five hundred. 23. The families of the Gerſhonites ſhall pitch behind the tabernacle weſtward. 24. And the chief of the houſe of the father of the Gerſhonites, *ſhall be* Eliaſaph the ſon of Lael. 25. And [m] the charge of the ſons of Gerſhon, in the tabernacle of the congregation, *ſhall be* [n] the tabernacle, and [o] the tent, [p] the covering thereof, and [q] the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 26. And [r] the hangings of the court, and [s] the curtain for the door of the court, which *is* by the tabernacle, and by the altar round about, and [t] the cords of it, for all the ſervice thereof. 27. ¶ And [u] of Kohath *was* the family of the Amramites, and the family of the Izeharites, and the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites: theſe *are* the families of the Kohathites. 28. In the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *were* eight thouſand and ſix hundred, keeping the charge of the ſanctuary. 29. The families of the ſons of Kohath ſhall pitch on the ſide of the tabernacle ſouthward. 30. And the chief of the houſe of the father of the families of the Kohathites, *ſhall be* Elizaphan the ſon of Uzziel. 31. And their [x] charge *ſhall be* [y] the ark, and [z] the table, and [a] the candleſtick, and [b] the altars, and the veſſels of the ſanctuary, wherewith they miniſter, and the [c] hanging, and all the ſervice thereof. 32. And Eleazar the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, *ſhall be* chief over the chief of the Levites, *and have* the overſight of them that keep the charge of the ſanctuary. 33. ¶ Of Merari *was* the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Muſhites: theſe *are* the families of Merari. 34. And thoſe that were numbred of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *were* ſix thouſand and two hundred. 35. And the chief of the houſe of the father of the families of Merari, *was* Zuriel the ſon of Abihail: *theſe* ſhall pitch on the ſide of the tabernacle, northward. 36. And *under* ‡ the cuſtody and charge of the ſons of Merari *ſhall be* the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the ſockets thereof, and all the veſſels thereof, and all that ſerveth thereto. 37. And the pillars of the court round about, and their ſockets, and their pins, and their cords. 38. ¶ But thoſe that encamp before the tabernacle toward the eaſt, *even* before the tabernacle of the congregation eaſtward, *ſhall be* Moſes and Aaron, and his ſons, keeping the charge of the ſanctuary, for the charge of the children of Iſrael: and [d] the ſtranger that cometh nigh, ſhall be put to death. 39. [e] All that were numbred of the Levites, which Moſes and Aaron numbred at the commandment of the LORD, throughout their families, all the males, from a month old and upward, *were* twenty and two thouſand.

[i] Chap. xxvi. 62.
† Heb. mouth.
[k] Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16. Chap. xxvi. 57. 1 Chron. vi. 1. & xxiii. 6.
[l] Exod. vi. 18.
[m] Chap. iv. 24.
[n] Exod. xxv. 9.
[o] Ibid. xxvi. 1.
[p] Ibid. 7, 14.
[q] Ibid. 36.
[r] Ibid. xxvii. 9.
[s] Ibid. 16.
[t] Ibid. xxxv. 18.
[u] 1 Chron. xxvi. 23.
[x] Chap. iv. 4, 15.
[y] Exod. xxv. 10.
[z] Ibid. 23.
[a] Ibid. 31.
[b] Exod. xxvii. 1. & xxx. 1.
[c] Exod. xxvi. 31.
‡ Heb. the office of the charge. See Chap. iv. 31.
[d] Ver. 10.
[e] See Chap. xxvi. 62.

v. 14—39. The Levites are ordered to be numbred, that they may have their work appointed them. They are to be reckoned from a month old, as being taken in lieu of the firſt-born, to be trained up for the ſervice of the ſanctuary, and according to their houſes and family, each family being aſſigned a ſeparate employ. If a woman were married to one of another tribe, her children were reckoned to their father's tribe. They were divided into three branches, as deſcended from Gerſhon, Kohath and Merari; and theſe ſubdivided, according to the names of their families: when encamped each branch had their ſtation and captain, Gerſhon weſtward, Kohath ſouthward, Merari northward, Moſes, Aaron and the prieſts eaſtward, at the door of the tabernacle. In a march the curtains and coverings of the tabernacle belonged to the family of Gerſhon, the ſacred furniture of the tabernacle were Kohath's charge, the boards, pillars, &c. were aſſigned to Merari. Moſes's poſterity have not the leaſt diſtinguiſhed honour, but claſs with the houſe of Amram. Nothing has a worſe appearance than when rulers ſeek to raiſe their needy relations, without reſpect to their merit. The numbers of each family united make 22,300, though they are called only 22,000, three hundred being firſt-born, and therefore not to be reckoned in the exchange to be made, God having a prior right to them. Levi was the leaſt of the tribes, ſignifying the few choſen, of which the ſpiritual church of Chriſt will ever be compoſed. Happy they who are of that few.

40. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Number all the firſt-born of the males of the children of Iſrael, from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names. 41. And thou ſhalt take the Levites for me (I *am* the LORD) inſtead of all the firſt-born among the children of Iſrael: and the cattle of the Levites inſtead of all the firſtlings among the cattle of the children of Iſrael. 42. And Moſes numbred, as the LORD commanded him, all the firſt-born among the children of Iſrael. 43. And all the firſt-born males, by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of thoſe that were numbred of them, were twenty and two thouſand two hundred and threeſcore and thirteen. 44. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 45. Take the Levites inſtead of all the firſt-born among the children of Iſrael, and the cattle of the Levites inſtead of their cattle, and the Levites ſhall be mine: I *am* the LORD. 46. And for thoſe that are to be redeemed of the two hundred and threeſcore and thirteen, of the firſt-born of the children of Iſrael, which are more than the Levites; 47. Thou ſhalt even take five ſhekels apiece by the poll, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary ſhalt thou take *them*: [f] the ſhekel *is* twenty gerahs. 48. And thou ſhalt give the money wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his ſons. 49. And Moſes took the redemption money of them that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites. 50. Of the firſt-born of the children of Iſrael took he the money, a thouſand three hundred and threeſcore and five *ſhekels*, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary. 51. And Moſes gave the money of them that were redeemed, unto Aaron and to his ſons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[f] Exod. xxx. 13. Lev. xxvii. 25. Chap. xviii. 16. Ezek. xiv. 12.

v. 40—51. Moſes is ordered to number the firſt-born of the people,

Before Chriſt 1490.

people, and the Levites and their cattle are taken in exchange for God. The number was found 22,273. The ſurplus 273 are ordered to be redeemed at five ſhekels a-piece, and theſe to be given to Aaron, in lieu of the perſons. Whether this were done by Lot, or whether the laſt who were numbred, paid, or whether the public redeemed them, is uncertain. *Note*, Though ſilver and gold might ranſom theſe, nothing leſs than the blood of Jeſus Chriſt could redeem thoſe firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven.

CHAP. IV.

In the former chapter an account was taken of the whole tribe of Levi, in this of thoſe of that tribe that were in the prime of their time for ſervice, betwixt thirty and fifty years old. 1. *The ſerviceable men of the Kohathites are ordered to be numbred, and their charges given them*, ver. 2, 20. 2. *Of the Gerſhonites*, ver. 24, 28. 3. *Of the Merarites*, ver. 29—33. 4. *The numbers of each, and the ſum total at laſt are recorded*, ver. 34—49.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, 2. Take the ſum of the ſons of Kohath from among the ſons of Levi, after their families, by the houſe of their fathers; 3. [a] From thirty years old and upward, even until fifty years old, all that enter into the hoſt, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation. 4. This *ſhall be* the ſervice of the ſons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation, *about* the moſt holy things. 5. And when the camp ſetteth forward, Aaron ſhall come and his ſons, and they ſhall take down [b] the covering vail, and cover the ark of teſtimony with it: 6. And ſhall put thereon the covering of badgers ſkins, and ſhall ſpread over *it* a cloth wholly of blue, and ſhall put in [c] the ſtaves thereof. 7. And upon [d] the table of ſhew-bread they ſhall ſpread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the diſhes, and the ſpoons, and the bowls, and covers to † cover withal: and the continual bread ſhall be thereon. 8. And they ſhall ſpread upon them a cloth of ſcarlet, and cover the ſame with a covering of badgers ſkins, and ſhall put in the ſtaves thereof. 9. And they ſhall take a cloth of blue, and cover [e] the candleſtick of the light, and [f] his lamps, and his tongs, and his ſnuff-diſhes, and all the oil-veſſels thereof, wherewith they miniſter unto it. 10. And they ſhall put it and all the veſſels thereof within a covering of badgers ſkins, and ſhall put *it* upon a bar. 11. And upon the golden altar they ſhall ſpread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering of badgers ſkins, and ſhall put to the ſtaves thereof. 12. And they ſhall take all the inſtruments of miniſtry, wherewith they miniſter in the ſanctuary, and put *them* in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers ſkins, and ſhall put *them* on a bar. 13. And they ſhall take away the aſhes from the altar, and ſpread a purple cloth thereon: 14. And they ſhall put upon it all the veſſels thereof, wherewith they miniſter about it, *even* the cenſers, the fleſh-hooks, and the ſhovels, and the † baſons, all the veſſels of the altar; and they ſhall ſpread upon it a covering of badgers ſkins, and put to the ſtaves of it. 15. And when Aaron and his ſons have made an end of covering the ſanctuary, and all the veſſels of the ſanctuary, as the camp is to ſet forward; after that, the ſons of Kohath ſhall come to bear *it*: [g] but they ſhall not touch *any* holy thing, leſt they die [h]. Theſe *things are* the burden of the ſons of Kohath, in the tabernacle of the congregation. 16. ¶ And to the office of Eleazar the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, *pertaineth* [i] the oil for the light, and [k] the ſweet incenſe, and [l] the daily meat-offering, and [m] the anointing oil, *and* the overſight of all the tabernacle, and of all that therein *is*, in the ſanctuary, and in the veſſels thereof. 17. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, 18. Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites, from among the Levites. 19. But thus do unto them, that they may live and not die, when they approach unto the moſt holy things; Aaron and his ſons ſhall go in, and appoint them every one to his ſervice, and to his burden. 20. [n] But they ſhall not go in to ſee when the holy things are covered, leſt they die.

[a] See Chap. viii. 24.
[b] Exod. xxvi. 31.
[c] Ibid. xxv. 13.
[d] Ibid. 30.
† Or pour out withal.
[e] Exod. xxv. 31.
[f] Ibid. 37, 38.
† Or bowls.
[g] 2 Sam. vi. 6.
[h] Chap. iii. 31.
[i] Exod. xxv. 6.
[k] Ibid. xxx. 34.
[l] Ibid. xxix. 40.
[m] Ibid. xxx. 23.
[n] See Exod. xix. 21. 1 Sam. vi. 19.

v. 1—20. Since no Levite was capable of miniſtring till thirty, nor longer than fifty, a new review is neceſſary to ſelect theſe from their brethren. Miniſters have need of much wiſdom and ſolidity: youthful novices, it is to be feared, will diſcredit their holy calling. They are to enter the hoſt, and do the work of the tabernacle: the miniſtry is not a calling of eaſe, but labour; they who take it upon them, need approve themſelves hardy and good ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt. As in all our removes, we muſt take God and his worſhip with us, charge is given about the tabernacle: the carriage of the nobleſt part of it is committed to the ſons of Kohath. Aaron and his ſons muſt take down, and cover all the holy things: the Levites may not touch nor ſee them: this diſpenſation was dark, a vail covered it, which vail is done away in Chriſt. Eleazar muſt take care both of their burdens and perſons, leaſt by tranſgreſſing, they ſhould be cut off. The charge of men's lives is great, but how much greater the charge of immortal ſouls.

21. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 22. Take alſo the ſum of the ſons of Gerſhon, throughout the houſes of their fathers, by their families; 23. From thirty years old and upward, until fifty years old ſhalt thou number them; all that enter in † to perform the ſervice, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation. 24. This *is* the ſervice of the families of the Gerſhonites, to ſerve, and for ‡ burdens. 25. And [o] they ſhall bear the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tabernacle of the congregation, his covering, and the covering of the badgers ſkins that *is* above upon it, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 26. And the hangings of the court, and the hanging for the door of the gate of the court which *is* by the tabernacle, and by the altar round about, and their cords, and all the inſtruments of their ſervice, and all that is made for them: ſo ſhall they ſerve. 27. At the ‖ appointment of Aaron and his ſons, ſhall be all the ſervice of the ſons of the Gerſhonites, in all their burdens, and in all their ſervice; and ye ſhall appoint unto them in charge all their burdens. 28. This *is* the ſervice of the families of the ſons of Gerſhon, in the tabernacle of the congregation: and their charge *ſhall be* under the hand of Ithamar the ſon of Aaron the prieſt. 29. ¶ As for the ſons of Merari, thou ſhalt number them after their families, by the houſe of their fathers; 30. From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old ſhalt thou number them, every one that entereth in to the § ſervice, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation. 31. And [p] this *is* the charge of their burden, according to all their ſervice in the tabernacle of the congregation; [q] the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and ſockets thereof. 32. And the pillars of the court round about, and their ſockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their inſtruments, and with all their ſervice: and by name ye ſhall reckon the inſtruments of the charge of their burden. 33. This *is* the ſervice of the families of the ſons of Merari, according to all their ſervice in the tabernacle of the congregation, under the hand of Ithamar the ſon of Aaron the prieſt.

† Heb. T war the warfare.
‡ Or carriage.
[o] Chap. iii. 25.
‖ Heb. Mouth.
§ Heb. Warfare.
[p] Chap. iii. 36.
[q] Chap. xxvi. 15.

v. 21—33. Ithamar had the charge of the other families: Gerſhon took care of the drapery, and Merari of the more heavy carriage of the tabernacle. Every pin muſt be produced, and nothing be loſt. *Note*, (1.) Every tittle of God's word is precious, and to be preſerved with ſacred reverence. (2.) When this earthly tabernacle of our bodies ſhall be diſſolved, as our ſouls under the conduct of the divine Eleazar go before, our bodies ſhall follow, and on the reſurrection day, a glorious tabernacle be raiſed up again, that never more ſhall be taken down or removed.

34. ¶ And Moſes and Aaron, and the chief of the congregation numbred the ſons of the Kohathites, after their families, and after the houſe of their fathers: 35. From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, every one that entreth in to the ſervice for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation: 36. And thoſe that were numbred of them by their families, were two thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty. 37. Theſe *were* they that were numbred of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do ſervice in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moſes and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moſes. 38. And thoſe that were numbred of the ſons of Gerſhon, throughout their families, and by the houſe of their

fathers; 39. From thirty years old, and upward, even unto fifty years old, every one that entreth in to the ſervice for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation: 40. Even thoſe that were numbered of them, throughout their families, by the houſes of their fathers, were two thouſand and ſix hundred and thirty. 41. Theſe *are* they that were numbered of the families of the ſons of Gerſhon, of all that might do ſervice in the tabernacle of the congregation, whom Moſes and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the LORD. 42. ¶ And thoſe that were numbered of the families of the ſons of Merari, throughout their families, by the houſe of their fathers; 43. From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, every one that entreth in to the ſervice for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation: 44. Even thoſe that were numbered of them after their families, were three thouſand and two hundred. 45. Theſe *be* thoſe that were numbered of the families of the ſons of Merari, whom Moſes and Aaron numbred, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moſes. 46. All thoſe that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moſes and Aaron, and the chief of Iſrael numbred, after their families and after the houſe of their fathers: 47. From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, every one that came to do the ſervice of the miniſtry, and the ſervice of the burden in the tabernacle of the congregation; 48. Even thoſe that were numbered of them, were eight thouſand and five hundred and fourſcore. 49. According to the commandment of the LORD, they were numbred by the hand of Moſes, every one according to his ſervice, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moſes.

v. 34—49. An account is taken of the effective men of two of the families: they were but about a third. The Merarites, who had the heavieſt part of the duty, had more than half their number of age; ſo conſtantly will God prepare the back for the burden. The whole who were engaged in the ſervice, were no more than 8580, a ſmall number, compared with the men of war. *Note*, God's peculiar people are a little flock, compared with the legions liſted in the cauſe and ſervice of ſin.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter we have, 1. *An order paſſed purſuant to the laws already made, for the removing the unclean out of the camp,* ver. 1—4. 2. *A repetition of the laws concerning reſtitution, in caſe of wrong done to a neighbour,* ver. 5—8. *and concerning the appropriating of the hallowed things to the prieſts,* ver. 9, 10. 3. *A new law made concerning the trial of a wife ſuſpected of adultery, by the waters of jealouſy,* ver. 11—31.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Command the children of Iſrael that they put out of the camp every [a] leper, and every one [b] that hath an iſſue, and whoſoever is [c] defiled by the dead. 3. Both male and female ſhall ye put out, without the camp ſhall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midſt whereof I dwell. 4. And the children of Iſrael did ſo, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſo did the children of Iſrael. 5. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 6. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, [d] When a man or woman ſhall commit any ſin that men commit, to do a treſpaſs againſt the LORD, and that perſon be guilty; 7. [e] Then they ſhall confeſs their ſin which they have done: and he ſhall recompenſe his treſpaſs with [f] the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth *part* thereof, and give *it* unto *him* againſt whom he hath treſpaſſed. 8. But if the man have no kinſman to recompenſe the treſpaſs unto, let the treſpaſs be recompenſed unto the LORD, *even* to the prieſt: beſide [g] the ram of the atonement, whereby an atonement ſhall be made for him. 9. And every † [h] offering of all the holy things of the children of Iſrael, which they bring unto the prieſt, ſhall be his. 10. And every man's hallowed things ſhall be his: whatſoever any man giveth the prieſt, it ſhall be [i] his.

[a] Lev. xiii. 3, 4, 6. Chap. xii. 14.
[b] Lev. xv. 2.
[c] Ibid. xxi. 1. Chap. ix. 6, 10. & xix. 11. & xxxi. 19.
[d] Lev. vi. 2, 3.
[e] Ibid. xxvi. 40. Joſh. vii. 19.
[f] Lev. vi. 5.
[g] Ibid. vi. 6. & vii. 8.
† Or heave-offering.
[h] Exod. xxix. 28. Lev. vi. 18, 26. & vii. 6. 32. Chap. xviii. 8. Deut. xviii. 3.
[i] Lev. x. 13.

v. 1—10. We have here,

1. The ſeparation of the unclean from the camp and tabernacle, till the cauſe of it was removed. *Note*, (1.) God's church and people muſt have no fellowſhip with the unholy and impure. (2.) Such ſhould be cut off from the viſible communion of ſaints. (3.) If not before, at death the ſeparation will be made, and that final and eternal.

2. The reſtitution of unjuſt gain, or fraudulent acquiſitions. Though it cover the delinquent with ſhame, confeſſion muſt be made; and better take ſhame before man, than be covered with everlaſting confuſion before men and angels. Atonement to God muſt be offered, as well as reſtitution to man, with a fifth part over: if the perſon were dead, his near kinſman was entitled to it; if he had none, it was the prieſt's. Reſtitution muſt be made. The poor are now God's receivers, when the party injured cannot be found. The prieſt who officiated, was entitled to the hallowed things of the atoning ſacrifice: it is fit he who doth the work ſhould have the wages.

11. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 12. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, If any man's wife go aſide, and commit a treſpaſs againſt him, 13. And a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her huſband, and be kept cloſe, and ſhe be defiled, and *there be* no witneſs againſt her, neither ſhe be taken *with the manner*; 14. And the ſpirit of jealouſy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and ſhe be defiled; or if the ſpirit of jealouſy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and ſhe be not defiled: 15. Then ſhall the man bring his wife unto the prieſt, and he ſhall bring her offering for her, the tenth *part* of an ephah of barley-meal; he ſhall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincenſe thereon, for it *is* an offering of jealouſy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to rememberance. 16. And the prieſt ſhall bring her near, and ſet her before the LORD. 17. And the prieſt ſhall take holy water in an earthen veſſel, and of the duſt that is in the floor of the tabernacle the prieſt ſhall take, and put *it* into the water. 18. And the prieſt ſhall ſet the woman before the LORD, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which *is* the jealouſy-offering: and the prieſt ſhall have in his hand the bitter water that cauſeth the curſe. 19. And the prieſt ſhall charge her by an oath, and ſay unto the woman, If no man have lien with thee, and if thou haſt not gone aſide to uncleanneſs † *with another* inſtead of thy huſband, be thou free from this bitter water that cauſeth the curſe: 20. But if thou haſt gone aſide *to another* inſtead of thy huſband, and if thou be defiled, and ſome man hath lien with thee beſide thine huſband: 21. Then the prieſt ſhall charge the woman with an oath of curſing, and the prieſt ſhall ſay unto the woman, The LORD make thee a curſe and an oath among thy people, when the LORD doth make thy thigh to rot ‡, and thy belly to ſwell; 22. And this water that cauſeth the curſe ſhall go into thy bowels, to make *thy* belly to ſwell, and *thy* thigh to rot: And the woman ſhall ſay, Amen, Amen. 23. And the prieſt ſhall write theſe curſes in a book, and he ſhall blot *them* out with the bitter water: 24. And he ſhall cauſe the woman to drink the bitter water that cauſeth the curſe: and the water that cauſeth the curſe ſhall enter into her, *and become* bitter. 25. Then the prieſt ſhall take the jealouſy offering out of the woman's hand, and ſhall wave the offering before the LORD, and offer it upon the altar. 26. And the prieſt ſhall take an handful of the offering, *even* the memorial thereof, and burn *it* upon the altar, and afterward ſhall cauſe the woman to drink the water. 27. And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it ſhall come to paſs, *that* if ſhe be defiled, and have done treſpaſs againſt her huſband; that the water that cauſeth the curſe ſhall enter into her, *and become* bitter, and her belly ſhall ſwell, and her thigh ſhall rot: and the woman [k] ſhall be a curſe among her people. 28. And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then ſhall ſhe be free, and ſhall conceive ſeed. 29. This *is* the law of jealouſies, when a wife goeth aſide *to another* inſtead of her huſband, and is defiled; 30. Or when the ſpirit of jealouſy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and ſhall ſet the woman before the LORD, and the prieſt ſhall execute upon her all this law. 31. Then ſhall the man be guilt-

† Heb. Under thy huſband, i. e. Whilſt under the power of thy huſband.
‡ Heb. Fall.
[k] Deut. xxviii. 37. Pſal. lxxxiii. 9, 11. Jer. xxiv. 9. & xxix. 18, 22. & xlii. 18. Zech. viii. 13.

guiltleſs from iniquity, and this woman ſhall bear her iniquity.

11—31. The law of jealouſy was ſingular, and could not but have the beſt effect to preſerve that purity ſo often enjoined.

On ſuſpicion of his wife's unfaithfulneſs, where no evidence of the fact appeared, nor other way of diſcovering the truth, the huſband brought her to the prieſt, with an offering of barley, mournful as the occaſion; a quarter of a pint of water was taken from the prieſt's laver, in an earthen veſſel, and duſt of the tabernacle mixed with it. The woman was then preſented before the Lord, her head uncovered, the jealouſy-offering put into her hand, and a ſolemn adjuration or imprecation was pronounced over her. If, terrified with the juſt ſenſe of her guilt and danger, ſhe confeſſed hereupon, ſhe was divorced without her dowry, and diſmiſſed. If ſhe perſiſted in her innocency, ſhe replied, Amen; whereupon the curſes were written on a parchment roll, and ſcraped into the water: then the prieſt took the jealouſy-offering out of her hand, and having burnt an handful on the altar, as a memorial for good, if innocent, for evil if guilty, ſhe was obliged to drink the water. The immediate and miraculous effects of which appeared, if an adultereſs; if innocent, it was a bleſſing, and made her fruitful: the huſband was obliged to make the trial, if he had juſt ſuſpicion, or would be under the guilt of ſinful connivance. From the whole, many uſeful leſſons ariſe, 1. Let every wife be careful to avoid the leaſt occaſion, which may awaken the ſpirit of jealouſy. 2. Let every huſband beware of indulging it: it is a canker that robs of all peace and reſt. 3. Innocence is a ſufficient ſupport under the moſt malignant accuſations. 4. We need fear to drink, if ſin hath embittered the waters: the pleaſures of ſenſe can make us but a miſerable recompenſe for the curſe of God. 5. Tho' the waters of jealouſy are no more, the voice of conſcience and the eye of God will ſpeak and ſee. 6. God brings ſtrangely to light the hidden things of darkneſs: though the adulterer ſayeth, no eye ſeeth me, afterwards his folly is made manifeſt to the world. 7. Though ſinners eſcape all preſent cenſure, or puniſhment, yet whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

CHAP. VI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The law concerning Nazarites,* (1.) *What it was which the vow of a Nazarite obliged him to,* ver. 1—8. (2.) *A remedial law in caſe a Nazarite happened to be polluted by the touch of a dead body,* ver. 9—12. (3.) *The ſolemnity of his diſcharge when his time was up,* ver. 13—21. 2. *Inſtructions given to the prieſts how they ſhould bleſs the people,* ver. 22—27.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, When either man or woman ſhall † ſeparate *themſelves* to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to ſeparate *themſelves* unto the LORD: 3. He ſhall ſeparate *himſelf* from wine and ſtrong drink, and ſhall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of ſtrong drink, neither ſhall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moiſt grapes or dried. 4. All the days of his ‡ ſeparation ſhall he eat nothing that is made of the † vine-tree, from the kernels even to the huſk. 5. All the days of the vow of his ſeparation, there ſhall [a] no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled in the which he ſeparateth *himſelf* unto the LORD, he ſhall be holy; *and* ſhall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. 6. All the days that he ſeparateth *himſelf* unto the LORD, [b] he ſhall come at no dead body. 7. [c] He ſhall not make himſelf unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his ſiſter, when they die: becauſe the ‖ conſecration of his God *is* upon his head. 8. All the days of his ſeparation he *is* holy unto the LORD. 9. And if any man die very ſuddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his conſecration; then he ſhall ſhave his head [d] in the day of his cleanſing, on the ſeventh day ſhall he ſhave it. 10. And [e] on the eighth day he ſhall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons to the prieſt, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 11. And the prieſt ſhall offer the one for a ſin-offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he ſinned by the dead, and ſhall hallow his head that ſame day. 12. And he ſhall conſecrate unto the LORD the days of his ſeparation, and ſhall bring a lamb of the firſt year [f] for a treſpaſs-offering: but the days that were before ſhall † be loſt, becauſe his ſeparation was defiled. 13. ¶ And this *is* the law of the Nazarite: When the days of his ſeparation are fulfilled, he ſhall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 14. And he ſhall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he-lamb of the firſt year without blemiſh, for a burnt-offering, and one ewe-lamb of the firſt year without blemiſh, [g] for a ſin-offering, and one ram without blemiſh, [h] for peace-offerings. 15. And a baſket of unleavened bread, [i] cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread [k] anointed with oil, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings. 16. And the prieſt ſhall bring *them* before the LORD, and ſhall offer his ſin offering, and his burnt-offering. 17. And he ſhall offer the ram, *for* a ſacrifice of peace-offerings unto the LORD, with the baſket of unleavened bread: the prieſt ſhall offer alſo his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 18. And [l] the Nazarite ſhall ſhave the head of his ſeparation, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and ſhall take the hair of the head of his ſeparation, and put *it* in the fire which *is* under the ſacrifice of the peace-offerings. 19. And the prieſt ſhall take the ſodden ſhoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the baſket, and one unleavened wafer; and ſhall put *them* upon the hands of the Nazarite, after *the hair of* his ſeparation is ſhaven. 20. And the prieſt ſhall wave them [m] *for* a wave-offering before the LORD: this *is* holy for the prieſt, with the wave-breaſt, and heave-ſhoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine. 21. This *is* the law of the Nazarite, who hath vowed, *and of* his offering unto the LORD for his ſeparation, beſides *that* that his hand ſhall get: according to the vow which he vowed, ſo he muſt do after the law of his ſeparation.

† Or make themſelves Nazarites.
‡ Or Nazariteſhip.
† Heb. Vine of the wine.
[a] Judg. xiii. 5. 1 Sam. i. 11.
[b] Lev. xix. 28. Chap. xix. 11.
[c] Lev. xxi. 1.
‖ Heb. Separation.
[d] 1 Chron. xix. 14.
[e] Lev. v. 7. & xiv. 22. & xv. 14, 29.
[f] Lev. v. 6.
† Heb. Fall.
[g] Lev. iv. 2, 27, 32.
[h] Ibid. iii. 6.
[i] Ibid. ii. 4.
[k] Exod. xxix. 2.
[l] Acts xxi. 24.
[m] Exod. xxix. 27, 28.

v. 1—21. The law of the Nazarites is here appointed. This conſiſted in a ſolemn ſeparation of themſelves for God, in a more peculiar employment of their time in the exerciſes of devotion, and communion with God. It muſt be the voluntary engagement of a perſon at their own liberty, whether man or woman, and for ſo long a time as they chuſe to vow, but never for leſs than thirty days. *Note,* There will be found among God's people ſome more eminent for their graces than others, peculiar ornaments of their profeſſion, and Nazarites among their brethren. The perſon who made the vow of ſeparation, was under particular obligations, (1.) Not to taſte wine, nor any thing which came from the vine, that they might ſhew themſelves patterns of temperance and ſobriety, and be ever fit for the ſervice of God. *Note,* Though the uſe of wine be not denied, the greateſt moderation in ſtrong drink is required of every chriſtian. Intemperance muſt immediately diſqualify for every act and exerciſe of devotion, and cut off all intercourſe between God and the ſoul. (2.) They might not ſhave their beards, nor clip their hair: they who have a deep concern about their ſoul, will have a noble neglect of the body; and without being ſlovenly, will ever ſhew that they are indifferent about the niceneſs of their appearance, and careleſs of ornament before men, whilſt their great attention is engaged about their appearing acceptable in the eyes of God. (3.) They might approach no dead body, not even their neareſt relations: they muſt keep their perſons as free from ceremonial, as their ſouls from moral uncleanneſs; and it became thoſe, whoſe dedication to God diſtinguiſhed them from others, and obliged them to the peculiar exerciſe of every holy temper, to ſhew the ſubdual of their affections upon earth, and univerſal reſignation to the Divine will. *Note,* We expect from eminent ſaints, eminent ſubmiſſion; the greater the profeſſion, the more every appearance of evil is to be avoided.

In caſe of ſome unavoidable accident, as ſudden death, and death often ſtrikes without warning, then, 1. He was not only as others, ſeven days unclean, but muſt bring particular ſacrifices, *v.* 10, 11. Sins of ſurprize require an atonement, and though no eminence of grace ſecures from temptation, every falſe ſtep in ſuch, requires double pains to retrieve it. 2. All the paſt time was loſt; he muſt ſhave himſelf, and begin the days of his conſecration again. *Note,* Every ſin is mortal, and unleſs we were each day, each hour, to be renewing our application to the blood of ſprinkling, all would be loſt.

If the vow were fulfilled, at the expiration of the time he was diſcharged from it. 1. By ſacrifices, a burnt offering, a ſin-offering, a peace-offering, meat-offerings, and whatever free-will offerings he choſe to add. We may not think when we ſerve God, he is our debtor, but even after we have done what is commanded, muſt acknowledge ourſelves unprofitable. We have to give him thanks for the ſtrength and grace he hath beſtowed, and in our holieſt duties own the need of an atonement, elſe our very righteouſneſs ſhould be our ruin; and we muſt ſtill be offering the ſacrifice of prayer, that the ſame ſupports which have been vouchſafed, may be continued. 2. His head was ſhaved publicly, at the door of the tabernacle, and the hair was burnt under the ſacrifice of peace-offering. Thus all men ſaw his vow fulfilled, and might not be offended at ſeeing him afterwards drink wine, or mourn for the dead. *Note,* We are not only to take care that we do right, but to let all men ſee that we do ſo, and remove every occaſion which might raiſe ſuſpicion or cenſure.

22. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 23. Speak unto Aaron, and unto his ſons, ſaying, On this wiſe [n] ye ſhall bleſs the children of Iſrael, ſaying unto them, 24. The LORD bleſs thee, and keep thee: 25. The LORD make his face ſhine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 26. [o] The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. 27. And they ſhall put my name upon the children of Iſrael, and I will bleſs them.

v. 22—27. The ſacerdotal benediction was a part of the prieſt's office. And though it is not in man's power to convey the bleſſing, yet, being by God's command, it was accompanied with his effectual grace. Jeſus, our great high-prieſt, ever lives to bleſs his people, and his miniſters commiſſioned from him, may comfortably and confidently pronounce his benediction on them: and what they declare on earth, he will ratify in heaven. *The Lord bleſs thee,* Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, beſtow on thee the bleſſings of his eternal covenant of grace and peace; make thee partaker of the Father's electing love, of the Son's redeeming grace, of the Spirit's comforting and ſanctifying influences; *and keep thee* from all thoſe evils of ſin and ſatan, from which of thyſelf thou art utterly unable to eſcape: *The Lord make his face to ſhine upon thee,* as the bright ſun of righteouſneſs, enlightening thy darkneſs, warming thy heart with his enlivening rays, kindling thy fervent affections, and comforting thee with the ſmiles of his reconciled face; *and be gracious unto thee,* beſtowing more abundant meaſures of his Divine ſtrength and conſolations; *and lift up the light of his countenance upon thee,* aſſuring thy conſcience of thy part and intereſt in his regard, and daily reſtoring thy ſoul to that joy, of which remaining corruption would deprive it; *and give thee peace,* ſuch as nothing can interrupt, nothing take away, begun in time, to be perpetuated to eternity! To ſuch a bleſſing and prayer, well might the people with delight and joy reply, Amen! Amen!

CHAP. VII.

This chapter contains, 1. *Preſents of the princes, on the dedication of the tabernacle,* ver. 1—9. 2. *Of the altar,* ver. 10—88. *Of all which, God* 3. *teſtifies his gracious acceptance, and that is ample recompence to the givers.*

1. AND it came to paſs on the day that Moſes had fully [a] ſet up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and ſanctified it, and all the inſtruments thereof, both the altar and all the veſſels thereof, and had anointed them, and ſanctified them; 2. That [b] the princes of Iſrael, heads of the houſe of their fathers (who *were* the princes of the tribes, † and were over them that were numbred) offered: 3. And they brought their offering before the LORD, ſix covered waggons, and twelve oxen; a waggon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox: and they brought them before the tabernacle. 4. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 5. Take *it* of them, that they may be to do the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou ſhalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his ſervice. 6. And Moſes took the waggons and the oxen and gave them unto the Levites. 7. Two waggons and four oxen [c] he gave unto the ſons of Gerſhon, according to their ſervice. 8. And [d] four waggons and eight oxen he gave unto the ſons of Merari, according unto their ſervice, [e] under the hand of Ithamar, the ſon of Aaron the prieſt. 9. But unto the ſons of Kohath he gave none: becauſe [f] the ſervice of the ſanctuary belonging unto them, [g] *was that* they ſhould bear upon their ſhoulders.

v. 1—9. As the tabernacle was to be ſubject to frequent removes, the princes of Iſrael are careful to provide the neceſſary carriages for it. Though no injunction had been given on this head, it ſeemed a needful and reaſonable thing. God has left in the government of his church many uneſſential matters to the prudence of the chief men in it, who are to ſee that all things be done decently and in order. The princes were both able and willing to aſſiſt the Levites, and happy days are they, where princes ſhew ſuch reſpect to God's miniſters, and ſeek to forward them in their labours. The waggons were diſtributed according to their burdens: the ſons of Kohath had none, becauſe their charge was leſs weighty, and being more ſacred, had need be carried with the greateſt care: the Gerſhonites had two waggons; the ſons of Merari four, becauſe their part was ſo much, or more proportionably heavier. *Note,* (1.) Where God calls to greater labour, he will ſupply proportionable ſtrength. (2.) As our preſent tabernacle of the body is ſo unſettled here, it becomes us to think ſeriouſly, and frequently about its removal, that when the hour comes, we may be prepared and ready.

10. ¶ And the princes offered for [h] dedicating of the altar, in the day that it was anointed, even the princes offered their offering before the altar. 11. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, They ſhall offer their offering each prince on his day, for the dedicating of the altar. 12. ¶ And he that offered his offering the firſt day, was Nahſhon the ſon of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah. 13. And his offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels,* one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels after [i] the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them *were* full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a [k] meat-offering: 14. One ſpoon of ten *ſhekels* of gold, full of incenſe: 15. [l] One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 16. One kid of the goats [m] for a ſin-offering: 17. And for [n] a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Nahſhon the ſon of Amminadab. 18. ¶ On the ſecond day Nethaneel the ſon of Zuar, prince of Iſſachar did offer. 19. He offered *for* his offering one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels,* one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 20. One ſpoon of gold of ten *ſhekels,* full of incenſe: 21. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year for a burnt-offering: 22. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 23. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Nethaneel the ſon of Zuar. 24. ¶ On the third day Eliab the ſon of Helon, prince of the children of Zebulun, *did offer.* 25. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels,* one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 26. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels,* full of incenſe: 27. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 28. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 29. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Eliab the ſon of Helon. 30. ¶ On the fourth day Elizur the ſon of Shedeur, prince of the children of Reuben, *did offer.* 31. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, of an hundred and thirty *ſhekels,* one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 32. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels,* full of incenſe: 33. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 34. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 35. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Elizur, the ſon of Shedeur. 36. ¶ On the fifth day Shelumiel the ſon of Zuriſhaddai, prince of the children of Simeon, *did offer.* 37. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels,* one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 38. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels,* full of incenſe: 39. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 40. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 41. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Shelumiel the ſon of Zuriſhaddai. 42. ¶ On the ſixth day Eliaſaph the ſon of Deuel, prince of the children of Gad, *offered.* 43. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty *ſhekels,*

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[n] Lev. ix. 22.

[o] Pſal. iv. 6.

[a] Exod. xl. 18. Lev. viii. 10.

[b] Chap. i. 4, &c.

† Heb. Who ſtood over.

[c] Chap. iv. 25.

[d] Ibid. 31.

[e] Ibid. 28, 33.

[f] Ibid. 15.

[g] Ibid. 6, 8, 10, 12, 14. 2 Sam. vi. 6, 13.

[h] See Deut. xx. 5. 1 Kings viii. 63. Ezra vi. 16. Neh. xii. 27. Pſal. xxx. Title.

[i] Exod. xxx. 13.

[k] Lev. ii. 1.

[l] Ibid. i. 2.

[m] Ibid. iv. 23.

[n] Ibid. iii. 1.

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a ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 44. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 45. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 46. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 47. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Eliaſaph the ſon of Deuel. 48. ¶ On the ſeventh day Eliſhama the ſon of Ammihud, prince of the children of Ephraim, *offered*. 49. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 50. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 51. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 52. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 53. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Eliſhama the the ſon of Ammihud. 54. ¶ On the eighth day *offered* Gamaliel the ſon of Pedahzur, prince of the children of Manaſſeh. 55. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, of an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 56. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 57. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 58. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 59. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Gamaliel the ſon of Pedahzur. 60. ¶ On the ninth day Abidan the ſon of Gideoni, prince of the children of Benjamin, *offered*. 61. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, a ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 62. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 63. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 64. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 65. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Abidan the ſon of Gideoni. 66. ¶ On the tenth day Ahiezer the ſon of Ammiſhaddai, prince of the children of Dan, *offered*. 67. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 68. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 69. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 70. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 71. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Ahiezer the ſon of Ammiſhaddai. 72. ¶ On the eleventh day Pagiel the ſon of Ocran, prince of the children of Aſher, *offered*. 73. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 74. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 75. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 76. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 77. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Pagiel the ſon of Ocran. 78. ¶ On the twelfth day Ahira the ſon of Enan, prince of the children of Naphtali, *offered*. 79. His offering *was* one ſilver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, one ſilver bowl of ſeventy ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering: 80. One golden ſpoon of ten *ſhekels*, full of incenſe: 81. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the firſt year, for a burnt-offering: 82. One kid of the goats for a ſin-offering: 83. And for a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the firſt year. This *was* the offering of Ahira the ſon of Enan. 84. This *was* the dedication of the altar (in the day when it was anointed) by the princes of Iſrael: twelve chargers of ſilver, twelve ſilver bowls, twelve ſpoons of gold: 85. Each charger of ſilver *weighing* an hundred and thirty *ſhekels*, each bowl ſeventy: all the ſilver veſſels *weighed* two thouſand and four hundred *ſhekels*, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary. 86. The golden ſpoons *were* twelve, full of incenſe, *weighing* ten *ſhekels* apiece, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary: all the gold of the ſpoons *was* an hundred and twenty *ſhekels*. 87. All the oxen for the burnt-offering *were* twelve bullocks, the rams twelve, the lambs of the firſt year twelve, with their meat-offering: and the kids of the goats for ſin-offering, twelve. 88. And all the oxen for the ſacrifice of the peace-offerings, *were* twenty and four bullocks, the rams ſixty, the he-goats ſixty, the lambs of the firſt year ſixty. This *was* the dedication of the altar, after that it was anointed. 89. And when Moſes was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation, to ſpeak with † him; then he heard ° the voice of one ſpeaking unto him from off the mercy-ſeat, that *was* upon the ark of the teſtimony, from between the two cherubims: and he ſpake unto him.

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† i. e. God.
° Exod. xxv. 22.

v. 10—89. The dedication of the altar began the ſame day it was ſet up. When Moſes had conſecrated it with the anointing oil, then appeared the generous piety of the princes, each haſtening with his offering, to pay their grateful tribute to that gracious God, who thus condeſcended to manifeſt his preſence in the midſt of them. 1. They were the princes of Iſrael; a rare example! Happy, were every nobleman like them, thus zealous for the glory of God. Since they are bleſſed with greater affluence than others, their obligations to works of piety and charity are ſurely proportionably ſtronger. 2. Their preſents were truly princely: they thought their beſt thus beſt employed. *Note*, We ſhall never regret what we have given to God. 3. They offered ſeparately, and each among his other gifts, preſented his ſin-offering. We muſt never forget to ſeek pardon for the ſin that cleaves to the beſt we do. 4. Their peace-offerings were eaten each day: thus the holy feaſt for themſelves, as well as the ſacrifice to God, was prepared; for God will have thoſe rejoice before him, who heartily devote their all unto him. 5. The order of their offerings was according to their encampments; the precedence once ſettled, muſt not be interrupted. The ſtation God allots, is to be ſubmitted to with delight. 6. Their offerings were the ſame; they were approaching the ſame altar, and expecting the ſame bleſſings. 7. Each hath his name and offering recorded. God will put a mark of honour upon ſervices done for him: no work or labour of love ſhall be forgotten, or unrewarded. 8. God accepts graciouſly their oblations, and from the mercy-ſeat declares his approbation of them. Whenever we are ſpeaking to God in ſacrifices of prayer and praiſe, he will aſſuredly anſwer us in a voice of mercy. We have not the Shechinah, 'tis true, in the midſt of us, but we have better, the incarnate Word, who promiſes to be with us always, and that whatſoever in his name we aſk, believing, we ſhall receive.

CHAP. VIII.

This chapter is concerning, 1. *The lamps in the candleſtick,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The ordination of the Levites,* (1.) *How they were purified,* ver. 5—8. 2. *How they were parted with by the people,* ver. 9, 10. 3. *How they were preſented to God in lieu of the firſt-born,* ver. 11—18. 4. *How they were conſigned to Aaron and his ſons, to be miniſters to them,* ver. 19. *And how all theſe orders were duly executed,* ver. 20—22. *And laſtly, the age appointed for their miniſtration,* ver. 23—26.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto Aaron, and ſay unto him, When thou [a] lighteſt the lamps, the ſeven lamps ſhall give light over againſt the candleſtick. 3. And Aaron did ſo; he lighted the lamps thereof, over againſt the candleſtick; as the LORD commanded Moſes. 4. [b] And this work of the candleſtick *was of* beaten gold, unto the ſhaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, *was* [c] beaten work: [d] according unto the pattern which the LORD had ſhewed Moſes, ſo he made the candleſtick.

[a] Exod. xxv. 37. & xl. 25.
[b] Ibid. xxv. 31.
[c] Ibid. 18.
[d] Ibid. 40.

v. 1—4. The candleſtick being prepared, the lamps are ordered to be lighted. Aaron firſt is employed, though afterwards the prieſt in waiting performed the ſervice. The fire was taken from the altar, the middle lamp was firſt lighted, and the reſt from it; nor had the tabernacle any other light, but from this candleſtick. *Note*, Chriſt is the only light of the world; and if ever we ſhine, it muſt be by the ſacred fire which his ſpirit kindles in us. The number of the branches was ſeven, which intimates the perfection of all thoſe, who, as united to Chriſt, are compleat in him. The uſe of the lamp was to ſee to do the work of the tabernacle. Miniſters muſt firſt have their own ſpirits lighted up, as the lamp of the Lord, before they can miniſter acceptably to God, or profitably to men. How ſhall they who are in darkneſs themſelves, lead others to the light?

5. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 6. Take the Levites from among the children of Iſrael, and cleanſe them. 7. And thus ſhalt thou do unto them, to cleanſe them: Sprinkle [e] water of purifying upon them, and † let them ſhave all their fleſh, and [f] let them waſh their clothes, and *ſo* make themſelves clean. 8. Then let them take a young bullock with [g] his meat-offering, *even* fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock ſhalt thou take for a ſin-offering. 9. And thou ſhalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou ſhalt gather the whole aſſembly of the children of Iſrael together: 10. And thou ſhalt bring the Levites before the LORD, and the children of Iſrael ſhall put their hands upon the Levites: 11. And Aaron ſhall ‡ offer the Levites before the LORD, *for* an ‖ offering of the children of Iſrael; that § they may execute the ſervice of the LORD. 12. And the Levites ſhall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou ſhalt offer the one *for* a ſin-offering, and the other *for* a burnt-offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites. 13. And thou ſhalt ſet the Levites before Aaron, and before his ſons, and offer them *for* an offering unto the LORD. 14. Thus ſhalt thou ſeparate the Levites from among the children of Iſrael: and [h] the Levites ſhall be mine. 15. And after that, ſhall the Levites go in, to do the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou ſhalt cleanſe them, and offer them *for* an offering. 16. For they *are* wholly given unto me, from among the children of Iſrael; [i] inſtead of ſuch as open every womb, *even inſtead of* the firſt-born of the children of Iſrael, have I taken them unto me. 17. [k] For all the firſt-born of the children of Iſrael *are* mine, *both* man and beaſt: on the day that I ſmote every firſt-born in the land of Egypt, I ſanctified them for myſelf. 18. And I have taken the Levites for all the firſt-born of the children of Iſrael. 19. And [l] I have given the Levites *as* † a gift to Aaron and to his ſons, from among the children of Iſrael; to do the ſervice of the children of Iſrael in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Iſrael: [m] that there be no plague among the children of Iſrael, when the children of Iſrael come nigh unto the ſanctuary. 20. And Moſes and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Iſrael did to the Levites according unto all that the LORD commanded Moſes concerning the Levites, ſo did the children of Iſrael unto them. 21. And the Levites were purified, and they waſhed their clothes: and Aaron offered them *as* an offering before the LORD; and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanſe them. 22. And after that went the Levites in, to do their ſervice in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron and before his ſons: [n] as the LORD had commanded Moſes concerning the Levites, ſo did they unto them. 23. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 24. This *is it* that *belongeth* unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward, they ſhall go in ‡ to wait upon the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation: 25. And from the age of fifty years they ſhall ‖ ceaſe waiting upon the ſervice *thereof*, and ſhall ſerve no more: 26. But ſhall miniſter with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and ſhall do no ſervice: Thus ſhalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.

[e] Chap. xix. 9, 17, 18.
† Heb. Let them cauſe a razor to paſs over, &c.
[f] Lev. xi. 25.
[g] Lev. ii. 2.
‡ Heb. Wave.
‖ Heb. Wave-offering.
§ Heb. They may be to execute, &c.
[h] Chap. iii. 45.
[i] Ibid. 12, 45.
[k] Exod. xiii. 2, 12, 15. Chap. iii. 13. Luke ii. 23.
[l] Chap. iii. 9.
† Heb. Given.
[m] Chap. xvi. 46. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16.
[n] Chap. iv. 4.
‡ Heb. To war the warfare of &c.
‖ Heb. Return from the warfare of the ſervice.

v. 5—26. As a divine call, and miſſion from perſons authoriſed, muſt unite in the ordination of a miniſter, we find, after the numbering the Levites, their ſolemn conſecration to God. In order whereunto, as they who bear the veſſels of the Lord muſt be holy, they are, 1. Enjoined to waſh and ſhave themſelves all over, and then water of purifying is ſprinkled upon them. Thus muſt Jeſus ſprinkle our conſciences, ere we can ſerve the living God. 2. When prepared, they are preſented before the Lord, and by impoſition of the hands of the congregation, or perhaps of their rulers, were, inſtead of the firſt-born, ſurrendered up to God's ſervice. Whatever God calls for we may chearfully reſign, as we ſhall ſurely ſee a bleſſing from it. 3. Offerings of atonement followed: for moſt neceſſary it is, that they who preach peace with God to others, ſhould firſt experience it in their own ſouls. Whereupon, 4. A ſolemn preſentation of them is made by Aaron to God. Miniſters are living ſacrifices, whoſe time, abilities, ſtrength, and all, muſt be employed for God, from the moment they are devoted to him. 5. God accepts of them inſtead of the firſt-born, appoints them their work in the tabernacle, to make atonement for the children of Iſrael, that there be no plague among them; and regards them as his immediate ſervants. *Note*, (1.) God's ſervice is among the higheſt honours. (2.) They who are called to the honour, muſt remember the work of the miniſtry, and diligently preach the atoning blood of the Lamb that was ſlain. (3.) If this be neglected, the plague of ſin among the people will lie at the miniſter's door. 6. Their time of ſervice is fixed. At five and twenty they began as probationers; at thirty they were admitted to carry the holy veſſels; at fifty they were diſcharged from the burdens of office, and were the ſuperintendants of their younger brethren, and guards of the ſanctuary. The prime of life is fitteſt for the laborious work of the miniſtry: when the faithful labourers begin to grow aged, they may well be aſſiſted by their younger brethren, who ſhould learn under their inſtructions, and be directed by their ſuperior experience.

CHAP. IX.

This chapter is, 1. *Concerning the great ordinance of the paſſover;* (1.) *Orders given for the obſervance of it at the return of the year,* ver. 1—5. (2.) *Proviſoes added for thoſe that were ceremonially unclean, or otherwiſe diſabled,* ver. 6—14. 2. *Concerning the pillar of the cloud,* ver. 15—23.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes in the wilderneſs of Sinai, in the firſt month of the ſecond year, after they were come out of the land of Egypt, ſaying, 2. Let the children of Iſrael alſo keep [a] the paſſover at his appointed ſeaſon. 3. In the fourteenth day of this month † at even, ye ſhall keep it in his appointed ſeaſon: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof ſhall ye keep it. 4. And Moſes ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, that they ſhould keep the paſſover. 5. And they kept the paſſover on the fourteenth day of the firſt month at even, in the wilderneſs of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo did the children of Iſrael. 6. ¶ And there were certain men who were [b] defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the paſſover on that day: and they came before Moſes, and before Aaron on that day. 7. And thoſe men ſaid unto him, We *are* defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed ſeaſon among the children of Iſrael? 8. And Moſes ſaid unto them, Stand ſtill, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you. 9. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 10. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, If any man of you or your poſterity ſhall be unclean by reaſon of a dead body, or *be* in a journey afar off, yet he ſhall keep the paſſover unto the LORD. 11. [c] The fourteenth day of the ſecond month at even they ſhall keep it, *and* eat it with unleavened bread, and bitter *herbs*. 12. [d] They ſhall leave none of it unto the morning, [e] nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the paſſover, they ſhall keep it. 13. But the man that *is* clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the paſſover; even the ſame ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people, becauſe he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed ſeaſon: that man ſhall bear his ſin. 14. And if a ſtranger ſhall ſojourn among you, and will keep the paſſover unto the LORD, according to the ordinance of the paſſover, and according to the manner thereof, ſo ſhall he do: [f] ye ſhall have one ordinance, both for the ſtranger, and for him that was born in the land.

[a] Exod. xii. 1, &c. Lev. xxiii. 5. Chap. xxviii. 16. Deut. xvi. 2.
† Heb. Between the two evenings.
[b] Chap. v. 3. & xix. 11.
[c] 2 Chron. xxx. 2, 15.
[d] Exod. xii. 10.
[e] Ibid. 46. John xix. 36.
[f] Exod. xii. 49.

v. 1—14. We have here,

1. The ſecond paſſover obſerved after their deliverance from Egypt ; and it ſhould ſeem, they celebrated it no more till they came to Canaan, becauſe of their omiſſion of circumciſion, which in their removes might be dangerous. Moſes, at God's command, enjoins it, and the people obey him. If they with delight could thus run to celebrate the memorial of their deliverance, with what conſtancy and gladneſs ſhould we approach the table of our Lord, to remember his greater deliverance of us from worſe than Egyptian bondage, even from the chains of ſin, and from the powers of death and hell.

2. A caſe brought before Moſes, *v.* 6. Some perſons were defiled by a dead body, and therefore could not keep the paſſover, yet grieved to be excluded, where themſelves were without blame : they conſult Moſes, and Moſes carries the matter before the Lord. Learn hence, (1.) If ceremonial defilement excluded from the paſſover, how much more ſhould moral impurity debar men from the table of the Lord. (2.) Even unforeſeen and unavoidable impediments, that detain us from waiting upon God in his ordinances, will be a grief to us. (3.) In caſes of conſcience miniſters ſhould be conſulted about the path of duty. (4.) Miniſters muſt wait much upon God in prayer, and his word, that they may be directed into all truth themſelves, and enabled to direct others alſo.

3. God reſolves the queſtion, and makes an order for future generations. Whoever are unclean, or on a journey afar off, have a month more allowed them, when they may with the ſame ceremonies keep the feaſt, and it would be alike accepted : but if it was deferred through neglect or contempt, the ſinner muſt be cut off, either by excommunication from the viſible church, or by God's hand in ſecret judgment. *Note*, (1.) They who are diſappointed unavoidably from attending upon God, will be happy to ſeize the firſt returning opportunity of approaching his houſe or table. (2.) Providential hindrances from the means of grace will not, if our hearts be right, deprive us of the grace of the means ; God will amply ſupply our wants ſome other way. (3.) They who reject God's ordinances, will be rejected by him. Habitual abſence from the Lord's table is the ſure ſign of a loſt ſoul.

4. The circumciſed ſtranger had the ſame right as the homeborn Iſraelite. In Chriſt Jeſus there is no difference between barbarian, Scythian, bond, or free : whoſoever calleth on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.

15. ¶ And [g] on the day that the tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, *namely* the tent of the teſtimony : and [h] at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. 16. So it was alway : the cloud covered it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night. 17. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle ; then after that the children of Iſrael journeyed : and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Iſrael pitched their tents. 18. At the commandment of the LORD the children of Iſrael journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched : [i] as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle, they reſted in the tents. 19. And when the cloud † tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Iſrael kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not. 20. And *ſo* it was when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle ; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed. 21. And *ſo* it was when the cloud ‡ abode from even unto the morning, and *that* the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed : whether *it was* by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed : 22. Or *whether it were* two days, or a month, or a year that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Iſrael [k] abode in their tents, and journeyed not : but when it was taken up, they journeyed. 23. At the commandment of the LORD they reſted in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed : they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moſes.

[g] Exod. xl. 34.
[h] Ibid. xiii. 21. & xl. 38.
[i] 1 Cor. x. 1.
† Heb. Prolonged.
‡ Heb. Was.
[k] Exod. xl. 36, 37.

v. 15—23. The miraculous pillar of the cloud reſting on the tabernacle in the day of its erection : God gives them orders how to regulate their marches by the motions and guidance of it.

1. They were to reſt as the cloud reſted, whether the time were long or ſhort. God's time is the beſt time : we may not run till he calls. Faith will beget patient waiting upon God. 2. When the cloud moved by day or night, they were to be always ready, and begin their march. *Note*, (1.) That we muſt have our tents ſtruck by death is certain ; the time when, uncertain : it becomes us therefore to be always prepared, that when God calls us out of the body, we may have nothing to do but to die. (2.) It will be comfortable to every true Iſraelite to ſee the cloud remove. This wilderneſs ſtate is not our reſt ; we look for a more abiding manſion in the ſkies. (3.) They were not to ſtay or encamp on the march, but by the direction of their guide. We muſt not deſire to chuſe the place of our own abode ; let God fix our habitation, and there contentedly let us pitch our tent.

How great was the favour thus viſibly to have the preſence of God among them, and to be under ſuch a guardian and guide ! Bleſſed be God, their mercies are our own, as to their ſubſtance ; God's word, and ſpirit, and providences, as this cloud, ſhall lead us in his holy ways, and keep us ſafely journeying heavenward. And whilſt we yield ourſelves up to him without reſerve, we may confidently exerciſe faith in our ſafe arrival at the promiſed land of everlaſting glory.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Orders given about the making and uſing of ſilver trumpets,* ver. 1—10. 2. *The removal of Iſrael's camp from mount Sinai to the wilderneſs of Paran,* ver. 11—28. 3. *Moſes's treaty with Hobab, his brother-in-law,* ver. 29—32. 4. *Moſes's prayer at the removing and reſting of the ark,* ver. 33—36.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Make thee two trumpets of ſilver ; of an whole piece ſhalt thou make them : that thou mayeſt uſe them for the calling of the aſſembly, and for the journeying of the camps. 3. And when [a] they ſhall blow with them, all the aſſembly ſhall aſſemble themſelves to thee, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 4. And if they blow *but* with one *trumpet*, then the princes *which are* heads of the thouſands of Iſrael, ſhall gather themſelves unto thee. 5. When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the eaſt parts, ſhall go forward. 6. When ye blow an alarm the ſecond time, then the camps that lie on the ſouth ſide ſhall take their journey : they ſhall blow an alarm for their journeys. 7. But when the congregation is to be gathered together, you ſhall blow ; but you ſhall not ſound an alarm. 8. [b] And the ſons of Aaron the prieſts ſhall blow with the trumpets ; and they ſhall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations. 9. And [c] if ye go to war in your land againſt the enemy that oppreſſeth you, then ye ſhall blow an alarm with the trumpets ; and ye ſhall be remembred before the LORD your God, and ye ſhall be ſaved from your enemies. 10. Alſo [d] in the day of your gladneſs, and in your ſolemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye ſhall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the ſacrifices of your peace-offerings ; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God : I *am* the LORD your God.

[a] Joel ii. 15.
[b] 1 Chron. xv. 24. 2 Chron. xiii. 12. 1 Mac. xvi. 8.
[c] Chap. xxxi. 6. Joſh. vi. 5. 2 Chron. xiii. 14.
[d] Chap. xxix. 1. Lev. xxiii. 24. 1 Chron. xv. 24. 2 Chron. v. 12. & vii. 6. & xxix. 26. Ezra iii. 10. Neh. xii. 35. Pſ. lxxxi. 3.

v. 1—10. God gives directions here for the making ſilver trumpets. They muſt be two, each of beaten ſilver, and the prieſts alone muſt blow in them. The miniſters of God muſt always lift up their voice as a trumpet, boldly and zealouſly for God, and their word be not only pure as the ſilver, but muſical as the trumpet's ſwelling note ; big with the glad tidings of a free ſalvation through Jeſus, and heard to the ends of the earth.

The uſe of theſe trumpets was, 1. If both trumpets were blown in a continued tone, the whole congregation were ſummoned to the tabernacle ; if one, the heads of the tribes only. It is thus by the miniſtry of the goſpel that the ſouls of his redeemed are called to Chriſt ; and in a reſurrection day they will be awakened by the trumpet's voice, to appear before the throne of God. 2. An interrupted blaſt intimated a march ; and by this ſignal, at intervals, the ſeveral camps, firſt of Judah, then of Reuben, next of Ephraim, and laſtly of Dan, were directed in their motions. They who would march aright to heaven, muſt attend to the word of God ſpoken by his ſervants. 3. In times of invaſion and war, theſe martial inſtruments were to awaken their courage ; and when they were ſounded, God promiſes to fight for them. Though the world is full of enemies againſt the people of God, we may boldly go forth under the ſtrength-inſpiring promiſes of God's word, and be aſſured of certain victory through Jeſus, the Captain of our Salvation. 4. Their ſolemn aſſemblies and feaſts were enlivened with the joyful ſound, intimating, that when we draw near to God in holy duties,

ties, it ſhould not be a weariſome ſervice, but the very joy and rejoicing of our hearts.

11. ¶ And it came to paſs on the twentieth *day* of the ſecond month, in the ſecond year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the teſtimony. 12. And the children of Iſrael took [e] their journeys out of the wilderneſs of Sinai: and the cloud reſted in the wilderneſs of Paran. 13. And they firſt took their journey, according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moſes. 14. ¶ [f] In the firſt *place* went the ſtandard of the camp of the children of Judah, according to their armies: and over his hoſt *was* [g] Nahſhon the ſon of Amminadab. 15. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Iſſachar, *was* Nethaneel the ſon of Zuar. 16. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Zebulun, *was* Eliab the ſon of Helon. 17. And [h] the tabernacle was taken down; and the ſons of Gerſhon, and the ſons of Merari, ſet forward [i] bearing the tabernacle. 18. ¶ And [k] the ſtandard of the camp of Reuben ſet forward according to their armies: and over his hoſt *was* Elizur the ſon of Shedeur. 19. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Simeon, *was* Shelumiel, the ſon of Zuriſhaddai. 20. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Gad, *was* Eliaſaph, the ſon of Deuel. 21. And the Kohathites ſet forward, [l] bearing the ſanctuary: and † *the other* did ſet up the tabernacle againſt they came. 22. ¶ And [m] the ſtandard of the camp of the children of Ephraim ſet forward according to their armies: and over his hoſt *was* Eliſhama the ſon of Ammihud. 23. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Manaſſeh, *was* Gamaliel the ſon of Pedahzur. 24. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, *was* Abidan the ſon of Gideoni. 25. ¶ And [n] the ſtandard of the camp of the children of Dan ſet forward, *which was* the rereward of all the camps throughout their hoſts: and over his hoſt *was* Ahiezer the ſon of Ammiſhaddai. 26. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Aſher, *was* Pagiel the ſon of Ocran. 27. And over the hoſt of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, *was* Ahira the ſon of Enan. 28. † Thus *were* the journeyings of the children of Iſrael, according to their armies, when they ſet forward.

v. 11—28. God having fully ſettled their hoſt, calls them to begin their march.

1. The ſignal is given in the removal of the cloud. They had been now a year at Sinai, and having received God's inſtitutions, they are, with God in the midſt of them, on their journey to be put in poſſeſſion of his promiſes. We may comfortably remove, when we have God with us. 2. They marched according to God's order, and under his guidance; and though they were long kept wandering, yet were never bewildered. When we truſt ourſelves to God, we may be involved in difficulties; but our way is ſafe, and the iſſue will be peace. 3. After three days they reſted in the wilderneſs of Paran. We muſt expect ſmall reſt here, where our beſt changes are but one wilderneſs for another. Whilſt therefore we are thankful for the mercies by the way, we muſt look for our abiding reſting place in heaven, from whence we ſhall remove no more. 4. The order of the march, as directed before. Judah led the way, then the Gerſhonites and Merarites followed with the tabernacle: next Reuben's ſquadron; after them, the Kohathites with the ſacred veſſels; Ephraim followed; Dan, with all the attendants on the camp, cloſed the rear. Behold a type of the church: Chriſt, the captain, leads the glorious van; his miniſters mark his ſteps with their ſacred charges; the faithful, firm-embodied, and true to their colours, follow; whilſt the weakeſt have a glorious guard of miniſtring ſpirits, under the conduct of their Lord: ſo that of thoſe whom he hath redeemed, not one ſhall be loſt at the general muſter, when Jeſus ſhall appear to make up his jewels.

29. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto Hobab, the ſon of Raguel the Midianite, Moſes's father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD ſaid, I will give it you: come thou with us, and [o] we will do thee good: for the LORD hath ſpoken good concerning Iſrael. 30. And he ſaid unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred. 31. And he ſaid, Leave us not, I pray thee; foraſmuch as thou knoweſt how we are to encamp in the wilderneſs, and thou mayeſt be to us inſtead of eyes. 32. And it ſhall be, if thou go with us, yea, it ſhall be, that what goodneſs the LORD ſhall do unto us, the ſame will we do unto thee.

v. 29—32. Hobab, (Jethro's ſon moſt probably) when Iſrael was now commanded to advance, is for returning home. Hereupon Moſes, his brother, invites him to go with them. They were going under a gracious promiſe, and with the protection of a great God, and therefore were ſure of ſucceſs. When we are going to heaven ourſelves, it cannot but be a grief to ſee our friends and relations diſpoſed to go another way, and we ſhall make it our buſineſs and labour to perſuade them to caſt in their lot with us. Hobab reſolves at firſt not to go; his land and kindred were dear attractives to keep him from the journey. How often have lands, and friends, and relations, prevailed upon the heart to renounce the ways of God and glory, for the momentary enjoyments of a periſhing world? Let it not be our caſe. Moſes will not be eaſily ſaid nay. Real love to a man's ſoul will make us importunate to gain him. He urges two reaſons, both ſuited to engage him: 1. The uſe he might be of to them in their encampments, and with his advice. *Note*, (1.) That we have it in our power to ſerve our neighbour, is a ſtrong argument for doing it. (2.) Though we are under the ſure guidance of an all-wiſe God, it becomes us to uſe all the means which human prudence ſuggeſts. 2. The advantage he might hope for himſelf. They who join God's people will ſhare in their inheritance; and though friends or lands are left behind, they will be amply recompenſed. Hobab, it ſhould ſeem by his ſilence, conſented, as we find his family in Canaan, *Judg.* i. 16. There are many a ſore temptation to draw back in the way to heaven, but effectual grace conſtrains the heart, and we are thus enabled to perſevere.

33. ¶ And they departed from [p] the mount of the LORD three days journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days journey, [q] to ſearch out a reſting-place for them. 34. And [r] the cloud of the LORD *was* upon them by day, when they went out of the camp. 35. And it came to paſs when the ark ſet forward, that Moſes ſaid, [s] Riſe up, LORD, and let thine enemies be ſcattered; and let them that hate thee, flee before thee. 36. And when it reſted, he ſaid, Return, O LORD, unto the † many thouſands of Iſrael.

v. 33—36. The ark of God went before them, not it ſeems in front, but the pillar of the cloud over it directed their march; and thus it might be ſaid to lead the way, and ſearch out the moſt convenient reſting-place. When we are under divine guidance, every ſituation will be ordered with infinite wiſdom, and we muſt believe ſo. When the ark moved, Moſes prayed, Riſe up, O Lord God, &c. We ſhould begin every day's journey of life with prayer; and need enough have we to pray, beſet as we are with ſpiritual enemies, and an oppoſing world. Our comfort is, whilſt omnipotence is on our ſide, be they who hate him, and us for our attachment to him, never ſo great or numerous, they ſhall be ſcattered as eaſily as morning miſts before the riſing ſun. At the reſting of the ark, Moſes renewed his petition for the return of the Divine Preſence, and therewith all bleſſings, in the midſt of the thouſands of Iſrael. Evening calls for returning mercies muſt never be neglected. Mercies on our own ſouls, that we may reſt under the ſhadow of the Almighty; mercies on the church of God, that its welfare and happineſs may abide and abound, till the time of final reſting, when, with all God's ſaints together, we ſhall dwell in him, and he in us, to a glorious eternity.

CHAP. XI.

This chapter begins a melancholy ſcene. The current of God's mercies is ſtopped by their rebellion. God is turned to be their enemy, and fights againſt them, and it is ſin, ſin, that makes all the miſchief. 1. *Their murmurings kindled a fire among them, which yet was ſoon quenched by the prayer of Moſes*, ver. 1—3. 2. *No ſooner was that fire of judgment quenched, but the fire of ſin breaks out again.* 1. *The people fret for want of fleſh*, ver. 4—9. 2. *Moſes frets for want of help*, ver. 10—15. *Now*, 1. *God promiſeth to gratify them both, to appoint help for Moſes*, ver. 16, 17. *And to give the people fleſh*, ver. 18—23. *And*, 2. *He preſently makes good both theſe promiſes. For*, 1. *The Spirit of God qualifies the ſeventy elders for the government*, ver. 24—30 2. *The power of God brings quails to feaſt the people*, ver. 31, 32. *Yet*, 3. *The juſtice of God plagued them for their murmurings*, ver. 33—35.

1. AND [a] *when* the people † complained, ‡ it diſpleaſed the LORD: and the LORD heard *it*; and his anger was kindled: and the fire of the LORD burnt

[e] Exod. xl. 36. Chap. ii. 9, 16, 24, 31.

[f] Chap. ii. 3.

[g] Chap. i. 7.

[h] Chap. i. 51.

[i] Chap. iv. 24, 31.

[k] Chap. ii. 10.

[l] Chap. iv. 4. & vii. 9.

† i. e. The Gerſhonites and the Merarites. See ver. 17.

[m] Chap. ii. 18.

[n] Chap. ii. 25. Joſh. vi. 9.

† Heb. Theſe.

[o] Judg. i. 16.

[p] See Exod. iii. 1.

[q] Deut. i. 33. Jer. xxxi. 2. Ezek. xx. 6.

[r] Exod. xiii. 21.

[s] Pſ. lxviii. 1, 2. & cxxxii. 8.

† Heb. Ten thouſand thouſands.

[a] Deut. ix. 22.

† Heb. Were as it were complainers.

‡ Heb. It was evil in the ears of, &c.

burnt [b] among them, and conſumed *them that were* in the uttermoſt parts of the camp. 2. And the people cried unto Moſes; and when Moſes prayed unto the LORD, the fire ‖ was quenched. 3. And he called the name of the place § Taberah: becauſe the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

[b] Pſ. lxxviii. 21.
‖ Heb. Sunk.
§ i. e. A burning.

v. 1—3. From the mercies they had experienced, and their promiſing beginnings, we might have expected a gracious iſſue to their journey; but alas! what a change is here!

1. A ſpirit of murmuring is among them; why or wherefore, it it hard to gueſs. They had every bleſſing their hearts could reaſonably deſire, and ſuch extraordinary inſtances of God's love to them, as ſhould have made them rejoice with joy unſpeakable. But a diſcontented ſpirit will never be without cauſe of murmuring, even in the midſt of mercies. God heard their repinings; for to him our moſt ſecret thoughts are fully known; and juſtly angry at their ingratitude, as he muſt ever be with thoſe complainers, who find fault with his proviſion for them, 2. He ſends a fire of wrath among them, either from the ſanctuary, as againſt Nadab and Abihu, or ſome immediate ſtroke of lightning from heaven. It burnt in the uttermoſt part of the camp; in the tribe of Dan probably, where the chief ſeat of the murmurers lay. God will not ſpare, if ſinners provoke him; and happy for us if we take warning by others, and repent of the like ſins, that we be not conſumed with their plagues. 3. Thus did the people; they cried unto Moſes; for in diſtreſs of ſoul God's ſlighted miniſters will be the firſt to be applied to; and Moſes kindly interceded for them, and the fire was ſtayed. The prayers of a righteous man avail much. It is a great bleſſing to have an intereſt in them. 4. The name given the place, *Taberah*, Burning. The place of the ſinner's torment ſhortly will be everlaſting burnings. Let us fear to murmur, leſt we ſhould likewiſe periſh.

4. ¶ And [c] the mixt multitude that *was* among them † fell a luſting: and the children of Iſrael alſo ‡ wept again, and ſaid, [d] Who ſhall give us fleſh to eat? 5. [e] We remember the fiſh which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: 6. But now our ſoul *is* dried away; *there is* nothing at all, beſides this manna, before our eyes. 7. And [f] the manna *was* as coriander-ſeed, and the ‖ colour thereof as the colour of [g] bdellium. 8. *And* the people went about, and gathered *it*, and ground *it* in mills, or beat *it* in a mortar, and baked *it* in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taſte of it was as the taſte of freſh oil. 9. And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

[c] As Exod. xii. 38.
† Heb. Luſted a luſt.
‡ Heb. Returned and wept.
[d] Pſ. lxxviii. 18. & cvi. 14. 1 Cor. x. 6.
[e] Exod. xvi. 3.
[f] Ibid. 14, 31.
‖ Heb. Eye of it as the eye of, &c.
[g] Gen. ii. 12.

v. 4—9. One ſin ſeverely viſited prevents not new provocations. 1. The mixed multitude, a mungrel breed, ſuch as followed in hopes of ſharing Iſrael's good, not to ſerve Iſrael's God, began the mutiny, and communicated the ſpirit of infection to the camp. A bad neighbourhood is dangerous, and ſin contagious; nor are any ſo high in grace or attainments, but they need watch and pray, leſt they enter into temptation. 2. They luſted for fleſh to eat, diſſatisfied with God's proviſion, and wanting to be their own caterers. Indulging our appetites is uſually our ruin: to gratify the body, men deſtroy their ſoul. 3. They diſtruſted God's power to ſupply their wants, though every day living by a miracle. Unbelief is a ſin that miracles cannot cure. 4. They compare their preſent with their paſt eſtate, and draw the moſt ungrateful concluſions. They remember the leeks and onions, but not the taſk-maſters of Egypt, and ſpeak of that manna, the bread of heaven, as if it famiſhed inſtead of fed them. *Note*, (1.) Ingratitude is among the greateſt ſins. (2.) The diſcontented loath their very bleſſings, and ſeem ſolicitous to make themſelves miſerable. (3.) It is a ſtrong mark of the curſe of God upon the heart, to ſee repining in the midſt of plenty.

10. ¶ Then Moſes heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent; and [h] the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moſes alſo was diſpleaſed. 11. [i] And Moſes ſaid unto the LORD, Wherefore haſt thou afflicted thy ſervant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy ſight, that thou layeſt the burden of all this people upon me? 12. Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay unto me, Carry them in thy boſom (as a nurſing father beareth the ſucking child) unto the land which thou ſwareſt unto their fathers? 13. Whence ſhould I have fleſh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, ſaying, Give us fleſh that we may eat. 14. [k] I am not able to bear all this people alone, becauſe *it is* too heavy for me. 15. And if thou deal thus with me, [l] kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy ſight; and let me not ſee my wretchedneſs.

[h] Pſ. lxxviii. 21.
[i] Deut. i. 12.
[k] Exod. xviii. 18.
[l] See 1 Kings xix. 4. Jonah iv. 3.

v. 10—15. Moſes heard the general murmur, and was juſtly diſpleaſed; and God alſo beheld with anger their baſe ingratitude. Had Moſes reſted here, he had done well; but impatience at their perverſeneſs, and deſpair of ſupporting the burden of ſuch a people, ſeems to have provoked him to ſpeak unadviſedly with his lips. He finds fault with that charge which was his higheſt honour; and wiſhes for that death with impatience, which he ſhould wait for with reſignation. *Note*, (1.) In heavy trials, we are too apt rather to wiſh ourſelves rid of them by death, rather than glorify God under them by patient ſubmiſſion. (2.) Many have deſired to die in a paſſion, who would gladly unſay their words, if God had granted their requeſt. (3.) The meekeſt of men have corruption in their hearts, and ſometimes it will riſe. (4.) They whom God calls to be rulers of others, have need to look peculiarly to the government of their own ſpirits.

16. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Gather unto me [m] ſeventy men of the elders of Iſrael, whom thou knoweſt to be elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may ſtand there with thee. 17. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and [n] I will take of the ſpirit which *is* upon thee, and will put *it* upon them; and they ſhall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear *it* not thyſelf alone. 18. And ſay thou unto the people, Sanctify yourſelves againſt to-morrow, and ye ſhall eat fleſh (for you have wept in the ears of the LORD, ſaying, Who ſhall give us fleſh to eat? for *it was* well with us in Egypt) therefore the LORD will give you fleſh, and ye ſhall eat. 19. Ye ſhall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; 20. [o] *But* even a † whole month, until it come out at your noſtrils, and it be lothſome unto you: becauſe that ye have deſpiſed the LORD which *is* among you, and have wept before him, ſaying, [p] Why came we forth out of Egypt? 21. And Moſes ſaid, [q] The people amongſt whom I *am*, *are* ſix hundred thouſand footmen; and thou haſt ſaid, I will give them fleſh, that they may eat a whole month. 22. [r] Shall the flocks and the herds be ſlain for them, to ſuffice them? or ſhall all the fiſh of the ſea be gathered together for them, to ſuffice them? 23. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [s] Is the LORD's hand waxed ſhort? thou ſhalt ſee now whether my word ſhall come to paſs unto thee, or not.

[m] See Exod. iv. 9.
[n] Neh. ix. 20.
[o] Pſ. lxxviii. 29. & cvi. 15.
† Heb. A month of days.
[p] Chap. xxi. 5.
[q] Exod. xii. 37. & xxxviii. 26. Chap. i. 46.
[r] See John vi. 7.
[s] Iſa. l. 2. & lix. 1.

v. 16—23. God anſwers both theſe requeſts of Moſes and the people, but with very different regards; Moſes in mercy, the people in judgment.

1. Moſes receives an inſtance of God's mercy. He does not upbraid his haſtineſs, but grants his petition. He is commanded to chuſe ſeventy elders, the moſt approved for wiſdom, and God will ſtrengthen them for their office, to bear with him the burden of the people. *Note*, (1.) None can reaſonably conclude they are called to an office, who are not qualified for it. (2.) Government is of divine inſtitution, and we muſt be obedient for conſcience ſake, not only to the king as ſupreme, but unto every magiſtrate who bears with him the burden.

2. The people's requeſt is gratified; better, peradventure, for them, had it been denied. Gifts in anger are judgments in diſguiſe. They ſhall not only have enough to ſatisfy, but to ſurfeit. *Note*, (1.) Luſt and loathing are near allied. (2.) The indulgence of brutal appetite will bring its own puniſhment along with it.

3. Moſes expreſſes ſome diſtruſt how this ſhould be done for ſuch a multitude. The ſtrongeſt faith is ſometimes ſhaken by indulging vain reaſonings; but God ſilences his doubts with a convincing argument. His almighty power can effect whatever his grace promiſes. He that divided the ſea, and opened the windows of heaven, is able to give them fleſh alſo. Let God's people be comforted in every trial, that his hand is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave; and be encouraged to pray, for his ear is not heavy that it cannot hear.

24. ¶ And Moſes went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the ſeventy men of the elders of the people, and ſet them round about the tabernacle. 25. And the LORD came down in a cloud, and ſpake unto him, and took of the ſpirit that *was* upon him, and gave *it* unto the ſeventy elders: and it came

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to paſs, *that* [t] when the ſpirit reſted upon them, [u] they propheſied, and did not ceaſe. 26. But there remained two *of the* men in the camp, the name of the one *was* Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the Spirit reſted upon them (and they *were* of them that were written, but [x] went not out unto the tabernacle) and they propheſied in the camp. 27. And there ran a young man, and told Moſes, and ſaid, Eldad and Medad do propheſy in the camp. 28. And Joſhua the ſon of Nun, the ſervant of Moſes, *one* of his young men, anſwered and ſaid, [y] My lord Moſes, forbid them. 29. And Moſes ſaid unto him, Envieſt thou for my ſake? [z] would God that all the LORD's people were prophets, *and* that the LORD would put his ſpirit upon them. 30. And Moſes gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Iſrael.

[t] See 2 Kings ii. 15.
[u] See 1 Sam. x. 5, 10.
[x] See 1 Sam. xx. 26. Jer. xxxvi. 5.
[y] See Luke ix. 49. John iii. 26.
[z] 1 Cor. xiv. 1.

v. 24—30. Moſes obeys the divine mandate, and having told the people the words of the Lord, he gathers the ſeventy elders before the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appears. God never fails to meet thoſe who are found waiting upon him. As they were ſelected by his order, he furniſhes them for their place, beſtowing upon them a portion of that ſpirit which reſted on Moſes; not diminiſhing his gifts, but increaſing theirs. Grace is an inexhauſtible fountain; no man has the leſs, becauſe of others who partake with him. Hereupon they propheſied, that is, joined in God's praiſes, or ſpake of the things of God, or foretold ſome future events to the people. Two of the ſeventy were abſent, either not receiving timely notice of the honour done them, or through modeſty declining it; but they propheſied alſo, prayed, or preached, or praiſed God in the camp. An appearance ſo extraordinary was ſoon noted, and carried to Moſes; and Joſhua, jealous for Moſes's honour, is ready to condemn and ſilence them for irregularity; but he rejoices in the manifeſtation of God's favour, and wiſhes piouſly every ſoul in the camp poſſeſſed the ſame ſpirit. *Note*, (1.) Others gifts and graces are too often the occaſion of envy to us. (2.) What we may think irregular for ourſelves, we may not be too haſty to condemn in others. (3.) If men propheſy in the name of Jeſus, and ſouls are edified, we ſhould therein rejoice, though they may not follow with us. (4.) If others increaſe in uſefulneſs, and we decreaſe, ſo the cauſe proſpers, we ſhould be willing to be the laſt and the leaſt. If God be glorified, that is enough.

31. ¶ And [a] there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the ſea, and let *them* fall by the camp, † as it were a day's journey on this ſide, and as it were a day's journey on the other ſide, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits *high* upon the face of the earth. 32. And the people ſtood up all that day, and all *that* night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails; he that gathered leaſt, gathered ten homers: and they ſpread *them* all abroad for themſelves round about the camp. 33. And [b] while the fleſh *was* yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed; the wrath of the LORD was kindled againſt the people, and the LORD ſmote the people with a very great plague. 34. And he called the name of that place, ‡ Kibroth-hattaavah: becauſe there they buried the people that luſted. 35. *And* [c] the people journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah unto Hazeroth: and ‖ abode at Hazeroth.

[a] Exod. xvi. 13. Pſ. lxxviii. 26. & cv. 40.
† Heb. As it were the way of a day.
[b] Pſ. lxxviii. 30, 31.
‡ i. e. The graves of luſt.
[c] Chap. xxxiii. 17.
‖ They were in, &c.

v. 31—35. The people now obtain their deſire, and ſuffer for their luſt.

1. God ſends them fleſh to eat. Either that delicious bird we call a quail, or, as learned men have conjectured, locuſts, which were a common food in thoſe Eaſtern countries, and in ſuch quantities that for ſixteen miles ſquare they were two cubits high; and, during two days and a night, afforded employment for all the hoſts to gather them, and the leaſt had ten homers, or aſs-loads, of them, which they ſpread to dry around the camp. Now they have enough, and rioted in plenty; but when the ſinner is moſt joyous, the ſword of vengeance is then deſcending.

2. God ſmote them with a very great plague. They who indulge their luſts, muſt pay dear for them. The meat was yet between their teeth when the wrath of God came upon them. How ſhort-lived is the proſperity of the wicked! when his poſſeſſion of what he coveted is to appearance moſt firmly ſecured, death ſnatches him away, and all his hopes periſh.

3. The name of the place; Kibroth-hattaavah, The graves of luſt. *Note*, This title may ſuit every tomb-ſtone. By luſt ſin entered into the world, and death paſſed upon all, becauſe all have ſinned.

CHAP. XII.

1. *Moſes is accuſed by Miriam and Aaron, his brother and ſiſter*, ver. 1—3. 2. *God calls them to an account for it*, ver. 4—9. 3. *Miriam is ſmitten with leproſy*, ver. 10. 4. *Aaron ſubmits, and Moſes intercedes for her*, ver. 11—13. 5. *She is healed, but put to ſhame for ſeven days*, ver. 14—26. *And this is recorded, to ſhew that the beſt perſons and families have both their follies and their croſſes.*

1. AND Miriam and Aaron ſpake againſt Moſes, becauſe of the † Ethiopian woman, whom he had married: for [a] he had ‡ married an Ethiopian woman. 2. And they ſaid, Hath the LORD indeed ſpoken only by Moſes? [b] hath he not ſpoken alſo by us? And the LORD heard *it*. 3. (Now the man Moſes *was* [c] very meek, above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth.)

† Or Cuſhite.
[a] Exod. ii. 21.
‡ Heb. Taken.
[b] Exod. xv. 20. Mic. vi. 4.
[c] Ecclus xlv. 4.

v. 1—3. Of all in the camp, theſe were ſurely the laſt from whom Moſes had need apprehend complaint; they were near relations, and diſtinguiſhed profeſſors. Let no man think it ſtrange, that his neareſt relatives are ſet againſt him: nor reckon his caſe hard, or be diſcouraged, if ſome eminent for religion, reflect moſt unkindly and unjuſtly on his conduct. Moſes was thus treated before him.

The complaint againſt him was, that in the choice of the ſeventy elders, he had been influenced by his wife Zipporah; and Miriam, jealous of her authority, ſeems to have inſtigated Aaron to this ungrateful behaviour towards his brother; inſinuating that they had equal authority from God, and therefore ought to have been conſulted. *Note*, (1.) Contentions for ſuperiority among Chriſtians are too common, and very ſinful. (2.) Nothing breeds bitterer diſputes, than jealouſy about power. (3.) Through evil ſuggeſtions, like Miriam's, the deareſt friends are often ſeparated. (4.) When perſons quarrel, they cannot be at reſt, unleſs they draw others into the diſpute.

Moſes maintained the ſame compoſure, for which he is famed; and in ſilence referred his cauſe to God, though from them this muſt have been peculiarly afflictive. The unkindneſs of profeſſed friends is ever harder to be borne, than the inſults of profeſſed enemies. He muſt have been well diſciplined in the ſchool of Chriſt, that can under ſuch provocations in patience and meekneſs poſſeſs his ſoul.

4. And the LORD ſpake ſuddenly unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. 5. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and ſtood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. 6. And he ſaid, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, *I* the LORD will make myſelf known unto him [d] in a viſion, *and* will ſpeak unto him [e] in a dream. 7. My ſervant Moſes *is* not ſo, [f] who *is* faithful in all mine houſe. 8. With him will I ſpeak [g] mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark ſpeeches; and the ſimilitude of the LORD ſhall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to ſpeak againſt my ſervant Moſes? 9. And the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt them, and he departed.

[d] Gen. xv. 1. & xlvi. 2. Job. xxxiii. 15. Ezek. i. 1. Dan. viii. 2. & x. 8, 16, 17.
[e] Gen. xxxi. 10, 11. 1. Kings iii. 5.
[f] Heb. iii. 2.
[g] Exod. xxxiii. 11. Deut. xxxiv. 10.

v. 4—9. Though the innocent may be ſilent, God will be the avenger of their quarrel. We have here,

1. The immediate interpoſition of God; he ſummons the parties to appear at his bar, to decide the controverſy, and will make them know the difference between his choſen ſervant Moſes and all other prophets. He made himſelf known to them in viſions, and a great favour that was; but Moſes was more highly favoured. 1. God teſtifies of his fidelity: eminent it was, and diſtinguiſhed; and this he moſt approves. It is not ſo much great gifts, or great abilities, but faithfulneſs and ſimplicity of heart, which God eſteems. 2. The manifeſtations made to him were peculiar. His eyes beheld more of God's glory than any before him, and the revelations given him were more diſtinct and clear, God ſpeaking to him familiarly, not in dark ſpeeches, but as a man ſpeaketh to his friend. *Note*, Prophetical viſions are ceaſed, and we ſee no more the ſimilitude of the Lord; but, bleſſed be God, we enjoy now diſtincter views of goſpel myſteries, than even the holy prophets ſaw; and, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt incarnate, have been favoured with brighter diſplays of the divine glory, grace and truth, than even Moſes on the mount beheld.

2. God's anger was kindled, and he ſhews it by ſome viſible ſign, or his ſudden departure, without waiting for their excuſe. *Note*, (1.) The reputations of God's miniſters are his jealous concern;

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concern; when God ſhall ariſe to plead their cauſe, confuſion ſhall cover their adverſaries. (2.) When God is provoked, he will depart; and no judgment heavier than to be forſaken of him.

h Deut. xxiv. 9.
i 2 Kings v. 27.

10. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and [h] behold, Miriam *became* [i] leprous, *white* as ſnow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and behold, *ſhe was* leprous. 11. And Aaron ſaid unto Moſes, Alas, my lord, I beſeech thee lay not the ſin upon us, wherein we have done fooliſhly, and wherein we have ſinned. 12. Let her not be as one dead; of whom the fleſh is half conſumed, when he cometh out of his mother's womb. 13. And Moſes cried unto the LORD, ſaying, Heal her now, O God, I beſeech thee. 14. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [k] If her father had but ſpit in her face, ſhould ſhe not be aſhamed ſeven days? [l] let her be ſhut out from the camp ſeven days, and after that let her be received in *again*. 15. [m] And Miriam was ſhut out from the camp ſeven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in *again*. 16. And afterward the people removed from [n] Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderneſs of Paran.

k See Heb. xii. 9.
l Lev. xiii. 46. Chap. v. 2.
m Deut. xxiv. 9.
n Chap. xi. 35. & xxxiii. 18.

v. 10—16. His diſpleaſure was manifeſt, and now it appeared,

1. Miriam becomes leprous. She who was challenging equality with Moſes, bears in her forehead a brand of infamy, and becomes viler than the meaneſt Iſraelite. Thoſe who walk in pride God is able to abaſe. The fair face that ſwells the heart with vanity, one ſtroke of diſeaſe can make quickly loathſome. Aaron is ſpared, as leaſt in the offence, or perhaps for his office-ſake, that it may not appear vile; but, as God's high-prieſt, he is obliged to pronounce that ſentence on his ſiſter, which muſt cover himſelf with confuſion. In the execution of their office no connections muſt influence miniſters; if their neareſt relatives are found leprous, they ſhould be excluded from the communion of God's people.

2. Aaron's humble ſubmiſſion and entreaty. He acknowledges their mutual ſin, aſks pardon of his brother, whom he had vilified, and earneſtly begs his interceſſion for his ſiſter, that ſhe might not be cut off, as one dead, from the congregation of the Lord. *Note*, (1.) They who revile God's ſervants ſhall be brought to bow to them, like Aaron in time, or like Dives in eternity. (2.) Where we have offended, we cannot be too ſoon in begging forgiveneſs, both of God and man. To continue impenitent is certain ruin. (3.) They who are cut off from the communion of the Lord by their ſins, are, worſe than leprous Miriam, ſpiritually dead.

3. Moſes's charity appears as exemplary as his meekneſs; he inſtantly cries to God for help. Inſtead of calling down judgment, as ſhe deſerved, he prays for that forgiveneſs with God, which ſhe found from himſelf. We muſt thus learn to forgive our enemies, and pray for them who deſpitefully uſe us. This is the ſpirit of chriſtianity.

4. His requeſt is granted. Miriam is healed, but for her humiliation, and for example to others, ſeven days ſhe is excluded the camp, to bear her ſhame for ſuch ungrateful conduct. When we do evil we ought to take that ſhame to us we have deſerved, and ſubmit to every humiliatory proceſs which may ſerve to ſhew our own ſorrow, and to warn others againſt our ſin.

5. During the time of Miriam's ſeparation the people halted. Whether to intimate the dangerous hindrances which ſin put in their way, or out of reſpect to Miriam, that ſhe might not have an increaſe of her ſhame. *Note*, (1.) In our way to heaven all our hindrances ariſe from our ſins. (2.) God will have us treat thoſe with the greateſt tenderneſs, who, however vile they have made themſelves, are now in penitential tears, returning from their evil ways.

6. The people go forward, to the borders of Canaan. One ſtep more, and they had been ſafely lodged in it. But the next chapter relates a fatal change. *Note*, Whilſt we are on this ſide the grave, we ever need to tremble. Many have gone to the borders of heaven, who will never enter it; almoſt but not altogether chriſtians.

CHAP. XIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The ſending of twelve ſpies before Iſrael into Canaan,* ver. 1—16. 2. *The inſtructions given to theſe ſpies,* ver. 17—20. 3. *Their executing of their commiſſion, and their return,* ver. 21—25. 4. *The report they brought back to the camp of Iſrael,* ver. 26—33.

a Chap. xxxii. 8. Deut. i. 22.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Send thou men, that they may ſearch the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Iſrael: of every tribe of their fathers ſhall ye ſend a man, every one a ruler among them. 3. And Moſes, by the commandment of the LORD, ſent them [b] from the wilderneſs of Paran: all thoſe men *were* heads of the children of Iſrael. 4. And theſe *were* their names: Of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the ſon of Zaccur. 5. Of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the ſon of Hori. 6. [c] Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh. 7. Of the tribe of Iſſachar, Igal the ſon of Joſeph. 8. Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oſhea the ſon of Nun. 9. Of the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the ſon of Raphu. 10. Of the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the ſon of Sodi. 11. Of the tribe of Joſeph, *namely*, of the tribe of Manaſſeh, Gaddi the ſon of Suſi. 12. Of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the ſon of Gemalli. 13. Of the tribe of Aſher, Sethur the ſon of Michael. 14. Of the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the ſon of Vophſi. 15. Of the tribe of Gad, Geuel the ſon of Machi. 16. Theſe *are* the names of the men which Moſes ſent to ſpy out the land. And Moſes called Oſhea the ſon of Nun, Jehoſhua. 17. ¶ And Moſes ſent them to ſpy out the land of Canaan, and ſaid unto them, Get you up this *way* ſouthward, and go up into the mountain: 18. And ſee the land what it *is*, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they *be* ſtrong or weak, few or many; 19. And what the land *is* that they dwell in, whether it *be* good or bad; and what cities *they be* that they dwell in, whether in tents or in ſtrong-holds; 20. And what the land *is*, whether it *be* fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land (now the time *was* the time of the firſt-ripe grapes.)

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b Chap. xxxii. 8. Deut. i. 19. & ix. 23.
c 1 Chro. iv. 15.

v. 1—20. As they were now on the borders of the land, they had no more to do but to go in and take poſſeſſion; but their unbelief, *Deut.* i. 22. ſuggeſted the need of ſending ſpies. They were not ſatisfied with God's promiſe, but would ſee for themſelves. So ready are we to indulge our own wretched reaſonings, rather than ſimply ſubmit to divine revelation. God permits Moſes to gratify them; choice is made of proper perſons, and their inſtructions given them concerning the ſoil, the inhabitants, and cities. Among theſe Joſhua is particularly mentioned, and the change which Moſes made in his name; Joſhua ſignifies the ſame as Jeſus, a Saviour, and is the type of him who ſhould come to ſave his people from their ſins, and to bring them to the land of reſt in glory everlaſting. Moſes encourages them in their employment, that boldly acquitting themſelves they might be examples of courage to their brethren. Nothing more animating than to follow thoſe whoſe fidelity and zeal have been tried.

21. ¶ So they went up and ſearched the land, from the wilderneſs of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. 22. And they aſcended by the ſouth, and came unto Hebron; where [d] Ahiman, Sheſhai, and Talmai, the children of Anak *were* ([e] now Hebron was built ſeven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23. [f] And they came unto the † brook of Eſhcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluſter of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a ſtaff, and *they brought* of the pomegranates, and of the figs. 24. The place was called the brook ‡ Eſhcol, becauſe of the cluſter of grapes which the children of Iſrael cut down from thence. 25. And they returned from ſearching of the land after forty days.

d Joſh. xi. 21, 22. & xv. 13. Judg. i. 10.
e Joſh. xxi. 11.
f Deut. i. 24.
† Or valley.
‡ i. e. A cluſter of grapes.

v. 21—25. The ſpies immediately proceed on their errand, and having paſſed unſuſpected through the land, perhaps in ſeparate parties, they might, on their return, unite at Hebron, a place of great antiquity, and poſſeſſed by the ſons of Anak; near unto which lay Machpelah, the burying-place of the patriarchs. They bring back with them a ſpecimen of the land, enough to confirm God's declaration, and to confute their own ſubſequent evil report. Theſe grapes were a proof of the goodneſs of that land, and an earneſt of their poſſeſſing it. *Note*, When faith goes up to ſpy out the heavenly Canaan, the preſent joys of believing are the foretaſtes of eternal bliſs.

26. ¶ And they went and came to Moſes, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Iſrael unto the wilderneſs of Paran, to [g] Kadeſh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and ſhewed them the fruit of the land. 27. And they told him, and ſaid, We came unto the land whither thou ſenteſt us, and ſurely [h] it floweth with milk and honey; and [i] this *is* the fruit of it. 28. Nevertheleſs, [k] the people

g Chap. xx. 1, 16. & xxxii. 8. & xxxiii. 36. Deut. i. 19. Joſh. xiv. 6.
h Exod. iii. 8. & xxxiii. 3.
i Deut. i. 25.
k Ibid. 2. 10, 21.

ple *be* ſtrong that dwell in the land, and the cities *are* [l] walled, *and* very great: and moreover, we ſaw the children of Anak there. 29. [m] The Amalekites dwell in the land of the ſouth: and the Hittites, and the Jebuſites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains, and the Canaanites dwell by the ſea, and by the coaſt of Jordan. 30. And [n] Caleb ſtilled the people before Moſes, and ſaid, Let us go up at once, and poſſeſs it; for we are well able to overcome it. 31. But the men that went up with him, ſaid, We be not able to go up againſt the people, for they *are* ſtronger than we. 32. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had ſearched, unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, The land through which we have gone to ſearch it, *is* a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and [o] all the people that we ſaw in it, *are* † men of a great ſtature. 33. And there we ſaw the giants, [p] the ſons of Anak, *which come* of the giants: and we were in our own ſight as graſhoppers, and ſo we were in their ſight.

[l] Deut. i. 28.
[m] Judg. vi. 3.
[n] See Chap. xiv. 6, 30.
[o] Am. ii. 9.
† Heb. Men of ſtatures.
[p] Deut. ii. 10. & ix. 2.

v. 26—33. After forty days waiting the ſpies return, and they who had ſent them in unbelief, and tempted God by their diſtruſt, are now juſtly left to ſtumble at their own inventions. The men who were ſent greatly diſagree in report and ſentiment, and, as is too commonly the caſe, the few faithful are rejected amidſt the multitude of gainſayers. Where the things of God are concerned, they who follow the multitude will infallibly err.

1. Ten of the meſſengers bring a diſcouraging report. They own the fertility of the ſoil, though afterwards, to countenance their cowardice, they contradict themſelves, and pretend that it was barren and deſolate with diſeaſes, their cities impregnable, their inveterate enemies the Amalekites juſt before them, to obſtruct their way, the paſſes of the mountains guarded by the Hittites, Jebuſites and Amorites, all the men great of ſtature; and the giants of Hebron are dwelt upon, as if the hoſts of Iſrael might be cruſhed as graſhoppers under their feet. Obſerve (1.) The coward heart magnifies every object, and increaſes every difficulty. (2.) Unbelief ſays of our ſpiritual enemies, as they did of the ſons of Anak, they are too mighty for us.

2. Caleb riſes to contradict ſo falſe and diſhonourable a repreſentation, and to encourage the people immediately to go up and poſſeſs the land. He affirms they were well able, and well he might; 600,000 men, with Moſes at their head, what need they fear: but this is the leaſt of their ſtrength; God is in the midſt of them, his pillar leads the way, his power they have repeatedly experienced, miracles for their ſafety were common, and may be expected, when aſſurances of their victory from God have been ſo repeatedly given, and Canaan promiſed to be their poſſeſſion. *Note*, (1.) Zeal for God dares every danger. (2.) Faith makes men confident of ſucceſs; though earth and hell, and all the powers of both, conſpire againſt the believing ſoul, to obſtruct his way to heaven, he goes on in the ſtrength of the Lord, and the power of his might, conquering and to conquer.

CHAP. XIV.

Here is, 1. *The rebellion of Iſrael againſt God, upon the report of the evil ſpies,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The fruitleſs endeavour of Moſes and Aaron, Caleb and Joſhua, to ſtill the tumult,* ver. 5—10. 3. *Their utter ruin juſtly threatned by an offended God,* ver. 11, 12. 4. *The humble interceſſion of Moſes for them,* ver. 13—19. 5. *A mitigation of the ſentence,* ver. 20—35. 6. *The preſent death of the evil ſpies,* ver. 36—39. 7. *The rebuke given to them who attempted to go forward notwithſtanding,* ver. 40—45. *And this is written for our admonition, that we* fall not after the ſame example of unbelief.

1. AND all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. 2. And all the children of Iſrael murmured againſt Moſes, and againſt Aaron: and the whole congregation ſaid unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or [a] would God we had died in this wilderneſs. 3. And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the ſword, that our wives, and our children ſhould be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? 4. And they ſaid one to another, Let us make a captain, and [b] let us return into Egypt.

[a] See Ver. 28, 29.
[b] Deut. xvii. 16.

v. 1—4. Diſcontent now ſpreads through the camp, every face gathers blackneſs, deſpair ſunk the courage of the hoſt, and unmanly tears beſpoke their coward terrors. The bittereſt ſorrows the heart knows are often thoſe we make ourſelves, without cauſe or reaſon. They clamour loud againſt Moſes and Aaron, and wiſh they had died in Egypt or the wilderneſs, rather than be reduced to their imaginary diſtreſſes; and, as the devil's power is then confirmed, when he can ſuggeſt hard thoughts of God, they charge that gracious Jehovah, who had fed and preſerved them ſo long and ſo richly, with the moſt horrid deſign of deceiving and deſtroying them. At laſt they fix the deſperate deſign of returning to Egypt, and reſolve to chuſe a captain, perhaps actually did ſo, in order to head their mutiny, and lead them back to that land of bondage! The purpoſe was folly, the attempt madneſs. How ſhould they return when God had left them, without proviſion or a guide? And what could they hope in Egypt but a repetition of miſery, to which death itſelf were preferable? *Note*, (1.) The headſtrong and unmortified paſſions of ſinners hurry them on to their ruin. (2.) They who are diſcontented under God's providences, and reſolve to mend themſelves, will ever make bad worſe. (3.) How much need have we to fear, leaſt after ſuffering many toils, we ſtart like Iſrael at new difficulties, turn back and walk no more with Jeſus! Dreadful ſtate of apoſtacy! attended with certain and eternal perdition.

5. Then [c] Moſes and Aaron fell on their faces before all the aſſembly of the congregation of the children of Iſrael. 6. ¶ And Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, *which were* of them that ſearched the land, rent their clothes. 7. And they ſpake unto all the company of the children of Iſrael, ſaying, [d] The land which we paſſed through to ſearch it, *is* an exceeding good land. 8. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. 9. Only rebel not ye againſt the LORD, [e] neither fear ye the people of the land; for they *are* bread for us: their † defence is departed from them, and the LORD *is* with us: fear them not. 10. But all the congregation bade ſtone them with ſtones: and [f] the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation, before all the children of Iſrael,

[c] Chap. xvi. 4.
[d] Chap. xiii. 27.
[e] Deut. xx. 3.
† Heb. ſhaddow.
[f] Exod. xxiv. 16, 17. & xl. 34. Lev. ix. 23. Chap. xvi. 19, 42. & xx. 6.

v. 5—10. Vain is every attempt to ſtay thoſe who are bent on their own ruin.

1. Moſes and Aaron fall upon their faces, either amazed at their mad procedure, and intreating them to deſiſt, or rather, conſcious of their great ſin, to ſupplicate God's patience and continuance of the mercies which they had forfeited. None know the deep concern which miniſters feel, when they ſee immortal ſouls ruſh headlong to their deſtruction. Caleb and Joſhua ſecond their prayers, with every forcible argument. With indignation at their baſeneſs, and grief for their rebellion, they rend their clothes, entreat them to conſider, declare the falſity of the report, and the unreaſonableneſs of their fears. 1. The land is a good land, exceeding good. 2. The people were nothing ſo formidable as apprehended, their defence was gone, as forſaken of God, and they might eat them up as bread. 3. God was their helper; if their enemies were ten times as numerous or ſtrong, they need not fear, when ſtrengthened by the arms of Omnipotence. Nothing was to be feared but their own rebellious ſpirits, that would ſtay the current of his mercies to them. *Note*, (1.) The moment God leaves a ſinner, he is an eaſy prey to every invader. (2.) With God's preſence and favour we never need fear. (3.) The ſoul that is loſt will have none to blame but his own rebellious ſelf.

2. Deaf to every remonſtrance, inſtead of taking their advice, the rulers of the congregation bid the people ſtone theſe faithful witneſſes. Truth is moſt exaſperating to thoſe who hate to be reformed; and they who will be faithful muſt often put their lives in their hands.

3. God appears to confound ſuch a daring deed of wickedneſs, and to reſcue his ſervants. They who dare to be zealous for God, may ſafely truſt him to ſave them from the madneſs of the people,

11. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the ſigns which I have ſhewed among them? 12. I will ſmite them with the peſtilence, and diſinherit them, and [g] will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they. 13. ¶ And [h] Moſes ſaid unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians ſhall hear *it* (for thou broughteſt up this people in thy might from among them), 14. And they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land: [i] *for* they have heard that thou LORD *art* among this people, that thou LORD art ſeen face to face, and *that* [k] thy cloud ſtandeth over them, and *that* thou goeſt before them, by day-time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. 15. Now *if* thou ſhalt kill *all* this people as one man; then the nations

[g] Exod. xxxii. 10.
[h] Ibid. 12. Deut. xxxii. 27.
[i] Exod. xv. 14. Joſh. ii. 9. & v. 1.
[k] Exod. xiii. 21. & xl. 38.

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tions which have heard the fame of thee, will ſpeak, ſaying, 16. Becauſe [l] the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he ſware unto them, therefore he hath ſlain them in the wilderneſs. 17. And now I beſeech thee, let the power of my LORD be great, according as thou haſt ſpoken, ſaying, 18. [m] The LORD *is* long-ſuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and tranſgreſſion, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, [n] viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation*. 19. Pardon, I beſeech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatneſs of thy mercy, and as thou haſt forgiven this people, from Egypt, even † until now.

[l] Deut. ix. 28.
[m] Exod. xxxiv 6. Pſ. ciii. 8. & cxlv. 8. Jonah iv. 2.
[n] Exod. xx. 5. & xxxiv. 7.
† Or, hitherto.

v. 11—19. Juſtly diſpleaſed at ſo rebellious a people, God riſes out of his place for judgment.

1. He ſpeaks to Moſes, whom they had deſpiſed. For however men reproach them, thoſe who honour him he will honour. 1. God upbraids their unbelief: this was the root of bitterneſs from whence all the evil ſprung. *Note*, Unbelief is amongſt the greateſt ſins, and the cauſe of all others; their perſeverance in it was ſtill more provoking, after all the interpoſitions they had experienced. It is exceeding ſinful in the people of God, after experience of his mercies, to diſtruſt his faithfulneſs, and he will require it at their hands. 2. God threatens to conſume and diſinherit them, and offers in their ſtead to raiſe up children of the promiſe from Moſes's loins. In judgment God will not forget his promiſes, but 'tis juſt to deprive thoſe of the bleſſings, who undervalue and deſpiſe them.

2. Moſes, as uſual, turns advocate for the people. He was a true patriot, and preferred Iſrael's good to his private concerns. His prayer is abrupt and urgent, as one who expected immediate wrath to break forth. 1. He pleads the honour of God. The eyes of the neighbouring nations were upon them, particularly Egypt and Canaan, who, if they were deſtroyed, would take occaſion to reproach God's power and faithfulneſs. *Note*, (1.) God's honour is near the heart of every Iſraelite. (2.) No plea in prayer ſo prevailing as God's own glory. (3.) The eyes of the world are intent upon the people of God, and glad to find any occaſion to blaſpheme. 2. He urges God's proclamation in Horeb. His power to ſave, and grace to pardon to the uttermoſt, have now opportunity to be diſplayed; and never could he ſo wonderfully ſhew his patience and long-ſuffering as on the preſent occaſion. 'Tis good approaching God with his own word of promiſe, and we may well hope then our prayers will ſucceed. 3. He prays importunately for pardon, according to the paſt experience of his mercies. Though their ſin was aggravated by their ungrateful returns of theſe mercies, yet God would be more glorified in ſhewing, that where ſin abounded there ſhall grace much more abound. Oh what a God have we to do with, who, after the deepeſt and repeated provocations, may yet be applied to; and, deſperate as our caſe may ſeem, there is yet hope in his mercy.

20. And the LORD ſaid, I have pardoned according to thy word: 21. But *as* truly *as* I live, all the earth ſhall be filled with the glory of the LORD. 22. [o] Becauſe all thoſe men which have ſeen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderneſs, and have tempted me now theſe ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; 23. [p] † Surely they ſhall not ſee the land which I ſware unto their fathers, neither ſhall any of them that provoked me, ſee it: 24. But my ſervant [q] Caleb, becauſe he had another ſpirit with him, and hath [r] followed me fully; him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his ſeed ſhall poſſeſs it. 25. (Now the Amalekites, and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley) To-morrow turn you, and [s] get you into the wilderneſs, by the way of the Red-ſea. 26. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, 27. How long *ſhall I bear with* this evil congregation, which murmur againſt me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Iſrael, which they murmur againſt me. 28. Say unto them, [t] *As truly as* I live, ſaith the LORD, [u] as ye have ſpoken in mine ears, ſo will I do to you. 29. Your carcaſes ſhall fall in this wilderneſs; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured againſt me. 30. Doubtleſs ye ſhall not come into the land *concerning* which I ‡ ſware to make you dwell therein, ſave Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun. 31. But your little ones, which ye ſaid ſhould be a prey, them will I bring in, and they ſhall know the land which ye have deſpiſed. 32. But *as for* you, your carcaſes they ſhall fall in this wilderneſs. 33. And your children ſhall § wander in the wilderneſs [x] forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcaſes be waſted in the wilderneſs. 34. [y] After the number of the days in which ye ſearched the land, *even* forty days (each day for a year) ſhall ye bear your iniquities, *even* [z] forty years, and ye ſhall know ‖ my breach of promiſe. 35. I the LORD have ſaid, I will ſurely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together againſt me: in this wilderneſs they ſhall be conſumed, and there they ſhall die.

[o] Deut. i. 35. Pſ. xcv. 11. & cvi. 26. Heb. iii. 17.
[p] Chap. xxxii. 11.
† Heb. If they ſee the land.
[q] Joſh. xiv. 6, 8, 9, 14.
[r] Chap. xxxii. 12.
[s] Deut. i. 40.
[t] Chap. xxvi. 65. & xxxii. 11. Deut. i. 35. Heb. iii. 17.
[u] See Ver. 2.
‡ Heb. lifted up my hand.
§ Or, feed.
[x] See Deut. ii. 14.
[y] Chap. xiii. 25.
[z] Pſ. xcv. 10. Ezek. iv. 6.
‖ Or, Altering of my purpoſe.

v. 20—35. Fixed is the dread decree! Judgment muſt proceed, but mingled with mercy. They ſhall not be conſumed, in an inſtant, as they deſerved, yet ſhall they never poſſeſs the land they have deſpiſed.

1. God's glory ſhall be manifeſted in pardoning and ſparing them at Moſes' interceſſion, yet in ſuch a way, as that his diſpleaſure againſt ſin ſhall appear in the moſt awful colours. *Note*, (1.) Great is the effect of fervent prayer. (2.) God will take care, even in his mercy to the ſinner, to ſhew his indignation againſt ſin.

2. The ſentence of excluſion from Canaan goes forth againſt them; the men of war ſhall all die in the wilderneſs. They wiſhed it, and the wiſh is granted: during forty years they are, by degrees, to be conſumed in their wanderings; a puniſhment leſs than their iniquities deſerved, after having tempted, provoked God, and murmured ſo repeatedly, and this in the face of the daily miracles wrought for them. *Note*, (1.) God minutes our provocations, and he will viſit for them. (2.) Repeated backſliding is very aggravated guilt.

3. God commands them to retire. They would, and they ſhall. The Amalekites they feared are ready to fall on them; and now, as God will not help them, they are indeed an unequal match. Unbelieving fears are juſtly puniſhed, by the infliction of the dreaded evil.

4. Forty years, (according to the days of their ſearching the land) they muſt bear their iniquities in the wilderneſs, where every hardſhip they endured ſhould remind them of the cauſe of it, and humble them under the reflection of their provocations which occaſioned theſe viſitations. *Note*, (1.) It is a great mercy that we have ſpace given us for repentance, and we need count thoſe ſufferings, mercies, which lead us thereunto. (2.) The afflictions of others for ſin ſhould be a warning to us to avoid their tranſgreſſions, that we may not ſhare in their plagues.

5. Mercy is promiſed to Caleb and Joſhua. They were men of another ſpirit, and as they approved their fidelity by fully following the Lord, he will reward them with ſingular favour, by bringing them into the land. *Note*, (1.) God's people are men of a different ſpirit from the world around them, and from what themſelves were in their unconverted ſtate. (2.) Their hearts fully cleave to the Lord; they have no allowed guile, and ſeek in ſimplicity to know and obey God's will. (3.) Theſe, however reviled and rejected of men, ſhall find that God will amply recompence them, by an inheritance incorruptible, reſerved for them in heaven.

6. The children who are young, and not ſuppoſed to join in their parents ſin, are ſpared; they ſhall ſee the promiſe fulfilled; and though their unbelieving fathers ſaid they would be a prey, themſelves ſhall ſeize the prey, and ſpoil theſe dreaded enemies. *Note*, If the children bear the iniquity of their fathers, 'tis only becauſe they follow their ſins; if, warned by their puniſhment, they avoid their evil ways, mercy ſhall compaſs them about on every ſide.

36. And the men which Moſes ſent to ſearch the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur againſt him, by bringing up a ſlander upon the land; 37. Even thoſe men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, [a] died by the plague before the LORD. 38. [b] But Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, *which were* of the men that went to ſearch the land, lived *ſtill*. 39. And Moſes told theſe ſayings unto all the children of Iſrael: and the people mourned greatly. 40. ¶ And they roſe up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, ſaying, Lo, [c] we *be here*, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promiſed: for we have ſinned. 41. And Moſes ſaid, Wherefore now do [d] you tranſgreſs the commandment of the LORD? but it ſhall not proſper. 42. [e] Go not up, for the LORD *is* not among you; that ye be not ſmitten before your enemies. 43. For the Amalekites, and the Canaanites *are* there before you; and ye ſhall fall by the ſword: becauſe ye are turned away from the LORD; therefore the LORD will not be with you. 44. But they preſumed to go up unto the hill

[a] 1 Cor. x. 10. Heb. iii. 17. Jude 5.
[b] Chap. xxvi. 65.
[c] Deut. i. 41.
[d] Ver. 25.
[e] Deut. i. 43.

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hill-top: nevertheleſs, the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moſes, departed not out of the camp. 45. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and ſmote them, and [f] diſcomfited them, *even* unto [g] Hormah.

[f] Deut. i. 44.
[g] Chap. xxi. 3. Judg. i. 17.

v. 36—45. God begins to execute his decree,

1. Upon the ten men who were the principals in the mutiny; they were ſtruck immediately dead, as they ſtood before the Lord. *Note,* (1.) Ringleaders in ſin, ſhall be firſt and deepeſt in ſuffering. (2.) It is amongſt the greateſt of ſins, to miſrepreſent the good ways of the Lord, and to ſeek to prejudice the minds of men againſt them, as melancholy, or impracticable. (3.) The miniſter that miſleads the ſouls of ſinners, ſhall be accountable for their blood. Caleb and Joſhua are ſpared, a living proof of the truth they ſpoke, and a preſent aſſurance of the favour God would ſhew them hereafter. None ever loſt in the end by their fidelity to him.

2. Moſes acquaints the people with God's decree, and deeply they appear affected, but it is irreverſible. *Note,* (1.) Many mourn for their puniſhments, who do not mourn for their ſins. (2.) In hell, the ſinner's ſorrow will neither aſſwage his torment, nor reverſe his ſentence.

3. They reſolve, contrary to Moſes' injunctions, to go up; they would not go at God's bidding; it is at their peril now if they attempt it. *Note,* When the day of grace is over, it is too late to ſtrive.

4. They proceed, and are routed. God was not with them, and if he leave us, we are weak indeed. The ſentence pronounced againſt them, the ſword of their enemies thus begins to fulfill. *Note,* (1.) God's counſel will ſtand, in ſpite of every effort to defeat it. (2.) We can only hope to have the neck of our ſpiritual enemies, when we have ſecured God for our friend.

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter inſtructions are given about the ſacrifices and oblations, 1. *The law concerning the meat-offerings and drink-offerings,* ver. 1—12. *both for Iſraelites and for ſtrangers,* ver. 13—16. *and a law concerning the heave-offerings of the firſt of their dough,* ver. 17—21. 2. *The law concerning ſacrifices for ſins of ignorance,* ver. 22—29. 3. *The puniſhment of preſumptuous ſins,* ver. 30, 31. *and an inſtance given in the ſabbath-breaker,* ver. 32—36. 4. *A law concerning fringes, for memorandums upon the borders of their garments,* ver. 37—41.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you, 3. And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt-offering, or a ſacrifice [b] in † performing a vow, or in a free-will offering, or [c] in your ſolemn feaſts, to make a [d] ſweet ſavour unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock: 4. [e] Then ſhall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD, bring [f] a meat-offering of a tenth-deal of flour, mingled [g] with the fourth *part* of an hin of oil. 5. And the fourth *part* of an hin of wine for a drink-offering ſhalt thou prepare, with the burnt-offering, or ſacrifice, for one lamb. 6. Or for a ram, thou ſhalt prepare *for* a meat-offering, two tenth-deals of flour mingled with the third *part* of an hin of oil. 7. And for a drink-offering, thou ſhalt offer the third *part* of an hin of wine, *for* a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 8. And when thou prepareſt a bullock *for* a burnt-offering, or *for* a ſacrifice in performing a vow, or [h] peace-offerings unto the LORD: 9. Then ſhall he bring with a bullock a meat-offering of three tenth-deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil. 10. And thou ſhalt bring for a drink-offering half an hin of wine, *for* an offering made by fire [i] of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 11. Thus ſhall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid. 12. According to the number that ye ſhall prepare, ſo ſhall ye do to every one, according to their number. 13. All that are born of the country, ſhall do theſe things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 14. And if a ſtranger ſojourn with you, or whoſoever *be* among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD: as ye do, ſo he ſhall do. 15. [k] One ordinance *ſhall be both* for you of the congregation, and alſo for the ſtranger that ſojourneth *with you,* an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye *are,* ſo ſhall the ſtranger be before the LORD. 16. One law, and one manner ſhall be for you, and for the ſtranger that ſojourneth with you. 17. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 18. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, When ye come into the land whither I bring you, 19. Then it ſhall be, that when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye ſhall offer up an heave-offering unto the LORD. 20. Ye ſhall offer up a cake of the firſt of your dough, *for* an heave-offering: as *ye do* [l] the heave-offering of the threſhing-floor, ſo ſhall ye heave it. 21. Of the firſt of your dough ye ſhall give unto the LORD, an heave-offering in your generations.

[a] Lev. xxiii. 10.
[b] Ibid. vii. 16. & xxii. 18, 21.
† Heb. Separating.
[c] Lev. xxiii. 8, 12, 36. Chap. xxviii. 16, 27. & xxix. 2, 8, 13. Deut. xvi. 10.
[d] Exod. xxix. 18.
[e] Lev. ii. 1. & vi. 14.
[f] Exod. xxix. 40. Lev. xxiii. 13.
[g] Ibid. xiv. 10.
[h] Ibid. vii. 11.
[i] Ecclus l. 15.
[k] Exod. xii. 49. Chap. ix. 14.
[l] Lev. ii. 14. & xxiii. 10, 16.

v. 1.—21. God had ſpared them at Moſes' requeſt, and in the opening of this chapter, intimates his fixed purpoſe of bringing them into the land of Canaan, which even all their rebellions ſhall not prevent. He here preſcribes the offerings hereafter to be made at his altar, as the ſacrifices had been enjoined before.

1. Meat-offerings and drink-offerings muſt accompany every ſacrifice: for a lamb, about three quarts of flour, a quart and half a pint of oil, and the like quantity of wine; and for the larger beaſts, proportionably, *v.* 6—10. As the prieſts proviſion was to ariſe from the altar, they had thus a table furniſhed richly. *Note,* They who miniſter before the Lord, deſerve a liberal maintenance.

2. In the things of God, there was to be no difference between an Iſraelite and a ſtranger; hereby they were invited to communion with God's altar, and an intimation given, that not the ſeed of Abraham's loins, ſo much as the children of his faith, were accepted of God. In Chriſt Jeſus there is no difference of nation, ſex, or perſon: all who come to him, ſhall be in no wiſe caſt out: every partition-wall is now thrown down, and whoſoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.

3. Though now they were fed with manna, God intended to give them by and by the corn of Canaan; and they are commanded to offer, from the firſt corn which was threſhed and ground, a portion of dough, as an acknowledgment of God's right, in all they enjoyed, and this was appropriated for the uſe of the prieſt's family. Our daily bread is God's gift, and we may then expect, when we break a portion of it to the hungry, that his bleſſing will be on the remainder.

22. ¶ [m] And if ye have erred, and not obſerved all theſe commandments which the LORD hath ſpoken unto Moſes, 23. *Even* all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moſes, from the day that the LORD commanded *Moſes,* and henceforward among your generations: 24. Then it ſhall be, if *ought* be committed by ignorance, † without the knowledge of the congregation; that all the congregation ſhall offer one young bullock for a burnt-offering, for a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD, with his meat-offering, and his drink-offering, according to the ‡ manner, and one kid of the goats for a ſin-offering. 25. And the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Iſrael, and it ſhall be forgiven them, for it *is* ignorance: and they ſhall bring their offering, a ſacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their ſin-offering before the LORD for their ignorance. 26. And it ſhall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Iſrael, and the ſtranger that ſojourneth among them; ſeeing all the people *were* in ignorance. 27. ¶ [n] And if any ſoul ſin through ignorance, then he ſhall bring a ſhe-goat of the firſt year for a ſin-offering. 28. And the prieſt ſhall make an atonement for the ſoul that ſinneth ignorantly, when he ſinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it ſhall be forgiven him. 29. You ſhall have one law for him that † ſinneth through ignorance, *both for* him that is born amongſt the children of Iſrael, and for the ſtranger that ſojourneth among them.

[m] Lev. iv. 2.
† Heb. From the eyes, &c.
‡ Or ordinance.
[n] Lev. iv. 27.
† Heb. Doth.

v. 22—29. We have the ſacrifices for ſins of ignorance, 1. Of the whole congregation; this was more largely treated before, *Lev.* iv. 13. only a kid for a ſin-offering is here added. 2. Of a private perſon. Sin muſt be atoned for, or it would deſtroy us. The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin, not only from thoſe which we feel and lament, but thoſe that through our blindneſs we cannot ſee. Indeed, who can underſtand all his errors: Lord, cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults.

30. ¶ But [o] the ſoul that doeth *ought* † preſumptuouſly (*whether he be* born in the land, or a ſtranger) the ſame reproacheth the LORD; and that ſoul ſhall be cut off from among his people. 31. Becauſe he hath deſ-

[o] Deut. xvii. 12.
† Heb. With an high hand.

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piſed the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment; that ſoul ſhall utterly be cut off: his iniquity *ſhall be* upon him. 32. And while the children of Iſrael were in the wilderneſs, [p] they found a man that gathered ſticks upon the ſabbath-day. 33. And they that found him gathering ſticks, brought him unto Moſes and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. 34. And [q] they put him in ward, becauſe it was not declared what ſhould be done to him. 35. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [r] the man ſhall ſurely be put to death: all the congregation ſhall ſtone him with ſtones without the camp. 36. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and ſtoned him with ſtones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[p] Exod. xxxv. 2, 3.

[q] Lev. xxiv. 12.

[r] Exod. xxxi. 14.

v. 30—36. Though ſins of ignorance admitted of ſacrifices, preſumptuous ſins were excluded from the benefit of them.

1. The nature and puniſhment of preſumptuous ſin. It is not every ſin, which is the preſumptuous ſin; we may tranſgreſs againſt our better knowledge, or the remonſtrances of our conſcience; yet without that inſolent contempt and defiance of God, which conſtitutes the character of the preſumptuous ſinner. Every ſin is deeply dangerous, but when a hardened heart denies God's truth, quarrels with God's juſtice, mocks at God's threatnings, rejects his government, and caſts off his fear, then the ſtate is deſperate indeed, and puniſhment certain and dreadful enſues. As there remains no ſacrifice for ſuch ſinners, the wrath of God muſt for ever abide upon them. Who need not hear and fear, and pray, keep thy ſervant from preſumptuous ſins!

2. A preſumptuous ſabbath-breaker is detected, and ſuffers. He was, in contempt of the Divine authority, gathering ſticks to light a fire, which God had expreſsly forbid. He is brought before the rulers, and as the caſe was without precedent, is put in ward, till God determines what death he ſhould die: his ſentence is pronounced, and in conſequence of it, he is ſtoned. *Note*, Wilful profanation of God's ſabbaths is a great crime; if magiſtrates are ſlack to puniſh it, God is a jealous God, and will in no wiſe ſpare the guilty.

37. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 38. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and bid them that [s] they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue. 39. And it ſhall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them: and that [t] ye ſeek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye uſe to [u] go a whoring: 40. That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. 41. I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I *am* the LORD your God.

[s] Deut. xxii. 12. Mat. xxiii. 5.

[t] See Deut. xxix. 19. Job xxxi. 7. Ezek. vi. 7.

[u] Pſal. lxxiii. 27. Jam. iv. 4.

37—41. The Jews were God's peculiar people; their very dreſs muſt be different from the nations around them. God orders them to wear fringes at the four corners of their garments, not ſo much for ornament as uſe, to remind them continually, which ever way they looked, of the obligation they were under to obey God's commandment. *Note*, (1.) When the manners of the world in dreſs are extravagant, or indecent, it becomes the people of God to be ſingular. (2.) Our cloaths, inſtead of miniſtring to pride, ſhould ever awaken our thankfulneſs, and lead us to God.

The concluſion of the chapter furniſhes the ſtrongeſt argument for their exact obedience and conformity to every injunction. *Note*, When God is our God, we ſhall not only count all his commandments right and good; but obedience to them will be as much our delight as our duty.

CHAP. XVI.

This chapter contains the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. 1. *They contend for the prieſt-hood againſt Aaron*, ver. 1—3. *and Moſes reaſons with them, and appeals to God for a deciſion of the controverſy*, ver. 4—11. 2. *Dathan and Abiram quarrel with Moſes, and refuſe to obey his ſummons, which greatly grieves him*, ver. 12—15. 3. *When they aſſembled at the door of the tabernacle, God appears in wrath to conſume them, and Moſes and Aaron plead for the people*, ver. 16—22. 4. *The rebels ſlain*, ver. 23—35. 5. *Their cenſers preſerved*, ver. 37—40. 6. *A new inſurrection of the people*, ver. 41—43. *followed by a plague*, ver. 45. *but ſtayed at Aaron's interceſſion*, ver. 46—50.

1. NOW [a] Korah, the ſon of Izhar, the ſon of Kohath, the ſon of Levi; and Dathan and Abiram the ſons of Eliab, and On the ſon of Peleth, ſons of Reuben, took *men*. 2. And they roſe up before Moſes, with certain of the children of Iſrael, two hundred and fifty princes of the aſſembly, [b] famous in the congregation, men of renown. 3. And [c] they gathered themſelves together againſt Moſes, and againſt Aaron, and ſaid unto them, † *Ye take* too much upon you, ſeeing all the congregation *are* holy every one of them, and the LORD *is* among them: wherefore then lift you up yourſelves above the congregation of the LORD? 4. And when Moſes heard *it*, [d] he fell upon his face: 5. And he ſpake unto Korah, and unto all his company, ſaying, Even to-morrow the LORD will ſhew who *are* his, and *who is* holy; and will cauſe *him* to come near unto him: even him whom he hath choſen, will he cauſe to come near unto him. 6. This do; Take you cenſers, Korah, and all his company; 7. And put fire therein, and put incenſe in them before the LORD to-morrow: and it ſhall be *that* the man whom the LORD doth chooſe, he *ſhall be* holy: *ye take* too much upon you, ye ſons of Levi. 8. And Moſes ſaid unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye ſons of Levi: 9. *Seemeth it but* a ſmall thing unto you, that the God of Iſrael hath ſeparated you from the congregation of Iſrael, to bring you near to himſelf, to do the ſervice of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to ſtand before the congregation, to miniſter unto them: 10. And he hath brought thee near *to him*, and all thy brethren the ſons of Levi with thee: and ſeek ye the prieſthood alſo? 11. For which cauſe *both* thou, and all thy company *are* gathered together againſt the LORD: and what *is* Aaron, that ye murmur againſt him?

[a] Chap. xxvi. 9. & xxvii. 3. Ecclus xlv. 18. Jude 11.

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[b] Chap. xxvi. 9.

[c] Pſal. cvi. 16.

† Heb. It is much for you.

[d] Chap. xiv. 5. & xx. 6.

v. 1—11. How dire are the conſequences of ambition! To this the greateſt ſtates, and moſt flouriſhing churches, may aſcribe their ruin. 1. The ringleader in this rebellion was Korah, a Levite, a near relation of Moſes and Aaron; yet conſumed with envy at the honour God had put on them, Dathan and Abiram, and On, of the tribe of Reuben, join him in their diſcontent, perhaps becauſe, though the eldeſt tribe, Judah was preferred before them, and quickly increaſe their party with two hundred and fifty princes of the aſſembly. The ſpirit of rebellion is a ſpreading evil. 2. The quarrel was Aaron's preferment to the prieſthood. They pretend, as equally holy, to have an equal right to it; and inſinuate, that Moſes and Aaron meant to aggrandize themſelves, though God had in ſuch an eſpecial manner called them to their office. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of characters cannot ſtand before envy. (2.) Ambitious ſtate or church reformers too often pretend they deſign to humble others, but mean in fact to exalt themſelves. 3. Moſes falls on his face in prayer, leaſt ſuch a mutiny ſhould ruin them, and through grief to hear ſuch an ungrateful accuſation. He appeals to God to decide the controverſy, and is ready to reſign up all his power into the hand that gave it: to-morrow the Lord ſhall chuſe whom he will have to ſerve him. Willing to prevent, however, an experiment which threatens to be ſo fatal to them, he expoſtulates with them, if they will hear expoſtulation, on the evil of their conduct. Many were the bleſſings and privileges enjoyed by Korah and his brethren. They were Levites, diſtinguiſhed by being ſet apart for God, honoured with the ſervice of the tabernacle, and permitted to draw nearer to God than others. Theſe peculiar diſtinctions ſhould ſurely have contented them, but pride is never ſatisfied; nothing ſufficeth them, whilſt the prieſthood is with-held: this was rebellion joined with ingratitude. It was not Aaron, but Aaron's God, againſt whom they had lift up their tongues. *Note*, (1.) Whoever are called to miniſter before the Lord, ſhould eſteem it a diſtinguiſhed privilege. (2.) Envy and ambition in miniſters, is doubly guilty. (3.) They who quarrel with the diſtinctions God hath made, are rebels againſt his government.

12. ¶ And Moſes ſent to call Dathan and Abiram, the ſons of Eliab: which ſaid, We will not come up. 13. *Is it* a ſmall thing that thou haſt brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderneſs, except thou make thyſelf altogether a prince over us? 14. Moreover, thou haſt not brought us into a [e] land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou † put out the eyes of theſe men? we will not come up. 15. And Moſes was very wroth, and ſaid unto the LORD, [f] Reſpect not thou their offering: [g] I have not taken one aſs from them, neither have I hurt one of them. 16. And Moſes ſaid unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron to-morrow: 17. And take every man his cenſer, and put incenſe in them, and bring ye before the LORD every

[e] Exod. iii. 8. Lev. xx. 24.

† Heb. Bore out.

[f] Gen. iv. 4, 5.

[g] 1 Sam. xii. 3. Acts xx. 33. 2 Cor. vii. 2.

man his cenſer, two hundred and fifty cenſers; thou alſo and Aaron each *of you* his cenſer. 18. And they took every man his cenſer, and put fire in them, and laid incenſe thereon, and ſtood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moſes and Aaron. 19. And Korah gathered all the congregation againſt them, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and [h] the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation. 20. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, [i] 21. Separate yourſelves from among this congregation, that I may conſume them in a moment. 22. And they fell upon their faces, and ſaid, O God, [k] the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, ſhall one man ſin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?

[h] Exod. xvi. 7, 10. Lev. ix. 6, 23. Chap. xiv. 10.
[i] See Gen. xix 17, 22. Jer. li. 6. Rev. xviii. 4.
[k] Chap. xxvii. 16. Job xii. 10. Ecclus xii. 7. Iſa. lvii. 16. Zeck. xii. 1. Heb xii. 9.

v. 12—22. Dathan and Abiram, abettors of Korah, being ſummoned to attend, return an anſwer, inſolent as unjuſt. They charge Moſes as having brought them from plenty to periſh in the wilderneſs, as deceiving their hopes and expectations, and as deſigning to enſlave them. What infamous and invidious accuſations! Was Egypt ſuch a land of plenty? Were they out of Canaan, but through their own rebellion? And was not Moſes a father, rather than a maſter over them; from whoſe kind interpoſition alone it was that they were this day alive thus to malign him? Such returns of evil for good are the lot of holy men. The moſt zealous miniſters for the ſervice of men's ſouls, muſt expect to meet with the ſevereſt reproaches.

Indignation fired the heart of Moſes at ſuch baſe ingratitude to himſelf, but more to ſee them bent on their own deſtruction. He appeals to God for the uprightneſs of his conduct. He had ſerved them without reward, adminiſtered impartial juſtice, nor could his greateſt enemies ſupport a charge of the moſt minute injury received from him; and therefore begs God would himſelf manifeſt his approbation, and reject their impious offerings. *Note*, The greateſt comfort under all accuſations is the teſtimony of a good conſcience. The morrow is appointed for the deciſion of the controverſy: Moſes and Aaron offer to appear on a level with them, and let God chuſe whom he will have. Korah accepts the challenge, and wilfully blind to the awful judgments on Nadab and Abihu, reſolves to make the experiment. Thoſe whom God devotes to deſtruction, he gives up to the blindneſs and hardneſs of their hearts. The morning comes, and Korah, eager to make the trial, collects the congregation againſt Moſes (for it is too plain they ever ſided with the rebellious) and with his cenſer ready, in his own conceit, already triumphs. Thus ſuddenly is the impenitent ſinner hurled from the pinnacle of vain confidence, into the depths of eternal deſpair and torment.

God, as the judge, aſcends the throne of his glory in terrible Majeſty, to decide the controverſy. He bids Moſes and Aaron inſtantly ſeparate themſelves, that he might conſume the reſt in a moment: they who followed the rebels, are ready to ſhare in their ruin; ſo dangerous it is to have fellowſhip with ſinners. Moſes and Aaron, as faithful and tender paſtors, though ſo ill treated, fall down on their faces, importunate ſuitors for mercy on the people: an example to be imitated by every miniſter, every chriſtian, towards his bittereſt perſecutors. Their prayer is ſhort, but appoſite: they addreſs God, as the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, and therefore acquainted with the ſecrets of all hearts, able to diſtinguiſh the deceiver from the deceived; and therefore beg him to paſs by the tranſgreſſion of the people, and let the vengeance light only on the ringleader of the rebellion. *Note*, There is a great difference between thoſe who ſin of malice, and thoſe who through weakneſs are drawn in to follow them.

23. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 24. Speak unto the congregation, ſaying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. 25. And Moſes roſe up, and went unto Dathan, and Abiram; and the elders of Iſrael followed him. 26. And he ſpake unto the congregation, ſaying, [l] Depart, I pray you, from the tents of theſe wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, leſt ye be conſumed in all their ſins. 27. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every ſide: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and ſtood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their ſons, and their little children. 28. And Moſes ſaid, Hereby ye ſhall know that the LORD hath ſent me to do all theſe works: for *I have* not *done them* of mine own mind. 29. If theſe men die † the common death of all men, or if they be viſited after the viſitation of all men; *then* the LORD hath not ſent me. 30. But if the LORD ‡ make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and ſwallow them up, with all that *appertain* unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye ſhall underſtand that theſe men have provoked the LORD. 31. ¶ [m] And it came to paſs, as he had made an end of ſpeaking all theſe words, that the ground clave aſunder that *was* under them: 32. And the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed them up, and their houſes, and [n] all the men that *appertained* unto Korah, and all *their* goods. 33. They and all that *appertained* to them went down alive into the pit, and the earth cloſed upon them: and they periſhed from among the congregation. 34. And all Iſrael that *were* round about them fled at the cry of them: for they ſaid, Leſt the earth ſwallow us up *alſo*.

[l] Iſa. lii. 11. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Rev. xviii. 4.
† Heb. As every man dieth.
‡ Heb. Create a creature.
[m] Chap. xxvi. 10. & xxvii. 3. Deut. xi. 6. Pſal. cvi. 17.
[n] See ver. 17. Chap. xxvi. 11. 1 Chron. vi. 22, 37.

v. 23—34. Moſes, at God's command, is enjoined to give the people warning. Some diſtinguiſhed tent had been reared, perhaps, for the conſultation of the rebel princes, and the people had gathered around them, whether as partiſans of their cauſe, or ſpectators of the iſſue. 1. Moſes immediately proceeds to execute his commiſſion; he ſeeks firſt to prevail on Dathan and Abiram themſelves to repent of their ſins, that they might prevent the approaching ruin; at leaſt, if they refuſed, to call upon thoſe who were about their tents to flee for their lives. The elders of Iſrael accompany him, to countenance his authority, and to enforce, by their preſence, the mandate he brought. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us to uſe every endearing method to ſave our bittereſt enemies from ruin. (2.) They who follow evil doers in their ways, are in danger of being conſumed with their plagues. (3.) We muſt hear the voice of God calling us to flee from the wrath to come, and ſave ourſelves from this untoward generation. 2. The people with haſte obeyed; gat themſelves up on every ſide, and removed their tents at a diſtance: fear of ruin is often the firſt ſtep to ſafety. 3. The rebels, incorrigibly audacious, with their families at their tent doors, ſeem to brave the divine threatning: they who thus refuſe to fear, will ſurely fall into miſchief. 4. The ſentence is pronounced, and Moſes appeals to its certain execution for the proof of his own divine miſſion. If theſe men die of natural diſeaſes, or age, or any death common to men, he would admit every accuſation as true; but if the earth opened, and ſwallowed them up alive, the evidence of his innocence and their guilt muſt be uncontroverted. 5. No ſooner ſpoken is the word, than done; a new unprecedented judgment overtakes them, the ground cleaves aſunder, alive they deſcend into the pit, their ſhrieks and cries are fruitleſs, the earth cloſes upon them, as groaning under their guilt, and weary of their blaſphemies. *Note*, (1.) It is of God's mercy we are not all conſumed, and that the earth doth not ſwallow up ſuch ſinners as we are. (2.) If men continue impenitent, the jaws of hell ſtand open to devour them, and if that pit ſhut her mouth upon them, then they periſh for ever. 6. Shocked at the fearful ſight, and terrified at their cries, the people fly ſtill farther from the dreadful ſcene, not without juſt apprehenſions, as they deſerved, of ſharing the like fate. *Note*, (1.) We are uſually much terrified at danger, and little at ſin; yet ſin is the moſt terrible part of every judgment. (2.) We ſhould do well to look down into the everlaſting burnings, and open our ears to the ſhrieks that fill the horrid caverns of Tophet; that, warned by others ſufferings, we come not into their place of torment.

35. And there came out a fire from the LORD, and conſumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incenſe. 36. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 37. Speak unto Eleazar, the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, that he take up the cenſers out of the burning, and ſcatter thou the fire yonder; for [o] they are hallowed. 38. The cenſers of theſe ſinners againſt their own ſouls, let them make them broad plates *for* a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and [p] they ſhall be a ſign unto the children of Iſrael. 39. And Eleazar the prieſt took the braſen cenſers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad *plates for* a covering of the altar: 40. *To be* a memorial unto the children of Iſrael, [q] that no ſtranger, which *is* not of the ſeed of Aaron, come near to offer incenſe before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD ſaid to him by the hand of Moſes.

[o] See Lev. xxvii. 28.
[p] Chap. xxvi. 10.
[q] Ibid. iii. 10.

v. 35—40. When God begins, he will make an end; and a fearful thing it is to fall into his hands. We have here,

1. The judgment on the two hundred and fifty princes before the congregation, at the ſame time that the earth ſwallowed up their companions. They offered unhallowed fire, and a conſuming fire is ſtirred up round about them. Aſpiring, like Lucifer, to be higheſt, they ſuffer with him the juſt reward of their deeds. *Note*, None ever ſinned againſt God, and proſpered.

2. God orders Eleazar to ſcatter the fire which they had taken from the altar in their cenſers, and was hallowed, and of the cenſers to make a covering for the brazen altar; a conſtant warning to future generations to avoid their ſin, leaſt they ſhared their puniſhment. *Note*, (1.) God abhors the ſervices of the wicked, and the very prayers of the ſelf-righteous are as much an abomination as the incenſe of Korah. (2.) Monuments of vengeance are neceſſary and uſeful; that they who ſee and hear, may fear, and do no more wickedly.

41. ¶ But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Iſrael murmured againſt Moſes, and againſt Aaron, ſaying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD. 42. And it came to paſs when the congregation was gathered againſt Moſes, and againſt Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. 43. And Moſes and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. 44. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 45. Get you up from among this congregation, that I may conſume them as in a moment: and [r] they fell upon their faces. 46. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, Take a cenſer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incenſe, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: [s] for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun. 47. And Aaron took as Moſes commanded, and ran into the midſt of the congregation; and behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incenſe, and made an atonement for the people. 48. And he ſtood between the dead and the living, and the plague was ſtayed. 49. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thouſand and ſeven hundred, beſides them that died about the matter of Korah. 50. And Aaron returned unto Moſes, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was ſtayed.

[r] Chap. xx. 6.

[s] Ibid. viii. 19.

v. 41—50. How ineffectual are the ſevereſt judgments to change the heart! Were a ſinner dragged through the belly of hell, and brought to earth again, his fears would be quickly forgotten, and he would return as a dog to his vomit. Nothing but Almighty Grace can work an abiding change.

1. The very next day the people rebelled, and made this ſtroke of God a plea of accuſation againſt Moſes and Aaron. Aſtoniſhing perverſeneſs! They who but yeſterday heard the cries of their periſhing brethren, to-day renew their provocations, nay add to them; they call the rebels the people of the Lord, and charge Moſes and Aaron as their murderers. Thus the beſt of men will find themſelves often expoſed to the moſt malignant miſrepreſentations.

2. God's glory appears, to reſcue his ſervants from the violence of the wicked, and to execute condign puniſhment on ſuch incorrigible offenders. Moſes and Aaron with confidence approach the Lord, aſſured of his protection; and, as they no doubt expected, hear the dire threatning of a juſtly offended God, ready to conſume ſuch a rebel race. *Note*, They need not fear the congregation of the wicked, who are ſafe under the ſhadow of the Almighty.

3. Moſes and Aaron, never wanting in the expreſſion of tendereſt regard for Iſrael, renew their ſupplications; and as the plague ſuddenly began its ravages among the people, Aaron haſtes to make atonement for them; and, with his burning cenſer, ſtands between the living and the dead. God accepted their prayer and incenſe, and the plague was ſtayed. Learn, (1.) That no provocations ſhould reſtrain us from flying to the relief of thoſe whom we can help or ſave. (2.) A faithful miniſter of Chriſt, whenever his duty calls, is ready to expoſe his life for the ſervice of the people. (3.) Aaron was herein a type of Chriſt: he ſtayed the devouring plague, by the interpoſition of his own body on the tree, and ſaved his choſen from ſinking in the common deſolation.

4. Great havock had been made in a ſhort moment; no leſs than fourteen thouſand and ſeven hundred periſhed, and a mercy it was that any eſcaped: but God delighteth not in the death of a ſinner. Let us fear to offend him, for his wrath is terrible; and let the views of his amazing patience and pardons engage our hearts to return to him with humble ſhame for paſt offences, and renewed purpoſes of obedience for the future.

CHAP. XVII.

To prevent, if poſſible, any future conteſt about the prieſthood, God condeſcends to inſtitute a perpetual memorial of his appointment of Aaron. 1. *He enjoins each of the twelve princes to bring a rod,* ver. 1—7. 2. *Aaron's miraculouſly bloſſoms,* ver. 8, 9. 3. *The rod is preſerved for a memorial,* ver. 10, 11. 4. *The people acquieſce in the deciſion,* ver. 12, 13.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and take of every one of them a rod, according to the houſe of *their* fathers, of all their princes, according to the houſe of their fathers, twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. 3. And thou ſhalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod *ſhall be* for the head of the houſe of their fathers. 4. And thou ſhalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the teſtimony, [a] where I will meet with you. 5. And it ſhall come to paſs, *that* the man's rod [b] whom I ſhall chooſe, ſhall bloſſom: and I will make to ceaſe from me the murmurings of the children of Iſrael, whereby they murmur againſt you. 6. And Moſes ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, and every one of their princes gave him † a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers houſes, *even* twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron *was* among their rods. 7. And Moſes laid up the rods before the LORD, in the tabernacle of witneſs.

[a] Exod. xxv. 22.

[b] Chap. xvi. 5.

† Heb. A rod for one prince, a rod for one prince.

v. 1—7. God is graciouſly pleaſed to make uſe of every means to ſatisfy the people, and to engage them to ſubmit to his ordinances. Many ſought the prieſthood, but it is to be feared, as now, more for the advantage attending it, than out of love to the ſervice: but God will chuſe for himſelf; and without a divine call, intruſion, as we have ſeen, is fearfully dangerous. Twelve rods of almond, ſuch as the princes bore, as enſigns of authority, are ordered, each man's name inſcribed or bound on his own rod, according to his tribe, and Aaron's in the midſt of them. Theſe together are laid up before the ark one night, and God's choice is before declared to fall on the man whoſe rod ſhall bloſſom. *Note*, Nothing ſo deſirable, as the prevention of all diſputes and ſtrifes among the people of God.

8. And it came to paſs that on the morrow Moſes went into the tabernacle of witneſs: and behold, the rod of Aaron for the houſe of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed bloſſoms, and yielded almonds. 9. And Moſes brought out all the rods from before the LORD, unto all the children of Iſrael: and they looked, and took every man his rod. 10. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Bring [c] Aaron's rod again, before the teſtimony, to be kept for a token againſt the † rebels; and thou ſhalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not. 11. And Moſes did *ſo*: as the LORD commanded him, ſo did he. 12. And the children of Iſrael ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, Behold, we die, we periſh, we all periſh. 13. Whoſoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the LORD, ſhall die: ſhall we be conſumed with dying?

[c] Heb. ix. 4.

† Heb. Children of rebellion.

v. 8—13. On the morrow the rods are produced, and a new miracle confirms God's appointment of Aaron.

1. His rod alone was teeming with life; fruit, leaves, and bloſſoms all adorn it; thus every ſuſpicion of fraud in Moſes is removed, and Aaron's office confirmed to him. *Note*, (1.) They bring forth fruit abundantly, whom God hath called and choſen. (2.) Thoſe whom Chriſt ordains and ſends to his work, he will bleſs. To ſee no ſouls quickened and converted by our miniſtry, would be a ſhrewd proof that we have not been ordained of God.

2. Aaron's rod is laid up for a memorial; and if, as is probable, the bloſſoms, leaves, and fruit, continued unwithering, it ſerved as an abiding proof of Aaron's choice, and a conſtant token againſt the paſt, as well as a guard againſt future rebellion. *Note*, The deſign of God in ſending his ſon, and in every diſpenſation of his grace or providence, is the ſalvation of his people, that they die not.

3. The people now convinced of their guilt, are ready to give up all for loſt; ſo apt are we to be ſwinging to extremes, and changing preſumption for deſpair. Trembling at the rod laid up againſt them, they reſolve not to come near the tabernacle of the Lord, or ever again challenge Aaron's place, leaſt death ſhould accompliſh the ruin which he had begun. *Note*, It is never too late to repent; happy for us, if by experience, we are convinced of the evil and danger of ſin, bow down before the chaſtening rod, and with jealouſy watch and pray, that we may never again return unto folly.

Before Chriſt about 1471.

CHAP. XVIII.

Aaron being now fully eſtabliſhed in the prieſthood, God repeats his former inſtructions. 1. *What is his work, and who ſhould be his aſſiſtants,* ver. 1—7. 2. *His wages, and the Levites,* 1. *The perquiſites peculiar to the prieſt,* ver. 8—19. 2. *The ſettled maintenance of the Levites,* ver. 20—24. 3. *The portion which muſt be paid to the prieſts out of the Levites maintenance,* ver. 25—32.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Aaron, Thou, and thy ſons, and thy father's houſe with thee, ſhall bear the iniquity of the ſanctuary: and thou and thy ſons with thee ſhall bear the iniquity of your prieſthood. 2. And thy brethren alſo of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be [a] joined unto thee, and [b] miniſter unto thee: but thou and thy ſons with thee *ſhall miniſter* before the tabernacle of witneſs. 3. And they ſhall keep thy charge, and [c] the charge of all the tabernacle: only they ſhall not come nigh the veſſels of the ſanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor you alſo die. 4. And they ſhall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the ſervice of the tabernacle: and [d] a ſtranger ſhall not come nigh unto you. 5. And ye ſhall keep [e] the charge of the ſanctuary, and the charge of the altar; [f] that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Iſrael. 6. And I, behold, I have [g] taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Iſrael: [h] to you *they are* given *as* a gift for the LORD, to do the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation. 7. Therefore thou and thy ſons with thee, ſhall keep your prieſts office, for every thing of the altar, and within the vail, and ye ſhall ſerve: I have given your prieſts office *unto you, as* a ſervice of gift: and the ſtranger that cometh nigh ſhall be put to death.

a See Gen. xxix. 34.
b Chap. iii. 6, 7.
c Ibid. 25, 31, 36.
d Ibid. 10.
e Exod. xxvii. 21. & xxx. 7. Lev. xxiv. 3. Chap. viii. 2.
f Chap. xvi. 46.
g Chap. iii. 12, 45.
h Chap. iii. 9.

v. 1—7. Aaron is now confirmed in his miniſtry; a diſtinguiſhed honour is put upon him; but he is reminded of the danger and difficulty of his arduous employment, that proportionable watchfulneſs, diligence, and zeal, may appear. 1. The charge of the ſanctuary is entruſted to him, with the prieſts and Levites; and they are to be anſwerable to God for every neglect or tranſgreſſion, or miſtake in their miniſtrations. *Note,* The miniſtry is an awful charge. If one immortal ſoul periſhes through our ignorance or careleſsneſs, his blood will God require at our hands. How many undertake the care of ſouls, who have never weighed the ſolemn account they muſt one day make to God? 2. Their ſeveral employments are appointed, Aaron alone within the vail; his ſons within the tabernacle; the Levites without, as their aſſiſtants in the ſervice of the court and altar; each hath his province, and all their work. God's houſe admits no idlers. An indolent prieſt is like Satan appearing among the ſons of God. 3. Peculiar care muſt be taken, that no ſtranger enter there. The people were trembling at the thoughts of their danger in approaching the tabernacle, and the prieſts and Levites are charged to keep them at a diſtance from ſin, that there may be no more wrath againſt them. *Note,* (1.) It is good to have the watchfulneſs of others to reſtrain us from evil, as well as our own purpoſes againſt it. (2.) The way to eſcape wrath, is to avoid ſin. (3.) Miniſters muſt not only put away iniquity from themſelves, but be watchful and zealous to keep others from offending.

8. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Aaron, Behold, [i] I alſo have given thee the charge of mine heave-offerings, of all the hallowed things of the children of Iſrael; unto thee have I given them, [k] by reaſon of the anointing, and to thy ſons by an ordinance for ever. 9. This ſhall be thine of the moſt holy things, *reſerved* from the fire: every oblation of theirs, every [l] meat-offering of theirs, and every [m] ſin-offering of theirs, and every [n] treſpaſs-offering of theirs, which they ſhall render unto me, *ſhall be* moſt holy for thee and for thy ſons. 10. In the moſt holy *place* ſhalt thou eat it; [o] every male ſhall eat it: It ſhall be holy unto thee. 11. And this *is* thine; [p] the heave-offering of their gift, with all the wave-offerings of the children of Iſrael: I have given them unto [q] thee, and to thy ſons, and to thy daughters with thee, by a ſtatute for ever: [r] every one that is clean in thine houſe ſhall eat of it. 12. [s] All the † beſt of the oil, and all the beſt of the wine, and of the wheat, [t] the firſt-fruits of them which they ſhall offer unto the LORD, them have I given thee. 13. *And* whatſoever is firſt ripe in the land, [u] which they ſhall bring unto the LORD, ſhall be thine; every one that is clean in thine houſe ſhall eat *of* it. 14. [x] Every thing devoted in Iſrael, ſhall be thine. 15. Every thing that openeth [y] the matrix in all fleſh, which they bring unto the LORD, *whether it be* of men or beaſts, ſhall be thine: nevertheleſs, [z] the firſt-born of man ſhalt thou ſurely redeem, and the firſtling of unclean beaſts ſhalt thou redeem. 16. And thoſe that are to be redeemed, from a month old ſhalt thou redeem [a] according to thine eſtimation, for the money of five ſhekels, after the ſhekel of the ſanctuary, [b] which *is* twenty gerahs. 17. But the firſtling of a cow, or the firſtling of a ſheep, or the firſtling of a goat, thou ſhalt not redeem, they *are* holy: thou ſhalt ſprinkle their blood upon the altar, and ſhalt burn their fat *for* an offering made by fire, for a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD. 18. And the fleſh of them ſhall be thine, as [c] the wave-breaſt, and as the right ſhoulder are thine. 19. All the heave-offerings of the holy things, which the children of Iſrael offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy ſons and thy daughters with thee, by a ſtatute for ever: [d] it *is* a covenant of ſalt for ever, before the LORD, unto thee and to thy ſeed with thee.

i Lev. vi. 16, 18, 26. & vii. 6, 32. Chap. v. 9.
k Exod. xxix. 29.
l Lev. ii. 2, 3.
m Lev. iv. 22, 27. & vi. 25.
n Lev. v. 1. & vii. 7. & x. 12. & xiv. 13.
o Lev. vi. 29. & vii. 6.
p Exod. xxix. 27. Lev. vii. 31.
q Ibid. x. 14. Deut. xviii. 3.
r Lev. xxii. 2.
s Exod. xxiii. 19. Deut. xviii. 4.
† Heb. Fat.
t Exod. xxii. 29.
u Ibid. & xxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 26. Lev. ii. 14. Chap. xv. 19. Deut. xxvi. 2.
x Lev. xxvii. 28.
y Exod. xiii. 2. & xxii. 29. Lev. xxvii. 26. Chap. iii. 13.
z Exod. xiii. 13. & xxxiv. 20.
a Lev. xxvii. 2.
b Exod. xxx. 13. Lev. xxvii. 25. Chap. iii. 47. Ezek. xlv. 12.
c Exod. xxix. 26, 28.
d Lev. ii. 13. 2 Chron. xiii. 5.

v. 8—19. God will have his ſervants liberally provided for: they ſhall not ſerve him for nought. As by their ſervice they were excluded from all means of gain, the altar they ſerved ſupplied them with plenty, and of the beſt. The offerings and firſt-fruits provided meat and drink for their families; and the ranſom-money, and things dedicated, ſupplied them with every other neceſſary. *Note,* (1.) They who ſerve at the altar, ſhould live by the altar. (2.) A godly people will make a liberal proviſion for a goſpel miniſtry. (3.) They who have the care of ſouls, need have no other care upon them. (4.) Let faithful miniſters truſt their families with God; as he hath provided for them while they live, he will not forget them when they are dead.

20. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Aaron, Thou ſhalt have no inheritance in their land, neither ſhalt thou have any part among them: [e] I *am* thy part, and thine inheritance among the children of Iſrael. 21. And behold, [f] I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Iſrael, for an inheritance, for their ſervice which they ſerve, *even* the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation. 22. [g] Neither muſt the children of Iſrael henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, leſt they bear ſin, † and die. 23. But the Levites ſhall do the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they ſhall bear their iniquity: *It ſhall be* a ſtatute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Iſrael they have no inheritance. 24. But the tithes of the children of Iſrael, which they offer *as* an heave-offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have ſaid unto them, [h] Among the children of Iſrael they ſhall have no inheritance. 25. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 26. Thus ſpeak unto the Levites, and ſay unto them, When ye take of the children of Iſrael the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye ſhall offer up an heave-offering of it for the LORD, *even* a tenth *part* of the tithe. 27. And *this* your heave-offering ſhall be reckoned unto you, as though *it were* the corn of the threſhing-floor, and as the fulneſs of the wine-preſs. 28. Thus you alſo ſhall offer an heave-offering unto the LORD, of all your tithes which ye receive of the children of Iſrael; and ye ſhall give thereof the LORD's heave-offering to Aaron the prieſt. 29. Out of all your gifts ye ſhall offer every heave-offering of the LORD, of all the ‡ beſt thereof, *even* the hallowed part thereof, out of it. 30. Therefore thou ſhalt ſay unto them, when ye have heaved the beſt thereof from it, then it ſhall be counted unto the Levites, as the increaſe of the threſhing-floor, and as the increaſe of the wine-preſs. 31. And ye ſhall eat it in every place, ye and your houſholds: for it *is* [i] your reward for your ſervice, in the tabernacle of the congregation. 32. And ye ſhall bear no ſin, by reaſon of it, when

e Deut. x. 9. & xii. 12. & xviii. 2. Joſh. xiii. 14, 33. Ezek. xliv. 28.
f Lev. xxvii. 30.
g Chap. i. 51.
† Heb. To die.
h Deut. x. 9. & xiv. 27, 29. & xviii. 1.
‡ Heb. Fat.
i 1 Tim. v. 18.

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when ye have heaved from it the beſt of it: neither ſhall ye pollute the holy things of the children of Iſrael, leſt ye die.

v. 20—32. The prieſts and Levites have farther proviſion made for them. They are forbid all ſecular concerns, and can hold no inheritance, only the houſes of the cities appointed them for an habitation. God was their portion; and he who hath him for a portion, need not wiſh a better, and may well count all beſides to be dung and loſs. As the Levites buſineſs is to keep the charge of the tabernacle, and to prevent all profane intruders, they have their wages in the tenths of the produce of every kind; and out of theſe, a tenth of the beſt was offered for the prieſts maintenance, and accepted of God, as if the produce of their own lands; after which, the remainder was free for the uſe of the Levites and their families, as the fruits of the earth to the people in general, after the tithes were paid. *Note,* (1.) Out of the portion the Lord allots his miniſters, they muſt be careful to honour him with a part. (2.) When we have dedicated to God a part of our ſubſtance, we may hope for his bleſſing and comfort in the uſe of the remainder.

CHAP. XIX.

This chapter is concerning the preparing and uſing of the aſhes which were to impregnate the water of purification. Here is, 1. *The method of preparing theſe aſhes,* ver. 1—10. 2. *Their deſign, to purify perſons from the pollution contracted by a dead body,* ver. 11—16. 3. *The manner of uſing them,* ver. 17—22. *This ceremonial purification was a type and figure of the cleanſing of the conſciences of believers from the pollutions of ſin, by the blood of Chriſt,* Heb. ix. 13, 14.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Aaron, ſaying, 2. This *is* the ordinance of the law which the LORD hath commanded, ſaying, Speak unto the children of Iſrael, that they bring thee a red heifer without ſpot, wherein *is* no blemiſh, *and* [a] upon which never came yoke. 3. And ye ſhall give her unto Eleazar the prieſt, that he may bring her [b] forth without the camp, and *one* ſhall ſlay her before his face. 4. And Eleazar the prieſt ſhall take of her blood with his finger, and [c] ſprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation ſeven times. 5. And *one* ſhall burn the heifer in his ſight; [d] her ſkin, and her fleſh, and her blood, with her dung ſhall he burn. 6. And the prieſt ſhall take cedar-wood, and hyſſop, and ſcarlet, and caſt *it* into the midſt of the burning of the heifer. 7. [e] Then the prieſt ſhall waſh his clothes, and he ſhall bathe his fleſh in water, and afterward he ſhall come into the camp, and the prieſt ſhall be unclean until the even. 8. And he that burneth her, ſhall waſh his clothes in water, and bathe his fleſh in water, and ſhall be unclean until the even. 9. And a man *that is* clean ſhall gather up [f] the aſhes of the heifer, and lay *them* up without the camp in a clean place, and it ſhall be kept for the congregation of the children of Iſrael, for a water of ſeparation: it *is* a purification for ſin. 10. And he that gathereth the aſhes of the heifer, ſhall waſh his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and it ſhall be unto the children of Iſrael, and unto the ſtranger that ſojourneth among them, for a ſtatute for ever.

[a] 1 Sam. vi. 7.
[b] Hebr. xiii. 11.
[c] Ibid. ix. 13.
[d] Exod. xxix. 14. Lev. iv 11, 12.
[e] Lev. xi. 25. & xv. 5.
[f] Hebr. ix. 13.

v. 1.—10. This preparation of the aſhes of purification, tho' recorded here, ſeems to have been done before they removed from Mount Sinai, *See chap.* viii. 5 The intention of it was to purify from ceremonial uncleanneſs, and to be typical of that ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus, which really purges the conſcience from dead works.

The heifer muſt be curiouſly choſen; not a blemiſh muſt be found, not ſo much as a hair of a different colour, but wholly red, in the prime of youth, and that never bore the yoke. Eleazar the prieſt muſt ſlay and burn it, as an unclean thing, without the camp. The blood of it was ſprinkled towards the door of the tabernacle, to which he directed his eyes. During the burning of the body, cedar-wood, hyſſop, and ſcarlet, were caſt into the fire, and the aſhes at laſt were carefully collected, and preſerved for the uſe of all the congregation. And as the ſervice made thoſe who were engaged in it unclean, they waſhed, and ſtayed till even before they could return to the tabernacle. All which was a ſhadow of him that was to come. The ſpotleſs purity of our Divine Lord, when he offered himſelf a ſacrifice for us, is here prefigured. He was red in his apparel, when he trod the wine-preſs alone, and when he died weltering in his blood. No yoke bound him to the dreadful ſervice; freely he offered himſelf to bear the ſins of many. At once the prieſt and ſacrifice, he offered up his body on the tree; as an unclean thing, becauſe the Lord had laid on him the iniquity of us all, he ſuffered without the camp, and from the croſs looked up to heaven, ſprinkling as it were his blood before the door of the heavenly ſanctuary. The fierceneſs of the fire, and the bitter hyſſop, ſhadow forth the fierceneſs of the wrath of God, and the bitterneſs of his ſoul under it; whilſt cedar's ſweet perfume ſhews how acceptable the ſmell of the ſacrifice was to God. The aſhes reſerved for common uſe, intimates his rich ſalvation, obtained and offered freely to ſinners of every claſs; and as the efficacy of his one oblation ever laſts, he ever lives to ſprinkle upon us the purifying water, which can cleanſe us from all our pollutions.

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11. ¶ [g] He that toucheth the dead body of any † man, ſhall be unclean ſeven days. 12. [h] He ſhall purify himſelf with it on the third day, and on the ſeventh day he ſhall be clean: but if he purify not himſelf the third day, then the ſeventh day he ſhall not be clean. 13. Whoſoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himſelf, [i] defileth the tabernacle of the LORD; and that ſoul ſhall be cut off from Iſrael: becauſe the water of ſeparation was not ſprinkled upon him, he ſhall be unclean; his uncleanneſs *is* yet upon him. 14. This *is* the law, when a man dieth in a tent; all that come into the tent, and all that *is* in the tent, ſhall be unclean ſeven days. 15. And every [k] open veſſel which hath no covering bound upon it, *is* unclean. 16. And whoſoever toucheth one that is ſlain with the ſword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, ſhall be unclean ſeven days. 17. And for an unclean *perſon* they ſhall take of the ‡ aſhes of the burnt heifer of purification for ſin, and ‖ running water ſhall be put thereto in a veſſel: 18. And a clean perſon ſhall take [l] hyſſop, and dip *it* in the water, and ſprinkle *it* upon the tent, and upon all the veſſels, and upon the perſons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one ſlain, or one dead, or a grave: 19. And the clean *perſon* ſhall ſprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the ſeventh day: and on the ſeventh day he ſhall purify himſelf, and waſh his clothes, and bathe himſelf in water, and ſhall be clean at even. 20. But the man that ſhall be unclean, and ſhall not purify himſelf, that ſoul ſhall be cut off from among the congregation: becauſe he hath defiled the ſanctuary of the LORD, the water of ſeparation hath not been ſprinkled upon him, he *is* unclean. 21. And it ſhall be a perpetual ſtatute unto them, that he that ſprinkleth the water of ſeparation, ſhall waſh his clothes, and he that toucheth the water of ſeparation, ſhall be unclean until even. 22. And whatſoever the unclean *perſon* toucheth, ſhall be unclean: and the ſoul that toucheth *it*, ſhall be unclean until even.

[g] Lev. xxi. 1. Chap. v. 2. & xxxi. 19. Lam. iv. 14. Hag. ii. 13.
† Heb. Soul of man.
[h] Chap. xxxi. 19.
[i] Lev. xv. 31.
[k] Chap. xxxi. 20.
‡ Heb. Duſt.
‖ Heb. Living waters ſhall be given.
[l] Pſ. li. 7.

v. 11—22. Directions are given about the aſhes thus prepared, which now were near at hand, and afterward probably divided to every city.

1. The perſons or things which need be purified by them: Every perſon who was in the tent or houſe where a corpſe lay; all who touched a dead body, or ſo much as a bone, or trod on a grave; every open veſſel, and whoever but touched any perſon or thing thus polluted; and every veſſel touched by the unclean. Death being the wages of ſin, the defilement thence contracted would ſerve to affect them with a deeper ſenſe of the evil of ſin, which occaſioned it. *Note,* If a dead corpſe was ſo polluting, how much more the company of thoſe dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and how carefully to be avoided?

2. The manner in which the aſhes were uſed. They were mixed with running water, and with a bunch of hyſſop ſprinkled on the unclean; and this was done by a clean perſon, who, during that day, was himſelf defiled. *Note,* (1.) Water is the emblem of the ſpirit, whoſe office it is to apply the blood of Jeſus to the heart. (2.) The hyſſop ſignifies the bitterneſs of repentance, that ever accompanies forgiveneſs of ſin. (3.) It is often the caſe, that they who call others to the fountain of Chriſt's blood, are defiled themſelves thereby; ſo ſubtilly does ſin cleave to our beſt duties.

3. The ſprinkling was repeated twice, on the third and ſeventh day; and if one were neglected, the other was ineffectual. *Note,* If we are not juſtified by Jeſus, who roſe the third day from the dead, we ſhall not be glorified in the day of God's eternal ſabbath.

4. Neglect of uſing the remedy provided, being contempt of God's law, was wilful ſin, and puniſhed with death. God's ordinances are never to be ſlighted in the moſt minute particular. No ſin is ſo little, but muſt be mortal, without the blood of ſprinkling.

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CHAP. XX.

At this chapter begins the hiſtory of the fortieth year, (which was the laſt) of the Iſraelites wandering in the wilderneſs. In it there is recorded, 1. *The death of Miriam*, ver. 1. 2. *The fetching of water out of the rock. In which obſerve,* (1.) *The diſtreſs of Iſrael for want of water*, ver. 2. (2.) *Their murmuring*, ver. 3—5. (3.) *God ſupplies them with water out of the rock*, ver. 6—11. (4.) *The infirmity of Moſes and Aaron upon this occaſion*, ver. 11. (5.) *God's diſpleaſure againſt them*, ver. 12, 13. 3. *The treaty with the Edomites. Iſrael's requeſt*, ver. 14—17. *and the repulſe the Edomites gave them*, ver. 18—21. 4. *The death of Aaron, the inſtalment of Eleazar, and the people's mourning for him*, ver. 22—29.

1. THEN [a] came the children of Iſrael, *even* the whole congregation, into the deſart of Zin, in the firſt month: and the people abode in Kadeſh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there. 2. And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themſelves together againſt Moſes and againſt Aaron. 3. And the people [b] chode with Moſes, and ſpake, ſaying, Would God that we had died when [c] our brethren died before the LORD. 4. And [d] why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderneſs, that we and our cattle ſhould die there? 5. And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it *is* no place of ſeed, or of figs, or vines, or of pomegranates, neither *is* there any water to drink. 6. And Moſes and Aaron went from the preſence of the aſſembly, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and [e] they fell upon their faces: and [f] the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. 7. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 8. [g] Take the rod, and gather thou the aſſembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and ſpeak ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it ſhall give forth his water, and [h] thou ſhalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: ſo thou ſhalt give the congregation, and their beaſts drink. 9. And Moſes took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. 10. And Moſes and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he ſaid unto them, [i] Hear now, ye rebels; muſt we fetch you water out of this rock? 11. And Moſes lift up his hand, and with his rod he ſmote the rock twice: and [k] the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beaſts *alſo*. 12. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron, [l] Becauſe ye believed me not, to ſanctify me in the eyes of the children of Iſrael; therefore ye ſhall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. 13. [m] This *is* the water of † Meribah, becauſe the children of Iſrael ſtrove with the LORD: and he was ſanctified in them.

[a] Chap. xxxiii. 36.
[b] Exod. xvii. 2.
[c] Chap. xi. 1, 33. & xiv. 37. & xvi. 32, 35, 46.
[d] Exod. xvii. 3.
[e] Chap. xiv. 5. & xvi. 4.
[f] Chap. xiv. 10.
[g] Exod. xvii. 5.
[h] Neh. ix. 15. Pſ. lxxviii. 15, 16. & cv. 41. & cxiv. 8. Iſa. xliii. 20. & xlviii. 21.
[i] Pſ. cvi. 33.
[k] Exod. xvii. 6. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[l] Chap. xxvii. 14. Deut. i. 37. & iii. 26. & xxxii. 51.
[m] Deut. xxxiii. 8. Pſ. xcv. 8. & cvi. 32, &c.
† i.e. Strife. See Exod. xvii. 7.

v. 1—13. Their years of wandering are now drawing to an end. The former generation being nearly conſumed, the people once more ſet their faces towards the promiſed land, and encamp in Kadeſh, near the borders of Edom, where we have,

1. Miriam's death. Though forgiven her murmuring, at Moſes's interceſſion, ſhe is excluded Canaan. *Note*, We may for our ſins be corrected with temporal afflictions, though God hath forgiven them, and ſaved us from eternal death. 2. The murmuring of the people for want of water. The water of the rock, which had followed them hitherto, had ceaſed when other ſupplies could be had; but on this remove to Kadeſh they were again reduced to ſtraits, and, as before, returned to their murmuring. *Note*, (1.) It is too common for children to imitate their fathers bad examples. (2.) They who cannot put up with inconveniences in their journey to heaven, muſt never think of going thither. Never was greater unthankfulneſs and perverſeneſs ſeen than in this people: inſtead of being affected with God's mercy in ſparing them, they wiſh to have died with their brethren by the plague, and quarrel with Moſes for having brought them from Egypt, though ſuch an iron furnace, becauſe of a preſent difficulty, which, by paſt experience, they might be aſſured God could eaſily remove. *Note*, They who ſeek occaſion to quarrel, will find fault with the beſt ſervices done them, and reproach with ill intentions their friends to whom they have been moſt obliged. 3. Moſes and Aaron fly to the ſanctuary, and on their faces fall down, leſt new judgments ſhould overtake the people, and to beg direction how to act in the preſent emergency. *Note*, In all troubles, approach to God is the ſureſt means for direction and relief. 4. God appears, not as before, in anger to deſtroy them, but in mercy to ſupply them. *Note*, If God were ſtrict to viſit for all our offences, the ſpirit would fail before him. He often thinketh upon mercy, when we deſerve puniſhment. Moſes is ordered to take the rod of God, and, in the preſence of all the people, to ſpeak to the rock, and the ſtreams ſhall immediately flow. Behold, (1.) The rich grace of God to a rebellious people. (2.) The power of God magnified in ſuch a miracle. Are our hearts hard as this rock, the word of God can cleave them, and open ſluices of penitential tears. 5. Moſes and Aaron obey, but in ſuch a manner, as diſpleaſed their Maſter, and brought upon them excluſion from the land to which they were conducting the people. They were guilty of two great ſins in this matter: (1.) Unbelief. They doubted whether God would really bring water from the rock for ſuch a people; or perhaps, whether, if he did, they ſhould not be condemned to another forty years wandring, and never reach the promiſed land. *Note*, No ſin among God's people more beſetting, or more dangerous, than unbelief. (2.) Paſſion. They were out of patience with them, angrily abuſe them as rebels, and, inſtead of calmly commanding the water to flow, Moſes with repeated vehemence ſmites the rock; and as Iſrael were ſpectators of this haſty conduct, the offence was the greater. *Note*, (1.) Great provocations are no excuſe for paſſion. (2.) The meekeſt men need watch over a ſelf-willed ſpirit. (3.) If anger kindle in our heart, the more cauſe have we to keep our lips as it were with a bridle. (4.) That reproach may be very juſt, which in our mouth, as flowing from an enraged heart, may to us be exceeding evil. 6. God's diſpleaſure at Moſes and Aaron; and their puniſhment is to die in the wilderneſs. *Note*, (1.) God's own people muſt not think they ſhall ſin with impunity. No; God, as he expects more from them, will often correct them more ſeverely than others. (2.) The record Moſes bears againſt himſelf, is a proof of his impartiality, and a gracious token of his humiliation under his offence. 7. The place is called Meribah, like that other, where they murmured and ſtrove with God before. It is good to remark the place and ſpot where our ſins have been committed, that we may, whenever we paſs by, look and be confounded on the remembrance of them.

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14. ¶ And Moſes ſent meſſengers from Kadeſh, unto the king of Edom, [n] Thus ſaith thy brother Iſrael, Thou knoweſt all the travel that hath † befallen us: 15. How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time: and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers. 16. And [o] when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and [p] ſent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and behold, we *are* in Kadeſh, a city in the uttermoſt of thy border. 17. Let us paſs, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not paſs through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink *of* the water of the wells: we will go by the king's *high*-way, we will not turn to the right hand, nor to the left, until we have paſſed thy borders. 18. And Edom ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt not paſs by me, leſt I come out againſt thee with the ſword. 19. And the children of Iſrael ſaid unto him, We will go by the highway: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, [q] then I will pay for it: I will only (without *doing* any thing *elſe*) go through on my feet. 20. And he ſaid, Thou ſhalt not go through. And Edom came out againſt him with much people, and with a ſtrong hand. 21. Thus Edom [r] refuſed to give Iſrael paſſage through his border: wherefore [s] Iſrael turned away from him.

[n] Deut. ii. 4, &c. & xxiii. 7. Obad. x. 12.
† Heb. found us.
[o] Exod. ii. 23. & iii. 7.
[p] Ibid. xiv. 19. & xxiii. 20.
[q] Deut. ii. 6, 28.
[r] See Deut. ii. 29.
[s] Ibid. ii. 4, 5. Judg. xi. 18.

v. 14—21. As the neareſt way to Canaan now lay through the territories of Edom, Moſes ſent ambaſſadors, to beg leave for a paſſage through their land. 1. The meſſage they brought was friendly and reaſonable: they urge their kindred, as a plea for favour. Near relations are doubly bound to every mutual act of kindneſs. They mention their ſufferings from Egypt, and their mercies from God, both to excite a compaſſionate concern for their paſt vexations, and to engage them to aſſiſt thoſe to whom God had ſhewed ſuch peculiar favour. It is as much our intereſt as duty, to be kind to thoſe who have God for their friend. They condeſcend to humble intreaty, though ſufficiently able to force a paſſage unaſked, if they choſe it. But power muſt never be employed to injuſtice. Finally, They engaged to do no damage, but to pay even for the water they drank, and to make no ſtay in the country, but with all ſpeed march by the high-road to the borders of Canaan. *Note*, They who are marching to heaven, go ſtrait forward in the highway of holineſs, and deſire nothing in Edom, the world of ſin, but a ſafe paſſage out of it. 2. They receive a peremptory refuſal from the king of Edom: and, to enforce it, he draws out his people to the frontiers to oppoſe them; jealous of ſuch a numerous army, leſt they ſhould ſeize the country, or inheriting

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ing the family feud of Eſau, and willing to diſappoint them of the inheritance they ſought in Canaan. *Note*, (1.) No quarrels ſo laſting and inveterate as thoſe of near relations. (2.) If we are the people of God, we may not wonder if we meet with the greateſt unkindneſs from thoſe, of whom we might reaſonably expect the greateſt affection.

[t] Chap. xxxiii. 37. [u] Chap. xxi. 4.
† Heb. Mouth. [x] Chap. xxxiii. 38. Deut. xxxii. 50.
[y] Exod. xxix. 29, 30.
[z] Deut. x. 6. & xxxii. 50.
[a] So Deut. xxxiv. 8.

22. ¶ And the children of Iſrael, *even* the whole congregation journeyed from [t] Kadeſh, and [u] came unto mount Hor. 23. And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coaſt of the land of Edom, ſaying, 24. Aaron ſhall be gathered unto his people: for he ſhall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Iſrael, becauſe ye rebelled againſt my † word at the water of Meribah. 25. [x] Take Aaron and Eleazar his ſon, and bring them up unto mount Hor: 26. And ſtrip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his ſon: and Aaron ſhall be gathered *unto his people*, and ſhall die there. 27. And Moſes did as the LORD commanded: and they went up into mount Hor, in the ſight of all the congregation. 28. [y] And Moſes ſtripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his ſon; and [z] Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moſes and Eleazar came down from the mount. 29. And when all the congregation ſaw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron [a] thirty days, *even* all the houſe of Iſrael.

v. 22—29. Death, when he ſtrikes in a family, often repeats his blow. Aaron quickly follows his ſiſter to the grave. They were now, after being ſupplied with neceſſary proviſions, wheeled to the right, and compaſſing the land of Edom. At mount Hor God informs Moſes and Aaron, that Aaron ſhall die there. The deareſt friends at laſt muſt be ſeparated. Though his ſin haſtened his death, yet dies he not under wrath, but gathered in the arms of divine mercy to his people. Death to the children of God, is but as the ſickle of the reaper, which cuts down the reed, only to ſecure the wheat in God's barn. Aaron cheerfully ſubmits to the divine command, and, with Moſes and Eleazar his ſucceſſor, goes in the ſight of the congregation to the foot of the mountain, dreſſed in his pontifical robes. *Note*, (1.) The dying believer looks moſt beautiful, when neareſt the borders of the grave. (2.) Faith diſarms death of its terrors. They need not fear to die, whoſe ſouls are ſafe in the arms of God's everlaſting love. They aſcend the mountain, and there Moſes ſtrips Aaron of the robes with which he had arrayed him. *Note*, (1.) When God calls for our parting, we muſt chearfully reſign our deareſt friends. (2.) Thus ſoon will death ſtrip us of our ornaments, and naked as we came from the womb, muſt we return to the grave. Eleazar is inveſted hereupon with the enſigns of his office, and Aaron beholds with joy his ſon his ſucceſſor, and in him the prieſthood perpetuated. *Note*, (1.) Nothing more pleaſing to parents, than, ere they lie down in the grave, to ſee their children comfortably ſettled. (2.) When aged miniſters are departing, they are then happy if they behold the glorious cauſe of God tranſmitted by them into the hands of faithful and zealous ſucceſſors. There Aaron died; his ſon and brother cloſed his eyes, and buried him in the mount. It is a great comfort on a dying-bed to have around us affectionate friends; their tenderneſs helps to ſmooth the rugged hand of death. Moſes and Eleazar then returned to the people; and they, though when Aaron was alive they had often reproached him, now feel and mourn the loſs. Death will do juſtice to thoſe who never found it before. Tho' the rebukes of a faithful miniſter once offended, when he is gone, his loſs will be felt and lamented.

CHAP. XXI.

The armies of Iſrael now begin to enter upon action. Here is, 1. *The defeat of Arad the Canaanite,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The chaſtiſement of the people with fiery ſerpents for their murmurings, and the relief granted them upon their ſubmiſſion by a braſen ſerpent,* ver. 4—9. 3. *Several marches forward, and ſome occurrences by the way,* ver. 10—20. 4. *The celebrated conqueſt of Sihon king of the Amorites,* ver. 21—32. *and of Og king of Baſhan,* ver. 33—35. *And poſſeſſion taken of their land.*

[a] Chap. xxxiii. 40. See Judg. i. 16.
† i. e. Utter deſtruction.

1. AND *when* [a] king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the ſouth, heard tell that Iſrael came by the way of the ſpies, then he fought againſt Iſrael, and took *ſome* of them priſoners. 2. And Iſrael vowed a vow unto the LORD, and ſaid, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly deſtroy their cities. 3. And the LORD hearkned to the voice of Iſrael, and delivered up the Canaanites: and they utterly deſtroyed them, and their cities, and he called the name of the place † Hormah.

v. 1—3. The king Arad, (or rather of Arad) a Canaanite, is the firſt to oppoſe Iſrael's progreſs, and ſuffers for it. To prove his people, God permits him at firſt ſome little ſucceſs. Thus are ſinners by proſperity often hurried faſter to their ruin; but when, inſtead of murmuring, they humbly approach unto God, and vow to devote to him the ſpoil, and utterly to conſume the people and their cities; then God delivers them up. They are routed on every ſide, and univerſal deſolation ſpread through their country. *Note*, (1.) Tho' we may be foiled with an attack of our ſpiritual enemies, we may not faint, but pray, and then we ſhall at laſt be conquerors. (2.) We muſt give no quarter to our ſins; theſe Canaanites muſt be ſlain without mercy.

[b] Chap. xx. 22. & xxxiii. 41.
† Heb. Shortened.
[c] Chap. xi. 6.
[d] Wiſd. xvi. 1, 5. 1 Cor. x. 9.
[e] Deut. viii. 15.
[f] Exod. viii. 8, 28. 1 Kings xiii. 6. Acts viii. 24.
[g] 2 Kings xviii. 4. John iii. 14.

4. ¶ And [b] they journeyed from mount Hor, by the way of the Red-ſea, to compaſs the land of Edom: and the ſoul of the people was much † diſcouraged becauſe of the way. 5. And the people ſpake againſt God, and againſt Moſes, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt, to die in the wilderneſs? for *there is* no bread, neither *is there any* water, and [c] our ſoul loatheth this light bread. 6. And [d] the LORD ſent [e] fiery ſerpents among the people; and they bit the people, and much people of Iſrael died. 7. ¶ Therefore the people came to Moſes, and ſaid, We have ſinned, for we have ſpoken againſt the LORD, and againſt thee; [f] pray unto the LORD that he take away the ſerpents from us: and Moſes prayed for the people. 8. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Make thee a fiery ſerpent, and ſet it upon a pole: and it ſhall come to paſs, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, ſhall live. 9. And [g] Moſes made a ſerpent of braſs, and put it upon a pole, and it came to paſs, that if a ſerpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the ſerpent of braſs, he lived.

v. 4—9. New provocations bring down new plagues upon them. We have here, 1. Their murmuring. Diſcouraged by the length and difficulties of the road, they quarrel not only with Moſes, but ſpeak alſo againſt God, as if his deſign was to deſtroy them, inſtead of ſaving them; and loathing God's proviſion of manna, they pretend to be now famiſhed with that light food, though ſo long and comfortably fed by it. *Note*, (1.) Many like theſe are diſcontented, though ſurrounded with mercies. (2.) The long continuance of the means of grace is apt to make them cheap in our eyes. The longer ſome enjoy the preaching of the goſpel, the leſs they value it: when it was new their appetite was ſharp, but now it is become inſipid to them. God viſits their ſin with fiery ſerpents, whoſe bite was venomous, and the effect of it burning heat, and intolerable thirſt: a puniſhment ſuited to their ſin. They feared they ſhould die, where no fear was; God therefore will give reality to their fears, and they ſhall die. Thus they who complain without cauſe, ſhall have cauſe to complain. 3. When they felt the ſmart of the ſerpents, they began to lament the ſin which brought them, and beg Moſes's advocacy, whom ſo often they had abuſed. *Note*, (1.) It is a mercy, when ſufferings by ſin lead us to repentance for ſin. (2.) In affliction, thoſe miniſters of God will be firſt ſought to, whom we have moſt deſpiſed. 4. Moſes prays, and God hears and anſwers. A ſerpent of braſs is appointed to be made, elevated on a pole, that it might be viſible to the utmoſt part of the camp; and whoſoever looked thereunto lived. Though they ſmarted by the pain of the bite, they ſhould not ſuffer death from the poiſon. *Note*, Though we do not ſuffer under ſin in hell, we ſhall ſmart for it in the body.

In their ſin, ſuffering, and method of cure, we may, as in a glaſs, ſee our own image reflected. Every man by nature is ſtung with the poiſon of ſin by that old ſerpent the devil; the effects of which muſt be ſhortly fatal, unleſs the venom be removed; and always painful, even to thoſe who recover. Chriſt Jeſus is to us this braſen ſerpent, faſhioned after the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and lifted up once on the croſs, and ſtill in the preaching of the goſpel, for the healing of the nations. No other method than this, which Infinite Wiſdom hath contrived, hath any efficacy to remove the guilt of ſin, or quiet the fears of a wounded conſcience. We are commanded to look to him, and whoever by faith, however deſperate his caſe appears, turns to a dying Saviour his dying eyes, ſhall feel his mortal pains aſſuage, and the ſting of death plucked from his heart. But if, neglecting or deſpiſing his ſalvation, the miſerable ſinner ſeeks by his own righteouſneſs to recover, or dares not truſt alone on the perfect work of Jeſus for life and glory, then he periſhes without remedy, and his ſin will be his eternal ruin.

10. ¶ And the children of Iſrael ſet forward, and [h] pitched in Oboth. 11. And they journeyed from Oboth, and [i] pitched at † Ije-abarim, in the wilderneſs which *is* before Moab, toward the ſun-riſing. 12. ¶ [k] From thence they removed, and pitched in the valley of Zared. 13. From thence they removed, and pitched on the other ſide of Arnon, which *is* in the wilderneſs that cometh out of the coaſts of the Amorites: for [l] Arnon *is* the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. 14. Wherefore it is ſaid in the book of the wars of the LORD, ‡ What he did in the Red ſea, and in the brooks of Arnon, 15. And at the ſtream of the brooks that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, and [m] ‖ lieth upon the border of Moab. 16. And from thence *they went* to [n] Beer: that *is* the well whereof the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, Gather the people together, and I will give them water. 17. ¶ Then Iſrael ſang this ſong, § Spring up, O well, † ſing ye unto it: 18. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it by *the direction of* the law-giver, with their ſtaves. And from the wilderneſs *they went* to Mattanah: 19. And from Mattanah to Nahaliel: and from Nahaliel to Bamoth: 20. And from Bamoth *in* the valley that *is* in the ‡ country of Moab, to the top of ‖ Piſgah, which looketh [o] toward § Jeſhimon.

[h] Chap. xxxiii. 43.
[i] Ibid. 44.
† i. e. Heaps of Abarim.
[k] Deut. ii. 13.
[l] Judg. xi. 18.
‡ Or Vaheb in Suphah.
[m] Deut. ii. 18.
‖ Heb. Leaneth.
[n] Judg. ix. 21.
§ Heb. Aſcend.
† Or, anſwer.
‡ Heb. Field.
‖ Or, the hill.
[o] Chap. xxiii. 28.
§ Or, the wilderneſs.

v. 10—20. We have here the journies of the people towards Canaan. Great exploits were performed by them againſt the Amorites, who had poſſeſſed a part of Moab; the particulars of which were recorded in a book called the Wars of the Lord, that is not now extant. When they were advanced from Oboth to Beer, in their want of water, God of his own motion promiſes to ſupply them abundantly. They ſeem now to have truſted without murmuring, and they find the bleſſing of doing ſo. Hereupon, 1. They celebrate with ſongs of praiſe the divine mercy, and in confidence of the promiſe, as if already fulfilled, pray and praiſe the gracious giver. *Note*, (1.) Every promiſed mercy is as much our own, as if we actually poſſeſſed it. (2.) Chriſt, by his ſpirit in the believer's heart, as a well of water, ſpringeth up unto eternal life. (3.) Praiſe is the grateful tribute we owe to God for his rich and undeſerved mercies. 2. As the people ſung, the princes digged in faith, and their ſtaves, like Moſes's rod, brought ſtreams out of the dry ground. When our conſolations ſeem at the loweſt ebb, God can thus open pools in the wilderneſs; and whilſt we, in dependance upon him, employ the ſtaff of prayer, we need not fear, but that he will lead us forth beſide the waters of comfort.

21. ¶ And [p] Iſrael ſent meſſengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, ſaying, 22. [q] Let me paſs through thy land; we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards, we will not drink *of* the waters of the well: *but* we will go along by the king's *high*-way, until we be paſt thy borders. 23. And [r] Sihon would not ſuffer Iſrael to paſs through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out againſt Iſrael into the wilderneſs: and [s] he came to Jahaz, and fought againſt Iſrael. 24. And [t] Iſrael ſmote him with the edge of the ſword, and poſſeſſed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon *was* ſtrong. 25. And Iſrael took all theſe cities: and Iſrael dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites in Heſhbon, and in all the † villages thereof. 26. For Heſhbon *was* the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought againſt the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon. 27. Wherefore they that ſpeak in proverbs, ſay, Come into Heſhbon, let the city of Sihon be built and prepared. 28. For [u] there is a fire gone out of Heſhbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath conſumed Ar of Moab, *and* the lords of the high places of Arnon. 29. Wo to thee, Moab; thou art undone, O people of [x] Chemoſh: he hath given his ſons that eſcaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites. 30. We have ſhot at them; Heſhbon is periſhed even [y] unto Dibon, and we have laid them waſte even unto Nophah, which *reacheth* unto Medeba. 31. ¶ Thus Iſrael dwelt in the land of the Amorites. 32. And Moſes ſent to ſpy out Jaazar, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that *were* there.

[p] Deut. ii. 26, 27. Judg. xi. 19.
[q] Chap. xx. 17.
[r] Deut. xxix. 7.
[s] Judg. xi. 20.
[t] Deut. ii. 32. & xxix. 7. Joſh. xii. 2. & xxiv. 8. Neh. ix. 22. Pſ. cxxxv. 10, 11. & cxxxvi 19. Amos ii. 9.
† Heb. Daughters.
[u] Jer. xlviii. 45, 46.
[x] Judg. xi. 24. 1 Kings xi. 7, 33. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.
[y] Jer. xlviii. 18, 22.

v. 21—32. Being advanced to Jeſhimon, and their way to Canaan lying through the country of Sihon, a king of the Amorites, on this ſide Jordan, they ſend him a peaceable meſſage, as before to Edom, which he returns with a denial, and ſeconds his anſwer with a fierce and unprovoked attack; the conſequence of which is his own deſtruction, and the loſs of his country, which Iſrael took poſſeſſion of; and here, and in the kingdom of Baſhan, two tribes and a half of the Iſraelites afterwards dwelt. Though this once belonged to Moab, it had been conquered by the Amorites; a record of which conqueſt is quoted in this fragment of a ſong of triumph, which the Amorites compoſed on the occaſion; wherein their conqueſt, and Moab's inability to recover it, are ſtrongly painted: ſo that no injury was hereby done to the Moabites. *Note*, (1.) They who intend miſchief to others, often fall themſelves into the pit they have digged. (2.) Worldly poſſeſſions at beſt are changeable things, and ill-gotten gain eſpecially is ſeldom long enjoyed.

33. ¶ [z] And they turned and went up by the way of Baſhan: and Og the king of Baſhan went out againſt them, he, and all his people, to the battle at [a] Edrei. 34. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and [b] thou ſhalt do to him as thou didſt unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heſhbon. 35. So they ſmote him and his ſons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they poſſeſſed his land.

[z] Deut. iii. 1. & xxix. 7.
[a] Joſh. xiii. 12.
[b] Pſ. cxxxv. 10, 11. & cxxxvi. 20.

v. 33—35. Inſtead of being warned by the fate of his neighbours, Og, king of Baſhan, haſtens to the attack, and meets the like deſtruction. God encourages his people; they fight and conquer, and poſſeſs the land. No weapon formed againſt them can proſper. The powers of corruption, though ſtrong as this gigantic Amorite, muſt fall before the believer, who is clad in the panoply of God. Theſe ſucceſſes were a happy earneſt of future victory; and from every ſtruggle againſt ſin, our faith ſhould grow more confirmed. He who is our ſtrength now, will be our ſalvation for ever.

CHAP. XXII.

In this chapter begins the famous ſtory of Balak and Balaam, their attempt to curſe Iſrael, and the baffling of that attempt. 1. *Balak's fear of Iſrael*, ver. 1—4. 2. *The embaſſy to Balaam, that he might come and curſe Iſrael, and the diſappointment he met with*, ver. 5—14. 3. *Balaam's coming to him upon his ſecond meſſage*, ver. 15—21. 4. *The oppoſition Balaam met with by the way*, ver. 22—35. 5. *The interview at length between Balak and Balaam*, ver. 36—41.

1. AND [a] the children of Iſrael ſet forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab, on this ſide Jordan by Jericho. 2. ¶ And Balak the ſon of Zippor ſaw all that Iſrael had done to the Amorites. 3. And [b] Moab was ſore afraid of the people, becauſe they *were* many: and Moab was diſtreſſed becauſe of the children of Iſrael. 4. And Moab ſaid unto [c] the elders of Midian, Now ſhall this company lick up all *that are* round about us, as the ox licketh up the graſs of the field. And Balak the ſon of Zippor *was* king of the Moabites at that time. 5. [d] He ſent meſſengers therefore unto Balaam the ſon of Beor, to [e] Pethor, which *is* by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, ſaying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the † face of the earth, and they abide over againſt me. 6. Come now therefore, I pray thee, [f] curſe me this people, for they *are* too mighty for me: peradventure I ſhall prevail, *that* we may ſmite them, and *that* I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou bleſſeſt, *is* bleſſed, and he whom thou curſeſt, is curſed. 7. And the elders of Moab, and the elders of Midian departed, with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and ſpake unto him the words of Balak. 8. And he ſaid unto them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again as the LORD ſhall ſpeak unto me: And the princes of Moab abode with Balaam. 9. And God came unto Balaam, and ſaid, What men *are* theſe with thee? 10. And Balaam ſaid unto God, Balak the ſon of Zippor, king of Moab, hath ſent unto me, *ſaying*, 11. Behold, *there is* a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: Come now, curſe me them;

[a] Chap. xxxiii. 48.
[b] Exod. xv. 15.
[c] Chap. xxxi. 8. Joſh. xiii. 21.
[d] Deut. xxiii. 4. Joſh. xiii. 22. & xxiv. 9. Neh. xiii. 1, 2. Mic. vi. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 15. Jude 11. Rev. ii. 14.
[e] See Chap. xxiii. 7. Deut. xxiii. 4.
† Heb. Eye.
[f] Chap. xxiii. 7.

them; peradventure ‡ I ſhall be able to overcome them, and drive them out. 12. And God ſaid unto Balaam, Thou ſhalt not go with them, thou ſhalt not curſe the people, for they *are* bleſſed. 13. And Balaam roſe up in the morning, and ſaid unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the LORD refuſeth to give me leave to go with you. 14. And the princes of Moab roſe up, and they went unto Balak, and ſaid, Balaam refuſeth to come with us.

‡ Heb. I ſhall prevail in fighting againſt them.

v. 1—14. Frighted at the progreſs of the arms of Iſrael, and apprehenſive leſt the next ſtroke might deſcend on them, the king of Moab, with the elders of Midian, are contriving to ſave themſelves. They need not be apprehenſive of danger: their relation, as deſcendants from Lot, ſecured them; and probably Moſes had informed them they were ſafe. But the wicked are in fear where no fear is; and they who are conſcious of their own ill intentions, are ever ready to ſuſpect ill of others. 1. The method he purſued. Unable he thought to cope with the armies of Iſrael, that had now ſpoiled his conquerors, he has recourſe to magic arts, and ſends for Balaam, a ſorcerer, to curſe the people, in hopes under his imprecations he might prevail, though he could not by his ſword alone. Who Balaam was, is uncertain; it is evident only he was famed for his incantations; and Balak aſſuredly concludes, that whom he curſeth are curſed, and whom he bleſſeth are bleſſed. To prevail on him to come, he exalts him as a God, honours him with a ſplendid embaſſy, and ſupports all with the ſolid argument of magnificent preſents. *Note*, (1.) The prayers or curſes of the wicked are alike impotent, to do good or evil. (2.) They who think to purchaſe heaven by their alms-giving, act as fooliſhly as Balak, who wanted by his gifts to procure Balaam's bleſſing. 2. The refuſal given the ambaſſadors of Moab. Balaam ſtayed them that night, that, as he ſays, he might enquire of God; and God, for his people's ſake, is pleaſed to honour him with his appearance in a dream or viſion of the night, forbids his journey, and aſſures him of the bleſſing that was upon Iſrael. In the morning he reports his anſwer to the meſſengers, but conceals the more material part, the bleſſing God had pronounced on Iſrael; and they, to flatter their maſter, make their report, as if the refuſal to come was not from God's forbidding, but from Balaam, and that he might be gained by greater invitation and preſents. Obſerve, (1.) God may for wiſe reaſons employ wicked men. No doubt, many like Balaam will periſh, though with him they may have done many wonderful works. (2.) When we love the ſin, and only are reſtrained by fear, we are but Balaam's followers. (3.) To conceal part of the truth, is as dangerous often as a direct lie.

15. ¶ And Balak ſent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they. 16. And they came to Balaam, and ſaid to him, Thus ſaith Balak the ſon of Zippor, † Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee, from coming unto me: 17. For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatſoever thou ſayeſt unto me: Come therefore, I pray thee, curſe me this people. 18. And Balaam anſwered and ſaid unto the ſervants of Balak, [g] If Balak would give me his houſe full of ſilver and gold, [h] I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do leſs or more. 19. Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye alſo here this night, that I may know what the LORD will ſay unto me more. 20. And God came unto Balaam at night, and ſaid unto him, If the men come to call thee, riſe up, *and* go with them; but yet [i] the word which I ſhall ſay unto thee, that ſhalt thou do. 21. And Balaam roſe up in the morning, and ſaddled his aſs, and went with the princes of Moab.

† Heb. Be not thou letted from, &c.

[g] Chap. xxiv. 13.

[h] 1 Kings xxii. 14. 2 Chron. xviii. 13.

[i] Ver. 35. Chap. xxiii. 12, 26.

v. 15—21. Balak was earneſt to carry his point, and therefore he ſpares no pains to accompliſh it. If he had been but at half the trouble to ſecure God's bleſſing, and Iſrael's friendſhip, he had ſucceeded better. 1. He increaſes his embaſſy, and adds diſtinguiſhed honour to his preſents. Importunate to gain him, he ſticks at nothing; let him preſcribe his own terms, and Balak will ratify them. *Note*, (1.) A man's heart muſt be ſtrongly fortified by realizing views of the eternal world, who can ſtand out againſt the united temptations of gain and honour. (2.) They who would keep from yielding to ſin, muſt reſolutely reſiſt and avoid the temptations to it. 2. Balaam receives and entertains the meſſengers, and whilſt profeſſedly adhering to the command of God, evidently betrays his willingneſs to go with them. He makes moſt honourable mention of God, and claims high relation to him, ſeeming to prefer his favour to the riches of the univerſe; but his heart was deceitful: he either intended to deceive them with fair ſpeeches, or was deceived himſelf. *Note*, (1.) Many claim an intereſt in God, whom he will diſown for his people. (2.) Sound words do not always ſpeak a ſound heart: it is eaſier to learn the language of God's people, than to ſhew their fidelity. (3.) The ſin is already committed, when we are ſeeking an excuſe for running into temptation. 3. God gave him permiſſion to go in anger. He ſhould have been ſatisfied in one denial: could he imagine there was in God any ſhadow of changing? Yet, even now he is reſtricted, and cannot ſpeak farther than he is permitted. God holds the devil's chain, and neither he nor his inſtruments can go a ſtep beyond their appointed bounds. 4. Balaam is in haſte to be gone: he does not wait to be called by the princes of Midian, but runs greedily after the bait of Balak's offers. *Note*, When the heart is gone from God, it will not be long ere the conduct betrays it.

22. ¶ And God's anger was kindled, becauſe he went: and the angel of the LORD ſtood in the way for an adverſary againſt him: Now he was riding upon his aſs, and his two ſervants *were* with him. 23. [k] And the aſs ſaw the angel of the LORD ſtanding in the way, and his ſword drawn in his hand: and the aſs turned aſide out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam ſmote the aſs to turn her into the way. 24. But the angel of the LORD ſtood in a path of the vineyards, a wall *being* on this ſide, and a wall on that ſide. 25. And when the aſs ſaw the angel of the LORD, ſhe thruſt herſelf unto the wall, and cruſht Balaam's foot againſt the wall: and he ſmote her again. 26. And the angel of the LORD went further, and ſtood in a narrow place, where *was* no way to turn either to the right hand, or to the left. 27. And when the aſs ſaw the angel of the LORD, ſhe fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he ſmote the aſs with a ſtaff. 28. And the LORD opened the mouth of the aſs, and ſhe ſaid unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou haſt ſmitten me theſe three times? 29. And Balaam ſaid unto the aſs, Becauſe thou haſt mocked me: I would there were a ſword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. 30. [l] And the aſs ſaid unto Balaam, *Am* not I thine aſs, † upon which thou haſt ridden ‡ ever ſince *I was* thine, unto this day? was I ever want to do ſo unto thee? And he ſaid, Nay. 31. Then the LORD [m] opened the eyes of Balaam, and he ſaw the angel of the LORD ſtanding in the way, and his ſword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and ‖ fell flat on his face. 32. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto him, Wherefore haſt thou ſmitten thine aſs theſe three times? behold, I went out to § withſtand thee, becauſe *thy* way is perverſe before me. 33. And the aſs ſaw me, and turned from me theſe three times: unleſs ſhe had turned from me, ſurely now alſo I had ſlain thee, and ſaved her alive. 34. And Balaam ſaid unto the angel of the LORD, I have ſinned; for I knew not that thou ſtoodeſt in the way againſt me: now therefore if it † diſpleaſe thee, I will get me back again. 35. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I ſhall ſpeak unto thee, that thou ſhalt ſpeak: ſo Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

[k] See 2 Kings vi. 17. Dan. x. 7. Acts xxii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 16. Jude 11.

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 16.

† Heb. Who haſt ridden upon me.

‡ Or, ever ſince thou waſt, &c.

[m] See Gen. xxi. 19. Luke xxiv. 16, 31.

‖ Or bowed himſelf.

§ Heb. To be an adverſary unto thee.

† Heb. Be evil in thine eyes.

v. 22—35. Balak's princes probably were in haſte to carry the glad tidings to their maſter, and Balaam was now alone with his ſervants. 1. God's anger was kindled againſt him. Sin is not the leſs provoking to him becauſe permitted. An angel with a flaming ſword is ſent to obſtruct his way. They are God's miniſters, ſent to defend the heirs of ſalvation, and to avenge his quarrel againſt their enemies. How impotent then their attempts againſt God's church and people, guarded by ſuch angelic hoſts! 2. The aſs he rode upon ſaw the danger, though Balaam was blind to it. When pride, luſt, and covetouſneſs, keep men aſleep in the arms of ſin, they are inſenſible, and ſee not the ſword of wrath hanging over their heads. The aſs turned aſide, and Balaam ſmote her to bring her into the way. Again, in a narrow part between the vineyards, ſtartled at the ſame appearance, the beaſt, eager to avoid the ſword, ran cloſe by the wall, and cruſhed Balaam's foot. Provoked at which, he ſmote her a ſecond time. So angry are we often at thoſe who would ſave us from ruin; and ſo little diſpoſed to enquire, whether our ways are not perverſe before God, and the cauſe of the accidents we meet with. At the next place of meeting the angel, a narrow paſs precluded all eſcape, and then his beaſt fell under him: at which, ſtill more incenſed, he ſtruck her the third time. Thoſe who are bent on ruin, will take no warning. 3. The dumb aſs, ſpeaking with man's voice, by a wonderful miracle, rebukes the madneſs

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of the prophet; ſhe complains juſtly of Balaam's cruelty: he in rage vindicates it with a wiſh he had a ſword to ſlay her, becauſe ſhe had mocked, or rather defiled him. *Note,* (1.) The whole creation groaneth under their ſufferings, but God hears the cries of the abuſed brutes, and will remember the cruelty of their tormentors. (2.) The inhumanity wherewith many a poor wretch treats his cattle, proves the wickedneſs and madneſs of Balaam in his heart. (3.) They who plead provocation, as an excuſe for their paſſions, will find that a fruitleſs plea at the bar of God. 4. He who gave the dumb beaſt ſpeech, gives her reaſon alſo: ſhe expoſtulates with him on the injuſtice of the treatment, from his paſt experience of her ſerviceableneſs and care of him; and that never before he had cauſe of complaint againſt her. *Note,* (1.) The uſefulneſs of the creatures to us, is a great call upon us to treat them with tenderneſs. (2.) One undeſigned falſe ſtep muſt not be treated with rigour, when the general tenor of the conduct hath been upright. 5. Balaam's eyes are now opened; the terrible viſion lays him flat on his face, juſtly apprehenſive of that ſword which hung over him. When God opens our eyes, then we ſhall tremble at that danger we were blind to before. The angel rebukes the perverſeneſs of his way, and ſhews him how indebted he was to the beaſt he had ſo injured. *Note,* We ſhall find them at laſt our beſt friends, whom we deſpiſed, or reviled, for their reproofs of our iniquity. 6. Balaam acknowledges his ſin, and profeſſes to be ready to return, willing to eſcape the danger of the way, though giving no ſymptom of ſorrow for the malignity of his intention againſt Iſrael. Thus ſome are terrified into a partial reformation, whoſe hearts remain ſtill unconverted from the love of ſin. 7. The angel permits his journey, if his mind ſtill led him on; but he is bound up from uttering a ſyllable farther than God ſhould give him, and made the unwilling inſtrument of bleſſing inſtead of curſing Iſrael. Thus God hath in his hands the hearts of all men, and can reſtrain their words and actions, and make the bittereſt enemies of his people inſtruments of good to them.

36. ¶ **And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him, unto a city of Moab, which *is* in the border of Arnon, which *is* in the utmoſt coaſt. 37. And Balak ſaid unto Balaam, Did I not earneſtly ſend unto thee to call thee? Wherefore cameſt thou not unto me? Am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour? 38. And Balaam ſaid unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee? have I now any power at all to ſay any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that ſhall I ſpeak. 39. And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto † Kirjath-Huzoth. 40. And Balak offered oxen, and ſheep, and ſent to Balaam, and to the princes that *were* with him. 41. And it came to paſs on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might ſee the utmoſt *part* of the people.**

† Or, A city of ſtreets.

v. 36—41. Balak haſtes to welcome Balaam to the borders of Moab; ſuch reſpect he pays to a falſe prophet; and ſhall the meſſenger of curſes be thus received with honour, and God's miniſters of peace be deſpiſed? He gently chides him for his delay to accept thoſe honours he deſigned him, and now is confident of ſucceſs. *Note,* When the ſinner, in his own opinion, is neareſt the ſummit of his wiſhes, then he ſtands on the precipice of deſtruction.——Balaam, with evident grief, declares his power limited, and cannot promiſe much ſucceſs from his coming; however, he is nobly entertained, ſacrifices are offered to the gods of Moab, and, after the firſt day ſpent in feſtal joy, the enſuing morning they ariſe early to proſecute their impotent deſigns; and from the high places of Baal deſcry the moſt diſtant part of Iſrael's hoſt encamped in the plain beneath. *Note,* They who will not take warning will be given up, like Balaam, to follow their own hearts.

CHAP. XXIII.

In this chapter we have Balak and Balaam buſy at work to do Iſrael a miſchief. Here is, 1. *The firſt attempt to curſe Iſrael.* (1.) *The preparation made for it by ſacrifice,* ver. 1—3. (2.) *The contrary inſtruction God gave Balaam,* ver. 4, 5. (3.) *The bleſſing Balaam was compelled to pronounce upon Iſrael inſtead of a curſe,* ver. 7—10. (4.) *The great diſappointment of Balak,* ver. 11, 12. 2. *The ſecond attempt balked,* ver. 13—26. 3. *Preparations made for a third,* ver. 27—30. *the iſſue of which we have in the next chapter.*

1. AND Balaam ſaid unto Balak, Build me here ſeven altars, and prepare me here ſeven oxen, and ſeven rams. 2. And Balak did as Balaam had ſpoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on *every* altar a bullock and a ram. 3. And Balaam ſaid unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt-offering, and I will go: peradventure the LORD will come to meet me; and whatſoever he ſheweth me, I will tell thee. And † he went to an high place. 4. And God met Balaam, and he ſaid unto him, I have prepared ſeven altars, and I have offered upon *every* altar a bullock and a ram. 5. And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and ſaid, Return unto Balak, and thus thou ſhalt ſpeak. 6. And he returned unto him, and lo, he ſtood by his burnt-ſacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab. 7. And he took up his parable and ſaid, Balak the king of Moab, hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the eaſt, *ſaying,* [a] Come, curſe me, Jacob, and come, defy Iſrael. 8. How ſhall I curſe, whom God hath not curſed? or how ſhall I defy, *whom* the LORD hath not defied? 9. For from the top of the rocks I ſee him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, [b] the people ſhall dwell alone, and ſhall not be reckoned among the nations. 10. [c] Who can count the duſt of Jacob, and the number of the fourth *part* of Iſrael? Let ‡ me die [d] the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his. 11. And Balak ſaid unto Balaam, What haſt thou done unto me? I took thee to curſe mine enemies, and behold, thou haſt bleſſed *them* altogether. 12. And he anſwered and ſaid, Muſt I not take heed to ſpeak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?

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† Heb. He went ſolitary.

[a] Chap. xxii. 6, 11, 17.

[b] Deut. xxxiii. 28.

[c] Gen. xiii. 16.

‡ Heb. My ſoul, or my life.

[d] Pſ. cxvi. 15. Iſa. lvii. 1, 2. Wiſd. v. 5. Luke ii. 29. Rev. xiv. 13.

v. 1—12. To engage God on his ſide Balaam prepares his ſacrifices, and Balak, at his command, offers them on ſeven altars. Hereupon, 1. He retires with an expectation of meeting with God; and though the ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, yet, for purpoſes of his own glory, he will give him his anſwer. Balaam, on God's appearance, boaſts of the charge he had been at in the ſacrifices, and ſeems to expect ſuch an anſwer as correſponded to his wiſhes; but God confounded his deſires, and made him the unwilling prophet of Iſrael's glory and Moab's confuſion. *Note,* (1.) They who think to make God a debtor by their ſervices, will be deeply diſappointed; the curſe of pride, on the ſervices of the ſelf-righteous, will be heavier than the curſe of ſin on the careleſs. (2.) God will meet thoſe who wait on him in his ways, with an anſwer of peace, and put a word in their mouth of bleſſing and comfort. 2. His return to Balak, who ſtood by his ſacrifice. He was not weary of waiting in ſo bad a cauſe; and ſhall not we much more always pray and never faint? Balak now is big with expectation, but how confounded with Balaam's meſſage! His parable, or prophetic word, confirms Iſrael's bleſſedneſs. 1. He owns his intention was to curſe, but that is impoſſible, God hath decreed the contrary, and nothing can reverſe the ſentence. Inviolable is the ſafety of God's Iſrael, and impotent the malice of men or devils againſt them; none can pluck them from the Saviour's hands, or ſeparate them from his love. 2. He is ſtruck with their appearance, and burſts forth into an admiration of their happineſs. They are confeſſedly a people ſeparated for God, under the divine guidance, and diſtinguiſhed by their honourable peculiarity, from all the nations around them. God's are a ſelected people, choſen by his everlaſting love, called by his effectual grace, diſtinguiſhed by a holy ſeparation from the world, in all their ways, and deſigned to dwell alone with him in his heavenly land of bliſs and glory. He expreſſes his aſtoniſhment at their multitude, countleſs as the duſt of the plain where they appeared; yea the fourth part of them, a ſquadron only of their hoſts, appears innumerable. So remarkably were the promiſes to Abraham fulfilled, even by the confeſſion of their enemies. *Note,* When all God's ſpiritual Iſrael are collected at the laſt great day, they will be a more glorious hoſt, which no man can number. Fain would he have his lot in death with righteous Iſrael, nor wiſhes a greater portion than that his laſt end might be like theirs. Vain wiſh! ſucceeded by no efforts, and dying as it dropt from his tongue. *Note,* (1.) The righteous die as other men; God's covenant protects them not from temporal, though it ſecures them from eternal death. (2.) Their death is deſireable, not dreadful; at their abſence from the body they will be admitted to the preſence of their Lord. (3.) Many wiſh their end, who do not like their way; but theſe are inſeparable. We muſt be companions with them in our lives, if in our deaths we would not be divided. Provoked highly at the unexpected diſappointment, with rage the King of Moab reproaches the prophet; while Balaam urges, in his defence, the neceſſity under which he acted, and owns the over-ruling power of the Almighty God. *Note,* (1.) God will make men know, that the heavens rule. (2.) Kings rage in vain againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed.

13. And Balak ſaid unto him, Come, I pray thee, with

with me unto another place, from whence thou mayſt ſee them: thou ſhalt ſee but the utmoſt part of them, and ſhalt not ſee them all: and curſe me them from thence. 14. ¶ And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of † Piſgah, and built ſeven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on *every* altar. 15. And he ſaid unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt-offering, while I meet *the LORD* yonder. 16. And the LORD met Balaam, and [e] put a word in his mouth, and ſaid, Go again unto Balak, and ſay thus. 17. And when he came to him, behold, he ſtood by his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak ſaid unto him, What hath the LORD ſpoken? 18. And he took up his parable and ſaid, Riſe up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou ſon of Zippor: 19. [f] God *is* not a man that he ſhould lie, neither the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent: hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do *it?* or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good? 20. Behold, I have received *commandment* to bleſs: and he hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it. 21. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael: the LORD his God *is* with him, and [g] the ſhout of a king *is* among them. 22. [h] God brought them out of Egypt: he hath as it were the ſtrength of an unicorn. 23. Surely *there is* no enchantment againſt Jacob, neither *is there* any divination ‡ againſt Iſrael: according to this time it ſhall be ſaid of Jacob and of Iſrael, What hath God wrought! 24. Behold, the people ſhall riſe up [i] as a great lion, and lift up himſelf as a young lion: [k] he ſhall not lie down, until he eat *of* the prey, and drink the blood of the ſlain.

† Or, The hill.
e Chap. xxii. 35.
f 1 Sam. xv. 29. Mal. iii. 6. Rom. xi. 29. Jam. i. 17. Tit. i. 2.
g Pſ. lxxxix. 15.
h Chap. xxiv. 8. Deut. xxxiii. 17.
‡ Or, in.
i Gen. xlix. 9.
k Ibid. 27.

v. 13—24. Not diſcouraged with one diſappointment, this reſtleſs enemy of God's people renews his attempts againſt them, hoping another place and ſacrifice might be more ſucceſsful, and that he might prevail againſt a part of the hoſts of Iſrael, if not againſt the whole. Balaam, as before, goes to meet the Lord, and returns to anſwer Balak's enquiry with a meſſage yet more confounding. They who perſiſt in the ways of ſin, will ſurely find each day repeated and bitterer diſappointments.—Balaam ſummons the King's ſolemn attention; for who dares trifle when God is ſpeaking by his ſervants? 1. He pronounces God's irreverſible decree. His purpoſes are unchangeable, and his word once ſpoken unalterable. Iſrael is ſecure in the divine faithfulneſs, and the object of the divine regard; he beholds no iniquity among them, ſince they had wholly ceaſed from idols. *Note*, (1.) God's people are bound to truſt him, and are ſafe in his faithfulneſs. His gifts and calling are without repentance. 2. God regards no iniquity in the ſoul that is found in Chriſt; his paſt ſins are all forgiven; his remaining corruption is hid by the conſtant ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus, and cloathed in perfect righteouſneſs he appears without ſpot before God. 2. He declares their power irreſiſtible. Since God is for them and with them, oppoſition is vain. *Note*, 'Tis our comfort to think, amidſt every attack of our ſpiritual enemies, that the everlaſting arms of the omnipotent God are under us. 3. He foretells the ravages they ſhould make among the nations, like a great lion amidſt the defenceleſs flocks; ſo that their foes in amazement, and themſelves in triumph, ſhall cry, "What hath God wrought!" *Note*, (1.) God's wonders of grace will, to eternity, be the matter of his people's triumphant ſongs. (2.) Where Jeſus our King is in the midſt of us, we ſhall aſſuredly go on conquering and to conquer. 4. He owns the vanity of his own inchantments, and the fruitleſsneſs of every other's attempt. Even the enemies of God's people ſhall at laſt be made to confeſs their impotence to hurt them, *Viciſti Galilæe.*

25. ¶ And Balak ſaid unto Balaam, Neither curſe them at all, nor bleſs them at all. 26. But Balaam anſwered and ſaid unto Balak, Told not I thee, ſaying, [l] All that the LORD ſpeaketh, that I muſt do? 27. ¶ And Balak ſaid unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place: peradventure it will pleaſe God, that thou mayſt curſe me them from thence. 28. And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh [m] toward Jeſhimon. 29. And Balaam ſaid unto Balak, Build me here ſeven altars, and prepare me here ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams. 30. And Balak did as Balaam had ſaid, and offered a bullock and a ram on *every* altar.

l 1 Kings xxii. 14.
m Chap. xxi. 20.

v. 25—30. Balak is now quite diſpirited with his attempts. Fain would he compound the matter, that Balaam ſhall neither bleſs nor curſe, whilſt he owns the impulſe he is under, which he is unable to controul. God's counſel ſhall ſtand, notwithſtanding the devices of man; and he will make the enemies of his people, however unwilling, know that he hath loved them. Once more the King is earneſt to make trial, and Balaam as deſirous to gain the wages of unrighteouſneſs; the place choſen is ſacred to Baal, the ſacrifices repeated, and there he would fain hope at leaſt ſomething may be done. *Note*, The devil always labours to prop up the ſinking hopes of ſinners, and leads them from one refuge of lies to another, till their ruin is compleated.

CHAP. XXIV.

In this chapter we are told, 1. *The final bleſſing Balaam pronounced over Iſrael,* ver. 1—9. 2. *His diſmiſſion by Balak,* ver. 10—13. 3. *The predictions Balaam left behind him concerning Iſrael, and ſome of the neighbour-nations,* ver. 14—25.

1. AND when Balaam ſaw that it pleaſed the LORD to bleſs Iſrael, he went not as at [a] other times, † to ſeek for enchantments, but he ſet his face toward the wilderneſs. 2. And Balaam lift up his eyes, and he ſaw Iſrael abiding *in his tents*, according to their tribes: and the Spirit of God came upon him. 3. [b] And he took up his parable, and ſaid, Balaam the ſon of Beor hath ſaid, and the man ‡ whoſe eyes are open, hath ſaid: 4. He hath ſaid, which heard the words of God, which ſaw the viſion of the Almighty, [c] falling *into a trance*, but having his eyes open; 5. How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, *and* thy tabernacles, O Iſrael! 6. As the valleys are they ſpread forth, as gardens by the river ſide, as the trees of lign-aloes [d] which the LORD hath planted, *and* as cedar-trees, beſide the waters. 7. He ſhall pour the water out of his buckets, and his ſeed *ſhall be* in many waters, and his king ſhall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom ſhall be exalted. 8. [e] God brought him forth out of Egypt, he hath as it were the ſtrength of an unicorn: he ſhall eat up the nations his enemies, and ſhall break their bones, and pierce *them* through with his arrows. 9. [f] He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who ſhall ſtir him up? [g] Bleſſed *is* he that bleſſeth thee, and curſed *is* he that curſeth thee.

a Chap. xxiii. 3, 15.
† Heb. To the meeting of inchantments.
b Chap. xxiii. 7, 18.
‡ Heb. Who had his eyes ſhut, but now open.
c See 1 Sam. xix. 24. Ezek. i. 28. Dan. viii. 18. & x. 16. Rev. i. 17.
d Pſ. civ. 16.
e Chap. xxiii. 22.
f Gen. xlix. 9.
g Gen. xii. 3. & xxvii. 29.

v. 1—9. Convinced now how vain were his inchantments, he retires no more to aſk counſel, but ſet his face towards the camp of Iſrael, and the ſpirit of prophecy comes upon him. 1. He prefaces his parable with a boaſt of the viſions he was favoured with, and the diſtinctneſs of his views of the events he predicted. Poor ſubject of boaſting! whilſt his heart remained unchanged, his knowledge rendered him but the more guilty. *Note*, (1.) 'Tis not light in the underſtanding, but grace in the heart, which is the truly valuable bleſſing. (2.) The knowledge which makes us proud, is the moſt effectual bar to the wiſdom which maketh wiſe unto ſalvation. 2. He admires the beauty of Iſrael's hoſt, and their regularity and order; ſpacious as the valleys, pleaſing to look upon as a blooming garden, fragrant as the ſmell of aloes, and ſtrong as the cedar. The church of God, in this valley of humiliation, is incloſed like a garden from the world around it, watered with the rivers of divine love, adorned with graces more fragrant than ſpices: and every believer is a tree of righteouſneſs planted of God, more flouriſhing and incorruptible than the cedar of Libanus. 3. He foretells the plenty, honour, and conqueſt which God would give them from heaven: his rain ſhall water their furrows; their kings ſhall eclipſe the glory of the moſt renowned monarchs, and their people, ſtrong as the unicorn, ſhall puſh their enemies the Canaanites, as they have done the Egyptians, till they have deſtroyed them, and dwell in peaceful ſecurity; none daring to diſturb them in their poſſeſſions, any more than to rouſe the ſlumbering lion. *Note*, Great is the glory of God's ſpiritual Iſrael; every believer ſhall be a king upon his throne, and receive a kingdom not only higher than Agag's, but alſo eternal in the heavens. 4. He concludes with a bleſſing on their friends, and a curſe on their enemies. *Note*, God regards what is done to his ſervants as done to himſelf; whether they be injuries or kindneſſes, he will recompenſe them accordingly.

10. ¶ And Balak's anger was kindled againſt Balaam, and he [h] ſmote his hands together: and Balak ſaid unto Balaam, I called thee to curſe mine enemies, and behold, thou haſt altogether bleſſed *them* theſe three times. 11. Therefore now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour, but lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour. 12. And Balaam ſaid unto Balak, Spake I not alſo to thy meſſengers, which thou ſenteſt unto me, ſaying, 13. [i] If Balak would give me

h Ezek. xx 14, 17. & xxii. 13.
i Chap. xx 18.

me his houſe full of ſilver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do *either* good or bad of mine own mind; *but* what the LORD ſaith, that will I ſpeak. 14. And now behold, I go unto my people: come *therefore, and* [k] I will advertiſe thee, what this people ſhall do to thy people [l] in the latter days.

[k] Mic. vi. 5. Rev. ii. 14.
[l] Gen. xlix. 1.

v. 10—14. Balak now, in the height of fury, ſmites his hands, baniſhes Balaam his country, reproaches him for his diſappointment, and mentions the honours he had loſt. Balaam replies, that he acted as he was neceſſitated, and had given him fair warning, he could do no other; but to compenſate, in ſome meaſure, his diſappointment, he will advertiſe him of what muſt happen in his own and the neighbour countries hereafter; but the viſion is diſtant, and there ſhall be peace in his days. *Note*, (1.) Whatever we loſe, or whatever reproach we ſuffer for faithful adherence to God's word, we ſhall be great gainers at laſt. (2.) They are doubly wretched, whom an awakened conſcience will not ſuffer to enjoy this world, yet live in bondage to thoſe luſts that muſt exclude them from heaven.

15. ¶ And he took up his parable, and ſaid, Balaam the ſon of Beor hath ſaid, and the man whoſe eyes are open, hath ſaid: 16. He hath ſaid, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the moſt High, *which* ſaw the viſion of the Almighty, falling *into a trance*, but having his eyes open: 17. I ſhall ſee him, but not now: I ſhall behold him, but not nigh: there ſhall come [m] a Star out of Jacob, and [n] a Sceptre ſhall riſe out of Iſrael, and ſhall † ſmite the corners of Moab, and deſtroy all the children of Sheth. 18. And [o] Edom ſhall be a poſſeſſion, Seir alſo ſhall be a poſſeſſion for his enemies, and Iſrael ſhall do valiantly. 19. Out of Jacob ſhall come he that ſhall have dominion, and ſhall deſtroy him that remaineth of the city. 20. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and ſaid, Amalek *was* ‡ the firſt of the nations, but his latter end *ſhall be*, ‖ that he periſh for ever. 21. And he looked on the Kenites; and took up his parable, and ſaid, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou putteſt thy neſt in a rock. 22. Nevertheleſs § the Kenite ſhall be waſted, * until Aſſhur ſhall carry thee away captive. 23. And he took up his parable, and ſaid, Alas, who ſhall live when God doth this! 24. And ſhips *ſhall come* from the coaſt of [p] Chittim, and ſhall afflict Aſſhur, and ſhall afflict [q] Eber, and he alſo ſhall periſh for ever. 25. And Balaam roſe up, and went and [r] returned to his place; and Balak alſo went his way.

[m] Mat. ii. 2. Rev. xxii. 16.
[n] Pſ. cx. 2.
† Heb. ſmite through the corners of Moab. See 2 Sam. viii. 2.
[o] 2 Sam. viii. 14. Pſ. lx. 8, 9, 12.
‡ i. e. that warred with Iſrael. See Exod. xvii. 8.
‖ Or, even to deſtruction. 1 Sam. xv. 3.
§ Heb. Rain.
* Or, how long ſhall it be ere Aſſhur carry thee away captive?
[p] Gen. x. 4. Dan. xi. 30.
[q] Gen. x. 21.
[r] See Chap. xxxi. 8.

v. 15—25. We have here Balaam's parting prophecy, and a memorable one it is. He prefaces it as before, with a boaſt of his own high knowledge, and the viſions of the Almighty he had been favoured with; and they were great indeed, but to him unprofitable. Many a man knows much of God, and ſpeaks moſt honourably of him, who hath neither true faith in him, nor love of him. The prophecy itſelf reſpects a double event, the ſubdual of the enemies of God's Iſrael, ſpiritual and temporal. 1. The Edomites and Moabites are to be ſubdued by the arms of Iſrael, which came to paſs in the reign of that bright ſtar of Jacob King David; who was herein a type of his Lord, the Meſſiah. Him at a diſtance Balaam ſaw, as a ſtar bright in glory, and with that ſceptre whoſe rule ſhall never end; triumphant over all the enemies of his people, and animating them with that holy courage which ſhall make all the powers of darkneſs yield to them the victory. Probably from Balaam, by tradition, this prophecy was ſpread in the eaſt; and when that extraordinary ſtar appeared to the wiſe men, it awakened their enquiries after the perſon whom the ſtar repreſented. 2. The Amalekites are doomed to ſuffer for their enmity againſt Iſrael; Amalek, who firſt attacked them, ſhall be utterly conſumed, which Saul, in great meaſure, fulfilled, and was entirely effected in the days of Hezekiah. *Note*, They who are at enmity with God's people ſhall ſmart for it, to their ruin. 3. Concerning the Kenites, who dwelt among the Amalekites, he predicts their captivity by the Aſſyrians, ſtrong and even impregnable as their abode appeared. No fortifications are proof againſt the decree of God. 4. He foretells the affliction of the Jews, under the Grecian and Roman monarchies, after their conqueſts of the Aſſyrians, but theſe alſo muſt ſucceſſively ſink into ruins; and as the power of a ſon of Eber, the Meſſiah, by his providence, hath overturned theſe mighty ſtates, his grace ſhall finally ſubdue every remaining antichriſtian power, and Rome papal ſhall periſh as Rome pagan hath done, their power be broken, and that kingdom be eſtabliſhed where Jeſus ſhall reign for ever over his ſaints glorioufly. Happy the ſoul that lives when the Lord doth this, and partakes of his everlaſting triumphs!

CHAP. XXV.

Here is, 1. *The ſin of Iſrael,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The puniſhment of this ſin,* ver. 4—9. 3. *The pious zeal of Phinehas in ſlaying Zimri and Cozbi, two impudent ſinners,* ver. 6, 8, 14, 15. 4. *God's commendation of the zeal of Phinehas,* ver. 10, 13. 5. *Enmity put between the Iſraelites and the Midianites,* ver. 16—18.

1. AND Iſrael abode in [a] Shittim, and [b] the people begun to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. 2. And [c] they called the people unto [d] the ſacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods: 3. And Iſrael joined himſelf unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Iſrael. 4. And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [e] Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD againſt the ſun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Iſrael. 5. And Moſes ſaid unto [f] the judges of Iſrael, [g] Slay ye every one his men, that were joined unto Baal-peor.

[a] Chap. xxx. 16. & xxxiii. 49.
[b] 1 Cor. x. 6.
[c] Joſh. xxii. 17. Pſ. cvi. 28. Hoſ. ix. 10.
[d] Exod. xxxiv. 15. 1 Cor x. 20.
[e] Deut. iv. 3. Joſh. xxii. 17.
[f] Exod. xviii. 21, 25.
[g] Exod. xxxii. 27.

v. 1—5. Balaam's counſel, before he left Moab, produced a worſe effect than his intended curſe could have done; and the charms of Moab's daughters proved a more fatal ſnare to Iſrael's hoſts than all his inchantments. The alluring arts of laſcivious beauty are the ſtrongeſt witchcraft of the devil. Obſerve,

1. The crying ſins Iſrael committed; whoredom and idolatry. The daughters of Moab, armed with more offenſive weapons than Balak's mighty warriors, with eyes full of adultery, that cannot ceaſe from ſin, and tongues ſmoother than oil, yet ſharper than drawn ſwords, beſet them, and (ſhameful to tell!) prevail. Bound in theſe ſilken cords of pleaſure's lure, they run to thoſe ſacrifices they before abhorred; for the gratification of beſtial appetites deny their God, and ſacrifice to the abomination of the Moabites. Blind to the happy land before them, even at Shittim, in full view of it, they prefer a preſent luſt to all the promiſes of a covenant God. Dreadful and aggravated crime! *Note*, (1.) They who tempt others to ſin, are the moſt guilty inſtruments of the devil. (2.) The love of women is the moſt dangerous of temptations. (3.) Flight is the only conqueſt. (4.) If once the heart be enſnared, there are no lengths unto which the miſerable ſlave of luſt and beauty may not be led. (5.) Nothing more endangers the ſoul's final apoſtacy from God, than yielding to the ſollicitation of the fleſh. (6.) By this ſin eſpecially the ſpirit of God is grieved, and the wrath of God brought down upon the ſinner.

2. The judgment of God upon them. They will buy pleaſure dear, who purchaſe it at the price of God's diſpleaſure, and eternal damnation. Execution is immediately done upon the princes, the chief of the offenders; they are hung up before the Lord, and a plague conſumes the people. *Note*, (1.) The fire of luſt and the flames of hell are inſeparable. (2.) The greatneſs of the offender is an aggravation of the crime, and therefore ſuch ſhould never be ſpared. (3.) The plagues of God will quickly turn the ſweets of forbidden pleaſure into the gall of aſps, and the gnawings of the worm that never dies.

6. ¶ And behold one of the children of Iſrael came, and brought unto his brethren a Midianitiſh woman, in the ſight of Moſes, and in the ſight of all the congregation of the children of Iſrael, who *were* weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 7. And [h] when Phinehas, [i] the ſon of Eleazar, the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, ſaw *it*, he roſe up from amongſt the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; 8. And he went after the man of Iſrael into the tent, and thruſt both of them through, the man of Iſrael and the woman through her belly; ſo the plague was ſtayed from the children of Iſrael. 9. [k] And thoſe that died in the plague, were twenty and four thouſand. 10. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 11. [l] Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar, the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Iſrael, (while he was zealous † for my ſake among them) that I conſumed not the children of Iſrael in my jealouſy. 12. Wherefore ſay, Behold, [m] I give unto him my covenant of peace. 13. And he ſhall have it, and [n] his ſeed after him, *even* the covenant of an everlaſting prieſthood, becauſe he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Iſrael. 14. Now the name of the Iſraelite that was ſlain, *even* that was ſlain with the Midianitiſh woman, *was* Zimri the ſon of Salu, a prince of a ‡ chief houſe among

[h] Pſal. cvi. 30. 1 Mac. ii. 54.
[i] Exod. vi. 25.
[k] 1 Cor. x. 8.
[l] Ver. 7. Pſal. cvi. 30.
† Heb. With my zeal. See 2 Cor. xi. 2.
[m] Mal. ii. 4, 5. & iii. 1. Ecclus xlv. 24. 1 Mac. ii. 54.
[n] See 1 Chron. vi. 4, &c.
‡ Heb. houſe of a father.

the Simeonites. 15. And the name of the Midianitiſh woman that was ſlain, *was* Cozbi the daughter of [o] Zur; he *was* head over a people, *and* of a chief houſe in Midian.

Before Chriſt 1451.

[o] Chap. xxxi. 8. Joſh. xiii. 21.

v. 6—15. Never was wickedneſs more daring than in Zimri, nor zeal more flaming than in Phinehas. Whilſt Moſes and the people were, with penitential tears, lamenting their ſin, and deprecating the judgments they had provoked, with bare-faced impudence, as if glorying in his ſhame, this prince of Simeon leads a harlot of quality openly to his tents. *Note*, Impudence in ſin is uſually the conſequence of lewdneſs. Phinehas, fired with jealouſy for God's glory, and indignation at the horrid crime, haſtens to follow this ſhameleſs pair, ſurprizes them in their crime, and plunging his javelin through them both, executes upon them, as God's magiſtrate, deſerved vengeance. Though ſome ſinners are too great for human laws, let them know there is a ſword of God will reach them.—God expreſſes his approbation of the deed, by a removal of the plague which had begun, and ſettles the entail of the prieſthood on the children of Phinehas; becauſe by his zeal as a prieſt, and fidelity as a magiſtrate, he had turned away wrath from the congregation. *Note*, (1.) The impartial diſtribution of juſtice upon offenders, is one chief means to rid the land of ſin, and ſave it from God's plagues, (2.) In God's cauſe we muſt not fear to rebuke the greateſt or moſt daring ſinners. (3.) God will recompenſe thoſe who are zealous in his cauſe with peculiar bleſſings.

16. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 17. [p] Vex the Midianites, and ſmite them: 18. For they vex you with their wiles, wherewith they have beguiled you, in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian their ſiſter, which was ſlain in the day of the plague, for Peor's ſake.

[p] Chap. xxxi. 2.

v. 16—18. Whilſt Iſrael ſmarts under the rod of correction, let not the Midianites, the occaſion of their ſin, think they ſhall go unpuniſhed; the ſword of vengeance awakes, and Midian is conſumed. *Note*, They who turn tempters to others, muſt expect ſhortly themſelves to be tormented with the devil and his angels: His work and wages go together.

CHAP. XXVI.

In this chapter, 1. *Orders are given for numbring the people*, ver. 1—4. 2. *A regiſter of the families, and numbers of each tribe*, ver. 5—50. *and the ſum total*, ver. 51. 3. *Direction given to divide the land among them*, ver. 52—56. 4. *The families and numbers of the Levites by themſelves*, ver. 57—62. 5. *Notice is taken of the fulfilling of the threatning in the death of all theſe that were firſt numbred*, ver. 63—65.

1. AND it came to paſs after the plague, that the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, and unto Eleazar the ſon of Aaron the prieſt, ſaying, 2. [a] Take the ſum of all the congregation of the children of Iſrael, [b] from twenty years old and upward, throughout their father's houſe, all that are able to go to war in Iſrael. 3. And Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt ſpake with them in the plains of Moab, by Jordan, *near* Jericho, ſaying, 4. *Take the ſum of the people*, from twenty years old and upward; as [c] the LORD commanded Moſes and the children of Iſrael, which went forth out of the land of Egypt. 5. ¶ [d] Reuben the eldeſt ſon of Iſrael: the children of Reuben; Hanoch, *of whom cometh* the family of the Hanochites: of Pallu, the family of the Palluites: 6. Of Heſron, the family of the Heſronites: of Carmi, the family of the Carmites. 7. Theſe *are* the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbred of them were forty and three thouſand and ſeven hundred and thirty. 8. And the ſons of Pallu; Eliab. 9. And the ſons of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. This *is that* Dathan and Abiram *which were* [e] famous in the congregation, who ſtrove againſt Moſes and againſt Aaron in the company of Korah, when they ſtrove againſt the LORD: 10. And the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and [f] they became a ſign. 11. Notwithſtanding, the children of Korah died not. 12. ¶ The ſons of Simeon after their families: of [g] Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites: of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites: of [h] Jachin, the family of the Jachinites: 13. Of [i] Zera, the family of the Zarhites: of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites. 14. Theſe *are* the families of the Simeonites, twenty and two thouſand and two hundred. 15. ¶ The children of Gad, after their families: of [k] Zephon, the family of the Zephonites: of Haggi, the family of the Haggites: of Shuni, the family of the Shunites: 16. Of [l] Ozni, the family of the Oznites: of Eri, the family of the Erites: 17. Of [m] Arod, the family of the Arodites: of Areli, the family of the Arelites. 18. Theſe *are* the families of the children of Gad, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, forty thouſand and five hundred. 19. ¶ [n] The ſons of Judah *were* Er and Onan: and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. 20. And the ſons of Judah after their families were; of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites: of Pharez, the family of the Pharzites: of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites: 21. And the ſons of Pharez were; of Heſron, the family of the Heſronites: of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites. 22. Theſe *are* the families of Judah, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, threeſcore and ſixteen thouſand and five hundred. 23. ¶ [o] Of the ſons of Iſſachar after their families: of Tola, the family of the Tolaites: of † Pua, the family of the Punites: 24. Of ‡ Jaſhub, the family of the Jaſhubites: of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites. 25. Theſe *are* the families of Iſſachar, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, threeſcore and four thouſand and three hundred. 26. ¶ [p] Of the ſons of Zebulun, after their families: Of Sered, the family of the Sardites: of Elon, the family of the Elonites: of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites. 27. Theſe *are* the families of the Zebulunites, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, threeſcore thouſand and five hundred. 28. ¶ [q] The ſons of Joſeph after their families, *were* Manaſſeh and Ephraim. 29. Of the ſons of Menaſſeh: [r] of Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead *come* the family of the Gileadites. 30. Theſe *are* the ſons of Gilead: of [s] Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites: of Helek the family of the Helekites: 31. And of Aſriel, the family of the Aſrielites: and of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites: 32. And of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites: and of Hepher, the family of the Hepherites. 33. ¶ And [t] Zelophehad the ſon of Hepher had no ſons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad, *were* Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 34. Theſe *are* the families of Manaſſeh, and thoſe that were numbred of them, fifty and two thouſand and ſeven hundred. 35. ¶ Theſe *are* the ſons of Ephraim, after their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites: of [u] Bechar, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites. 36. And theſe *are* the ſons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites: 37. Theſe *are* the families of the ſons of Ephraim, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, thirty and two thouſand and five hundred. Theſe *are* the ſons of Joſeph, after their families. 38. ¶ [x] The ſons of Benjamin after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaites: of Aſhbel, the family of the Aſhbelites: of [y] Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites: 39. Of [z] Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites. 40. And of the ſons of Bela were [a] Ard and Naaman: *of Ard*, the family of the Ardites: *and* of Naaman, the family of the Naamites. 41. Theſe *are* the ſons of Benjamin after their families: and they that were numbred of them, *were* forty and five thouſand and ſix hundred. 42. ¶ [b] Theſe *are* the ſons of Dan after their families: of ‖ Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. Theſe *are* the families of Dan after their families. 43. All the families of the Shuhamites, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, *were* threeſcore and four thouſand and four hundred. 44. ¶ [c] Of the children of Aſher after their families: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites: of Jeſui, the family of the Jeſuites: of Beriah, the family of the Beriites. 45. Of the ſons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites. 46. And the name of the daughter of Aſher, *was* Sarah. 47. Theſe *are* the families of the ſons of Aſher, according to thoſe that were numbred of them, *who were* fifty and three thouſand and

[a] Exod. xxx. 12. & xxxviii. 25, 26. Chap. i. 2.
[b] Chap. i. 3.
[c] Chap. i. 1.
[d] Gen. xlvi. 8. Exod. vi. 14. 1 Chron. v. 1.
[e] Chap. xvi. 2.
[f] Chap. xvi. 38. See 2 Pet. ii. 6.
[g] Jemuel. Gen. xlvi. 10.
[h] 1 Chron. iv. 24. Jarib.
[i] Gen. xlvi. 10. Zohar.

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[k] Gen. xlvi. 16. Ziphion.
[l] Gen. xlvi. 16. Ezbon.
[m] Gen. xlvi. 16. Arodi.
[n] Gen. xxxviii. 2, &c. & xlvi. 12. 1 Chron. ii. 3.
[o] Gen. xlvi. 13. 1 Chron. vii. 1.
† Or Puvah.
‡ Or Job.
[p] Gen. xlvi. 14.
[q] Ibid. 20.
[r] Joſh. xvii. 1.
[s] Ibid. 2. Judg. vi. 11, 24, 34. Abiezer.
[t] Chap. xxvii. 1. & xxxvi. 11.
[u] 1 Chron. vii. 20. Bered.
[x] 1 Chron. vii. 6.
[y] Gen. xlvi. 21. Ehi & Aharah. 1 Chron. viii. 1.
[z] Gen. xlvi. 21. Muppim & Huppim.
[a] 1 Chron. viii. 3. Addar.
[b] Gen. xlvi. 23.
‖ Or, Huſhim.
[c] Gen. xlvi. 17. 1 Chron. vii. 30.

and four hundred. 48. [d] Of the ſons of Naphtali, after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites: 49. Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of [e] Shillem, the family of the Shillemites. 50. Theſe *are* the families of Naphtali, according to their families: and they that were numbred of them, *were* forty and five thouſand and four hundred. 51. [f] Theſe *were* numbred of the children of Iſrael, ſix hundred thouſand and a thouſand ſeven hundred and thirty.

[d] Gen. xlvi. 24. 1 Chron. vii. 13.
[e] 1 Chron. vii. 13. Shallum.
[f] See Chap. i. 46.

v. 1—51. At God's command Moſes, and Eleazar now joined in commiſſion with him, number the people after the plague. Though they are corrected, they are not given over unto death. Their numbers, notwithſtanding the judgments whereby they had been conſumed, were but inconſiderably diminiſhed; though the ſeveral tribes had undergone great changes, ſeven of them had increaſed, whilſt five had been diminiſhed, and ſome of them in a ſurpriſing degree. It is obſerveable that Simeon and Reuben were among the latter, whoſe princes are mentioned in the former rebellions as chief, and probably their tribes ſuffered for their adherence to them. Partakers of other men's ſins muſt ſuffer with them. Dathan and Abiram are again ſtamped with the brand of infamy; and Korah's children taken notice of, as not dying with their father: as they ſeem not to have joined their father in rebellion, they are ſpared as monuments of God's mercy, and employed, as their brethren, in the ſervice of the ſanctuary. If children follow not their parents ill examples, they ſhall not be upbraided with them.

52. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 53. Unto theſe the land ſhall be divided for an inheritance, according to the number of names. 54. [g] To many thou ſhalt † give the more inheritance, and to few thou ſhalt ‡ give the leſs inheritance: to every one ſhall his inheritance be given, according to thoſe that were numbred of him. 55. Notwithſtanding, [h] the land ſhall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they ſhall inherit. 56. According to the lot ſhall the poſſeſſion thereof be divided, between many and few,

[g] Chap. xxxiii. 54.
† Heb. multiply his inheritance.
‡ Heb. diminiſh his inheritance.
[h] Chap. xxxiii. 54. Joſh. xi. 23. & xiv. 2.

v. 52—56. The land is ordered to be divided before it is conquered, becauſe the poſſeſſion was enſured to them. The diviſion of it is according to their numbers; the larger tribe ſhall have moſt, the leſſer in proportion: and yet this is to be determined by lot, that ſo every tribe may ſee God's appointment in the bounds of their habitation, and acquieſce in it. *Note*, Our place and abode, and a thouſand circumſtances of our lives, to us ſeem utterly fortuitous; but all correſpond with God's decree, and anſwer the eternal plan of his providence; a forcible reaſon for unreſerved reſignation and contentment in every place or ſtation.

57. ¶ And [i] theſe *are* they that were numbred of the Levites after their families: of Gerſhon, the family of the Gerſhonites: of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites: of Merari, the family of the Merarites. 58. Theſe *are* the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Muſhites, the family of the Korathites: and Kohath begat Amram. 59. And the name of Amram's wife *was* [k] Jochebed the daughter of Levi, whom *her mother* bare to Levi in Egypt: and ſhe bare unto Amram, Aaron and Moſes, and Miriam their ſiſter. 60. And unto Aaron was born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 61. And [l] Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered ſtrange fire before the LORD. 62. [m] And thoſe that were numbred of them, were twenty and three thouſand, all males from a month old and upward: for [n] they were not numbred among the children of Iſrael, becauſe there was no inheritance given them among the children of Iſrael.

[i] Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16, 17, 18, 19. 1 Chron. vi. 1, 16.
[k] Exod. ii. 1, 2. & vi. 20.
[l] Lev. x. 2. Chap. iii. 4. 1 Chron. xxiv. 2.
[m] See Chap. iii. 39.
[n] Chap. i. 49.

v. 57—62. Though the tribe of Levi came not under the ſentence pronounced on the reſt, they continued ſtill the ſmalleſt tribe; and were increaſed but one thouſand during theſe forty years. Nadab and Abihu's puniſhment, like Korah's, is remarked, that their brethren might remember, and dread to follow ſo bad examples.

63. ¶ Theſe *are* they that were numbred by Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt, who numbred the children of Iſrael, in the plains of Moab, by Jordan *near* Jericho. 64. But [o] among theſe there was not a man of them whom Moſes and Aaron the prieſt numbred, when they numbred the children of Iſrael in the wilderneſs of Sinai. 65. For the LORD had ſaid of them, They [p] ſhall ſurely die in the wilderneſs: and there was not left a man of them, ſave Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun.

[o] See Chap. Deut. ii. 4, 15.
[p] Chap. xiv. 28, 29. 1 Chron. x. 5, 6.

v. 63—65. Here is a moſt obſervable accompliſhment of the Divine threatning. Not a man is left of the former numbering, ſave Caleb and Joſhua. *Note*, (1.) Nothing can diſappoint the Divine decree. The ſinner, however long reſpited, muſt periſh at the laſt. (2.) Our lives are in God's hand, and every arrow of death hath its name and commiſſion written on it; they are perfectly ſafe amidſt the peſtilence, and the garments rolled in blood, concerning whom God ſaith, Come not near the men on whom is my mark.

CHAP. XXVII.

Here is, 1. *The caſe of Zelophehad's daughters determined,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Notice given to Moſes of his death approaching,* ver. 12—14. *Proviſion made of a ſucceſſor in the government,* 1. *By the prayer of Moſes,* ver. 15—17. 2. *By the appointment of God,* ver. 18—23.

1. THEN came the daughters of [a] Zelophehad, the ſon of Hepher, the ſon of Gilead, the ſon of Machir, the ſon of Manaſſeh, of the families of Manaſſeh, the ſon of Joſeph; and theſe *are* the names of his daughters, Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah. 2. And they ſtood before Moſes, and before Eleazar the prieſt, and before the princes, and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, ſaying, 3. [b] Our father died in the wilderneſs, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themſelves together againſt the LORD [c] in the company of Korah: but died in his own ſin, and had no ſons. 4. Why ſhould the name of our father be † done away from among his family, becauſe he hath no ſon? [d] Give unto us *therefore* a poſſeſſion among the brethren of our father. 5. And Moſes brought their cauſe before the LORD. 6. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 7. The daughters of Zelophehad ſpeak right: [e] thou ſhalt ſurely give them a poſſeſſion of an inheritance among their father's brethren, and thou ſhalt cauſe the inheritance of their father to paſs unto them. 8. And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, If a man die, and have no ſon, then ye ſhall cauſe his inheritance to paſs unto his daughter. 9. And if he have no daughter, then ye ſhall give his inheritance unto his brethren. 10. And if he have no brethren, then ye ſhall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren. 11. And if his father have no brethren, then ye ſhall give his inheritance unto his kinſman, that is next to him of his family, and he ſhall poſſeſs it: and it ſhall be unto the children of Iſrael a ſtatute of judgment, as the LORD commanded Moſes.

[a] Chap. xxvi. 33. & xxxvi. 1, 11. Joſh. xvii. 3.
[b] Chap. xiv. 35. & xxvi. 64, 65.
[c] Chap. xvi. 1, 2.
† Heb. Diminiſhed.
[d] Joſh. xvii. 4.
[e] Chap. xxxvi. 2.

v. 1—11. Here is the caſe of Zelophehad's daughters. Unwilling to be excluded from their father's ſhare of Canaan, they make application to the high court of judicature, where Moſes ſat as preſident; and petition, that ſince their father died not under any particular act of rebellion and attainder, but under the common ſin, they might ſhare his inheritance. They expreſſed their dependance in God's faithfulneſs, and an earneſt deſire to have a lot in the land of promiſe. Wiſe virgins indeed! May we follow their faith and ſollicitude, that we may have a part in the heavenly Canaan. As the requeſt was unprecedented, Moſes enquires of God, and he declares it juſt and reaſonable. Hereupon a ſtanding law is made for the future, that daughters, in fault of male iſſue, ſhall ſhare alike their father's patrimony; and if there be no children, it ſhall deſcend to the neareſt lineal deſcendant. *Note*, In diſpoſing of our eſtates, though we may not be bound by this Jewiſh law, yet it is the dictate of juſtice, that we alienate not our eſtate from the lineal heir, to indulge the pride of raiſing a name, or through miſtaken ideas of meritorious charities.

12. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, [f] Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and ſee the land which I have given unto the children of Iſrael. 13. And when thou haſt ſeen it, thou alſo ſhalt be gathered unto thy people, as [g] Aaron thy brother was gathered. 14. For [h] ye rebelled againſt my commandment (in the deſert of Zin,

[f] Chap. xxxiii. 47. Deut. iii. 27, & xxxii. 49, & xxxiv. 1.
[g] Chap. xx. 24, 28. & xxxi. 2. Deut. x. 6.
[h] Chap. xx. 12, 14. Deut. i. 37. Pſal. cvi. 32.

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Zin, in the ſtrife of the congregation) to ſanctify me at the water before their eyes: that *is* [i] the water of Meribah in Kadeſh in the wilderneſs of Zin.

[i] Exod. xvii. 7.

v. 12—14. Moſes is warned of his death, and reminded of his ſin, which was the cauſe of it. He muſt not enter Canaan, but he may be gratified with the ſight of it. For this purpoſe, he is ordered to go up to mount Abarim, and there, as Aaron before him, in mount Hor, after he had ſeen the promiſed land, he muſt be gathered to his fathers. *Note*, (1.) The deareſt ſervants of God go not unpuniſhed for their offences. (2.) Temporal death is the tribute we all muſt pay for ſin. (3.) The dying believer is by faith enabled to ſee the heavenly country, and to rejoice in the proſpect even on this ſide the grave. (4.) It is among the great comforts of death, that we are going to thoſe, whoſe preſence and company will make the exchange of ſtates moſt deſirable. (5.) We ſhould improve by the death of thoſe whom we have ſeen depart before us in comfort and peace, and be encouraged to hope, that our laſt end ſhall be like theirs.

15. ¶ And Moſes ſpake unto the LORD, ſaying, 16. Let the LORD, [k] the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, ſet a man over the congregation, 17. [l] Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not [m] as ſheep which have no ſhepherd. 18. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Take thee Joſhua the ſon of Nun, a man [n] in whom *is* the ſpirit, and [o] lay thine hand upon him. 19. And ſet him before Eleazar the prieſt, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their ſight. 20. And [p] thou ſhalt put *ſome* of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Iſrael may be obedient. 21. And [q] he ſhall ſtand before Eleazar the prieſt, who ſhall aſk *counſel* for him, [r] after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: [s] at his word ſhall they go out, and at his word they ſhall come in, *both* he and all the children of Iſrael with him, even all the congregation. 22. And Moſes did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joſhua, and ſet him before Eleazar the prieſt, and before all the congregation. 23. And he laid his hands upon him, and [t] gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moſes.

[k] Chap. xvi. 22. Hebr. xii. 9.
[l] 2 Chron. i. 10.
[m] 1 Kings xxii. 17. Zech. x. 2. Mat. ix. 36. Mark vi. 34.
[n] Gen. xli. 38. Judg iii. 10. & xi. 29. 1 Sam. xvi. 13, 18.
[o] Deut. xxxiv. 9.
[p] See Chap. xi. 27, 28. 1 Sam. x. 6, 9. 2 Kings ii. 15.
[q] See Joſh. ix. 14. Judg. i. 1. & xx. 18. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. & xxx. 7.
[r] Exod. xxviii. 30.
[s] Joſh. ix. 14. 1 Sam. xxii. 10.
[t] Deut. iii. 28.

v. 15—23. With tender ſollicitude for the people, that they may not be left as ſheep without a ſhepherd, we have here,

1. Moſes' prayer. He addreſſes God, as the God of the ſpirits of men, and therefore the beſt judge of their capacities, to chuſe a man to be their captain in battle, and their faithful magiſtrate; that after his death, there may be no diſputes about the government, and the people under no inconvenience for want of a fit commander. *Note*, (1.) A real patriot extends his views to the future welfare of his nation. (2.) The riſing generation ſhould be our peculiar care, that when we are dead, the congregation of the Lord may ſtill flouriſh, and his kingdom be eſtabliſhed.

2. God anſwers his requeſt in the appointment of Joſhua. He is a man in whom is the ſpirit: the ſpirit of grace, as a good man; the ſpirit of wiſdom, as a great man; and the ſpirit of courage, as a brave man. Eminent ſervices require eminent gifts and graces. In order to his ſolemn inauguration as his ſucceſſor, he is commanded to preſent him to the people, to give him a ſolemn charge for his future conduct, before them all; to lay his hands upon him, as delegating his office to him, and to honour him, by aſſociating him into the government with him immediately. Eleazar is appointed as his council, to ſtand before God to enquire for him, that being under a Divine guidance, he might be enſured of ſucceſs. *Note*, They will certainly be guided aright, who take care always to conſult the divine oracles.

3. Moſes chearfully obeys. Not envious of his ſucceſſor, nor ſollicitous about the intereſts of his own family, his ſingle care is the good of the people; a noble inſtance of diſintereſted zeal, and a ſure proof of the unfeigned humility and integrity of his own heart. Let true patriots imitate ſo worthy an example.

CHAP. XXVIII.

This chapter contains ſundry ordinances of worſhip, and provides that now they were entring Canaan, they ſhould be ſure to take their religion along with them, and not forget that, in the proſecution of their wars, ver. 1, 2. *The laws ſummed up concerning the ſacrifices*, 1. *Daily*, ver. 3—8. 2. *Weekly*, ver. 9, 10. 3. *Monthly*, ver. 11—15. 4. *Yearly*, 1. *At the paſſover*, ver. 16—25. 2. *At pentecoſt*, ver. 26—31.

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1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Command the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, My offering *and* [a] my bread for my ſacrifices made by fire *for* a † ſweet ſavour unto me, ſhall ye obſerve to offer unto me in their due ſeaſon. 3. And thou ſhalt ſay unto them, [b] This *is* the offering made by fire, which ye ſhall offer unto the LORD: two lambs of the firſt year without ſpot, ‖ day by day *for* a continual burnt-offering. 4. The one lamb ſhalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb ſhalt thou offer ‡ at even. 5. And [c] a tenth *part* of an ephah of flour for [d] a meat-offering, mingled with the fourth *part* of [e] an hin of beaten oil. 6. *It is* a continual burnt-offering, [f] which was ordained in mount Sinai, for a ſweet ſavour, a ſacrifice made by fire unto the LORD. 7. And the drink offering thereof *ſhall be* the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: [g] in the holy *place* ſhalt thou cauſe the ſtrong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink-offering. 8. And the other lamb ſhalt thou offer at even: as the meat-offering of the morning, and as the drink-offering thereof thou ſhalt offer *it*, a ſacrifice made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD.

[a] Lev. iii. 11. & xxi. 6, 8. Mal. i. 7, 12.
† Heb. Savour of my reſt.
[b] Exod. xxix. 38.
‖ Heb. In a day.
‡ Heb. Between the two evenings.
[c] Exod. xvi. 36. Chap. xv. 4.
[d] Lev. ii. 1.
[e] Exod. xxix. 40.
[f] See Amos v. 25.
[g] Exod. xxix. 42.

v. 1—8. The former generation to whom theſe laws had been given were dead, their children therefore hear a ſolemn recapitulation of them. They were ready to enter upon a ſtate of warfare, and might be tempted to neglect the Divine inſtitutions, but there was double need to ſecure their peace with God, when they were at war with the Canaanites. It may be they had been negligent of ſome of theſe obſervances, and now when they are about to be comfortably ſettled, God expects more exact obedience. The daily ſacrifice is firſt ordained for a continual burnt-offering, typical of that ſacrifice of Jeſus, the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world, who ever appears with his blood before God, to make atonement for the ſins of his people.

9. ¶ And on the ſabbath-day, two lambs of the firſt year without ſpot, and two tenth-deals of flour *for* a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and the drink-offering thereof. 10. *This is* the burnt-offering of every ſabbath, beſide the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering. 11. ¶ [h] And in the beginnings of your months ye ſhall offer a burnt-offering unto the LORD: two young bullocks, and one ram, ſeven lambs of the firſt year without ſpot, 12. And three tenth-deals of flour *for* a meat-offering, mingled with oil, for one bullock, and two tenth-deals of flour *for* a meat-offering mingled with oil, for one ram, 13. And a ſeveral tenth-deal of flour mingled with oil, *for* a meat-offering, unto one lamb, *for* a burnt-offering of a ſweet ſavour, a ſacrifice made by fire unto the LORD. 14. And their drink-offerings ſhall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third *part* of an hin unto a ram, and a fourth *part* of an hin unto a lamb: this *is* the burnt-offering of every month throughout the months of the year. 15. And one kid of the goats for a ſin-offering unto the LORD ſhall be offered, beſides the continual burnt-offering and his drink-offering.

[h] 1 Sam. xx. 5.

v. 9—15. On the ſabbath, the daily ſacrifice, with its oblations, was doubled; intimating to us, the neceſſity of improving theſe holy days, by repeated attendance at God's houſe, and double diligence in the exerciſes of religious converſation, meditation, prayer and praiſe. On the new moons, beſides the daily ſacrifice, two bullocks, a ram, and ſeven lambs were offered with their ſeveral meat and drink-offerings, and a kid of the goats for a ſin-offering. Even when we are offering ſacrifices of praiſe and thankſgiving, it is the ſin-offering of our Divine Lord once offered, that makes all our ſervices pleaſing to God. Indeed our beſt ſacrifices themſelves need this atonement, for the imperfection which attends them.

16. [i] And in the fourteenth day of the firſt month *is* the paſſover of the LORD. 17. And in the fifteenth day of this month *is* the feaſt; ſeven days ſhall unleavened bread be eaten. 18. In [k] the firſt day *ſhall be* an holy convocation: ye ſhall do no manner of ſervile work *therein*. 19. But ye ſhall offer a ſacrifice made by fire *for* a burnt-offering unto the LORD, two young bullocks, and one ram, and ſeven lambs of the firſt year: [l] they ſhall be unto you without blemiſh. 20. And their meat-offering *ſhall be of* flour mingled with oil: three tenth-deals ſhall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth-deals

[i] Exod. xii. 18. Lev. xxiii. 5. Chap. ix. 5. Deut. xvi. 1.
[k] Exod. xii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 7.
[l] Ver. 31. Chap. xxix. 8.

deals for a ram. 21. A ſeveral tenth-deal ſhalt thou offer for every lamb throughout the ſeven lambs. 22. And one goat *for* a ſin-offering, to make an atonement for you. 23. Ye ſhall offer theſe beſide the burnt-offering in the morning, which *is* for a continual burnt-offering. 24. After this manner ye ſhall offer daily throughout the ſeven days, the meat of the ſacrifice made by fire, of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD: it ſhall be offered beſide the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering. 25. And on the ſeventh day ye ſhall have an holy convocation: ye ſhall do no ſervile work.

v. 16—25. On the ſeven days after the paſſover, was the feaſt of unleavened bread. The firſt and laſt of which were days of holy convocation; and every day of the ſeven, the ſame ſacrifices were repeated as on the new moon. They need not grudge the number, or value of their ſacrifices, when they conſidered the deliverance they commemorated. A ſoul delivered by Jeſus Chriſt, from the bondage of corruption, thinks he can never enough expreſs his gratitude to his redeemer.

26. ¶ Alſo [m] in the day of the firſt-fruits, when ye bring a new meat-offering unto the LORD, after your weeks *be out*, ye ſhall have an holy convocation, ye ſhall do no ſervile work. 27. But ye ſhall offer the burnt-offering for a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD, two young bullocks, one ram, ſeven lambs of the firſt year: 28. And their meat-offering of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals unto one bullock, two tenth-deals unto one ram, 29. A ſeveral tenth-deal unto one lamb throughout the ſeven lambs. 30. *And* one kid of the goats to make an atonement for you. 31. Ye ſhall offer *them*, beſides the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, ([n] they ſhall be unto you without blemiſh) and their drink-offerings.

[m] Exod. xxiii. 16. & xxxiv. 22. Lev. 10. Deut. xvi. 10.

[n] Ver. 19.

v. 26—31. The ſame ſacrifices and offerings are enjoined on the day of Pentecoſt, the feaſt of the firſt-fruits. God, who ſo liberally provided for them, deſerved a return of acknowledgement for the harveſt they had gathered. *Note*, When at the harveſt of death we are gathered in, our ſervice will be uninterrupted ſacrifices of praiſe to God, through a bleſſed eternity.

CHAP. XXIX.

This chapter appoints the offerings made by fire unto the Lord, in the three great ſolemnities of the ſeventh month. 1. *In the feaſt of trumpets*, ver. 1—6. 2. *In the day of atonement*, ver. 7—11. 3. *In the feaſt of tabernacles, and the ſeven days following*, ver. 12—38. *And then the concluſion of theſe ordinances*, ver. 39—40.

1. AND in the ſeventh month, on the firſt *day* of the month, ye ſhall have an holy convocation, ye ſhall do no ſervile work: [a] it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you. 2. And ye ſhall offer a burnt-offering for a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD, one young bullock, one ram, *and* ſeven lambs of the firſt year without blemiſh. 3. And their meat-offering *ſhall be of* flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals for a bullock, *and* two tenth-deals for a ram: 4. And one tenth-deal for one lamb, throughout the ſeven lambs. 5. And one kid of the goats *for* a ſin-offering, to make an atonement for you: 6. Beſide [b] the burnt-offering of the month, and his meat-offering, and [c] the daily burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and their drink offerings, according unto their manner, for a ſweet ſavour, a ſacrifice made by fire unto the LORD. 7. ¶ And [d] ye ſhall have on the tenth *day* of this ſeventh month an holy convocation; and ye ſhall afflict your ſouls: ye ſhall not do any work *therein*. 8. But ye ſhall offer a burnt-offering unto the LORD *for* a ſweet ſavour, one young bullock, one ram, *and* ſeven lambs of the firſt year: [e] they ſhall be unto you without blemiſh. 9. And their meat-offering *ſhall be of* flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals to a bullock, *and* two tenth-deals to one ram: 10. A ſeveral tenth-deal for one lamb throughout the ſeven lambs: 11. One kid of the goats *for* a ſin-offering, beſides [f] the ſin-offering of atonement, and the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering of it, and their drink-offerings.

[a] Lev. xxiii. 24.

[b] Chap. xxviii. 11.

[c] Ibid. 3.

[d] Lev. xvi. 29. xxiii. 27.

[e] Chap. xxviii. 19, 31.

[f] Lev. xvi. 3, 5.

v. 1—11. The ſeventh month was diſtinguiſhed with more ſolemnities than any other. The firſt day of it was uſhered in with the feaſt of trumpets, preparatory to the day of atonement. We need continual and loud calls to repentance. The ſacrifices to be offered, were a bullock, a ram, and ſeven lambs, with their ſeveral oblations; beſides thoſe which muſt be offered as a new moon, and the daily burnt ſacrifice. We may not think extraordinary duties excuſe us from daily ſtated ſervices. When we have waited upon God in the great congregation, or ſecretly among the faithful, we muſt not neglect our family devotions, nor ſlight the work of ſecret prayer. On the tenth day of the month, was the annual ſolemn faſt: when beſide the ſervices enjoined, *Lev.* xvi. the ſame ſacrifices are to be added as on the firſt day of the month; and beſide the ſin-offering of atonement, another kid for a ſin-offering. Intimating to us, that whilſt we exerciſe faith in the blood of atonement, and grieve at our offences, our very tears need the blood of Chriſt to waſh them, and our repentance to be repented of, and pardoned.

12. ¶ And [g] on the fifteenth day of the ſeventh month ye ſhall have an holy convocation; ye ſhall do no ſervile work, and ye ſhall keep a feaſt unto the LORD ſeven days. 13. And [h] ye ſhall offer a burnt-offering, a ſacrifice made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the firſt year, they ſhall be without blemiſh. 14. And their meat-offering *ſhall be of* flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals unto every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth-deals to each ram of the two rams: 15. And a ſeveral tenth-deal to each lamb of the fourteen lambs: 16. And one kid of the goats *for* a ſin-offering, beſide the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 17. ¶ And on the ſecond day *ye ſhall offer* twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the firſt year without ſpot: 18. And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* according to their number, [i] after the manner: 19. And one kid of the goats *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering thereof, and their drink-offerings. 20. ¶ And on the third day, eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the firſt year without blemiſh: 21. And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* according to their number, [k] after the manner: 22. And one goat *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink offering. 23. ¶ And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the firſt year without blemiſh: 24. Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* according to their number, after the manner: 25. And one kid of the goats *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 26. ¶ And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the firſt year without ſpot: 27. And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* according to their number, after the manner: 28. And one goat *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 29. ¶ And on the ſixth day eight bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the firſt year, without blemiſh: 30. And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* according to their number, after the manner: 31. And one goat *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 32. ¶ And on the ſeventh day ſeven bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the firſt year without blemiſh: 33. And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* according to their number, after the manner: 34. And one goat *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 35. ¶ On the eighth day ye ſhall have [l] a ſolemn aſſembly: ye ſhall do no ſervile work *therein*. 36. But ye ſhall offer a burnt-offering, a ſacrifice made by fire of a ſweet ſavour unto the LORD, one bullock, one ram, ſeven lambs of the firſt year without blemiſh: 37. Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, *ſhall be* accord-

[g] Ibid. xxiii. 33.

[h] Ezra iii. 4.

[i] Ver. 3. 4, 9, 10. Chap. xxviii. 7, 14.

[k] Ver. 18.

[l] Lev. xxiii. 36.

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according to their number after the manner: 38. And one goat *for* a ſin-offering, beſides the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering. 39. Theſe *things* ye ſhall † do unto the LORD, in your ſet feaſts, beſides your [m] vows, and your free-will-offerings, for your burnt-offerings, and for your meat-offerings, and for your drink-offerings, and for your peace-offerings. 40. And Moſes told the children of Iſrael, according to all that the LORD commanded Moſes.

† Heb. Offer.
[m] Lev. vii. 11, 16.

v. 12—40. The feaſt of tabernacles on the 17th day of the month, was kept with every demonſtration of joy: and well it becometh thoſe to rejoice whoſe ſin is forgiven, and whoſe iniquity is pardoned. The feaſt laſted ſeven days; during which, there were many and expenſive ſacrifices: each day of the ſeven they diminiſhed one bullock, and with every days ſervice, a continual ſacrifice of atonement was offered beſides the daily burnt-offering. Our moſt expenſive ſervices have no acceptableneſs before God, farther than the blood of atonement accompanies them. Theſe were offered at the general expence, whilſt each man was left at liberty, to offer his vows and free-will-offerings beſide, according to his abilities and generoſity.

CHAP. XXX.

In this chapter we have a law concerning vows, 1. *A general rule laid down, that all vows muſt be carefully performed,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Some particular exceptions to this rule.* 1. *That the vows of daughters ſhould not be binding, unleſs allowed by the father,* ver. 3—5. *Nor,* 2. *The vows of wives, unleſs allowed by the huſband,* ver. 6—16.

1. AND Moſes ſpake unto the heads of the tribes, concerning the children of Iſrael, ſaying, This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded. 2. [a] If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or ſwear an oath to bind his ſoul with a bond, he ſhall not † break his word, he ſhall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

[a] Deut. xxiii. 21. Ecclus v. 4.
† Heb. Profane.

v. 1—2. The vow muſt in itſelf be lawful for the honour of God, and in a matter where the perſon was not before obliged, ſuch as a free-will-offering, or the like, and when once made, muſt be conſcientiouſly fulfilled. Better not vow, than not pay. To mock God, is to ruin our ſouls.

3. If a woman alſo vow a vow unto the LORD, and bind *herſelf* by a bond, *being* in her father's houſe, in her youth: 4. And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith ſhe hath bound her ſoul, and her father ſhall hold his peace at her: then all her vows ſhall ſtand, and every bond wherewith ſhe hath bound her ſoul, ſhall ſtand. 5. But if her father diſallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds, wherewith ſhe hath bound her ſoul, ſhall ſtand, and the LORD ſhall forgive her, becauſe her father diſallowed her. 6. And if ſhe had at all an huſband when † ſhe vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith ſhe bound her ſoul; 7. And her huſband heard *it*, and held his peace at her in the day that he heard *it*: then her vows ſhall ſtand, and her bonds wherewith ſhe bound her ſoul, ſhall ſtand. 8. But if her huſband diſallow her on the day that he heard *it*, then he ſhall make her vow which ſhe vowed, and that which ſhe uttered with her lips, wherewith ſhe bound her ſoul, of none effect, and the LORD ſhall forgive her. 9. But every vow of a widow, and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their ſouls, ſhall ſtand againſt her. 10. And if ſhe vowed in her huſband's houſe, or bound her ſoul by a bond with an oath; 11. And if her huſband heard *it*, and held his peace at her, *and* diſallowed her not: then all her vows ſhall ſtand, and every bond wherewith ſhe bound her ſoul ſhall ſtand. 12. But if her huſband hath utterly made them void on the day he heard *them*; *then* whatſoever proceeded out of her lips, concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her ſoul, ſhall not ſtand: her huſband hath made them void, and the LORD ſhall forgive her. 13. Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the ſoul, her huſband may eſtabliſh it, or her huſband may make it void. 14. But if her huſband altogether hold his peace at her, from day to day, then he eſtabliſheth all her vows, or all her bonds which *are* upon her: he confirmeth them, becauſe he held his peace at her, in the day that he heard *them*. 15. But if he ſhall any ways make them void, after that he hath heard *them*, then he ſhall bear her iniquity. 16. Theſe *are* the ſtatutes which the LORD commanded Moſes, between a man and his wife, between the father and his daughter, *being yet* in her youth in her father's houſe.

† Heb. Her vows were upon her.

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v. 3—16. Two exceptions are put in againſt the general rule. Perſons in the power of others, whether daughters or wives, may have their vows diſannulled by their fathers or their huſbands. If they hold their tongue, their ſilence is interpreted conſent; if they diſallow their vow, it is void, and the Lord will not require it of them. But if a woman divorced, or a widow, vow, ſhe is bound, as being at her liberty; if the vow however were made during her huſband's life, and diſallowed by him, ſhe was not bound by it after his death. Thus God ſhews his regard for family government, the entire ſubmiſſion due from children to their parents, and wives to their huſbands; even God's own ſervice is not ſo dear to him as humble ſubjection: to obey in this caſe, is better than ſacrifice. How careful then ſhould children be, not to enter into engagements without their parents conſent, leaſt they be reduced to the ſad dilemma of being diſobedient to their parents, or falſe to their vows.

CHAP. XXXI.

This chapter is the hiſtory of a Holy War, *a war with Midian. Here is,* (1.) *A divine command for the war,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *The undertaking of the war,* ver. 3—6. (3.) *The glorious ſucceſs of it,* ver. 7—12. (4.) *Their triumphant return from the war.* 1. *The reſpect Moſes paid the ſoldiers,* ver. 13. 2. *The rebuke he gave them for ſparing the women,* ver. 14—18. 3. *The directions he gave them for the purifying themſelves, and their effects,* ver. 19—24. 4. *The diſtribution of the ſpoil they had taken,* ver. 25—47. 5. *The free-will-offering of the officers,* ver. 48—54.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. [a] Avenge the children of Iſrael of the Midianites: afterward [b] ſhalt thou be gathered unto thy people. 3. And Moſes ſpake unto the people, ſaying, Arm ſome of yourſelves unto the war, and let them go againſt the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian. 4. † Of every tribe a thouſand throughout all the tribes of Iſrael, ſhall ye ſend to the war. 5. So there were delivered out of the thouſands of Iſrael, a thouſand of *every* tribe, twelve thouſand armed for war. 6. And Moſes ſent them to the war, a thouſand of *every* tribe, them and Phinehas, the ſon of Eleazar the prieſt, to the war, with the holy inſtruments, and [c] the trumpets to blow in his hand.

[a] Chap. xxv. 17.
[b] Ibid. xxvii. 13.
† Heb. A thouſand of a tribe, a thouſand of a tribe.
[c] Chap. x. 9.

v. 1—6. The Midianites had been, with the Moabites, greatly inſtrumental in drawing Iſrael aſide from God; they are therefore to be puniſhed among the firſt; for they are our worſt enemies who draw us into ſin. *Note,* Our luſts are thoſe Midianites, and on them we muſt wage unrelenting war. 1. God orders Moſes to avenge the people on their enemies, that though he may not ſee all their victories, he may behold the firſt fruits of them before he dies. It is a comfort in death to leave the church of God in a ſtate of growing proſperity. 2. Moſes obeys, and draws out a detachment of a thouſand men from each tribe; enough, if God was with them, to conſume the more numerous hoſts of Midian. God will thus teach them, that it is not ſo much the arm of fleſh, as his favour, that enſures them victory. 3. Phinehas, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf for his zeal againſt the Midianites, is ſent with them, to blow the trumpets that breathed martial ardour into every heart, and with the holy inſtruments, probably thoſe which were uſed when they conſulted God on extraordinary occaſions. *Note,* (1.) Where the battle is the Lord's, and to avenge his quarrel in ſo good a cauſe, we may boldly advance. (2.) Thoſe ſoldiers will be truly brave, whom God's miniſters teach, on the principles of the goſpel, to overcome the fear of death and danger.

7. And they warred againſt the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moſes; and [d] they ſlew [e] all the males. 8. And they ſlew the kings of Midian, beſide the reſt of them that were ſlain, *namely,* [f] Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: [g] Balaam alſo the ſon of Beor, they ſlew with the

[d] Deut. xx. 13. Judg. xxi. 11. 1 Sam. xxvii. 9. 1 Kings xi. 15, 16.
[e] See Judg. vi. 1, 2, 33.
[f] Joſh. xiii. 21.
[g] Ibid. 22.

the ſword. 9. And the children of Iſrael took *all* the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the ſpoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. 10. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly caſtles with fire. 11. [h] And they took all the ſpoil, and all the prey, *both* of men and of beaſts. 12. And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the ſpoil unto Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt, and unto the congregation of the children of Iſrael, unto the camp, at the plains of Moab, which *are* by Jordan *near* Jericho.

[h] Deut. xx. 14.

v. 7—12. The ſucceſs was anſwerable to their wiſhes. Their enemies fell before them, and juſtly ſuffered for the evil they had ſeduced Iſrael to commit. *Note*, God will often make the tempters to ſin to be tormented of thoſe whom they deceived. 1. They ſlew all the males, not all the nation, but all they met in that part of the country where they made their attack. Among them, five kings or princes of Midian fell; and as an inſtance of eſpecial judgment, Balaam the author of all the miſchief was among the ſlain, who now on the ſame malicious errand, was probably employed by the Midianites, as before by the Moabites. God will take condign vengeance on thoſe who have been the introducers of corruption among his people. If judgment overtake them not on this ſide the grave, it infallibly will on the other. 2. They took the women and children captives, plundered the country, burnt their cities and idol-temples, and returned laden with the ſpoil of their enemies.

13. ¶ And Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp. 14. And Moſes was wroth with the officers of the hoſt, *with* the captains over thouſands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the † battle. 15. And Moſes ſaid unto them, Have ye ſaved all [i] the women alive? 16. Behold, [k] theſe cauſed the children of Iſrael, through [l] the counſel of Balaam, to commit treſpaſs againſt the LORD in the matter of Peor, and [m] there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. 17. Now therefore [n] kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man, by lying with † him. 18. But all the women-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourſelves. 19. And [o] do ye abide without the camp ſeven days: whoſoever hath killed any perſon, and [p] whoſoever hath touched any ſlain, purify *both* yourſelves and your captives on the third day and on the ſeventh day. 20. And purify all *your* raiment, and all † that is made of ſkins, and all work of goats *hair*, and all things made of wood. 21. ¶ And Eleazar the prieſt ſaid unto the men of war which went to the battle, This *is* the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moſes; 22. Only the gold, and the ſilver, the braſs, the iron, the tin, and the lead, 23. Every thing that may abide the fire, ye ſhall make *it* go through the fire, and it ſhall be clean: nevertheleſs it ſhall be purified [q] with the water of ſeparation: and all that abideth not the fire ye ſhall make go through the water. 24. And [r] ye ſhall waſh your clothes on the ſeventh day, and ye ſhall be clean, and afterward ye ſhall come into the camp.

† Heb. Hoſt of war.
[i] See Deut. xx. 13. 1 Sam. xv. 3.
[k] Chap. xxv. 2.
[l] Chap. xxiv. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 15.
[m] Chap. xxv. 9.
[n] Judg. xxi. 11.
† Heb. A male.
[o] Chap. v. 2.
[p] Ibid. xix. 11, &c.
† Heb. Inſtrument, or veſſel of ſkins.
[q] Chap. xix. 9, 17.
[r] Lev. xi. 25.

v. 13—24. To congratulate their victory, Moſes and Eleazar go forth to meet the conquerors. When, 1. Moſes is wroth at the people for ſparing the women alive: they had been the chief criminals, and might endanger a fatal relapſe; they muſt, therefore, as many as have known man, be ſlain immediately. We muſt cut off the temptations to ſin, if we would be delivered from the prevalence of it. 2. As their hands muſt have been defiled with blood, and with the bodies of the ſlain, they muſt ſtay ſeven days without the camp, till they are purified; together with the captives and ſpoil they had taken, which were unclean and unfit for their uſe, till ſprinkled with the water of purification. The veſſels that would bear the fire, muſt paſs through it, and thoſe which would not, muſt be waſhed. *Note*, God's people muſt purify themſelves as a peculiar people, and all they enjoy muſt firſt be ſanctified by the word of God, and by prayer.

25. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 26. Take the ſum of the prey † that was taken, *both* of man and of beaſt, thou and Eleazar the prieſt, and the chief fathers of the congregation: 27. And [s] divide the prey into two parts; between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation. 28. And levy a tribute unto the LORD, of the men of war which went out to battle: [t] one ſoul of five hundred, *both* of the perſons, and of the beeves, and of the aſſes, and of the ſheep. 29. Take *it* of their half, and give *it* unto Eleazar the prieſt, *for* an heave-offering of the LORD. 30. And of the children of Iſrael's half, thou ſhalt take one portion of fifty, of the perſons, of the beeves, of the aſſes, and of † the flocks, of all manner of beaſts, and give them unto the Levites, [u] which keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD. 31. And Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt did as the LORD commanded Moſes. 32. And the booty, *being* the reſt of the prey which the men of war had caught, was ſix hundred thouſand, and ſeventy thouſand, and five thouſand ſheep, 33. And threeſcore and twelve thouſand beeves, 34. And threeſcore and one thouſand aſſes, 35. And thirty and two thouſand perſons in all, of women that had not known man, by lying with him. 36. And the half, *which was* the portion of them that went out to war, was in number three hundred thouſand, and ſeven and thirty thouſand and five hundred ſheep; 37. And the LORD's tribute of the ſheep was ſix hundred and threeſcore and fifteen. 38. And the beeves *were* thirty and ſix thouſand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* threeſcore and twelve. 39. And the aſſes *were* thirty thouſand and five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute *was* threeſcore and one. 40. And the perſons *were* ſixteen thouſand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* thirty and two perſons. 41. And Moſes gave the tribute *which was* the LORD's heave-offering, unto Eleazar the prieſt, [x] as the LORD commanded Moſes. 42. And of the children of Iſrael's half, which Moſes divided from the men that warred: 43. (Now the half *that pertained unto* the congregation, was three hundred thouſand, and thirty thouſand, *and* ſeven thouſand, and five hundred ſheep: 44. And thirty and ſix thouſand beeves; 45. And thirty thouſand aſſes and five hundred: 46. And ſixteen thouſand perſons:) 47. Even of the children of Iſrael's half, Moſes took one portion of fifty, *both* of man and beaſt, and gave them unto the Levites which kept the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moſes.

Heb. Of e captivity.
Joſh. xxii. 1 Sam. x. 24.
[t] See ver. 30, 47. Chap. xviii. 26.
† Or goats.
[u] Chap. iii. 7, 8, 25, 31, 36.
[x] See chap. xviii. 8, 19.

v. 25—47. We have here an account of the vaſt booty they had gotten, and the diſtribution of it, according to God's order. One half was divided among the whole congregation, whoſe ſervice at home was needful to guard the camp, and who would have been as willing as their brethren, to have gone to the battle. The other half was divided among thoſe who went to the battle, who had borne the greateſt dangers, and deſerved the greater ſhare. *Note*, If we war a hard warfare for Chriſt, we ſhould be comforted, that great is our reward in heaven.—God muſt have his part, as well as the people theirs, ſince to him they were indebted for all. A fiftieth, therefore, from the people, for the uſe of the Levites; a five hundredth from the ſoldiers for the uſe of the prieſts, are ſeparated as the Lord's tribute. It was reaſonable they ſhould give the moſt, who had gained it at the leaſt hazard. *Note*, In all our gains, God muſt be regarded: as it is his bleſſing which maketh rich, we are bound to honour him with our ſubſtance.

48. ¶ And the officers which *were* over thouſands of the hoſt, the captains of thouſands, and captains of hundreds, came near unto Moſes: 49. And they ſaid unto Moſes, Thy ſervants have taken the ſum of the men of war which *are* under our † charge, and there lacketh not one man of us. 50. We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath * gotten of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, ear-rings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our ſouls before the LORD. 51. And Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt took the gold of them, *even* all wrought jewels. 52. And all the gold of the ‡ offering that they offered up to the LORD, of the captains of thouſands, and of the captains of hundreds, was ſixteen thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty ſhekels. 53. (*For* [y] the men of war had taken ſpoil, every man for himſelf). 54. And Moſes and Eleazar the prieſt took the gold of the captains of thouſands, and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, *for* a memorial for the children of Iſrael before the LORD.

† Heb. Hand.
* Heb. Found.
‡ Heb. Heave-offering.
[y] Deut. xx. 14.

v. 48—54. The piety of the officers of Iſrael appears here as great as their prowefs. On calling their muſter-roll, not a man was loſt by diſeaſe or the ſword, in this expedition, an inſtance of Divine protection ſo amazing, could not but affect them; and as they loved their ſoldiers as brethren, and were tender of their lives, as every good general ſhould be, they make the moſt grateful acknowledgements to God for his preſervation. Each man brought an oblation to the Lord of gold and jewels, which was their private ſpoil; and therewith alſo ſought atonement for their ſouls, having tranſgreſſed in preſerving the women, and as they might juſtly fear in other things. Moſes is ordered to receive and lay it up before the Lord, for a memorial of his care of them, and their gratitude. *Note*, (1.) Great deliverances deſerve particular thankfulneſs. (2.) We take nothing in hand, but we need ſeek atonement when we have done. (3.) Where God gives plenty, we muſt abound in works of piety and charity.

CHAP. XXXII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The humble requeſt of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, for an inheritance on that ſide Jordan, where Iſrael now lay encamped, ver. 1—5. *(2.) Moſes's miſ-interpreting of their requeſt,* ver. 6—15. *(3.) Their explication of it,* ver. 16—19. *(4.) The grant of their petition under the proviſoes and limitations, which they themſelves propoſed,* ver. 20—42.

1. NOW the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they ſaw the land of [a] Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that behold, the place *was* a place for cattle; 2. The children of Gad, and the children of Reuben, came and ſpake unto Moſes, and to Eleazar the prieſt, and unto the princes of the congregation, ſaying, 3. Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and [b] Nimrah, and Heſhbon, and Elealeh, and [c] Shebam, and Nebo, and [d] Beon; 4. *Even* the country [e] which the LORD ſmote before the congregation of Iſrael, *is* a land for cattle, and thy ſervants have cattle. 5. Wherefore, ſaid they, if we have found grace in thy ſight, let this land be given unto thy ſervants for a poſſeſſion, *and* bring us not over Jordan. 6. ¶ And Moſes ſaid unto the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and ſhall ye ſit here? 7. And wherefore † diſcourage ye the heart of the children of Iſrael from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them? 8. Thus did your fathers, [f] when I ſent them from Kadeſh-barnea [g] to ſee the land. 9. For when [h] they went up unto the valley of Eſhcol, and ſaw the land, they diſcouraged the heart of the children of Iſrael, that they ſhould not go into the land which the LORD had given them. 10. And [i] the LORD's anger was kindled the ſame time, and he ſware, ſaying, 11. Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, [k] from twenty years old and upward, ſhall ſee the land which I ſware unto Abraham, unto Iſaac, and unto Jacob, becauſe [l] they have not † wholly followed me: 12. Save Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, the Kenezite, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD. 13. And the LORD's anger was kindled againſt Iſrael, and he made them wander in the wilderneſs forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the ſight of the LORD was conſumed. 14. And behold, ye are riſen up in your father's ſtead, an increaſe of ſinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Iſrael. 15. For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderneſs, and ye ſhall deſtroy all this people.

[a] Chap. xxi. 32. Joſh. xiii. 25. 2 Sam. xxiv 5.
[b] Ver. 36. Bethnimrah.
[c] Ver. 38. Shibmah.
[d] Ver. 38. Baal-meon.
[e] Chap. xxi. 24, 34.
† Heb. Break.
[f] Chap. xiii. 3, 26.
[g] Deut. i. 22.
[h] Chap. xiii. 24.
[i] Ibid. xiv. 21.
[k] Ibid. 28, 29. Deut. i. 35.
[l] Chap. xiv. 24, 30.
† Heb. Fulfilled after me.

v. 1—15. Pleaſed with the fertility of the ſoil, and the country of Gilead and Jazer, the children of Reuben and Gad caſt a longing eye upon it for their poſſeſſion. Whereupon,

1. They make their requeſt to Moſes, plead its ſuitableneſs to the numerous herds they kept, and beg they may be permitted to have their lot on this ſide Jordan. *Note*, Too many, like them, take up their reſt on earth, and over-anxious about worldly things, loſe all concern about a poſſeſſion in the heavenly Canaan.

2. Moſes highly reſents their propoſal, juſtly apprehenſive of the conſequences; it ſeemed to ſpeak unbelief of God's promiſes, and a diſtruſt of his power, to be the dictate of covetouſneſs and cowardice; and in the iſſue might be fatally dangerous to the whole, whether by weakening the army, and diſcouraging the hearts of their brethren, or, as was more to be feared, and Moſes reminds them, by provoking God, as their fathers had done, and thereby augmenting his fierce anger againſt Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) It is a dangerous ſymptom of ruin coming upon a land, when the riſing generation tread in the ſins of their fathers, and grow worſe and worſe. (2.) It is as baſe as ſelfiſh to deſire our own reſt and eaſe, when God's people are called to hardſhips, and need our help and aſſiſtance. (3.) Paſt experiences ſhould be treaſured up, as future memorials. (4.) Holy indignation againſt ſin is a part of the character of the faithful miniſters of God.

16. ¶ And they came near unto him, and ſaid, We will build ſheep-folds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones. 17. But [m] we ourſelves will go ready armed before the children of Iſrael, until we have brought them unto their place; and our little ones ſhall dwell in the fenced cities, becauſe of the inhabitants of the land. 18. [n] We will not return unto our houſes, until the children of Iſrael have inherited every man his inheritance: 19. For we will not inherit with them on yonder ſide Jordan, or forward, becauſe our inheritance is fallen to us on this ſide Jordan eaſtward. 20. ¶ And [o] Moſes ſaid unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the LORD to war, 21. And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him: 22. And [p] the land be ſubdued before the LORD: then afterward ye ſhall return, and be guiltleſs before the LORD, and before Iſrael; and [q] this land ſhall be your poſſeſſion before the LORD. 23. But if ye will not do ſo, behold, ye have ſinned againſt the LORD: and be ſure your ſin will find you out. 24. Build ye cities for your little ones, and folds for your ſheep, and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth. 25. And the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, Thy ſervants will do as my lord commandeth. 26. Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle ſhall be there in the cities of Gilead. 27. [r] But thy ſervants will paſs over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, as my lord ſaith.

[m] Joſh. iv. 13.
[n] Joſh. xxii. 2.
[o] Deut. iii. 18. Joſh. i. 13.
[p] Deut. iii. 20.
[q] Deut. iii. 12, 15, 16. Joſh. i. 15. & xiii. 8.
[r] Joſh. iv. 12

v. 16—27. Though Moſes had juſt ſuſpicion for his fears, yet their reply ſeems to ſhow they were groundleſs. A faithful miniſter watches with godly jealouſy over the people, and his care and love of them appear even in ſuſpicions that may ariſe from miſtake, or miſinterpretation.

1. They engage to follow their brethren, and never to forſake them till they are comfortably ſettled, yea offer to go before them, in bearing the brunt of every battle, ſo far from being cowards, or diſcouraging them. Only they would ſecure their wives and children, and cattle, till their return; and content with their preſent lot, deſire no part beyond Jordan. *Note*, It is good to hear always before we judge. They may be actuated by the nobleſt motives, whoſe conduct may be liable to much miſrepreſentation.

2. The propoſal is conſented to, on theſe conditions; They ſhall go armed before the Lord, to fight his battles, and never think of quitting the camp, till the land is ſubdued; otherwiſe ſin would overtake them, and puniſh them accordingly. *Note*, Sin will find us out, if we are falſe and faithleſs, and we ſhall ſurely ſuffer for it—Thus the matter is compromiſed, they engage for ready obedience, and punctual performance of the agreement. The moſt ſerviceable, about 40,000 men, accordingly followed Iſrael into Canaan, till the land was divided; whilſt the reſt, by conſent no doubt, were left as a guard to the country they occupied.

28. So [s] concerning them Moſes commanded Eleazar the prieſt, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Iſrael: 29. And Moſes ſaid unto them, If the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben will paſs with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle before the LORD, and the land ſhall be ſubdued before you, then ye ſhall give them the land of Gilead for a poſſeſſion: 30. But if they will not paſs over with you armed, they ſhall have poſſeſſions among you in the land of Canaan. 31. And the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben anſwered, ſaying, As the LORD hath ſaid unto thy ſervants, ſo will we do. 32. We will paſs over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, that the poſſeſſion of our inheritance on this ſide Jordan *may be* ours. 33. And [t] Moſes gave unto them,

[s] Ibid. i. 13
[t] Deut. iii. 12. Joſh. xiii. 8. & xxii. 4

even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manaſſeh the ſon of Joſeph, [w] the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Baſhan, the land with the cities thereof, in the coaſts, *even* the cities of the country round about. 34. ¶ And the children of Gad built [x] Dibon, and Ataroth, and [y] Aroer, 35. And Atroth, Shophan, and [z] Jaazer, and Jogbehah, 36. And [a] Bethnimrah, and Beth-haran, fenced cities: and folds for ſheep. 37. And the children of Reuben [b] built Heſhbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim, 38. And Nebo, and Baal-meon ([c] their names being changed) and Shibmah: and † gave other names unto the cities which they builded. 39. And the children of [d] Machir the ſon of Manaſſeh went to Gilead, and took it, and diſpoſſeſſed the Amorite which *was* in it. 40. And Moſes [e] gave Gilead unto Machir the ſon of Manaſſeh, and he dwelt therein. 41. And [f] Jair the ſon of Manaſſeh went and took the ſmall towns thereof and called them [g] Havoth-jair. 42. And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name.

Before Chriſt 1451.

[w] Chap. xxi. 24, 33.
[x] Chap. xxxiii. 45, 46.
[y] Deut. ii. 36.
[z] Ver. 1, 3.
[a] Ver. 3.
[b] Chap. xxi. 27.
[c] See Ver. 3. Joſh. xxiii. 7.
† Heb. They called by names the names of the cities.
[d] Gen. l. 23.
[e] Deut. iii. 12, 13, 15.
[f] Ibid. 14. Joſh. xiii. 30. 1 Chron. ii. 21, 22.
[g] Judg. x. 4. 1 Kings iv. 13.

v. 28—42. As Moſes was not to live till the ſettlement of the people, he charges Eleazar and Joſhua to ſee the agreement here made fulfilled, and the Reubenites and Gadites renew their engagements; whereupon the cities are allotted them; and being more than they can occupy, half the tribe of Manaſſeh, either at their own requeſt, or by divine appointment, as a reward for the bravery of Machir, who diſpoſſeſſed the Gileadites, have their lot in Gilead. Each tribe repairs the cities which had been damaged by the war, and ſecures their families and cattle, changing the names of the places, in token of their ſovereignty, or to aboliſh the very mention of thoſe idols, after whom they had been called. *Note,* We cannot be too careful to deſtroy every memorial, which would either lead us into ſin, or ſtir up the idea of it in our minds.

CHAP. XXXIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A particular account of all the removes and encampments of the children of Iſrael,* ver. 1—49. 2. *A ſtrict command given them to drive out all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan,* ver. 50—56.

1. THESE *are* the journeys of the children of Iſrael, which went forth out of the land of Egypt, with their armies, under the hand of Moſes and Aaron. 2. And Moſes wrote their goings out, according to their journeys, by the commandment of the LORD: and theſe *are* their journeys according to their goings out. 3. And [a] they departed from Rameſes, in the firſt month, on the fifteenth day of the firſt month: on the morrow after the paſſover the children of Iſrael went out [b] with an high hand in the ſight of all the Egyptians. 4. (For the Egyptians buried all *their* firſt-born, [c] which the LORD had ſmitten among them: [d] upon their gods alſo the LORD executed judgments.) 5. And [e] the children of Iſrael removed from Rameſes, and pitched in Succoth. 6. And they departed from [f] Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which *is* in the edge of the wilderneſs. 7. And [g] they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pihahiroth, which *is* before Baalzephon: and they pitched before Migdol. 8. And they departed from before Pihahiroth, and [h] paſſed through the midſt of the ſea, into the wilderneſs, and went three days journey in the wilderneſs of Etham, and pitched in Marah. 9. And they removed from Marah, and [i] came unto Elim; and in Elim *were* twelve fountains of water, and threeſcore and ten palm-trees, and they pitched there. 10. And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red ſea. 11. And they removed from the Red ſea, and encamped in [k] the wilderneſs of Sin. 12. And they took their journey out of the wilderneſs of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah. 13. And they departed from Dophkah, and encamped in Aluſh. 14. And they removed from Aluſh, and encamped at [l] Rephidim, where was no water for the people to drink. 15. And they departed from Rephidim, and pitched in [m] the wilderneſs of Sinai. 16. And they removed from the deſart of Sinai, and pitched at [n] Kibroth-Hattaavah. 17. And they departed from Kibroth-Hattaavah, and encamped at [o] Hazeroth. 18. And they departed from Hazeroth, and pitched in [p] Rithmah. 19. And they departed from Rithmah, and pitched at Rimmon-Parez. 20. And they departed from Rimmon-Parez, and pitched in Libnah. 21. And they removed from Libnah, and pitched at Riſſah. 22. And they journeyed from Riſſah, and pitched in Kehelathah. 23. And they went from Kehelathah, and pitched in mount Shapher. 24. And they removed from mount Shapher, and encamped in Haradah. 25. And they removed from Haradah, and pitched in Makheloth. 26. And they removed from Makheloth, and encamped at Tahath. 27. And they departed from Tahath, and pitched at Tarah. 28. And they removed from Tarah, and pitched in Mithcah. 29. And they went from Mithcah, and pitched in Haſhmonah. 30. And they departed from Haſhmonah, and encamped at [q] Moſeroth. 31. And they departed from Moſeroth, and pitched in Bene-jaakan. 32. And they removed from [r] Bene-jaakan, and encamped at [s] Hor-hagidgad. 33. And they went from Hor-hagidgad, and pitched in Jotbathah. 34. And they removed from Jotbathah, and encamped at Ebronah. 35. And they departed from Ebronah, and [t] encamped at Ezion-gaber. 36. And they removed from Ezion-gaber, and [u] pitched in the wilderneſs of Zin, which *is* Kadeſh. 37. And they removed from [x] Kadeſh, and pitched in mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom. 38. And [y] Aaron the prieſt went up unto mount Hor, at the commandment of the LORD, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Iſrael were come out of the land of Egypt, in the firſt *day* of the fifth month. 39. And Aaron *was* an hundred and twenty and three years old, when he died in mount Hor. 40. [z] And king Arad the Canaanite (which dwelt in the ſouth, in the land of Canaan) heard of the coming of the children of Iſrael. 41. And they departed from mount [a] Hor, and pitched in Zalmonah. 42. And they departed from Zalmonah, and pitched in Punon. 43. And they departed from Punon, and [b] pitched in Oboth. 44. And [c] they departed from Oboth, and pitched in [d] Ije-abarim, in the border of Moab. 45. And they departed from Iim, and pitched in [e] Dibon-Gad. 46. And they removed from Dibon-Gad, and encamped in [f] Almon-diblathaim. 47. And they removed from Almon-diblathaim, and [g] pitched in the mountains of Abarim before Nebo. 48. And they departed from the mountains of Abarim, and [h] pitched in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho. 49. And they pitched by Jordan from Beth-jeſimoth, *even* unto † [i] Abel-ſhittim, in the plains of Moab.

[a] Exod. xii. 37.
[b] Ibid. xiv. 8.
[c] Ibid. xii. 29.
[d] Ibid. 12. & xviii. 11. Iſa. xix. 1. Rev. xii. 8.
[e] Exod. xii. 37.
[f] Ibid. xiii. 20.
[g] Ibid. xiv. 2, 9.
[h] Ibid. xiv. 22. & xv. 22, 23.
[i] Ibid. xv. 27.
[k] Ibid. xvi. 1.
[l] Ibid. xvii. 1. & xix. 1.
[m] Ibid. xvi. 1. & xix. 1, 2.
[n] Chap. xi. 34.
[o] Ibid. 35.

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[p] Chap. xii. 16. 1 Mac. v. 9. Dathema.
[q] Deut. x. 6.
[r] 1 Mac. v. 4. Bean. See Gen. xxxvi. 27. Deut. x. 6. 1 Chron. i. 42.
[s] Deut. x. 7.
[t] Ibid. 8. 1 Kings ix. 26.
[u] Chap. xx. 1. & xxvii. 14.
[x] Chap. xx. 22. & xxi. 4.
[y] Chap. xx. 25. Deut. x. 6. & xxxii. 50.
[z] Chap. xxi. 1, &c.
[a] Ibid. 4.
[b] Ibid. 10.
[c] Ibid. 11.
[d] Ibid.
[e] Chap. xxxii. 34.
[f] Ezek. vi. 14.
[g] Chap. xxi. 20.
[h] Chap. xxii. 1.
† Or the plains of Shittim.
[i] Chap. xxv. 1. Joſh. ii 1.

v. 1—49. At God's command, Moſes is ordered to keep a journal of their marches, which is here publiſhed, that they might remember and adore the good hand of the Lord upon them in this dangerous road. Particular notice is taken of their departure from Egypt: They came out with a high hand, under the conduct of their divinely-appointed leaders, whilſt the Egyptians were digging the graves of their children, and lamenting the deſolations of their idols. Amidſt all the dangers of the way, and the greater dangers of their ſins, God ſafely conducted them through the dreary wilderneſs, and, after forty years of wandring, had brought them ſafe to the borders of the promiſed land; thence to look back on the places of their manifold provocations with ſhame, and forward to the land of promiſe with enlivened hope. *Note,* (1.) It is uſeful to keep a diary of God's mercies and providences, that they may be remembered for our own and others comfort or direction. (2.) This world is the Chriſtian's wilderneſs; many a long year he is called to wander to and fro in it; but being under divine guidance, amidſt all his winding ſteps, he is led by the right way, and ſure to arrive ſafe at laſt at the land of glory.

50. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, in the plains of Moab, by Jordan *near* Jericho, ſaying, 51. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [k] When ye are paſſed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; 52. [l] Then ye ſhall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and deſtroy all their pictures, and deſtroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places. 53. And ye ſhall diſpoſſeſs *the inhabitants of* the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to poſſeſs it. 54. [m] And ye ſhall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families, *and* to the more ye ſhall † give the more inheri-

[k] Deut. vii. 2. Joſh. xi. 12.
[l] Exod. xxiii. 24, 33. & xxxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 2, 5. & xii. 3.
[m] Chap. xxvi. 53.
† Heb. Multiply his inheritance.

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tance, and to the fewer ye ſhall ‡ give the leſs inheritance: every man's *inheritance* ſhall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye ſhall inherit. 55. But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it ſhall come to paſs, that thoſe which ye let remain of them, *ſhall be* [n] pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your ſides, and ſhall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. 56. Moreover, it ſhall come to paſs, *that* I ſhall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them.

‡ Heb. Diminiſh his inheritance.

[n] Joſh. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 3. See Exod. xxiii. 33.

v. 50—56. Strict injunctions are given for the entire deſtruction of every monument of idolatry, and the utter extirpation of the people. It would be highly dangerous to maintain any friendſhip with them, or preſerve the leaſt relicts of their idols, leſt they ſhould be enſnared thereby. We are peculiarly to guard againſt our beſetting ſin, and ſtop up every avenue of our heart, at which it might enter. If they were obedient, then their inheritance was ſecure; if diſobedient, they ſhould ſuffer that expulſion themſelves, which they ſhould have inflicted on the inhabitants. *Note*, (1.) We can be only ſafe by renouncing all peace with our ſins. (2.) If we deſtroy not them, they will deſtroy us body and ſoul in hell.

CHAP. XXXIV.

In this chapter God directs Moſes, and he Iſrael, 1. *Concerning the bounds of the land of Canaan,* ver. 1—15. 2. *Concerning the diviſion of it to the tribes of Iſrael,* ver. 16—24.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 2. Command the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan (this *is* the land that ſhall fall unto you for an inheritance, *even* the land of Canaan, with the coaſts thereof) 3. Then [a] your ſouth quarter ſhall be from the wilderneſs of Zin, along by the coaſt of Edom, and your ſouth border ſhall be the utmoſt coaſt of [b] the ſalt-ſea eaſtward. 4. And your border ſhall turn from the ſouth, [c] to the aſcent of Akrabbim, and paſs on to Zin: and the going forth thereof ſhall be from the ſouth to [d] Kadeſh-barnea, and ſhall go on to [e] Hazar-addar, and paſs on to Azmon. 5. And the border ſhall fetch a compaſs from Azmon [f] unto the river of Egypt, and the goings out of it ſhall be at the ſea. 6. And *as for* the weſtern-border, you ſhall even have the great ſea for a border, this ſhall be your weſt border. 7. And this ſhall be your north border: from the great ſea, you ſhall point out for you [g] mount Hor. 8. From mount Hor ye ſhall point out *your border* [h] unto the entrance of Hamath: and the goings forth of the border ſhall be to Zedad. 9. ¶ And the border ſhall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it ſhall be at Hazar-enan: this ſhall be your north border. 10. And ye ſhall point out your eaſt border, from Hazar-enan to Shepham. 11. And the coaſt ſhall go down from Shepham to [i] Riblah, on the eaſt ſide of Ain: and the border ſhall deſcend, and ſhall reach unto the † ſide of the ſea [k] of Chinnereth eaſtward. 12. And the border ſhall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it ſhall be at the ſalt-ſea: this ſhall be your land with the coaſts thereof round about. 13. And Moſes commanded the children of Iſrael, ſaying, This *is* the land which ye ſhall inherit by lot, which the LORD commanded to give unto the nine tribes, and to the half tribe. 14. [l] For the tribe of the children of Reuben, according to the houſe of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad, according to the houſe of their fathers, have received *their inheritance*, and half the tribe of Manaſſeh have received their inheritance. 15. The two tribes, and the half tribe, have received their inheritance on this ſide Jordan, *near* Jericho, eaſt-ward, toward the ſun-riſing.

[a] Joſh. xv. 1.
[b] Gen. xiv. 3.
[c] See Joſh. xv. 3.
[d] Chap. xiii. 26.
[e] See Joſh. xv. 3.
[f] Gen. xv. 18. Joſh. xv. 4, 47. 1 Kings viii. 65. Iſa. xxvii. 12.
[g] Chap. xxxiii. 37.
[h] Chap. xiii. 21. 2 Kings xiv. 25.
[i] 2 Kings xxiii. 33. Jer. xxxix. 5, 6.
† Heb. Shoulder.
[k] Deut. iii. 17. Joſh. xi. 2. & xix. 35.
[l] Chap. xxxii. 33. Joſh. xiv. 2, 3.

v. 1—15. The borders of the land of Canaan are here geographically deſcribed, that they may know how far the warrant of God reached for the ſword to deſtroy, and for themſelves to poſſeſs. Though they were promiſed more extenſive dominion, which they afterwards enjoyed, even to Euphrates; yet the part themſelves occupied was ſmall, about a hundred and ſixty miles in length, and fifty in breadth, having on the north mount Hor, on the ſouth Kadeſh-barnea, on the weſt the Mediterranean, and on the eaſt the dead ſea. The fruitfulneſs of the land compenſated for its narrowneſs, and not only abundantly ſupplied the home conſumption of ſuch a vaſt multitude, but enriched them with large exports. *Note*, (1.) We muſt be content with the bounds which God's providence aſſigns us, nor be inordinate in our deſires of worldly poſſeſſions, to add houſe to houſe, and field to field. (2.) The people of God expect but a ſmall portion of earth; their inheritance is in heaven. (3.) A little, with God's bleſſing, will afford that affluence and comfort, which cannot be enjoyed in the great riches of the ungodly.

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16. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 17. Theſe *are* the names of the men, which ſhall divide the land unto you, [m] Eleazar the prieſt, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun. 18. And ye ſhall take one prince of every tribe to divide the land by inheritance. 19. And the names of the men *are* theſe: of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh. 20. And of the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the ſon of Ammihud. 21. Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the ſon of Chiſlon. 22. And the prince of the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the ſon of Jogli. 23. The prince of the children of Joſeph: for the tribe of the children of Manaſſeh, Hanniel the ſon of Ephod. 24. And the prince of the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the ſon of Shiphtan. 25. And the prince of the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the ſon of Parnach. 26. And the prince of the tribe of the children of Iſſachar, Paltiel the ſon of Azzan. 27. And the prince of the tribe of the children of Aſhur, Ahihud the ſon of Shelomi. 28. And the prince of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the ſon of Ammihud. 29. Theſe *are they* whom the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance unto the children of Iſrael, in the land of Canaan.

[m] Joſh. xiv. 1. & xix. 51.

v. 16—29. Though they had not yet poſſeſſed one foot of Canaan, God will have them look upon the conqueſt as certain; and the land accordingly is divided among the remaining nine tribes and half. Eleazar and Joſhua are the chief commiſſioners, and types of Jeſus, the prieſt and king of his people, who will divide to them his eternal inheritance. A prince of each tribe is joined with them, to take care of the intereſts of his people, and to avoid all ſuſpicion of partiality in the diſtribution. It is not enough to do right; we ſhould take care to have our juſt dealing evident to all men.

CHAP. XXXV.

A proviſion made for the tribe of Levi. 1. *Forty-eight cities aſſigned them, with their ſuburbs, ſome in every tribe,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Six of thoſe were to be for cities of refuge, if a man killed another unawares,* ver. 9—15. 1. *This ſanctuary was not allowed in caſe of wilful murder,* ver. 16—21. 2. *In what caſes it was allowed,* ver. 20—24. 3. *What was the law concerning thoſe that took ſhelter in theſe cities of refuge,* ver. 25—34.

1. AND the LORD ſpake unto Moſes in the plains of Moab, by Jordan *near* Jericho, ſaying, 2. [a] Command the children of Iſrael, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their poſſeſſion, cities to dwell in: and ye ſhall give *alſo* unto the Levites ſuburbs for the cities round about them. 3. And the cities ſhall they have to dwell in, and the ſuburbs of them ſhall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beaſts. 4. And the ſuburbs of the cities which ye ſhall give unto the Levites, *ſhall reach* from the wall of the city and outward, a thouſand cubits round about. 5. And ye ſhall meaſure from without the city on the eaſt ſide two thouſand cubits, and on the ſouth ſide two thouſand cubits, and on the weſt ſide two thouſand cubits, and on the north ſide two thouſand cubits: and the city *ſhall be* in the midſt: this ſhall be to them the ſuburbs of the cities. 6. And among the cities which ye ſhall give unto the Levites, *there ſhall be* [b] ſix cities for refuge, which ye ſhall appoint for the man-ſlayer, that he may flee thither: and † to them ye ſhall add forty and two cities. 7. *So* all the cities which ye ſhall give to the Levites, *ſhall be* forty and eight cities: them *ſhall ye give* with their ſuburbs. 8. And the cities which ye ſhall give, *ſhall be* of the poſſeſſion of the children of Iſrael: [c] from *them that have* many, ye ſhall give many; but from *them that have* few, ye ſhall give few. Every one

[a] Joſh. xiv. 3, 4. & xxi. 2.
[b] Deut. iv. 41. Joſh. xx. 2. & xxi. 3, 21.
† Heb. Above them ye ſhall give.
[c] Chap. xxvi. 54.

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one ſhall give of his cities unto the Levites, according to his inheritance which ‡ he inheriteth.

‡ Heb. They inherit.

v. 1—8. As the Levites would need an abode, when they came into the land, God aſſigns them forty-eight cities, with their ſuburbs, for their cattle, in the ſeveral tribes. They needed not arable land, as the tythes were their portion, and the care of the ſoil would have diverted them from the care of men's ſouls. For mutual edification they dwell together; for general uſefulneſs their cities are diſperſed, each tribe, according to its extent, furniſhing them out of their lot with a ſuitable abode. *Note*, (1.) To provide a goſpel miniſtry, ſhould be the great concern of every people. (2.) They who are engaged in the miniſtry ſhould, as much as poſſible, diveſt themſelves of every worldly care. (3.) They who miniſter to us in ſpirituals, have a right to reap our worldly things.

9. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, 10. Speak unto the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, [d] When ye be come over Jordan, into the land of Canaan: 11. Then [e] ye ſhall appoint you cities, to be cities of refuge for you; that the ſlayer may flee thither, which killeth any perſon † at unawares. 12. [f] And they ſhall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger, that the man-ſlayer die not, until he ſtand before the congregation in judgment. 13. And of theſe cities which ye ſhall give, ſix cities ſhall ye have for refuge. 14. [g] Ye ſhall give three cities on this ſide Jordan, and three cities ſhall ye give in the land of Canaan, *which* ſhall be cities of refuge. 15. Theſe ſix cities ſhall be a refuge, *both* for the children of Iſrael, and for the ſtranger, and for the ſojourner among them: that every one that killeth any perſon unawares, may flee thither. 16. [h] And if he ſmite him with an inſtrument of iron, (ſo that he die) he *is* a murderer: the murderer ſhall ſurely be put to death. 17. And if he ſmite him ‡ with throwing a ſtone, (wherewith he may die) and he die, he *is* a murderer: the murderer ſhall ſurely be put to death. 18. Or *if* he ſmite him with an hand weapon of wood, (wherewith he may die) and he die, he *is* a murderer: the murderer ſhall ſurely be put to death. 19. The revenger of blood himſelf ſhall ſlay the murderer: when he meeteth him he ſhall ſlay him. 20. But [i] if he thruſt him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait, that he die: 21. Or in enmity ſmite him with his hand, that he die, he that ſmote *him* ſhall ſurely be put to death, *for* he *is* a murderer: the revenger of blood ſhall ſlay the murderer, when he meeteth him. 22. But if he thruſt him ſuddenly [k] without enmity, or have caſt upon him any thing without laying of wait: 23. Or with any ſtone wherewith a man may die, ſeeing *him* not, and caſt *it* upon him that he die, and *was* not his enemy, neither ſought his harm: 24. Then the congregation ſhall judge between the ſlayer, and the revenger of blood, according to theſe judgments. 25. And the congregation ſhall deliver the ſlayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation ſhall reſtore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he ſhall abide in it unto the death of the high prieſt, [l] which was anointed with the holy oil. 26. But if the ſlayer ſhall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; 27. And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge; and the revenger of blood kill the ſlayer; ‖ he ſhall not be guilty of blood: 28. Becauſe he ſhould have remained in the city of his refuge, until the death of the high prieſt: but after the death of the high prieſt, the ſlayer ſhall return into the land of his poſſeſſion. 29. So theſe *things* ſhall be for a ſtatute of judgment unto you, throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 30. Whoſo killeth any perſon, the murderer ſhall be put to death, by the [m] mouth of witneſſes: but one witneſs ſhall not teſtify againſt any perſon, *to cauſe him* to die. 31. Moreover, ye ſhall take no ſatisfaction for the life of a murderer, which *is* § guilty of death; but he ſhall be ſurely put to death. 32. And ye ſhall take no ſatisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he ſhould come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the prieſt. 33. So ye ſhall not pollute the land wherein ye *are*: for blood [n] it defileth the land: and † the land cannot be cleanſed of the blood that is ſhed therein, but by the blood of him that ſhed it. 34. Defile not therefore the land which ye ſhall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Iſrael.

[d] Deut. xix. 2. Joſh. xx. 2.
[e] Exod. xxi. 13.
† Heb. By error.
[f] Deut. xix. 6. Joſh. xx. 5.
[g] Deut. iv. 41. Joſh. xx. 8.
[h] Exod. xxi. 12, 14. Lev. xxiv. 17.
‡ Heb. With a ſtone of the hand.
[i] Deut. xix. 11.
[k] Exod. xxi. 13.
[l] Ibid. xxix. 7. Lev. iv. 3. & xxi. 10.
‖ Heb. No blood ſhall be to him.
[m] Deut. xvii. 6. & xix. 15. Mat. xviii. 16. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. Heb. x. 28.
§ Heb. Faulty to die.
[n] Mic. iv. 11.
† Heb. There can be no expiation for the land.

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v. 9—34. Six of theſe forty-eight cities are appropriated to a particular purpoſe, as places of refuge for the man-ſlayer, who killed his neighbour unawares; and particular inſtructions given to diſtinguiſh between the murderer and the manſlayer, the refuge which was allowed the one, being juſtly denied the other.

1. If a man, whether on a ſudden provocation, or more deliberate contrivance, ſmote his neighbour with any inſtrument, with a ſtone, or his hand, and death enſued, then it was murder: in which caſe no refuge was allowed, no eſcape from ſuffering permitted. Blood required blood, and till it be ſhed, the land was defiled. The kinſman of the deceaſed was to be the executioner of vengeance himſelf, on conviction of the offender; and two witneſſes are required to prove the fact, as in caſes of life and death clear evidence is neceſſary. *Note*, (1.) The crime of murder is unpardonable. It is at the magiſtrate's peril that execution be done on the offender, as he will anſwer to God in the day of judgment. No quality nor intereſt muſt in this caſe ever be regarded. (2.) If murderers through ſinful connivance now eſcape, God's ſword will overtake them.

2. The caſe of the man-ſlayer deſcribed, and his remedy. He is ſuppoſed to have killed his neighbour undeſignedly, without any previous enmity, or anger, and wholly by accident, *v.* 22, 23. In this caſe he is allowed to fly to one of the cities of refuge, where he ſhould be protected. If he were found loitering on the road, or negligent of eſcaping, the avenger of blood might ſlay him harmleſs. If he was ſafe lodged, he might demand a trial; and if the fact was found murder, the city no longer afforded him protection: he was immediately executed. If he was acquitted of the murder, then he was reſtored to the city of refuge, and continued there during the life of the high prieſt for the time being. If he went out of the bounds of the city before the high prieſt's death, then he was not entitled to protection: if the avenger of blood found him, he might ſlay him. From which we ſhould learn, a horror of blood, which, though accidentally ſhed, is attended with ſuch diſagreeable effects. The whole of this tranſaction affords us a lively type of that grace provided for the ſinner in the goſpel, and the neceſſity of flying to Chriſt, as the only refuge of a guilty ſoul. (1.) If death overtake us loitering in our ſins, we muſt periſh in them. (2.) There is a door of hope opened to the miſerable in Jeſus Chriſt, and he who flies to his blood and righteouſneſs, is ſafe from fear of evil. (3.) Like theſe cities, Chriſt is near to flee unto, and the way plain and clear: it is only look to him, and be ſaved. (4.) As the ſtranger was intitled to theſe cities of refuge, as well as the Iſraelite, ſo is it in Chriſt; all are welcome, and he who cometh to him ſhall be in no wiſe caſt out. (5.) We muſt abide in Chriſt, as well as flee to him; our ſecurity depends upon it, and, bleſſed be his name, he who calls us to him, hath promiſed to keep us, that we ſhall not depart from him.

CHAP. XXXVI.

We have in this chapter the determination of a queſtion, that aroſe upon the caſe of the daughters of Zelophehad. God had appointed that they ſhould inherit, chap. xxvii. 7. Now here, 1. An inconvenience is ſuggeſted, in caſe they ſhould marry into any other tribe, ver. 1—4. 2. It is prevented by a divine appointment, that they ſhould marry in their own tribe and family, ver. 5—7. and this is ſettled for a rule in like caſes, ver. 8, 9. and they did marry accordingly to ſome of their own relations, ver. 10—12. and with this the book concludes, ver. 13.

1. AND the chief fathers of the families of [a] the children of Gilead, the ſon of Machir, the ſon of Manaſſeh, of the families of the ſons of Joſeph, came near, and ſpake before Moſes, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Iſrael: 2. And they ſaid, [b] The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Iſrael: and [c] my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother, unto his daughters. 3. And if they be married to any of the ſons of the *other* tribes of the children of Iſrael; then ſhall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and ſhall be put to the inheritance of the tribe † whereunto they are received: ſo ſhall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance. 4. And when [d] the jubile of the children of Iſrael ſhall be, then ſhall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: ſo ſhall their inhe-

[a] Chap. xxvii. 29.
[b] Chap. xxvi. 55. & xxvii. 1. & xxxiii. 54. Joſh. xvii. 3.
[c] Chap. xxvii. 1, 7. Joſh. xvii. 3, 4.
† Heb. Unto whom they ſhall be.
[d] Lev. xxv. 10.

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ritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.

v. 1—4. The heads of the tribe of Manaſſeh, foreſeeing an inconvenience which might ariſe concerning the portion of Zelophehad's daughters, bring the caſe before Moſes. As they were heireſſes, and might therefore be greatly courted for their fortunes, (for money is too commonly the vile inducement to marriage); ſhould they match out of their own tribe, their inheritance, which God had aſſigned them, would go to their huſbands tribe, in prejudice to the Manaſſites, which would be an injury to their tribe, and might be the occaſion of many quarrels in like caſes in futurity. It is our wiſdom to foreſee and to prevent evils in proſpect, and, eſpecially in our ſettlements and families, to remove, as much as poſſible, every occaſion of diſpute.

5. And Moſes commanded the children of Iſrael, according to the word of the LORD, ſaying, The tribe of the ſons of Joſeph hath ſaid well. 6. This *is* the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, ſaying, Let them † marry to whom they think beſt; [e] only to the family of the tribe of their father ſhall they marry. 7. So ſhall not the inheritance of the children of Iſrael remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Iſrael ſhall ‡ keep himſelf to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. 8. And [f] every daughter that poſſeſſeth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Iſrael, ſhall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Iſrael may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. 9. Neither ſhall the inheritance remove from *one* tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Iſrael ſhall keep himſelf to his own inheritance. 10. Even as the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo did the daughters of Zelophehad. 11. [g] For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their father's brother's ſons. 12. *And* they were married ‖ into the families of the ſons of Manaſſeh the ſon of Joſeph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father. 13. Theſe *are* the commandments and the judgments which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moſes, unto the children of Iſrael in the plains of Moab, by Jordan *near* Jericho.

v. 5—13. God is pleaſed to approve the enquiry, and to reſolve the queſtion. 1. He orders they ſhall marry in their own family; not only among the Manaſſites, but among their relations of the houſe of Hepher, where, though reſtricted to an houſe, there was choice enough of perſons; and this would moſt effectually ſecure their portions in their own tribe and family: and this precedent is eſtabliſhed in future ſimilar caſes, that their inheritances may be preſerved entire. *Note*, Though children in marriage ſhould conſult their parents mind, parents muſt be careful not to force their inclinations. It is perſonal choice which can only make real union. 2. The daughters of Zelophehad acquieſced in the determination, and married their uncle's ſons, which is a degree of kindred not prohibited. The book concludes with a reference to the foregoing ordinances, all which, on their arrival in Canaan, they muſt religiouſly obſerve. It is a great bleſſing to have the path of duty made clear before us, ſince thus through grace we may be enabled to walk and pleaſe God.

† Heb. Be wives.

[e] Tobit i. 9.

‡ Heb. Cleave to.

[f] 1 Chron. xxiii. 22.

[g] Chap. xxvii. 1.

‖ Heb. To ſome that were of the families.

THE

EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;

OR, A

PRACTICAL COMMENT

Upon the Fifth Book of MOSES called

DEUTERONOMY.

THE title of this book is Deuteronomy, *which ſignifies a* ſecond law; *not a new body of laws, but the former ones repeated and explained, with ſome additions to them. This was become neceſſary;* (1.) *Becauſe the men of that generation to whom the law was firſt given were all dead, and a new generation was ſprung up.* (2.) *This repetition was needful, that the impreſſion might be more deep and laſting; having line upon line, and precept upon precept. Goſpel miniſters, as Moſes, muſt not fail often to ſtir up the people's minds, by way of remembrance: the great truths of the goſpel need frequently to be inſiſted on, though in general admitted, and believed,* Phil. iii. 1. (3.) *God would leave them inexcuſable, if they neglected ſo great a ſalvation, ſo clearly explained, and ſo awfully enforced. To make the contents of this book univerſally known among them, every King was obliged, with his own hand, to tranſcribe, and make it the matter of his daily meditations,* chap. xvii. 18, *at their paſſing over Jordan, it was to be written on great ſtones, that* he who ran might read it, chap. xxvii. 2, 3. *and every ſabbatical year, at the feaſt of tabernacles, it was read publickly by the prieſt, in the audience of the people. It opens with a recapitulation of the ſingular events which had happened to them, and is full of moſt earneſt exhortations to obedience, with the direſt curſes pronounced on the tranſgreſſors. It ſeems to be delivered the laſt month of Moſes's life; this might be regarded as his dying charge to the people; the laſt words of ſuch great perſonages being likely to leave deep impreſſions on the mind. Its divine authority and inſpiration is ſupported by a great number of quotations made from it by Chriſt and his apoſtles; and hence particularly, the Devil was foiled on his temptations of our Lord in the wilderneſs.*

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CHAP. I.

In the five firſt verſes of this chapter we have the date of Moſes' farewel ſermon, the place where it was preached, ver. 1, 2, 5. *and the time when,* ver. 3, 4. *He reminds them,* 1. *Of the promiſe God made them of the land of Canaan,* ver. 6, 8. 2. *Of the proviſion made of judges for them,* ver. 9, 18. 3. *Of their unbelief and murmuring upon the report of the ſpies,* ver. 19, 33. 4. *Of the ſentence paſſed upon them for it,* ver. 34—46.

[a] Joſh. ix. 1, 10. & xxii. 4, 7.
† Heb. Zuph.
[b] Numb. xiii. 26.
[c] Numb. xxxiii. 38.
[d] Numb. xxi. 24, 33.
[e] Numb. xxi. 33. Joſh. xiii. 12.

1. THESE *be* the words which Moſes ſpake unto all Iſrael, [a] on this ſide Jordan in the wilderneſs, in the plain over-againſt † the Red *ſea*, between Paran and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab. 2. (*There are* eleven days *journey* from Horeb by the way of mount Seir, unto [b] Kadeſh-barnea.) 3. And it came to paſs [c] in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the firſt *day* of the month, *that* Moſes ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, according unto all that the LORD had given him in commandment unto them; 4. [d] After he had ſlain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heſhbon, and Og the king of Baſhan, which dwelt at Aſtaroth [e] in Edrei. 5. On this ſide Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moſes to declare this law, ſaying, 6. The LORD our God ſpake unto us [f] in Horeb, ſaying Ye have dwelt long [g] enough in this mount: 7. Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto ‡ all *the places* nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the ſouth, and by the ſea-ſide, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. 8. Behold I have ‖ ſet the land before you: go in and poſſeſs the land which the LORD ſware unto your fathers, [h] Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, to give unto them, and to their ſeed after them.

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[f] Exod. iii. 1.
[g] See Exod. xix. 1, Numb. x. 11.
‡ Heb. All his neighbours.
‖ Heb. given.
[h] Gen. xii. 7. & xv. 18. & xvii. 7, 8, & xxvi. 4, xxviii. 13.

v. 1—8. Moſes is now about to part from that people, whom he had ſo tenderly and faithfully ſerved; and therefore he leaves them his ſolemn charge, that after his death they might have theſe things always in remembrance. They were now in the plains of Moab, over-againſt Suph (not the Red ſea, as we tranſlate it, which was at a conſiderable diſtance) and juſt forty years had elapſed ſince their departure from Egypt; during which they had received the puniſhment of their murmurings, and were ready to receive the fulfilment of the promiſes; highly it imported them now to be obedient, ſince this would enſure them the necks of their enemies. It was at God's command he ſpoke, and he begins his diſcourſe from their departure from Sinai. 1. He mentions their order to depart. They had dwelt long enough under the mount Sinai, and its awful thunderings, and are now to go to poſſeſs the land of promiſe. *Note*, God will not ſuffer his people to continue mourning ever under the ſpirit of bondage and diſtreſs, but when he hath made them feel their deſerts, will ſhew them the riches of his grace, which begets the ſpirit of adoption. 2. The aſſurance God gave them of ſucceſs. We fight not when under Chriſt's banners as uncertainly; heaven is our own from the moment he is our captain.

9. ¶ And [i] I ſpake unto you at that time, ſaying, I am not able to bear you myſelf alone: 10. The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and behold, [k] you *are* this day as the ſtars of heaven for multitude. 11. ([l] The LORD God of your fathers make you a thouſand times ſo many more as ye *are*, and bleſs you [m] as he hath promiſed you.) 12. How can I myſelf alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your ſtrife? 13. † Take ye wiſe men and underſtanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. 14. And ye anſwered me, and ſaid, The thing which thou haſt ſpoken, *is* good *for us* to do. 15. So I took the chief of your tribes, wiſe men, and known, and [n] ‡ made them heads over you, captains over thouſands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes. 16. And I charged your judges at that time, ſaying, Hear *the cauſes* between your brethren, and [o] judge righteouſly between *every* man and [p] his brother, and the ſtranger *that is* with him. 17. [q] Ye ſhall not ‖ reſpect perſons in judgment, *but* you ſhall hear the ſmall as well as the great; you ſhall not be afraid of the face of man, for [r] the judgment *is* God's: and the cauſe that is too hard for you, bring *it* unto me, and I will hear it. 18. And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye ſhould do.

[i] Exod. xviii. 18. Numb. xi. 24.
[k] Gen. xv. 5.
[l] 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.
[m] Gen. xv. 5. & xxii. 17. & xxvi. 4. Exod. xxxii. 13.
† Heb. give.
[n] Exod xviii. 21.
‡ Heb. gave.
[o] John vii. 24.
[p] Lev. xxiv. 22.
[q] Lev. xix. 15. Chap. xvi. 19. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Prov. xxiv. 23. Jam. ii. 1.
‖ Heb. acknowledge faces.
[r] 2 Chron. xix. 6.

v. 9—18. The excellent civil government eſtabliſhed among them is here mentioned, for which they were greatly indebted to Moſes' prudence and wiſdom.

1. Their multitude being ſo great, and he unable to bear the burden, ſo as to hear and determine upon the variety of caſes which came before him, he directed them to chuſe wiſe men to be aſſiſtant judges; yet heartily praying that their numbers might increaſe a thouſand times, whatever care devolved upon him thereby. A good wiſh, or a ſhort prayer, is a uſeful parentheſis in our diſcourſe. 2. As he had no ambition to engroſs the government to himſelf, he had no dependants to provide for; therefore only deſcribes the character of fit perſons, and leaves the choice of them to themſelves. *Note*, Judges muſt be men of ſuperior underſtanding, as well as tried integrity, if they would fill their high ſtation with honour to themſelves, or advantage to the community. 3. When they approved the advice, and preſented to him the perſons, he gave them an excellent charge for their behaviour; which every good judge need ſeriouſly weigh and follow. 1. To give every cauſe a full hearing, and not be impatient with the length of the cauſe, or inattentive to the evidence produced in it. 2. To determine with ſtrict impartiality, unbiaſſed by any connection, uninfluenced by any regard for men's perſons, unawed by any fears or menaces of the rulers or the multitude. 3. He enforces his charge with this ſtrongeſt argument, The judgment is God's; they act under him immediately, as his repreſentatives, and are accountable to him for their conduct. 4. In caſes of difficulty, recourſe was to be had to himſelf; that ſo no injuſtice might be done the people through ignorance, any more than of deſign.

19. ¶ And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderneſs, which you ſaw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us; and [s] we came to Kadeſh-barnea. 20. And I ſaid unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us. 21. Behold, the LORD thy God hath ſet the land before thee: go up *and* poſſeſs *it*, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath ſaid unto thee; [t] fear not, neither be diſcouraged. 22. ¶ And ye came near unto me every one of you, and ſaid, We will ſend men before us, and they ſhall ſearch us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we muſt go up, and into what cities we ſhall come. 23. And the ſaying pleaſed me well: and [u] I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe. 24. And [x] they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eſhcol, and ſearched it out. 25. And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought *it* down unto us, and brought us word again, and ſaid, [y] *It is* a good land which the LORD our God doth give us. 26. [z] Notwithſtanding, ye would not go up, but rebelled againſt the commandment of the LORD your God. 27. And ye murmured in your tents, and ſaid, Becauſe the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to deſtroy us. 28. Whither ſhall we go up? our brethren have † diſcouraged our heart, ſaying, [a] The people *is* greater and taller than we, [b] the cities *are* great and walled up to heaven, and moreover we have ſeen the ſons of [c] the Anakims there. 29. Then I ſaid unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. 30. [d] The LORD your God which goeth before you, he ſhall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes: 31. And in the wilderneſs, where thou haſt ſeen how that the [e] LORD thy God bare thee as a man doth bear his ſon, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. 32. Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God, 33. [f] Who went in the way before you [g] to ſearch you out a place to pitch your tents *in*, in fire by night to ſhew you by what way ye ſhould go, and in a cloud by day. 34. And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, [h] and ſware, ſaying, 35. [i] Surely there ſhall not one of theſe men, of this evil generation, ſee that good land, which I ſware to give unto your fathers; 36. [k] Save Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, he ſhall ſee it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, becauſe [l] he hath ‡ wholly followed the LORD. 37. [m] Alſo the LORD was angry with me for your ſakes, ſaying, Thou alſo ſhalt not go in thither. 38. *But* Joſhua the ſon of Nun, which ſtandeth before thee, he ſhall go in thither. Encourage him: for he ſhall cauſe Iſrael to inherit it. 39. [n] Moreover, your little ones, which ye ſaid ſhould be a prey, and your children which in that day [o] had no knowledge between good and evil, they ſhall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they ſhall poſſeſs it. 40. [p] But *as for* you, turn ye, and take your journey into the wilderneſs by the way of the Red ſea. 41. Then ye anſwered and ſaid unto me, [q] We have ſinned againſt the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill. 42. And the LORD ſaid unto me, Say unto them, [r] Go not up, neither fight, for I *am* not among you; leſt ye be ſmitten before your enemies. 43. So I ſpake unto you, and ye would not hear, but rebelled againſt the commandment of the LORD, and ‖ went preſumptuouſly up into the hill. 44. [s] And the Amorites which dwelt in that mountain, came out againſt you, and chaſed you [t] as bees do, and deſtroyed you in Seir, *even* unto Hormah. 45. And ye returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you. 46. [u] So ye abode in Kadeſh many days, according unto the days that ye abode *there*.

[s] Num. xiii. 26.
[t] Joſh. i. 9.
[u] Numb. xiii. 3.
[x] Ibid. 22, 23, 24.
[y] Ibid. 27.
[z] Num. xiv. 1.
† Heb. melted.
[a] Num. xiii. 29, 32, 34.
[b] Chap. ix. 1.
[c] Num. xiii. 28.
[d] Exod. xiv. 14, 25. Neh. iv. 20.
[e] Chap. xxxii. 11, 12. Iſa. xlvi. 3, 4. & lxiii. 9. Hoſ. xi. 3. See Acts xiii. 18.
[f] Exod. xiii. 21.
[g] Numb. x. 33. Ezek. x. 6.
[h] Chap. ii. 14, 15.
[i] Numb. xiv. 22, 23, 29. Pſ. xcv. 11.
[k] Joſh. xiv. 9.
[l] Numb. xiv. 24.
‡ Heb. Fulfilled to go after.
[m] Numb xx. 12. & xxvii. 14. Chap. iii. 26. & iv. 21. & xxxiv. 4.
[n] Numb. xiv. 31.
[o] Iſa. vii. 15, 16. Rom. ix. 11.
[p] Numb. xiv. 25.
[q] Ibid. 40.
[r] Ibid. 42.
‖ Heb. You were preſumptuous and went up.
[s] Numb. xiv. 45.
[t] Pſal. cxviii. 12.
[u] Numb. xiii. 25.

v. 19—46. They were now in a fair way for poſſeſſion of the promiſed land; but Moſes reminds them of their perverſeneſs, and the dire conſequences which enſued thereupon. They were ſafely led through the terrible wilderneſs, and nothing remained but to go up and poſſeſs their inheritance. God's protection had been an earneſt of future mercies, and his promiſe their ſecurity. But then their unbelief began to break forth, 1. In ſending ſpies. They ſhould have taken God's word, and not have deſired ſight, when they were called to walk by faith. Nothing ſo dangerous as indulging our own wiſdom, where God's word hath already decided. 2. In the credit they paid to the lying repreſentation the ſpies made. They acknowledged the goodneſs of the land, but they exaggerated the difficulties of conquering it. Heaven is allowed to be a deſireable place, but the ſtraitneſs of the way deters the carnal and unbelieving heart from going up to it. 3. In their diſregard of Moſes' earneſt encouragement. Much had they experienced of God's care of them in Egypt, more in his protection and guidance through the wilderneſs, and therefore ſure they need not now fear; but, blind to their own mercies, they murmur, refuſing to go up, reflecting invidiouſly on God himſelf, as their deſtroyer, inſtead of preſerver; and thus, under the power of an evil heart of unbelief, departed from the living God. *Note*, (1.) Unbelief is at the root of all our ſins. (2.) Every ſin is

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greatly aggravated, when committed againſt experience of paſt mercies. He reminds them of the conſequence of this unbelief, in the condemnation which paſſed upon them all, ſave Caleb and Joſhua. All their other ſins had not deſtroyed them but for this. Unbelief is the only damning ſin. He himſelf alſo ſuffered under their provocations, and was excluded from Cahaan. Not that God hereby intended to diſinherit them: He was ordered to encourage Joſhua, and to aſſure their children they ſhould poſſeſs what their fathers forfeited. Happy for them, if they took warning by their examples, to do no more after their works. Finally, he mentions their perverſe attempt in oppoſition to the divine command, and the ill ſucceſs of it. Their tears then were fruitleſs; the decree was gone forth, and they had nothing to do but to ſubmit. *Note*, (1.) When the door of mercy is ſhut, it is too late to knock. (2.) Many weep for their ſufferings, not for their ſins; and this is no better than the ſorrow of the world, which worketh death.

CHAP. II.

Moſes paſſes by in ſilence their thirty-eight years wandrings, and continues his narrative with their return towards Canaan, ver. 1—3. *God orders them to give no diſturbanee*; 1. *To the Edomites*, ver. 4—8. *Nor*, 2. *To the Moabites*, ver. 9. *whoſe country and former inhabitants are deſcribed*, ver. 10—12. *Their paſſing the brook Zered is mentioned*, ver. 13—16. 3. *Nor to the Ammonites*, ver. 17—23. 4. *The Amorites given up to them*, ver. 24—26. *Their juſt quarrel with them*, ver. 26—32. *and complete victory*, ver. 33—37.

1. THEN we turned, and took our journey into the wilderneſs, by the way of the Red ſea, [a] as the LORD ſpake unto me; and we compaſſed mount Seir many days. 2. And the LORD ſpake unto me, ſaying, 3. Ye have compaſſed this mountain [b] long enough: turn you northward. 4. And command thou the people, ſaying, [c] Ye *are* to paſs through the coaſt of your brethren, the children of Eſau, which dwell in Seir, and they ſhall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourſelves therefore. 5. Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, † no not ſo much as a foot breadth, becauſe [d] I have given mount Seir unto Eſau *for* a poſſeſſion. 6. Ye ſhall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye ſhall alſo buy water of them, that ye may drink. 7. For the LORD thy God hath bleſſed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderneſs: [e] theſe forty years the LORD thy God *hath been* with thee, thou haſt lacked nothing.

[a] Numb. xiv. 25. Chap. i. 40.
[b] See ver. 7, 14.
[c] Numb. xx. 14.
† Heb. even to the treading of the ſole of the foot.
[d] Gen. xxxvi. 8. Joſh. xxiv. 4.
[e] Chap. viii. 2.

v. 1—7. God hath his appointed 'times for exerciſing his people's faith, and permitting his enemies proſperity. When he ſaith it is long enough, then cometh the end. Iſrael is now advancing to Canaan. Edom lay in their way, but they are forbid to moleſt them. They might not take advantage over their fears, nor revenge for their unkindneſs, nor expect to diſpoſſeſs thoſe, whoſe inheritance was a gift of God. *Note*, The people of God are ever generous, forgiving, and diſintereſted. They muſt treat them kindly, and with ſtrict juſtice; as they wanted nothing from them which they were not well able to pay for, they muſt not take their water without a price. It is the ſpirit of the goſpel, not only to do no injury to our enemies, but to keep ourſelves from being unneceſſarily burdenſome to our friends. Every thing mean and mercenary is as much forbidden as every thing malignant.

8. [f] And when we paſſed by from our brethren the children of Eſau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and paſſed by the way of the wilderneſs of Moab. 9. And the LORD ſaid unto me, † Diſtreſs not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land *for* a poſſeſſion, becauſe I have given [g] Ar unto [h] the children of Lot *for* a poſſeſſion. 10. [i] The Emims dwelt therein in times paſt, a people great and many, and tall as [k] the Anakims: 11. Which alſo were accounted giants, as the Anakims, but the Moabites call them Emims. 12. [l] The Horims alſo dwelt in Seir before-time, but the children of Eſau ‡ ſucceeded them when they had deſtroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their ‖ ſtead, as Iſrael did unto the land of his poſſeſſion, which the LORD gave unto them. 13. Now riſe up, *ſaid I*, and get you over [m] the § brook Zered; and we went over the brook Zered. 14. And the ſpace in which we came [n] from Kadeſh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, *was* thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were waſted out from among the hoſt, [o] as the LORD ſware unto them. 15. For indeed the hand of the LORD was againſt them to deſtroy them from among the hoſt, until they were conſumed. 16. ¶ So it came to paſs, when all the men of war were conſumed and dead from among the people, 17. That the LORD ſpake unto me, ſaying, 18. Thou art to paſs over through Ar, the coaſt of Moab, this day. 19. And *when* thou comeſt nigh over againſt the children of Ammon, diſtreſs them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon *any* poſſeſſion, becauſe I have given it unto [p] the children of Lot *for* a poſſeſſion. 20. (That alſo was accounted a land of giants, giants dwelt therein in old time, and the Ammonites called them [q] Zamzummims, 21. A people great and many, and tall as the Anakims; but the LORD deſtroyed them before them, and they ſucceeded them, and dwelt in their ſtead: 22. As he did to the children of Eſau [r] which dwelt in Seir, when he deſtroyed [s] the Horims from before them, and they ſucceeded them, and dwelt in their ſtead even unto this day: 23. And [t] the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, *even* unto [u] Azzah, [x] the Caphtorims which came forth out of Caphtor, deſtroyed them, and dwelt in their ſtead.)

[f] Judg. xi. 18.
† Or, Uſe no hoſtility againſt Moab.
[g] Numb. xxi. 28.
[h] Gen. xix. 37.
[i] Gen. xiv. 5.
[k] Num. xiii. 23, 34.
[l] Gen. xiv. 6. & xxxvi. 20.
‡ Heb. inherited them.
‖ Or, room.
[m] Num. xxi. 12.
§ Or, valley.
[n] Numb. xiii. 26.
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[o] Chap. i. 34, 35.
[p] Gen. xix. 38.
[q] Gen. xiv. 5. Zuzims.
[r] Gen. xxxii. 3.
[s] Gen. xiv. 6. & xxxvi. 20—30.
[t] Joſh. xiii. 3.
[u] Jer. xxv. 20.
[x] Gen. x. 14. Am. ix. 7.

v. 8—23. Moſes proceeds, 1. To recount their marches by the borders of Moab and Ammon, with ſome hiſtorical account of the former inhabitants, whom they had diſpoſſeſſed. They were giants, great in ſtature, and terrible to look upon as the Anakims, yet fell before the ſons of Lot and Eſau; why then ſhould the ſeed of Jacob fear, that God would not more glorioſly aſſiſt them in deſtroying the giants of Canaan? *Note*, In the world we have no ſure and abiding portion. The more vain and changeable its poſſeſſion, the more ſollicitous ſhould we be to ſecure a kingdom which cannot be moved. 2. He mentions their paſſage of the brook Zared, and the remarkable fulfilment of God's ſentence, in cutting off entirely the former generation, except Caleb and Joſhua, in the wilderneſs: for the hand of God was againſt them, as appeared in the ſeveral plagues with which they were viſited. God's counſel will ſtand, and woe to the ſoul againſt whom he contendeth in anger. 3. They are ſtrictly forbidden to diſtreſs the children of Lot; as the Edomites were brethren, the Ammonites and Moabites were near akin to them, and for their father's ſake muſt be ſpared; they may not covet for a poſſeſſion what God hath aſſigned them. *Note*, (1.) Relations have a title to a particular regard. (2.) The bleſſing of godly parents deſcends to childrens children.

24. ¶ Riſe ye up, take your journey, and [y] paſs over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon the Amorite king of Heſhbon, and his land: † begin to poſſeſs *it*, and contend with him in battle. 25. [z] This day will I begin to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee upon the nations *that are* under the whole heaven, who ſhall hear report of thee, and ſhall tremble, and be in anguiſh becauſe of thee. 26. ¶ And I ſent meſſengers out of the wilderneſs of Kedemoth, unto Sihon, king of Heſhbon, [a] with words of peace, ſaying, 27. [b] Let me paſs through thy land: I will go along by the highway, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left. 28. Thou ſhalt ſell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will paſs through on my feet: 29. ([c] As the children of Eſau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me) until I ſhall paſs over Jordan, into the land which the LORD our God giveth us. 30. But [d] Sihon king of Heſhbon would not let us paſs by him: for [e] the LORD thy God [f] hardned his ſpirit, and made his heart obſtinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as *appeareth* this day: 31. And the LORD ſaid unto me, Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee: begin to poſſeſs, that thou mayeſt inherit his land. 32. [g] Then Sihon came out againſt us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz. 33. And [h] the LORD our God delivered him before us, and [i] we ſmote him, and his ſons, and all his people. 34. And we took all his cities at that time, and [k] utterly deſtroyed ‡ the men, and the women, and the little ones of every city, we left none to remain: 35. Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourſelves, and the ſpoil of the cities which we took. 36. [l] From Aroer, which *is*

[y] Numb. xxi. 13, 14. Judg. xi. 21.
† Heb. begin, poſſeſs.
[z] Ezek. xv. 14.
[a] Chap. xx. 10.
[b] Numb. xxi. 21, 22. Judg. xi. 19.
[c] See Chap. xxiii. 3, 4. Judg. xi. 17, 18.
[d] Numb. xxi. 33.
[e] Joſh. xi. 20.
[f] Exod. iv. 21.
[g] Numb. xxi. 23.
[h] Chap. vii. 2. & xx. 16.
[i] Chap. xxix. 7.
[k] Lev. xxvii. 28. Chap. vii. 2, 26.
‡ Heb. Every city of men and women and little ones.
[l] Chap. iii. 12. & iv. 48. Joſh. xiii. 9.

by the brink of the river of Arnon, and *from* the city
that *is* by the river, even unto Gilead, there was not one
city too ſtrong for us: the LORD our God delivered
all unto us. 37. Only unto the land of the children of
Ammon thou cameſt not, *nor* unto any place of the ri-
ver [m] Jabbok, nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor
unto whatſoever the LORD our God forbad us.

[m] Gen. xxxii. 22. Chap. iii. 16.

v. 24—37. Though they might not touch the Ammonite, they are not reſtrained from the Amorite. But even to them they muſt firſt make offers of peace, though God had hardned their hearts to refuſe them, that they might periſh. The goſpel is thus preached to thoſe who reject it, through the hardneſs of their heart, yet are left inexcuſable thereby. Sihon refuſes a paſſage, and draws out his armies; but he meddled to his ruin; God bids them poſſeſs the land; his fear had gone before, to diſpirit the people, and they fell an eaſy prey. God's Iſrael may be well encouraged; what can reſiſt thoſe for whom God fights, and before whom he ſends his terrors round about? univerſal deſolation was quickly ſpread on every ſide; the ſword of Iſrael left none alive. The meaſure of their iniquity was full, and the conſumption determined on the whole nation. Their cattle, goods, cities, and country were the ſpoil of the conquerors; and now, from an howling wilderneſs, they began to poſſeſs a land of plenty. *Note*, It will be a bleſſed and glorious exchange, when the believer quits the wilderneſs of the world, to enter into his everlaſting manſions in the city of God.

CHAP. III.

Moſes in this chapter relates, 1. *The conqueſt of Og, king of Baſhan, and the ſeizing of his country,* ver. 1—11. 2. *The diſtribution of theſe new conqueſts to the two tribes and a half,* ver. 12—17. *Under certain proviſos and limitations,* ver. 18—20. 3. *The encouragement given to Joſhua to carry on the war which was ſo glorioſly begun,* ver. 21, 22. 4. *Moſes's requeſt to go over into Canaan,* ver. 23—25. *With the denial of that requeſt, but the grant of an equivalent,* ver. 26—29.

1. THEN we turned, and went up the way to Ba-
ſhan: and [a] Og the king of Baſhan came out
againſt us, he and all his people to battle [b] at Edrei.
2. And the LORD ſaid unto me, Fear him not: for I
will deliver him, and all his people, and his land into
thy hand, and thou ſhalt do unto him as thou didſt unto
[c] Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heſhbon.
3. So the LORD our God delivered into our hands
[d] Og alſo the king of Baſhan, and all his people: and
we ſmote him until none was left to him remaining. 4.
And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a
city which we took not from them, threeſcore cities, [e] all
the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Baſhan.
5. All theſe cities were fenced with high walls, gates
and bars, beſides unwalled towns a great many. 6. And
we utterly deſtroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king
[f] of Heſhbon, utterly deſtroying the men, women, and
children of every city. 7. But all the cattle, and the
ſpoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourſelves. 8.
And we took at that time out of the hand of the two
kings of the Amorites, the land that *was* on this ſide
Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto mount Hermon:
9. (*Which* [g] Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion; and the
Amorites call it [h] Shenir.) 10. [i] All the cities of the
plain, and all Gilead, and [k] all Baſhan, unto Salchah and
Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Baſhan: 11. [l] For
only Og king of Baſhan remained of the remnant of gi-
ants; behold his bed-ſtead *was* a bed-ſtead of iron: *is* it
not in [m] Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits
was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it,
after the cubit of a man.

[a] Numb. xxi. 33, &c. Chap. xxix. 7.
[b] Chap. i. 4.
[c] Numb. xxi. 24.
[d] Ibid. 33.
[e] 1 Kings iv. 13.
[f] Chap. ii. 24.
[g] Chap. iv. 48.
[h] 1 Chron. v. 23.
[i] Chap. iv. 49.
[k] Joſh. xii. 5. & xiii. 11.
[l] Am. ii. 9.
[m] 2 Sam. xii. 26. Jer. xlix. 2. Ezek. xxi. 25.

v. 1—11. Moſes continues a relation of their conqueſt. Og and his people fell like Sihon before them. Though his own ſtature and ſtrength were wonderful, as may be judged by his bed-ſtead of iron, preſerved in Rabbah, by which he appears upwards of thirteen feet high, and his courage equal to it, for he came out to meet Iſrael, yet himſelf fell by their ſword, and all his ſubjects periſhed with him; whilſt his country and goods became a prey, according to God's promiſe and power, who delivered them into Iſrael's hand. *Note*, (1.) There is no might or wiſdom againſt the Lord. (2.) They who refuſe to be warned by others fall, and continue to provoke their judgments, will periſh with them.

12. And this land *which* we poſſeſſed at that time,
[n] from Aroer, which *is* by the river Arnon, and half
mount Gilead, and [o] the cities thereof, gave I unto the
Reubenites, and to the Gadites. 13. And the reſt of
Gilead, and all Baſhan, *being* the kingdom of Og, gave
I unto the half-tribe of Manaſſeh; all the region of Ar-
gob, with all Baſhan, which was called the land of giants.
14. [p] Jair the ſon of Manaſſeh took all the country of
Argob, [q] unto the coaſts of Geſhuri, and [r] Maachathi;
and called them after his own name, Baſhan-havoth-jair, [s]
unto this day. 15. And [t] I gave Gilead unto Machir.
16. And unto the Reubenites, and [u] unto the Gadites,
I gave from Gilead even unto the river Arnon, half the
valley, and the border, even unto the river Jabbok,
[x] *which is* the border of the children of Ammon: 17.
The plain alſo, and Jordan, and the coaſt *thereof*, from
[y] Chinnereth [z] even unto the ſea of the plain, [a] *even* the
ſalt-ſea, under † Aſhdoth-piſgah eaſtward. 18. ¶ And
I commanded you at that time, ſaying, The LORD your
God hath given you this land to poſſeſs it: [b] ye ſhall
paſs over armed before your brethren the children of
Iſrael, all *that are* ‡ meet for the war. 19. But your
wives, and your little ones, and your cattle (*for* I know
that ye have much cattle) ſhall abide in your cities which
I have given you; 20. Until the LORD have given
reſt unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and *until*
they alſo poſſeſs the land which the LORD your God
hath given them beyond Jordan: and *then* ſhall [c] ye
return every man unto his poſſeſſion which I have given
you.

[n] Chap. ii. 36.
[o] Num. xxxii. 33. Joſh. xiii. 8, &c.
[p] 1 Chron. ii. 22.
[q] Joſh. xiii. 13.
[r] 2 Sam. x. 6.
[s] Num. xxxii. 41.
[t] Ibid. 39.
[u] 2 Sam. xxiv. 5.
[x] Num. xxi. 24. Joſh. xii. 2.
[y] Num. xxxiv. 11.
[z] Chap. iv. 49. & xxxiii. 23.
[a] Gen. xiv. 3.
† Or the ſprings of Piſgah, or the hill.
[b] Num. xxxii. 20.
‡ Heb. Sons of Power.
[c] Joſh. xxii. 4.

v. 12—20. Moſes rehearſes the ſettlement of theſe conqueſts on the Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manaſſeh, reminding them withal of the condition of their tenure. They muſt go over Jordan before their brethren to fight the Lord's battles, and ſee them comfortably ſettled in Canaan, before they preſumed to return to their own poſſeſſions in Gilead. Brethren in Chriſt muſt be companions in tribulation; and ſeek each others peace as their own.

21. ¶ [d] And I commanded Joſhua at that time, ſay-
ing, Thine eyes have ſeen all that the LORD your God
hath done unto theſe two kings: ſo ſhall the LORD do
unto all the kingdoms whither thou paſſeſt. 22. Ye
ſhall not fear them: for the LORD your God he ſhall
fight for you. 23. [e] And I beſought the LORD at
that time ſaying, 24. O LORD God, thou haſt be-
gun to ſhew thy ſervant thy greatneſs, and thy migh-
ty hand: for [f] what God *is there* in heaven or in earth,
that can do according to thy works, and according to
thy might? 25. I pray thee let me go over, and ſee
the good land that *is* beyond Jordan, that goodly moun-
tain, and Lebanon. 26. But [g] the LORD was wroth
with me for your ſakes, and would not hear me; and
the LORD ſaid unto me, Let it ſuffice thee, ſpeak no
more unto me of this matter. 27. [h] Get thee up into
the top of † Piſgah, and lift up thine eyes weſtward, and
northward, and ſouthward, and eaſtward, and behold
it with thine eyes; for thou ſhalt not go over this Jor-
dan. 28. But [i] charge Joſhua, and encourage him, and
ſtrengthen him: for he ſhall go over before this people,
and he ſhall cauſe them to inherit the land which thou
ſhalt ſee. 29. So we abode in [k] the valley over againſt
Beth-peor.

[d] Num. xxvii. 18.
[e] See 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.
[f] Pſal. lxxi. 19. & lxxxvi. 8. & lxxxix. 6.
[g] Num. xx. 12. & xxvii. 14. Chap. i. 37. & xxxi. 2. & xxxii. 51, 52. & xxxiv. 4. Pſal. cvi. 32.
[h] Num. xxvii. 12.
† Or the hill.
[i] Num. xxvii. 18.
[k] Chap. xxxiv. 6.

v. 21—29. As Joſhua was ordained to ſucceed Moſes in the government, he repeats the encouragement he gave him to be brave and confident in ſo good a cauſe. He had ſeen already ſome of God's mighty acts, and he was aſſured ſuch would be the ſucceſs which ſhould ever attend him, ſince it was the Lord who fought their battles. If God be for us, wherefore ſhould we fear or doubt? Moſes mentions his own deſire and prayer, and the refuſal he met with. 1. He adores God for the mercies he had already taſted, admiring the power and greatneſs of the works which he had ſhown to Iſrael, and intimates his wiſh that he might behold ſtill greater diſplays of God's glory, in the perfection of his people's ſettlement. *Note*, (1.) We ought never to entertain a deſire in our hearts, that we may not offer in prayer to God. (2.) A glimpſe of God's glory quickens the ſoul's longing after brighter diſcoveries of it. (3.) Thankfulneſs for any meaſure of God's mercy we have taſted, is the ſureſt means to obtain the bleſſing we need. 2. He puts up his petition for permiſſion to go over Jordan, enamoured, as it were, with the love of the goodly land. *Note*, They who have had a believing view of heaven, cannot but count it a goodly land, and long for an abode in it. 3. His requeſt is denied, yet in ſuch a way as ſufficiently aſſures him of God's favour towards him. Our prayers may often ſucceed, though we receive not according to our particular requeſts. God was wroth with him formerly, and had determined concerning the matter. Yet bids him kindly deſiſt, as if he wiſhed not to be aſked for what he could not grant, and be content. *Note*, If God gives us contentment under diſappointments, we have one bleſſed token that our prayer is heard with favour. Yet he ſhall ſee the land, though he may not enter it, and from the top of Piſgah be comforted in the proſpect of what his dear flock would poſſeſs after his deceaſe. Finally, He bids him charge Joſhua, and ſtrengthen him in his work, with the aſſurance of compleating the conqueſts he had begun. *Note*, (1.) Aged and experienced Chriſtians, are bound to encourage the hearts of their younger brethren. (2.) It is a great comfort to a dying miniſter, to leave the flock of God in a proſperous ſtate, and provided with every means for their edification, when he is ſleeping in the duſt.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A moſt earneſt and pathetical exhortation to obedience,* ver. 1—40. 2. *The appointing the cities of refuge on that ſide Jordan,* ver. 41—43. 3. *The particular deſcription of the place where Moſes delivered the following repetition of the law,* ver. 44—49.

1. NOW therefore hearken, O Iſrael, unto [a] the ſtatutes, and unto the judgments which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and poſſeſs the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. 2. [b] Ye ſhall not add unto the word which I command you, neither ſhall you diminiſh *ought* from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. 3. Your eyes have ſeen what the LORD did becauſe of [c] Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the LORD thy God hath deſtroyed them from among you. 4. But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God *are* alive every one of you this day. 5. Behold, I have taught you ſtatutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye ſhould do ſo in the land whither ye go to poſſeſs it. 6. Keep therefore and do *them*, for this *is* [d] your wiſdom and your underſtanding in the ſight of the nations, which ſhall hear all theſe ſtatutes, and ſay, Surely this great nation *is* a wiſe and underſtanding people. 7. For [e] what nation *is there ſo* great, who *hath* [f] God ſo nigh unto them, as the LORD our God *is* in all *things* that we call upon him for? 8. And what nation *is there ſo* great, that hath ſtatutes and judgments *ſo* righteous, as all this law which I ſet before you this day? 9. Only take heed to thyſelf, and keep thy ſoul diligently, leſt thou forget the things which thine eyes have ſeen, and leſt they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but [g] teach them thy ſons, and thy ſons ſons: 10. *Specially* [h] the day that thou ſtoodſt before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD ſaid unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they ſhall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children. 11. And ye came near and ſtood under the mountain, and [i] the mountain burnt with fire unto the † midſt of heaven, with darkneſs, clouds, and thick darkneſs. 12. And the LORD ſpake unto you out of the midſt of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but ſaw no ſimilitude, [k] ‡ only *ye heard* a voice. 13. [l] And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *even* [m] ten commandments, and [n] he wrote them upon two tables of ſtone. 14. ¶ And [o] the LORD commanded me at that time, to teach you ſtatutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to poſſeſs it. 15. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourſelves (for ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day *that* the LORD ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the fire) 16. Leſt ye corrupt *yourſelves*, and [p] make you a graven image, the ſimilitude of any figure, the likeneſs of male or female, 17. The likeneſs of any beaſt that *is* on the earth, the likeneſs of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, 18. The likeneſs of [q] any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeneſs of any fiſh that *is* in the waters beneath the earth: 19. And leſt thou [r] lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou ſeeſt the ſun, and the moon, and the ſtars, *even* [s] all the hoſt of heaven, ſhouldſt be driven to worſhip them, and ſerve them, which the LORD thy God hath ‖ divided unto all nations under the whole heaven. 20. But the LORD hath taken you, and [t] brought you forth out of the iron furnace, *even* out of Egypt, [u] to be unto him a people of inheritance, as *ye are* this day. 21. Furthermore, [x] the LORD was angry with me for your ſakes, and ſware that I ſhould not go over Jordan, and that I ſhould not go in unto that good land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance. 22. But [y] I muſt die in this land, I muſt not go over Jordan: but ye ſhall go over and poſſeſs that good land. 23. Take heed unto yourſelves, leſt ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, *or* the likeneſs of any *thing* [z] which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee. 24. For [a] the LORD thy God *is* a conſuming fire, *even* [b] a jealous God. 25. ¶ When thou ſhalt beget children, and childrens children, and ſhalt have remained long in the land, and ſhall corrupt *yourſelves*, and make a graven image, *or* the likeneſs of any *thing*, and ſhall do evil in the ſight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger: 26. [c] I call heaven and earth to witneſs againſt you this day, that ye ſhall ſoon utterly periſh from off the land whereunto you go over Jordan to poſſeſs it: ye ſhall not prolong *your* days upon it, but ſhall utterly be deſtroyed. 27. And [d] the LORD ſhall ſcatter you among the nations, and ye ſhall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD ſhall lead you. 28. [e] And there ye ſhall ſerve gods, the work of mens hands, wood and ſtone, [f] which neither ſee, nor hear, nor eat, nor ſmell. 29. [g] But if from thence thou ſhalt ſeek the LORD thy God, thou ſhalt find *him*, if thou ſeek him with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul. 30. When thou art in tribulation, and all theſe things † are come upon thee, [h] *even* in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and ſhalt be obedient unto his voice: 31. (For the LORD thy God *is* a merciful God) he will not forſake thee, neither deſtroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he ſware unto them. 32. For aſk now of the days that are paſt, which were before thee, ſince the day that God created man upon the earth, and *aſk* [i] from the one ſide of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been *any ſuch thing* as this great thing *is*, or hath been heard like it? 33. [k] Did *ever* people hear the voice of God ſpeaking out of the midſt of the fire, as thou haſt heard, and live? 34. Or, hath God aſſayed to go *and* take him a nation from the midſt of *another* nation, [l] by temptations, by ſigns, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a ſtretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35. Unto thee it was ſhewed, that thou mightſt know that the LORD he *is* God; [m] *there is* none elſe beſides him. 36. [n] Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might inſtruct thee: and upon earth he ſhewed thee his great fire, and thou heardeſt his words out of the midſt of the fire. 37. And becauſe he loved thy fathers, therefore he choſe their ſeed after them, and [o] brought thee out in his ſight with his mighty power out of Egypt: 38. To drive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou *art*, to bring thee in to give thee their land *for* an inheritance, as *it is* this day. 39. Know therefore this day, and conſider *it* in thy heart, that [p] the LORD he *is* God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: *there is* none elſe. 40. Thou ſhalt keep therefore his ſtatutes, and his commandments which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayſt prolong *thy* days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for ever.

v. 1—40. The review of God's providences towards them are here earneſtly applied, as arguments for their fidelity and obedience, with the moſt ſolemn charge to enforce them upon their conſciences.

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[a] Lev. xix. 37. & xx. 8. & xxii. 31.

[b] Chap. xii. 32. Joſh. i. 7. Prov. xxx. 6. Ecclus xii. 13. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

[c] Num. xxv. 4, &c. Joſh. xxii. 17.

[d] Job xxviii. 28. Pſal. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7.

[e] 2 Sam. vii. 23.

[f] Pſal. xlvi. 1. & cxlv. 18. & cxlviii. 14. Iſa. lv. 6.

[g] Gen. xviii. 19. Chap. vi. 7. & xi. 19. Pſal. lxxviii. 5, 6.

[h] Exod. xix. 9, 16. & xx. 18. Heb. xii. 18.

[i] Exod. xix. 18.

† Heb. Heart.

[k] Exod. xx. 22, 23.

‡ Heb. Save a voice.

[l] Chap. ix. 9, 11.

[m] Exod. xxxiv. 28.

[n] Ibid. xxiv. 12.

[o] Ibid. xxi. 1. Chap. xxii. & xxiii.

[p] Exod. xx. 4, 5.

[q] Rom. i. 23.

[r] Chap. xvii. 3. Job xxxi. 26, 27.

[s] Gen. ii. 1.

‖ Or imparted.

[t] 1 Kings viii. 51. Jer. xi. 4.

[u] Exod. xix. 5. Chap. ix. 29 & xxxii. 9.

[x] Num. xx. 12. Chap. i. 37.

[y] See 2 Pet. i. 13, 14, 15.

[z] Exod. xx. 4, 5.

[a] Chap. ix. 3. Iſa. xxxiii. 14. Hebr. xii. 29.

[b] Exod. xx. 5. Iſa. xlii. 8.

[c] Iſa. i. 2. Mic. vi. 2.

[d] Lev. xxvi. 33. Chap. xxviii. 62, 64. Neh. i. 8.

[e] Chap. xxviii. 64. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. Jer. xvi. 13.

[f] Pſal. cxv. 4, 5. & cxxxv. 15. Iſa. xliv. 9. & xlvi. 7.

[g] Lev. xxvi. 39. Chap. xxx. 1. 2 Chron. xv. 4. Neh. i. 9.

† Heb. Have found thee.

[h] Gen. xlix. 1.

[i] Mat. xxiv. 31.

[k] Exod. xxiv. 11. & xxxiii. 20.

[l] Chap vii. 19. & xxix. 3.

[m] Chap. xxxii. 39. Iſa. xlv. 5, 18, 22. Mark xii. 29, 32.

[n] Exod. xix. 9, 19. & xx. 18, 22. & xxiv. 16. Heb. xii. 18.

[o] Exod. xiii. 3, 9, 14.

[p] Joſh. ii. 11.

He begins with commanding deep and ſerious attention to ſo awful a ſubject. The word of God can never be heard with ſufficient reverence and godly fear. It is the character of the man to whom God will look, that he trembleth at his word. 1. Moſes charges them with careful preſervation of the ſacred truſt committed to them. They may not add to the word of truth, by inventions or tradition, nor diminiſh from it, by ſlighting or neglecting what was enjoined them, as ſuperfluous. They muſt hear God's word, that they may keep it, obey the precepts, obſerve the ordinances, and judge according to the laws preſcribed them: and herein they cannot be too ſollicitouſly careful, when compaſſed with temptations, a deceitful heart within, and an enſnaring world without, againſt which, all their watchfulneſs, diligence and prayer would be but enough. *Note*, This charge is equally applicable to ourſelves: we owe a like ſcrupulous attention to God's word, and need the ſame diligence to keep our hearts, and to walk before God in his holy ways. 2. A particular caution is given them againſt idolatry; this was the ſin God would be moſt diſhonoured by, and the conſequences of it moſt ſurely fatal to themſelves, *v.* 15—18. They muſt make no repreſentation of God in any form, by image or picture. They ſaw no likeneſs of any thing in Horeb; nor can any ſimilitude be conceived of him who is a ſpirit, and will have thoſe who worſhip him, to worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth: and ideal repreſentations of God muſt be as much avoided, as ſenſible figures, leaſt we commit idolatry in our heart. The nations around them worſhipped the hoſts of heaven, but they muſt abhor the thought of giving that honour to the creature, which was due only to the Creator: the ſun, moon, and ſtars, might tempt their eye, and examples of others be apt to enſnare them, but how abſurd, as well as impious, were it to worſhip that which was made to ſerve us? They are the works of God, and whatever glory they poſſeſs, the praiſe is due to him alone. What a mercy to be delivered from blind idolatry! Whilſt we pity thoſe who worſhip the viſible luminaries of heaven, may every view of them lead up our hearts in adoration to him who formed them. 3. They are not only to take heed to themſelves, but to teach their children. Parents have an awful truſt repoſed in them, to inſtruct their children in the knowledge of God's ways, and to lead them by precept and example to walk therein. 4. He repeats his warning, not to forget the covenant of the Lord, *v.* 23. aſſured, that if they bore in mind the riches of the promiſes therein made, and the faithfulneſs of God engaged for their fulfilment, then nothing would ever be able to ſhake their conſtancy and fidelity. *Note*, A conſtant remembrance of God's covenant, is the moſt quickening means to our diligent obedience.

Moſes ſupports this charge with the moſt forcible arguments; for to be godly in Chriſt Jeſus, is the moſt reaſonable ſervice imaginable. 1. He urges the benefit of their obedience, *v.* 1. and the danger of rebellion, *v.* 3. They would be unſpeakably gainers by the one, and as great loſers by the other. *Note*, Intereſt, as well as duty, is on the ſide of religion. 2. He mentions their relation to God, as their own and their father's God, with the obligations thence reſulting to ſerve and obey him. *Note*, If God be our God, it is highly reaſonable we ſhould approve ourſelves his faithful people. 3. He pleads the wiſdom of ſuch fidelity: it is moſt agreeable to reaſon, as well as moſt conducive to their own happineſs; and could not but procure them the reſpect and admiration of the nations around them, *v.* 6. Religion is the trueſt wiſdom, and even thoſe who reject it themſelves, ſtand in awe of it, and reverence it in others. 4. He enforces their duty, by the privileges they enjoyed. [1.] As being near to God, and having his ears open to hear and grant every requeſt. *Note*, (1.) God's Iſrael are a praying people; a prayerleſs ſoul is truly heatheniſh. (2.) None wait upon him in faith, who go without an anſwer of peace. [2.] As being poſſeſſed of a code of laws ſo excellent and equitable in themſelves, ſo conducive to promote perſonal and national ſecurity and felicity. All that is human, is defective: the book of God alone contains the deciſions of perfect equity, and the laws of perfect wiſdom. [3.] As having heard God himſelf ſpeaking to them from the midſt of the fire; a ſingular favour, which no other nation could boaſt of beſide themſelves. We hear no more this audible voice now, but we have his gentler and ſweeter call in the written word; and this voice, whoſoever is of the truth, receives with delight, and obeys in ſimplicity. [4.] As having experienced ſuch ſingular mercies in their deliverance from Egypt, and all the wonders they had ſeen in the wilderneſs, *v.* 34—37. and having ſtill greater mercies in proſpect, *v.* 38. Nothing is ſo powerful to engage the heart, as a deep and grateful ſenſe of God's goodneſs to us. 5. Moſes urges the glorious character of God. (1.) He is a jealous God, and a conſuming fire; his eye keen to diſcern, and his arm ſtrong to puniſh every diſobedience. We need be jealous over ourſelves therefore, leaſt we provoke that wrath, which if it be kindled againſt us, will burn to the nethermoſt hell. (2.) He is a merciful God, *v.* 31. and ſince he will not forſake us, we ought ſurely never to leave or forſake him. (3.) He is the only true God; beſide him there is no other. In heaven he makes the bright diſplays of his radiant glory, and earth is the footſtool of his throne, and not beneath his care and government. To him therefore are we bound to ſubmit, and him only to ſerve. 6. The fatal conſequences of apoſtacy from God, are ſtrongly preſſed upon them, *v.* 25—31. They ſhould be utterly deſtroyed, ſcattered among the nations, and given up to the vileſt ſervice of idols. *Note*, The ſin by which we have provoked God, he may in juſt judgment give us up to, as our puniſhment. 7. Yet there is a reſerve of mercy promiſed, whenever they ſought God, humbled under his chaſtiſements. Wherever they are, in whatever corner of the earth diſperſed, if they cried unto God in their miſery, he would hear them, for the ſake of the covenant he had made with their fathers, and recover them. When our ſtate is ever ſo bad, it is a mercy it is not utterly deſperate. *Note*, (1.) The end of afflictions on the people of God, is to bring them to repentance. (2.) Whenever we ſeek God in ſimplicity, however we have before provoked him, he will not utterly forſake us. (3.) His covenant with our glorious head, and ſecond Adam, Jeſus, affords us ground to hope, that he will never caſt out thoſe, who come to him in this Son of his eternal Love.

41. ¶ Then Moſes [q] ſevered three cities on this ſide Jordan, toward the ſun-riſing: 42. [r] That the ſlayer might flee thither, which ſhould kill his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times paſt; and that fleeing unto one of theſe cities, he might live: 43. *Namely*, [s] Bezer in the wilderneſs, in the plain country, of the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, of the Gadites; and Golan in Baſhan, of the Manaſſites. 44. ¶ And this *is* the law which Moſes ſet before the children of Iſrael: 45. Theſe *are* the teſtimonies, and the ſtatutes, and the judgments, which Moſes ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, after they came forth out of Egypt: 46. On this ſide Jordan [t] in the valley over againſt Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heſhbon, whom Moſes and the children of Iſrael [u] ſmote, after they were come forth out of Egypt: 47. And they poſſeſſed his land, and the land [x] of Og king of Baſhan, two kings of the Amorites, which *were* on this ſide Jordan, toward the ſun-riſing; 48. From Aroer, which *is* by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto mount Sion, which *is* [y] Hermon, 49. And all the plain on this ſide Jordan eaſtward, even unto the ſea of the plain, under [z] the ſprings of Piſgah.

[q] Num. xxxv. 6, 14.
[r] Chap. xix. 4.
[s] Joſh. xx 8.
[t] Chap. iii. 29.
[u] Num. xxi. 24. Chap. i. 4.
[x] Num. xxi. 33. Chap. iii. 3.
[y] Chap. iii. 9. Pſal. cxxxiii. 3.
[z] Chap. iii. 17.

v. 41—49. Whilſt Moſes lived, he laboured to improve the moment in ſettling the affairs of his people. For which purpoſe, 1. He fixes on the cities of refuge, which were on that ſide Jordan, in the land of Gilead and Baſan. 2. He proceeds to open and enforce the teſtimonies, ſtatutes, and judgments, which had been delivered to them, that at leaſt he might be free from their blood, when he had not ſhunned to declare unto them the whole counſel of God.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter we have a repetition of the ten commandments. 1. 1. *The general intent of them; they were in the nature of a covenant between God and Iſrael*, ver. 1—5. 2. *The particular precepts are repeated*, ver. 6. 3. *The people's requeſt that they might not hear God's voice, but uſe the mediation of Moſes*, ver. 23—27. 4. *God grants that it ſhould be ſo*, ver. 28—31. 5. *The obligation they were under to obedience*, ver. 32, 33.

1. AND Moſes called all Iſrael, and ſaid unto them, Hear, O Iſrael, the ſtatutes and judgments which I ſpeak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and † keep and do them. 2. [a] The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3. [b] The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day. 4. [c] The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midſt of the fire, 5. (I ſtood between the LORD and you at that time, to ſhew you the word of the LORD: for [d] ye were afraid by reaſon of the fire, and went not up into the mount) ſaying,

† Heb. Keep to do them.
[a] Exod. xix. 5.
[b] See Mat. xiii. 17. Heb. viii. 9.
[c] Exod. xix. 9, 19. Chap. xxxiv. 10.
[d] Exod. xix. 16. & xx. 18.

v. 1—5. Moſes ſummons the people, as many as could come within hearing, to attend the charge he was farther to deliver; and needful it was that they ſhould thoroughly know, what they were ſo ſolemnly bound to obey. He calls upon them to hear the ſtatutes, moral, ceremonial and judicial, which God delivered in Horeb, when he talked with them face to face, with an aſtoniſhing familiarity; and where they conſenting to God's commands, a covenant was eſtabliſhed between them, where-

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wherein God engaged to be their God to bleſs them, and they to be his ſervants to obey him, whilſt Moſes, as mediator, ſtood between them. *Note*, (1.) There can be no covenant between God and the ſoul, but through the one mediator Jeſus Chriſt, whom Moſes prefigured. (2.) The promiſes of the covenant engage our hearts to all holy obedience. (3.) There is not only a common obligation lying upon believers to be obedient, becauſe it is their duty, but, as intereſted in the covenant, a peculiar one, becauſe they profeſs it to be their choice.

[e] Exod. xx. ii. &c. Lev. xxvi. 1. Chap. vi. 4. Pſal. lxxxi. 10.
† Heb. Servants.
[f] Exod. xxxiv. 7.
[g] Jer. xxxii. 18.
[h] Lev. xix. 12. Mat. v. 33.
[i] Exod. xxiii. 12. & xxxv. 2. Ezek. xx. 12.
[k] Gen. ii. 2. Exod. xvi. 29, 31. Heb. iv. 4.
[l] Lev. xix. 3. Chap. xxvii. 16. Eph. vi. 2, 3. Col. iii. 20.
[m] Mat. v. 21.
[n] Luke xviii. 20.
[o] Rom. xiii. 9.
[p] Ibid. vii. 7.
[q] Exod. xxiv. 12.

6. ¶ [e] I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of † bondage. 7. Thou ſhalt have none other gods before me. 8. Thou ſhalt not make thee *any* graven image, *or* any likeneſs *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters beneath the earth. 9. Thou ſhalt not bow down thyſelf unto them, nor ſerve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, [f] viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me, 10. And [g] ſhewing mercy unto thouſands of them that love me and keep my commandments. 11. [h] Thou ſhalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain. 12. Keep the ſabbath day to ſanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. 13. [i] Six days thou ſhalt labour, and do all thy work: 14. But the ſeventh day *is* [k] the ſabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou ſhalt not do any work, thou, nor thy ſon, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-ſervant, nor thy maid-ſervant, nor thine ox, nor thine aſs, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy ſtranger that *is* within thy gates; that thy man-ſervant, and thy maid-ſervant may reſt as well as thou. 15. And remember that thou waſt a ſervant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a ſtretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the ſabbath-day. 16. ¶ [l] Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged: and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 17. [m] Thou ſhalt not kill. 18. [n] Neither ſhalt thou commit adultery. 19. [o] Neither ſhalt thou ſteal. 20. Neither ſhalt thou bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour. 21. [p] Neither ſhalt thou deſire thy neighbour's wife, neither ſhalt thou covet thy neighbour's houſe, his field, or his man ſervant, or his maid-ſervant, his ox, or his aſs, or any *thing* that *is* thy neighbours. 22. ¶ Theſe words the LORD ſpake unto all your aſſembly in the mount out of the midſt of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkneſs, with a great voice, and he added no more; and [q] he wrote them in two tables of ſtone, and delivered them unto me.

v. 6—22. We have here the ten commandments which God delivered on Horeb or Sinai, two ſummits of the ſame mountain. Some little variations are obſervable from *Exod.* xx. tho' the general ſenſe of them is exactly the ſame. After the fourth commandment, the reaſon for obſerving a ſacred reſt which before was taken from the creation, is here urged from their deliverance from Egypt. They had been ſervants themſelves, therefore knew how welcome a day's reſt would be to their own ſervants. Their redemption alſo was typical of our own, and we, in memory of Chriſt reſting from his glorious work on his reſurrection day, obſerve it as our day of ſacred reſt, to celebrate his triumphs over ſin, death, and hell, and to prepare to triumph with him, when we ſhall finally reſt from our labours in eternal bliſs. The commands are here all connected, as before ſeparate, for they are links of one chain, and he who offendeth in one point is guilty of all. The fifth commandment hath ſome addition, which the Apoſtle *Eph.* vi. 3. quotes, *That it may be well with thee*, for it goes ill with diſobedient children, whilſt God's bleſſing is upon the dutiful. The whole was delivered with the moſt awful appearances, ſuited to excite awful apprehenſions of that God with whom they had to do, and that law which was delivered to them. Of itſelf, the law is a miniſtration of condemnation to fallen man, and could only ſerve to beget terror in the guilty conſcience; but it was given to bring us unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by faith.—To preſerve theſe commands from being forgotten, they are written on durable tables, and laid up in the ark for a memorial to ſucceeding generations. *Note*, The writing the ſcriptures is what we can never enough be thankful for; thus we are not left to uncertain traditions, but may continually apply to the unadulterated fountain of truth.

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[r] Exod. xx. 19.
[s] Ibid. xix. 19.
[t] Chap. iv. 33. Judg. xiii. 22.
† Heb. Add to hear.
[u] Exod. xx. 19. Heb. xii. 19.
[x] Chap. xviii. 17.
[y] Chap. xxxii. 29. Pſal. lxxxi. 13. Iſa. xlviii. 18. Mat. xxiii. 37.
[z] Joſh. i. 7.

23. And [r] it came to paſs when ye heard the voice out of the midſt of the darkneſs (for the mountain did burn with fire) that ye came near unto me, *even* all the heads of your tribes, and your elders. 24. And ye ſaid, Behold, the LORD our God hath ſhewed us his glory, and his greatneſs, and [s] we have heard his voice out of the midſt of the fire: we have ſeen this day that God doth talk with man, and [t] he liveth. 25. Now therefore why ſhould we die? for this great fire will conſume us. If we † hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we ſhall die. 26. For who *is there of* all fleſh that hath heard the voice of the living God, ſpeaking out of the midſt of the fire (as we *have*) and lived? 27. Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God ſhall ſay; and [u] ſpeak thou unto us all that the LORD our God ſhall ſpeak unto thee, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*. 28. And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye ſpake unto me; and the LORD ſaid unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have ſpoken unto thee: [x] they have well ſaid all that they have ſpoken. 29. [y] O that there were ſuch an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! 30. Go ſay to them, Get you into your tents again. 31. But as for thee, ſtand thou here by me, and I will ſpeak unto thee all the commandments, and the ſtatutes, and the judgments which thou ſhalt teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I give them to poſſeſs it. 32. Ye ſhall obſerve to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: [z] you ſhall not turn aſide to the right hand or to the left. 33. You ſhall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and *that it may be* well with you, and *that* ye may prolong *your* days in the land which ye ſhall poſſeſs.

v. 23—33. Overcome with the diſplays of the terrible Majeſty they beheld, and trembling at the voice of God, they can no longer endure this method of immediate communion with him, leaſt they die. *Note*, (1.) Fallen man is naturally in terrors at God's voice. But, (2.) In Chriſt Jeſus, we are not afraid to approach him, becauſe we know it is the voice of love. They propoſe,

1. That God would ſpeak to them, not immediately himſelf, but through Moſes, their mediator. They had deſpiſed him before, but they value him now when he can ſtand their friend. Awakened conſciences ſee with different eyes.

2. They promiſe to be obedient. Nothing commoner than under convictions to make great promiſes, which are uſually as ſoon forgotten, as the ſailor's prayers when the ſtorm is over.

3. God condeſcends to approve their motion, and ſpeaks his deſire that there were ſuch a heart in them as now appeared, humble, reverential, and dutiful. Moſes is appointed as the mediator between them, and him they muſt hear. *Note*, (1.) God is well pleaſed with every gracious purpoſe his ſpirit excites in the heart, and delights in the ſalvation of his people. (2.) It were well for us, that there were ſuch a conſtant ſenſe of God, and the things of God upon our minds, as ſometimes we feel. (3.) The word God ſpeaks by his prophets and apoſtles, is as ſure as what he ſpeaks by his own voice from heaven, and to be equally regarded: and if the ſcriptures are neglected, all the appearances of Sinai, if repeated, would never have any effect upon us.

4. Moſes infers from all this their obligation to be obedient, and aſſures them it is the only way to be happy. No true happineſs in time or in eternity is to be enjoyed, but in the way of true holineſs.

CHAP. VI.

Moſes goes on with his charge to Iſrael, to be ſure to keep up their religion in Canaan. 1. *A perſuaſive to obedience*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The firſt truth to be believed, that* God is one, *ver.* 4. 3. *The firſt duty to be done, to love him with all our heart*, ver. 5. 4. *The means for keeping up religion*, ver. 6—9. 5. *Cautions againſt thoſe things which would be the ruin of religion. Abuſe of plenty*, ver. 10—12. *Inclination to idolatry*, ver. 14, 15. *Some general precepts*, ver. 13, 16, 17, 18. 6. *He directs them what inſtructions to give their children*, ver. 20—25.

1. NOW theſe *are* the commandments, the ſtatutes, and the judgments which the LORD your God

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† Heb. Paſs over.

[a] Exod. iii. 8.

God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye † go to poſſeſs it: 2. That thou mighteſt fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his ſtatutes, and his commandments which I command thee; thou and thy ſon, and thy ſons ſon, all the days of thy life, and that thy days may be prolonged. 3. ¶ Hear therefore, O Iſrael, and obſerve to do *it*, that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increaſe mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promiſed thee, in [a] the land that floweth with milk and honey.

v. 1—3. Moſes is ſollicitous to approve his own fidelity to them, and to inculcate upon them every command he hath received from the Lord; and charges them to tranſmit them to their childrens children, ſeeing on their religious obſervance of them, their well-being in time and eternity depended. And he begins with the fear of God, for filial fear is the ſtrongeſt preſervative from falling. *Note*, (1.) Parents have an awful charge, and great will be their guilt, if they neglect it. (2.) To walk in the fear of God, is the way to pleaſe God. (3.) They who walk in his fear, need fear nothing elſe; for God will take care, and abundantly provide for them.

[b] Iſa. xlii. 8. Mark xii. 29. John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. viii. 4, 6.
[c] Chap. x. 12. Mat. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30. Luke x. 27.
[d] Chap. xi. 18. Pſal. xxxvii. 31. & xl. 8. & cxix. 98. Iſa. li. 7.
[e] Chap. iv 9. & xi. 19. Pſal. lxxviii. 4.
† Heb. Whet, or ſharpen.
[f] Exod. xiii. 9, 16. Chap. xi. 18. Prov. iii. 3. & vi. 21. & vii. 3.
[g] Chap. xi. 20. Iſa, lvii. 8.
[h] Pſal. cv. 44.
[i] Chap. viii. 10, &c.
‡ Heb. Bondmen, or ſervants.
[k] Chap. x. 12, 20. & xiii. 4. Mat. iv. 10. Luke iv. 8.
[l] Pſal. lxiii. 11. Iſa. xlv. 23. & lxv. 16. Jer. iv. 2. & v. 7. & xii. 16.
[m] Mat. iv. 7. Luke iv. 12.
[n] Exod. xvii. 2. Num. xx. 3, 4. & xxi. 4.

4. [b] Hear, O Iſrael, the LORD our God *is* one LORD. 5. And [c] thou ſhalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy might. 6. And [d] theſe words which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thine heart. 7. [e] And thou ſhalt † teach them diligently unto thy children, and ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up. 8. [f] And thou ſhalt bind them for a ſign upon thine hand, and they ſhall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9. [g] And thou ſhalt write them upon the poſts of thy houſe, and on thy gates. 10. And it ſhall be when the LORD thy God ſhall have brought thee into the land which he ſware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities [h] which thou buildeſt not, 11. And houſes full of all good *things* which thou filledſt not, and wells digged which thou diggedſt not, vineyards and olive-trees which thou plantedſt not, [i] when thou ſhalt have eaten and be full; 12. *Then* beware leſt thou forget the LORD which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of ‡ bondage. 13. [k] Thou ſhalt fear the LORD thy God and ſerve him, and [l] ſhalt ſwear by his name. 14. Ye ſhall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you: 15. (For the LORD thy God *is* a jealous God among you) leſt the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled againſt thee, and deſtroy thee from off the face of the earth. 16. ¶ [m] Ye ſhall not tempt the LORD your God, [n] as ye tempted *him* in Maſſah.

v. 4—16. To know the true God, is everlaſting life; becauſe we cannot know him without loving, nor love without deſire and delight to pleaſe him. Therefore, 1. Moſes teaches them what God is. One in eſſence, in oppoſition to the gods many and lords many of the heathen; the ſelf-exiſtent, eternal, omnipotent Jehovah, beſide whom there is and can be no other. Happy the man that hath him for his God. 2. He urges the duty they owe him, to love him: this is the firſt and great commandment, and it contains all the reſt; for then we cannot but delight in what he commands, and truſt on what he promiſes: and moſt deſerving he is of our warmeſt affection, ſince in himſelf ſo tranſcendently excellent, and to us ſo amazingly kind: well may he challenge our heart, our whole heart, in ſincerity that knows no reſerve; with ſupreme affection, which admits no rival; with ardency ſtronger than death, and with permanence equal to the days of eternity. Lord! ſhed abroad ſuch love in our hearts. 3. The means preſcribed to maintain and increaſe this love in their hearts: they are to ſtore up God's words in their mind and memory, to inſtruct their children in them, by frequently inculcating the commandments upon them, to make them the matter of conſtant daily converſation for their mutual edification, and to write ſelect portions of them upon parchment ſcrolls, and on the poſts of their houſes, that they may be reminded of them, whenever they go out or come in. *Note*, (1.) God's word ſhould be read with ſeriousneſs every day. (2.) Our hearts ſhould be employed in meditation thereon, that we may inwardly digeſt it for our ſoul's food. (3.) We ſhould take delight to make it the ſubject of our diſcourſe; not to diſpute on what is abſtruſe, but to build up each other in the love and obedience to what is evident and clear. (4.) Eſpecial care ſhould we take early to acquaint our children and ſervants, with the invaluable knowledge, which alone is able to make them wiſe unto ſalvation. 4. Such attention to God's commands, would preſerve them from forgetting God in a day of proſperity. They were going into a land of plenty, and ſadly apt is the heart to be debauched by eaſe and affluence; therefore, the more they enjoyed, the more careful they need be over their hearts. *Note*, No ſtate ſo dangerous to the ſoul, none calls for greater fear and trembling, than when the world ſmiles, abundance ſurrounds us, and every earthly bleſſing tempts the idolatrous heart to take up its reſt below. 5. The fear of God muſt be before their eyes, and his ſervice their happy freedom. No mention of idol gods muſt come into their mouths, but when they ſwear, it muſt be an appeal to the true, and only heart-ſearching God. As their great danger ever lay from their idolatrous neighbours, they muſt carefully avoid going after their gods, for that would infallibly bring down upon them the wrath of God to conſume them. *Note*, (1.) An oath is an appeal to God, and it muſt be made in his name: it is the heighth of profaneneſs to ſwear by any other. (2.) A jealous fear over ourſelves, is the way to avoid provoking a jealous God.

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[o] Num. xxxiii. 52.
† Heb. To morrow.
[p] Exod. iii. 19. & xiii. 3.
‡ Heb. Evil.
[q] Rom. x. 5

17. You ſhall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his teſtimonies, and his ſtatutes which he hath commanded thee. 18. And thou ſhalt do *that which is* right and good in the ſight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayſt go in and poſſeſs the good land which the LORD ſware unto thy fathers; 19. [o] To caſt out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath ſpoken. 20. *And* when thy ſon aſketh thee † in time to come, ſaying, What *mean* the teſtimonies, and the ſtatutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God hath commanded you? 21. Then thou ſhalt ſay unto thy ſon, We were Pharaoh's bond-men in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt [p] with a mighty hand. 22. And the LORD ſhewed ſigns and wonders, great and ‡ ſore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his houſhold, before our eyes. 23. And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he ſware unto our fathers. 24. And the LORD commanded us to do all theſe ſtatutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preſerve us alive, as *it is* at this day. 25. [q] And it ſhall be our righteouſneſs, if we obſerve to do all theſe commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

v. 17—25. Repeated warnings are needful. 1. He charges them in no exigence to diſtruſt God's power or love, aſſuring them, that diligent obedience would be crowned with infallible ſucceſs againſt all their enemies. Whilſt we truſt God, and follow on in the way of duty, his promiſe ſecures our ſafety and happineſs. 2. They muſt ſeize every opportunity to inſtruct their children, that their religion and the deep remembrance of God's dealings with them, may be tranſmitted to their lateſt poſterity. Hearing ſo often the law read and taught, and ſeeing ſo many rites and ceremonies performed, their children would be naturally inquiſitive into the meaning of them; then they muſt ſeize the good opportunity to inform them of their former deplorable eſtate in Egypt, the great deliverances wrought for them, and the favours beſtowed on them in theſe inſtitutions, in the perfect obſervance of which they might attain righteouſneſs and life. *Note*, (1.) It ſhould be highly pleaſing to parents to hear their children's enquiries about the things of God. It is their duty to inform them, even when averſe to inſtruction; and how much more ſo, when teachable and deſirous to learn. (2.) Righteouſneſs and life eternal are inſeparable: not indeed to be obtained by a ſinner, through obedience to the law, but by him who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.

CHAP. VII.

Moſes commands Iſrael, 1. *Utterly to deſtroy the ſeven devoted nations, their altars, and images,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The reaſon given, their holineſs and relation to God,* ver. 6—8. 3. *The terms they ſtood upon with God,* ver. 9, 10. (1.) *In general, that if they would ſerve God, he would bleſs and proſper them,* ver. 12—15. (2.) *In particular, He would drive out the nations before them,* ver. 17—24.

[a] Chap. xxx. 3.
[b] Gen. xv. 19, 20.

1. WHEN [a] the LORD thy God ſhall bring thee into the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it, and hath caſt out many nations before thee, [b] the Hittites, and the Girgaſhites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites,

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Jebuſites, ſeven nations, greater and mightier than thou; 2. And when the LORD thy God ſhall deliver them before thee: thou ſhalt ſmite them, *and* [c] utterly deſtroy them, [d] thou ſhalt make no covenant with them, nor ſhew mercy unto them: 3. [e] Neither ſhalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou ſhalt not give unto his ſon, nor his daughter ſhalt thou take unto thy ſon. 4. For they will turn away thy ſon from following me, that they may ſerve other gods: ſo will the anger of the LORD be kindled againſt you, and deſtroy thee ſuddenly. 5. But thus ſhall ye deal with them; ye ſhall [f] deſtroy their altars, and break down their † images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

[c] Lev. xxvii. 21, 28. Num. xxxiii. 52. Joſh. vi. 17. & viii. 24. & x. 28, 40. & xi. 11, 12.
[d] Exod. xxiii. 32. & xxxiv. 12, 15, 16. See Chap. xx. 10. Joſh. ii. 14. & ix. 18. Judg. i. 24.
[e] 1 Kings xi. 2.
[f] Exod. xxiii. 24. & xxxiv. 12, 13. Chap. xii. 3.
† Heb. Statues or pillars.

v. 1—5. All connection with idolaters muſt be avoided, and every monument of idolatry utterly conſumed.

1. They muſt give them no quarter. The meaſure of their iniquities was full, and Iſrael is God's executioner of vengeance upon them. However tender of men's lives they ought to be on other occaſions, here no room for pity or mercy was found; and it was a neceſſary act, for their own ſafety, as well as God's glory. God's Iſrael muſt make no covenant with ſin, nor ſpare the deareſt luſt. 2. They are forbidden all marriages among them, as this would have the moſt immediate tendency to ſeduce them to idolatry. *Note*, No inducement of rank, beauty, or fortune, ſhould ever tempt a godly man to marry an unbeliever. 3. All monuments of idolatry muſt be utterly deſtroyed, altars, groves, or images. We cannot be too careful to remove temptation from us as far as poſſible.

6. For [g] thou *art* a holy people unto the LORD thy God: [h] the LORD thy God hath choſen thee to be a ſpecial people unto himſelf, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth. 7. The LORD did not ſet his love upon you, nor chuſe you, becauſe ye were more in number than any people (for ye *were* the feweſt of all people) 8. But [i] becauſe the LORD loved you, and becauſe he would keep the oath which he had ſworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the houſe of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he *is* God, [k] the faithful God, [l] which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thouſand generations; 10. And [m] repayeth them that hate him, to their face, to deſtroy them: he will not be ſlack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. 11. Thou ſhalt therefore keep the commandments, and the ſtatutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them.

[g] Chap. xiv. 2. & xxvi. 19. Pſ. l. 5. Jer. ii. 3.
[h] Exod. xix. 5. Amos iii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[i] Chap. x. 15.
[k] Iſa. xlix. 7. 1 Cor. i. 9. & x. 13. 2 Cor. i. 18. 1 Theſ. v. 24. 2 Theſ. iii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Hebr. xi. 11. 1 John i. 9.
[l] Exod. xx. 6.
[m] Nahum i. 2.

v. 6—11. The reaſons are here given for ſuch cautious avoiding whatever might offend God. For, 1. They were a choſen generation to ſhew forth his praiſes, and therefore bound to anſwer the gracious deſigns of God. There was in them no cauſe moving God to ſuch peculiar regard, but his own ſovereign choice and love; for they were the feweſt in number, and had proved themſelves ſufficiently perverſe and ungrateful in their conduct. He adds the promiſe made to their fathers, for whoſe ſake they were beloved. *Note*, (1.) Saving grace is ſovereign grace. (2.) The promiſe of God to Jeſus Chriſt is the only obligation we have upon him for his regard to us. (3.) As many as are choſen of God, muſt and will approve themſelves a peculiar people to him. 2. They would find their account herein; for God would be their friend if they loved and cleaved to him, but a mortal enemy, if they turned from him, and ſhewed by their diſobedience the enmity of their hearts againſt him. Learn hence, (1.) That godlineſs is the greateſt gain, as attended with his love, whoſe favour is better than life itſelf. (2.) That love and obedience are inſeparable. (3.) That every wilful ſinner is in heart a hater of God. (4.) That they who live at enmity with God, bring down inevitable ruin upon their ſouls.

12. ¶ [n] Wherefore it ſhall come to paſs, † if ye hearken to theſe judgments, and keep and do them; that the LORD thy God ſhall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he ſware unto thy fathers. 13. And he will love thee, and bleſs thee, and multiply thee: he will alſo bleſs the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increaſe of thy kine, and the flocks of thy ſheep, in the land which he ſware unto thy fathers to give thee. 14. Thou ſhalt be bleſſed above all people: [o] there ſhall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. 15. And the LORD will take away from thee all ſickneſs, and will put none of [p] the evil diſeaſes of Egypt (which thou knoweſt) upon thee; but will lay them upon all *them* that hate thee. 16. And thou ſhalt conſume all the people which the LORD thy God ſhall deliver thee, thine eye ſhall have no pity upon them: neither ſhalt thou ſerve their gods, for that *will be* [q] a ſnare unto thee. 17. If thou ſhalt ſay in thine heart, Theſe nations *are* more than I, how can I diſpoſſeſs them? 18. Thou ſhalt not be afraid of them: *but* ſhalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; 19. [r] The great temptations which thine eye ſaw, and the ſigns, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the ſtretched-out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: ſo ſhall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid. 20. [s] Moreover, the LORD thy God will ſend the hornet among them, until they that are left and hide themſelves from thee, be deſtroyed. 21. Thou ſhalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God *is* among you, a mighty God and terrible. 22. And the LORD thy God will ‡ put out thoſe nations before thee by little and little: thou mayeſt not conſume them at once, leſt the beaſts of the field increaſe upon thee. 23. But the LORD thy God ſhall deliver them || unto thee, and ſhall deſtroy them with a mighty deſtruction, until they be deſtroyed. 24. [t] And he ſhall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou ſhalt deſtroy their name from under heaven: there ſhall no man be able to ſtand before thee, until thou have deſtroyed them. 25. The graven images of their gods [u] ſhall ye burn with fire: [x] thou ſhalt not deſire the ſilver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* unto thee, leſt [y] thou be ſnared therein: for it *is* an abomination to the LORD thy God. 26. Neither ſhalt thou bring an abomination into thy houſe, leſt thou be a curſed thing like it: *but* thou ſhalt utterly deteſt it, and thou ſhalt utterly abhor it, [z] for it *is* a curſed thing.

[n] Lev. xxvi. 3. Chap. xxviii. 1.
† Heb. Becauſe.
[o] Exod. xxiii. 26, &c.
[p] Ibid. ix. 14. & xv. 26. Chap. xxviii. 27, 60.
[q] Exod. xxiii. 33. Chap. xii. 30.
[r] Chap. iv. 34. & xxix. 3.
[s] Exod. xxiii. 28. Joſh. xxiv. 12.
‡ Heb. Pluck off.
|| Heb. Before thy face.
[t] Joſh. xii. 1.
[u] Exod. xxxii. 20. Chap. xii. 3.
[x] Joſh. vii. 1, 21. 2 Mac. xii. 40.
[y] Zeph. i. 3.
[z] Lev. xxvii. 28. Chap. xiii. 17.

v. 12—26. Moſes encourages them to obedience, by an enlargement on the mercies which would attend them. 1. If they kept God's judgments, he would love them and bleſs them. Their poſterity ſhould be numerous to inherit the good land, and none of the diſeaſes of Egypt ſhould come near to deſtroy their lives, or make them uncomfortable. Diſeaſes are God's rod: may we never provoke him to lay it upon us in anger! 2. They are repeatedly commanded to deſtroy the people and their idols; the gold and ſilver, the beauty of the engraving, or the preciouſneſs of the materials, muſt not lead them to ſpare the leaſt relick; what God abhors they muſt; and 'tis their ſafety to do ſo, leaſt they be ſnared thereby, and become accurſed like the idols the heathen doated upon. *Note*, (1.) Covetouſneſs is real idolatry. (2.) If we would avoid the curſe, we muſt avoid the ſnare. (3.) Sin, the abominable thing which God hates, is to the true Iſraelite an object of his utter deteſtation. 3. God promiſes to ſtrengthen them to extirpate this devoted race. Though the conqueſt was difficult, from the number of the people, and their ſtrength, yet they need not fear them. The wonders God had ſhewn in Egypt they had ſeen, and ought to remember: He can and will as eaſily conſume the Canaanites as the Egyptians. Beſides, he promiſes to ſend his auxiliaries; the hornets ſhall go before them, and with their invenomed ſtings torment and terrify them, that they may fall an eaſy prey. So ſoon can God make a deſpicable inſect the inſtrument of his judgment; but above all, the mighty and terrible God himſelf is in the midſt of them, and who ſhall ſtand before them? *Note*, (1.) Paſt experience ſhould be brought forth, as encouragement under preſent difficulties. (2.) If God be for us, what matters it who are againſt us. (3.) Going forth, under God's promiſe, to war againſt our corruptions, we may, with confidence, be aſſured ſin ſhall not have dominion over us. 4. Their conqueſts ſhall be gradual, as they multiplied to inhabit the land, not all at once, leaſt the beaſts increaſed upon them, allured by the carcaſſes of the ſlain, and the deſolations of the land. *Note*, (1.) Heaven is thus a gradual conqueſt. Corruption dies by degrees, and grace by little and little takes increaſing poſſeſſion of the ſoul, 'till it is made perfect in glory. (2.) The deſtruction of the enemies of God's church and people is advancing by degrees, and however long ſpared and difficult to ſubdue, the decree is ſure, they ſhall be rooted out at laſt.

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter Moſes repeats, 1. *Some general exhortations to obedience,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Remembers them of the great things God had done for them in the wilderneſs,* ver. 2—5. *and* ver. 15, 16. 3. *He deſcribes the good land into which God would now bring them,* ver. 7, 8, 9. 4. *He gives a caution againſt the temptations of a proſperous condition,* ver. 10—14. *and* 17, 18. *And,* 5. *A fair warning of the fatal conſequences of apoſtaſy from God,* ver. 19, 20.

1. ALL the commandments which I command thee this day, ſhall ye obſerve to do, that ye may live and multiply, and go in and poſſeſs the land which the LORD ſware unto your fathers. 2. And thou ſhalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee [a] theſe forty years in the wilderneſs, to humble thee, *and* [b] to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldeſt keep his commandments, or no. 3. And he humbled thee, and [c] ſuffered thee to hunger, and [d] fed thee with manna (which thou kneweſt not, neither did thy fathers know) that he might make thee know that [e] man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. 4. [f] Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot ſwell theſe forty years. 5. [g] Thou ſhalt alſo conſider in thine heart, that as a man chaſtneth his ſon, *ſo* the LORD thy God chaſtneth thee. 6. Therefore thou ſhalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. 7. For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, [h] a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that ſpring out of valleys and hills; 8. A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, a land of † oil-olive, and honey, 9. A land wherein thou ſhalt eat bread without ſcarceneſs, thou ſhalt not lack any *thing* in it, a land [i] whoſe ſtones *are* iron, and out of whoſe hills thou mayeſt dig braſs.

[a] Chap. i. 3. & ii. 7.
[b] Exod. xvi. 4. Chap. xiii. 3.
[c] Exod. xvi. 2, 3.
[d] Ibid. 12, 14, 35.
[e] Pſ. civ. 29. Mat. iv. 4. Luke iv. 4.
[f] Chap. xxix. 5. Neh. ix. 21.
[g] 2 Sam. vii. 14. Pſal. lxxxix. 32. Prov. iii. 12. Heb. xii. 5. Rev. iii. 19.
[h] Chap. xi. 10, 11.
† Heb. Of olive-tree of oil.
[i] Chap. xxxiii. 25.

v. 1—9. Repeated injunctions were given to urge their obedience; it was what God juſtly expected of them, and they need carefully perform. Two arguments are here mentioned.

1. What God had done for them in the wilderneſs. There they had gone through his gracious diſcipline, to humble and prove them, whether they would truſt on his providence, and ſubmit to his corrections; and there they had experienced aſtoniſhing interpoſitions of his mercy and grace to their bodies and ſouls, in feeding them with manna, preſerving their cloaths from decay, and their feet from ſwelling amidſt all their marches, and more in pardoning their manifold provocations, and bringing them at laſt to the land of promiſe, after thoſe chaſtiſements which God, as a father, kindly inflicted, that they might not be wholly unpuniſhed. *Note,* (1.) We ſhould remember often God's paſt dealings with us in mercy, as the encouragement to truſt on the continuance of his care. (2.) We have need of every affliction; our hearts are ſo proud and ſtubborn, that all is little enough to bend them. (3.) Trials are the proof of our faith. God exerciſes us, that our graces, like gold in the furnace, may ſhine the brighter. (4.) God can ſupply his people in their deepeſt diſtreſſes. Let us take no indirect courſes to relieve ourſelves, and then verily we ſhall be fed. (5.) The rod of correction is the mark of parental love; inſtead of fainting we ſhould rejoice, when we are chaſtiſed of him.

2. What God was about to do for them. Canaan was before them; a land watered with copious ſtreams, the vallies ſtanding thick with corn, the hills covered with vines and olives, and every pleaſing fruit; where plenty crowned the happy year, and filled their tables with abundance: whilſt mines of precious ore enriched the bowels of the earth, and opened hidden reſources of wealth. Deeply therefore they were bound to ſerve that maſter, who paid them ſuch abundant wages. How glorious the earthly, but how much better the heavenly Canaan, watered with the river of life, adorned with the trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord; flowing with wine of everlaſting conſolation, and rich in treaſures that never wax old or decay. May my lot fall in this pleaſant land!

10. [k] When thou haſt eaten and art full, then thou ſhalt bleſs the LORD thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee. 11. Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his ſtatutes, which I command thee this day: 12. [l] Leſt *when* thou haſt eaten and art full, and haſt built goodly houſes, and dwelt *therein*; 13. And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy ſilver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou haſt is multiplied: 14. Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God (which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage; 15. Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderneſs, [m] *wherein were* fiery ſerpents, and ſcorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; [n] who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; 16. Who fed thee in the wilderneſs with [o] manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end) 17. [p] And thou ſay in thine heart, My power, and the might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth. 18. But thou ſhalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may eſtabliſh his covenant which he ſware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day. 19. And it ſhall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and ſerve them, and worſhip them, I teſtify againſt you this day, that ye ſhall ſurely periſh. 20. As the nations which the LORD deſtroyeth before your face, ſo ſhall ye periſh: becauſe ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

[k] Chap. vi. 11, 12.
[l] Chap. xxviii. 47. & xxxii. 15. Prov. xxx. 9. Hoſ. xiii. 6.
[m] Num. xxi. 6. Hoſ. xiii. 5.
[n] Num. xx. 11. Pſ. lxxviii. 15. & cxiv. 8.
[o] Exod. xvi. 15.
[p] Chap. ix. 4.

v. 10—20. Manifold were the bleſſings, and rich the proviſion beſtowed on them: it was but reaſon therefore, 1. That they ſhould bleſs God for them; that they ſhould never ſit down at their tables, or riſe from them, without a grateful remembrance of the hand which fed them. To eat and drink without thankſgiving and prayer, is to be more brutiſh than the ox, which knoweth his owner, and the aſs his maſter's crib. 2. That they take care in their proſperity not to forget God. Affluence is a dangerous ſnare, perhaps much more than the fiery furnace of affliction. They muſt beware of pride, which, with increaſe of wealth, is apt to ſwell the heart with ſelf-importance, and, as the conſequence, make them neglect that duty to God, which they ſo peculiarly owed him, both for the preſent diſtinguiſhing mercies, and the paſt great deliverances. The riches they enjoyed, however great, were the gift of God, more than the effect of their induſtry; and which, as received from him, ſhould lead to him. *Note,* (1.) It is very difficult to poſſeſs an humble mind in an advance of ſtation, and in the midſt of proſperity. (2.) Great and rich men too commonly look upon religion as below them. Their good things are their portion, and they hate to be reſtrained in their gratifications. (3.) Forgetfulneſs of God is not only a great ſin itſelf, but the cauſe of all others. (4.) Whatever we get, we ſhould aſcribe the praiſe not to our own induſtry or wiſdom, but to God's bleſſing. (5.) The moment pride ſwells the heart, on any acquiſition ſpiritual or temporal, that moment the curſe of God is upon it, and our gain becomes our greateſt loſs. Therefore, 3. Moſes warns them of the fatal conſequences of ſuch departures from God. The moment they forgot God, they would neceſſarily ſet up every man his idols in his heart, and then they would periſh, as the nations they had driven out before them. *Note,* (1.) We muſt have ſome object of worſhip, and that is our God, wherever our ſupreme affections are placed. They who turn from God commence idolaters, and worſhip gold, or beauty, or honour, or themſelves. (2.) Ruin and ſin go hand in hand: though we forget God, we ſhall not be forgotten of him.

CHAP. IX.

In this chapter Moſes, 1. *Aſſures them of victory over their enemies,* ver. 1—3. 2. *He cautions them not to attribute their ſucceſſes to their own merit, but to God's juſtice,* ver. 4—6. 3. *To make it evident, he ſhews Iſrael their tranſgreſſions,* 1. *In the matter of the golden calf,* ver. 8—21. 2. *In other inſtances of their rebellion,* ver. 22, 23. *And,* 3. *Mentions the interceſſion he had made for them at Horeb, to prevent their being ruined for the golden calf,* ver. 25.

1. HEAR, O Iſrael: Thou *art* to paſs over Jordan this day, to go in to poſſeſs nations greater and mightier than thyſelf, cities great and [a] fenced up to heaven, 2. A people great and tall, [b] the children of the Anakims, whom thou knoweſt, and *of whom* thou haſt heard *ſay*, Who can ſtand before the children of Anak! 3. Underſtand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God *is* he which goeth over before thee *as* [c] a conſuming fire: he ſhall deſtroy them, and he ſhall bring them down before thy face: ſo ſhalt thou drive them out, and deſtroy them quickly, as the LORD hath ſaid unto thee.

[a] Chap. i. 28.
[b] Num. xiii. 22, 28, 29.
[c] Chap. iv. 24. Hebr. xii. 29.

4. Speak

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4. Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath caſt them out from before thee, ſaying, [d] For my righteouſneſs the LORD hath brought me in to poſſeſs this land: but [e] for the wickedneſs of theſe nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. 5. [f] Not for thy righteouſneſs, or for the uprightneſs of thine heart doſt thou go to poſſeſs their land: but for the wickedneſs of theſe nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform [g] the word which the LORD ſware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob. 6. Underſtand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to poſſeſs it, for thy righteouſneſs, for thou *art* [h] a ſtiff-necked people.

[d] Chap. viii. 17. Rom. xi. 6, 20. 1 Cor. iv. 4, 7.
[e] Gen. xv. 16.
[f] Tit. iii. 4.
[g] Gen. xii. 7. & xiii. 15. & xv. 7. & xvii. 8. & xxvi. 4. & xxviii. 13.
[h] Exod. xxxii. 9. & xxxiii. 3. & xxxiv. 9.

v. 1—6. With awakening calls to attention, after ſome pauſe, he renews his diſcourſe. They were ſhortly to paſs over Jordan, and to enter the land of Canaan, fortified indeed with the greateſt art, and defended by the moſt mighty warriors. But the greater their ſtrength, the more conſpicuous would be the power of God in the certain victory to which he led them. They muſt beware hereupon not to aſcribe their conqueſts to their own deſerts, for they were a ſtiff-necked people, but to the wickedneſs of the people, on whom God would by them execute vengeance, and to the promiſe made to their fathers, wherein God would have his faithfulneſs appear. *Note*, (1.) The greater our enemies are, the more ſhall the power of God be magnified in our ſalvation. (2.) The people of God can never have too mean an opinion of their own righteouſneſs, nor too high a one of the riches and ſovereignty of God's grace. When we come to the poſſeſſion of eternal glory, every ſaint will with delight caſt down his crown before the throne of Jeſus, and own, that all the praiſe and glory are due to him alone. (3.) God will find inſtruments to execute his wrath upon a devoted people. Though he bear long, he will not bear always. (4.) However God's promiſes ſeem delayed, he is faithful, and we ſhall ſee them fulfilled at the laſt. They who patiently wait ſhall ſee the ſalvation of our God.

7. ¶ Remember, *and* forget not, how thou provokedſt the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderneſs: [i] from the day that thou didſt depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious againſt the LORD. 8. [k] Alſo in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, ſo that the LORD was angry with you, to have deſtroyed you. 9. [l] When I was gone up into the mount, to receive the tables of ſtone, *even* the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then [m] I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water: 10. [n] And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of ſtone written with the finger of God, and on them *was written* according to all the words which the LORD ſpake with you in the mount, out of the midſt of fire, [o] in the day of the aſſembly. 11. And it came to paſs at the end of forty days and forty nights *that* the LORD gave me the two tables of ſtone, *even* the tables of the covenant. 12. And the LORD ſaid unto me, [p] Ariſe, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou haſt brought forth out of Egypt, have corrupted *themſelves*: they are quickly turned aſide out of the way which I commanded them, they have made them a molten image. 13. Furthermore, the LORD ſpake unto me, ſaying, I have ſeen this people, and behold, [q] it *is* a ſtiff-necked people. 14. Let me alone, that I may deſtroy them, and [r] blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they. 15. So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant *were* in my two hands. 16. And [s] I looked, and behold, ye had ſinned againſt the LORD your God, *and* had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aſide quickly out of the way which the LORD had commanded you. 17. And I took the two tables, and caſt them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes. 18. And [t] I fell down before the LORD as at the firſt, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water, becauſe of all your ſins which ye ſinned, in doing wickedly in the ſight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. 19. (For I was afraid of the anger, and hot diſpleaſure wherewith the LORD was wroth againſt you to deſtroy you) But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time alſo. 20. And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have deſtroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron alſo the ſame time. 21. And [u] I took your ſin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and ſtamped it, *and* ground *it* very ſmall, *even* until it was as ſmall as duſt: and I caſt the duſt thereof into the brook that deſcended out of the mount. 22. And at [x] Taberah, and at [y] Maſſah, and at [z] Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath. 23. Likewiſe, [a] when the LORD ſent you from Kadeſh-barnea, ſaying, Go up and poſſeſs the land which I have given you; then you rebelled againſt the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice. 24. [b] You have been rebellious againſt the LORD, from the day that I knew you. 25. [c] Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down *at the firſt*; becauſe the LORD had ſaid he would deſtroy you. 26. [d] I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and ſaid, O Lord GOD, deſtroy not thy people, and thine inheritance which thou haſt redeemed through thy greatneſs, which thou haſt brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 27. Remember thy ſervants, Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; look not unto the ſtubbornneſs of this people, nor to their wickedneſs, nor to their ſin: 28. Leſt [e] the land whence thou broughteſt us out, ſay, [f] Becauſe the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promiſed them, and becauſe he hated them, he hath brought them out to ſlay them in the wilderneſs. 29. [g] Yet they *are* thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughteſt out by thy mighty power, and by thy ſtretched out arm.

[i] Exod. xiv. 11. & xvi. 2. & xvii. 2. Num. xi. 4. & xx. 2. & xiv. 2.
[k] Exod. xxxii. 4. Pſ. cvi. 19.
[l] Exod. xxiv. 12, 15.
[m] Ibid. 18. & xxxiv. 28.
[n] Ibid. xxxi. 18.
[o] Ibid. xix. 17. & xx. 1.
[p] Ibid. xxxii. 7.
[q] Ver. 6. Chap. ix. 16. & xxxi. 27. 2 Kings xvii. 14.
[r] Chap. xxix. 20. Pſ. ix. 5. & cix. 13.
[s] Exod. xxxii. 19.
[t] Ibid. xxxiv. 28. Pſ. cvi. 23.

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[u] Exod. xxxii. 20.
[x] Num. xi. 1, 3, 5.
[y] Exod. xvii. 7.
[z] Num. xi. 4, 34.
[a] Ibid. xiii. 3. & xiv. 1.
[b] Chap. xxxi. 27.
[c] Ver. 18.
[d] Exod. xxxii. 11, &c.
[e] Gen. xli. 57. 1 Sam. xiv. 25.
[f] Exod. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 16.
[g] Chap. iv. 20.

v. 7—29. As nothing is more difficult than to be put out of a good conceit with ourſelves, Moſes brings to their remembrance abundant proof how little reaſon they had to value themſelves on their own righteouſneſs. Their whole conduct, from the day of their coming from Egypt, had been a ſucceſſion of rebellions; many of which are particularly ſpecified, and many more there were probably during their ſojourning in the wilderneſs. The capital of them was the calf in Horeb; a ſcene ſo ſhocking, that after that they ſhould never dare to lift up their eyes to God but with ſhame and confuſion. Then were they in danger to have been abandoned for ever of God, and he had been juſtified in rejecting them. In fear of ſuch a righteous doom, Moſes with fervent prayer interpoſes, if poſſible to avert the hot diſpleaſure which was awakened againſt them. Nor had he one plea to make for them of their deſert, but acknowledges their aggravated guilt, and only begs their fathers might be remembred, and that their enemies might not be tempted to blaſpheme God, if they ſhould be deſtroyed. Nor had they been rebels themſelves, but even Aaron had been drawn or forced into compliance with them, and thereby alſo provoked God moſt highly, even to threaten to deſtroy him. And when the calf, their hateful ſin, was deſtroyed, and undeſerved mercy vouchſafed to them, the burnings of Taberah, the plague of Maſſah, the graves of Kibroth-hattaavah, and the ſlain at Kadeſh-barnea, were awful monuments againſt them, how deep their rebellions were rooted, and how undeſerving they were of the leaſt of the mercies vouchſafed to them. *Note*, (1.) Whoever reviews carefully his own conduct towards God, cannot but ſtand amazed, that after ſuch repeated provocations there ſhould be any mercy in ſtore for him, and own how vile and unworthy he is of it. (2.) It is obſtinate blindneſs of heart alone, which can ever ſupport in us a good opinion of ourſelves.

CHAP. X.

Moſes having mentioned their provocations, here reminds them of God's mercies, both deſerving to be kept in everlaſting remembrance. 1. *The renewing of the tables of the covenant,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Giving orders for their progreſs towards Canaan,* ver. 6, 7. 3. *Chooſing the tribe of Levi for his own,* ver. 8, 9. *And continuing the prieſthood after the death of Aaron,* ver. 6. 4. *Accepting the interceſſion of Moſes for them,* ver. 10, 11. *From whence he infers what obligations they lay under to fear, and love, and ſerve God,* ver. 12—22.

1. AT that time the LORD ſaid unto me, [a] Hew thee two tables of ſtone like unto the firſt, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. 2. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the firſt tables which thou brakeſt, and thou ſhalt put them in the ark. 3. And I made an ark *of* [b] ſhittim-wood, and hewed two tables of ſtone like unto the firſt, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in

[a] Exod. xxxiv. 1.
[b] Ibid. xxv. 5, 10. & xxxvii. 1.

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mine hand. 4. And [c] he wrote on the tables, according to the firſt writing, the ten † commandments, which the LORD ſpake unto you in the mount, out of the midſt of the fire, in the day of the aſſembly: and the LORD gave them unto me. 5. And I turned myſelf and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made, and there they be, as the LORD commanded me. 6. ¶ [d] And the children of Iſrael took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan, [e] to Moſera: [f] there Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his ſon miniſtred in the prieſt's office in his ſtead. 7. [g] From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters. 8. ¶ At that time [h] the LORD ſeparated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [i] to ſtand before the LORD to miniſter unto him, and [k] to bleſs in his name unto this day. 9. [l] Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren: the LORD *is* his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promiſed him. 10. [m] And I ſtayed in the mount, according to the ‡ firſt time, forty days and forty nights, and [n] the LORD hearkened unto me at that time alſo, *and* the LORD would not deſtroy thee. 11. And [o] the LORD ſaid unto me, Ariſe, ‖ take *thy* journey before the people, that they may go in, and poſſeſs the land which I ſware unto their fathers to give unto them.

v. 1—11. If Iſrael had their deſerts, they had been long ſince undone: it was of the Lord's mercies they were not conſumed. His grace triumphed over their provocations. 1. In reſtoring to them the tables of the covenant which were broken, in token of his reconciliation and return to them, and they are laid up in the ark before him. *Note*, (1.) Chriſt is our ark; the law is ſafe in his hands, for he hath perfectly fulfilled it, and obtained thereby eternal redemption for us. (2.) Though we have not the tables of ſtone, we have the ſame law in the written word; and if we are God's people, find the love of it engraved on the fleſhly tables of our hearts. 2. In leading them ſafe through the wilderneſs, toward the land of promiſe, with the miraculous ſupplies ſo often provided for them. 3. He gave them a ſtanding miniſtry in Aaron and his ſucceſſors, and in the whole tribe of Levi. *Note*, As long as God raiſes up faithful miniſters, it is a ſure ſymptom of mercy yet in ſtore for his church and people. 4. He granted Moſes' requeſt, conſenting to go with them, to put them in poſſeſſion of the land promiſed to their fathers, and Moſes is to be their captain. Thus Jeſus is at once the advocate for ſin, and the captain of our ſalvation: they whom he prays for, and who fight under his banner, can never faint or fail.

12. ¶ And now Iſrael, [p] what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and [q] to love him, and to ſerve the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, 13. To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his ſtatutes which I command thee this day for thy good? 14. Behold, [r] the heaven, and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD's thy God, [s] the earth *alſo* with all that therein *is*. 15. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he choſe their ſeed after them, *even* you above all people, as *it is* this day. 16. [t] Circumciſe therefore the foreſkin of your heart, and be no more ſtiff-necked. 17. For the LORD your God *is* God of gods and [u] Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and terrible, [x] which regardeth not perſons, nor taketh reward. 18. [y] He doth execute the judgment of the fatherleſs and widow, and loveth the ſtranger, in giving him food and raiment. 19. [z] Love ye therefore the ſtranger: for ye were ſtrangers in the land of Egypt. 20. [a] Thou ſhalt fear the LORD thy God; him ſhalt thou ſerve, and [b] to him ſhalt thou cleave, and [c] ſwear by his name. 21. [d] He *is* thy praiſe, and he *is* thy God that hath done for thee theſe great and terrible things which thine eyes have ſeen. 22. Thy fathers went down into Egypt [e] with threeſcore and ten perſons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee [f] as the ſtars of heaven for multitude.

v. 12—22. Mercies like theſe no doubt deſerve the warmeſt returns of gratitude and duty. We have here, 1. Theſe reaſonable demands of God upon them deſcribed. To *fear him*, becauſe his majeſty is glorious, his wrath dreadful, and his mercy great. To *love him*, with ſupreme deſire after him, with delight in him beyond all things, and with growing conformity of our ſouls to his image. To *ſerve him* with that chearful, univerſal, happy obedience, which love dictates, making his ſervice perfect freedom. To *keep his commandments*, without reſerve, or murmuring. To *circumciſe the foreſkin of their hearts*, by putting off the old man, which is corrupt, with the affections and luſts, and neither ſparing, nor deſiring to ſpare, the leaſt filthineſs or ſuperfluity of naughtineſs in the heart. *Not ſtiffnecked*, but humble, and chearfully ſubmiſſive to the rod of correction, as to the yoke of obedience. *Swearing by his name*, as the only omniſcient God, to whom ſuch appeal ſhould be made; and *cleaving* to him with unſhaken fidelity, and perſevering ſtedfaſtneſs; withal extending their regard to their neighbours, and *loving even the ſtranger*, who is the object of God's regard, and ſhould be of theirs; eſpecially when they conſidered their own deſolate eſtate in Egypt, where God ſo graciouſly, as a father, relieved them from their diſtreſſes. Society in ſuffering ſhould be an argument to pity and relieve the afflicted. *Note*, Iſrael's duty is our own, and all this doth the Lord our God require of every one of his ſpiritual Iſrael. 2. There is the greateſt juſtice and ſuitableneſs in this conduct towards God; becauſe *God* is glorious above all gods, *mighty* to protect and bleſs, and *terrible* to puniſh; above all partiality to perſons, and poſſeſſing all power in heaven and earth, whether to reward the fidelity of his choſen, or to recompence vengeance to his enemies: full of grace towards the poor deſtitute, and tender of his own Iſrael; the object of their juſt praiſes; in ſovereign grace ſelecting them for his own, and with abundant increaſe multiplying them as the ſtars of heaven. *Note*, (1.) Every view of God in his glorious perfections is an argument to love and ſerve him. (2.) The diſtinguiſhing choice God makes in the election of grace, lays on his people peculiar obligations to devote themſelves wholly to his honour and glory.

[c] Ibid. xxxiv. 28.
† Heb. Words.
[d] Num. xxxiii. 31.
[e] Ibid. 30.
[f] Num. xx. 28. & xxxiii. 38.
[g] Ibid. xxxiii. 32, 33, 34.
[h] Ibid. iii. 6. & iv. 4. & viii. 14.
[i] Chap. xviii. 5.
[k] Lev. ix. 22. Num. vi. 24.
[l] Num. xviii. 20. Chap. xviii. 1. Ezek. xliv. 28.
[m] Exod. xxxiv. 28. Chap. ix. 18, 25.
‡ Or former days.
[n] Exod. xxxii. 32, 33. & xxxiii. 17. Chap. ix. 19.
[o] Exod. xxxii. 34. & xxxiii. 1.
‖ Heb. Go in journey.
[p] Mic. vi. 8.
[q] Chap. vi. 5. Mat. xxii. 37.
[r] Exod. xix. Pſ. cxv. 16. & cxlviii. 4.
[s] Gen. xiv. 19. Pſ. xxiv. 1.
[t] See Lev. xxvi. 41. Chap. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Rom. ii. 28, 29. Col. ii. 11.
[u] Rev. xvii. 14. & xix. 16.
[x] 2 Chron. xix. 7. Job xxxiv. 19. Acts x. 34. Rom. ii. 11. Gal. ii. 6. Eph. vi. 9. Col iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17.
[y] Pſ lxviii. 5. & cxlvi. 9.
[z] Lev. xix. 33, 34. Gal. ii. 6.
[a] Chap. vi. 13. Mat. iv. 10. Luke iv. 8.
[b] Chap. xiii. 4.
[c] Pſ. lxiii. 11.
[d] Exod. xv. 2. Pſ. xxii. 3. Jer. xvii. 14.
[e] Gen. xlvi. 27. Exod. i. 5. Acts vii. 14.
[f] Gen. xv. 5.

CHAP. XI.

Moſes, 1. *Inſtances ſeveral of God's mighty works, as arguments for their fidelity*, ver. 1—7. 2. *That their obedience would be attended with eminent bleſſings*, ver. 8—15. ver. 18—25. *But*, 3. *Their diſobedience would ruin them*, ver. 16, 17. 4. *Orders given for the ſolemn publication of the bleſſings of obedience, and the curſes of rebellion*, ver. 26—32.

1. THerefore thou ſhalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his ſtatutes, and his judgments, and his commandments alway. 2. And know you this day: for *I ſpeak* not with your children which have not known, and which have not ſeen the chaſtiſement of the LORD your God, his greatneſs, his mighty hand, and his ſtretched out arm; 3. And his miracles, and his acts which he did in the midſt of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land; 4. And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horſes, and to their chariots, [a] how he made the water of the Red ſea to overflow them as they purſued after you, and *how* the LORD hath deſtroyed them unto this day; 5. And what he did unto you in the wilderneſs, until ye came into this place; 6. And [b] what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the ſons of Eliab, the ſon of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed them up, and their houſholds, and their tents, and all the † ſubſtance that ‡ *was* in their poſſeſſion in the midſt of all Iſrael. 7. But your eyes have ſeen all the great acts of the LORD, which he did.

v. 1—7. The obligations to keep God's charge ſo ſolemnly committed to them is further urged from the inſtances God had given them of his mercy to them, in the miracles wrought in Egypt, and the deſtruction of the army of Pharaoh; as alſo his judgment on the conſpirators Dathan and Abiram, ſaving them from domeſtic as well as foreign enemies. This, thoſe who were the oldeſt of them had ſeen, and ought deeply to remember, and be affected by it. *Note*, God's mercies to us, when we were young, ought to leave an impreſſion on us, which time and age ſhould never efface.

8. Therefore ſhall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be ſtrong, and go in and poſſeſs the land whither you go to poſſeſs it: 9. And that ye may prolong *your* days in the land which the LORD ſware unto your fathers to give unto them, and to their ſeed, a land that floweth with milk and honey. 10. ¶ For the land whither thou goeſt in to poſſeſs it, *is* not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou ſowedſt thy ſeed, and wateredſt *it* with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: 11.

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[a] Exod. xiv. 27.
[b] Num. xvi. 31. & xxvii. 3. Pſ. cvi. 17.
† Or living ſubſtance which followed them.
‡ Heb. Was at their feet.

But the land whither ye go to poſſeſs it, *is* a land of hills and valleys, *and* drinketh water of the rain of heaven: 12. A land which the LORD thy God † careth for: [c] the eyes of the LORD thy God *are* always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year. 13. ¶ And it ſhall come to paſs, if you ſhall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to ſerve him with all your heart and with all your ſoul: 14. That I will give *you* the rain of your land in his due ſeaſon, [d] the firſt rain and the latter rain, that thou mayſt gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. 15. And I will ‡ ſend graſs in thy fields, for thy cattle, that thou mayſt eat and be full. 16. Take heed to yourſelves, [e] that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aſide, and [f] ſerve other gods, and worſhip them: 17. And *then* the LORD's wrath be kindled againſt you, and [g] he ſhut up the heaven that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit, and *leſt* ye periſh quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

† Heb. ſeeketh.
[c] 1 Kings ix. 3.
[d] Joel ii. 23. Jam. v. 7.
‡ Heb. give.
[e] Chap. xxix. 18.
[f] Chap. viii. 19.
[g] 1 Kings viii. 35.

v. 8—17. 1. The way to conqueſt was obedience. On this depended their ſtrength, for then the mighty God would be their helper; and thus alſo they would ſecure long poſſeſſion, which elſe they would quickly forfeit. *Note*, Sin ſhortens the days of the wicked, and cauſes the lands to caſt out their inhabitants. 2. On their obedience alſo the fertility of their land depended. Canaan was not like Egypt, which had the Nile cut into innumerable canals, from whence the ground was watered; but owed its fruitfulneſs to the deſcending rains, which God would cauſe to deſcend plentifully upon them, and make them over-flow with corn, and wine, and oil. *Note*, (1.) Mercies coming from the immediate hand of God are doubly ſweet. (2.) Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is. (3.) The more we enjoy from God's gift, the more bound we are to live to God's glory. 3. The conſequences of their diſobedience would be the very reverſe of all this. If they turned aſide to idols, the wrath of God would be kindled againſt them, and they would be utterly conſumed from the good land, and the land itſelf be left deſolate, under the curſe of God; the fulfilment of which is this day moſt viſible, it being now a moſt barren ſpot, and almoſt without inhabitants. *Note*, They who will not be influenced by God's mercies, will ſink under his judgments.

18. ¶ Therefore [h] ſhall ye lay up theſe my words in your heart, and in your ſoul, and [i] bind them for a ſign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. 19. [k] And ye ſhall teach them your children; ſpeaking of them when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up. 20. And thou ſhalt write them upon the door-poſts of thine houſe, and upon thy gates: 21. That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD ſware unto your fathers to give them, [l] as the days of heaven upon the earth. 22. ¶ For if ye ſhall diligently keep all theſe commandments which I command you to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; 23. Then will the LORD drive out all theſe nations from before you, and ye ſhall poſſeſs greater nations, and mightier than yourſelves. 24. [m] Every place, whereon the ſoles of your feet ſhall tread, ſhall be yours: [n] from the wilderneſs, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermoſt ſea, ſhall your coaſt be. 25. There ſhall no man be able to ſtand before you: *for* the LORD your God ſhall lay the fear of you, and the dread of you upon all the land that ye ſhall tread upon, [o] as he hath ſaid unto you.

[h] Chap. vi. 6.
[i] Ibid. 8.
[k] Chap. iv. 9, 10. & vi. 7.
[l] Pſ. lxxii. 5. & lxxxix. 29, 30.
[m] Joſh. i. 3. & xiv. 9.
[n] Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. Num. xxxiv. 3.
[o] Exod. xxiii. 27.

v. 18—25. Though theſe directions had been given before, they were no vain repetitions; all was little enough for their admonition. 1. They are charged to lay up theſe words in their memories, and to embrace them with cordial affection; to place them ever in their view, that they may not be forgotten, and to be talking of them at home and abroad, making them matter of conſtant inſtruction to their children, and of familiar converſe with their friends. *Note*, When the heart is filled with the knowledge and love of God's word, the lips will ever be bringing forth that good converſation which miniſters grace to the hearers. 2. The bleſſing aſſured them is certain poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan, an enlargement of their borders to Euphrates, with an abiding inheritance for their children; and ſecurity from all their foes; whom an holy awe ſhould reſtrain from daring to moleſt them. *Note*, (1.) Religion ſtamps a reverence on its profeſſors, which keeps their enemies in awe of them. (2.) Godlineſs, tranſmitted with our poſſeſſions, is the fureſt means to perpetuate them in our families.

26. ¶ [p] Behold, I ſet before you this day a bleſſing and a curſe: 27. [q] A bleſſing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you this day: 28. And [r] a curſe, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aſide out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods which ye have not known. 29. And it ſhall come to paſs when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it, that thou ſhalt put [s] the bleſſing upon mount Gerizim, and the curſe upon mount Ebal. 30. *Are* they not on the other ſide Jordan, by the way where the ſun goeth down, in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champain over-againſt Gilgal, [t] beſide the plains of Moreh? 31. For ye ſhall paſs over Jordan to go in to poſſeſs the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye ſhall poſſeſs it and dwell therein. 32. And ye ſhall obſerve [u] to do all the ſtatutes and judgments which I ſet before you this day.

[p] Chap. xxx. 15.
[q] Chap. xxviii. 2.
[r] Ibid. 15.
[s] Chap. xxvii. 12, 13. Joſh. viii. 33.
[t] Gen. xii. 6. Judg. vii. 1.
[u] Chap. v. 32.

v. 26—32. Moſes ſums up the ſubſtance of his diſcourſe, that being brought to a point it might be the eaſier remembered. 1. It contains a bleſſing and a curſe. A bleſſing on obedience rich and moſt deſireable, a curſe on diſobedience ruinous and dreadful. The matter was plain beyond miſtake; and on their own choice it depended, whether to have God their friend or their enemy. The way to heaven and hell is plain and evident in God's word; if men will not ſee, and will not walk aright, their blood is on their own heads. 2. On their poſſeſſing the land, there is a ſolemn publication of this bleſſing and curſe appointed on mount Ebal and mount Gerizim, that no man might plead ignorance, and that their own conſent to them on rehearſal, might engage their hearts more firmly to obedience, or leave them more inexcuſable in their guilt.

CHAP. XII.

Moſes farther enjoins them, 1. *Utterly to deſtroy all relicks of idolatry,* ver. 1—3. 2. *To keep cloſe to the tabernacle,* ver. 4, 5. 3. *To bring thither their offerings, tythes and ſacrifices,* ver. 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 18, 26, 27, 28. 4. *They are forbidden to do as at preſent,* ver. 8—11. *or as the Canaanites had done,* ver. 29—32. *or to eat the hallowed things at home,* ver. 13, 17, 18, 19. 5. *Fleſh in common permitted, the blood forbidden,* ver. 15, 16, 20, 26.

1. THESE *are* the ſtatutes and judgments which ye ſhall obſerve to do in the land which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to poſſeſs it, all the days that ye live upon the earth. 2. [a] Ye ſhall utterly deſtroy all the places wherein the nations which ye ſhall † poſſeſs ſerved their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree. 3. And [b] you ſhall ‡ overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire, and you ſhall hew down the graven images of their gods, and deſtroy the names of them out of that place. 4. Ye ſhall not do ſo unto the LORD your God.

[a] Exod. xxxiv. 13. Chap. vii. 5.
† Heb. Or, inherit.
[b] Numb. xxxiii. 52. Judg. ii. 2.
‡ Heb. break down.

v. 1—4. We cannot have too many cautions to beware of the ſin which doth moſt eaſily beſet us. To prevent therefore all temptation to idolatry, repeated charges are given to extirpate every monument of idol worſhip, to cut down the groves where the lewd rites were performed, and to deſtroy the abominable images, the objects of their blind devotion. Nor muſt they ever adopt their ceremonies in the worſhip of the true God, or ſacrifice to him on hills, or in groves, but only at the altar where God had put his name. *Note*, (1.) All will-worſhip is abomination to God. (2.) There is no poſſibility of reconciling the worſhip of God and mammon, of Chriſt and Belial.

5. But unto the place [c] which the LORD your God ſhall chooſe out of all your tribes, to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation ſhall ye ſeek, and thither thou ſhalt come: 6. And [d] thither ye ſhall bring your burnt-offerings, and your ſacrifices, and [e] your tithes, and heave-offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your free-will-offerings, and the firſtlings of your herds, and of

[c] Ver. 11. Joſh. ix. 27. 1 Kings viii. 29. 2 Chron. vii. 12.
[d] Lev. xvii. 3.
[e] Ver. 17. Chap. xiv. 22. & xv. 19, 20.

of your flocks. 7. And [f] there ye ſhall eat before the LORD your God, and ye ſhall rejoice in all that you put your hand unto, ye and your houſholds, wherein the LORD thy God hath bleſſed thee. 8. Ye ſhall not do after all *the things* that we do here this day, every man whatſoever *is* right in his own eyes. 9. For ye are not as yet come to the reſt, and to the inheritance which the LORD your God giveth you. 10. But *when* ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and *when* he giveth you reſt from all your enemies round about, ſo that ye dwell in ſafety: 11. Then there ſhall be [g] a place which the LORD your God ſhall chooſe to cauſe his name to dwell there, thither ſhall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your ſacrifices, your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and all * your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD. 12. And ye ſhall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your ſons, and your daughters, and your men-ſervants, and your maid-ſervants, and the Levite that *is* within your gates; foraſmuch as [h] he hath no part nor inheritance with you. 13. Take heed to thyſelf that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou ſeeſt. 14. But [i] in the place which the LORD ſhall chooſe in one of thy tribes, there thou ſhalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou ſhalt do all that I command thee. 15. Notwithſtanding, thou mayeſt kill and eat fleſh in all thy gates, whatſoever thy ſoul luſteth after, according to the bleſſing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee: [k] the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roe-buck, and as of the hart. 16. [l] Only ye ſhall not eat the blood: ye ſhall pour it upon the earth as water. 17. ¶ Thou mayeſt not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firſtlings of thy herds, or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou voweſt, nor thy free-will-offerings, or heave-offering of thine hand: 18. But [m] thou muſt eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe, thou and thy ſon, and thy daughter, and thy man-ſervant, and thy maid-ſervant, and the Levite that *is* within thy gates: and thou ſhalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou putteſt thine hands unto. 19. [n] Take heed to thyſelf that thou forſake not the Levite † as long as thou liveſt upon the earth. 20. ¶ When the LORD thy God ſhall enlarge thy border, [o] as he hath promiſed thee, and thou ſhalt ſay, I will eat fleſh (becauſe thy ſoul longeth to eat fleſh) thou mayeſt eat fleſh whatſoever thy ſoul luſteth after. 21. If the place which the LORD thy God hath choſen to put his name there, be too far from thee; then thou ſhalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou ſhalt eat in thy gates whatſoever thy ſoul luſteth after. 22. [p] Even as the roe-buck and the hart is eaten, ſo thou ſhalt eat them: the unclean and the clean ſhall eat *of* them alike. 23. [q] Only ‡ be ſure that thou eat not the blood: [r] for the blood *is* the life, and thou mayeſt not eat the life with the fleſh. 24. Thou ſhalt not eat it; thou ſhalt pour it upon the earth as water. 25. Thou ſhalt not eat it, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, [s] when thou ſhalt do *that which is* right in the ſight of the LORD. 26. Only thy holy things which thou haſt, and thy vows, thou ſhalt take, and go unto the place which the LORD ſhall chooſe: 27. And [t] thou ſhalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the fleſh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God: and the blood of thy ſacrifices ſhall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou ſhalt eat the fleſh. 28. Obſerve and hear all theſe words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doeſt *that which is* good and right in the ſight of the LORD thy God. 29. ¶ When the LORD thy God ſhall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs them, and thou ‖ ſucceedeſt them, and dwelleſt in their land: 30. Take heed to thyſelf [u] that thou be not ſnared § by following them, after that they be deſtroyed from before thee, and that thou enquire not after their gods, ſaying, How did theſe nations ſerve their gods? even ſo will I do likewiſe. 31. Thou ſhalt not do ſo unto the LORD thy God: for every * abomination to the LORD which he hateth, have they done unto their gods: for [x] even their ſons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. 32. What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: [y] thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.

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[f] Chap. xiv. 26.

[g] Ver. 5, 14, 18, 21, 26. Chap. xiv. 23. & xv. 20. & xvi. 2, &c. & xvii. 8. & xviii. 6. & xxiii. 16. & xxvi. 2. & xxxi. 11. Joſh. xviii. 1. 1 Kings viii. 29. Pſal. lxxviii. 68.

* Heb. The choice of your vows.

[h] Chap. x. 9.

[i] Ver. 11.

[k] Ver. 22.

[l] Gen. ix. 4. Lev. vii. 26. & xvii. 10. Chap. xv. 23. & ver. 23.

[m] Ver. 11. Chap. xiv. 22.

[n] Chap. xiv. 27. Ecclus vii. 31.

† Heb. All thy days.

[o] Gen. xv. 18. & xxviii. 14. Chap. xi. 24. & xix. 8.

[p] Ver. 15.

[q] Ver. 16.

‡ Heb. Be ſtrong.

[r] Gen. ix. 4. Lev. xvii. 11, 14.

[s] Chap. xiii. 18.

[t] Lev. i. 5, 9, 13.

‖ Heb. Inheriteſt or poſſeſſeſt them.

[u] Chap. vii. 16.

§ Heb. After them.

* Heb. Abomination of the Lord.

[x] Lev. xviii. 21. & xx. 2. Chap. xviii. 10. Jer. xxxii. 35.

[y] Chap. iv. 2. & xiii. 18. Joſh. i. 7. Prov. xxx. 6. Rev. xxii. 18.

v, 5—32. As nothing would preſerve them more effectually from idolatry, than forbidding all ſacrifices and public offerings, except in one place under the immediate eye of God's miniſters; we have this again and again inculcated. 1. God promiſes, when they were in quiet poſſeſſion of the land, to chuſe the place where he would put his name, erect his tabernacle, and manifeſt his preſence in the divine Shechinah. He left not the place to their option, leaſt they ſhould diſpute about the choice; nor mentions it as yet, becauſe it was enough for them to know his pleaſure now, and they ſhould have farther direction when it was needful. Bleſſed be God! all diſtinctions of place in Chriſt Jeſus are now deſtroyed; every where we may have acceſs to a throne of grace, and find our ſervices accepted in the Redeemer. 2, When the place was fixed, they muſt there offer their ſacrifices, their tithes, and freewill-offerings, for the maintenance of the prieſts and levites; and all their holy things muſt be eaten there, before the Lord, with joy and gladneſs of heart, by them and their families. God's ſervice is delighful: to be melancholy is to diſhonour it. Religion was deſigned to be our pleaſure, not our burden. 3. Though all their devoted things might only be eaten before the Lord, no reſtraint is laid upon them reſpecting common and allowed meats; they might kill and eat without reſerve; and both the unclean and the clean might eat them alike; with theſe proviſos only, 1. That they lived according to the bleſſing of God upon them, ver. 15. neither luxuriouſly extravagant, nor penuriouſly ſaving. Exceſs and covetouſneſs are alike diſhonourable to God. He giveth us his bleſſings richly to enjoy; and whilſt he would have us eat our bread, and drink our wine with a chearful heart, he wills we ſhould uſe his gifts with that ſobriety and temperance, which may ſatisfy our natural appetite, without making proviſion for our ſinful luſts. 2. The blood is ſtrictly forbidden. In the wilderneſs, all their beaſts ſeem to have been ſlain at the door of the tabernacle, under the inſpection of the Levites: now that they are permitted to ſlay and eat in all their gates, they muſt be careful to pour out the blood on the earth; it is the life of the beaſt, and appointed as the atonement for the ſouls of men. 4. They muſt not draw their preſent conduct into a precedent; for, notwithſtanding all the care that could be taken, in their frequent removes and unſettled ſtate, many things ſeem to have been omitted, and the circumſtances of their marches prevented that exact regularity which was enjoined them. They muſt therefore, when at reſt in Canaan, be more punctual in their ſacrifices and obſervances. *Note*, (1.) In the beſt ordered churches ſomething will ſtill be defective; perfect purity is reſerved for the heavenly Canaan. (2.) In caſes of neceſſity thoſe ordinances of worſhip may be omitted, which in different circumſtances would render us highly culpable. 5. He warns them againſt the leaſt deſire to know, and the leaſt enquiry after the worſhip of the Canaanites. Ignorance of evil is often a protection from it; whilſt the very knowledge of ſin is a ſnare. In general, it was enough for them to know that it was moſt hateful to God, and one inſtance ſufficient to ſhock and deter them; moſt unnatural as inhuman, they burnt their ſons and their daughters to their idols; ſo might not they do. They muſt ſcrupulouſly obſerve the divine directory of worſhip, nor add thereto, nor diminiſh therefrom. *Note*, Our worſhip will then be acceptable, when regulated by divine preſcription.

CHAP. XIII.

Moſes having warned them againſt the idolatry of Canaan, *guards them againſt deceivers among themſelves, who would draw them to idolatry,* (1.) *By the pretence of prophecy,* ver. 1—5. (2.) *By the pretence of friendſhip and relation,* ver. 6—11. (3.) *By the pretence of numbers,* ver. 12—18. *In all which caſes the tempters muſt be utterly deſtroyed.*

1. IF there ariſe among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and [a] giveth thee a ſign or a wonder, 2. And [b] the ſign or the wonder come to paſs, whereof he ſpake unto thee, ſaying, Let us go after other gods (which thou haſt not known) and let us ſerve them; 3. Thou ſhalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for [c] the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your ſoul. 4. Ye ſhall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and you

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[a] Mat. xxiv. 24.

[b] See Chap. xviii. 22. Jer. xxviii. 9. Mat. vii. 22.

[c] Chap. viii. 2. See Mat. xxiv. 24. 1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Theſſ. ii. 11. Rev. xiii. 14.

you ſhall ſerve him, and [d] cleave unto him. 5. And [e] that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, ſhall be put to death (becauſe he hath † ſpoken to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the houſe of bondage, to thruſt thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in) [f] ſo ſhalt thou put the evil away from the midſt of thee.

[d] Chap. x. 20.
[e] Chap. xviii. 20. Jer. xiv. 15. Zech. xiii. 3.
† Heb. Spoken revolt against the Lord.
[f] Chap. xxii. 21, 22, 24. 1 Cor. v. 13.

v. 1—5. Moſes would fain bar up every avenue to idolatry. He therefore cautions them againſt all lying prophets, which would ſeduce them from God. 1. He ſuppoſes it poſſible, that ſuch would ariſe among themſelves, and that God, to prove them, might ſuffer ſuch impoſtors to do many ſtrange things, in confirmation of their pretended miſſion; yet, if the deſign was to lead them to idolatry, that alone were ſufficient proof of the lying and deceiving prophet. Obſerve, (1.) It ſeems very queſtionable, whether ever a falſe prophet wrought a real miracle, though by ſlight and diabolic help ſtrange feats might be performed, as would appear ſuch. But, (2.) No evidence, however ſtrongly to appearance ſupported, is admiſſible againſt the revealed truths of God. Even miracles would be no proof of miſſion, if the doctrine were not according to godlineſs. 2. They are enjoined to reject, with abhorrence, ſuch a motion, and not to hearken to ſuch an impious ſuggeſtion, but ſteadily to obey the voice of God, and walk in his way. Some temptations are not ſo much as to be debated with; they are ſo ſhocking that we may not ſo much as hearken to them; nor muſt they only turn from the evil, but put the evil from them, by the death of the deceiver; his very breath is peſtilential, and he muſt be cut off without delay. We can never be too earneſt to remove the tempter far away from us.

6. ¶ [g] If thy brother, the ſon of thy mother, or thy ſon, or thy daughter, or [h] the wife of thy boſom, or thy friend, which *is* as thine own ſoul, entice thee ſecretly, ſaying, Let us go and ſerve other gods (which thou haſt not known, thou, nor thy fathers; 7. *Namely*, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth) 8. Thou ſhalt not conſent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither ſhall thine eye pity him, neither ſhalt thou ſpare, neither ſhalt thou conceal him. 9. But [i] thou ſhalt ſurely kill him; [k] thine hand ſhall be firſt upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. 10. And thou ſhalt ſtone him with ſtones, that he die: becauſe he hath ſought to thruſt thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of † bondage. 11. And [l] all Iſrael ſhall hear, and fear, and ſhall do no more any ſuch wickedneſs as this is among you.

[g] Chap. xvii. 2.
[h] See Gen. xvi. 5. Chap. xxviii. 54. Prov. v. 20. Mic. vii. 5.
[i] Chap. xvii. 7.
[k] Acts vii. 58.
† Heb. Bondmen.
[l] Chap. xvii. 13.

v. 6—11. Our neareſt and deareſt relatives, in this behalf, muſt have no regard ſhown to them; ſhould they tempt us ſecretly to idolatry, the ſame holy indignation muſt fire our boſoms againſt them; we muſt neither conceal nor pity them. Our hand muſt be firſt upon them to ſtone them, and then all the people; that thus both the evil may be removed, and ſuch execution deter others from the like criminal attempts. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe temptations are doubly bewitching, that come through thoſe we love. (2.) The hope of ſecrecy and ſecurity in ſin, is a great ſnare to lead men into it. (3.) To conceal the criminal from juſtice, is to be a party in his crime. (4.) The deſign of every execution is to ſtrike terror into others, that they may be kept from the ſame guilty ways, and miſerable end.

12. ¶ [m] If thou ſhalt hear *ſay* in one of thy cities, which the LORD thy God hath given thee to dwell there, ſaying, 13. *Certain* men, † the children of Belial, [n] are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, ſaying, Let us go and ſerve other gods (which ye have not known) 14. Then ſhalt thou enquire and make ſearch, and aſk diligently: and behold, *if it be* truth, *and* the thing certain, *that* ſuch abomination is wrought among you: 15. Thou ſhalt ſurely ſmite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the ſword, [o] deſtroying it utterly, and all that *is* therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the ſword. 16. And thou ſhalt gather all the ſpoil of it into the midſt of the ſtreet thereof, and ſhalt burn with fire the city, and all the ſpoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God: and it ſhall be an heap for ever, it ſhall not be built again. 17. And [p] there ſhall cleave nought of the ‡ curſed thing to thine hand: that the LORD may turn from the fierceneſs of his anger, and ſhew thee mercy, and have compaſſion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath ſworn unto thy fathers; 18. When thou ſhalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, [q] to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do *that which is* right in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

[m] Joſh. xxii. 11, &c. Jud. xx. 1, 2.
† Or, naughty men. See Jud. xix. 22. 1 Sam. ii. 12. & xxv. 25. 2 Cor. vi. 15.
[n] 1 John ii. 19. Jude 19.
[o] Exod. xxii. 20. Lev. xxvii. 18. Joſh. vi. 17.
[p] Chap. vii. 26.
‡ Or, Devoted.
[q] Chap. xii. 15, 32.

v. 12—18. In caſe of the general defection of any place to idolatry, the judgment upon it is here determined. 1. It is ſuppoſed the city had been inhabited by the Iſraelites, and that they are univerſally turned to idolatry, at the inſtigation of ſome daring ſinners, the children of Belial: bad examples are dreadfully contagious. In this caſe, 2. On information, which muſt be carefully made, without paſſion or prejudice, if the fact appeared true before the Sanhedrim, admonition was firſt given them to repent, ſay the Jews, by two wiſe men, which if they refuſed, the whole congregation camped againſt the city. The few faithful, if ſuch were found, would no doubt ſave themſelves by flight; the reſt were univerſally devoted to deſtruction; their city, and all their goods, utterly burnt; not the leaſt particular might be reſerved, on pain of death, but the place made a dunghill for ever, as a monument of righteous vengeance. *Note*, (1.) All who depart from God will ſurely periſh. (2.) We are bound to ſhew our abhorrence againſt all Popiſh idol-worſhip, with all infidelity and irreligion. (3.) Though ſinners, through their quality or multitude, may be now above the ſword of human juſtice, they will ſhortly find they are within the reach of God.

CHAP. XIV.

Moſes teaches them, 1. *To diſtinguiſh themſelves from their neighbours, in their mourning,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *In their meat,* ver. 3—21. 3. *Religiouſly to devote their tythes to God,* ver. 22—29.

1. YE *are* the children of the LORD your God: [a] Ye ſhall not cut yourſelves, nor make any baldneſs between your eyes for the dead. 2. [b] For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath choſen thee to be a peculiar people unto himſelf, above all the nations that *are* upon the earth. 3. ¶ Thou ſhalt not eat any abominable thing. 4. [c] Theſe *are* the beaſts which ye ſhall eat: the ox, the ſheep, and the goat, 5. The hart, and the roe-buck, and the fallow-deer, and the wild goat, and the ‖ † pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois. 6. And every beaſt that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, *and* cheweth the cud amongſt the beaſts; that ye ſhall eat. 7. Nevertheleſs, theſe ye ſhall not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; *as* the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof: *therefore* they *are* unclean unto you. 8. And the ſwine, becauſe it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it *is* unclean unto you: ye ſhall not eat of their fleſh, [d] nor touch their dead carcaſe. 9. ¶ [e] Theſe ye ſhall eat of all that *are* in the waters: all that have fins and ſcales ſhall ye eat: 10. And whatſoever hath not fins and ſcales, ye may not eat: it *is* unclean unto you. 11. ¶ *Of* all clean birds ye ſhall eat. 12. But theſe *are they* of which ye ſhall not eat: the eagle, and the oſſifrage, and the oſpray, 13. And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind, 14. And every raven after his kind, 15. And the owl, and the night-hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, 16. The little owl, and the great owl, and the ſwan, 17. And the pelican, and the gier-eagle, and the cormorant, 18. And the ſtork, and the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and [f] the bat. 19. And [g] every creeping thing that flieth, *is* unclean unto you: they ſhall not be eaten. 20. *But of* all clean fowls ye may eat. 21. ¶ Ye ſhall not eat *of* any thing that dieth of itſelf: thou ſhalt give it unto the ſtranger that *is* in thy gates, that he may eat it, or thou mayſt ſell it unto an alien: for thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God. [h] Thou ſhalt not ſeethe a kid in his mother's milk.

[a] Lev. xix. 28. & xxi. 5. Jer. xvi. 6. & xli. 5. & xlvii. 5. 1 Theſ. iv. 13.
[b] Chap. vii. 6. & xxvi. 18.
[c] Lev. xi. 2, &c.
‖ Or, biſon,
† Heb. Diſhon.
[d] Lev. xi. 27.
[e] Ibid. 9.
[f] Ibid. 19.
[g] Ibid. 21.
[h] Exod. xxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 26.

v. 1—21. God having choſen Iſrael for his own, of ſovereign grace ſeparated them from the nations, adopted them as his children, and deſigned them for his glory, he has a right to expect from them that they ſhould anſwer theſe purpoſes of his grace, and approve themſelves a holy people before him. And this muſt appear, 1. In their mournings, where all inordinate ſorrow muſt be avoided; and every ſuperſtitious practice, which the Gentiles uſed, as cutting themſelves, and making any baldneſs for the dead, muſt be abhorred. *Note*, (1.) We are not forbidden to mourn for the dead; but to expreſs immoderate ſorrow would be the proof of idolatrous attachment to the creature, and a diſhonour to God. (2.) As our bodies are not our own, but bought with a price, we muſt glorify God in them, nor disfigure or deform that temple where he is pleaſed to take up his abode. 2. In their meat. Though many of the forbidden beaſts, or fiſh, or fowl, may, in themſelves, be good for food, and allowable to others, yet God will lay them under particular reſtraints, to prevent their mingling with the heathen. There is enough permitted them, to remove every occaſion of juſt complaint, if their perverſe appetites did not enſlave them. *Note*, Thoſe who are not ſatisfied with the lawful gratifications God allows, never will be ſatisfied in the gratification of their lawleſs luſts. 3. They may not eat what died of itſelf, it was unwholeſome as well as unclean; nor a kid ſeethed in its mother's milk, becauſe either it beſpoke luxury, or ſome heatheniſh ſuperſtitious cuſtom. Theſe obſervances are purely judaical, and the reaſon of them is now ceaſed; but the ſeparation from evil, and the dedication of ourſelves to God, which theſe ſignified, ſtill remains obligatory on every chriſtian.

i Chap. xii. 6, 17.
k Ibid. 5.
l Chap. xv. 19, 20.
† Heb. aſketh of thee.
m Chap. xii. 19.
n Numb. xviii. 20. Chap. xviii. 1.
o Chap. xxvi. 12. Am. iv. 4.
p Chap. xxvi. 12.
q Ver. 27.
r See Mal. ii. 10.

22. [i] Thou ſhalt truly tithe all the increaſe of thy ſeed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. 23. [k] And thou ſhalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he ſhall chooſe to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and [l] the firſtlings of thy herds, and of thy flocks: that thou mayſt learn to fear the LORD thy God always. 24. And if the way be too long for thee, ſo that thou art not able to carry it, *or* if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe to ſet his name there, when the LORD thy God hath bleſſed thee: 25. Then ſhalt thou turn *it* into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and ſhalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe. 26. And thou ſhalt beſtow that money for whatſoever thy ſoul luſteth after, for oxen or for ſheep, or for wine, or for ſtrong drink, or for whatſoever thy ſoul † deſireth: and thou ſhalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou ſhalt rejoice, thou and thine houſhold. 27. And [m] the Levite that *is* within thy gates, thou ſhalt not forſake him: for [n] he hath no part nor inheritance with thee. 28. ¶ [o] At the end of three years thou ſhalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increaſe the ſame year, and ſhalt lay *it* up within thy gates. 29. [p] And the Levite (becauſe [q] he hath no part nor inheritance with thee) and the ſtranger, and the fatherleſs, and the widow, which *are* within thy gates, ſhall come, and ſhall eat and be ſatisfied; that [r] the LORD thy God may bleſs thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doſt.

v. 22—29. Their grounds paid a double tithe; one for the Levites maintenance, another that was wholly employed in works of piety and charity. The former the Levites themſelves ſaw truly performed, the latter was left to the people's own integrity; not to be honeſt here were to rob God. *Note*, We muſt make conſcience of devoting to God's ſervice a portion of our increaſe. Two years this tithe was either carried up to the temple in kind, and eaten by them and their families, in a holy feaſt before the Lord; or, the money ariſing from the ſale of the tithe, if their abode was diſtant, was brought up and laid out in this manner: the Levite was never to be forgotten by them; his company not only graced their table, but his preſence and watchfulneſs over them would prevent exceſs. Every third year this ſecond tithe was ſpent at home, on the ſtranger, the fatherleſs, and the widow; and with them the Levite had his portion alſo, his preſence and company being always profitable, whether at the temple or at home. God promiſes they ſhall be no loſers by this liberality, his bleſſing will amply repay them. *Note*, (1.) Frequent aſſemblings before God are among the beſt means to keep us faithful in his ſervice. (2.) He who calls us to him, wills we ſhould rejoice before him. (3.) They have a continual feaſt, who poſſeſs contentment, and uſe all God's gifts with holy thankfulneſs. (4.) God careth for the fatherleſs and widow, and ſo muſt we; nor ſhall we ever loſe by that which is thus lent unto the Lord, for he ſaith, it ſhall be paid us again with abundant intereſt.

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter Moſes gives orders, (1.) *Concerning the releaſe of debts every ſeventh year,* ver. 1—6. *with a caution that that be no hindrance to charitable lending,* ver. 7—11. (2.) *Concerning the releaſe of ſervants after ſeven years ſervice,* ver. 12—18. (3.) *Concerning the ſanctification of the firſtlings of cattle to God,* ver. 19—23.

a Exod. xxi. 2. & xxiii. 10. Lev. xxv. 2, 4. Chap. xxxi. 10. Jer. xxxiv. 14.
† Heb. Maſter of the lending of his hand.
b See Chap. xxiii. 20.
‡ Or, To the end that there be no poor among you.
c Chap. xxviii. 12, 44.
d Mat. v. 42. Luke vi. 34, 35.
‖ Heb. word.
§ Heb. Belial.
e Chap. xxviii. 54, 56. Prov. xxiii. 6. & xxviii. 22. Mat. xx. 15.
f Mat. xxvi. 11. Joh. xii. 8.

1. AT the end of [a] *every* ſeven years thou ſhalt make a releaſe. 2. And this *is* the manner of the releaſe: Every † creditor that lendeth *ought* unto his neighbour, ſhall releaſe *it*, he ſhall not exact *it* of his neighbour, or of his brother, becauſe it is called the LORD's releaſe. 3. [b] Of a foreigner thou mayſt exact *it again*: but *that* which is thine with thy brother, thine hand ſhall releaſe: 4. ‡ Save when there ſhall be no poor among you: for the LORD ſhall greatly bleſs thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance to poſſeſs it: 5. Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to obſerve to do all theſe commandments which I command thee this day. 6. For the LORD thy God bleſſeth thee, as he promiſed thee, and [c] thou ſhalt lend unto many nations, but thou ſhalt not borrow; and thou ſhalt reign over many nations, but they ſhall not reign over thee. 7. ¶ If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates, in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou ſhalt not harden thy heart, nor ſhut thine hand from thy poor brother: 8. But [d] thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto him, and ſhalt ſurely lend him ſufficient for his need, *in that* which he wanteth. 9. Beware that there be not a ‖ thought in thy § wicked heart, ſaying, The ſeventh year, the year of releaſe is at hand: and [e] thine eye be evil againſt thy poor brother, and thou giveſt him nought, and he cry unto the LORD againſt thee, and it be ſin unto thee. 10. Thou ſhalt ſurely give him, and thine heart ſhall not be grieved when thou giveſt unto him: becauſe that for this thing the LORD thy God ſhall bleſs thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteſt thine hand unto. 11. For [f] the poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the land: therefore I command thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

v. 1—11. We have here, 1. An order for the releaſe of inſolvent debtors on the ſabbatical year, which related to their brethren only, and not to aliens. If they afterwards were able, they were, in honour and conſcience, bound to pay, but if not, the creditor could not trouble them for it, nor recover the debt at law. Not that they ſhould loſe by this liberality; God would inrich them abundantly, and enable them to lend to their richer neighbours around them, and thus over-pay their loſſes in the intereſt they ſhould receive. *Note*, (1.) The goſpel preaches to us poor debtors this acceptable year of the Lord, even the free pardon of all our ſins through the blood of Jeſus. (2.) God teaches us not to be ſevere exactors upon our brethren, but to forgive them, as we hope to be forgiven. (3.) They who can take God's ſecurity for payment of what, for his ſake, they remit to the indigent, will find him a reſponſible bondſman. 2. He cautions them againſt their making this a plea for uncharitableneſs; that the year of releaſe approached, and they ſhould be in danger of loſing what they lent: ſuch a wicked thought God rebukes, enjoining them to open both their heart and hand to their brother's neceſſities, and according to their ability to lend, hoping for nothing again; and this not grudgingly, or of neceſſity, but with chearfulneſs, aſſured that God will not ſuffer them to be loſers by their kindneſs; and leaſt, if they refuſed, the cry of the needy ſhould come up againſt them, and their ſin be had in remembrance before God. *Note*, (1.) God knows and remarks every evil thought of our hearts, and therefore we ſhould watch againſt and ſuppreſs the firſt riſings of them within us. (2.) It is a dreadful thing to have the cry of the poor againſt us; for God hears, and will avenge them ſpeedily. (3.) 'Tis not ſo much the gift, as the temper of the giver, God regards. (4.) The beſt and moſt uſeful charity, probably, is to aſſiſt the induſtrious poor with a ſmall loan, by the help of which they may be put in a way of comfortably providing for themſelves and families. (5.) Though we loſe what we thus lend, we ſhall find ourſelves gainers at laſt.

g Exod. xxi. 2. Jer. xxxiv. 14.

12. ¶ *And* [g] if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be ſold unto thee, and ſerve thee ſix years, then in the ſeventh year thou ſhalt let him go free from thee. 13. And when thou ſendeſt him out free from thee, thou ſhalt not let him go away empty: 14. Thou ſhalt furniſh him liberally out of thy flock, and out of

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thy floor, and out of thy wine-preſs: *of that* wherewith
the LORD thy God hath bleſſed thee, thou ſhalt give
unto him. 15. And thou ſhalt remember that thou waſt
a bond-man in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy
God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this
thing to day. 16. And it ſhall be, if he ſay unto thee,
I will not go away from thee (becauſe he loveth thee,
and thine houſe, becauſe he is well with thee,) 17.
[h] Then thou ſhalt take an awl, and thruſt *it* through his
ear unto the door, and he ſhall be thy ſervant for ever:
and alſo unto thy maid-ſervant thou ſhalt do likewiſe.
18. It ſhall not ſeem hard unto thee when thou ſendeſt
him away free from thee; for he hath been worth [i] a
double hired ſervant *to thee*, in ſerving thee ſix years:
and the LORD thy God ſhall bleſs thee in all that
thou doſt.

[h] Exod. xxi. 6.

[i] See Iſa. xvi. 14. & xxi. 16.

v. 12—18. Every ſeventh year the ſervants who had ſold themſelves, or had been ſold by the judges for theft, or by their parents through poverty, were diſcharged, or ſooner, if a jubile year came; unleſs, through love of their maſter's ſervice, they choſe to ſtay, when an awl was thruſt through their ear to the door, and they were ſervants for life. *Note*, God's ſpiritual Iſrael are called unto liberty; and though their ear is bored to ſerve their divine maſter for ever, yet his ſervice is their happy freedom.—If a ſervant was diſcharged, he muſt not be ſent away empty, but ſupplied, according to his maſter's abilities, with the means to procure himſelf a future livelihood. And this they muſt do both in gratitude to God for their own deliverance from Egypt, when God ſent them forth enriched from the houſe of bondage, and as a juſt acknowledgement of their ſervant's labour, who ſerved ſo long without wages. And as this would alſo ſecure the continuance of God's bleſſings upon them, intereſt as well as gratitude called for a generous preſent to them. *Note*, If our maſter in heaven hath been kind to us, in filling our cup with affluence, 'tis but reaſon we ſhould ſhew kindneſs to our poor tenants and ſervants, that ſo they may be made happy in our ſervice.

19. ¶ [k] All the firſtling males that come of thy herd,
and of thy flock, thou ſhalt ſanctify unto the LORD thy
God: thou ſhalt do no work with the firſtling of the
bullock, nor ſhear the firſtling of thy ſheep. 20. [l] Thou
ſhalt eat it before the LORD thy God year by year, in
the place which the LORD ſhall chooſe, thou and thy
houſhold. 21. [m] And if there be *any* blemiſh therein, *as*
if it be lame, or blind, *or have* any ill blemiſh, thou ſhalt
not ſacrifice it unto the LORD thy God. 22. Thou
ſhalt eat it within thy gates: [n] the unclean and the clean
perſon ſhall eat it alike, as the roe-buck, and as the hart.
23. [o] Only thou ſhalt not eat the blood thereof: thou
ſhalt pour it upon the ground as water.

[k] Exod. xiii. 2. & xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. Numb. iii. 13.

[l] Chap. xii. 7, 17. & xiv. 23. & xvi. 11, 14.

[m] Lev. xxii. 20. Chap. xvii. 1. Ecclus xxxv. 12.

[n] Chap. xii. 15.

[o] Ibid. 16, 23.

v. 19—22. The firſtlings were God's due, in return for his mercies in ſparing the firſt-born of man and beaſt in Egypt; if males, they were to be divided between the prieſt and the altar, *Numb.* xviii. 17. if females, they muſt be employed in no work, nor ſhorn, but offered up, as a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, and eaten before the Lord at the place which God ſhould chuſe; if blemiſhed, they muſt not be brought for an offering, but killed at home, and eaten alike by the unclean or the clean, only the blood muſt be carefully ſhed. We are now delivered from theſe burdenſome rites, and all ceremonial diſtinctions are ceaſed; but one obligation remains perpetual, that we ſhould offer up ourſelves, as firſt-fruits, to God and to the Lamb, to be living ſacrifices, employed in his work and devoted to his glory.

CHAP. XVI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A repetition of the laws concerning the three yearly feaſts; in particular, that of the paſſover,* ver. 1—8. *That of pentecoſt,* ver. 9—12. *That of tabernacles,* ver. 13—15. *And the general law concerning the people's attendance on them,* ver. 16, 17. 2. *The inſtitution of an inferior magiſtracy, and general rules of juſtice given to thoſe that were called into office,* ver. 18—20. 3. *A caveat againſt groves and images,* ver. 21, 22.

1. OBſerve [a] the month of Abib, and keep the paſſover
unto the LORD thy God: for [b] in the month
of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of
Egypt [c] by night. 2. Thou ſhalt therefore ſacrifice the
paſſover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and [d] the
herd, in [e] the place which the LORD ſhall chooſe to
place his name there. 3. [f] Thou ſhalt eat no leavened
bread with it: ſeven days ſhalt thou eat unleavened
bread therewith, *even* the bread of affliction: (for thou
cameſt forth out of the land of Egypt in haſte) that thou
mayeſt remember the day when thou cameſt forth out of
the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life. 4. And
[g] there ſhall be no leavened bread ſeen with thee in all
thy coaſts ſeven days, [h] neither ſhall there *any thing* of
the fleſh which thou ſacrificedſt the firſt day at even, remain
all night until the morning. 5. Thou mayſt not
† ſacrifice the paſſover within any of thy gates, which
the LORD thy God giveth thee. 6. But at the place
which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe to place his name
in, there thou ſhalt ſacrifice the paſſover [i] at even, at the
going down of the ſun, at the ſeaſon that thou cameſt
forth out of Egypt. 7. And thou ſhalt roaſt and eat *it*
in the place which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe:
and thou ſhalt turn in the morning, and go into thy
tents. 8. Six days thou ſhalt eat unleavened bread, and
on the ſeventh day *ſhall be* a ‡ ſolemn aſſembly to the
LORD thy God: thou ſhalt do no work *therein*.

[a] Exod. ii. 2, &c.

[b] Exod. xiii. 4.

[c] Exod. xii. 29, 42.

[d] Numb. xxviii. 19.

[e] Chap. xii. 5.

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[f] Exod. xii. 15, 19. & xxxiv. 18.

[g] Exod. xxxiv. 25.

[h] Exod. xii. 10.

† Or, kill.

[i] Exod. xii. 6.

‡ Heb. Reſtraint.

v. 1—8. God charges them here carefully to obſerve his ſolemnities, as nothing would ſerve more effectually to ſecure them in their allegiance to him. The firſt and chief of theſe is the paſſover, which hath been repeatedly mentioned before; it was kept in the month Abib, anſwering to part of our March and April, in memory of their deliverance from Egypt. The lamb appointed for the paſchal ſupper muſt be killed in the place the Lord ſhould chuſe. It was typical of that divine Lamb whoſe ſacrifice is the price of our eternal redemption. Seven days they did eat unleavened bread, in remembrance of their bondage, and the haſte with which they were thruſt out of Egypt. And this ſignal mercy they muſt not only once a year, but all their days, remember, as a conſtant motive to love and ſerve God. *Note*, A dying Jeſus, and our redemption by him, muſt be continually in our eye, and his love towards us every day freſh in our memory, and warm upon our hearts.

9. ¶ [k] Seven weeks ſhalt thou number unto thee: begin
to number the ſeven weeks from *ſuch time as* thou
beginneſt *to put* the ſickle to the corn. 10. And thou
ſhalt keep the feaſt of weeks unto the LORD thy God,
with † a tribute of a free-will offering of thine hand,
which thou ſhalt give *unto the LORD thy God*, according
as the LORD thy God hath bleſſed thee. 11. And
thou ſhalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and
thy ſon, and thy daughter, and thy man-ſervant, and
thy maid-ſervant, and the Levite that *is* within thy gates,
and the ſtranger, and the fatherleſs, and the widow, that
are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God
hath choſen to place his name there. 12. And thou
ſhalt remember that thou waſt a bond-man in Egypt:
and thou ſhalt obſerve and do theſe ſtatutes.

[k] Exod. xxiii. 16. & xxxiv. 22. Lev. xxiii. 15. Numb. xxviii. 26.

† Or. Sufficiency.

v. 9—12. The feaſt of pentecoſt followed ſeven weeks after the offering of the firſt-fruits, which were always offered the morrow after the paſſover, when their harveſt began. In gratitude for which, now it was finiſhed, their free-will offerings were required, and theſe to be eaten with joy before the Lord; nor muſt they feaſt alone, their ſervants, the ſtranger, the fatherleſs and widow muſt be welcome to their board, and rejoice with them. Remembrance of their former indigence and hardſhips in Egypt, ſhould make them liberal and charitable. *Note*, A chriſtian's heart is generous, he will not eat his morſel alone.

13. ¶ [l] Thou ſhalt obſerve the feaſt of tabernacles ſeven
days, after that thou haſt gathered in thy † corn and
thy wine. 14. And [m] thou ſhalt rejoice in thy feaſt,
thou, and thy ſon, and thy daughter, and thy man-ſervant,
and thy maid-ſervant, and the Levite, the ſtranger,
and the fatherleſs, and the widow, that *are* within thy
gates. 15. Seven days ſhalt thou keep a ſolemn feaſt
unto the LORD thy God, in the place which the LORD
ſhall chooſe: becauſe the LORD thy God ſhall bleſs
thee in all thy increaſe, and in all the works of thine
hands, therefore thou ſhalt ſurely rejoice. 16. ¶ [n] Three
times in a year ſhall all thy males appear before the
LORD thy God, in the place which he ſhall chooſe: in
the feaſt of unleavened bread, and in the feaſt of weeks,
and in the feaſt of tabernacles: and [o] they ſhall not appear
before the LORD empty. 17. Every man *ſhall
give* ‡ as he is able, according to the bleſſing of the
LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

[l] Exod. xxiii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 34. Numb. xxix. 12.

† Heb. floor and thy wine-preſs.

[m] Neh. viii. 9, &c.

[n] Exod xxiii. 14, 17. & xxxiv. 23.

[o] Exod. xxiii. 15. & xxxiv. 20. Ecclus xxxv. 4.

‡ Heb. According to the gift of his hand.

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v. 13—17. The feaſt of tabernacles was the laſt holy ſolemnity, during which they dwelt in booths, in memory of their ſojourning in the wilderneſs; and with feaſting and holy joy commemorated God's mercies towards them. They were enjoined to invite, as before, the neceſſitous to partake with them, that none might be mourning for want in theſe days of rejoicing. *Note,* When we are happy ourſelves, we ſhould call our neighbours to rejoice with us, and ſeek to communicate that gladneſs of heart which we enjoy. On each of theſe three ſolemnities, all the males appeared before God, each with his free-will-offering, according to the bleſſing of God upon his labours. God expects a grateful acknowledgment, and be it little or much, it is alike accepted, according to our ſeveral abilities.

[p] Chap. i. 16. 1 Chron. xxiii. 4. & xxvi 29. 2 Chron. xix. 8.
[q] Exod. xxiii. 8. Lev. xix. 15. Prov. xvii. 8, 23. Eccleſ. vii. 7. Ecclus xx. 29.
† Or matters.
‡ Heb. Juſtice, juſtice.
[r] Exod. xxxiv. 13.
[s] Lev. xxvi. 1.
‖ Or ſtatue, or pillar.

18. ¶ [p] Judges and officers ſhalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes: and they ſhall judge the people with juſt judgment. 19. Thou ſhalt not wreſt judgment, thou ſhalt not reſpect perſons, [q] neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wiſe, and pervert the † words of the righteous. 20. ‡ That which is altogether juſt ſhalt thou follow, that thou mayſt live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 21. ¶ [r] Thou ſhalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou ſhalt make thee. 22. [s] Neither ſhalt thou ſet thee up *any* ‖ image, which the LORD thy God hateth.

v. 18—22. 1. Magiſtrates are to be appointed in every city, that the people might have redreſs at hand under oppreſſion, and a ready deciſion of their controverſies. The charge given them is to obſerve impartial juſtice; they muſt be ſwayed by no influence, nor take any gift; but alike above the love of money, as the fear of man, judge righteous judgment. *Note,* Uprightneſs in the ſeat of juſtice, is among the greateſt bleſſings any land can enjoy. 2. All groves are forbidden near God's altar, and every image, as the object or medium of worſhip, which God abhors, idolatry being among the greateſt of crimes, and moſt to be dreaded in all its appearances. Let us beware then of the deluſions of the church of Rome, where this accurſed idol-worſhip is eſtabliſhed; and God not only diſhonoured by images, but adoration paid to pictures and ſtatues of pretended ſaints, yea, even to dead men's bones, and ſuch vile relicks.

CHAP. XVII.

The charge of this chapter is, (1.) *Concerning the perfection of thoſe animals that were offered in ſacrifices,* ver. 1. (2.) *The puniſhment of thoſe that worſhipped idols,* ver. 2—7. (3.) *Concerning appeals from the inferior courts to the great Sanhedrim,* ver. 8—13. (4.) *Concerning the choice and duty of a king,* ver. 14—20.

[a] Chap. xv. 21. Mal. i. 8.
† Or goat.
[b] Chap. xiii. 6.
[c] Ibid. iv. 19. Job xxxi. 26.
[d] Jer. vii. 22, 23.
[e] Lev. xiv. 14, 16. Joſh. vii. 25.
[f] Numb. xxxv. 30. Chap. xix. 15. Mat. xviii. 16. John viii. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. 1 Tim. v. 19. Heb. x. 28.
[g] Chap. xiii. 9. Acts vii. 58.
[h] Chap. xiii. 5. & xix. 19.

1. THOU [a] ſhalt not ſacrifice unto the LORD thy God *any* bullock or † ſheep, wherein is blemiſh, *or* any evil-favouredneſs: for that *is* an abomination unto the LORD thy God. 2. ¶ [b] If there be found among you within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman that hath wrought wickedneſs in the ſight of the LORD thy God, in tranſgreſſing his covenant, 3. And hath gone and ſerved other gods and worſhipped them, either [c] the ſun, or moon, or any of the hoſt of heaven, [d] which I have not commanded: 4. And it be told thee, and thou haſt heard *of it,* and enquired diligently, and behold, *it be* true, *and* the thing certain, *that* ſuch abomination is wrought in Iſrael: 5. Then ſhalt thou bring forth that man or that woman (which have committed that wicked thing) unto thy gates *even* that man or that woman, and [e] ſhalt ſtone them with ſtones till they die. 6. [f] At the mouth of two witneſſes, or three witneſſes, ſhall he that is worthy of death, be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witneſs he ſhall not be put to death. 7. [g] The hands of the witneſſes ſhall be firſt upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people: [h] ſo thou ſhalt put the evil away from among you.

v. 1—7. Two laws are here enjoined. 1. That no ſacrifice muſt be offered to God, that is not perfectly ſound and without blemiſh. God requires and deſerves our beſt. 2. Concerning the detection and puniſhment of idolaters. Information muſt be lodged againſt them, the judges muſt cite them to appear; and if on the evidence of two or more witneſſes, the fact was proved, the offenders were to be inſtantly ſtoned to death, in the moſt public manner, in the gate of the city. *Note,* (1.) In matters of life and death, the cleareſt evidence is required: ſuſpicions, though ſtrong, are not to be admitted as a proof of guilt. 2. Executions cannot be too public and ſolemn, that others may ſee and tremble.

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1451.

[i] 2 Chron. xix. 10. Hag. ii. 11. Mal. ii. 7.
[k] See Exod. xxi. 13, 20, 22, 28. & xxii. 2. Numb. xxxv. 11, 16, 19. Chap. xix. 4, 10.
[l] Chap. xii. 5. & xix. 17. Pſal. cxxii. 5.
[m] See Jer. xviii. 18.
[n] Chap. xix. 17.
[o] Num. xv. 30. Ezra x. 8. Hoſ. iv. 4.
† Heb. Not to hearken.
[p] Chap. xviii. 5, 7.
[q] Ibid. xiii. 11.

8. ¶ [i] If there ariſe a matter too hard for thee in judgment, [k] between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between ſtroke and ſtroke, *being* matters of controverſy within thy gates: then ſhalt thou ariſe, and [l] get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe; 9. And [m] thou ſhalt come unto the prieſts the Levites, and [n] unto the judge that ſhall be in thoſe days, and enquire, and they ſhall ſhew thee the ſentence of judgment. 10. And thou ſhalt do according to the ſentence which they of that place (which the LORD ſhall chooſe) ſhall ſhew thee, and thou ſhalt obſerve to do according to all that they inform thee: 11. According to the ſentence of the law which they ſhall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they ſhall tell thee thou ſhalt do: thou ſhalt not decline from the ſentence which they ſhall ſhew thee, to the right hand nor to the left. 12. And [o] the man that will do preſumptuouſly, † and will not hearken unto the prieſt ([p] that ſtandeth to miniſter there before the LORD thy God) or unto the judge, even that man ſhall die: and thou ſhalt put away the evil from Iſrael. 13. [q] And all the people ſhall hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly.

v. 8—13. Proviſion is here made for the deciſion of difficult cauſes, concerning which the inferior judges were in doubt, whether in caſes of blood, or in matters of right, or in actions of aſſault and battery, where either the circumſtances were embaraſſed, the evidence dubious, or the ſenſe of the law not clear to them; the matter was then carried before the ſuperior court, conſiſting of Prieſts and Levites, who were ſuppoſed to be thoroughly verſed in the divine law, and have here a promiſe made them, *v.* 9. of direction in ſuch circumſtances, and the ſentence of the preſident of that court was final, and to be executed punctually. For diſobedience to them, was accounted preſumptuous ſin againſt God, and puniſhed as a capital crime. *Note,* (1.) Paſſive obedience to lawful authority is our bounden duty, not only for fear of wrath, but for conſcience ſake. (2.) To rebel againſt the orders of government, is to commit treaſon againſt the Majeſty of heaven.

[r] 1 Sam. viii. 5.
[s] See 1 Sam. ix. 15. & x. 24. & xvi. 12. 1 Chron. xxii. 10.
[t] Jer. xxx. 21.
[u] 1 Kings iv. 26. & x. 26, 28.
[x] Iſa. xxxi. 1. Ezek. xvii. 15.
[y] Exod. xiii. 17. Num. xiv. 3, 4.
[z] Chap. xxviii. 68. Hoſ. xi. 5. See Jer. xlii. 15.
[a] See 1 Kings xi. 3, 4.
[b] 2 Kings xi. 12.
[c] Chap. xxxi. 9. See 2 Kings xxii. 8.
[d] Joſh. i. 8.

14. ¶ When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and ſhalt poſſeſs it, and ſhalt dwell therein, and ſhalt ſay, [r] I will ſet a king over me, like as all the nations that *are* about: 15. Thou ſhalt in any wiſe ſet *him* king over thee [s] whom the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe: [t] *one* from among thy brethren ſhalt thou ſet king over thee: thou mayſt not ſet a ſtranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother. 16. But he ſhall not multiply [u] horſes to himſelf, nor cauſe the people [x] to return to Egypt, to the end that he ſhould multiply horſes; foraſmuch [y] as the LORD hath ſaid unto you, [z] Ye ſhall henceforth return no more that way. 17. Neither ſhall he multiply wives to himſelf, [a] that his heart turn not away: neither ſhall he greatly multiply to himſelf ſilver and gold: 18. [b] And it ſhall be when he ſitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he ſhall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of [c] *that which is* before the prieſts the Levites. 19. And [d] it ſhall be with him, and he ſhall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and theſe ſtatutes, to do them: 20. That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aſide from the commandment to the right hand or to the left; to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom: he and his children in the midſt of Iſrael.

v. 14—20. God, who foreſaw the deſire they would hereafter have to ſet a king over them, takes care to let them know what ſort of perſon they muſt elect, and what rules he muſt be under.

1. They are permitted to ſet a ſovereign over them, but God will have the direction of the choice of the perſon, who muſt be no foreigner, but one of their brethren; the type of that King Meſſiah, who ſhould be bone of our bone, and fleſh of our fleſh.

2. They who rule others, muſt remember how reſponſible they are to God, for the government of themſelves. Here are laws to

be obſerved by their future king. 1. He muſt not multiply horſes, to put his truſt in his armies, or to tyrannize over his ſubjects by a military force, nor ſuffer the people to go to Egypt to buy horſes, leaſt, by ſuch communication, they ſhould return to their old idolatry. *Note*, Nothing corrupts our manners ſooner than bad company. He muſt not multiply wives, which would alike divert his heart from the ſervice of God and the care of government, to the indulgence of his luſts. The more power kings have to gratify their fleſhly appetites, the more careful they ſhould be to reſtrain them. Nor muſt he greatly increaſe his treaſures, leaſt his own heart be lifted up with pride, or his people oppreſſed with taxes. *Note*, A king muſt be the father of his people, his riches conſiſt in the riches of his ſubjects. 2. He muſt make God's word his rule of conduct; for which purpoſe, 1. He muſt with his own hand write a copy of the whole law, or this Book of Deuteronomy at leaſt, as the abſtract, and this immediately after his coming to the throne, that it might be deeply imprinted on his memory; and in the beginning of his reign, be a remembrance to him, that his happineſs and his people's depended on his conformity to this rule of duty; nor muſt any avocations or buſineſs in the ſettlement of his affairs, be pleaded for an omiſſion of this taſk impoſed on him. *Note*, (1.) It is a great aſſiſtance to the memory, to write down what hath affected us. (2.) The greateſt avocations of buſineſs will never be taken as an excuſe for neglect of God's word, and the work of religion. 2. He muſt not only write, but frequently reviſe what he had written, meditate thereupon, and make it the conſtant rule of his practice, that ſo he may learn to fear God, to be himſelf an example of obedience to others, and in his high eſtate kept humble before God. Learn hence, (1.) No day ſhould paſs without reading God's word. (2.) The true fear of God leads to faithful obedience to his commands. (3.) The higher our ſtation, the more exemplary need our converſation to be. (4.) No precept needs more frequent repetition, than to keep a lowly mind in a high ſtation. 3. Religion would be the ſecurity of his throne, his own days would be prolonged in proſperity, and his crown deſcend to his lateſt poſterity. *Note*, Even in this world, God will ſhew, that in keeping his commandments there is great reward.

CHAP. XVIII.

In this chapter, (1.) *The revenues of the church are ſettled, and rules given concerning the Levites miniſtration and maintenance*, ver. 1—8. (2.) *Cautions againſt the idolatrous cuſtoms of the heathens*, ver. 9—14. (3.) *A promiſe is given them of the ſpirit of prophecy to continue among them, and to center at laſt in Chriſt the great prophet*, ver. 15—18. *Wrath threatned againſt thoſe that deſpiſe prophecy*, ver. 19. *or counterfeit it*, ver. 20. *and a rule given for the trial of it*, ver. 21, 22.

1. THE prieſts and Levites, *and* all the tribe of Levi, [a] ſhall have no part or inheritance with Iſrael: [b] they ſhall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance. 2. Therefore ſhall they have no inheritance among their brethren: the LORD *is* their inheritance, as he hath ſaid unto them. 3. ¶ And this ſhall be the prieſt's due from the people, from them that offer a ſacrifice, whether *it be* ox or ſheep; and [c] they ſhall give unto the prieſt the ſhoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw. 4. [d] The firſt-fruit *alſo* of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thy oil, and the firſt of the fleece of thy ſheep ſhalt thou give him. 5. For [e] the LORD thy God hath choſen him out of all thy tribes; [f] to ſtand to miniſter in the name of the LORD, him and his ſons for ever. 6. ¶ And if a Levite come from any of thy gates, out of all Iſrael, where he ſojourned, and come with all the deſire of his mind [g] unto the place which the LORD ſhall chooſe; 7. Then he ſhall miniſter in the name of the LORD his God, as all his brethren the Levites *do*, which ſtand before the LORD. 8. They ſhall have like portions to eat, beſide † that which cometh of the ſale of his patrimony.

[a] Num. xviii. 20. Chap. x. 9.
[b] 1 Cor. ix. 13.
[c] Lev. vii. 30—34.
[d] Exod. xxii. 29. Num. xviii. 12, 24.
[e] Exod. xxviii. 1. Num. iii. 10.
[f] Chap. x. 8. & xvii. 12.
[g] Chap. xii. 5.
† Heb. His ſales by the fathers.

v. 1—8. Proviſion is made for the ſupport of a godly miniſtry, 1. They were to have no inheritance among their brethren, nor any worldly care to draw them off from attendance to the duties of their function. God was to be their portion, and they who have his love in time, and the hope of his glory in eternity, need not wiſh a greater. *Note*, A worldly-minded prieſt is a ſcandal to his profeſſion, and a living lie. Not that they ſhould want a competency, though they were debarred from getting gain by agriculture or commerce. As ſervants at God's altar, they had a part of every ſacrifice for their maintenance, *v.* 3. and the firſt-fruits of the corn and wine, and the fleece of the ſheep were given them, that they might have both food and raiment ſufficient for them. *Note*, He that loves God's altar, will never grudge a liberal contribution to ſupport thoſe who are choſen of God to miniſter before him. Whom God honours, we muſt honour. 2. If a Levite, from a holy zeal for God's ſervice, deſired out of his courſe to go up and ſerve at the altar, he might, and ſhare the work and wages with his brethren there: for in ſettling a certain number always to miniſter, no excluſion was put on thoſe who voluntarily offered themſelves. His patrimony in the city of the Levites continued ſtill his own, and he might diſpoſe of it. *Note*, Beſides the generally eſtabliſhed ſervice, a zealous miniſter will delight to be employed for God, out of common ſeaſons, as well as in ſeaſon; and though his colder brethren may count this ſtep irregular, God will regard it as highly commendable.

9. ¶ When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou ſhalt not learn to do after the abominations of thoſe nations. 10. There ſhall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his ſon or his daughter [h] to paſs through the fire, [i] *or* that uſeth divination, *or* an obſerver of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, 11. [k] Or a charmer, or a conſulter with familiar ſpirits, or a wizard, or [l] a necromancer: 12. For all that do theſe things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and becauſe of theſe abominations, the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee. 13. Thou ſhalt be † perfect with the LORD thy God. 14. For theſe nations which thou ſhalt ‡ poſſeſs, hearkned unto obſervers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee the LORD thy God hath not ſuffered thee ſo *to do.*

[h] Lev. xviii. 21.
[i] Ibid. xix. 26, 31. & xx. 27. Iſa. viii. 19.
[k] Lev. xx. 27.
[l] 1 Sam. xxviii. 7.
† Or upright, or ſincere.
‡ Or inherit.

v. 9—14. One ſhould think they needed not ſuch repeated charges, to avoid abominations ſo groſs and abſurd. Yet what evil will not a corrupted heart be prone to? after-experience proved them far from needleſs. Moloch was the idol which repreſented the ſun, and to him the children were dedicated, by paſſing between two fires; ſometimes they were burnt in them: ſuch unnatural and impious rites, God's Iſrael muſt abhor. Nor muſt they uſe any divination, or enchantment, or conſult thoſe who pretended ſtrange knowledge of future events; all theſe are an abomination, as aſcribing that power and wiſdom to the devil, which alone belongs to God. We need not wonder, that ſuch deluſions ſhould be then in uſe, when even among ourſelves there ſtill remain ſome profane enough to pretend to powers of charms and fortune-telling, and many deluded enough to have faith in their predictions; a ſhocking proof of the dreadful blindneſs, which remains even in the midſt of goſpel-day. Such practices as theſe ruined the Canaanites; but they had been better taught; ſo much therefore would their guilt be increaſed, ſhould they give into them. God had kept them hitherto, and his grace would not be wanting, if they ſought him, and deſired to walk in holineſs before him. *Note*, If ever we are preſerved from the greateſt abominations, we owe it not to any good diſpoſitions in ourſelves, but to the preventing and reſtraining grace of God.

15. ¶ [m] The LORD thy God will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet from the midſt of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye ſhall hearken. 16. According to all that thou deſiredſt of the LORD thy God in Horeb, [n] in the day of the aſſembly, ſaying, [o] Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God; neither let me ſee this great fire any more, that I die not. 17. And the LORD ſaid unto me, [p] They have well *ſpoken that* which they have ſpoken. 18. [q] I will raiſe them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will [r] put my words in his mouth, [s] and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I ſhall command him. 19. And it ſhall come to paſs, *that* whoſoever will not hearken unto my words which he ſhall ſpeak in my name, I will require *it* of him. 20. But [t] the prophet which ſhall preſume to ſpeak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to ſpeak, or that ſhall ſpeak in the name of other gods, [u] even that prophet ſhall die. 21. And if thou ſay in thine heart, How ſhall we know the word which the LORD hath not ſpoken? 22. [x] When a prophet ſpeaketh in the name of the LORD, [y] if the thing follow not, nor come to paſs, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not ſpoken, *but* the prophet hath ſpoken it preſumptuouſly; thou ſhalt not be afraid of him.

[m] John i. 45. Acts iii. 22. & vii. 37.
[n] Chap. ix. 10.
[o] Exod. xx. 19. Hebr. xii. 19.
[p] Chap. v. 28.
[q] John i. 45. Acts iii. 22. & vii. 37.
[r] Iſa. li. 16.
[s] John iv. 25. & viii. 28. & xii. 49, 50.
[t] Chap. xiii. 5. Jer. xiv. 14. Zech. xiii. 3.
[u] Acts iii. 23.
[x] Jer. xxviii. 9.
[y] See Chap. xiii. 2.

v. 15—22. We have here one of the cleareſt prophecies of

Chriſt which is to be found in the law, and which is ſtrongly pleaded by the Apoſtle, *Acts* iii. 22. and vii. 37.

1. God promiſes to raiſe up a Prophet, and ſuch was our Divine Lord, mighty in word and deed, ſprung from the ſtock of Iſrael; like Moſes, both as a redeemer and ruler, but greater, as his deliverance and rule are ſpiritual and eternal, commiſſioned of God for his office, whom all muſt hear, on pain of anſwering for their contempt to God. The voice from the cloud repeated the ſolemn warning, and wo to that ſoul that refuſes to hear his doctrine, and receive his goſpel, for there is ſalvation in no other.

2. This prophecy was given at Sinai, on the people's requeſt, that God would ſpeak to them by Moſes, and not in his own terrible Majeſty; and intimated a deſign of making a new and farther diſcovery of himſelf, and that in a different manner from what they there beheld. Accordingly God hath ſpoken to us in theſe laſt times, by his ſon become incarnate, that his terror might not make us afraid. Full of grace and truth he appeared; but they who rejected Moſes, crucified his Lord; and God to this hour is requiring their rejection of his ſalvation at their hands.

3. Falſe prophets muſt be puniſhed with death, on conviction before the Sanhedrim, and God lays down the marks whereby the cheat might be eaſily diſcovered. If the prophet ſpake contrary to God's revealed will, or tempted them to idols, this was ſufficient evidence of his impoſture: or if his prophecy, given in proof of his miſſion, came not to paſs, then they might be ſure he was a liar, and need not fear his denunciations, nor be backward to execute ſentence upon him. *Note,* (1.) Whatever is repugnant to the written word of God, we may be ſure comes from a lying ſpirit. (2.) Pretenders to prophecy, who would terrify God's people, deſerve the ſevereſt puniſhment.

CHAP. XIX.

This chapter relates, (1.) *To the ſixth commandment,* Thou ſhalt not kill, *ver.* 1—13. (2.) *To the eighth commandment,* Thou ſhalt not ſteal, *ver.* 14. (3.) *To the ninth commandment,* Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs, *ver.* 15—21.

1. WHEN [a] the LORD thy God hath cut off the nations, whoſe land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou † ſucceedeſt them, and dwelleſt in their cities, and in their houſes; 2. [b] Thou ſhalt ſeparate three cities for thee in the midſt of thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to poſſeſs it. 3. Thou ſhalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coaſts of thy land (which the LORD thy God giveth thee to inherit) into three parts, that every ſlayer may flee thither. 4. ¶ And [c] this *is* the caſe of the ſlayer which ſhall flee thither, that he may live: Whoſo killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not ‡ in time paſt, 5. As when *a man* goeth into the wood with his neighbour, to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a ſtroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the ‖ head ſlippeth from the § helve, and † lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; he ſhall flee unto one of thoſe cities, and live: 6. [d] Leſt the avenger of the blood purſue the ſlayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, becauſe the way is long, and ‡ ſlay him; whereas he *was* not worthy of death, inaſmuch as he hated him not ‖ in time paſt. 7. Wherefore I command thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt ſeparate three cities for thee. 8. And if [e] the LORD thy God enlarge thy coaſt, (as he hath ſworn unto thy fathers) and give thee all the land which he promiſed to give unto thy fathers: 9. (If thou ſhalt keep all theſe commandments to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the LORD thy God, and to walk ever in his ways) [f] then ſhalt thou add three cities more for thee, beſide theſe three: 10. That innocent blood be not ſhed in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance, and *ſo* blood be upon thee. 11. ¶ But [g] if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and riſe up againſt him, and ſmite him § mortally, that he die, and fleeth into one of theſe cities: 12. Then the elders of his city ſhall ſend, and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. 13. Thine eye ſhall not pity him, but [h] thou ſhalt put away *the guilt of* innocent blood from Iſrael, that it may go well with thee.

[a] Chap. xii. 29.
† Heb. Inheriteſt or poſſeſſeſt.
[b] Exod. xxi. 13. Num. xxxv. 10. Joſh. xx 2.
[c] Chap. iv. 42.
‡ Heb. From yeſterday and the third day.
‖ Heb. Iron.
§ Heb. Wood.
† Heb. Findeth.
[d] Numb. xxxv. 12.
‡ Heb. Smite him in life.
‖ See ver. 4.
[e] Gen. xv. 18. Chap. xii. 20.
[f] Joſh. xx. 7.
[g] Exod. xxi. 12. Num. xxxv. 16, 24. Chap. xxvii. 24.
§ Heb. In life.
[h] Num. xxxv. 33, 34.

v. 1—13. Effectual proviſion is here made for the preſervation of the perſon who ſhould be ſo unhappy as to kill another by accident, and alſo for the puniſhment of the murderer. 1. Three cities had been already provided on that ſide Jordan; three others are to be ſevered on the other ſide; and if they were obedient, their border ſhould be farther enlarged, and three cities more added for this gracious purpoſe. But of this their ſins deprived them. To theſe cities the manſlayer muſt flee; becauſe though the death was accidental, yet if overtaken on the road by the relations of the perſon, he might be ſlain. The road was kept ever clear of impediments, and poſts ſet up wherever two ways met, with Miklat, Refuge, written on them, pointing to the city, that the manſlayer might not err; and when once ſafe lodged there, no ſword of the purſuer might touch him. *Note,* (1.) Chriſt is this city; the ſinner fleeth to him, and is ſafe. (2.) Miniſters are theſe directories, to teach the way, and aſſiſt ſuch as deſire to flee from the wrath to come. (3.) The way is plain, and the city near, for every awakened ſoul that truly flies for refuge. If any ſinner periſhes, his blood is on his own head, becauſe he neglects ſo great a ſalvation. 2. The murderer muſt find no protection, though he fled to the city of refuge. If the murder were of deſign, and previous hatred was proved, he muſt be delivered up, and put to death, that innocent blood may not be upon the land. *Note,* (1.) All ſanctuaries for murder, ſuch as are common in the church of Rome, are as great an impiety againſt God, as deſtructive of ſound government in the land. (2.) The wilful ſinner has no covering; even Chriſt profits him nothing. Since he will not come to him that he might have life, he muſt ſuffer, what he provokes, the wages of eternal death.

14. ¶ [i] Thou ſhalt not remove thy neighbour's *landmark,* which they of old time have ſet in thine inheritance which thou ſhalt inherit, in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to poſſeſs it. 15. ¶ [k] One witneſs ſhall not riſe up againſt a man for any iniquity, or for any ſin, in any ſin that he ſinneth: at the mouth of two witneſſes, or at the mouth of three witneſſes ſhall the matter be eſtabliſhed. 16. ¶ If a falſe witneſs riſe up againſt any man, to teſtify againſt him † *that which is* wrong: 17. Then both the men between whom the controverſy *is,* ſhall ſtand before the LORD, [l] before the prieſts, and the judges which ſhall be in thoſe days. 18. And the judges ſhall make diligent inquiſition: and behold, *if* the witneſs *be* a falſe witneſs, *and* hath teſtified falſly againſt his brother: 19. [m] Then ſhall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother: [n] ſo ſhalt thou put the evil away from among you. 20. And [o] thoſe which remain ſhall hear, and fear, and ſhall henceforth commit no more any ſuch evil among you. 21. And thine eye ſhall not pity, *but* [p] life *ſhall go* for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

[i] Chap. xxvii. 17. Prov. xxii. 28. Hoſ. v. 10.
[k] Num. xxxv. 30. Chap. xvii. 6. Mat. xviii. 16. John viii. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. 1 Tim. v. 19. Hebr. x. 28.
† Or falling away.
[l] Chap. xvii. 9.
[m] Prov. xix. 5, 9. Dan. xiii. 62.
[n] Chap. xiii. 5 & xvii. 7. & xxi. 21. & xxii. 21, 24. & xxiv. 7.
[o] Chap. xxi. 21.
[p] Exod. xxi. 23. Lev. xxiv. 20. Mat. v. 38.

v. 14—21. Care being taken for men's lives, their properties are next ſecured. 1. A law is ordained for the preſerving each man in his poſſeſſion, according to the ancient boundaries allotted him. No incroachments muſt be made, nor land-marks deſtroyed, which might give occaſion for diſpute. *Note,* (1.) For the ſake of poſterity, we are bound to maintain our juſt rights, and ſhould keep them clearly aſcertained. (2.) All invaſion of our neighbours property is highly criminal, and no leſs ſo the concealing or deſtroying thoſe records or evidences which may expoſe him to ruinous law-ſuits, and render his juſt rights precarious. 2. In criminal caſes, two witneſſes or more were required, in order to conviction. In caſe of ſuſpicion of perjury, (as what will not revenge or covetouſneſs do!) the matter was brought before the Lord, and the great counſel of prieſts and judges made diligent inquiſition; and on proof of the fact, then they inflicted on the perjured perſon the ſame puniſhment, which, had his evidence been true, ſhould have been inflicted on his neighbour, whether of death, or ſtripes, or pecuniary mulct. A deciſion, than which nothing could be more juſt, nor better ſuited to deter all men from ſuch heinous wickedneſs. *Note,* God will in righteous judgment often overrule the wickedneſs of men, and hang them like Haman on the gallows they have erected for others.

CHAP. XX.

This chapter contains, 1. *The encouragement of thoſe who went to war.* 2. *The diſmiſſion of thoſe whoſe buſineſs required their attendance, or whoſe fears diſqualified them.* 3. *The treaties they muſt make with the cities that were far off,* ver. 10—15. 4. *The deſtruction they muſt make of the people, into whoſe land they were going,* ver. 16, 17, 18. 5. *The care they muſt take in beſieging cities not to deſtroy the fruit-trees,* ver. 19, 20.

1. WHEN thou goeſt out to battle againſt thine enemies, and [a] ſeeſt horſes and chariots, *and* a

[a] See Pſal. xxviii. 7. Iſa. xxxi. 1.

people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 2. And it ſhall be when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the prieſt ſhall approach, and ſpeak unto the people, 3. And ſhall ſay unto them, Hear, O Iſrael, you approach this day unto battle againſt your enemies: let not your hearts † faint, fear not, and do not ‡ tremble, neither be ye terrified becauſe of them: 4. For the LORD your God *is* he that goeth with you, to fight for you againſt your enemies, to ſave you. 5. ¶ And the officers ſhall ſpeak unto the people, ſaying, What man *is there* that hath built a new houſe, [b] and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his houſe, leſt he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. 6. And what man *is he* that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not *yet* eaten ‖ of it? let him *alſo* go and return unto his houſe, leſt he die in the battle, and another man eat of it. 7. [c] And what man *is there* that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his houſe, leſt he die in battle, and another man take her. 8. And the officers ſhall ſpeak further unto the people, and they ſhall ſay, [d] What man *is there that is* fearful and faint-hearted? let him go and return unto his houſe, leaſt his brethren's heart § faint as well as his heart. 9. And it ſhall be when the officers have made an end of ſpeaking unto the people, that they ſhall make captains of the armies † to lead the people.

† Heb. Be tender.
‡ Heb. Make haſte.
[b] See Neh. xii. 27. Pſal. xxx. Title.
‖ Heb. Made it common. See Lev. xix. 23, 24. Chap. xxviii. 30.
[c] Chap. xxiv. 5.
[d] Judg. vii. 3.
§ See ver. 3.
† Heb. To be in the head of the people.

v. 1—9. Iſrael was now a martial hoſt, and long wars before them. The orders and regulations therefore to be obſerved by them in going to battle, are here laid down. 1. They are encouraged againſt all fears of the numbers, or ſtrength of their enemies, though they were horſemen or chariots, it mattered not, God was in the midſt of them: and as they had ſeen Pharaoh's chariots and horſemen overthrown, God would give them the ſame ſucceſs. The prieſt who went out with them to the war, appointed for this office, was particularly to encourage them, and inſpire their ſouls with heroic courage and confidence of victory, as acting under the promiſe and protection of the faithful and omnipotent God. *Note*, (1.) A godly chaplain is the moſt uſeful officer in an army. Thoſe ſoldiers will ever be braveſt, who fight on principle, and have overcome the fear of death upon their knees, before they meet it in the field. (2.) It is the buſineſs of every goſpel-miniſter to encourage the faithful to fight manfully under Chriſt's banners, aſſuring them, that thus they cannot fail of being more than conquerors. 2. Thoſe who were indiſpoſed for war, muſt be diſcharged, [1.] either if they had built a houſe, and not poſſeſſed it, or dedicated it with feaſting, as was uſual, or planted a vineyard, and not yet taſted of its fruit; or betrothed a wife, and not conſummated the marriage: it was ſuppoſed theſe worldly comforts left behind, would diſtract their mind from their buſineſs in war, and make them afraid to die: or God kindly choſe to diſpenſe with their ſervice, rather than deprive them of what it was ſuppoſed their hearts muſt be particularly fond of. *Note*, (1.) It is the nature of our worldly enjoyments, that they pleaſe us moſt at firſt. (2.) Thoſe who would ſerve God heartily, muſt ſerve God willingly: he will have no preſſed men, but only volunteers in his army. [2.] All cowards muſt be diſmiſſed, whether they were ſuch through natural timidity, or the cries of a guilty conſcience at the approach of danger: theſe would diſhearten their brethren, and nothing more pernicious in an army than a panic fear: they are unfit to fight, who are afraid to die. 3. When the army was thus purged, the captains of the hoſt are appointed; no faint-hearted ones muſt be among them. *Note*, Every Chriſtian muſt be a man of courage, but every miniſter needs diſtinguiſhed boldneſs and firmneſs in fighting the Lord's battles, and going before the people.

10. ¶ When thou comeſt nigh unto a city to fight againſt it, [e] then proclaim peace unto it. 11. And it ſhall be, if it make thee anſwer of peace, and open unto thee, then it ſhall be *that* all the people *that is* found therein, ſhall be tributaries unto thee, and they ſhall ſerve thee. 12. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war againſt thee, then thou ſhalt beſiege it. 13. And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, [f] thou ſhalt ſmite every male thereof with the edge of the ſword. 14. But the women, and the little ones, and [g] the cattle, and all that is in the city, *even* all the ſpoil thereof, ſhalt thou † take unto thyſelf: and thou ſhalt eat the ſpoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee. 15. Thus ſhalt thou do unto all the cities *which are* very far off from thee, which *are* not of the cities of theſe nations. 16. But [h] of the cities of theſe people which the LORD thy God doth give thee *for* an inheritance, thou ſhalt ſave alive nothing that breatheth: 17. But thou ſhalt utterly deſtroy them, *namely*, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebuſites, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee: 18. That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods, ſo ſhould ye ſin againſt the LORD your God. 19. ¶ When thou ſhalt beſiege a city a long time, in making war againſt it to take it, thou ſhalt not deſtroy the trees thereof by forcing an ax againſt them: for thou mayſt eat of them, and thou ſhalt not cut them down (‡ for the tree of the field *is* man's *life*) ‖ to employ *them* in the ſiege. 20. Only the trees which thou knoweſt that they *be* not trees for meat, thou ſhalt deſtroy and cut them down; and thou ſhalt build bulwarks againſt the city that maketh war with thee, until § it be ſubdued.

[e] 2 Sam. xx. 18.
[f] Num. xxxi. 7.
[g] Joſh. viii. 2.
† Heb. Spoil.
[h] Num. xxxiii. 52. Chap. vii. 1, 2.
‡ Or, for, O man, the tree of the field is to be employed in the ſiege.
‖ Heb. To go from before thee.
§ Heb. It come down.

v. 10—20. As they would be engaged in other wars, beſides thoſe with the ſeven devoted nations, 1. God commands them to give their enemies fair notice, and to offer peace before they declared war, on condition of their renunciation of idolatry, and paying tribute. *Note*, (1.) God deals thus with ſinners. The goſpel offers peace and reconciliation: if hereupon we accept the favour, and ſubmit ourſelves to God, all is well; if not, then juſtice unſheaths the ſword, and we are treated as determined enemies. (2.) In all our diſputes, recourſe ſhould never be had to violent methods, by law or war, till we have in vain tried every method of peaceable accommodation. 2. In caſe the terms were rejected, then the war proceeded; God engaged to ſupport them in their righteous quarrels, and give them victory; and all the men, at leaſt all found in arms, are to be put to death, while the reſt of the land and inhabitants are given them for ſpoil. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who will not hear the calls of Divine mercy, muſt periſh under the rod of vengeance. (2.) God will bleſs thoſe who follow him. (3.) The ſpoil gotten in a juſt war, is lawful gain. 3. The ſeven devoted nations muſt have neither offers of peace, nor any quarter. They are to ſuffer for their ſins, and their utter extirpation is neceſſary, that Iſrael may not be enſnared by their idolatry. It is dangerous living among bad neighbours: we are more likely to learn their ill cuſtoms, than they of us to repent and forſake them. 4. In caſe of long ſieges, they are forbidden to uſe fruit-trees for their bulwarks, becauſe as they were ſure of taking the city, the loſs would after fall upon themſelves. *Note*, (1.) God in his prohibitions conſults our intereſt and happineſs. All his reſtraints are only, Do thyſelf no harm. (2.) Wilful waſte in war is not only a mark of a cruel and ſavage temper, and moſt inhuman to the poor people of the land, but in the iſſue a means to diſtreſs the conquerors.

CHAP. XXI.

In this chapter proviſion is made, 1. *For the putting away of the guilt of blood from the land, when he that ſhed it was fled from juſtice,* ver. 1—9. 2. *For the preſerving of the honour of a captive maid,* ver. 12—14. 3. *For the ſecuring of the right of a firſt-born ſon,* ver. 15—17. 4. *For the reſtraining and puniſhing of a rebellious ſon,* ver. 18—21. 5. *For the burial of the worſt malefactors,* ver. 22, 23.

1. IF *one* be found ſlain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to poſſeſs it, lying in the field, *and* it be not known who hath ſlain him: 2. Then thy elders and thy judges ſhall come forth, and they ſhall meaſure unto the cities which *are* round about him that is ſlain: 3. And it ſhall be *that* the city *which is* next unto the ſlain man, even the elders of that city ſhall take an heifer which hath not been wrought with, *and* which hath not drawn in the yoke. 4. And the elders of that city ſhall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley which is neither eared nor ſown, and ſhall ſtrike off the heifer's neck there in the valley. 5. And the prieſts the ſons of Levi ſhall come near (for [a] them the LORD thy God hath choſen to miniſter unto him, and to bleſs in the name of the LORD) and [b] by their † word ſhall every controverſy and every ſtroke be *tried*. 6. And all the elders of that city *that are* next unto the ſlain *man*, [c] ſhall waſh their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley. 7. And they ſhall anſwer and ſay, Our hands have

[a] Chap. x. 8. 1 Chron. xxiii. 13. Ecclus xlv. 15.
[b] Chap. xvii. 8, 9.
† Heb. Mouth.
[c] See Pſal. xix. 12. Mat. xxvii. 24.

have not ſhed this blood, neither have our eyes ſeen *it*. 8. Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Iſrael, whom thou haſt redeemed, and [d] lay not innocent blood † unto thy people of Iſrael's charge. And the blood ſhall be forgiven them. 9. So ſhalt thou put away the *guilt of* innocent blood from among you, when thou ſhalt do *that which is* right in the ſight of the LORD.

d Jon. i. 14.
† Heb. In the midſt.

v. 1—9. We have here the expiation for an unknown murder, where no diſcovery can be obtained of the perſon who committed the fact. The elders of the neareſt city muſt aſſemble, and bring with them a bullock that had never born the yoke, and in a barren valley ſtrike off his head, in preſence of a deputation of prieſts from the great council, making ſolemn profeſſion of their own innocence, and entire ignorance of the criminal; whereupon they waſh their hands over the heifer, as clear of this innocent blood, and pray that God would be merciful to the land, and avert from it the judgments ſuch offences provoked; all which could not but ſerve to impreſs the people with a dread of the guilt of blood, and contribute to the detection of the criminal, whom none, it were hoped, would dare conceal. *Note*, (1.) Though the greateſt crimes may ſometimes eſcape puniſhment, the day is near when there is no darkneſs where any worker of iniquity can hide himſelf. (2.) Our prayers to avert national judgments, are the greateſt ſervice we can do our country. However deſpiſed God's praying people may be, it is for their ſakes, and at their inſtance that God ſpares the land.

10. ¶ When thou goeſt forth to war againſt thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou haſt taken them captive, 11. And ſeeſt among the captives a beautiful woman, and haſt a deſire unto her, that thou wouldſt have her to thy wife: 12. Then thou ſhalt bring her home to thine houſe, and ſhe ſhall ſhave her head, and † pare her nails. 13. And ſhe ſhall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and ſhall remain in thine houſe, and [e] bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that, thou ſhalt go in unto her, and be her huſband, and ſhe ſhall be thy wife. 14. And it ſhall be if thou have no delight in her, then thou ſhalt let her go whither ſhe will, but thou ſhalt not ſell her at all for money, thou ſhalt not make merchandiſe of her, [f] becauſe thou haſt humbled her.

† Heb. Make or dreſs, i. e. ſay ſome, ſuffer to grow.
e See Pſal. xlx. 10.
f Judg. xix. 24.

v. 10—14. The granting this liberty ſeems rather a permiſſion than a command, becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts. They are abſolutely forbid all connection with the devoted Canaanites; but in their other wars, if a man took a captive, and was pleaſed with her beauty, he muſt not gratify his lawleſs luſt, but might make her his lawful wife; yet not till after ſome time, when his thoughts might be more recollected, and the woman had, during a month, gone through the proceſs here enjoined, of ſhaving her head, and paring her nails, which might be ordained, 1. As a means to wean the man from his inordinate regard to her, in this disfigured dreſs; Or, 2. As an inſtance of her renunciation of her former idolatry, and as a luſtration on her becoming a proſelyte; Or, 3. As a token of mourning for her friends, from whom ſhe was ſeparated, as if they had been dead. *Note*, (1.) Sudden paſſions muſt be reſtrained, till grace is given for reflection. (2.) What we love inordinately, we ſhould ſeek to wean our affections from. (3.) Before we take a partner for life, it is of infinite moment that we agree in religion. (4.) We are bound to ſhow indulgence to the ſorrows which flow from natural affection. If upon ſecond thoughts before marriage, he ſaw the matter in a different light, or after marriage diſliked her, then ſhe muſt have her liberty, and muſt not be ſold as a bond-woman; this would be a compenſation for the diſappointment ſhe received, or the injury ſuſtained. *Note*, (1.) We cannot be too careful what engagements we form, leaſt our honour and conſcience ſhould afterwards be wounded by our raſhneſs. (2.) They are entitled to every poſſible ſatisfaction who, though found as unfit for our choice on reflection as this captive, have reaſon to upbraid us for their diſappointment.

15. ¶ If a man have two wives, one beloved and [g] another hated, and they have born him children, *both* the beloved and the hated; and *if* the firſt-born ſon be hers that was hated: 16. Then it ſhall be, [h] when he maketh his ſons to inherit *that* which he hath, *that* he may not make the ſon of the beloved, firſt-born, before the ſon of the hated, *which is indeed* the firſt-born: 17. But he ſhall acknowledge the ſon of the hated *for* the firſt-born, [i] by giving him a double portion of all † that he hath: for [k] he *is* the beginning of his ſtrength, the right of the firſt-born *is* his.

g Gen. xxix. 33.
h 2 Chron. xi. 19, 22.
i See 1 Chron. v. 1.
† Heb. That is found with him.
k Gen. xlix. 3.

v. 15—17. The ſtepping aſide from the ſtrait path in one inſtance, uſually endangers us to go on increaſing the evil. Thus the man who to gratify his luſts, took two wives, was in danger of ſhewing ſinful and unjuſt partiality to the children, according to his love to the mother. God therefore provides, that the eldeſt, though the ſon of the beſt beloved, or perhaps diſliked, ſhall have his double portion of the inheritance. *Note*, Though the diſtinctions God makes by his grace, may render one child really more amiable to us than another, we are not therefore to invert the order of nature, in the diſtribution of our eſtates, but correſpond with the will of providence, and let the eldeſt poſſeſs the double portion.

18. ¶ If a man have a ſtubborn and rebellious ſon, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that* when they have chaſtned him, will not hearken unto them: 19. Then ſhall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place: 20. And they ſhall ſay unto the elders of his city, This our ſon *is* ſtubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; *he is* a glutton, and a drunkard. 21. And all the men of his city ſhall ſtone him with ſtones, that he die; [l] ſo ſhalt thou put evil away from among you, and all Iſrael ſhall hear and fear. 22. ¶ And if a man have committed a ſin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: 23. [m] His body ſhall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou ſhalt in any wiſe bury him that day (for [n] he that is hanged, *is* † accurſed of God) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

l Chap. xiii. 5. & xix. 19, 20. & xxii. 21, 24.
m Joſh. viii. 29. & x. 26
n Gal. iii. 13.
† Heb. The curſe of God.
See Num. xxv. 4. Joſh. x. 26. 2 Sam. xxi. 6.

v. 18—23. God had provided before againſt the partiality of parents. Though the ſon was unaimiable in his temper, or weak in his capacity, he muſt not fare the worſe: but here, 1. Their authority is to be maintained againſt the undutiful and diſobedient. In this caſe, if he ſlighted their advice, deſpiſed their authority, and ſquandered their ſubſtance in riotous living, in gluttony and drunkenneſs, then, on complaint from his parents, he was convicted and ſtoned to death: an aweful warning to rebellious children, and a powerful means of ſupporting parental authority, and ſuppreſſing in families the ſpirit of diſobedience. *Note*, (1.) No heavier grief can lie upon a parent than to behold a debauched and abandoned ſon. (2.) Drunkenneſs is the door that leads to every abomination. (3.) They who give themſelves up to their luſts, juſtly forfeit the love of their deareſt relations, and will find them in the day of judgment their accuſers. (4.) The undutiful ſon that will not amend under reproof, however now no longer ſubject to this judgment, will find a heavier in ſtore for him in the day of God. 2. God commands the bodies of malefactors who had been put to death, and hung up for the terror of others, not to be left on the tree after ſun-ſet. This puniſhment conveyed the ſtrongeſt tokens of the wrath and curſe of God againſt them: but that the land may not be defiled by a dead body, it is to be laid in the grave before night. Thus when Jeſus ſuffered the wrath of God, his corpſe was laid in the grave before evening; and as the land was by the malefactor's death and burial delivered from defilement, ſo Chriſt has buried all our ſins in his grave, and purified his church from every ſpot of iniquity.

CHAP. XXII.

The laws of this chapter do provide, 1. *For the care of ſtray or fallen cattle,* ver. 1—4. 2. *That men and women ſhould not wear one another's clothes,* ver. 5. *and that other needleſs mixtures ſhould be avoided,* ver. 9—11. 3. *For the preſervation of birds,* ver. 6, 7. 4. *Of life,* ver. 8. 5. *Of the commandments,* ver. 12. 6. *Of the reputation of a wife abuſed, if ſhe were innocent,* ver. 13—19. *her puniſhment if guilty,* ver. 20—21. 7. *For the preſervation of the chaſtity of wives,* ver. 22. *Virgins betrothed,* ver. 23—27. *or not betrothed,* ver. 28, 29. *And laſtly againſt inceſt,* ver. 30.

1. [a] THOU ſhalt not ſee thy brother's ox or his ſheep go aſtray, and hide thyſelf from them: thou ſhalt in any caſe bring them again unto thy brother. 2. And if thy brother *be* not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou ſhalt bring it unto thine own houſe, and it ſhall be with thee until thy brother ſeek after it, and thou ſhalt reſtore it to him again. 3. In like manner ſhalt thou do with his aſs, and ſo ſhalt thou do with his raiment, and with all loſt things of thy bro-

a Exod. xxiii. 4.

ther's, which he hath loſt and thou haſt found, ſhalt thou do likewiſe; thou mayſt not hide thyſelf. 4. ¶ [b] Thou ſhalt not ſee thy brother's aſs or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyſelf from them: thou ſhalt ſurely help him to lift *them* up again.

[b] Exod. xxiii. 5.

v. 1—4. Natural equity dictates theſe inſtances of brotherly kindneſs. Whatever was ſtrayed or loſt, of cattle or goods, were to be ſecured for the owner, and diligent enquiry made for him, whether he were an Iſraelite or a ſtranger. And the ſame regard muſt be ſhewn to his aſs or ox, if fallen under his burden, to lift him up, and to help him on his way. God would herein teach us, 1. To be ready for every friendly office to our neighbour. 2. To be ſtrictly honeſt and upright, in retaining nothing of his that came however ſecretly into our poſſeſſion. 3. If ſuch care is enjoined toward a loſt ſheep, how much more need it be ſhewn toward a loſt ſoul.

5. ¶ The woman ſhall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither ſhall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do ſo *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God. 6. ¶ If a bird's neſt chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, *whether they be* young ones, or eggs, and the dam ſitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou ſhalt not take the dam with the young. 7. *But* thou ſhalt in any wiſe let the dam go, and take the young to thee, that it may be well with thee, and *that* thou mayſt prolong *thy* days. 8. ¶ When thou buildeſt a new houſe, then thou ſhalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine houſe, if any man fall from thence. 9. ¶ [c] Thou ſhalt not ſow thy vineyard with divers ſeeds: leſt the † fruit of thy ſeed which thou haſt ſown, and the fruit of thy vineyard be defiled. 10. ¶ [d] Thou ſhalt not plow with an ox and an aſs together. 11. ¶ [e] Thou ſhalt not wear a garment of divers ſorts, *as* of woollen and linen together. 12. ¶ Thou ſhalt make thee [f] fringes upon the four † quarters of thy veſture, wherewith thou covereſt *thyſelf*.

[c] Lev. xix. 19.
† Heb. Fulneſs of thy ſeed.
[d] See 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16.
[e] Lev. xix. 19.
[f] Numb. xv. 38. Mat. xxiii. 5.
† Heb. Wings.

v. 5—12. Sundry laws are here enjoined. 1. To maintain diſtinction of ſex in the apparel. Probably to prevent the idolatrous cuſtoms of the Gentiles among them; or to preſerve them from the impurities for which ſuch confuſion of dreſs would give opportunity, and either of theſe would render them abominable to God. *Note*, It ſhould be our care, even in our cloaths, to pleaſe God. Indecency in our dreſs, however faſhionable, is not the leſs ſinful. 2. The dam muſt not be taken in her neſt, with her eggs or her young ones. It was for their advantage ſhe ſhould be left to breed again; and there would have been ſome cruelty in taking occaſion from her parental tenderneſs to ſeize or deſtroy her. God will have us avoid every appearance of inhumanity, would teach us his own providential care of the leaſt of his creatures; and by the promiſe he adds to the commandment, ſhews, that in keeping the leaſt of them, there is great reward. As there is no ſin ſo little as to be overlooked, there is no obedience ſo minute, as to be unneceſſary or unnoticed. 3. Their houſes muſt have a battlement round them, that as the roof was flat, and they often went up thither, they might be in no danger of falling from the top. God is careful of our lives, and will have us to remove every thing which might endanger them. 4. Mixtures of ſeed in their fields are forbidden; ploughing with different kinds of cattle, and wearing cloaths of woollen and linen wove together. Thus muſt we abſtain from being unequally yoked; our profeſſions of religion muſt be uniform, and we muſt allow no mixture of any thing defiling in our converſation. 5. Their fringes are again enjoined. They were a peculiar people, and they muſt not be aſhamed to appear ſo, but carry the badge of their religion always about them. We muſt ſeek to walk ſo that all who ſee us, may take knowledge of us, that we belong to Jeſus.

13. ¶ If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, 14. And give occaſion of ſpeech againſt her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and ſay, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: 15. Then ſhall the father of the damſel, and her mother, take and bring forth *the tokens of* the damſel's virginity, unto the elders of the city in the gate. 16. And the damſel's father ſhall ſay unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her, 17. And lo, he hath given occaſions of ſpeech *againſt her*, ſaying, I found not thy daughter a maid: and yet theſe *are the tokens of* my daughter's virginity: and they ſhall ſpread the cloth before the elders of the city. 18. And the elders of that city ſhall take that man and chaſtiſe him. 19. And they ſhall amerce him in an hundred *ſhekels* of ſilver, and give *them* unto the father of the damſel, becauſe he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Iſrael: and ſhe ſhall be his wife, he may not put her away all his days. 20. But if this thing be true, *and the tokens of* virginity be not found for the damſel: 21. Then they ſhall bring out the damſel to the door of her father's houſe, and the men of her city ſhall ſtone her with ſtones that ſhe die: becauſe ſhe hath wrought folly in Iſrael, to play the whore in her father's houſe; [g] ſo ſhalt thou put evil away from among you.

[g] Chap. xiii. 5.

v. 13—21. To preſerve the reputation and chaſtity of the daughters of Iſrael, we have here the vindication of the virgin, whom after marriage her huſband diſliked, and would be rid of, on pretence ſhe was before defiled. The tokens of virginity which were preſerved from the marriage-bed, on his complaint, were produced before the judges, by the father and mother of the damſel, and he was condemned to make ſatisfaction for the ſlander, by ſuffering corporal puniſhment, beſides a fine, and obligation never to divorce her. But if the fact was proved, that ſhe was really defiled after being betrothed, ſhe was brought to the door of her father's houſe, and ſtoned to death, to make his diſgrace great as her ſufferings. *Note*, (1.) Chaſtity is a precious jewel that muſt be kept with jealous care, and parents are called to eſpecial watchfulneſs, that neither by their own examples, nor by permitting their children to keep bad company, they may lead them into ſo criminal a conduct. (2.) Chaſtity is a tender plant, and can leaſt of any thing bear the blaſts of malevolence; we ſhould be very jealous how we entertain, and ſtill more cautious how we ſpread a ſuſpicion to our neighbour's prejudice, the conſequences of which are irreparable. (3.) The loſs of chaſtity is juſtly reckoned in women, infamous, nor is it leſs ſinful in men: but though it may now be ſo ſecretly concealed, that no ſuſpicion wounds, the folly and ſhame of fornication will ſhortly be manifeſt to all, when whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, and worſe than this ignominious death be the ſentence.

22. ¶ [h] If a man be found lying with a woman married to an huſband, then they ſhall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: ſo ſhalt thou put away evil from Iſrael. 23. ¶ If a damſel *that is* a virgin be betrothed unto an huſband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her: 24. Then ye ſhall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye ſhall ſtone them with ſtones that they die; the damſel, becauſe ſhe cried not, *being* in the city: and the man, [i] becauſe he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: [k] ſo thou ſhalt put away evil from among you. 25. ¶ But if a man find a betrothed damſel in the field, and the man † force her and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her ſhall die. 26. But unto the damſel thou ſhalt do nothing, *there is* in the damſel no ſin *worthy* of death: for as when a man riſeth againſt his neighbour, and ſlayeth him, even ſo *is* this matter. 27. For he found her in the field, *and* the betrothed damſel cried, and *there was* none to ſave her. 28. ¶ [l] If a man find a damſel *that is* a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found: 29. Then the man that lay with her, ſhall give unto the damſel's father fifty *ſhekels* of ſilver, and ſhe ſhall be his wife, becauſe he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. 30. ¶ [m] A man ſhall not take his father's wife, [n] nor diſcover his father's ſkirt.

[h] Lev. xx, 10. John viii. 5.
[i] Chap. xxi. 14.
[k] Ver. 21, 22.
† Heb. Take ſtrong hold of her.
[l] Exod. xxii, 16.
[m] Lev. xviii. 8. & xx. 11. 1 Cor. v. 1.
[n] See Ruth iii. 9. Ezek. xvi. 8.

v. 22—30. 1. To lie with a married woman, or one betrothed, was death to both the offenders, if this was done in the city, becauſe it was preſumed aſſiſtance might be had, if they cried out and reſiſted: but if in a lonely place violence was offered to a damſel, in ſpite of cries and reſiſtance, then only the raviſher muſt die. *Note*, (1.) They who uſe not the proper means to be delivered from temptation, are juſtly charged with wilful ſin. (2.) It were highly deſireable that adultery were ſtill puniſhed with death, as many crimes are, though unſpeakably inferior in guilt. (3.) That is not our ſin which is done by force, not choice. (4.) It is but juſt that rape ſhould be a capital crime, ſince to be robbed of chaſtity, is next to being robbed of life. (5.) In every temptation we muſt cry to Jeſus, and then we ſhall be delivered from the power of evil. 2. Seduction of an unmarried woman was puniſhed with a fine to the father, and with an obligation to marry the woman, without power to divorce her. He who robs a woman of her honour, can never make her reparation but by taking her for his wife. 3. Inceſt is forbidden; the

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groſſeſt inſtance with a father's wife is only mentioned here, but every degree of it is abominable. *Note,* If once we give the reins to our luſts, we know not whither they may hurry us. If we would keep from deeds ſhocking to humanity, we muſt reſiſt the firſt cravings of concupiſcence.

CHAP. XXIII.

We have in this chapter, 1. *The excluſion of certain perſons from the congregation,* ver. 1—8. 2. *The removal of all uncleanneſs out of the camp,* ver. 9—14. 3. *The receiving fugitive ſervants,* ver. 15, 16. 4. *Whoredom forbidden,* ver. 17, 18. 5. *Uſury,* ver. 19, 20. 6. *The breach of vows,* ver 21—23. 7. *What liberty a man might take in his neighbour's field and vineyard, and what not,* ver. 24, 25.

1. HE that is wounded in the ſtones, or hath his privy member cut off, ſhall not enter into the congregation of the LORD. 2. A baſtard ſhall not enter into the congregation of the LORD: even to his tenth generation ſhall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD. 3. [a] An Ammonite or Moabite ſhall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation ſhall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever: 4. [b] Becauſe they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt: and [c] becauſe they hired againſt thee Balaam the ſon of Beor of Pethor of Meſopotamia, to curſe thee. 5. Neverthleſs the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam: but the LORD thy God turned the curſe into a bleſſing unto thee, becauſe the LORD thy God loved thee. 6. [d] Thou ſhalt not ſeek their peace, nor their † proſperity all thy days for ever. 7. ¶ Thou ſhalt not abhor an Edomite, for he *is* thy brother: Thou ſhalt not abhor an Egyptian, becauſe thou waſt a ſtranger in his land. 8. The children that are begotten of them, ſhall enter into the congregation of the LORD in their third generation.

[a] Neh. xiii. 1.

[b] See Chap. ii. 29.

[c] Num. xxii. 5, 6.

[d] Ezra ix. 12.

† Heb. Good.

v. 1—8. Excluſion from the congregation of the Lord means not a rejection from all communion in religious ſervices, for every proſelyte was welcome; but from all power and authority as officers or magiſtrates, and from free intercourſe of marriage. Baſtards, all who were the offspring of inceſtuous beds, and Eunuchs, were for ever excluded. God will put a brand of diſgrace upon ſuch. Moabites and Ammonites are under the ſame ſentence, and the reaſon given is, becauſe of their unkindneſs to the people of Iſrael, in refuſing them proviſions by the way, and their viler attempt to procure them a curſe from Balaam, which God however over-ruled for a bleſſing. Thoſe who would injure God's Iſrael, he will repay; their deſigns ſhall not only be abortive, but the evil return upon their own heads. The Edomites, though they had behaved unkind, muſt not be abhorred, nor the Egyptians, notwithſtanding their hard ſervitude to them; but the proſelytes of theſe nations after the third generation, are to be admitted to the privileges of true Iſraelites; and the reaſon given is, becauſe of the near kindred of the one, and the kindneſs they had at firſt experienced from the other. *Note,* (1.) Near relations, though they may have treated us unnaturally, muſt be regarded by us with affection ſtill. (2.) The unkindneſs we may have received, muſt not cancel our grateful acknowledgment for former favours, we muſt forget the one, and remember the other.

9. ¶ When the hoſt goeth forth againſt thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing. 10. ¶ [e] If there be among you any man that is not clean, by reaſon of uncleanneſs that chanceth him by night, then ſhall he go abroad out of the camp, he ſhall not come within the camp. 11. But it ſhall be when evening † cometh on, [f] he ſhall waſh *himſelf* with water: and when the ſun is down, he ſhall come into the camp *again.* 12. ¶ Thou ſhalt have a place alſo without the camp, whither thou ſhalt go forth abroad. 13. And thou ſhalt have a paddle upon thy weapon: and it ſhall be when thou ‡ wilt eaſe thy ſelf abroad, thou ſhalt dig therewith, and ſhalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee. 14. For the LORD thy God walketh in the midſt of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee: therefore ſhall thy camp be holy, that he ſee no ‖ unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.

[e] Lev. xv. 16.

† Heb. Turneth towards.

[f] Lev. xv. 5.

‡ Heb. Sitteſt down.

‖ Heb. Nakedneſs of any thing.

v. 9—14. A charge is here given to keep their hoſts pure from ceremonial, natural, and much more from moral defilement. Sin muſt be abſtained from of every kind. Soldiers who have death ever before them, have eſpecial calls to keep from evil, as it cannot but tend to make them cowards in battle, and bring down alſo God's diſpleaſure upon the hoſt. In the midſt of ſpoil and captives, they muſt abſtain from cruelty, luſt and rapaciouſneſs. If ceremonial uncleanneſs happened to them, they muſt be ſeparated from the camp, as unfit to dwell among the hoſts where God's preſence appeared; and every thing indecent, or uncleanly, muſt be carefully avoided, that this conſtant care to obſerve neatneſs in their perſons, and cleanneſs from ceremonial pollutions, might teach them how much more neceſſary it was to preſerve their ſouls from the defilement of ſin. *Note,* (1.) They who provoke God by their ſins, can with little reaſon expect a bleſſing on their arms. (2.) Cleanlineſs is next to godlineſs: a ſlut or a ſloven is ever a ſlothful perſon, and neglect of decency and neatneſs, is not only want of ſenſe, but want of grace. (3.) The cleanlineſs of a camp is moſt conducive to the health of the army. (4.) We ſhould be aſhamed to do an indecent thing to offend one another, how much more to do a wicked thing to offend God.

15. ¶ [g] Thou ſhalt not deliver unto his maſter, the ſervant which is eſcaped from his maſter unto thee. 16. He ſhall dwell with thee, *even* among you in [h] that place which he ſhall chooſe, in one of thy gates where † it liketh him beſt: thou ſhalt not oppreſs him. 17. ¶ There ſhall be no ‖ whore [i] of the daughters of Iſrael, nor a ſodomite of the ſons of Iſrael. 18. Thou ſhalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog into the houſe of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both theſe *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God. 19. ¶ [k] Thou ſhalt not lend upon uſury to thy brother; uſury of money, uſury of victuals, uſury of any thing that is lent upon uſury. 20. [l] Unto a ſtranger thou mayſt lend upon uſury, but unto thy brother thou ſhalt not lend upon uſury; that the LORD thy God may bleſs thee in all that thou ſetteſt thine hand to, in the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it. 21. ¶ [m] When thou ſhalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou ſhalt not ſlack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will ſurely require it of thee; and it would be ſin in thee. 22. But if thou ſhalt forbear to vow, it ſhall be no ſin in thee. 23. That which is gone out of thy lips, thou ſhalt keep and perform; *even* a free-will offering, according as thou haſt vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou haſt promiſed with thy mouth. 24. When thou comeſt into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayſt eat grapes thy fill, at thine own pleaſure; but thou ſhalt not put *any* in thy veſſel. 25. When thou comeſt into the ſtanding-corn of thy neighbours, then [n] thou mayſt pluck the ears with thine hand: but thou ſhalt not move a ſickle unto thy neighbours ſtanding-corn.

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[g] 1 Sam. xxx. 15.

[h] Chap. xii. 5.

† Heb. Is good for him.

‖ Or ſodomiteſs.

[i] Lev. xix. 20. See Prov. ii. 16.

[k] Ex. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36. Neh. v. 2, 7. Pſal. xv. 5. Luke vi. 34, 35.

[l] See Lev. xix. 34. Chap. xv. 3.

[m] Num. xxx. 2. Eccles v. 4.

[n] Mat. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

v. 15—25. Sundry laws are here enjoined,

1. A ſervant who had been cruelly and unjuſtly treated, muſt find an aſylum amongſt them. An idle runagate it is not ſuppoſed they would harbour; but the oppreſſed and deſtitute muſt be not only protected, but if willing to become a proſelyte, be provided for. *Note,* (1.) The people of God muſt have compaſſion on the oppreſſed, and ſupport them againſt their perſecutors. (2.) Converts deſerve peculiar tenderneſs, that they may have no temptation to return.

2. No whore nor ſodomite muſt be ſuffered among them; nor the price of ſuch crimes be permitted to come into the houſe of the Lord for any vow: God abominates both them and their polluted gains. *Note,* (1.) The offerings of the wicked are abomination to the Lord. (2.) There can be no commutation for ſin; their gifts muſt periſh with them.

3. All uſury is forbidden to an Iſraelite: if he wanted victuals, or money, they muſt be freely lent. As they were God's peculiar people, they muſt ſhew peculiar tenderneſs and generoſity one to another. Of ſtrangers they might receive uſury; as they are ſuppoſed to live by trade, and to make conſiderable advantage thereby, it were but juſt they ſhould ſhare their gains with the lender. Intereſt for our money is highly reaſonable, but the Chriſtian will find many an occaſion to practice this generoſity to his brethren, and to lend, hoping for nothing in return.

4. Every vow muſt be carefully fulfilled. It is in our own power not to vow, but it is ſin after vows to make enquiry.

5. Travellers, in paſſing through fields or vineyards, or labourers, in gathering them in, might freely eat, according to their appetite, only they muſt carry none away. *Note,* (1.) We muſt be hoſpitable, and willing to communicate of our abundance. (2.) We may not abuſe our neighbour's liberality, nor, becauſe we are on free coſt, be gluttons to devour his meat, or covetous to reſerve it.

CHAP. XXIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The toleration of divorce,* ver. 1—4. 2. *A diſcharge of new married men from the war,* ver. 5. 3. *Laws concerning pledges,* ver. 6, 10—13, *and* 17. 4. *Againſt man-ſtealing,* ver. 7. 5. *Concerning the leproſy,* ver. 8, 9. 6. *Againſt the injuſtice of maſters towards their ſervants,* ver. 14, 15. *Judges in capital cauſes,* ver. 16. *and civil concerns,* ver. 17, 18. 7. *Of charity to the poor,* ver. 19—22.

1. WHEN [a] a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to paſs that ſhe find no favour in his eyes, becauſe he hath found † ſome uncleanneſs in her: then let him write her a bill of ‡ divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and ſend her out of his houſe. 2. And when ſhe is departed out of his houſe, ſhe may go and be another man's *wife.* 3. And *if* the latter huſband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and ſendeth her out of his houſe; or if the latter huſband die, which took her *to be* his wife; 4. [b] Her former huſband which ſent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that ſhe is defiled: for that *is* abomination before the LORD, and thou ſhalt not cauſe the land to ſin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

[a] Mat. v. 31. & xix. 7. Mark x. 4.
† Heb. Matter of nakedneſs.
‡ Heb. Cutting off.
[b] Jer. iii. 1.

v. 1—4. For the hardneſs of their heart our Saviour ſays Moſes gave them this permiſſion. Since they would put away their wives, yet they muſt be under theſe regulations. It muſt not be for every cauſe, but ſome uncleanneſs; not adultery, for that was death; but ſome ſecret diſagreeableneſs in her perſon, or perverſeneſs in her temper, that made her company and cohabitation diſguſting and offenſive. In which caſe, a bill of divorcement muſt be written, and ſigned before witneſſes, that time intervening, ſuch ſeparations might not enſue on every quarrel. If the matter was reſolved, on this bill being delivered to her, ſhe was diſmiſſed, and free to marry whom ſhe choſe; only that on the death or diſmiſſion from a ſecond huſband, the firſt might never take her again. *Note,* Separation of man and wife is a matter deeply to be weighed, and much to be borne, before ſuch a ſtep be taken. The remedy is uſually worſe than the diſeaſe; and when the breach is rendered hereby too wide to be made up, too late they find they have involved themſelves in greater difficulties, than thoſe they meant to avoid.

5. ¶ [c] When a man hath taken a new wife, he ſhall not go out to war, † neither ſhall he be charged with any buſineſs: *but* he ſhall be free at home one year, and ſhall cheer up his wife which he hath taken. 6. ¶ No man ſhall take the nether or the upper milſtone to pledge: for he taketh *a man's* life to pledge. 7. ¶ [d] If a man be found ſtealing any of his brethren of the children of Iſrael, and maketh merchandiſe of him, or ſelleth him; then that thief ſhall die, and [e] thou ſhalt put evil away from among you. 8. ¶ Take heed in [f] the plague of leproſy, that thou obſerve diligently, and do according to all that the prieſts the Levites ſhall teach you: as I commanded them, *ſo* ye ſhall obſerve to do. 9. Remember what [g] the LORD thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt. 10. ¶ When thou doſt ‡ lend thy brother any thing, thou ſhalt not go into his houſe to fetch his pledge. 11. Thou ſhalt ſtand abroad, and the man to whom thou doſt lend, ſhall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee. 12. And if the man *be* poor, thou ſhalt not ſleep with his pledge. 13. [h] In any caſe thou ſhalt deliver him the pledge again when the ſun goeth down, that he may ſleep in his own raiment, and [i] bleſs thee: and [k] it ſhall be righteouſneſs unto thee before the LORD thy God.

[c] Chap. xx. 7.
† Heb. Not any thing ſhall paſs upon him.
[d] Exod. xxi. 16.
[e] Chap. xix. 19.
[f] Lev. xiii. 2. & xiv. 2.
[g] Num. xii. 10.
‡ Heb. Lend the loan of any thing to, &c.
[h] Exod. xxii. 26.
[i] Job xxxi. 20.
[k] Chap vi. 25. Pſ. cvi. 31. & cxii. 9. Dan. iv. 27.

v. 5—13. Sundry laws are here laid down, 1. Concerning a new-married man. During his firſt year of marriage he was excuſed from war, and every public avocation that would call him from home, where his preſence was needful, that by conjugal endearments love might be cemented, and the union be firm and laſting. *Note,* Nothing ſo needful in the marriage ſtate, in order to keep up mutual affection, as the avoiding all needleſs abſence, and ſhewing on both ſides a conſtant ſollicitude to pleaſe, 2. The milſtone, which the man wants to grind his daily bread, muſt not be taken for a pledge. Though a man may be ſo diſtreſſed, as to offer to put that in our power, which is needful for his own and his family's ſubſiſtence, we muſt by no means take advantage of his neceſſities. 3. Man-ſtealing is forbidden on pain of death. It was a high crime, thus to rob the ſtate of a ſubject, and an Iſraelite of liberty. 4. The laws concerning leproſy muſt be ſtrictly complied with. The perſon muſt not conceal the malady, but ſhew himſelf to the prieſt, and conform to the regulations preſcribed, leaſt, if he deſpiſed authority like Miriam, he ſhould be puniſhed: nor need he think it hard to ſubmit, when ſhe, though ſo eminent, was obliged to it. *Note,* Whatever humiliations we are called to undergo for ſin, we ſhould readily yield to them; ſince it is better now to confeſs and be pardoned, than cover our iniquities, and be condemned for them eternally. 5. The lender may not enter his neighbour's houſe to fetch a pledge, but muſt receive it without; nor muſt he keep the garments he needs to cover him at night in his cuſtody, but reſtore them, that the poor debtor might bleſs him, with his prayers and thanks to God for ſuch kindneſs: and this act of mercy God would own and approve. *Note,* (1.) We may not lord it, or be aſſuming, or cruel, towards thoſe who are in debt to us. (2.) They who can make no other preſent recompenſe to their kind creditors, ſhould beg of God to remember them for good. (3.) Though our works of charity are not in any ſenſe our juſtifying righteouſneſs before God, yet are they ſuch as he will own and reward in a judgment-day.

14. ¶ Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant *that is* poor and needy, *whether he be* of thy brethren, or of thy ſtrangers that *are* in thy land within thy gates. 15. At his day [l] thou ſhalt give *him* his hire, neither ſhall the ſun go down upon it, for he *is* poor, and † ſetteth his heart upon it; [m] leſt he cry againſt thee unto the LORD, and it be ſin unto thee. 16. [n] The fathers ſhall not be put to death for the children, neither ſhall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man ſhall be put to death for his own ſin. 17. ¶ [o] Thou ſhalt not pervert the judgment of the ſtranger, *nor* of the fatherleſs, [p] nor take a widow's raiment to pledge. 18. But [q] thou ſhalt remember that thou waſt a bond-man in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing. 19. ¶ [r] When thou cutteſt down thine harveſt in the field, and haſt forgot a ſheaf in the field, thou ſhalt not go again to fetch it: it ſhall be for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſs, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bleſs thee in all the work of thine hands. 20. When thou beateſt thine olive-tree, ‡ thou ſhalt not go over the boughs again: it ſhall be for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſs, and for the widow. 21. When thou gathereſt the grapes of thy vineyard, thou ſhalt not glean *it* ‖ afterward: it ſhall be for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſs, and for the widow. 22. And [s] thou ſhalt remember that thou waſt a bond-man in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing.

[l] Lev. xix. 13. Jer. xxii. 13. Tob. iv. 14. Jam. v. 4.
† Heb. Lifteth his ſoul unto it. Pſ. xxv. 1. & lxxxvi. 4.
[m] Jam. v. 4.
[n] 2 Kings xiv. 6. 2 Chron. xxv. 4. Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. Ezek. xviii. 20.
[o] Exod. xxii. 21, 22 Prov. xxii. 22. Iſa. i. 23. Jer. v. 28. & xxii. 3. Ezek. xxii. 29. Zech. vii. 10.
[p] Exod. xxii. 26.
[q] Ver. 22.
[r] Lev. xix. 9. & xxiii. 22.
‡ Heb. Thou ſhalt not bough it after thee.
‖ Heb. After thee.
[s] Ver. 18.

v. 14—22. 1. God enjoins maſters to be kind and punctual in paying their ſervants. They muſt not be over-loaded with labour; and when their daily taſk is done, as their heart would be upon their hire, and their poverty might not ſuffer delay, they muſt receive their wages, as they earned it, leſt, if it was unkindly or fraudulently detained, their cry ſhould come up before God, and heavy guilt be on their oppreſſors. *Note,* There is a God who intereſts himſelf in behalf of the poor and oppreſſed; and woe to thoſe againſt whom their juſt complaints ariſe. 2. Juſtice muſt be impartially adminiſtred. In criminal caſes, the father's crime muſt not involve the ſon, nor the ſon's the father; but every one muſt bear his own puniſhment. In civil caſes between party and party, the judge muſt not pervert the judgment of the ſtranger or fatherleſs, nor ſuffer them, becauſe friendleſs, to be oppreſſed; but rather be advocates for ſuch as have none to plead for them, and are unable to plead for themſelves. 3. In their harveſt and vintage they may not make too nice a ſcrutiny, or return to bring again a ſheaf dropt in the field or forgotten. They had been bondmen in Egypt, and their own wants there muſt teach them tender compaſſion, and charitable regard for the ſtranger, the fatherleſs, and widow. *Note,* The more we are ſenſible of God's goodneſs to ourſelves, the more will it open our hands and hearts in charity to our neighbours.

CHAP. XXV.

Here is, 1. *A law to moderate the ſcourging of malefactors,* ver. 1—3. 2. *A law in favour of the ox that treads out the corn,* ver. 4. 3. *For the diſgracing of him that refuſed to marry his brother's widow,* ver. 5—10. 4. *For the puniſhment of an immodeſt woman,* ver. 11, 12. 5. *For juſt weights and meaſures,* ver. 13—16. 6. *For the deſtroying of Amalek,* ver. 17—19.

1. IF there be a controverſy between men, and they come unto judgment, that *the judges* may judge them,

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[a] Mat. x. 17.
[b] 2 Cor. xi. 24.
[c] Prov. xii. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 9. 1 Tim. v. 18.
† Heb. Threſheth.

them, then they ſhall juſtify the righteous, and condemn the wicked. 2. And it ſhall be, if the wicked man *be* worthy to be beaten, that the judge ſhall cauſe him to lie down, [a] to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number. 3. [b] Forty ſtripes he may give him, *and* not exceed: leſt *if* he ſhould exceed, and beat him above theſe with many ſtripes, then thy brother ſhould ſeem vile unto thee. 4. ¶ [c] Thou ſhalt not muzzle the ox when he † treadeth out *the corn.*

v. 1—4. Directions are here given, 1. For the ſcourging of malefactors. This was the common puniſhment of crimes not capital. The matter was brought before the judge: on examination made, if the accuſation was not proved, then the accuſed perſon was juſtified, and declared innocent of the charge. If the fact appeared evident, he was condemned to ſuffer on the ſpot, in preſence of the judges, the puniſhment due to his offence, which never exceeded forty ſtripes. The whip wherewith they ſcourged the offender was made of three thongs, or cords, thirteen ſtrokes of which amounted to thirty-nine, and this was the greateſt number ever inflicted. *See* 2 *Cor.* xi. 24. During the time that he was ſcourging, one of the judges read *Deut.* xxviii. 58, 59. that ſpiritual correction, added to bodily pain, might lead the criminal to repentance; and the reaſon given for this limitation of the ſtripes, is to prevent an Iſraelite's appearing contemptible, if maimed or treated over rigorouſly. 2. The beaſt that ſerves us, deſerves his ſupport, and is intitled to our kindneſs. But if the ox who trod out the corn, (which was the uſual way in the eaſt, inſtead of threſhing it as we do) muſt not be muzzled, but permitted to eat freely, how much more do thoſe who labour for our ſouls deſerve to live by their work, and liberally to ſhare our worldly things?

[d] Mat. xxii. 24. Mark xii. 19. Luke xx. 28.
† Or next kinſman.
Gen. xxxviii. 8. Ruth i. 12, 13.
‡ Or next kinſman's wife.
[e] Ruth iv. 7.

5. ¶ [d] If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead ſhall not marry without unto a ſtranger: her † huſband's brother ſhall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an huſband's brother unto her. 6. And it ſhall be, *that* the firſt-born which ſhe beareth, ſhall ſucceed in the name of his brother *which is* dead, that his name be not put out of Iſrael. 7. And if the man like not to take his ‡ brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and ſay, [e] My huſband's brother refuſeth to raiſe up unto his brother a name in Iſrael, he will not perform the duty of my huſband's brother. 8. Then the elders of his city ſhall call him, and ſpeak unto him: and *if* he ſtand *to it*, and ſay, I like not to take her: 9. Then ſhall his brother's wife come unto him in the preſence of the elders, and looſe his ſhoe from off his foot, and ſpit in his face, and ſhall anſwer and ſay, So ſhall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's houſe. 10. And his name ſhall be called in Iſrael, The houſe of him that hath his ſhoe looſed.

v. 5—10. To preſerve the genealogies of every family, if a brother die without iſſue, his brother, as yet unmarried, was to take his wife; and the firſt ſon of ſuch marriage ſucceeded to the inheritance of the deceaſed, and was counted as his deſcendant. If he diſliked the woman, and refuſed to marry her, he was cited before the judges, and admoniſhed: if he ſtill perſiſted, the woman looſed his ſhoe, and ſpit in his face, and his family bore a mark of infamy for his refuſal. Both were then diſmiſſed, and each at liberty to marry whom they choſe. *Note*, (1.) There is no forcing affection, and no marriage can be happy without it. Better ſuffer any thing, than marry by compulſion. (2.) They deſerve to be reproached themſelves, whoſe conduct gives occaſion to caſt reproach on others.

11. ¶ When men ſtrive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her huſband out of the hand of him that ſmiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the ſecrets: 12. Then thou ſhalt cut off her hand, thine eye ſhall not pity *her*.

v. 11, 12. If on a quarrel, to diſengage her huſband from his antagoniſt, the wife put forth her hand to ſeize his ſecret parts, her hand muſt be cut off; nor muſt the tenderneſs of her ſex plead for pity, or her paſſion be admitted as an excuſe. *Note*, (1.) Nothing ſo ſhocking in a woman as immodeſty. (2.) If in a rage ſuch an action was ſo highly criminal, how much more in wanton lewdneſs. (3.) Paſſion is no plea for ſin, nor will be admitted as ſuch at God's bar.

[f] Lev. xix. 35, 36. Prov. xi. 1. Ezek. xlv. 10.
† Heb. A ſtone and a ſtone.
‡ Heb. An ephah and an ephah.
[g] Prov. xi. 1.
[h] Exod. xvii. 8.
[i] 2 Sam. xv. 3.

13. ¶ [f] Thou ſhalt not have in thy bag † divers weights, a great and a ſmall. 14. Thou ſhalt not have in thine houſe ‡ divers meaſures, a great and a ſmall. 15. *But* thou ſhalt have a perfect and juſt weight, a perfect and juſt meaſure ſhalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 16. For [g] all that do ſuch things, *and* all that do unrighteouſly, *are* an abomination unto the LORD thy God. 17. ¶ [h] Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way when ye were come forth out of Egypt; 18. How he met thee by the way, and ſmote the hindmoſt of thee, *even* all *that were* feeble behind thee, when thou *waſt* faint and weary; and he feared not God. 19. Therefore it ſhall be, [i] when the LORD thy God hath given thee reſt from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance to poſſeſs it, *that* thou ſhalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou ſhalt not forget *it*.

v. 13—19. We have here, 1. A law for the regulation of weights and meaſures, which muſt be exact with the allowed ſtandard; and honeſty will in the end be the beſt policy, as God promiſes to lengthen the days of the upright; but the unrighteous are his abomination, and he is the avenger of all ſuch. *Note*, Though a man grow rich by diſhoneſt gain, there is that curſe upon it which will turn it into a plague to him and his. 2. A dreadful memento is put upon Amalek. He had fallen upon them as ſoon as they had eſcaped from Egypt. He had taken advantage of their weakneſs, and attacked them when weary with marching, and faint with thirſt. He had cowardly hung upon their rear, to pick up the hindmoſt, who could make no reſiſtance; and impiouſly feared not the Lord, whoſe glory appeared ſo viſibly at their head. For theſe inſtances of treacherous cruelty to his people, God will puniſh him with utter exciſion; and they muſt not forget to execute the ſentence, which was done at ſeveral times by Saul and David, and finally in the time of Hezekiah, 1 *Chron.* iv. 43. *Note*, (1.) God will avenge the quarrels of his people upon their enemies; and they will be eſpecially remembered, who ſeek to diſtreſs or diſcourage the weak, and to offend his little ones, who are but beginning to eſcape from ſpiritual Egypt. (2.) God's ſentence is often ſlow in the execution, but it is ſure.

CHAP. XXVI.

In this chapter, 1. *Moſes gives them a form of confeſſion to be made by him that offered the baſket of his firſt-fruits,* ver. 1—11. 2. *The proteſtation and prayer to be made after the diſpoſal of the third year's tithe,* ver. 12—15. 3. *The mutual covenant between God and them,* ver. 16—19.

[a] Exod. xxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 26. Chap. xvi. 10.
[b] Hoſ. xii. 12
[c] Gen. xlvi. 10.
[d] Exod. i. 11.
[e] Ibid. ii. 23.
[f] Ibid. xii. 37.

1. AND it ſhall be when thou *art* come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance, and poſſeſſeſt it, and dwelleſt therein: 2. [a] That thou ſhalt take of the firſt of all the fruit of the earth, which thou ſhalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and ſhalt put *it* in a baſket, and ſhalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God ſhall chooſe to place his name there. 3. And thou ſhalt go unto the prieſt that ſhall be in thoſe days, and ſay unto him, I profeſs this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country which the LORD ſware unto our fathers for to give us. 4. And the prieſt ſhall take the baſket out of thine hand, and ſet it down before the altar of the LORD thy God. 5. And thou ſhalt ſpeak and ſay before the LORD thy God, [b] A Syrian ready to periſh *was* my father, and [c] he went down into Egypt, and ſojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. 6. And [d] the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage. 7. And [e] when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppreſſion. 8. And [f] the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outſtretched arm, and with great terribleneſs, and with ſigns, and with wonders. 9. And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, *even* a land that floweth with milk and honey. 10. And now behold, I have brought the firſt-fruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, haſt given me: and thou ſhalt ſet it before the LORD thy God, and worſhip before the LORD thy God. 11. And thou ſhalt rejoice in every good *thing* which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto

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unto thine houſe, thou and the Levite, and the ſtranger that *is* among you.

v. 1—11. We have here the ceremony and prayer preſcribed at the offering of the firſt fruits, which every man brought from his own land, beſide that preſcribed *Levit.* xxiii. 10. Having ſelected the firſt-ripe of the barley, wheat, olives, dates, pomegranates, figs, and grapes, they were placed ſeparately in a baſket, and with theſe on his ſhoulder he went to the place which God choſe to put his name there; and when the prieſt came to receive the offering, he made the following profeſſion and humble acknowledgment. 1. Of the faithfulneſs of God in giving them the land he had promiſed to their fathers. Gratitude for his goodneſs, is the tribute God juſtly expects from us. 2. He confeſſed his own unworthineſs of ſo great a mercy; ſprung from anceſtors of ſo ignoble original, Syrians by birth, and who had been ſlaves in Egypt. The more unworthy we, the more is the riches and ſovereignty of divine grace magnified in our ſalvation. We cannot ſpeak too lowly of ourſelves, nor too highly of God's goodneſs. 3. He thankfully remembered the deliverance God wrought for them, and the happy land he had now brought them to. *Note*, (1.) Paſt deliverances are never to be forgotten, eſpecially thoſe which God hath wrought for our ſouls. (2.) Others mercies are our own, and we ſhould be thankful for the bleſſings they enjoy in common with ourſelves. 4. He then offered up the baſket, which the prieſt waved, and ſet down by the altar, as an acknowledgement due to the great Lord of the land, containing a little of the firſt and the beſt, and which ſanctified the remainder to his own uſe. *Note*, (1.) All our gifts of providence muſt be acknowledged as coming from God's hand. (2.) The prime of our life ſhould be offered up to his ſervice. (3.) Our earthly bleſſings will then be doubly ſweet to us, when we receive and uſe them as coming to us from God's mercy and love. 5. The ſervice was concluded with other acts of ſolemn worſhip, and a feaſt of holy joy before the Lord. It was not ſo much the gift, as the gratitude of the offerer's heart, which made the offering acceptable; and whilſt God was honoured by this worſhip and ſervice, he ſhould be happy and rejoice before him.

12. ¶ When thou haſt made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increaſe, the third year, *which is* [g] the year of tithing, and haſt given *it* unto the Levite, the ſtranger, the fatherleſs and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled: 13. Then thou ſhalt ſay before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of *mine* houſe, and alſo have given them unto the Levite, and unto the ſtranger, to the fatherleſs, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou haſt commanded me: I have not tranſgreſſed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten *them*. 14. [h] I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away *ought* thereof for *any* unclean *uſe*, nor given *ought* thereof for the dead: *but* I have hearkned to the voice of the LORD my God, *and* have done according to all that thou haſt commanded me. 15. [i] Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bleſs thy people Iſrael, and the land which thou haſt given us, as thou ſwareſt unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

[g] Chap. xiv. 28.
[h] Hoſ. ix. 4.
[i] Iſa. lxiii. 15. Zech. ii. 13.

v. 12—15. As the third year's tithe was to be eaten in their gates by the poor and the Levite, and the ſeparating of it left to the honeſty of the ſeveral perſons, they were obliged to make, 1. A ſolemn proteſtation of their integrity herein; That every hallowed thing had been carefully ſeparated, and given, according to the law, to the Levite, the ſtranger, the fatherleſs, and widow; that they had neither wilfully neglected, nor careleſsly forgotten it. They profeſſed, that nothing had been miſapplied, in any common or profane way; neither eaten in mourning, nor applied to any unclean uſe, nor in any funeral feaſts or ſuperſtitious rites in honour of the dead. *Note*, As we muſt give an account ſhortly of our ſtewardſhip, it becomes us frequently to reviſe our conduct, that we may keep a conſcience void of offence. 2. They added a prayer to this proteſtation for the common peace and proſperity of the people and the land. God's people are true patriots; they love their country, and labour and pray for the peace of it.

16. ¶ This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do theſe ſtatutes and judgments; thou ſhalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul. 17. Thou haſt avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice. 18. And [k] the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promiſed thee, and that *thou* ſhouldſt keep all his commandments. 19. And to make thee [l] high above all nations which he hath made, in praiſe, and in name, and in honour, and that thou mayeſt be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath ſpoken.

Exod. xix. Chap. vii. & xiv. 2.
[l] Chap. iv. 7, 8. & xxviii. 1.

v. 16—19. Moſes enforces all theſe laws by that mutual covenant which ſubſiſted between God and them. As *His* commands, they were bound to be obedient from duty; as they had avowed God to be their Lord, what was before their duty, became now their choice; and as God had acknowledged them for his people, and promiſed to make them both great and good, they were in love and gratitude engaged to be faithful. *Note*, (1.) Our obedience to God's laws ſhould be chearful and univerſal, as being all holy, and juſt, and good. (2.) Every profeſſion we make of taking him for our God, obliges us to fidelity in his ſervice. (3.) It is his promiſe to make us holy, and in conſequence to make us glorious; and this muſt be the moſt engaging argument to yield ourſelves up to him, to be in body, ſoul, and ſpirit, devoted to his will and ſervice; for what he promiſes to work in us, we may aſſuredly expect, notwithſtanding all the corruption of our hearts, to ſee accompliſhed by his grace.

CHAP. XXVII.

To keep theſe laws ever in their remembrance, Moſes, 1. *Commands them to be written on ſtones;* ver. 1—10. 2. *To affect their hearts with the importance of them, a ſolemn rehearſal is enjoined, and their conſent to them as ſolemnly to be given,* ver. 11—26.

1. AND Moſes with the elders of Iſrael, commanded the people, ſaying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day. 2. And it ſhall be on the day [a] when you ſhall paſs over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that [b] thou ſhalt ſet thee up great ſtones, and plaiſter them with plaiſter. 3. And thou ſhalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art paſſed over, that thou mayſt go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey: as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promiſed thee. 4. Therefore it ſhall be when ye be gone over Jordan, *that* ye ſhall ſet up theſe ſtones, which I command you this day, [c] in mount Ebal, and thou ſhalt plaiſter them with plaiſter. 5. And there ſhalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of ſtones: [d] thou ſhalt not lift up *any* iron *tool* upon them. 6. Thou ſhalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole ſtones: and thou ſhalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God. 7. And thou ſhalt offer peace-offerings, and ſhalt eat there, and rejoice before the LORD thy God. 8. And thou ſhalt write upon the ſtones all the words of this law very plainly. 9. ¶ And Moſes, and the prieſts the Levites, ſpake unto all Iſrael, ſaying, Take heed, and hearken, O Iſrael, this day thou art become the people of the LORD thy God. 10. Thou ſhalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his ſtatutes which I command thee this day.

[a] Joſh. iv. 1.
[b] Joſh. viii. 32.
[c] Ibid. 30.
[d] Exod. xx. 25. Joſh. viii. 31.

v. 1—10. The law being delivered, care is here taken to have the record preſerved and attended to; for which purpoſe, 1. Moſes, with the prieſts and princes of the people, that their numbers and dignity might give weight to the admonition, ſolemnly charges the people to be obedient. They were now in a diſtinguiſhed manner declared to be the people of God, and therefore muſt approve themſelves as became ſuch a relation. *Note*, (1.) All who have weight and influence over others, ſhould join in promoting the work of religion among them. (2.) The honour and bleſſing of God's ſervice is an obligation ſtrong to ſerve him. (3.) When miniſters and magiſtrates ſhow themſelves zealous in their ſtation for God, it is much to be hoped, that the people will hear and follow ſuch good examples. 2. That none may plead ignorance, a copy of the law is ordered to be written on large ſtones plaiſtered over. Some think this refers only to the ten commandments; others, to the curſes, *v.* 15—26. whilſt others affirm all this book of *Deuteronomy* was intended. *Note*, The word of God is ſo plain, that wilful ignorance of it is wilful ſin. Beſides this, an altar muſt be erected for ſacrifice: perhaps it was on the four ſides of this the law was written. It muſt be built of ſtones unhewn and plain; for God's ſervice requires no ornaments: he demands not the gilded altar, but the holy heart. Burnt-offerings and peace-offerings were ſacrificed, to intimate how neceſſary it was to have the remedy of atoning blood near from the condemnation of a holy law; and they are commanded to eat and rejoice before the Lord: for they, who through the ſacrifice of Jeſus are reconciled to God, delivered from the curſe of the law, and admitted into a covenant of grace, have need to rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the God of their ſalvation. All theſe inſtitutions are typical of our divine Redeemer. On him are our curſes laid; he is at once our altar and ſacrifice; and whoſoever eats his fleſh, and drinks his blood, cannot but rejoice before the Lord with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

11. ¶ And Moſes charged the people the ſame day, ſaying, 12. Theſe ſhall ſtand [e] upon mount Gerizzim to bleſs the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Iſſachar, and Joſeph, and Benjamin. 13. And [f] theſe ſhall ſtand upon mount Ebal † to curſe; Reuben, Gad, and Aſher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. 14. And [g] the Levites ſhall ſpeak, and ſay unto all the men of Iſrael with a loud voice, 15. [h] Curſed *be* the man that maketh *any* graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftſman, and putteth *it* in *a* ſecret *place*: and all the people ſhall anſwer and ſay, [i] Amen. 16. [k] Curſed *be* he that ſetteth light by his father or his mother: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 17. [l] Curſed *be* he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 18. [m] Curſed *be* he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 19. [n] Curſed *be* he that perverteth the judgment of the ſtranger, fatherleſs, and widow: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 20. [o] Curſed *be* he that lieth with his father's wife; becauſe he uncovereth his father's ſkirt: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 21. [p] Curſed *be* he that lieth with any manner of beaſt: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 22. [q] Curſed *be* he that lieth with his ſiſter, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 23. [r] Curſed *be* he that lieth with his mother-in-law: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 24. [s] Curſed *be* he that ſmiteth his neighbour ſecretly: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 25. [t] Curſed *be* he that taketh reward to ſlay an innocent perſon: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen. 26. [u] Curſed *be* he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

[e] Judg. ix. 7.
[f] Chap. xi. 29. Joſh. viii. 33.
† Heb. For a curſing.
[g] Joſh. viii. 33. Dan. ix. 11.
[h] Exod. xx. 4, 23. & xxxiv. 17. Lev. xix. 4. & xxvi. 1. Chap. iv. 16, 23. & v. 8.
[i] See Jer. xi. 5. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.
[k] Exod. xx. 12. & xxi. 17. Lev. xix. 3.
[l] Chap. xix. 14. Prov. xxii. 28.
[m] Lev. xix. 14.
[n] Exod. xxii. 21, 22. Chap. x. 18.
[o] Lev. xviii. 8. Chap. xxii. 30.
[p] Lev. xviii. 23.
[q] Ibid. 9.
[r] Ibid. 17. & xx. 14.
[s] Exod. xx. 13. & xxi. 12, 14. Lev. xxiv. 17. Num. xxxv. 31. Chap. xix. 11.
[t] Exod. xxiii. 8. Chap. x. 17. & xvi. 19. Ezek. xxii. 12.
[u] Jer. xi. 3. Gal. iii. 10.

v. 11—26. The places here mentioned were two riſing mountains, divided by a valley, on each of which the people were ranged, ſix tribes on one hill, and ſix on the other, and the prieſts in the middle; who, on reading each of the bleſſings and curſes, pauſed a moment, and the people on each ſide made the awful reſponſe. The bleſſings, though not mentioned, ſeem to have been the counter-part of the curſes, and pronounced alternately. And here we may obſerve, 1. That the appointment of the tribes for their ſeveral poſts, is expreſsly appointed of God. The ſix more honourable tribes are appointed to bleſs: they are all the children of the free women, and Levi is reckoned among them; for they who preach the bleſſing or curſe to others, need firſt apply them to their own hearts. 2. They are all called to join in their Amen, on the rehearſal of the curſes, as well as bleſſings. In the latter caſe they expreſſed their deſire after them; in the former, their confeſſion of faith in the certainty of the threatned curſe, their approbation of the ſentence as juſt, and an awful imprecation upon their ſouls, if they tranſgreſſed. Thus out of their own mouths would they be condemned. *Note*, (1.) The curſes of God againſt ſin are awful realities. (2.) Miniſters muſt urge the terrors of the Lord to perſuade, as well as the love of Chriſt to conſtrain; and all little enough to influence the hard heart of man. (3.) In the day of God every ſinner will be ſtruck ſpeechleſs, and left without excuſe.

The curſes are all levelled againſt ſome particular breaches of the commandments, except the laſt, which includes every tranſgreſſion againſt the whole law. The firſt curſe lights on tranſgreſſors of the ſecond commandment. A graven or molten image muſt not only not be worſhipped, but not ſo much as made to ſet up in ſecret: ſo much muſt they be fenced off from temptation to idolatry. *Note*, God ſees what is done in ſecret, as well as in public, and will not fail to bring it into judgment. 2. Contempt of father or mother is highly criminal. To illuſe them in word or deed, was cognizable by the judges; but God ſees farther, and he lays his curſe upon thoſe children who only in heart ſlight or contemn their parents. 3. The removing land-marks; wilfully miſleading thoſe who come to us for advice and direction; and perverting the judgment of the poor and deſtitute; all breaches of the ſeventh commandment, have each their juſt judgment pronounced on them. 4. Various crimes of inceſt and beſtiality, horrid violations of the eighth commandment, are laid under the dreadful curſe. 5. Murder, whether by poiſon or the ſword, in ſecret, or under pretence of law, through perjured witneſſes, or wicked judges condemning the innocent, is ſure to meet a recompenſe of vengeance. *Note*, (1.) No murder ſo concealed, but God will bring it to light. (2.) There will be a re-hearing of every cauſe, when the unjuſt judge, or perjured villain, will feel the weight of innocent blood. 6. The laſt curſe is moſt extenſive, comprehending every tranſgreſſion, and denouncing wrath on the offender. It is this eſpecially which muſt cover every living ſoul with confuſion, and, but for Jeſus Chriſt, would ſink us under eternal condemnation.

CHAP. XXVIII.

We have here, 1. *The bleſſings of obedience,* ver. 1—14. 2. *The curſes on diſobedience,* ver. 15—67. *They are enlarged upon, to affect their minds with the one, and to alarm them by the other.*

1. AND it ſhall come to paſs, [a] if thou ſhalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to obſerve *and* to do all his commandments which I command thee this day; that [b] the LORD thy God will ſet thee on high above all nations of the earth. 2. And all theſe bleſſings ſhall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou ſhalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God. 3. Bleſſed *ſhalt* thou *be* in the city, and bleſſed *ſhalt* thou *be* in the field. 4. [c] Bleſſed *ſhall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increaſe of thy kine, and the flocks of thy ſheep. 5. Bleſſed *ſhall be* thy baſket and thy † ſtore. 6. [d] Bleſſed *ſhalt* thou *be* when thou comeſt in, and bleſſed *ſhalt* thou *be* when thou goeſt out. 7. The LORD ſhall cauſe thine enemies that riſe up againſt thee [e] to be ſmitten before thy face; they ſhall come out againſt thee one way, and flee before thee ſeven ways. 8. The LORD ſhall command the bleſſing upon thee in thy ‡ ſtore-houſes, and in all that thou ſetteſt thine hand unto: and he ſhall bleſs thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 9. [f] The LORD ſhall eſtabliſh thee an holy people unto himſelf, as he hath ſworn unto thee, if thou ſhalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways. 10. And all people of the earth ſhall ſee that thou art called by the name of the LORD, and they ſhall be afraid of thee. 11. [g] And the LORD ſhall make thee plenteous ‖ in goods, in the fruit of thy § body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD ſware unto thy fathers to give thee. 12. The LORD ſhall open unto thee his good treaſure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his ſeaſon, and to bleſs all the work of thine hand: and [h] thou ſhalt lend unto many nations, and thou ſhalt not borrow. 13. And the LORD ſhall make thee [i] the head and not the tail; and thou ſhalt be above only, and thou ſhalt not be beneath: if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to obſerve and to do *them*: 14. And thou ſhalt not go aſide from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to ſerve them.

[a] Lev. xxvi. 3.
[b] Chap. xxvi. 19.
[c] Gen. xlix. 25. Pſal. cxxvii. 3.
† Or dough, or kneading troughs.
[d] Pſ. cxxi. 8.
[e] Ver. 25.
‡ Or barns.
[f] Exod. xix. 5, 6. Chap. vii. 6.
[g] Chap. xxx. 9, &c.
‖ Or for good.
§ Heb. Belly.
[h] Chap. xv. 6.
[i] Iſa. ix. 14, 15.

v. 1—14. God delights in the proſperity of his people, and to bleſs them he rejoiceth; whilſt vengeance is his ſtrange work. Happy for them, if, ſenſible of his goodneſs, they are enabled to walk ſo as not to provoke his diſpleaſure.

1. God propounds to them the condition on which all their happineſs depended; and that was, ſerious attention to his revealed will, faithful and perſevering obedience to his commands, and, particularly, careful watchfulneſs not to turn aſide after idols. As long as we are found waiting upon God in his ways, ſo long we may be aſſured he will meet and bleſs us.

2. The bleſſings promiſed are moſt engaging, great, and glorious, ſpiritual and temporal, and no doubt look farther, even to eternal bleſſedneſs. [1.] Outward proſperity and affluence are promiſed them. (1.) In dignity they ſhould excel all nations. Wealth, like a river, ſhould flow in upon them, ſo that the nations around ſhould borrow of them, and be in ſubjection to them. Victory conſtantly ſhould attend their ſtandards, their enemies in fear bow down and lick the duſt before them, and be forced to own God's diſtinguiſhing regard for them. *Note*, They who have God for their friend, will ſurely at laſt have their enemies at their feet. (2.) God's bleſſing is promiſed on them

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them in all places, and in all undertakings. In the city peace, plenty, and riches, in their traffic ſhould abound. In the field, their labour ſhould be crowned with ſucceſs beyond their moſt ſanguine wiſhes, and the barns and vats overflow with corn and wine. In their journey their perſons ſhould be protected, and their undertakings proſperous, under the conſtant care of a covenant God. *Note*, They who have an eye to God in all they take in hand, and keep him in their mind in all their travels, will find his bleſſings ſtill preventing and following them. (3.) Uncommon fruitfulneſs is aſſured them. Their families ſhould increaſe as a flock, and no want of a portion and proviſion for them. Their ſheep and oxen ſhould multiply exceedingly; their fields ſtand thick with corn, watered from heaven with peculiar care; and, when gathered in, ſtill God's bleſſing ſhould be upon their ſtores, preſerving them from damage and accidents, and giving them the moſt comfortable enjoyment of their poſſeſſions. Thus every earthly bliſs, health, wealth, honour, children; in ſhort, all that heart could wiſh, is promiſed as their portion. *Note*, They who have an intereſt in God's love, may be aſſured they ſhall want no manner of thing that is good. If the goſpel directs us rather to ſpiritual and eternal, than temporal bleſſings; yet it aſſures us theſe ſhall in a meaſure be added to thoſe who ſeek firſt the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs. [2.] Spiritual mercies are promiſed them. They who are faithful to that meaſure of grace they receive, ſhall grow in grace. (1.) God engages to eſtabliſh them in holineſs, to keep them a people ſeparate for himſelf, and to bleſs them with his ordinances for their increaſing ſanctification. *Note*, Holineſs is God's work in us; we are called to obey his godly motions; and when we do ſo, he is pleaſed to reward what he hath wrought, by ſtrengthening, eſtabliſhing, and ſettling us. (2.) Their religious character ſhould engage the reverence and reſpect of the nations around them. The evident regard of God to them would be confeſſed by their enemies, and therein a clear acknowledgment be made of their ſuperior happineſs and felicity, ariſing from his favour and love. Spiritual happineſs is the beſt of portions; and they who have the Lord for their God, poſſeſs a joy, which, though the ſtranger intermeddleth not with, he will be forced to own, is the only real felicity under the ſun.

[k] Lev. xxvi. 14. Lam. ii. 17. Dan. ix. 11, 13. Mal. ii. 2. Bar. i. 20.
† Heb. Which thou wouldſt do.
[l] Lev. xxvi. 16.
‡ Or drought.
[m] Amos iv. 9.
[n] Lev. xxvi. 19.
[o] Ver. 7. Chap. xxxii. 30. Iſa. xxx. 17.
[p] Jer. xv. 4. & xxiv. 9. Ezek. xxiii. 46.
‖ Heb. For a removing.
[q] Pſ. lxxix. 2. Jer. vii. 33. & xvi. 4. & xxxiv. 20.
[r] Exod. ix. 9. & xv. 26.
[s] 1 Sam. v. 6. Pſ. lxxviii. 66.
[t] Job v. 14. Iſa. lix. 10.
[u] Jer. viii. 10.
[x] Job xxxi. 10. Jer. xii. 13. Amos v. 11. Zeph. i. 13.
[y] Chap. xx. 6.
§ Heb. Profane, or uſe it as common meat. See Chap. xx. 6.

15. ¶ But it ſhall come to paſs, [k] if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to obſerve to do all his commandments, and his ſtatutes which I command thee this day; that all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee and overtake thee. 16. Curſed *ſhalt* thou *be* in the city, and curſed *ſhalt* thou *be* in the field. 17. Curſed *ſhall be* thy baſket and thy ſtore. 18. Curſed *ſhall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increaſe of thy kine, and the flocks of thy ſheep. 19. Curſed *ſhalt* thou *be* when thou comeſt in, and curſed *ſhalt* thou be when thou goeſt out. 20. The LORD ſhall ſend upon thee curſing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou ſetteſt thine hand unto, † for to do; until thou be deſtroyed, and until thou periſh quickly; becauſe of the wickedneſs of thy doings whereby thou haſt forſaken me. 21. The LORD ſhall make the peſtilence cleave unto thee, until he have conſumed thee from off the land, whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it. 22. [l] The LORD ſhall ſmite thee with a conſumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the ‡ ſword, and with [m] blaſting, and with mildew: and they ſhall purſue thee until thou periſh. 23. And [n] thy heaven that *is* over thy head ſhall be braſs, and the earth that *is* under thee *ſhall be* iron. 24. The LORD ſhall make the rain of thy land powder and duſt: from heaven ſhall it come down upon thee, until thou be deſtroyed. 25. [o] The LORD ſhall cauſe thee to be ſmitten before thine enemies: thou ſhalt go out one way againſt them, and flee ſeven ways before them; and [p] ſhalt be ‖ removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. 26. And [q] thy carcaſe ſhall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beaſts of the earth, and no man ſhall fray *them* away. 27. The LORD will ſmite thee with [r] the botch of Egypt, and with [s] the emerods, and with the ſcab, and with the itch, whereof thou canſt not be healed. 28. The LORD ſhall ſmite thee with madneſs, and blindneſs, and aſtoniſhment of heart. 29. And [t] thou ſhalt grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkneſs, and thou ſhalt not proſper in thy ways: and thou ſhalt be only oppreſſed, and ſpoiled evermore, and no man ſhall ſave *thee*. 30. [u] Thou ſhalt betroth a wife, and another man ſhall lie with her: [x] thou ſhalt build an houſe, and thou ſhalt not dwell therein: [y] thou ſhalt plant a vineyard, and ſhalt § not gather the grapes thereof. 31. Thine ox *ſhall be* ſlain before thine eyes, and thou ſhalt not eat thereof: thine aſs *ſhall be* violently taken away from before thy face, and † ſhall not be reſtored to thee: thy ſheep *ſhall be* given unto thine enemies, and thou ſhalt have none to reſcue *them*. 32. Thy ſons and thy daughters *ſhall be* given unto another people, and thine eyes ſhall look, and fail *with longing* for them all the day long: and *there ſhall be* no might in thine hand. 33. [z] The fruit of thy land and all thy labours, ſhall a nation which thou knoweſt not, eat up; and thou ſhalt be only oppreſſed and cruſhed alway: 34. So that thou ſhalt be mad, [a] for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee. 35. The LORD ſhall ſmite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a ſore botch that cannot be healed, from the ſole of thy foot unto the top of thy head. 36. The LORD ſhall bring thee, and [b] thy king which thou ſhalt ſet over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and [c] there ſhalt thou ſerve other gods, wood and ſtone. 37. And thou ſhalt become [d] an aſtoniſhment, a proverb, and [e] a by-word, among all nations whither the LORD ſhall lead thee. 38. [f] Thou ſhalt carry much ſeed out into the field, and ſhalt gather *but* little in: for the locuſt ſhall conſume it. 39. Thou ſhalt plant vineyards and dreſs *them*, but ſhalt neither drink *of* the wine, not gather *the grapes*: for the worms ſhall eat them. 40. Thou ſhalt have olive-trees throughout all thy coaſts, but thou ſhalt not anoint *thyſelf* with the oil: for thine olive ſhall caſt *his fruit*. 41. Thou ſhalt beget ſons and daughters, but ‡ thou ſhalt not enjoy them: for they ſhall go into captivity. 42. All thy trees and fruit of thy land ſhall the locuſt ‖ conſume. 43. The ſtranger *that is* within thee ſhall get up above thee very high; and thou ſhalt come down very low. 44. He ſhall lend to thee, and thou ſhalt not lend to him: [g] He ſhall be the head, and thou ſhalt be the tail.

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† Heb. Shall not return to thee.
[z] Lev. xxvi. 16. Jer. v. 17.
[a] Ver. 6, 7.
[b] 2 Kings xvii. 4, 5. & xxiv. 12. & xxv. 7. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.
[c] Chap. iv. 28. Jer. xvi. 13.
[d] 1 Kings ix. 7. Jer. xxiv. 9. & xxv. 9. Zech viii. 13.
[e] Pſ. xliv. 14.
[f] Mic. vi. 15. Hag. i. 6.
‡ Heb. They ſhall not be thine.
‖ Or poſſeſs.
[g] Ver. 13. Lam. i. 5.

v. 15—44. They who will not be conſtrained by God's love, muſt periſh under his diſpleaſure. We have here a curſe threatned, extenſive and terrible enough to make the ears of every one who heareth it to tingle.

1. The cauſe of it aſſigned: their contemptuous diſregard of God, their wilful diſobedience to his will, and eſpecially their impious forſaking him to follow idols. If we caſt off God, no wonder he rejects us. In his judgments he will appear juſt: none ſuffer under his curſe, but thoſe who rebel againſt his commands.

2. The curſe itſelf here denounced, vaſt, comprehenſive, and inevitable. Wherever the ſinner goes, cloſer than his ſhadow it purſues him. The fenced cities, or rural ſcene, afford no protection, can give no relief. Whatever he hath, the curſe is upon it: the very ground groans under it in barrenneſs; his poſſeſſions are forfeited by ſin, and embittered to him; the poiſon of wrath mingles with every enjoyment; every work of his hand is unſucceſsful; vexation and diſappointment torment him without ceaſing, and no proſpect of their end. Woe, woe, woe, to the ſinful ſoul, againſt whom God cometh forth thus armed with indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh. But leſt general denunciations ſhould not have the wiſhed-for effect, he deſcends to particulars; each like a poiſonous dart armed with a mortal ſting, and every ſinner ſet up as the mark on whom God would in particular empty his quiver. Diſeaſe ſhall ſeize upon their bodies, not as the rod of correction, but as the ſtroke of judgment. Loathſome ulcers, (ſuitable puniſhment for the loathſomeneſs of ſin) ſhall cover them from head to foot, and make them an abhorring to others, and a burden to themſelves. Agonizing pain ſhall torture them from the burning ſores, and no cure or palliative be found; and after days of anguiſh, the pining conſumption, or raging fever, or mortal peſtilence, ſhall finiſh in torment a life of miſery. Famine ſhall aggravate their pain and ſickneſs; the heavens ſhall drop down no dew, and the incruſted earth be incapable of vegetation: and if a leaf appears, or blade of graſs, God's terrible army, the locuſts, ſhall be at hand to devour it: ſo that the ſeed ſown ſhall not be reaped; whilſt the worm ſhall mar their vineyards, and the fruit of the olive fail, ſhook down by ſtormy blaſts, or withered with inceſſant drought. To add to their plagues, the ſword of the enemy ſhall overtake them, irreſiſtible in fury, mercileſs in vengeance; and ſo abhorred ſhould they be, that no man paſſing by would bury their carcaſſes, nor ſo much as fray away the birds which preyed upon them. Infatuated withal, their counſels ſhould be fooliſh, and madneſs of heart make them a terror to themſelves; whilſt every refuge they fled to ſhould fail them, and their allies diſtreſs them as much as their enemies. Their enjoyments ſhall now vaniſh as a dream; the wife they have eſpouſed be violated; their ſubſtance conſumed by the oppreſſor; their houſes plundered, their

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cattle driven away for a ſpoil, and ſerve to feaſt their enemies, whilſt themſelves are famiſhed with hunger. From free-born ſons of Iſrael, who kept the nations at their feet, they ſhould drag the galling chain of captivity heavily along; ſhould behold their ſons and daughters plucked from their embraces, doomed to ſervile labours, or devoted to more ſervile luſts. Idolatry, which had been their ſin, ſhall become now their puniſhment; and racks and fires compel them to ſerve thoſe gods in a ſtrange land, after whom they went a whoring in their own. The few that remained in Canaan, far from experiencing a happier eſtate, ſhould there be inſulted and tyrannized over by their lordly maſters, and groan in vain under loads of taxes and debt, without pity, or hope of releaſe from their oppreſſors; contemptible in every eye, the very heathens would take up a taunting proverb againſt them; whilſt overwhelmed with their miſeries, they ſhould ſtand ſilent in terror and aſtoniſhment at their own plagues, the ſummit of which ſhould be dark unfathomable deſpair, and at laſt the dreadful effect thereof raging and incurable madneſs. Who can review this curſe without trembling? yet theſe things to the ſinner are but the beginnings of ſorrow. Learn hence, (1.) What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. (2.) That when we ſee ſpreading diſeaſes, we ſhould deprecate the wrath that is gone forth. (3.) That blindneſs of heart is among God's heavieſt curſes. (4.) That they who ſell themſelves to work iniquity, ſhall find their iniquity turned into their plague, and the idols they ſerve become their torment. (5.) That the moſt dreadful of all eſtates is deſpair. (6.) That this is often the cauſe of madneſs. (7.) That all theſe evils date their origin to departure from the living God.

45. Moreover, all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee, and ſhall purſue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be deſtroyed: becauſe thou hearknedſt not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his ſtatutes which he commanded thee. 46. And they ſhall be upon thee for a ſign and for a wonder, and upon thy ſeed for ever. 47. Becauſe thou ſervedſt not the LORD thy God with joyfulneſs and with gladneſs of heart, [h] for the abundance of all *things*: 48. Therefore ſhalt thou ſerve thine enemies which the LORD ſhall ſend againſt thee, in hunger, and in thirſt, and in nakedneſs, and in want of all *things*: and [i] he ſhall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have deſtroyed thee. 49. [k] The LORD ſhall bring a nation againſt thee from far, from the end of the earth, [l] *as ſwift* as the eagle flieth, a nation whoſe tongue thou ſhalt not † underſtand: 50. A nation ‡ of fierce countenance, [m] which ſhall not regard the perſon of the old, nor ſhew favour to the young. 51. And he ſhall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be deſtroyed: which *alſo* ſhall not leave thee *either* corn, wine, or oil, *or* the increaſe of thy kine, or flocks of thy ſheep, until he have deſtroyed thee. 52. And he ſhall beſiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou truſtedſt, throughout all thy land: and he ſhall beſiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land which the LORD thy God hath given thee. 53. [n] And thou ſhalt eat the fruit of thine own † body, the fleſh of thy ſons and of thy daughters (which the LORD thy God hath given thee) in the ſiege, and in the ſtraitneſs wherewith thine enemies ſhall diſtreſs thee. 54. *So that* the man *that is* tender among you, and very delicate, his eye ſhall be evil toward his brother, and toward [o] the wife of his boſom, and towards the remnant of his children which he ſhall leave: 55. So that he will not give to any of them of the fleſh of his children whom he ſhall eat: becauſe he hath nothing left him in the ſiege, and in the ſtraitneſs wherewith thine enemies ſhall diſtreſs thee in all thy gates. 56. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to ſet the ſole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateneſs and tenderneſs, her eye ſhall be evil towards the huſband of her boſom, and towards her ſon, and towards her daughter, 57. And towards her † young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which ſhe ſhall bear: for ſhe ſhall eat them for want of all *things* ſecretly in the ſiege and ſtraitneſs wherewith thine enemy ſhall diſtreſs thee in thy gates. 58. If thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this law, *that are* written in this book, that thou mayeſt fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; 59. Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy ſeed, *even* great plagues, and of long continuance, and ſore ſickneſſes, and of long continuance. 60. Moreover, he will bring upon thee all [p] the diſeaſes of Egypt, which thou waſt afraid of; and they ſhall cleave unto thee. 61. Alſo every ſickneſs, and every plague which *is* not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD † bring upon thee, until thou be deſtroyed. 62. And [q] ye ſhall be left few in number, whereas ye were [r] as the ſtars of heaven for multitude: becauſe thou wouldeſt not obey the voice of the LORD thy God. 63. And it ſhall come to paſs, *that* as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you: ſo [s] the LORD will rejoice over you to deſtroy you, and to bring you to nought: and ye ſhall be plucked from off the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it. 64. And the LORD [t] ſhall ſcatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou ſhalt ſerve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and ſtone. 65. And [u] among theſe nations ſhalt thou find no eaſe, neither ſhall the ſole of thy foot have reſt: but the LORD ſhall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and ſorrow of mind. 66. And thy life ſhall hang in doubt before thee, and thou ſhalt fear, day and night, and ſhalt have none aſſurance of thy life. 67. [x] In the morning thou ſhalt ſay, Would God it were even: and at even thou ſhalt ſay, Would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou ſhalt fear, and [y] for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee. 68. And the LORD [z] ſhall bring thee into Egypt again, with ſhips, by the way whereof I ſpake unto thee, [a] Thou ſhalt ſee it no more again: and there ye ſhall be ſold unto your enemies for bond-men and bond-women, and no man ſhall buy *you*.

[h] Chap. xxxii. 15.
[i] Jer. xxviii. 14.
[k] Ibid. v. 15. & vi. 23. Luke xix. 43.
[l] Jer. xlviii. 40. & xlix. 22 Lam. iv. 19. Hoſ. viii. 1.
† Heb. Hear.
‡ Heb. Strong of face. Prov. vii. 13. Eccles. viii. 1. Dan. viii. 23.
[m] Iſa. xlvii. 6.
[n] Lev. xxvi. 29. 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Jer. xix. 9. Lam. ii. 20. & iv. 10. Bar. ii. 3.
† Heb. Belly.
[o] Chap. xiii. 6.
† Heb. After-birth.
[p] Chap. vii. 15.
† Heb. Cauſe to aſcend.
[q] Chap. iv. 27.
[r] Chap. x. 22.
[s] Prov. i. 26. Iſa. i. 24.
[t] Lev. xxvi. 33. Neh. i. 8. Jer. xvi. 13.
[u] Am. ix. 4.
[x] Job vii. 4.
[y] Ver. 34.
[z] Jer. xliv. 7. Hoſ. viii. 13. & ix. 3.
[a] Chap. xvii. 16.

v. 45—68. Like the intervals of thunder, when one loud roar is paſt, after a moment's pauſe a louder burſt ſucceeds: ſo are the judgments of God upon an impenitent people. Far from being exhauſted, they are redoubled, and greater ſtill in ſtore. The former curſes ſeem to point chiefly at thoſe viſitations which God ſent upon them, till their return from the Babyloniſh captivity; theſe laſt ſeem particularly applicable to their preſent diſperſion. An event ſo ſingular, amazing, and altogether miraculous, that it ſtands a ſtriking proof of the fulfilment of this prophecy, and an inconteſtible evidence of the divine authority of the ſcriptures. The threatnings of God here denounced are many and dreadful, and we now ſee them literally accompliſhed. 1. They are doomed to ſtand as monuments of divine vengeance, and as a wonder to themſelves and others. Such they are this day, ſcattered among all nations, yet diſtinct as ever, and every where evidently lying under ſome of the curſes here pronounced upon them. 2. Becauſe they refuſed to ſerve God with chearfulneſs, when he poured down his multiplied mercies upon them, they are condemned to ſerve their enemies under an iron yoke, and the moſt diſtreſſing want, which was ſucceſſively fulfilled under the Aſſyrians and Babylonians, till their laſt deſtruction came upon them under the Romans; and now they are in every land without the leaſt power or authority, ſubject to every oppreſſion of their haughty maſters, and in general in abject want and wretchedneſs. 3. This is threatned to be effected in a way moſt tremendous: a fierce nation, unſparing and mercileſs, ſhould fly like an eagle upon them, and after ſpreading deſolation around them, beſiege and deſtroy every defenced city, and lay them in the duſt. The Roman ſeverity is well known; their ſtandards bore the eagle, and theſe they carried with them, drawing their diſtant legions to the ſiege of Jeruſalem, which was at laſt taken and utterly deſtroyed. 4. The miſeries of this ſiege are here pathetically deſcribed: Famine ſo ſevere ſhould enſue, that the neareſt relations ſhall not only grudge each other the leaſt morſel, but look with moſt malignant deſign to ſeize an opportunity of ſlaying each other for meat. Nay, ſuch ſhould be the intolerable hunger, that not only the common people, but the nobleman delicately brought up, ſhould be led to murder the wife of his boſom, or the children ſhe bare him, for food: nay, more ſhocking, that the tender mother, and the delicate lady, ſhall not with-hold their hands from infant gore, nor ſpare the babe at their breaſt, or the fruit of their womb. The literal fulfilment of which Joſephus remarks, when, amidſt innumerable murders, ravages, and ſhocking ſcenes, committed by the neareſt relatives, he mentions a lady of faſhion, who murdered her ſucking child: one half ſhe had devoured, when the houſe being broken up by the famiſhed people in ſearch of meat, and they on pain of death demanded it, ſhe produced the other mangled half, to the horror and confuſion of the beholders. 5. The moſt terrible plagues are denounced: plagues wonderful on them and their poſterity, and ſickneſſes ſore and long continued. And dreadful indeed have been thoſe they have ſuffered, during more than 1700 years, and the Jews themſelves are conſtrained to own it. 6. Few of them ſhould be left, of their vaſt multitudes, the ſword, the famine and the plague ſhould make ſuch havock among them. Accordingly we are informed near three million of them periſhed at once, under the Roman invaſion, by theſe ſore judgments, and very few eſcaped the almoſt univerſal exciſion. 7. The doom of thoſe who eſcape is no leſs terrible; enſlaved by their enemies, and diſperſed into diſtant lands, particularly ſent by ſhips into Egypt, and even there ſo vile that ſcarce a purchaſer could be found for them; conſtrained to the ſervice of gods their fathers never knew, and carrying about with them a trembling heart, in conſtant terror of new judgments, at morning wiſhing for night, at night for morning, and having no reſt, poſſeſſion, or abiding ſettlement in any place; all which were remarkably fulfilled. The number of the ſlaves was ſo great after the taking Jeruſalem, that it is ſaid thirty were ſold for a ſmall piece of ſilver, and vaſt multitudes ſent by Titus to work in the mines of Egypt, and others, after their laſt deſtruction by Adrian, miſerably ſhipwrecked in their paſſage thither. Since that time thouſands, compelled by the inquiſition, have ſubmitted to popiſh idolatry: and in every place where they dwell, they continue without poſſeſſions or fixed abode, expoſed to every inſult, and liable to every oppreſſion from the ſtates under which they live. From whence we may obſerve, (1.) The unavoidable miſery of the ſinner under the wrath of God. (2.) The certainty of the fulfilment of all God's threatnings, by theſe inſtances already accompliſhed. (3.) The warning we ſhould receive from ſuch an awakening ſcene of judgments. (4.) That the only way of ſafety lies in holy fear and humble obedience.

CHAP. XXIX.

This chapter contains, 1. *A covenant to be made with Iſrael*, ver. 1. 2. *A recital of favours done them*, ver. 2—8. 3. *The perſons taken into covenant*, ver. 10, 11, 14, 15. 4. *The abſtract of it*, ver. 12, 13. 5. *The great deſign of it*, ver. 16, 17. 6. *A ſolemn warning againſt falſe peace*, ver. 18—28. 6. *The concluſion*, ver. 29.

1. THESE *are* the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moſes to make with the children of Iſrael, in the land of Moab, beſides [a] the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. 2. ¶ And Moſes called unto all Iſrael, and ſaid unto them, [b] Ye have ſeen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his ſervants, and unto all his land; 3. [c] The great temptations which thine eyes have ſeen, the ſigns and thoſe great miracles: 4. Yet [d] the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive; and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, unto this day. 5. And [e] I have led you forty years in the wilderneſs: [f] your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy ſhoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. 6. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have you drunk wine, or ſtrong drink: that ye might know that I *am* the LORD your God. 7. And when ye came unto this place, [g] Sihon the king of Heſhbon, and Og the king of Baſhan, came out againſt us unto battle, and we ſmote them. 8. And we took their land, and [h] gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of Manaſſeh. 9. [i] Keep therefore the words of this covenant and do them, that ye may proſper in all that ye do.

v. 1—9. The former covenant was made at Sinai. This is a repetition of it: as they were a new generation, it was needful they ſhould themſelves conſent to the gracious terms propoſed to them. 1. To induce them thereunto Moſes puts them in mind of God's aſtoniſhing interpoſition to ſave them from Egypt, his care of them in the wilderneſs, and the poſſeſſions they began to enjoy in Baſhan and Heſhbon. Paſt mercies are an engagement to fidelity, and encouragement ſtill to expect greater. 2. He laments their paſt blindneſs, unbelief and murmurings; repeatedly had they given ſad proof of theſe, and to that day they remained in them, and muſt remain, till God gave the ſeeing eye and hearing ear. *Note*, (1.) Unbelief is a deep-rooted evil. (2.) 'Till God opens the eyes of our mind, we can neither know him, love him, nor ſerve him. 3. He charges them to attend now to the words of this covenant: and happy! if at laſt there were ſuch a heart in them, firmly to believe the divine promiſes, and chearfully to obey the divine commands; proſperity then could not but attend them.

10 ¶. Ye ſtand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Iſrael. 11. Your little ones, your wives, and thy ſtranger that *is* in thy camp, from [k] the hewer of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water: 12. That thou ſhouldſt † enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day: 13. That he may eſtabliſh thee to-day for a people unto himſelf, and *that* he may be unto thee a God, as he hath ſaid unto thee, and as he hath ſworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob. 14. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; 15. But with *him* that ſtandeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and [l] alſo with *him* that *is* not here with us this day: 16. (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the nations which ye paſſed by. 17. And ye have ſeen their abominations, and their ‡ idols, wood and ſtone, ſilver and gold, which *were* among them.) 18. Leſt there ſhould be among you man or woman, or family, or tribe, [m] whoſe heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go *and* ſerve the gods of theſe nations: [n] leſt there ſhould be among you a root that beareth || gall and wormwood, 19. And it come to paſs when he heareth the words of this curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk [o] in the § imagination of mine heart, [p] to add † drunkenneſs to thirſt: 20. [q] The LORD will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the LORD, and his jealouſy ſhall ſmoke againſt that man, and all the curſes *that are* written in this book ſhall lie upon him, and [r] the LORD ſhall blot out his name from under heaven. 21. And [s] the LORD ſhall ſeparate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Iſrael, according to all the curſes of the covenant, *that* ‡ *are* written in this book of the law: 22. So that the generation to come of your children that ſhall riſe up after you, and the ſtranger that ſhall come from a far land, ſhall ſay, when they ſee the plagues of that land, and the ſickneſſes || which the LORD hath laid upon it; 23. *And that* the whole land thereof *is* brimſtone, [t] and ſalt, *and* burning, *that* it is not ſown, nor beareth, nor any graſs groweth therein, [u] like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger and in his wrath: 24. Even all nations ſhall ſay, [x] Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? What *meaneth* the heat of this great anger? 25. Then men ſhall ſay, Becauſe they have forſaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt. 26. For they went and ſerved other gods, and worſhipped them, gods whom they knew not, and § *whom* he had not † given unto them. 27. And the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt this land, to bring upon it all the curſes *that are* written in this book. 28. And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and caſt them into another land, as *it is* this day. 29. The ſecret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but thoſe *things which are* revealed *belong* unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

v. 10—29. We have here the covenant laid before them, and warmly recommended to them. 1. The parties of the covenant. God, as their God, engaging to bleſs them with every mercy, and confirming with an oath the immutability of his counſel; and they ſolemnly binding themſelves, in return, to be his people, one and all. The captains and officers muſt ſubſcribe to it: when great men are good men, their examples are greatly influential. Their wives and children are admitted to it. Believers children are ſharers in their covenant mercies; and not only native Iſraelites, but the ſtranger, even to the meaneſt follower of the camp, is invited to come. *Note*, None are beneath God's regard; to his covenant the poor have as welcome acceſs as the great. And all are called to conſent thereto: though ſickneſs or buſineſs of neceſſity prevented perſonal attendance, all muſt come under the bonds of the covenant, and, according to their fidelity or diſobedience, ſhare the bleſſing or curſes therein contained. 2. The great article of the covenant on God's part, is his being their God; this comprehending all imaginable bliſs and happineſs: on their part he expects (and well he might) that they ſhould be his people, dependent on his promiſes, loving him unfeignedly, and chearfully obſervant of all his commands and ordinances. Nothing ſo reaſonable as this. *Note*, The promiſes of grace muſt en-

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[a] Chap. v. 2, 3.
[b] Exod. xix. 4.
[c] Chap. iv. 34. & vii. 19.
[d] See Iſa. lxiii. 17. John viii. 43. Eph. iv. 18. 2 Theſſ. ii. 11, 12.
[e] Chap. i. 3.
[f] Chap. viii. 4.
[g] Num. xxi. 24, 33. Chap. ii. 32. & iii. 1.
[h] Numb. xxxii. 33. Chap. iii. 12, 13.
[i] Chap. iv. 6. Joſh. i. 7. 1 Kings ii. 3.
[k] See Joſh. ix. 21, 23, 27.
† Heb. paſs.
[l] See Acts ii. 29. 1 Cor. vii. 14.
‡ Heb. Dungy gods.
[m] Chap. xi. 16.
[n] Heb. xii. 15.
|| Heb. Roſh, a poiſonous herb.
[o] Num. xv. 39.
§ Or, Stubbornneſs.
[p] Iſa. xxx. 1.
† Heb. The drunken to the thirſty.
[q] Ezek. xiv. 7, 8.
[r] Chap. ix. 14.
[s] Mat. xxiv. 51.
‡ Heb. is written.
|| Heb. wherewith the Lord hath made it ſick.
[t] Jer. xvii. 6. Zeph. ii. 9.
[u] Gen. xix. 24, 25.
[x] 1 Kings ix. 8. Jer. xxii. 8.
§ Or, Who had not given to them any portion.
† Heb. divided.

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gage us to the duties of obedience. 3. As idolatry was the rock which threatned the moſt danger, they are eſpecially warned to beware of it. Their abode in Egypt had probably infected them, and the idols of the nations they had paſſed by had enſnared them; they had need therefore to watch againſt ſo beſetting, and withal ſo provoking a ſin, leſt ruin inevitable and dreadful came upon them for their idolatry, whether on individuals or the whole nation. 1. On individuals. None can eſcape God's eye, none are above his arm, or beneath his notice. We have this apoſtacy from God ſet in very ſtriking colours: (1.) It begins in the departure of the heart from God, to ſome creature-love and idol-ſervice. (2.) The fruit from this root is gall or hemlock and wormwood, deteſtable principles, malignant and poiſonous, and a converſation corrupt and abominable, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt. (3.) Withal, the ſinner, ſecure and confident, promiſes himſelf peace, though walking in theſe vile imaginations of his heart. But (4.) His fearful end approaches, and the ſmoking wrath of God will ſeize him in the midſt of his fatal ſecurity. Learn hence, 1. That many are bleſſing themſelves, over whom the curſe of God hangs terrible. 2. That inſenſibility is one of the moſt fatal ſymptoms of a deſperate ſoul. 3. Nothing more effectually ſerves to ſtupify the conſcience than a habit of drunkenneſs. 4. They who now glory in their ſhame are like thoſe who got drunk in honour of their idols, and ſin with greater aggravation. 5. Let the preſumptuous ſinner tremble; the wrath of God abideth on him; his ſmoaking jealouſy, like a fiery furnace, ſhall burn, and none ſhall quench it, deep as hell, abiding as the days of eternity; under it the periſhing wretch muſt lie down without pity, without reprieve, and, worſe than all, without hope of abatement of his torment, or end of his miſery. O that ſinners were wiſe, that they underſtood theſe things, that they would conſider their latter end. 2. On the whole nation the ſame ſins would bring the ſame puniſhment. Their land would become as the ſulphureous plains of Sodom; and to this day that once fruitful ſpot of Judea bears the marks of this divine curſe, being now almoſt deſolate of inhabitants, and barren as the rocky wilderneſs. A ſcene ſo ſtrange could not but excite the neighbouring nations to enquire into the cauſe; and the anſwer is fully ſatisfactory, Becauſe they forſook the God of their fathers, tranſgreſſed his covenant, and turned unto idols, therefore are theſe curſes come upon them, and their deſolations accompliſhed. *Note*, (1.) The judgments of God ſhould awaken our enquiries into the cauſe of them, that we may take warning. (2.) They who have abuſed the greateſt national privileges, may expect the heavieſt national viſitations. (3.) They who forſake their father's God deſerve to loſe their father's inheritance. Laſtly, He concludes with ſilencing every objection which might be raiſed againſt God's judgments, and an admonition to follow the plain and clear revelation of God's will. *Note*, (1.) There are a thouſand queſtions which curious pride would aſk, that God forbids to anſwer. (2.) All that is needful for us to know, we may, if we conſult God's revealed will; where he ſets bounds, 'tis our wiſdom to be content to be ignorant. (3.) The revelation God hath made is deſigned not to communicate ſpeculative and uſeleſs knowledge, but to engage us to holy practice and dutiful obedience. (4.) In this we cannot be too careful to walk ourſelves, and inſtruct our children, as the ſureſt means of averting all thoſe plagues that are ready to deſcend upon the ungodly.

CHAP. XXX.

This chapter contains, 1. *Exceeding great and precious promiſes made to repenting Iſrael,* ver. 1—10. 2. *The righteouſneſs of faith ſet before them in the plainneſs and eaſineſs of the commandment that was now given them,* ver. 11—14. 3. *A fair reference of the whole matter to their choice,* ver. 15—20.

a Lev. xxvi. 40. b Chap. xxviii.

1. AND [a] it ſhall come to paſs when [b] all theſe things are come upon thee, the bleſſing and the curſe, which I have ſet before thee, and thou ſhalt call *them* to mind among all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, 2. And ſhalt return unto the LORD thy God, and ſhalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul: 3. [c] That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compaſſion upon thee, and will return and [d] gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath ſcattered thee. 4. [e] If *any* of thine be driven out unto the outmoſt *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. 5. And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers poſſeſſed, and thou ſhalt poſſeſs it: and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. 6. And [f] the LORD thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, that thou mayſt live. 7. And the LORD thy God, will put all theſe curſes upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which perſecuted thee. 8. And thou ſhalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. 9. [g] And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for [h] the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers. 10. If thou ſhalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God to keep his commandments, and his ſtatutes, *which are* written in this book of the law, *and* if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy ſoul.

c Pſal. cvi. 45. & cxxvi. 1. Jer. xxxii. 37. d Pſ. cxlvii. 2. e Chap. xxviii. 64. Neh. i. 9.

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f Chap. x. 16. Jer. xxxii. 39. Ezek. xi. 19. & xxxvi. 26.

g Chap. xxviii. 11.

h Jer. xxxii. 41.

v. 1—10. There is with God grace abounding to the chief of ſinners; none that return to him ſhall be, in any wiſe, caſt out. We have here, 1. The penitent return of Iſrael, and therein alſo of every ſinner. 1. It begins with ſerious reflection on the fulfilment of God's word, begetting humbling conviction on the heart. *Note*, The firſt ſtep towards return to God, is always conviction of our ſin and ingratitude, and a ſenſe of the juſt deſert of both. 2. Faith in a reconciled God muſt be exerciſed. We muſt, like the prodigal, call him our God and father in Jeſus Chriſt, though we acknowledge ourſelves utterly unworthy to be called his children. 3. Converſion will follow from a conſtraining ſenſe of God's tranſcendent compaſſions; theſe will engage the heart, and we ſhall deſire, without reſerve, to yield up ourſelves to him, from a principle of love, and with univerſal devotedneſs of body and ſoul to his ſervice. 4. Fervent and importunate prayer will expreſs the earneſt breathings of the heart after God. Behold he prayeth, is the ſign of every returning ſinner. Hereupon God promiſes, 2. To hear and anſwer them, not upbraiding them with their ſins, nor rejecting them, becauſe out of trouble they cry to him, but according to their neceſſities he will ſupply them: his bowels of compaſſion will yearn over them. Such are God's tender mercies to the vileſt, that bow with contrite hearts before him; he will from the diſtant lands reſtore them; however far gone in ſin, they ſhall be recovered: their captivity ſhall be loſed, the bonds of ſin ſhall no longer enſlave them; God will do them good, *temporal good*, in reſtoring them to plenty and affluence in their long-loſt heritages. *Note*, Return to God is often attended with great bleſſings in our worldly affairs. *Spiritual good* is better ſtill. He will circumciſe their hearts, will cut off their vile affections, and ſhed abroad his holy love within their ſouls; hereby enabling them for the obedience he requires, and ſecuring them from future departures from him: their enemies ſhall now fall before them, and feel the power of victorious grace; thus ſin ſhall have no more dominion over the returning penitent. Finally, by ten ſeveral repetitions God engages to regard them as their covenant God, to their great and endleſs comfort.—Happy the ſinner that thus returns to God, and finds God thus return to his poor ſoul!

i Iſa. xlv. 19.

k Rom. x. 6, &c.

11. ¶ For this commandment which I command thee this day, [i] it *is* not hidden from thee, neither *is* it far off. 12. [k] It *is* not in heaven, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, Who ſhall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? 13. Neither *is* it beyond the ſea, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, Who ſhall go over the ſea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 14. But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayeſt do it.

v. 11—14. The plainneſs of the precept is a ſtrong plea for obedience to it; the knowledge of God's will was not hidden from them in dark ſpeeches, or hieroglyphical figures; nor far from them, that they need travel in queſt of it; nor above them, that it exceeded their comprehenſion; or ſo deep, that it was obſcure or unintelligible; but near to them, written plain on tables, and daily inculcated by the prieſts and Levites, in a language they could not fail of underſtanding, and which ought to ſink deep into their hearts. The apoſtle, *Rom.* x. 6. with beautiful propriety, applies this to the goſpel; and it is by many thought that Moſes intended it. The doctrine of grace in a Redeemer is clearly revealed, and eaſily comprehended by the enlightened mind, brought nigh to us by the miniſtry of the word: we need not climb the ſkies to enquire, Jeſus incarnate is come down to teach us; nor need we go down to the deep in ſearch for him, who is ariſen from the dead, and hath accompliſhed the work of redemption: ſo that, if with our mouth we confeſs him as our only hope, and in our heart cleave to him as our only Lord, we ſhall infallibly be ſaved.

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l Ver. 19. Chap. xi. 26.

15. ¶ See [l] I have ſet before thee this day life and good, and death and evil: 16. In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his ſtatutes, and his judgments, that thou mayſt live and multiply: and the LORD thy God ſhall bleſs thee in the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it. 17. But if thine heart turn away, ſo that thou wilt not hear, but ſhalt be drawn away, and worſhip other gods, and ſerve them: 18. I denounce unto you this day, that ye ſhall ſurely periſh, *and that* ye ſhall not prolong *your* days upon the land whither thou paſſeſt over Jordan, to go to poſſeſs it. 19. [m] I call heaven and earth to record this day againſt you, *that* [n] I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing: therefore chooſe life, that both thou and thy ſeed may live: 20. That thou mayſt love the LORD thy God, *and* that thou mayſt obey his voice, and that thou mayſt cleave unto him (for he *is* thy life, and the length of thy days) that thou mayſt dwell in the land which the LORD ſware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

m Chap. iv. 26.

n Ver. 15.

v. 15—20. Warm and urgent when ſuch important concerns were at ſtake, he ſeeks to fix ſome abiding impreſſions on their heart, or at leaſt to leave them inexcuſable. 1. The caſe was plain, and on their choice it depended to be happy or miſerable; they had every argument preſſed upon them to avoid death, every motive urged to engage them to ſeek the life God promiſed. The love of God, and obedience to his will, would infallibly procure the one, diſobedience and idolatry inevitably expoſe them to the other. But if under the law, where the promiſes and threatnings were chiefly temporal, theſe arguments were ſo ſtrong, how much more are they to us, before whom death and life eternal are ſet, according as we believe and obey, or by our diſobedience and unbelief reject the goſpel of Jeſus? 2. He appeals to heaven and earth for his faithfulneſs, and urges them to chuſe the way of duty, as the path of life. They who periſh will have only themſelves to blame; they would not receive the knowledge of the truth, that they might be ſaved: whilſt they who hear and chuſe it will own it to be not of themſelves, but the gift of God. He that is ſaved owes it to God's grace; every man that is damned has only himſelf to blame. 3. He again returns to exhort them to love, ſerve, and cleave to God, as the author of their life, and all the comforts of it; and that they may dwell in the land which he ſware to give their fathers, and by their fidelity maintain a long and uninterrupted enjoyment of it. Thus cloſing with a rememberance, how much in intereſt, as well as duty, they are bound to obedience.

CHAP. XXXI.

In this chapter Moſes, 1. *Encourageth the people,* ver. 1—6. *and Joſhua,* ver. 7, 8, 23. 2. *The book of the law is written, and delivered into the cuſtody of the prieſts,* ver. 9. *and* 24—27. 3. *Ordered to be publickly read every ſeventh year,* ver. 10—13. 4. *God calls Moſes and Joſhua to the door of the tabernacle,* ver. 14, 15. 5. *He foretels to them the apoſtaſy of Iſrael,* ver. 16—18. 6. *He preſcribes the following ſong to be a witneſs againſt them,* ver. 19—21. 7. *Moſes wrote it,* ver. 22. *And delivered it to Iſrael, with an intimation of the deſign of it, as he had received it from the Lord,* ver. 28—30.

a Chap. xxxiv. 7.

b Numb. xx. 12. & xxvii. 13. Chap. iii. 27.

c Numb. xxvii. 21. Chap. iii. 28.

d Num. xxi. 24, 33.

e Chap. vii. 2.

f Joſh. i. 5. Heb xiii. 5.

1. AND Moſes went and ſpake theſe words unto all Iſrael. 2. And he ſaid unto them, [a] I *am* an hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: alſo the LORD hath ſaid unto me, [b] Thou ſhalt not go over this Jordan. 3. The LORD thy God, he will go over before thee, *and* he will deſtroy theſe nations from before thee, and thou ſhalt poſſeſs them: *and* Joſhua, he ſhall go over before thee, [c] as the LORD hath ſaid. 4. And the LORD ſhall do unto them, [d] as he did to Sihon, and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom he deſtroyed. 5. And [e] the LORD ſhall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according unto all the commandments which I have commanded you. 6. Be ſtrong and of a good courage, fear not nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee, [f] he will not fail thee, nor forſake thee. 7. ¶ And Moſes called unto Joſhua, and ſaid unto him in the ſight of all Iſrael, Be ſtrong and of a good courage: for thou muſt go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath ſworn unto their fathers to give them: and thou ſhalt cauſe them to inherit it. 8. And [g] the LORD, he *it is* that doth go before thee, he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forſake thee: [h] fear not neither be diſmayed.

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g Exod. xiii. 21, 22. & xxxiii. 14.

h Joſh. i. 9.

v. 1—8. One parting word more before his lips are ſhut in death. They were going to a war in which they needed encouragement; he, the leader in whom they had confidence, could not go before them, his age was very great, and though his natural force was not abated by it, yet God had put a bar in his way, and determined his death on this ſide Jordan. *Note,* The day of our death is fixed by divine decree; before, we are ſafe in the midſt of danger; then, nothing can ſecure us. Therefore, 1. Moſes animates the people with the aſſurance of God's conſtant preſence with them, and his never-failing providence over them. God's ſpiritual Iſrael may be aſſured he will never leave nor forſake them: as he might not go himſelf he appoints them Joſhua for their leader, of whoſe courage they had full experience, and whoſe regard for them they could not doubt, after what had paſſed. Thus as one faithful miniſter is removed another ſucceeds him. They need not fear ſucceſs when God was their captain; what they had ſeen might be ſufficient to confirm their confidence, and as it was God's determined decree to root out the Canaanites, and to make them his inſtruments, they might reſt aſſured it would be done. *Note,* (1.) Paſt experience ſhould be remembered for our preſent encouragement. (2.) What God ſends us to do he will enable us to accompliſh, however difficult it may appear. 2. He encourages Joſhua, not that he wanted courage, but that every promiſe from God might inſpire freſh confidence of victory; he gives him the ſame aſſurances of the divine preſence and never-failing care, and charges him to act as a valiant leader. Every believer is a Joſhua, ſtrong to fight the Lord's battles, undiſmayed with danger, and exerciſing faith in the divine promiſes for final and complete victory over ſin, and death, and hell.

i Chap. xvii. 18.

k Chap. xv. 1.

l Joſh. viii. 34, 35. Neh. viii. 1, 2, 5, &c.

9. ¶ And Moſes wrote this law, and [i] delivered it unto the prieſts the ſons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Iſrael. 10. And Moſes commanded them, ſaying, At the end of *every* ſeven years, in the ſolemnity of [k] the year of releaſe, in the feaſt of tabernacles, 11. When all Iſrael is come to appear before the LORD thy God, in the place which he ſhall chooſe, [l] thou ſhalt read this law before all Iſrael in their hearing. 12. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy ſtranger that *is* within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and obſerve to do all the words of this law: 13. And *that* their children which have not known *any thing*, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to poſſeſs it.

v. 9—13. 1. Moſes, to perpetuate the memory of theſe laws, commits them to writing; either the whole Pentateuch, or this book of Deuteronomy, the reſt being written before. The bleſſing of having theſe records thus preſerved is unſpeakable; the law and goſpel both, through mercy, are not committed to uncertain tradition, but recorded ſafe in the book of God, that our faith may not ſtand on the word of man, but on the power of God. 2. The care and cuſtody of it is committed to the prieſts and elders, that themſelves might be careful to conform to its precepts, and that the copies taken from it might be perfectly correſponding to the original. Miniſters muſt ſpeak as the oracles of God, magiſtrates act according to the rule of God's word, then God's bleſſing and ſucceſs will attend their labours. 3. A public reading of the whole, once in ſeven years, is appointed; every ſabbath a portion was read, and no doubt in their families daily the good men failed not to occupy themſelves in God's word; but that none may plead ignorance, and alſo by the ſolemnity to awaken deeper attention, at the feaſt of tabernacles in the year of releaſe, the whole was read through by the king or chief magiſtrate, ſome ſay; others, by the high-prieſt; others, by a perſon appointed for this buſineſs. The whole congregation of Iſrael then aſſembled, not only the males but the women and children, and the ſtranger alſo, as it imported them all to attend, that the riſing generation might learn their duty, and be quickned in the way of obedience. *Note,* (1.) When we are moſt happy in the goſpel liberty, preached by Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall delight to hear and obey him in every call of duty. (2.) The word of God being our only rule, ſhould be read and known of all; how cruel the attempt, and how contrary to the divine will, to keep it locked up from the people in an unknown tongue, and to eſtabliſh ignorance by law? (3.) Nothing ſhould engage us more ſollicitouſly, than the early inſtruction of our children in the knowledge of the holy ſcriptures, which alone can make them wiſe unto ſalvation.

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14. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Behold, thy days approach that thou muſt die: call Joſhua, and preſent yourſelves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that [m] I may give him a charge. And Moſes and Joſhua went, and preſented themſelves in the tabernacle of the congregation. 15. And [n] the LORD appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud ſtood over the door of the tabernacle 16. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, Behold, thou ſhalt † ſleep with thy fathers, and this people will riſe up, and go a whoring after the gods of the ſtrangers of the land whither they go *to be* amongſt them, and will forſake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. 17. Then my anger ſhall be kindled againſt them in that day, and I will forſake them, and [o] I will hide my face from them, and they ſhall be devoured, and many evils and troubles ſhall ‡ befal them, ſo that they will ſay in that day, [p] Are not theſe evils come upon us, becauſe our God *is* not amongſt us? 18. And I will ſurely hide my face in that day, for all the evils which they ſhall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods. 19. Now therefore write ye this ſong for you, and teach it the children of Iſrael; put it in their mouths, that this ſong may be a witneſs for me againſt the children of Iſrael. 20. For when I ſhall have brought them into the land which I ſware unto their fathers that floweth with milk and honey; and they ſhall have eaten and filled themſelves, and [q] waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and ſerve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant. 21. And it ſhall come to paſs, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this ſong ſhall teſtify ‖ againſt them as a witneſs: for it ſhall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their ſeed: for I know their imagination [r] which they § go about, even now before I have brought them into the land which I ſware.

[m] Numb. xxvii. 19.
[n] Exod. xxxiii. 9.
† Heb. Lie down. See 2 Sam. vii. 12. Acts vii. 60.
[o] Chap. xxxii. 20. Pſal. civ. 29.
‡ Heb. Find them.
[p] Judg. vi. 13.
[q] Chap. xxxxii. 15.
‖ Heb. Before.
[r] Am. v. 25, 26.
§ Heb. Do.

v. 14—21. Moſes is again warned of his approaching end. The beſt of men need be admoniſhed to put their houſe in order. Hereupon, 1. Moſes is ſummoned to the tabernacle, with Joſhua ſolemnly delegated to be his ſucceſſor, there to receive his charge. 2. God hereupon appears to them in the Shechinah, and foretels, [1.] The departure of Iſrael from him, and their adultery with idols, tranſgreſſing, as a wife, the covenant of marriage, in which they had been joined to the Lord; and this, in conſequence of their abuſe of proſperity, and the carnality of their wicked hearts. *Note*, (1.) All love of ſin is ſpiritual adultery. (2.) They who pamper the body to inflame their luſts, will quickly ſeek unlawful gratifications for them. [2.] God's anger is threatned againſt them; ſince they forſake him he will forſake them, and woe unto them, when his wiſdom no longer guides, nor his power protects them; innumerable evils cannot then but compaſs them about, ſuch as would extort their confeſſions, that they had brought their miſeries on themſelves by ſin, and God, in the day of their calamity, threatens to hide his face from them. *Note*, The greateſt bitterneſs of every affliction is to have God's face turned away from us in anger. [3.] Moſes, by divine inſpiration, is commanded to deliver and write a ſacred ſong, as a warning to them and for a witneſs againſt them. God knew the imaginations of their evil hearts before they were put in poſſeſſion of the land; and he gives them this ſong, the metre of which would make it more eaſily remembered, that when their evils overtook them, they might be led by it to repentance. *Note*, (1.) God knoweth the ſecrets of the heart, and can put a word in the mouth of his ſervants, piercing as a ſword. (2.) Though God's elect people may be unfaithful, before their fall the means are provided for their recovery.

22. ¶ Moſes therefore wrote this ſong the ſame day, and taught it the children of Iſrael. 23. And he gave Joſhua the ſon of Nun a charge, and ſaid, [s] Be ſtrong and of a good courage: for thou ſhalt bring the children of Iſrael into the land which I ſware unto them: and I will be with thee. 24. ¶ And it came to paſs when Moſes had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finiſhed; 25. That Moſes commanded the Levites which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, ſaying, 26. Take this book of the law, and [t] put it in the ſide of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witneſs againſt thee. 27. [u] For I know thy rebellion, and thy ſtiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious againſt the LORD; and how much more after my death? 28. Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may ſpeak theſe words in their ears, and [x] call heaven and earth to record againſt them. 29. [y] For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt *yourſelves*, and turn aſide from the way which I have commanded you: and evil [z] will befall you in the latter days, becauſe ye will do evil in the ſight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands. 30. And Moſes ſpake in the ears of all the congregation of Iſrael the words of this ſong, until they were ended.

[s] Joſh. i. 6.
[t] See 2 Kings xxii. 8.
[u] Chap. ix. 24. & xxxii. 20.
Before Chriſt 1451.
[x] Chap. xxxii. 1.
[y] Ibid. 5.
[z] Gen. xlix. 1.

v. 22—30. We have here, 1. The charge Moſes gave to Joſhua, repeated to him by the Lord himſelf. God promiſes to be with him, notwithſtanding the perverſeneſs of the people, which he foreſaw, and to give them the land he had promiſed. 2. Moſes writes the ſong God gave him, and taught it the people, that it might be remembered by them; calling heaven and earth to witneſs againſt them, as moſt inexcuſable, if they proved diſobedient. *Note*, Religious inſtruction is often more eaſily and more abidingly communicated in poetry than in proſe. 3. A copy of the law is laid up by the ſide of the ark, as a ſacred depoſit at all times to be referred to, and to ſtand for a witneſs before the Lord, either for or againſt them. *Note*, By the word of God every living ſoul muſt be ſhortly juſtified or condemned for eternity. 4. He gives them a ſharp rebuke, from paſt experience of their rebellions, and declares his juſt apprehenſions of their apoſtacy after his death. 5. He diſcharges his truſt, by a faithful report of the whole revelation God had made to them, and leaves it with them, at their peril, to attend to it. *Note*, All that miniſters can do is to give the faithful warning, and then, though Iſrael be not gathered, they ſhall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord; if they are not happy in the ſucceſs of their labours, they ſhall not, however, be without their reward.

CHAP. XXXII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The ſong of Moſes,* (1.) *The preface,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *A high character of God, and the ill character of the people of Iſrael,* ver. 3—6. (3.) *A rehearſal of the great things God had done for them, and their ill carriage towards him,* 7—18. (4.) *A prediction of the deſtroying judgments which God would bring upon them for their aggravated ſins,* ver. 19—33. (5.) *A promiſe of the deſtruction of their enemies at laſt, and the glorious deliverance of a remnant of Iſrael,* ver. 33—43. 2. *The exhortation with which Moſes delivered this ſong to them,* ver. 44—47. 3. *The orders God gives to Moſes to go up to mount Nebo and die,* ver. 48—52.

1. [a] GIVE ear, O ye heavens, and I will ſpeak: and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. 2. [b] My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain: my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs. 3. Becauſe I will publiſh the name of the LORD: aſcribe ye greatneſs unto our God.

[a] Chap. iv. 26. & xxx. 19. & xxxi. 28. Pſal. l. 4. Iſa. i. 2. Jer. ii. 12. & vi. 19.
[b] Iſa. lv. 10, 11. 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 8.

v. 1—3. Moſes opens his important ſong, 1. With a ſolemn appeal to heaven and earth, for the truth of his word, and the juſtice of the divine procedure, or as if more attentive than this ſtupid people, they would ſooner hear and obey him. His doctrine is deſcribed as dropping as the rain, whether in wrath, as the deluge, or in mercy, as the gentle ſhowers to refreſh the parched ground: and the influence of it like the ſmall rain on the tender graſs, deſcending ſoftly, and ſweetly inſinuating into the affections. Such is the goſpel of Jeſus, cooling the parched conſcience, burnt up with the wrath of God, cauſing the heart to yield its fruit, and wherever received making the inward man to flouriſh as a green field; whilſt like the ground which, after rain produceth only briars and thorns, is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned; ſo an unprofitable hearing and rejection of this word expoſes to greater damnation, and makes it a ſavour of death unto death. 2. The reaſon is given for the audience and attention he demands, becauſe of the greatneſs and glory of that God, whoſe name he was about to proclaim. *Note*, The higher thoughts we entertain of God, the more ſhall we be afraid to ſin, and the readier to ſubmit to every providence, and to own the juſtice of every afflictive diſpenſation.

4. *He is* [c] the rock, [d] his work *is* perfect; for all his ways *are* judgment: [e] a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right *is* he. 5. † [f] They have corrupted themſelves, ‡ their ſpot *is* not *the ſpot* of his children; *they are* a perverſe and crooked generation. 6. Do ye

[c] 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. Pſ. xviii. 2, 46. Heb. i. 12. Iſa. xxvi. 4. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[d] 2 Sam. xxii. 31.
[e] Exod. xxxiv. 6. Job xxxiv. 10.
† Heb. He hath corrupted to himſelf.
[f] Chap. xxxi. 29.
‡ Or, That they are not his children, that is their blot.

ye thus requite the LORD, O fooliſh people and unwiſe? *is* not he thy father *that* hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and eſtabliſhed thee?

v. 4—6. The greatneſs of God is here enlarged upon, and ſeveral particulars of his glorious character opened to awaken our reverence, fear, and love.

1. *He is a rock*, ſtrong to ſupport the hopes of all that truſt in him; an everlaſting foundation that cannot be moved. Such is Jeſus to the ſinner that flies to him. *His work is perfect*, whether of creation or providence, and eſpecially his work of redemption. Nothing is wanting for the compleat and eternal ſalvation of his people. *All his ways are judgment*, planned with infinite wiſdom, and executed in ſuch a manner as to make the moſt glorious diſplays of his righteouſneſs. *He is a God of truth*, faithful to all his promiſes, who neither hath nor can fail thoſe who truſt him. *Without iniquity*, whom none can complain of as deceiving, or injuring them. *Juſt and right is he*, in his rewards and puniſhments, giving to every man according as his work is. A glorious character, moſt deſerving our regard, and demanding our devotion and ſervice.

2. The character of Iſrael is ſadly the reverſe. *They have corrupted themſelves*, in oppoſition to all God's warnings and mercies; he is juſt, but they are altogether become abominable, and can blame none for their ruin but themſelves. *Their ſpot is not the ſpot of children*; it was wilful deliberate ſin, which they choſe, delighted in, and did not repent of. *Note*, God's children, like the ſun, have their ſpots, but they are condemned, bewailed, oppoſed, and prayed againſt, and ſo ſhall not be their deſtruction. *They are a perverſe and crooked generation*, diſpoſed to evil, and impatient of reſtraint, that will neither be influenced by love, nor deterred by fear. *Note*, When any people becomes incorrigible in wickedneſs their end is near.

3. Moſes expoſtulates with them on their folly and wickedneſs. What obligations were they not under? How had God regarded them as the tendereſt father, and bought them at the price of Egypt's plagues; how ungrateful then to forget and forſake ſuch a God, yea, how unwiſe to provoke him whoſe judgments are as awful as his mercies are great. *Note*, (1.) Sin is the baſeſt ingratitude to our father, as well as inſolent diſobedience to our Lord and maſter. (2.) None will appear ſuch egregious fools at a judgment day, as they who have forſaken God for the ſake of diverſe luſts and pleaſures. (3.) Shall Jewiſh ingratitude for temporal mercies deſerve ſuch rebuke? of how much ſorer condemnation then ſhall he be thought worthy who rejects redeeming love, and baſely ſins againſt that Saviour who bought us with his blood?

7. ¶ Remember the days of old, conſider the years of † many generations: aſk thy father, and he will ſhew thee, thy elders, and they will tell thee. 8. When [g] the moſt High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he ſeparated the ſons of Adam, he ſet the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Iſrael. 9. For [h] the LORD's portion *is* his people: Jacob *is* the ‡ lot of his inheritance. 10. [i] He found him in a deſert land, and in the waſte howling wilderneſs: he ‖ led him about, he inſtructed him, [k] he kept him as the apple of his eye. 11. [l] As an eagle ſtirreth up her neſt, fluttereth over her young, ſpreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; 12. *So* the LORD alone did lead him, and *there was* no ſtrange god with him. 13. [m] He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increaſe of the fields, and he made him to [n] ſuck honey out of the rock, and oyl out of the flinty rock. 14. Butter of kine, and milk of ſheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Baſhan, and goats, [o] with the fat of kidneys of wheat, and thou didſt drink the pure blood of the grape.

† Heb. Generation and generation.
[g] Zech. ix. 1. Acts xvii. 26.
[h] Exod. xv. 16.
‡ Heb Cord.
[i] Chap. viii. 15. Jer. ii. 6. Hoſ. xiii. 5.
‖ Or, Compaſſed him about.
[k] Pſal. xvii. 8. Prov. vii. 2. Zech. ii. 8.
[l] Exod. xix. 4. Chap. i. 31. Iſa. xxxi. 5. & xlvi. 4. & lxiii 9. Hoſ. xi. 3.
[m] Iſa. lviii. 14. Ezek. xxxvi. 2.
[n] Job xxix. 6 Pſ. lxxxi. 16.
[o] Pſ. lxxxi. 15. & cxlvii. 14.

v. 7—14. Moſes, to engage them to fidelity, by a review of God's gracious dealings with them, produces a variety of inſtances wherein God had manifeſted towards them peculiar favour. 1. He reminds them of the days of old, the extraordinary kindneſſes ſhown to their forefathers, and thoſe of later date, of which their fathers and elders could inform them, who had ſeen his wondrous works and miracles ſo often repeated for their ſafety and comfort. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould, from records of former ages, draw directions for preſent uſe. (2.) Fathers ſhould make it their buſineſs and delight to communicate their experience of God's goodneſs to their children, and to encourage them to truſt in the ſame mercy. 2. He particularly inſtances God's care for them, before they had a being, when, ſhortly after the flood, he ſelected the land of Canaan for them, and gave it, in the diviſion of the nations, to be occupied by the deſcendants of Noah's ungodly ſon, to prepare and keep poſſeſſion for them until they were able to occupy it; when they ſhould root out that accurſed race, which were only ſpared until then for Iſrael's ſake. *Note*, (1.) Every diſpoſition of men's abode and circumſtances, and even the affairs of the nations of the world, have ſpecial regard to God's church and choſen people. (2.) There is not a circumſtance which happens, but according to the divine decree, and God's elect may be aſſured that every thing is deſigned to work for their good. (3.) For their ſakes the veſſels of wrath appointed to deſtruction are long ſpared, and enjoy many bleſſings. 3. The reaſon is given for ſuch a proviſion made for Iſrael; they are God's portion, peculiarly ſeparated for him from all the nations of the earth; and a type of his ſpiritual people, whom, by diſtinguiſhing and ſovereign grace, he hath choſen from all eternity to be to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, meaſured out as by lot or line, that they may be diſtinguiſhed from all others, and dwell alone for God. 4. He deſcribes the manner of his collecting them, and his dealings with them before he brought them to their reſt. God's people who are predeſtinated for the heavenly inheritance muſt be trained up for it. (1.) *He found them in a deſert land*, in the wilderneſs, deſolate and forlorn, ignorant and perverſe, but *he inſtructed* them and *led them*, and bowed their ſtubborn neck to his yoke. *Note*, God's ſpiritual Iſrael are all found by him thus in the deſert of ſin, and the wretchedneſs of a fallen nature; unſought of them, he ſeeks them by his grace, calls them by his ſpirit, inſtructs them by his word and providence, inclines their hearts to follow him, and leads them in his ways, when, after exerciſing their faith and patience through much tribulation, he gives them at laſt an entrance into his everlaſting kingdom. (2.) He kept them as the apple of his eye; ſo dear were they to him, and ſo careful was he that none ſhould touch them to hurt them. God's people ſhare his tendereſt love, and he that meddleth with them, meddleth to his own hurt. (3.) As the eagle teaches her young fledged brood to fly, flutters over them to bring them from the neſt, ſpreads her wings to direct them, takes them on her back, and carries them in their firſt weak eſſays; ſuch were the compaſſions of God to Iſrael, in bringing them from their neſt in Egypt, and carrying them through the wilderneſs. Such are they ſtill to all his redeemed people, raiſing them from their weak and low eſtate, ſupporting them in his arms, teaching them to ſoar aloft by faith and hope, leaving far behind them all idolatrous attachment to the creature, and enabling them to reach after their manſion in the ſkies. 5. When they were ready for their poſſeſſions he brought them in; mighty kings had already fallen before him, and they who were ſlaves in Egypt begin to reign in Baſhan, whilſt the kingdoms of Canaan alſo are ſhortly to fall before them. Part of their inheritance they enjoy, a greater part remains to be beſtowed; where plenty crowns the year, honey and oil flow as copiouſly as the ſtreams from the rock in the wilderneſs, the fineſt wheat ſhall ſupply them with food, the choiceſt cattle afford them meat, and wine and milk run down like a river. Well might God expect a return for ſuch mercies from them. *Note*, Such are the conqueſts, ſuch the poſſeſſions of every ſpiritual Iſraelite. The powers of ſin fall before victorious grace; he ſits upon the rock which is very high, even the rock of ages; his heart is filled with divine conſolations, he is nouriſhed by the words of truth and righteouſneſs, and fed with that meat, and drinks of that blood, which enſures to him life and immortality, to be enjoyed in the preſence of the ever-bleſſed God.

15. ¶ But [p] Jeſhurun waxed fat, and kicked: [q] thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered *with fatneſs*; then he forſook God *which* made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation. 16. They provoked him to jealouſy with ſtrange *gods*, with abominations provoked they him to anger. 17. [r] They ſacrificed unto devils, † not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods that* came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. 18. Of that rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and haſt forgotten God that formed thee.

[p] Chap. xxxiii. 5, 26. Iſa. xlv. 2.
[q] Neh. ix. 25. Pſ. xvii. 10. Jer. ii. 7. & v. 7. Hoſ. xiii. 6.
[r] Lev. xvii. 7. Pſ. cvi. 37. 1 Cor. x. 20. Rev. ix. 20.
† Or, which were not God.

v. 15—18. Moſes ſpeaks of what he foreſaw, as already come to paſs, becauſe of the certainty of the event. 1. He mentions their ſenſuality, ſtupidity and obſtinacy. *They waxed fat*, abuſed their proſperity by luxury; and nothing more dangerous to any ſoul, than to be fed to the full. *They kicked*, rejected the warnings of God's prophets, and would have none of their reproofs. The ſinner is in enraged at thoſe who would interrupt his vile purſuits, with ungrateful notices of his danger. *They grew thick*; after reſiſting the calls of God, blindneſs and hardneſs of heart came upon them; this is the uſual proceſs of ſin, when calls of conſcience are reſiſted; every moment they grow weaker, till the heart is ſeared and inſenſible. *They forſook God, and lightly eſteemed the rock of their ſalvation*; this was the neceſſary conſequence of ſuch a conduct. God and ſin can never be reconciled; we muſt deſpiſe the one in proportion as we delight in the other; and every ſtep we take in the purſuit of our luſts, leads us neceſſarily at a greater diſtance from God.

Before Chriſt 1451.

2. Their idolatry was eſpecially vile and abominable. They ſet up *ſtrange gods*, other than the true God, and *new* idols, ſuch as even the worſt of their idolatrous fathers neither knew nor feared, and thus grew worſe and worſe. Nay, they *ſacrificed to devils*, ſo ſhockingly beſotted and infatuated is the blind idolater, and more ſollicitous to placate a malignant ſpirit, than to ſecure the favour of that God, before whom the devils tremble. *Note*, There is nothing ſo ſhocking and abſurd of which a fallen ſpirit left to itſelf is not capable. 3. Their ingratitude was moſt baſe and provoking: they forgat the God who formed them, made them a people ſo diſtinguiſhed, and were unmindful of their rock who begat them. No wonder therefore, his jealouſy burnt like fire, and fierce wrath awoke againſt theſe tranſgreſſors. *Note*, (1.) God is a jealous God, he cannot bear a rival in the affections of his people, much leſs a ſuperior. (2.) They who forget God, will not be forgotten of him, his wrath abideth on them.

19. And [s] when the LORD ſaw *it*, he † abhorred *them*, [t] becauſe of the provoking of his ſons, and of his daughters. 20. And he ſaid, [u] I will hide my face from them, I will ſee what their end *ſhall be*: for they *are* a very froward generation, [x] children in whom *is* no faith. 21. They have moved me to jealouſy with *that which is* not god, [y] they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and [z] I will move them to jealouſy with *thoſe which are* not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a fooliſh nation. 22. For [a] a fire is kindled in my anger, and ‡ ſhall burn into the loweſt hell, and ‖ ſhall conſume the earth with her increaſe, and ſet on fire the foundations of the mountains. 23. [b] I will heap miſchiefs upon them, [c] I will ſpend mine arrows upon them. 24. *They ſhall be* burnt with hunger, and devoured with § burning heat, and with bitter deſtruction: I will alſo ſend [d] the teeth of beaſts upon them, with the poiſon of ſerpents of the duſt. 25. [e] The ſword without, and terror † within ſhall ‡ deſtroy both the young man and the virgin, the ſuckling *alſo*, with the man of gray hairs.

[s] Judg. ii. 14.
† Or deſpiſed.
[t] Iſa. i. 2.
[u] Chap. xxxi 17.
[x] Iſa. xxx. 9.
[y] 1 Sam. xii. 21. 1 Kings xvi. 13, 26. Pſal. xxxi. 6. Jer. viii. 19. & x. 8.
[z] Hoſ. i. 10. Rom. x. 19.
[a] Jer. xv. 14. Lam. iv. 11.
‡ Or hath burned.
‖ Or hath conſumed.
[b] Iſa. xxvi. 15.
[c] Pſal. vii. 12, 13. Ezek. v. 16.
§ Heb. Burning coals. Hebr. iii. 5.
[d] Lev. xxvi. 22.
[e] Lam. i. 20. Ezek. vii. 15. 2 Cor. vii. 5.
† Heb. From the chambers.
‡ Heb. Bereave.

v. 19—25. It is the folly of ſinners that they often ſay, Tuſh, God ſhall not ſee: but his eyes run to and fro in the earth, and there is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where any of the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves. We hear therefore, the wrath of God denounced upon them, 1. In his abhorrence of them. They had once born the character of children in profeſſion at leaſt; now that they act ſo undutifully, it is juſtice to diſinherit them. *Note*, Sin makes us odious in the ſight of divine purity, and no ſin ſo offenſive as theirs, who made profeſſion of religion. 2. In his hiding his face from them: not that he ceaſed to minute their iniquities, but he withdrew every token of his favour from them, to try them if they would ſeek after him; but they continued perverſe and obſtinate, and faithleſs to all their vows and engagements. *Note*, Their ſin is greatly aggravated, who not only tranſgreſs the law they are under, but violate the covenant they once entered into. 3. As they had treated God with ſuch contempt, he will puniſh them in kind, making them a prey to blind and idolatrous nations, and obliging them to ſerve thoſe whom they regarded as vile and deſpicable. Such were the Babylonians and Romans, who ſubdued them, and ſuch were all thoſe Gentiles, who, on their rejection of Chriſt and his goſpel, were admitted into covenant with God, from which by their wickedneſs they were excluded. 4. Their terrible end is foretold. The fire of God ſhall burn up their pleaſant land and goodly cities, God's bow ſhall be bent, and his quiver emptied with repeated ſtrokes of judgment, the famine ſhall devour, the peſtilence conſume them, the beaſts of the field and poiſonous ſerpents ſhall fix their invenomed fangs upon them, whilſt the ſword of the enemy, mercileſs and drenched in blood, ſhall ſpare neither young nor old, till they are deſtroyed. *Note*, God's plagues will overtake the ſinner ſooner or later; at leaſt, if not before, in the everlaſting burnings of hell.

26. I ſaid, I would ſcatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to ceaſe from among men: 27. Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, [f] leſt their adverſaries ſhould behave themſelves ſtrangely, *and* leſt they ſhould ſay, † Our hand *is* high, and the LORD hath not done all this. 28. For they *are* a nation void of counſel, neither *is there any* underſtanding in them. 29. [g] O that they were wiſe, *that* they underſtood this, [h] *that* they would conſider their latter end! 30. How ſhould [i] one chaſe a thouſand, and two put ten thouſand to flight, except their rock [k] had ſold them, and the LORD had ſhut them up? 31. For their rock *is* not as our rock, [l] even our enemies themſelves *being* judges. 32. For their vine ‡ *is* of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes *are* grapes of gall, their cluſters *are* bitter. 33. Their wine *is* the poiſon of dragons, and the cruel venom of aſps. 34. [m] *Is* not this laid up in ſtore with me, *and* ſealed up among my treaſures? 35. To me *belongeth* [n] vengeance and recompence, their foot ſhall ſlide in *due* time, for [o] the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that ſhall come upon them make haſte. 36. For [p] the LORD ſhall judge his people, and [q] repent himſelf for his ſervants; when he ſeeth that *their* ‖ power is gone, and [r] *there is* none ſhut up, or left. 37. And he ſhall ſay, [s] Where *are* their gods, *their* rock in whom they truſted. 38. Which did eat the fat of their ſacrifices, *and* drank of the wine of their drink-offerings? let them riſe up and help you, *and* be § your protection.

[f] Jer. xix. 4.
† Or our high hand, and not the Lord hath done all this.
[g] Pſal. lxxxi. 8.
[h] Iſa. xlvii. 7. Lam. i. 9.
[i] Lev. xxvi. 8. Joſh. xxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xxiv. 4. Iſa. xxx. 17.
[k] Pſal. xliv. 12. Iſa. l. 1. & lii. 3.
[l] 1 Sam. iv. 8. Jer. xl. 3.

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‡ Or is worſe than the vine of Sodom.
[m] Job xiv. 17. Jer. ii. 22. Hoſ. xiii. 12. Rom. ii. 5.
[n] Pſal. xciv. 1. Ecclus xxviii. 1. Rom. xii. 19. Heb. x. 30.
[o] 2 Pet. ii. 3.
[p] Pſal. cxxxv. 14.
[q] Judg. ii. 18. Pſal. cvi. 45. Jer. xxxi. 20. 2 Mac. vii. 6.
‖ Heb. Hand.
[r] 1 Kings xiv. 10. & xxi. 21. 2 Kings ix. 8. & xiv. 26.
[s] Judg. x. 14. Jer. ii. 28.
§ Heb. An hiding for you.

v. 26—38. Juſt had it been with God utterly to have conſumed them; but for his great name's ſake he ſtays his arm. 1. He conſults his own glory. He might have cut them down as ripe, for vengeance, nor left ſo much as a handful in the corner of the field ſtanding; but he knew their enemies, a people void of underſtanding, would aſcribe it to their own power, and to the honour of their pretended deities: therefore he interpoſes to ſpare a remnant, *fearing the wrath of the enemy*, (not really, but ſpeaking according to the manner of men) leaſt they ſhould triumph in making an end of them. 2. Moſes expreſſes his ardent deſire, that Iſrael might make a good uſe of God's corrections and mercies, and in the view of their latter end, bethink them before it was too late. *Note*, (1.) It is an important thing to prepare for death, and ſhould be often and ſolemnly the matter of our conſideration. (2.) The moment of our abode here is ſo ſhort, and eternity ſo awful which depends upon it, that they are fools indeed, who for things temporal loſe the things eternal. (3.) It ſhould be the deſire and prayer of every faithful miniſter, to awaken the ſouls of ſinners to the conſideration of theſe things. 3. The victory of the enemy over Iſrael, is aſcribed to the true cauſe, their ſins; not effected by human arm, or heathen idol's power, but becauſe ſold into the hands of their foes, and forſaken of God their rock, under whoſe bleſſing in times paſt, their remarkable ſucceſs had extorted from thoſe they ſubdued, a confeſſion of the ſuperiority of Iſrael's God. 4. The ſin of Iſrael's enemies ſhall come up in remembrance before God, and their puniſhment lingreth not. Their ſins are great as Sodom, and their iniquity like Gomorrah; the meaſure of their iniquity is filling: God keeps a record of it *laid up in ſtore* before him, and ſealed againſt the day of vengeance. *Note*, Tho' proſperous ſinners flouriſh long, and be ſuffered to trample down God's Iſrael, a book of their pride is kept, and the day is coming when they who treaſured up wrath againſt the day of wrath, ſhall be overtaken by it. The hour is fixed, and it is near, even at the door, when death ſhall cut down the ſinner, and his damnation no longer ſlumber. 5. God will remember his people in their diſtreſſes, and repent, *i. e.* change, not his mind towards them, for that is unchangeable, but his manner of dealing with them, compaſſionating their deſolations, beholding their cities without inhabitants, and their country deſerted. Thus under the judges, and eſpecially after the Babyloniſh captivity, they experienced his mercy towards them in their deep affliction. *Note*, In the times of his people's greateſt calamities, he is near to reſtore them, on their humble return to him, and to pluck them as brands from the burning. 6. God expreſſes his contempt and ſcorn of the idol deities; either thoſe in which Iſrael had truſted, none of which could help them in diſtreſs, or rather the gods of their enemies, to whom they had ſo liberally ſacrificed on their former victories; let them now protect their votaries. But how ſhall they ſave others, when themſelves are bowed down and upon the weary beaſts, carrying among other ſpoil into captivity. *Note*, They who truſt on any thing but Chriſt alone for ſalvation, will find they lean on a broken reed, too weak to ſupport them, which will run into their hand and pierce it.

39. See now that [t] I, *even* I *am* he, and [u] *there is* no god with me: [x] I kill, and I make alive: I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand. 40. [y] For I lift up my hand to heaven, and ſay I live for ever. 41. [z] If I whet my glittering ſword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. 42. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, (and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh) *and that* with the blood of the ſlain, and of the captives, from the beginning of [a] revenges upon the enemy. 43. † [b] Rejoice, O ye nations *with* his people: for he will avenge the blood of his ſervants, and will render vengeance to his adverſaries, and will be merciful unto his land, *and* to his people.

[t] Pſal. cii. 27. Iſa. xli. 4. & xlviii. 12.
[u] Chap. iv. 35. Iſa. xlv. 5, 18, 22.
[x] 1 Sam. ii. 6. 2 Kings v. 7. Job v. 18. Pſal. lxviii. 20. Hoſ. vi. 1. Tob. xiii. 2. Wiſd. xvi. 13.
[y] Gen. xiv. 22.
[z] Iſa. xxvii. 1. & xxxiv. 5. & lxvi. 16. Ezek. xxi. 14, 10.
[a] Job. xiii. 24. Jer. xxx. 14. Lam. ii. 5.
† Or praiſe his people, ye nations. Or ſing ye.
[b] Rom. xv. 10.

v. 39—43. The ſong concludes, 1. With a proclamation of God's glory and greatneſs as it began. *I, even I am he,* the ſelf-exiſtent, and the only God. There is none *with me* equal in glory, none beſide me. *I kill, and I make alive*; dominion and power are all lodged in my hand, the death of my enemies is determined, the life of my people is ſecured: or if I ſmite them, ſo that they ſeem dead, I, who wounded, can heal them. *Neither is there any who can deliver out of my hand*; none who dare interpoſe to reſcue my enemies from deſtruction, none to pluck my people, and ſeparate them from my love. *Note,* All theſe things are expreſsly aſcribed to our Jeſus, and in a more eminent manner have been, and continued to be fulfilled, both reſpecting his ſpiritual Iſrael, and his ſpiritual enemies. 2. With a ſolemn oath of God, who becauſe he can ſwear by no greater, ſwears by himſelf, to ſhew the immutability of his counſels, (1.) In his enemies deſtruction. The glittering ſword is unſheathed; it is whetted with fury; it deſcends upon the necks of his enemies, weilded by the arm of Omnipotence, and therefore the deſolation cannot but be terrible, when God awakes to vengeance, and drenches his arrows in the blood of the ſlain. *Note,* It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; and yet unleſs ſinners repent, they muſt infallibly periſh, without mercy or remedy. (2.) For his people's comfort. They ſhall ſee the vengeance executed on their enemies, and rejoice in God's glory therein manifeſted; they ſhall believe the gracious promiſes confirmed by the oath of God, and triumph in their great and ſure ſalvation: they ſhall ſee the vaſt increaſe of his church, when the nations ſhall flow into it, and all his redeemed come at laſt to Zion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads. *Note,* (1.) Whatever trials the faithful may be expoſed to, or whatever ſufferings for their ſins they may undergo, peace and joy ſhall be their everlaſting portion. (2.) The people of God ſhould be always comforted, nor amidſt their days of heavineſs, through manifold temptation, intermit their rejoicing in hope. (3.) Let the enemies of God's church and people know their day is coming, and when the ſmoke of their torment aſcendeth for ever and ever, the ſaints in glory ſhall ſhout Hallelujah.

44. ¶ And Moſes came and ſpake all the words of this ſong in the ears of the people, he and † Hoſhea the ſon of Nun. 45. And Moſes made an end of ſpeaking all theſe words to all Iſrael. 46. And he ſaid unto them, [c] Set your hearts unto all the words which I teſtify among you this day; which ye ſhall command your children to obſerve to do, all the words of this law. 47. For it *is* not a vain thing for you; [d] becauſe it *is* your life; and through this thing ye ſhall prolong *your* days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to poſſeſs it. 48. [e] And the LORD ſpake unto Moſes that ſelf-ſame day, ſaying, 49. [f] Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, *unto* mount Nebo, which *is* in the land of Moab, that *is* over againſt Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan which I give unto the children of Iſrael for a poſſeſſion. 50. And die in the mount whither thou goeſt up, and be gathered unto thy people; as [g] Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: 51. Becauſe [h] ye treſpaſſed againſt me among the children of Iſrael, at the waters of ‡ Meribah-kadeſh, in the wilderneſs of Zin; becauſe [i] ye ſanctified me not in the midſt of the children of Iſrael. 52. [k] Yet thou ſhalt ſee the land before *thee,* but thou ſhalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Iſrael.

† Or Joſhua.
[c] Chap. vi. 6. & xi. 18.
[d] Chap. xxx. 19.
[e] Num. xxvii. 12.
[f] Ibid. xxxiii. 47. Chap. xxxiv. 1.
[g] Num. xx. 25, 28. & xxxiii. 38.
[h] Ibid. xx. 11, 12, 13. & xxvii. 14.
‡ Or ſtrife at Kadeſh.
[i] See Lev. x. 3.
[k] Num. xxxiv. 4.

v. 44—52. Moſes and Joſhua, in different congregations of the people, ſolemnly rehearſe the words of this ſong: as Joſhua is ſhortly to ſupply Moſes' place, they muſt bear the ſame word, and witneſs the ſame truth. *Note,* There is but one truth in the ſcripture, one faith, one hope, one goſpel. Moſes after delivery of this ſong, 1. Adds his earneſt charge to them, *to ſet their hearts* to obey all theſe commands of God, and not only themſelves to be exemplary, but ſeek to tranſmit their religion to the ſucceeding generations, by training their children up in the way which they ſhould go; for it is not *a vain thing,* an inconſiderable matter, their life depended on it, their comfortable life in Canaan, their eternal life in heaven. *Note,* Religion is our higheſt intereſt, as well as our bounden duty: happy, were we all more deeply convinced thereof! 2. God lets Moſes know he muſt die. The very day his work is done, he is ordered up to mount Nebo. *Note,* When God hath accompliſhed all his will in us upon earth, he will not fail that ſame hour to take us to himſelf. He reminds him of his ſin that prevented his paſſing over Jordan. Humble reflections upon paſt miſconduct become us even in dying moments. He mentions Aaron's death before him, as a comfortable ſupport againſt his own. Moſes had ſeen him die in peace, and was now to go to him. It is a comfort in dying ſeaſons, to think of thoſe who have gone before, and whom we ſhall ſo ſhortly meet in glory, eſpecially our Divine Redeemer, the High-prieſt of our profeſſion—Yet he may ſee the land, though he may not enter it. God is pleaſed to ſhew him this favour as a token of his reconciliation to him, and in full view of it he may die content. *Note,* (1.) This ſide the grave, we can only by faith ſee the promiſes afar off; we muſt croſs the ſtream of death, and then we ſhall receive them in all their fulneſs. (2.) Tho' on a dying bed we may have much to lament, it is enough if Jeſus ſtands by to ſay our iniquity is pardoned, and holds out eternal life, as the gift of God to us, through his obedience unto death in our behalf.

CHAP. XXXIII.

This chapter contains Moſes' final benediction: 1. *He pronounceth them all bleſſed in what God had done for them already, eſpecially in giving them his law,* ver. 2—5. 2. *He pronounceth a bleſſing upon each tribe, which is both a prayer for, and a prophecy of, their felicity,* ver. 6—25. 3. *He pronounceth them all in general bleſſed, upon the account of what God would be to them, and do for them, if they were obedient,* ver. 26—29.

1. AND this *is* the bleſſing wherewith Moſes [a] the man of God bleſſed the children of Iſrael before his death. 2. And he ſaid, [b] The LORD came from Sinai, and roſe up from Seir unto them; he ſhined forth from mount Paran, and he came with [c] ten thouſands of ſaints: from his right hand *went* † a fiery law for them. 3. Yea, [d] he loved the people; [e] all his ſaints *are* in thy hand; and they ſat down at thy feet; *every one* ſhall receive of thy words. 4. Moſes commanded us a law: [f] *even* the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. 5. And he was [g] king in [h] Jeſhurun, when the heads of the people, *and* the tribes of Iſrael were gathered together.

[a] Pſal. xc. Title.
[b] Exod. xix. 18. Judg. v. 4. Hab. iii. 3.
[c] See Pſal. lxviii. 17. Dan. vii. 10. Acts vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2. Rev. v. 11. & ix. 16.
† Heb. A fire of law.
[d] Ex. xix. 5.
[e] Chap. vii. 6. Pſal. l. 5.
[f] Pſal. cxix. 111.
[g] See Gen. xxxvi. 31. Judg. ix. 2. & xvii. 6.
[h] Chap. xxxii. 15.

v. 1—5. Moſes being now to leave them, in token of his warm affection towards them, notwithſtanding their ingratitude, pronounces over them his parting benediction. As *a man of God,* a *good man,* he prays for their felicity; as a *prophet,* he foretels the bleſſings God had in ſtore for them. 1. He reminds them of the glorious appearance of God on Sinai, whence the brightneſs of his preſence ſhone ſo powerfully, that the diſtant mounts of Seir and Paran were illumined thereby; or perhaps it may refer to the ſeveral glorious appearances which God made to them near each of theſe mountains. Ten thouſand holy angels, an innumerable multitude ſurrounded the King of Glory, when through their ſhining ranks the law went forth from the throne of the Divine Majeſty. 2. He mentions the fiery law which was given them from his right hand: *fiery,* becauſe not only given from amidſt the fire of Sinai, but alſo becauſe, like the powerful operations of this element, it burns the conſcience, and torments it with a ſenſe of guilt. *Note,* The ſinner who breaks God's law, will ſtill find it conſuming fire. 3. The regard and love of God towards them. No nation ſo diſtinguiſhed, ſeparated to be a peculiar people, covered and protected by the hand of Omnipotence, drawn to his feet to hear and learn the way to life and happineſs, and ſweetly inclined to receive the words which make wiſe unto ſalvation. Happy art thou, O Iſrael. *Note,* (1.) God's people are a peculiar and choſen generation. (2.) They are ſafe in the hand of their Lord, and none can pluck them thence. (3.) They are all taught of God, and ſweetly drawn to his feet, to learn his will and to obey it. 4. The people acknowledge their obligation to God and to Moſes. *To God,* for giving them ſuch a holy law, which was their beſt inheritance, and whilſt they obſerved it, would inſure the land to their poſterity unto the lateſt ages. *To Moſes,* who had been their mediator in the delivery of the law, and as the chief magiſtrate for God, had ſeen it obſerved by the people. *Note,* (1.) To have God's law written in our hearts, is our beſt treaſure. (2.) We can never enough be thankful to God, nor the inſtruments whom he makes uſe of in bringing our hearts in ſubjection to his will.

6. ¶ Let Reuben live, and not die: and let *not* his men be few. 7. ¶ And this *is the bleſſing* of Judah; and he ſaid, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people; let his hands be ſufficient for him, and be thou an help *to him* from his enemies.

v. 6, 7. Reuben was a frontier tribe, and much expoſed; and whilſt a part of this tribe went over Jordan to battle before their brethren, they would be in danger both at home and abroad, but God's protection will keep them from being diminiſhed. Though becauſe of his ſin he may not excell, yet ſhall he not for his ſin be deſtroyed, or his name be extinct. *Note,* (1.)

Though God viſits for ſin, it will be in meaſure. (2.) They who are now returned to the path of duty, may confidently expect the return of God's bleſſing.

Judah comes next in order. Simeon, whoſe lot lay in the midſt of Judah, is omitted, probably becauſe, as thus united, they would ſhare in the ſame bleſſing. Moſes begs that his prayers might be heard, his warfare proſperous, his labours ſucceſsful, and peace be in his borders. This was fulfilled in David, Aſa, Hezekiah's prayers and victories, and in the abundance of all good things which this tribe enjoyed. *Note*, (1.) With Judah's prayers we may expect Judah's bleſſing. (2.) Chriſt, the lion of the tribe of Judah, hath prayed and fought, and conquered for us, and having made peace through the blood of his croſs, will keep us ſafe from the fear of evil, in time and in eternity.

i Exod, xxviii. 30.
k Numb. xx. 13.
l Exod. xxxii. 28.
m See Jer. xviii. 18. Mal. ii. 5.
† Or let them teach, &c.
‡ Or let them put incenſe.
‖ Heb. At thy noſe.

8. ¶ And of Levi he ſaid [i] *Let* thy Thummim and thy Urim *be* with thy holy one [k] whom thou didſt prove at Maſſah, *and with* whom thou didſt ſtrive at the waters of Meribah; 9. Who ſaid unto his father and to his mother, I have not ſeen him, [l] neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children; for [m] they have obſerved thy word, and kept thy covenant. 10. † They ſhall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Iſrael thy law: ‡ they ſhall put incenſe ‖ before thee, and whole-burnt ſacrifice upon thine altar. 11 Bleſs, LORD, his ſubſtance, and accept the work of his hands: ſmite through the loins of them that riſe againſt him, and of them that hate him, that they riſe not again.

v. 8—11, Levi was diſtinguiſhed by the prieſthood. Moſes therefore, 1. prays that the Urim and Thummim, lights and perfections, might be continually with the high-prieſt, as they had been with Aaron, whoſe fidelity God approved of at Meribah, *Exod.* xvii. 7. The Urim and Thummim continued till the captivity, and were never afterwards reſtored. But Chriſt being come, the true high-prieſt whom Aaron prefigured, in him all fulneſs of light, and all perfection of purity dwell, and his faithful miniſters partake, in a meaſure, of his light and purity in their miniſtrations before him. 2. Their fidelity is commended, whether in the exemplary impartiality they ſhewed in their deciſions, or in the death of their neareſt friends, whom they ſlew when defiled with idolatry, *Exod.* xxxii. 26. *Note*, God's miniſters zeal and uprightneſs ſhall be remembred to their everlaſting honour and comfort. 3. The work aſſigned them. To be chief judges in all controverſies, to preach the law of God to the people, and to miniſter in holy things at his altar. Preaching God's word is an honourable work, and his miniſtry a diſtinguiſhed employment: woe to them who count it deſpicable, and much more to thoſe who by their negligence and ill examples make it ſo. 4. He prays for them, that their ſubſtance, which conſiſted chiefly in the tythes and offerings, might be bleſſed, that they might have enough, and the comfortable enjoyment of it; that their miniſtrations might be acceptable to God, and ſucceſsful among the people, and that their enemies might be confounded and deſtroyed. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt deſire of a faithful miniſter, is, that God would accept and proſper his labours. (2.) They who are moſt active and faithful for God, will find moſt oppoſition from the world and the devil; but God is their helper, and he will diſappoint and over-rule all the deſigns of their enemies.

n Gen. xix. 25.
† Heb. Thruſtforth.
‡ Heb. Moons.
o Gen. xlix. 26.
p Hab. iii. 6.
q Exod. iii. 2, 4.
r Gen. xlix. 26.
‖ Heb. An unicorn.
s Pſal. xliv. 5.
t Gen. xlviii. 19.

12. ¶ *And* of Benjamin he ſaid, The beloved of the LORD ſhall dwell in ſafety by him; *and the LORD* ſhall cover him all the day long, and he ſhall dwell between his ſhoulders. 13. ¶ And of Joſeph he ſaid, [n] Bleſſed of the LORD *be* his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, 14. And for the precious fruits *brought forth* by the ſun, and for the precious things † put forth by the ‡ moon, 15. And for the chief things of [o] the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of [p] the laſting hills, 16. And for the precious things of the earth, and fulneſs thereof, and for the good will of [q] him that dwelt in the buſh: let *the bleſſing* come upon the head of Joſeph, and upon the top of the head of him that [r] was ſeparated from his brethren. 17. His glory *is like* the firſtling of his bullock, and his horns *are like* the horns of ‖ unicorns: with them [s] he ſhall puſh the people together, to the ends of the earth: and [t] they *are* the ten thouſands of Ephraim, and they *are* the thouſands of Manaſſeh.

v. 12—17. The temple lying in the borders of Benjamin, or at leaſt cloſe to it, he fitly follows Levi in order. He is called the beloved of the Lord: as he was his father's darling, he had alſo God's regard towards him: dwelling ſo near God's temple, he was kept in ſafety, and did not apoſtatize from God's worſhip when the other tribes revolted, and joining with Judah, he had the ſame Divine protection and care over him. *Note*, They who keep cloſe to God's church and worſhip, will have no cauſe ever to repent it. They will ſhare in the felicity of his choſen, and partake of his everlaſting love.

Joſeph's bleſſing includes his two ſons. 1. He had been once ſeparated from his brethren, and ſold as a ſlave into Egypt, but God was with him, and ſeparated him to honour; therefore he hath a double portion among them. 2. Moſes prays for, and prophecies the plenty and glory of Joſeph's ſons, 1. *Their plenty*; a fruitful land ſhould the lot of Ephraim and Manaſſeh be, watered with the dew of heaven, and with ſtreams that burſt from the bowels of the deep beneath; quickned by the benign influences of the heavenly bodies, the earth would give her plenteous increaſe, and the hills laden with vines and olives fill their houſes with their produce; or diſcloſing their precious ſtores within, enrich them with mines of braſs and iron: but theſe temporal bleſſings are the leaſt part of their happineſs; the good will of God, as their covenant God, who appeared to Moſes in the buſh, is better to them than all the reſt. This he prays for, and promiſes them, and then they could want nothing to complete their felicity. *Note*, (1.) God has bleſſings in abundance to beſtow on his ſeparated ones, not only of the baſket and the ſtore, but the unſpeakably more valuable ones of the gifts, graces, and conſolations of his bleſſed Spirit. (2.) The true enjoyment of all earthly good things is to have the bleſſing of him who dwelt in the buſh upon them; and even in the want of theſe, this will alone ſatisfy the ſoul abundantly. 2. Their power. Strong and majeſtic as the bulls of Baſhan, irreſiſtible as the unicorn or rhinoceros, puſhing the Canaanites to their utmoſt borders, and filling the land with a numerous and warlike off-ſpring, wherein the youngeſt, according to the prophecy, ſtill hath the pre-eminence: it is ſaid the ten thouſands of Ephraim, and the thouſands of Manaſſeh; Ephraim being moſt numerous, and after the diviſion of the tribes, Samaria in his lot became the metropolis of Iſrael. *Note*, This is ſtill the caſe with our divine Joſeph and his ſpiritual ſons, before whom all their ſpiritual enemies muſt fall, ſubdued by the horn of his power.

u Gen. xlix. 13, 14, 15.
x Pſal. iv. 5.

18. ¶ And of Zebulun he ſaid, [u] Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and Iſſachar, in thy tents. 19. They ſhall call the people unto the mountain, there [x] they ſhall offer ſacrifices of righteouſneſs: for they ſhall ſuck *of* the abundance of the ſeas, and *of* treaſures hid in the ſand.

v. 18—19. The bleſſings of Zebulun and Iſſachar are joined together. Both ſhould have a pleaſant lot, and each ſucceſs in their labours. Zebulun *muſt rejoice in his going out* in war, or rather his proſperous voyages. This tribe dwelling near the ſea, and Iſſachar *in his tent*, God giving him plenty from the fruit of his labours in agriculture. Both of them zealous for God, ſhall call the people to the mountain, to the worſhip of God: the gentiles around them, with whom they trafficked, or their brethren, whoſe hearts might be backward. Their offerings ſhould be accepted of God, as ſacrifices of righteouſneſs; and well ſhould they be able to afford them, being enriched by their traffick and merchandize, and *with the treaſures hid in the ſand*, ſuch as gold-duſt, pearl, coral, or the riches which from ſhipwreck might be caſt on their coaſt. *Note*, (1.) The ſailor and huſbandman have their ſeveral occupations pointed out to them by the providence of God, and each their difficulties and their advantages. God wills that each ſhould be content with his lot, and rejoice in his labours. (2.) In all our traffick and buſineſs, we ſhould ſeek to make the intereſts of God's kingdom our capital aim, and improve our connections with others, in ſuch a way, as if poſſible, to bring them to the worſhip and ſervice of our God. (3.) They who are bleſſed with greateſt abundance, are eſpecially called upon to honour God with more abundant ſacrifices of good works.

y See Joſh. xiii. 10, &c. 1 Chron. xii. 8, &c.
z Num. xxxii. 16, 17, &c.
† Heb. Cieled.
a Joſh. iv. 12.

20. ¶ And of Gad he ſaid, Bleſſed *be* [y] he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. 21. And [z] he provided the firſt part for himſelf, becauſe there, *in* a portion of the law-giver *was he* † ſeated; and [a] he came with the heads of the people, he executed the juſtice of the LORD, and his judgments with Iſrael.

v. 20, 21. Gad was a warlike tribe, and Moſes prophecies his enlargement. As a lion ſtrong, and when rouſed up furious and devouring, his prudence is remarked in *providing the firſt part for himſelf*, having his lot on that ſide of Jordan already conquered, appointed by Moſes himſelf the law-giver. Yet zealous for his brethren's ſettlement, he paſſes over before them, *to execute the juſtice of the Lord* upon the devoted Canaanites. *Note*, (1.) To do well for ourſelves, and provide for our own houſe, when it can be done without injuring our neighbour, is commendable. (2.) The mercies of God to ourſelves in our enlargements, ſhould make us the readier to aſſiſt our brethren.

22. ¶ And of Dan he ſaid, Dan *is* a lion's whelp; he ſhall leap from Baſhan. 23. ¶ And of Naphtali he ſaid, O Naphtali, [b] ſatisfied with favour, and full with the bleſſing of the LORD: [c] poſſeſs thou the weſt and the ſouth. 24. ¶ And of Aſher he ſaid, [d] *Let* Aſher *be* bleſſed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him [e] dip his foot in oil. 25. † Thy ſhoes *ſhall be* iron and braſs; and as thy days, *ſo ſhall* thy ſtrength *be*.

[b] Gen. xlix. 21.
[c] See Joſh. xix. 32, &c.
[d] Gen. xlix. 20.
[e] See Job xxix. 6.
† Or under thy ſhoes ſhall be iron, &c.

v. 22—25. 1. The bleſſing on Dan is, that he ſhould be bold and ſtrong as a lion's whelp, which was fulfilled in Sampſon; and *ſhall leap as a lion from Baſhan*, when they fell upon the people of Laiſh, and ſeized their country, and dwelt there. 2. The bleſſing of Naphtali is rich indeed! *ſatisfied with favour*, happy in the regards of his brethren, and more happy ſtill in the love and favour of God, which is the fountain of all bleſſedneſs; *full of the bleſſing of the Lord*, not only enriched with a temporal proviſion, but bleſſed with the richer mercies of the covenant of grace. *Poſſeſſed of the weſt*, or rather as the word ſignifies, *the ſea* of Genneſaret, which was its border, and *the ſouth*, from the tribe of Dan. The favour of God's people is a ſingular mercy, but the favour of God himſelf is that which can alone fully ſatisfy the ſoul. 3. Aſher is happy in his name, and happy in his inheritance; bleſſed with a numerous poſterity; acceptable to his brethren, by a carriage which conciliates their regard; flowing with ſuch plenty that his very ſteps were bathed in oil; rich in mines of braſs and iron, and *his ſtrength as his day*, either to old age poſſeſſing the vigour of youth, or in every trial finding ſuitable and ſufficient ſupports. *Note*, (1.) A kind and humble carriage will engage the affection of our neighbours. (2.) Whatever ſufferings or ſervices God calls us to, he will enable us for. Let us truſt him.

26. ¶ *There is* none like unto the God of [f] Jeſhurun, [g] *who* rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the ſky. 27. The eternal God *is thy* refuge, and underneath *are* the everlaſting arms; and he ſhall thruſt out the enemy from before thee, and ſhall ſay, Deſtroy *them*. 28. [h] Iſrael then ſhall dwell in ſafety alone: the fountain of Jacob *ſhall be* upon a land of corn and wine, alſo his heaven ſhall drop down dew. 29. Happy *art* thou, O Iſrael: who *is* like unto thee, O people ſaved by the LORD, the ſhield of thy help, and who *is* the ſword of thy excellency! and [i] thine enemies ſhall be † found liars unto thee, and [k] thou ſhalt tread upon their high places.

[f] Chap. xxxii. 15.
[g] Pſal. lxviii. 4, 33. Hab. iii. 8.
[h] Num. xxiii. 9. Jer. xxiii. 6. & xxxiii. 16.
[i] 2 Sam. xxii. 45. Pſal. xviii. 44. & lxvi. 3. & lxxxi. 15.
† Or ſubdued unto thee.
[k] Chap. xxxii. 13.

v. 26—29. He concludes his ſong with a high character of Iſrael's God, and a glorious account of God's Iſrael. 1. Iſrael's God is glorious above all gods; the heavens are his chariot, ſhewing his majeſty and honour, under his government, and armed to execute his orders. Eternal in his ſelf-exiſtent eſſence, almighty in power and univerſal dominion. *Note*, We can never ſufficiently exalt and extol the God of Glory; when we have raiſed our conceptions and praiſes to the higheſt pitch, he is ſtill far above all bleſſing and praiſe. 2. The Iſrael of God is glorious too, in the love, care, protection and bleſſing of ſuch a God. *He is their refuge* or dwelling-place; a refuge to fly to, as the manſlayer did for deliverance from ſin, death, and hell. *A manſion*, where the ſoul may reſt, comfortable and ſecure, under the ſhadow of a covenant God. *And underneath are the everlaſting arms*, arms of everlaſting love, to embrace and comfort them, of everlaſting power to protect and preſerve them. *Note*, Not all the powers of darkneſs can pluck Chriſt's redeemed ones from him; no not the weakeſt believer that hangs upon him. In the ſoreſt trials, and deepeſt diſtreſſes, they cannot fail, whom God upholdeth with his hand: bleſſed and happy they who truſt on him. *He ſhall thruſt out the enemy from before thee*; ſtrongly entrenched, and powerful as their armies may be, the commiſſion is ſigned for their deſtruction, *he ſhall ſay, Deſtroy them*. In judgment, the Canaanites muſt periſh, and Iſrael be the executioner of divine vengeance. *Note*, Chriſt Jeſus hath, by once dying, deſtroyed the devil and his works, and all his redeemed people go forth under his banner, conquering and to conquer. *Iſrael then ſhall dwell in ſafety alone*, for what can diſturb their repoſe, who have God for their refuge? With his preſence they never can be ſolitary, and whilſt detached from the idolatry around them, are thus ſecure from fear of evil. *Note*, The more ſeparate we are from the world, uſually the ſafer; little compliances bring on often great and dangerous conſequences. *The fountain of Jacob*, the people derived from him their ſource, and flowing downward ſtill to future generations, *ſhall be upon a land of corn and wine*, with which Canaan their happy lot abounded: *alſo his heavens ſhall drop down the dew*, refreſhing and timely ſhowers ſhall impregnate the earth with fertility: thus Jeſus cauſes the dew of his heavenly influences to deſcend on his people's hearts, which makes them revive as the corn, and grow as the vine. Well may it be ſaid after ſuch an aſſemblage of bleſſings, *Happy art thou, O Iſrael, Who is like unto thee?* whom no foes can approach, becauſe a *people ſaved of the Lord*, covered from every aſſault by him, *who is the ſhield of thy help*, and armed with thoſe offenſive weapons, whoſe piercing edge no tempered armour can reſiſt, *even the ſword of his excellency*. *Note*, Every ſpiritual Iſraelite is clad in the divine panoply: the ſhield of faith, the ſword of the ſpirit, and the helmet of ſalvation, ſecure him from danger, enable him to fight and ſubdue every enemy of his ſoul. *Thine enemies ſhall be found liars unto thee*, their proud vauntings ſhall be confounded, and their threatned rage diſappointed; or they *ſhall lie unto thee*, as the Gibeonites, through fear of their arms, contriving a lie to ſecure themſelves from deſtruction: and *thou ſhalt tread upon their high places*, triumphantly reign over them, caſting down their ſtrongeſt-holds, and treading under foot their idols, whoſe groves and temples were uſually on the high places; and thus ſhall God do for his believing people, bruiſing ſatan under their feet, caſting down imaginations, and every high thought which exalteth itſelf within them, and bringing the whole man into the obedience of Chriſt, who ſhall reign in the believer's heart as their king on earth, before they are brought to reign with him, as kings in glory everlaſting.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Moſes having finiſhed his dying words, applies himſelf to his dying work. Here is, 1. *The view Moſes had of the land of Canaan,* ver. 1—4. 2. *His death and burial,* ver. 5, 6. 3. *His age,* ver. 7. 4. *Iſrael's mourning for him,* ver. 8. 5. *His ſucceſſor,* ver. 9. 6. *His character,* ver. 10—12.

1. AND Moſes went up from the plains of Moab unto [a] the mountain of Nebo, to the top of † Piſgah, that *is* over againſt Jericho: and the LORD ſhewed him [b] all the land of Gilead, [c] unto Dan, 2. And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manaſſeh, and all the land of Judah, [d] unto the utmoſt ſea, 3. And the ſouth, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, [e] the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar. 4. And the LORD ſaid unto him, [f] This *is* the land which I ſware unto Abraham, unto Iſaac, and unto Jacob, ſaying, I will give it unto thy ſeed: [g] I have cauſed thee to ſee *it* with thine eyes, but thou ſhalt not go over thither.

[a] Num. xxiii. 47. & xxvii. 12. Chap. xxxii. 49.
† Or the hill.
[b] Chap. iii. 27. 2 Mac. ii. 4.
[c] Gen. xiv. 14.
[d] Chap. xi. 24.
[e] Judg. i. 16. & iii. 13. 2 Chron. xxviii. 15.
[f] Gen. xii. 7. & xiii. 15. & xv. 18. & xxvi. 3. & xxviii. 13.
[g] Chap. xxxii. 52.

v. 1—4. Moſes having received the divine command to go up to mount Nebo and die, chearfully addreſſes him to the pleaſing taſk; for to a believer, death is not his loſs, but gain; not his miſery, but his privilege. 1. He goes up to the top of Piſgah, the higheſt ſummit of the mountain; and, it ſhould ſeem, alone without help though ſo aged, and without company, that they may not ſee him die, and ſuperſtitiouſly venerate his bones, or his ſepulchre. 2. God ſhews him from thence, according to his promiſe, all the inheritance of the tribes of Iſrael, both on this ſide Jordan and beyond it. God was then with him, when every other ſupport failed him, and his preſence made up for all the reſt. It was a large extent of country, but his eye was keen, and aſſiſted now by particular power from God. *Note*, To God's grace we ſtand indebted for every pleaſing proſpect which faith gives us of the glory beyond the grave; and he is often peculiarly kind to his dying ſaints, making their views of his glory moſt ſtrong and ſtriking, to ſupport them in that awful hour. God's faithfulneſs now was evident, and it afforded a ſupport to himſelf, that he had this faithful God to truſt upon, who, though he might not enter the earthly Canaan, had provided for him a better country, that is, an heavenly; and having by faith ſhewed it him afar off, would ſhortly, through the grave and gate of death, bring him thither, to an everlaſting inheritance.

5. ¶ [h] So Moſes the ſervant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. 6. ¶ And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over againſt Beth-peor: but [i] no man knoweth of his ſepulchre unto this day. 7. ¶ And [k] Moſes *was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died: [l] his eye was not dim, nor his † natural force ‡ abated. 8. ¶ And the children of Iſrael wept for Moſes in the plains of Moab [m] thirty days, ſo the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moſes were ended.

[h] Ibid. xxxii. 50.
[i] See Jude 9.
[k] Chap. xxxi. 2.
[l] See Joſh. xiv. 10, 11.
† Heb. Moiſture.
‡ Heb. Fled.
[m] See Gen. l. 3, 10. Num. xx. 29.

v. 5—8. We have here,

1. The death of Moſes *the ſervant of the Lord*, whom God ſo eminently employed and owned; he died in *Moab*, *according to the word of the Lord*, not by diſeaſe or age, but by an immediate diſſolution, without grief or pain, in full health and vigour.

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gour. *Note*, (1.) Death will remove the moſt uſeful and favoured ſervants of God. (2.) When they reſt frem their labours on earth, they will enter into their reſt in heaven. (3.) They have lived long enough, who have finiſhed the work God hath given them to do, and ſhall have their deſires anſwered, to be abſent from the body, and to be preſent with the Lord.

2. Moſes' burial. It is not ſaid who buried him: it ſeems God uſed the miniſtry of angels: See *Jude. v.* 9. particularly Michael, and buried him ſecretly in a valley over againſt Beth-peor, that his ſepulchre might not be known, and that the people might be kept from that idolatrous veneration they might be led to pay him after his death. *Note*, (1.) When the ſoul reſts with God, it matters little where the body lies. The duſt will not be the leſs at eaſe, becauſe no ſumptuous monument is raiſed over the grave. (2.) All veneration for the relicks of departed ſaints is abominable; it is like ſiding with the devil, when he diſputed for the body of Moſes.

3. His age. One hundred and twenty years old, not equal to the years of his fathers, yet greatly exceeding his cotemporaries: he had experienced a great viciſſitude of ſtate, reſcued when expoſed to the jaws of death, then brought up as a royal prince in Pharaoh's court, afterwards reduced to the mean employment of a ſhepherd; then at laſt exalted to be King in Jeſhurun. Such a changing world we live in, good and evil are ſet thus over againſt each other, but in that bleſt world to which we go, there is nothing but bliſs and glory *without variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning.* One remarkable thing is obſerved of him, that *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*; no decay of body, nor infirmity of mind attended him to the laſt. *Note*, (1.) A healthy old age is a ſingular bleſſing. (2.) The moral law is thus in full vigour, ſharp as ever to diſcern our faults, and ſtrong as ever to avenge diſobedience.

4. The mourning of the people for him. They had a great loſs in ſuch a leader; and thoſe who oppoſed him when alive, probably now more bitterly regretted his departure, *Virtutem preſentem odimus, ſublatam quærimus.* Beſides that, it brought their ſins againſt him to remembrance, and tears of penitence for themſelves, mingled with tears of ſorrow for him. It is good to make every grief a means of our humiliation: thirty days it laſted; a long mourning, but we may not always weep. Though decent ſorrow is commendable, immoderate grief is ſinful: the days of mourning muſt end; we are ſure they will ſhortly, and never more return, when the day comes that every tear ſhall be wiped from our eyes.

n Num. xxvii. 18,23.

9. ¶ And Joſhua the ſon of Nun was full of the ſpirit of wiſdom: for [n] Moſes had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Iſrael hearkned unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moſes. 10. ¶ And there aroſe not a prophet ſince in Iſrael like unto Moſes, [o] whom the LORD knew face to face. 11. In all [p] the ſigns and the wonders which the LORD ſent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his ſervants, and to all his land. 12. And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moſes ſhewed in the ſight of all Iſrael.

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o Exod. xxxiii. 11. Num. xii. 6, 8. Chap. v. 4.

p Chap. iv. 34. & vii. 19.

v. 9—12. We have here the praiſe of the living governor, and the juſt encomium on the deceaſed. 1. Joſhua was admirably qualified to ſucceed Moſes in his arduous charge, *full of the ſpirit of wiſdom*, ſkilled alike in the arts of government and war; God had commanded Moſes *to lay his hands on him*, and whilſt he deſigned him his ſucceſſor, communicated to him abilities for the taſk, and the people acknowledged the appointment, and paid a ready obedience to his orders. *Note*, (1.) Whom God calls to any charge, he qualifies for the employment. (2.) God will never leave his Iſrael deſtitute, but as one faithful miniſter is taken away, another ſhall be raiſed up in his ſtead. (3.) We muſt not, through prejudice to the living, exalt too much thoſe who went before them, but ſubmit with the ſame chearfulneſs and love to the younger paſtors, as to the more aged ones which are departed. (4.) Joſhua is appointed for what Moſes could not do. Thus the law of Moſes leaves us in the wilderneſs of conviction, Chriſt Jeſus, the true Joſhua, alone can bring us to the true reſt of peace of conſcience on earth, or eternal bliſs in heaven. 2. The encomium of Moſes is great, and moſt deſerved. He was above all other prophets diſtinguiſhed, in the free and frequent communion he enjoyed with God; others heard from him in dreams and viſions, but Moſes ſpake with him face to face, as a man talketh with his friend. None performed the like ſtupendous miracles, nor did any prophet ariſe in Iſrael like him. This teſtimony ſeems to have been written long after his departure, as was this chapter, by ſome of the ſucceeding inſpired penmen. One prophet, however, was predicted to ariſe, and he is ſince ariſen, more ſuperior to Moſes, than he was above his brethren. His goſpel in glory ſurpaſſing the law, which was a miniſtration of condemnation, his miracles more wonderful and numerous, and his covenant eſtabliſhed on better promiſes. Moſes was a ſervant in the houſe, Chriſt a ſon over his own houſe, one lies buried in the plains of Moab, the other living for ever to bleſs his people, ſeated on the throne of eternal glory, and ruling for them, and in them, till all enemies be put under their feet, and death itſelf at laſt be ſwallowed up in victory.

The End of the Five Books of MOSES.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
JOSHUA.

The Jews diſtinguiſh the Prophets into former and latter: The former begins with Joſhua, and ends with the book of Kings; and though the contents be purely hiſtorical, yet they are juſtly ſuppoſed to have been written by ſome of the Prophets, from authentic records of the Jewiſh nation. The Book of Joſhua contains the events of about twenty-ſeven years, and preſents us with the conqueſt, diviſion, and government of the land of Canaan, under the command of this divinely-appointed leader, who was herein an eminent type of Jeſus the Captain of our Salvation, who is given of God for a leader and commander to his ſpiritual Iſrael. A Leader, *to bring them ſafe through every ſpiritual danger, and to reſcue them from every enemy of their ſouls, till their final reſt in glory. A* Commander, *to reign over their hearts, and by his ſpirit to guide and rule them, according to his holy will and pleaſure on earth, till he ſhall bring them to his kingdom in heaven, where of his government there ſhall be no end.*

The divine authority of this book is ſupported ſufficiently; not only by its univerſal reception in the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church as canonical, but by the references and quotations made out of it in the New Teſtament, Heb. xi. 30, 31. Chap. xiii. 6. Jam. ii. 25. *In it we ſee the fulfilment of the foregoing prophecies and promiſes, and the faithfulneſs of God therein diſplayed; and are encouraged to truſt him in like manner, till all our enemies, like theirs, ſhall be put under our feet.*

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CHAP. I.

This book begins with the hiſtory of Joſhua's reign and government, to which, 1. *God* appoints *him,* ver. 1—9. 2. *He enters upon his charge,* ver. 10, 11. *and particularly reminds the two tribes and half of their engagements,* ver. 12—15. 3. *They agree to it, and take an oath of fealty to him,* ver. 16—18.

1. NOW after the death of Moſes the ſervant of the LORD, it came to paſs, that the LORD ſpake unto Joſhua the ſon of Nun, Moſes [a] miniſter, ſaying, 2. [b] Moſes my ſervant is dead; now therefore ariſe, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Iſrael. 3. [c] Every place that the ſole of your foot ſhall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I ſaid unto Moſes. 4. [d] From the wilderneſs and this Lebanon, even unto the great river the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great ſea, toward the going down of the ſun, ſhall be your coaſt. 5. There ſhall not any man be able to ſtand before thee all the days of thy life: [e] as I was with Moſes, *ſo* I will be with thee: [f] I will not fail thee, nor forſake thee. 6. [g] Be ſtrong and of a good courage: for † unto this people ſhalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I ſware unto their fathers to give them. 7. Only be thou ſtrong and very courageous, that thou mayſt obſerve to do according to all the law [h] which Moſes my ſervant commanded thee: [i] turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayeſt ‡ proſper whitherſoever thou goeſt. 8. [k] This book of the law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but [l] thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all *that is* written therein: for then thou ſhalt make thy way proſperous, and then thou ſhalt ‖ have good ſucceſs. 9. [m] Have not I commanded thee? Be ſtrong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou diſmayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whitherſoever thou goeſt.

[a] Deut. i. 38.
[b] Ibid. xxxiv. 5.
[c] Deut. xi. 24. Chap. xiv. 9.
[d] Exod. xxiii. 31. Num. xxxiv. 3.
[e] Exod. iii. 12.
[f] Deut. xxxi. 6, 8. Hebr. xiii. 5.
[g] Deut. xxxi. 23.
† Or, thou ſhalt cauſe this people to inherit the land, &c.

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[h] Deut. xxxi. 7.
[i] Deut. v. 32. & xxviii. 14.
‡ Or, do wiſely.
[k] Deut. xvii. 18, 19.
[l] Pſal. i. 2.
‖ Or, do wiſely.
[m] Deut. xxxi. 7, 8.

v. 1—9. Moſes being dead, God now ſpeaks to Joſhua about the march of the people into the land of promiſe. He had before been appointed to the office of captain-general: having firſt learnt to obey as Moſes' miniſter, he came to rule as his ſucceſſor. We may obſerve, 1. The command of God, *Moſes my ſervant is dead, now therefore ariſe.* Moſes had been a faithful ſervant, but death is the common lot of man; the wiſe man dieth as the fool. By removing from them this moſt uſeful miniſter, God will call them off from dependance on, and attachment to men. Joſhua muſt ariſe, and though conſcious of great inferiority of abilities, yet at God's command he may comfortably

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bly addreſs himſelf to the work; he who ſends will ſtrengthen him. *Note*, (1.) It is a comfort to the people of God, that though miniſters die, Jeſus their Lord for ever lives to provide for and direct them. (2.) Thoſe whom God calls to ſucceed eminent miniſters, though they feel their own inſufficiency, muſt not be diſcouraged, but truſt upon his grace and ſtrength who gives the miſſion. 2. The work enjoined him, to paſs Jordan, and to poſſeſs the land of Canaan. An arduous taſk! how ſhall he croſs this deep river, without bridge or pontoons, eſpecially now when overflowing its banks? and how poſſeſs a land, where all the inhabitants are mighty? here he muſt truſt upon God: if he commands, he will make the way plain and eaſy. *Note*, Divine faith overlooks the greateſt difficulties. They can do all things, who have Chriſt ſtrengthening them. 3. The promiſes made to him for his encouragement, [1.] The gift of the land is confirmed to the children of Iſrael. It was their own, as certainly as if they were in poſſeſſion. *Note*, The heavenly inheritance is as ſure to the heirs of promiſe, as if they were actually entered into it. The bounds are wide and extended, and had they been faithful to God, he had not ſuffered a tittle to have been unfulfilled: if they never occupied the whole, they muſt blame their own unbelief and diſobedience. *Note*, The glorious inheritance above reſts upon no uncertain conditions to be performed by us, but is ſecured by the perfect obedience of our divine Lord. [2.] God aſſures him, that his never-failing preſence and bleſſing ſhall be with him, as they had been with Moſes; and the conſequence of theſe muſt be victory. He ſhall tread on the necks of his enemies, and divide the land, to be poſſeſſed in peace by the tribes of Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) They who have God's preſence with them, may chearfully and confidently go forth againſt a hoſt of enemies. (2.) If God promiſes, he will never leave nor forſake us; it becomes us never to diſhonour him by our unbelieving fears. (3.) Victory over all the powers of evil is obtained for us, by our divine Joſhua, and we may triumph already in our glorious head over ſin, and death, and hell, as vanquiſhed enemies. 4. God gives him a repeated charge, (1.) To be obſervant of God's commandments, both by a perſonal obedience to them himſelf, and by diligent care to ſee them obſerved, by the army as their captain, and by the people as their ruler; and herein he might neither turn to the right hand or the left, indulge his own fancy, in explaining away any inſtitutions of God, or add ought to the ſacred rule; and in order hereunto daily, he muſt read in this holy book, make it the ſubject of frequent meditation, and converſe about the great things therein written, for his own and others improvement and edification. *Note*, No man ſo great as to be above his Bible; the higher our ſtation, the more we need divine direction for our conduct, becauſe our difficulties are greater, our influence more extenſive, and our ſalvation likely to be more glorious, or our damnation more aggravated. God promiſes, that proſperity and obedience ſhall go hand in hand, and ſucceſs crown all his undertakings. *Note*, They who are faithful to God, will aſſuredly find a bleſſing from him. (2.) He bids him be of good courage, repeats it again and again, and urges it with renewed aſſurances, that he would be with him: and need there was of ſuch encouragement, though his courage had been tried and known, for his difficulties were now greater than ever. His own inſufficiency for ſuch an enterprize, the people's well-known rebellious ſpirit, his enemies power and numbers might ſhake the moſt confirmed conſtancy; but fear is baniſhed, whilſt he who commands, inſpires him with ſtrength and courage irreſiſtible. *Note*, (1.) They who are ſtrongeſt, have need of daily ſupport and enouragement from God, or their ſtrength would quickly prove but weakneſs. (2.) When we go forth to fight the Lord's battles, as miniſters, we ſhould take with us that encouraging promiſe, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.* (3.) When God is pleaſed to work, none ſhall lett it: the mountains of difficulty before our divine Zerubbabel ſhall become a plain.

10. ¶ Then Joſhua commanded the officers of the people, ſaying, 11. Paſs through the hoſt, and command the people, ſaying, Prepare you victuals; for [n] within three days ye ſhall paſs over this Jordan, to go in to poſſeſs the land which the LORD your God giveth you to poſſeſs it. 12. ¶ And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manaſſeh, ſpake Joſhua, ſaying, 13. Remember [o] the word which Moſes the ſervant of the LORD commanded you, ſaying, The LORD your God hath given you reſt, and hath given you this land: 14. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle ſhall remain in the land which Moſes gave you on this ſide Jordan; but ye ſhall paſs before your brethren † armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them: 15. Until the LORD have given your brethren reſt, as *he hath given* you, and they alſo have poſſeſſed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: [p] then ye ſhall return unto the land of your poſſeſſion, and enjoy it, which Moſes the LORD's ſervant gave you on this ſide Jordan toward the ſun-riſing.

[n] Chap. iii. 2.

[o] Num. xxxii. 20, 28. Chap. xxii. 4.

† Heb. Marſhalled by five: as Exod. xiii. 18.

[p] Chap. xxii. 4. &c.

v. 10—15. No ſooner hath God done commanding, than Joſhua, as a faithful ſervant, begins obeying. 1. He iſſues forth orders to prepare for the march. Manna they had for bread, but as they were now in a land where cattle abounded, they might provide meat for their hoſts, as on the firſt news of invaſion, the enemy would probably remove their cattle to diſtant places. Proclamation is made, that within three days they ſhould paſs over Jordan, and poſſeſs the land which Joſhua ſpeaks of with the fulleſt confidence, and in ſo doing, could not but greatly encourage them. This proclamation ſeems to have been iſſued after the thirty days mourning was ended, and juſt at, or immediately after the return of the ſpies mentioned *Chap.* II. *Note*, We ought to ſpeak confidently of the fulfilment of God's promiſes, that by our own faith we may ſtrengthen our brethren. 2. The two tribes and half, though they had their ſettlement on that ſide Jordan, muſt, according to agreement, paſs over before their brethren. They muſt not quit them, till they were comfortably ſettled alſo. *Note*, The intereſts of God's Iſrael muſt be made our own, and we muſt be ready to ſhare their warfare, and to ſeek their reſt as our own.

16. ¶ And they anſwered Joſhua, ſaying, All that thou commandeſt us, we will do, and whitherſoever thou ſendeſt us, we will go. 17. According as we hearkened unto Moſes in all things, ſo will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moſes. 18. Whoſoever *he be* that doth rebel againſt thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words, in all that thou commandeſt him, he ſhall be put to death: only be ſtrong and of a good courage.

v. 16—18. The heads of theſe tribes readily acknowledge their obligations, and profeſs their willingneſs to go with their brethren, and be obedient to him as they had been to Moſes, to go and do whatſoever he ſhould command them. *Note*, They who have taken the Lord Jeſus for their maſter, will yield a ready and willing obedience to his word, and ſubmiſſion to his providences. They add alſo, 1. An earneſt prayer for his ſucceſs, and a profeſſion of their truſt, that God would be with him, as he was with Moſes. *Note*, (1.) Miniſters and magiſtrates ſhould have continually an intereſt in our prayers. Their bleſſing is in effect our own. (2.) The mercy, which faith aſſures us we ſhall obtain, we are not the leſs bound to pray for. 2. They make an act, that rebellion againſt his commands ſhould be death. The man who refuſed to go over Jordan with his brethren, deſerved not to live to enjoy his own poſſeſſions. Accordingly forty thouſand of them, being as many as Joſhua choſe, or were needed, went over to war; the reſt ſtaying at his command, to guard their conqueſts. 3. They encourage him to lead the way, and therein profeſs their chearfulneſs to follow him as to certain victory. *Note*, It is a great encouragement to miniſters to ſee the people hearty, and ſtrengthening their hands in their work and labours.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter we have an account of the ſpies Joſhua ſent, ver. 1. 2. *How Rahab received and protected them*, ver. 2—7. 3. *The account ſhe gave them of the preſent poſture of Jericho*, ver. 8—11. 4. *The bargain ſhe made with them for the ſecurity of herſelf and her relations*, ver. 12—21. 5. *Their ſafe return to Joſhua, and the account they gave him of their expedition*, ver. 22—24.

1. AND Joſhua the ſon of Nun † ſent [a] out of Shittim two men, to ſpy ſecretly, ſaying, Go view the land, even Jericho: and they went, and [b] came into an harlot's houſe, named [c] Rahab, and ‡ lodged there. 2. And it was told the king of Jericho, ſaying, Behold there came men in hither to night of the children of Iſrael, to ſearch out the country. 3. And the king of Jericho ſent unto Rahab, ſaying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine houſe: for they be come to ſearch out all the country. 4. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and ſaid thus, There came men unto me, but I wiſt not whence they *were*: 5. And it came to paſs *about the time* of ſhutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went, I wot not: purſue after them quickly, for ye ſhall overtake them. 6. But [d] ſhe had brought them up to the roof of the houſe, and hid them with the ſtalks of flax, which ſhe

† Or, had ſent.

[a] Num. xxv. 1.

[b] Heb. xi. 31. James ii. 25.

[c] Matth. i. 5.

‡ Heb. Lay.

[d] See 2 Sam. xvii. 19.

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ſhe had laid in order upon the roof. 7. And the men purſued after them the way to Jordan, unto the fords: and as ſoon as they which purſued after them were gone out, they ſhut the gate.

v. 1—7. Joſhua, as a wiſe leader, though aſſured of God's protection, uſes thoſe prudential means which might moſt rationally enſure ſucceſs. 1. He ſends out ſpies to get information concerning the eaſieſt method for his intended attack on Jericho. We muſt not tempt God by a neglect of the means, though we muſt truſt him for the ſucceſs of every enterprize. 2. The ſpies with ready obedience undertake the dangerous ſervice, and as all good ſoldiers ought to do, put their lives in their hands, croſs Jordan, ſecretly enter Jericho by night, and take up their abode at an harlot's houſe, whoſe name was Rahab. A woman whoſe conduct had juſtly deſerved to be ſtigmatized, yet who is more diſtinguiſhed by the choice of ſovereign grace among the eminent veſſels of mercy. *Note,* (1.) The vileſt need not deſpair; the grace of God knows no difference; it is grace abounding to the chief of ſinners. (2.) The remembrance of *what we were,* ſhould ſerve to affect our minds more deeply with thankfulneſs to God, for *what,* through grace, *we are.* 3. Rahab very kindly entertains and protects them. They had not entered Jericho quite unperceived. Suſpicion of their deſign had raiſed a ſearch after them, and had they not found ſo hoſpitable a friend, they were in the moſt imminent danger. But Rahab having heard and believed the report of God's promiſe to Iſrael, reſolved, at all hazards, to ſecrete them, which ſhe did under the flax, which lay on the flat roof of her houſe; and with a lie, which nothing could excuſe, betrays her country, and deceives the inquiſitors. It was by faith, we are aſſured, ſhe concealed the ſpies: an action which the Holy Ghoſt has marked as highly commendable, though there appears in the means ſhe uſed much to condemn. Learn hence, (1.) There may be true and juſtifying faith where much corruption ſtill works, and ſin in ſome inſtance prevails. (2.) The hazard ſhe herſelf ran in this concealment, ſhewed the firmneſs of her confidence in the divine promiſe to Iſrael. They who truly believe, will riſk all for God, and not count their very lives dear unto them. (3.) We muſt not haſtily caſt out, as reprobates, thoſe whom in ſome actions we cannot but condemn: they may be ſound in faith, though Satan have gained advantage in a trying time againſt them.

8. ¶ And before they were laid down, ſhe came up unto them upon the roof; 9. And ſhe ſaid unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your [e] terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land † faint becauſe of you. 10. For we have heard how the LORD [f] dried up the water of the red ſea for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did unto the two kings of the Amorites that *were* on the other ſide Jordan, [g] Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly deſtroyed. 11. And as ſoon as we had heard *theſe things,* [h] our hearts did melt, neither ‡ did there remain any more courage in any man, becauſe of you: for [i] the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. 12. Now therefore, I pray you, ſwear unto me by the LORD, ſince I have ſhewed you kindneſs, that ye will alſo ſhew kindneſs unto my [k] father's houſe; and give me a true token: 13. And *that* ye will ſave alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my ſiſters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. 14. And the men anſwered her, Our life ‖ for yours, if ye utter not this our buſineſs. And it ſhall be when the LORD hath given us the land, that [l] we will deal kindly and truly with thee. 15. Then ſhe let them down by a cord through the window: for her houſe *was* upon the town-wall, and ſhe dwelt upon the wall. 16. And ſhe ſaid unto them, Get you to the mountain, leſt the purſuers meet you; and hide yourſelves there three days, until the purſuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. 17. And the men ſaid unto her, We *will be* blameleſs of this thine oath which thou haſt made us ſwear. 18. Behold, *when* we come into the land, thou ſhalt bind this line of ſcarlet thread in the window which thou didſt let us down by: and thou ſhalt § bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's houſhold home unto thee. 19. And it ſhall be, *that* whoſoever ſhall go out of the doors of thy houſe into the ſtreet, his blood *ſhall be* upon his head, and we *will be* guiltleſs: and whoſoever ſhall be with thee in the houſe, [m] his blood *ſhall be* on our head, if *any* hand be upon him. 20. And if thou utter this our buſineſs, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou haſt made us to ſwear. 21. And ſhe ſaid, According unto your words, ſo *be* it. And ſhe ſent them away, and they departed: and ſhe bound the ſcarlet line in the window.

[e] Gen. xxxv. 5. Exod. xxiii. 27.
† Heb. Melt.
[f] Exod. xiv. 21. Chap. iv. 23.
[g] Num. xxi. 24, 34.
[h] Exod. xv. 14.
‡ Heb. Roſe up.
[i] Deut. iv. 39.
[k] See 1 Tim. v. 8.
‖ Heb. Inſtead of you to die.
[l] Judg. i. 24.
§ Heb. Gather.
[m] Mat. xxvii. 25.

v. 8—21. Having happily ſucceeded in her ſtratagem on the men of Jericho, whilſt they were gone on their purſuit, Rahab comes up to her concealed gueſts; and,

1. Informs them of the dread and terror the people of the land were under, becauſe of them. The fame of God's wonders in Egypt, and in the land of Gilead and Baſhan, had gone before them, and, more than half conquered by their fears, the hearts of the Canaanites already fainted at their approach: and convinced herſelf of God's power and faithfulneſs, to give them the land, ſhe makes profeſſion of her faith, which could not but mightily conduce to ſtrengthen theirs. God had given them the land, and they had nothing more to do, than come up and poſſeſs it. *Note,* (1.) God can ſend his terrors to the hearts of his enemies, ſo that the boldeſt ſhall tremble with panic fear. (2.) It is a great help to confirm the faith of the weak, to hear the encouraging profeſſions of their believing brethren. (3.) Faith is a diſtinguiſhing gift of God; though all Jericho heard the ſame report, Rahab alone effectually received it. Thus where the goſpel is preached, ſometimes one, and that too perhaps the moſt unlikely perſon in the congregation, hears and believes, whilſt the reſt continue as impenitent and infidel as before.

2. Rahab engages them to afford her protection, on the approaching ruin of her country; ſhe knew the certain deſtruction, and was ſollicitous to provide againſt it. With a tender concern for her relations, ſhe would ſecure them with herſelf, and requeſts them, by an oath, to enſure their lives with her own, as a juſt recompence for her care of them. *Note,* (1.) Faith which foreſees the ruin of the ungodly, will urge us to ſave ourſelves from among them. (2.) They who have a concern about their own ſouls, cannot but be exceedingly ſollicitous for thoſe of their own houſe. (3.) The lives that are jeoparded for Chriſt's ſervice, ſhall be ſecured by his care.

3. They readily conſent to her requeſt, and confirm it by an oath, to take the ſame care of her life as their own, which indeed they owed to her concealment, to deal kindly with her beyond her requeſts, and to ſee that no violence ſhould be offered to any under her roof; with this proviſo, that ſhe complied with the inſtructions which they gave her, which were to conceal the whole of what had paſſed; to tie the ſcarlet cord by which they were let down, in her window, as a mark upon her houſe; and to ſuffer none within her doors to go out, leaſt they ſhould fall in the promiſcuous ſlaughter. *Note,* (1.) When we ſwear, it muſt be with caution, inſerting every needful proviſo, leaſt afterwards we ſhould be enſnared by the words of our lips. (2.) The blood of Chriſt upon the believer's heart, is as this ſcarlet cord upon Rahab's houſe, a protection from the ſword of the deſtroyer. (3.) They muſt not mingle with the world which lieth in wickedneſs, who would not be condemned with it.

4. Being let down by the wall, and following the advice ſhe gave them, after hiding themſelves three days in the mountains till their purſuers were returned, the ſpies haſten to the camp, and Rahab binds the cord in the window, that ſhe might be ready for the approaching event. *Note,* (1.) Prudent means are to be uſed for our ſafety, when we are moſt truly truſting our all with God. (2.) We muſt make no delay to get the blood of ſprinkling on our conſcience, that ſo we may never be ſurprized unawares by death or danger.

22. And they went and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the purſuers were returned. And the purſuers ſought *them* throughout all the way, but found *them* not. 23. ¶ So the two men returned, and deſcended from the mountain, and paſſed over, and came to Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and told him all *things* that befel them; 24. And they ſaid unto Joſhua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do † faint becauſe of us.

† Heb. Melt.

v. 22—24. The ſpies being returned in ſafety, make a faithful report of their expedition, the happy incident of Rahab's kindneſs, and the dread and terror of the people, aſſuredly gathering from thence the conqueſt of the land, and encouraging their brethren to go up without delay. *Note,* (1.) The fears of ſinners are the preſages of their approaching ruin. (2.) They may comfortably and confidently go up againſt their ſpiritual enemies, who have God's promiſes of victory to encourage them.

CHAP. III.

This chapter, 1. *opens with the march of Iſrael to the banks of Jordan,* ver. 1. 2. *After three days reſt, proclamation is made to the*

the people, to follow the prieſts bearing the ark, ver. 2—6. 3. *God promiſes to magnify Joſhua*, ver. 7, 8. 4. *The people are informed of what God is about to do for them*, ver. 9—13. 5. *The event correſponds thereunto*, ver. 14—17.

1. AND Joſhua roſe early in the morning, and they removed [a] from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Iſrael, and lodged there before they paſſed over. 2. And it came to paſs [b] after three days, that the officers went through the hoſt; 3. And they commanded the people, ſaying, [c] when ye ſee the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, [d] and the prieſts the Levites bearing it, then ye ſhall remove from your place, and go after it. 4. Yet there ſhall be a ſpace between you and it, about two thouſand cubits by meaſure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye muſt go: for ye have not paſſed *this* way † heretofore. 5. And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, [e] Sanctify yourſelves: for to-morrow the LORD will do wonders among you. 6. And Joſhua ſpake unto the prieſts, ſaying, [f] Take up the ark of the covenant, and paſs over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

v. 1—6. All things being now ready for their march, they advance to the banks of Jordan. Joſhua very early in the morning, as a diligent commander, ariſes to his work. They who have buſineſs that calls them, muſt not lie ſlumbering on their beds. Proclamation is now made through the hoſts, to obſerve the following orders: To follow the ark as their guide, the cloud having probably departed from them at Moſes' death: the prieſts were to bear it, and lead the way, and they at an humble diſtance muſt go after it; God undertaking to find them a path that had never been paſſed before, and to lead them ſafely through. *Note*, (1.) They who follow the word of God as their guide, will walk in the right way. (2.) The prieſts who hold forth this word, muſt not only go before the people in their miniſtrations of it, but lead them alſo by their examples. (3.) Though they who bear the ark, are more expoſed than others, they need not fear, their charge ſhall be their protection. (4.) Death is a path untrod, but if God's preſence and promiſes be with us, we ſhall not fear, theſe will guide and guard us ſafely through the dark valley. 2. They are commanded to ſanctify themſelves, to cleanſe themſelves from all ceremonial defilement, and by exerciſes of devotion, and purification of their hearts from moral pollutions, prepare for the mercies God was ready to ſhew them, and the wonders he was about to work on their behalf. *Note*, They who would paſs the ſtream of death comfortably, muſt have no unrepented ſin upon their conſcience: in order to ſee God, we muſt be pure in heart. 3. Joſhua gives the order to the prieſts to take up the ark of the covenant, and they with readineſs obey him, and march before the people to the brink of the river. *Note*, They who are ſure they are in the way of duty, will follow God with comfort and confidence, though inſurmountable difficulties in human eſtimation ſeem to obſtruct their paſſage.

7. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the ſight of all Iſrael, that they may know that [g] as I was with Moſes, *ſo* I will be with thee. 8. And thou ſhalt command the prieſts that bear the ark of the covenant, ſaying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye ſhall ſtand ſtill in Jordan. 9. ¶ And Joſhua ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God. 10. And Joſhua ſaid, Hereby ye ſhall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgaſhites, and the Amorites, and the Jebuſites. 11. Behold, the ark of the covenant of [h] the Lord of all the earth, paſſeth over before you into Jordan. 12. Now therefore take ye twelve men out of the tribes of Iſrael, out of every tribe a man. 13. And it ſhall come to paſs, as ſoon as the ſoles of the feet of the prieſts that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, ſhall reſt in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan ſhall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above: and they [i] ſhall ſtand upon an heap.

v. 7—13. God being now about to bring his people into the land of promiſe, under their new general, He is pleaſed,

1. To put a mark of diſtinguiſhed honour upon him, by ſpeaking to him from the mercy-ſeat, before the ark removed, aſſuring him publickly of his preſence with him at the banks of Jordan, as diſtinguiſhably as it had been with Moſes, at the red ſea; and the prieſts themſelves are to be under his direction, and receive their orders from him. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who honour God, he will honour. (2.) It was at Bethabara, the place where Joſhua paſſed, that Jeſus was baptized, and entered upon his miniſtry, of bringing God's Iſrael to their reſt in glory. (3.) It is the duty of magiſtrates to ſtir up miniſters to their work, as it ſhould be their delight to be ready to execute every plan propoſed for the good of immortal ſouls.

2. Joſhua communicates to the people God's deſign of dividing the waters of Jordan, and from ſuch a miraculous inſtance of God's favour to them, infers the certain victory which they ſhould gain over all their enemies. He who went before them down into Jordan, would go up before them utterly to expel the nations of Canaan; and when they had ſeen with their eyes the waters dried up, they might no more doubt their poſſeſſing the land whither they were thus led. *Note*, The wondrous preſervations, and the repeated mercies every believer is daily receiving from God, ſhould be improved as a comfortable ground of confidence in futurity. He who leads us thro' the dangers of to-day, will preſerve us amidſt the trials of to-morrow; and as we have found him our ſupport in life, we ſhall alſo find him our ſtrength and comfort in death.

3. Twelve men are ſelected from the ſeveral tribes, ready to receive the farther orders which ſhould be iſſued.

14. ¶ And it came to paſs when the people removed from their tents, to paſs over Jordan, and the prieſts bearing [k] the ark of the covenant before the people; 15. And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the prieſts that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water (for [l] Jordan overfloweth all his banks [m] all the time of harveſt.) 16. That the waters which came down from above, ſtood *and* roſe up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beſide [n] Zaretan: and thoſe that came down [o] toward the ſea of the plain, *even* [p] the ſalt-ſea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people paſſed over right againſt Jericho. 17. And the prieſts that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, ſtood firm on dry ground in the midſt of Jordan, and all the Iſraelites paſſed over on dry ground, until all the people were paſſed clean over Jordan.

v. 14—17. Now was the glorious power of God to be magnified for his Iſrael. Advancing under his orders, though no way appeared, the prieſts reached the river's bank, much wider and deeper than uſual, owing to the melting of the ſnow from mount Lebanon, in the month of Niſan, anſwering to part of March and April, when their barley harveſt began. But no ſooner had their feet touched the waters, than they fled before them; part rolled backward to their fountain, part ran down into the lake of Sodom, and left a ſpace of 16 or 18 miles dry, for the ranſomed of the Lord to paſs over. *Note*, (1.) The greatneſs of our difficulties ſhall only the more magnify the power of God, in overcoming them for us. (2.) When we have an intereſt in a covenant God, and follow in ſimplicity the ark Chriſt, we ſhall find the paſſage of death as eaſy, as to Iſrael it was to paſs through the bed of the river, when the waters were dried up.—To aſſure the people of the ſafety of the paſſage, God's ark ſtands in the midſt till all are paſſed over: to encourage them to venture through, God's prieſts, as they entered firſt, ſtay till the laſt man has gained the oppoſite ſhore. *Note*, (1.) God's miniſters muſt be the firſt to brave danger, and the laſt to regard their own ſafety. (2.) Where God's covenant in Chriſt is eſtabliſhed, no ſtreams of wrath can overwhelm the ſoul. The place of their paſſage was oppoſite to Jericho, and not a man was loſt by the way. It could not but ſtrike terror and confuſion into their enemies, to ſee ſuch a miracle; it could not fail to inſpire themſelves with confidence of ſucceſs. What city could ſtand before thoſe, to whom the very elements miniſtered, and whom the omnipotent God led as their captain. *Note*, Nothing can withſtand the people of God in their paſſage to glory: in vain the world, or ſin, or death, obſtruct the way, God will cleave before them the deep waters, till the laſt believer is paſſed over, and not one ſoul ſhall be loſt of all whom Jeſus hath redeemed with his precious blood.

CHAP. IV.

This chapter gives a farther account of the miraculous paſſage of Iſrael through Jordan. 1. *Twelve ſtones are taken out of Jordan for a memorial*, ver. 1—8. 2. *Twelve others were ſet up in Jordan*, ver. 9. 3. *The march of all the people through Jordan's channel*, ver. 10—14. 4. *The cloſing of the waters*, ver. 15—19. 5. *The erecting of the monument in Gilgal, to preſerve the remembrance of this work of wonder to poſterity*, ver. 20—24.

[a] Chap. ii. 1.

[b] Ibid. i. 10, 11.

[c] See Numb. x. 33.

[d] Deut. xxxi. 25.

† Heb. Since yeſterday, and the third day.

[e] Exod. xix. 10, 14, 15. Lev. xx. 7. Numb. xi. 18. Chap. vii. 13. 1 Sam. xvi. 5. Joel ii. 16.

[f] Numb. iv. 15.

[g] Chap. i. 5.

[h] Ver. 13. Mich. iv. 13. Zech. iv. 14. & vi. 5.

[i] Pſal. cxiv. 3.

[k] Acts vii. 45.

[l] 1 Chron. xii. 15. Jer. xii. 5. & xlix. 19. Ecclus xxiv. 26.

[m] Chap. iv. 19. & v. 10, 12.

[n] 1 Kings iv. 12. & vii. 46.

[o] Deut. iii. 17.

[p] Numb. xxxiv. 3.

1. AND it came to paſs when all the people were clean paſſed [a] over Jordan, that the LORD ſpake unto [b] Joſhua, ſaying, 2. Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, 3. And command you them, ſaying, Take you hence, out of the midſt of Jordan, out of the place where the prieſts feet ſtood firm, twelve ſtones, and ye ſhall carry them over with you, and leave them in [c] the lodging-place where you ſhall lodge this night. 4. Then Joſhua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Iſrael, out of every tribe a man. 5. And Joſhua ſaid unto them, Paſs over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midſt of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a ſtone upon his ſhoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Iſrael: 6. That this may be a ſign among you, *that* when your children aſk *their fathers* † in time to come, ſaying, What *mean* you by theſe ſtones? 7. Then ye ſhall anſwer them, That [d] the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, when it paſſed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and theſe ſtones ſhall be for a memorial unto the children of Iſrael for ever. 8. And the children of Iſrael did ſo as Joſhua commanded, and took up twelve ſtones out of the midſt of Jordan, as the LORD ſpake unto Joſhua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Iſrael, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. 9. And Joſhua ſet up twelve ſtones in the midſt of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the prieſts which bare the ark of the covenant ſtood: and they are there unto this day.

[a] Deut. xxvii. 2.
[b] Chap. iii. 12.
[c] Ver. 19, 20.
† Heb. To-morrow.
[d] Chap. iii. 13, 16.

v. 1—9. Joſhua at God's command, after all the people were paſſed over, appoints twelve men, one out of each tribe, to return to the midſt of the river, and from the place where the prieſts feet reſted, to bring up twelve large ſtones, to be erected in the ſtation where they ſhould lodge at night, for a ſtanding memorial to ſucceeding generations, of this ſtupendous tranſaction. *Note*, (1.) It is good to preſerve the remembrance of extraordinary mercies, that the lateſt poſterity who inherit our bleſſings, may remember and praiſe the great author of them. (2.) As not the feebleſt Iſraelite periſhed in the paſſage, no more ſhall the weakeſt believer be left behind in a reſurrection-day, he ſhall come up with the tribes of the Lord, and enter with them into his everlaſting reſt.

Twelve other ſtones are alſo ſet up by Joſhua in the midſt of Jordan, piled up ſo as to be viſible, and ſtand as a counterpart to the monument, which ſhould be erected in Gilgal, both deſigned for the ſame purpoſe, to awaken the enquiries of the riſing generations, and to preſerve the tradition of this miraculous paſſage.

10. ¶ For the prieſts which bare the ark, ſtood in the midſt of Jordan, until every thing was finiſhed that the LORD commanded Joſhua to ſpeak unto the people, according to all that Moſes commanded Joſhua: and the people haſted and paſſed over. 11. And it came to paſs when all the people were clean paſſed over, that the ark of the LORD paſſed over, and the prieſts in the preſence of the people. 12. And [e] the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manaſſeh, paſſed over armed before the children of Iſrael, as Moſes ſpake unto them: 13. About forty thouſand ‡ prepared for war, paſſed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho. 14. ¶ On that day the LORD [f] magnified Joſhua in the ſight of all Iſrael, and they feared him, as they feared Moſes, all the days of his life. 15. And the LORD ſpake unto Joſhua, ſaying, 16. Command the prieſts that bear [g] the ark of the teſtimony, that they come up out of Jordan. 17. Joſhua therefore commanded the prieſts, ſaying, Come ye up out of Jordan. 18. And it came to paſs when the prieſts, that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, were come up out of the mids of Jordan, *and* the ſoles of the prieſts feet were ‖ lift up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, [h] and § flowed over all his banks, as *they did* before. 19. ¶ And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth *day* of the firſt month, and encamped in [i] Gilgal, in the eaſt-border of Jericho.

[e] Num. xii. 20, 27, 28.
‡ Or, ready armed.
[f] Chap. iii. 7.
[g] Exod. xxv. 16, 22.
‖ Heb. Plucked up.
[h] Chap. iii. 15.
§ Heb. Went.
[i] Chap. v. 9.

v. 10—19. In eagerneſs to reach the borders of this long looked for Canaan, the people in haſte paſs over. The two tribes and half lead the van; that is to ſay, a ſelect body of 40,000 men, as many as Joſhua choſe, the reſt being left at home, to guard the conquered country: and when all the people were paſſed in ſafety, the prieſts, at Joſhua's command, laſt of all aſcended from the river's bed, with the ark of God; which was no ſooner out of the channel than the waters, no longer reſtrained by the preſence and power of God, returned to their wonted courſe, and overflowed as uſual their banks. Thus was this paſſage accompliſhed, according to the commandment of the Lord, which Joſhua, attentive to Moſes's inſtructions, exactly followed; and herein he gained to himſelf immortal honour, God magnifying him in the ſight of the people, and cauſing them henceforth to reverence and reſpect him as much as they had reſpected Moſes himſelf. Juſt forty years were now elapſed ſince their departure from Egypt, all but five days, during which they halted at Gilgal, to prepare for and keep the paſſover. From hence we may learn, 1. That they who have heaven in their eye, cannot but be eager to enter that happy land. 2. They who are called out to God's work and ſervice, muſt chearfully leave all behind them. 3. Though we may wait long in the midſt of danger, as the prieſts did in Jordan, yet, if we have God's preſence with us, we need not be weary, nor doubt but we ſhall ſafely land at laſt. 4. Though the years of our pilgrimage be many, and full of ſorrow, it is a comfort they have an appointed end; and when we enter heaven the feaſt is prepared, and we ſhall celebrate our paſſover with ſongs of never-ending praiſe.

20. ¶ And thoſe twelve ſtones which they took out of Jordan, did Joſhua pitch in Gilgal. 21 And he ſpake unto the children of Iſrael, ſaying, When your children ſhall aſk their fathers † in time to come, ſaying, What *mean* theſe ſtones? 22. Then ye ſhall let your children know, ſaying, Iſrael came over this Jordan on dry land. 23. For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were paſſed over, as the LORD your God did to the [k] Red-ſea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: 24. That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty: that ye might [l] fear the LORD your God for ever.

† Heb. To-morrow. Ver. 6.
[k] Exod. xiv. 21.
[l] Pſal. lxxvi. 8. Jer. x. 6, 7. & xxxii. 40.

v. 20—24. The twelve ſtones taken out of Jordan are pitched in Gilgal, either erected as a pillar or laid in rows, as a monumental remembrancer of their late aſtoniſhing paſſage. As this would no doubt awaken the enquiries of the riſing generation, Joſhua directs them how and what to anſwer. 1. It was a memorial of their paſſage over Jordan on dry land. 2. They muſt inform their children that this was a ſecond miracle; the like divine power having been exerciſed at the Red-ſea. 3. That the deſign of all theſe miracles and monuments, was to glorify God, and make his almighty power to appear to all the people of the earth. 4. Particularly with regard to them, they were intended to engage their fear and obedience to this glorious God all their days. *Note*, (1.) It is good for young people to be inquiſitive, where inſtruction may be learnt. (2.) Parents ſhould take delight to teach their children the wondrous mercies of a gracious God. (3.) The deſign of God, in all his works and ways, is to exalt his own greatneſs and glory. (4.) The beſt inſtruction which children can receive is, to fear God for ever; happy they who are thus brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

CHAP. V.

We have here, 1. *The terror of the Canaanites,* ver. 1. 2. *The covenant of circumciſion renewed,* ver. 2—9. 3. *The feaſt of the paſſover celebrated,* ver. 10. 4. *Their camp victualled with the corn of the land, whereupon the manna ceaſed,* ver. 11, 12. 5. *The captain of the Lord's hoſt himſelf appears to Joſhua, to animate and direct him,* ver. 13—15.

1. AND it came to paſs when all the kings of the [a] Amorites, which *were* on the ſide of Jordan weſtward, and all the kings of the [b] Canaanites which *were* by the ſea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Iſrael, until we were paſſed over, that [c] their heart melted; neither was their ſpirit in them any more, becauſe of the children of Iſrael. 2. ¶ At that time the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, make thee † ſharp knives, and circumciſe again the children of Iſrael the ſecond time. 3. And [d] Joſhua made him ſharp knives, and circumciſed the children of Iſrael at the hill of the fore-ſkins. 4. And this *is* the

[a] Gen. x. 6.
[b] Num. xiii. 29.
[c] Exod. xv. 15. Chap. ii. 9. Pſ. xlviii. 5, 8. Rev. xviii. 10.
† Heb. Knives, or ſwords of rocks.
[d] Exod. iv. 25. Rom. ii. 9. Col. ii. 11.

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cauſe why Joſhua did circumciſe: all the people that came out of Egypt, *that were* males, *even* all the men of war, [e] died in the wilderneſs by the way, after they came out of Egypt. 5. Now all the people that came out, were circumciſed; but all the people *that were* [f] born in the wilderneſs by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, *them* they had not circumciſed. 6. For the children of Iſrael walked forty years in the wilderneſs, till all the people *that were* men of war, which came out of Egypt, were conſumed, becauſe they obeyed not the voice of the LORD; unto whom [g] the LORD ſware that he would not ſhew them the land which the LORD ſware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. 7. And their children, *whom* [h] he raiſed up in their ſtead, them Joſhua circumciſed; for they were [i] uncircumciſed, becauſe they had not circumciſed them by the way. 8. And it came to paſs, when they had done circumciſing all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. 9. And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, This day have I rolled away [k] the reproach of Egypt [l] from off you: wherefore the name of the place is called ‡ Gilgal unto this day.

[e] Num. xiv. 23. 1 Cor. x. 5. Heb. iii. 17, 19.
[f] Hoſ. vi. 6, 7.
[g] Num. xiv. 23. Pſ. xcv. 10.
[h] Num. xiv. 31.
[i] Eph. ii. 14. Col. iii. 11.
[k] Gen. xxxiv. 14. Jer. ix. 25.
[l] Chap. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7.
‡ i. e. Rolling.

v. 1—9. Safely arrived at laſt within the borders of the promiſed land, the divided waters of Jordan cloſe, and nothing remains, but to caſt out the inhabitants, and poſſeſs the country. In order to which we are told, 1. What terror and diſmay ſeized on the neighbouring kings. Who can ſtand before thoſe, from whoſe preſence the ſwellings of affrighted Jordan retire and open a ſafe way for their march? Their hearts melted therefore like wax, and they gave themſelves up for loſt. *Note*, God often makes his enemies know how vain it is to contend with him; and by his ſecret terrors, even in the midſt of life and health, brings them into the pangs of death. 2. The people halted at their firſt ſtation, and Joſhua, at the divine command, iſſues orders for a general circumciſion of the people. It ſeems, during their march through the wilderneſs, this rite had been neglected, either becauſe of the inconvenience it muſt have been attended with, during their frequent marches, or perhaps forbidden them as a mark of God's diſpleaſure. The ſeal of the covenant being with-held, they might be admoniſhed of their forfeiture of the bleſſings of it, through their unbelief and murmuring. But now, when God's goodneſs has triumphed over their perverſeneſs, on admitting them into the land, he commands them to receive the ſeal of the covenant in token of the fulfilment of the promiſes made to Abraham; and whilſt their enemies were in terrors, they might reſt in ſafety from fear of being attacked, till they were recovered. 3. The people readily conſent; they had ſeen ſo much of God's interpoſition, that they were not afraid of their enemies, and were happy to lay themſelves under the bonds of the covenant, that with God's promiſes thus ſealed to them, they might go forth more confidently to vanquiſh their foes. All therefore who were born in the wilderneſs were circumciſed together, the very day they arrived at their firſt ſtation, or the day following. The operation was performed with ſharp knives, or, as the original imports, *knives of ſtones*, which were antiently in uſe; and it is called a *ſecond* circumciſion, not that it was ever repeated to the ſame perſons, but in reference either to the firſt inſtitution of the ordinance, which now, on entring the promiſed land, was ſo ſolemnly repeated; or, as others conjecture, with reſpect to a former general circumciſion, during the three days darkneſs in Egypt; becauſe, in their ſtate of hard ſervitude and perſecution, it had probably been neglected. As any perſon might circumciſe, and all thoſe that came out of Egypt, under twenty years of age, were moſt of them alive, the work divided into ſo many hands was ſoon performed; and the place afterwards retained the name of the tranſaction, it was called the hill of the Foreſkins, becauſe they covered them up with earth in an heap, and Gilgal, becauſe their reproach was now taken away. They were owned of God, as his covenant children, and no longer to be branded as wanderers in a wilderneſs, but now are entered as poſſeſſors into the long-expected inheritance. *Note*, (1.) The reproaches caſt on God's people ſhall ſhortly be wiped away, and confuſion cover their enemies. (2.) The Iſrael of God muſt circumciſe the foreſkin of their heart, and cut off every corrupt and vile affection. (3.) Nothing can ſo infallibly aſſure us of inheriting the kingdom of glory, as the experience of the mortification of ſin in our ſouls, through the work of our divine Joſhua.

10. ¶ And the children of Iſrael encamped in Gilgal, and kept [m] the paſſover on the fourteenth day of the month, at even, in the plains of Jericho. 11. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the paſſover unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the ſelf-ſame day. 12. ¶ And [n] the manna ceaſed on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land, neither had the children of Iſrael manna any more, but they did eat of [o] the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

[m] Numb. ix. 2.
[n] Rev. vii. 16, 17.
[o] Prov. xiii. 22.

v. 10—12. The people being prepared by circumciſion, might now partake of the other grand ordinance of God; accordingly we find, before they entered upon action, they kept the paſſover as preſcribed, on the fourteenth day of the month, exactly forty years from their departure from Egypt. From that day they began to eat the old corn of the land, which they had ſeized probably in the villages which the people deſerted on their approach; with this they kept the feaſt of unleavened bread, offering the firſt-fruits, which were now ripe, of that part of the adjacent fields of which they had taken poſſeſſion; and now, as they had no more need of the manna, it ceaſed; God herein ſhewing them it was not an ordinary proviſion, but a daily miracle, and no longer to be expected, when they might be ſupplied in an ordinary way. *Note*, (1.) They who would go forth with courage to fight the Lord's battles, ſhould firſt ſolemnly devote themſelves to him, and act faith upon him in the uſe of his ſacraments. (2.) We muſt not expect to be fed by miracle, when God puts ordinary means into our hand. (3.) Sweet and ſtrengthening as manna are the ordinances of grace now to the militant believer, but when they have anſwered their deſign they will ceaſe; when we come to the preſence of God, and the poſſeſſion of glory, prayer, the word, and ſacraments, will be no longer needful.

13. ¶ And it came to paſs when Joſhua was by Jericho, that he [p] lift up his eyes, and looked, and behold there ſtood [q] a man over againſt him with his ſword drawn in his hand: and Joſhua went unto him, and ſaid unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adverſaries? 14. And he ſaid, Nay, but [r] *as* † captain of the hoſt of the LORD am I now come. And Joſhua [s] fell on his face to the earth, and did worſhip, and ſaid unto him, [t] What ſaith my LORD unto his ſervant? 15. And the captain of the LORD's hoſt ſaid unto Joſhua, [u] Looſe thy ſhoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt, *is* ‡ holy: and Joſhua did ſo.

[p] Dan. viii. 3.
[q] Exod. xxiii. 23. Chap. vi. 2.
[r] Iſa. lv. 4. Heb. ii. 10.
† Or, Prince.
[s] Dan. xii. 1. Gen. xvii. 3.
[t] 1 Sam. iii. 9.
[u] Exod. iii. 5. 1 Cor. ii. 14.
‡ Heb. Holineſs. 2 Pet. i. 18.

v. 13—15. When Joſhua and the people had been thus waiting upon God, he comes to manifeſt himſelf to them for their encouragement. They who draw near to God, will ever find God near to hear and help them; Joſhua ſeems to have retired, either to reconnoitre the walls, in order to form an attack on Jericho, or to pray for divine direction; and, whilſt in thought involved his eyes were turned to the earth, a majeſtic appearance awakens his notice, and on a ſudden a man with a ſword drawn ſtands before him. This ſeems to be no other than the incarnate word, that in the fulneſs of time ſhould come, who now appeared in an human form, to encourage his people by his preſence and protection. *Note*, If Jeſus draws the ſword to defend us, not all the powers of ſin, death or hell ſhall be able to hurt us. Joſhua, as a valiant leader, boldly advances, and bids him declare whether he came as friend or foe, ready to hazard his life if needful, and fearleſs of the drawn ſword. *Note*, We need courage when we are fighting for God, and eſpecially not to fear the faces of men. He does not diſdain to anſwer the queſtion, but quickly reſolves him concerning his character and deſign. As captain of the Lord's hoſts he is come, to guide them with his counſel, and ſtrengthen them with his power. And what can ſtand before thoſe who fight under ſuch a leader? Joſhua now plainly perceived the preſence of the deity: the ſame Jehovah that appeared to Abraham as a traveller, now comes as a man of war, and therefore at his feet he falls, to make ſupplication before him, and receive his orders from him. It is no diſparagement to the greateſt general to be found often on his knees before the God of hoſts, and there is no ſurer way to obtain the necks of his enemies. To impreſs his mind with deeper reverence and awe, and to intimate to him that it was the ſame divine Majeſty which ſpake to Moſes in the buſh, he commands him to looſe his ſhoe, as a mark of reſpect and obedience, which he inſtantly performs, and ſtands attentive to the commands which the Lord ſhould be pleaſed to enjoin him. *Note*, (1.) Chriſt is the captain of our ſalvation, fully qualified to ſubdue all our ſpiritual enemies, and ever ſtanding ready to help and defend all who fly to him for ſuccour. (2.) If we take him for our Lord, we muſt ſhew ourſelves his ſervants, by a ready obedience to his will and pleaſure.

CHAP. VI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The directions and aſſurances which the captain of the Lord's hoſt gave Joſhua concerning Jericho,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The trial of the people's obedience in walking round the city*

city ſix days, ver. 6—14. 3. *The wonderful delivery of it into their hands the ſeventh day, with a ſolemn charge to them to uſe it as a* devoted *thing*, ver. 15—21. *and* ver. 24. 4. *The preſervation of Rahab and her relations*, ver. 22, 23, 25. 5. *A curſe pronounced upon the man that ſhould dare to rebuild this city*, ver. 26, 27. *An abſtract of this ſtory we find among the trophies of faith*, Heb. xi. 30. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compaſſed about ſeven days.

1. NOW Jericho † was ſtraitly ſhut up, [a] becauſe of the children of Iſrael: none went out, and none came in. 2. And [b] the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, See, [c] I have given into thine hand Jericho, and [d] the king thereof, *and* the mighty men of valour. 3. And ye ſhall [e] compaſs the city, all *ye* men of war, *and* go round about the city once: thus ſhalt thou do ſix days. 4. And ſeven prieſts ſhall bear before the ark ſeven trumpets of [f] rams horns: and the ſeventh day ye ſhall compaſs the city [g] ſeven times, and the prieſts ſhall [h] blow with the trumpets. 5. And it ſhall come to paſs, that when they make a long *blaſt* with the rams horn, *and* when ye hear the ſound of the trumpet, all the people ſhall [i] ſhout with a great ſhout: and the wall of the city ſhall fall down ‡ flat, and the people ſhall aſcend up every man ſtraight before him.

v. 1—5. Jericho was now cloſe beſieged without, and cloſe ſhut up and guarded within, by the ſtrength of the fortifications and the number of the inhabitants; but the captain of the Lord's hoſts aſſures Joſhua the place was his own: and, to try the obedience of the people, as well as to ſpread the terror of ſuch a ſcene wide through the land, he iſſues a ſtrange order. No military attack need be made, no engines drawn to the walls, but only the ark of God be carried in ſolemn proceſſion ſix days round the city, by the prieſts, blowing with rams horns, accompanied by all the people; on the ſeventh day the city muſt be compaſſed ſeven times, when at the ſignal given of a long blaſt of the trumpets, the people muſt ſhout together, and the walls ſhall fall down flat, ſo that every man may go up inſtantly, and ſmite the inhabitants, ſurpriſed and defenceleſs. *Note*, Though the ſinner's heart be walled and barred as faſt as Jericho, the word of God, ſpoken by his miniſters, hath mighty power to caſt down the ſtrong-holds of Satan; and if the inſtruments ſeem weak as theſe rams horns, that divine power is with them, which nothing can reſiſt.

6. ¶ And Joſhua the ſon of Nun called the prieſts, and ſaid unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let ſeven [k] prieſts bear ſeven trumpets of rams horns before the ark of the LORD. 7. And he ſaid unto the people, Paſs on, and compaſs the city, and let [l] him that is armed paſs on before the ark of the LORD. 8. ¶ And it came to paſs when Joſhua had ſpoken unto the people, that the ſeven prieſts bearing the ſeven trumpets of rams horns, paſſed on [m] before the LORD, and [n] blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. 9. ¶ And the armed men went before the prieſts that blew with the trumpets, and the † rereward came after the ark, *the prieſts* going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 10. And Joſhua had commanded the people, ſaying, Ye ſhall not ſhout, nor make any noiſe with your voice, neither ſhall *any* word proceed out of your mouth, until [o] the day I bid you ſhout, then ſhall ye ſhout. 11. So the ark of the LORD compaſſed the city, going about *it* once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. 12. ¶ And Joſhua [p] roſe early in the morning, and the prieſts took up the ark of the LORD. 13. And [q] ſeven prieſts bearing ſeven trumpets of rams horns before the ark of the LORD, went on [r] continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them, but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, *the prieſts* going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 14. And the ſecond day they compaſſed the city once, and returned into the camp: ſo they did ſix days. 15. And it came to paſs on the ſeventh day, that they roſe early about the dawning of the day, and compaſſed the city after the ſame manner ſeven times: only on that day they compaſſed the city ſeven times.

v. 6—15. Joſhua heſitates not at the ſtrange order, but inſtantly haſtens in faith to put it in execution, and all the people readily obey him. The prieſts take up the ark, the armed hoſts go before to prepare the way, the people follow, moving in ſolemn ſilence, whilſt nothing is heard but the blaſts of the trumpet, terrible to their enemies, and inſpiring Iſrael's armies with martial ardor. Six days they repeat the journey, the ſeventh morning dawns, they ariſe and ſeven times ſurround the walls, and by this time perhaps the men of Jericho were lulled into ſecurity, little apprehenſive of any conſequences which could endanger them from ſuch a procedure: but when ſinners are moſt ſecure, then judgment overtakes them, as ſorrow comes upon a woman in travail. *Note*, (1.) We muſt patiently perſevere in the uſe of the means of grace, though we ſee not their immediate good effect. (2.) As one of theſe days was a ſabbath, perhaps the laſt, it teaches us, that when we are called of God to labour on that day for his glory, it is no breach of the holy reſt. (3.) Wherever the ark goes, and the word of God leads, we muſt follow it. (4.) They who do ſo will ſurely ſpeed at laſt, and ſee the great ſalvation of God.

16. And it came to paſs at the ſeventh time, when the prieſts blew with the trumpets, Joſhua ſaid unto the people, Shout, for the LORD hath given you the city. 17. ¶ And the city ſhall be † accurſed, *even* it and all that *are* therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot ſhall live, ſhe and all that *are* with her in the houſe, becauſe [s] ſhe hid the meſſengers that we ſent. 18. And you in any wiſe keep *yourſelves* from the accurſed thing, leſt ye make *yourſelves* accurſed when ye take of the accurſed thing, and make the camp of Iſrael a curſe, and [t] trouble it. 19. But all the ſilver and gold, and veſſels of braſs and iron, *are* conſecrated unto the LORD: they ſhall come into the treaſury of the LORD. 20. So the people ſhouted when *the prieſts* blew with the trumpets: and it came to paſs when the people heard the ſound of the trumpet, and the people ſhouted with a great ſhout, that the wall fell down [u] flat, ſo that the people went up into the city every man ſtraight before him, and they took the city. 21. And they [x] utterly deſtroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and ſheep, and aſs, with the edge of the ſword. 22. But Joſhua had ſaid unto the two men that had ſpied out the country, Go into the harlot's houſe, and bring out thence the woman, and all that ſhe hath, as [y] ye ſware unto her. 23. And the young men that were ſpies, went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that ſhe had: and they brought out all her kindred, and left them [z] without the camp of Iſrael. 24. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the ſilver and the gold, and the veſſels of braſs and of iron, they put into the treaſury of the houſe of the LORD. 25. And [a] Joſhua ſaved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's houſhold, and all that ſhe had: and ſhe [b] dwelleth in Iſrael *even* unto this day: becauſe ſhe hid the meſſengers which Joſhua ſent to ſpy out Jericho. 26. ¶ And Joſhua adjured *them* at that time, ſaying, Curſed *be* the man before the LORD, that riſeth up and buildeth this city Jericho: [c] he ſhall lay the foundation thereof in his firſt-born, and in his youngeſt *ſon* ſhall he ſet up the gates of it. 27. So the LORD was with Joſhua, and [d] his fame was *noiſed* throughout all the country.

v. 16—27. Now is the hour of Jericho's deſtruction come. At Joſhua's command the hoſts of Iſrael ſhout aloud; at the ſignal given by the trumpet's long blaſt, and according to their faith, this proud city's walls fall down before them. Such will be the triumphant ſhout of the Iſrael of God, when under the conduct of the divine Joſhua they ſhall, in the laſt hour of their warfare, ſee all their foes laid low before them, and with their expiring breath triumph over death, their laſt enemy, and march through the breaches of the grave to the poſſeſſion of the city of the living God.

Several directions are here given for the people, all which were punctually executed. 1. The city muſt be devoted to utter deſtruction, the palaces conſumed with fire, not a creature ſuffered to live, neither man nor beaſt; they are ſacrifices to divine juſtice, and the ſeverity executed on them ſhall increaſe the terror of their neighbours. *Note*, (1.) Whatever God doth, terrible as it may appear to us, he will ever be ſeen to be juſt in his judgments. (2.) They who harden their hearts in oppoſition to God, will too late find their ruin inevitable. 2. The gold and ſilver, braſs and iron, are to be reſerved purely for the uſe of the ſanctuary. The firſt-fruits of their ſpoils muſt, in gratitude, be conſecrated to God, whoſe arm alone won for them the city; and to take the leaſt trifle is forbidden, as ſure to bring a curſe upon the camp, and ruin upon the ſacrilegious perſon. *Note*, (1.) That ſilver and gold is well employed which is devoted to the immediate ſervice of God's ſanctuary. (2.) None ever robbed God's altar and proſpered. 3. Rahab and her family, and all that ſhe hath, are preſerved amidſt the general deſolation; her houſe, if it was upon the town wall, was probably left ſtanding when the reſt of the wall fell, and the two men, whoſe lives were preſerved by her kindneſs, and who were under an oath to her in behalf of the people, are ſent to take care of her, and of all her relations who took refuge with her. For a time they were placed in ſafety without the camp, and provided for; but it is preſumed, on becoming proſelytes, were incorporated with Iſrael, and Rahab herſelf obtained the high honour of becoming the wife of Salmon, a prince of Judah, and filling a remarkable place in the genealogy of the Redeemer. *Note*, (1.) They who have pious relations often fare the better for their ſake. (2.) God can make thoſe who, in their characters, have been the foremoſt in ſin, as eminent for his gifts and graces, as they were infamous before for their abominations. 4. A curſe is pronounced on the builder of Jericho. It muſt remain a heap of ruins, for a memorial to poſterity, and he that would rear its walls, muſt do it at the ruin of his family: the effect of this adjuration, five hundred years or more afterwards, appeared in Hiel, who attempted to rebuild it, 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. after it was built it became a flouriſhing city, for many ages, but now, with the reſt of the land, is returned to its former deſolation. 5. Joſhua's fame was ſpread abroad; reſpected by his people and dreaded by his enemies, it was manifeſt God was with him; and he is great indeed, whom the Lord honours with his preſence and bleſſing.

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† Heb. Did ſhut up, and was ſhut up. Pſal. cxxvii. 1.

[a] Chap. ii. 9.

[b] Chap. v. 13.

[c] Dan. ii. 21.

[d] Chap. ii. 11.

[e] Num. xiv. 9. Job ix. 4.

[f] 2 Kings xv. 10. 2 Chron. xx. 17. Zech. iv. 6. 1 Cor. i. 27.

[g] 1 Kings xviii. 43.

[h] Heb. xi. 30.

[i] 1 Chron. xx. 21.

‡ Heb. On its place.

[k] Num. x. 9. Deut. xx. 2, &c.

[l] Chap. i. 14.

[m] Chap. iv. 13.

[n] 2 Cor. x. 4.

† Or, gathering hoſt.

[o] Luke xxiv. 49.

[p] Pſal. cxii. 5.

[q] Ver. 6. 1 Chron. xv. 26.

[r] Gal. vi. 9.

† Or, devoted. Deut. vii. 26. Iſa. xxxiv. 6. Jer. xlvi. 10. Ezek. xxxix. 17. Mic. iv. 13.

[s] Chap. ii. 4, 6. Mat. x. 41. Heb. vi. 10. & xi. 31.

[t] Chap. vii. 25. Eccleſ. ix. 18. Jonah i. 12.

[u] Ver. 5. Rev. xviii. 21.

[x] Deut. ii. 34. 1 Kings xx. 42. Rev. xviii. 21.

[y] Chap. ii. 14. Pſ. xv. 4.

[z] Numb. xxxi. 19. Deut. xxi. 10, &c.

[a] Judg. i. 24.

[b] Mat. i. 5. Luke iii. 32.

[c] 1 Kings xvi. 34. Mal. i. 4.

[d] 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Sam. vii. 9. Mat. xiv. 1.

CHAP. VII.

We have here, (1.) *The ſin of Achan*, ver. 1. (2.) *The defeat of Iſrael before Ai thereupon*, ver. 2—5. (3.) *Joſhua's humiliation and prayer on that occaſion*, ver. 6—9. (4.) *The directions God gave him for the putting away the iniquity*, ver. 10—15. (5.) *The diſcovery, trial, conviction, condemnation, and execution of the criminal*, ver. 16—26.

[a] Chap. xxii. 20.
† Or, Achar, i. e. trouble. 1 Chron. ii. 7.
[b] Exod. iv. 24.
[c] Prov. xx. 18. & xxiv. 6. Mat. x. 16.
[d] Iſa. lix. 2.
[e] Lev. xxvi.

1. BUT [a] the children of Iſrael committed a treſpaſs in the accurſed thing: for † Achan, the ſon of Carmi, the ſon of Zabdi, the ſon of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accurſed thing: and [b] the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt the children of Iſrael. 2. And Joſhua ſent men from Jericho to Ai, which *is* beſide Beth-aven, on the eaſt-ſide of Bethel, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, Go up and [c] view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. 3. And they returned to Joſhua, and ſaid unto him, Let not all the people go up: but let about two or three thouſand men go up and ſmite Ai, *and* make not all the people to labour thither; for they *are but* few. 4. So there went up thither of the people about three thouſand men, and [d] they fled before the men of Ai. 5. And the men of Ai ſmote of them about thirty and ſix men: for they chaſed them *from* before the gate *even* unto Shebarim, and ſmote them in the going down: wherefore [e] the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

v. 1—5. The laſt chapter left Iſrael triumphant, and Joſhua's name great and glorious; this begins with a dire *But*, which ſtops the current of their victories, and caſts them into the deepeſt diſtreſs; the cauſe of which always is ſin. 1. We have an account of the ſin committed, Achan the ſon of Carmi, of the houſe of Judah, had tranſgreſſed the divine command, and ſecretly taken of the devoted things, and hereby had brought the hoſt under the diſpleaſure of God. One ſinner thus deſtroys much good, the community he belonged to are defiled by him, and ſuffer for him. *Note*, (1.) Covetouſneſs is among the moſt rooted evil tempers of the fallen mind. (2.) We muſt ſeparate ourſelves from ſinners, if we would not ſhare their judgments. 2. The effects of God's diſpleaſure quickly appeared; though the ſin was committed ſo ſecretly that no eye ſaw him, it was not hid from God; and he takes ſuch ways to bring the crime to light, as ſhall ſhew his juſt indignation againſt it. Let not the guilty think of being concealed or excuſed, God will find them out, and viſit them to their confuſion. Confident now of ſucceſs, thoſe who were ſent to view the city of Ai report the conqueſt eaſy, and that the people need not be fatigued by a general march; a detached party of two or three thouſand men being thought ſufficient, theſe are accordingly ſent, but ſeized with a panic at the gate of the city, they fly before their purſuers, and, with the loſs of ſix and thirty men, eſcape to the camp, and fill it with terror and confuſion. God had evidently forſaken them, and though the loſs was ſmall, juſtly were they alarmed at a defeat which portended more dreadful conſequences. *Note*, (1.) Though the greateſt difficulties vaniſh when God is our helper, the leaſt temptation will prevail the moment he leaves us to ourſelves. (2.) Whenever we provoke God, we may expect to ſuffer for it. (3.) Fear and terror of conſcience are the natural conſequences of guilt, and the preſent wages of ſin.

[f] Gen. xxxvii. 29. Eſth. iv. 1.
[g] Pſal. l. 15.
[h] 1 Sam. iv. 12.
[i] Job xxi. 7. Jer. xxxii. 24.
[k] Chap. i. 3, 4.
[l] Heb. ii. 1.
† Heb. Necks.
Chap. i. 5.
[m] Pſ. lxxxiii. 4.
[n] Exod. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 3. Mat. vi. 9. John xii. 28.

6. ¶ And Joſhua [f] rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face, [g] before the ark of the LORD, until the even-tide, he and the elders of Iſrael, and [h] put duſt upon their heads. 7. And Joſhua ſaid, Alas, O Lord GOD, [i] wherefore haſt thou at all brought this people over Jordan, [k] to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to deſtroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other ſide Jordan. 8. O Lord, [l] what ſhall I ſay, when Iſrael turneth their † backs before their enemies! 9. For the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land ſhall hear *of it*, and ſhall inviron us round, [m] and cut off our name from the earth: and [n] what wilt thou do unto thy great name?

v. 6—9. Joſhua, moſt deeply affected with the calamities of the people, and apprehenſive of more fatal conſequences, 1. In deep humiliation rends his cloaths, and falls proſtrate on the earth; he who was ſo courageous, that he never feared the face of man, trembles before an offended God. The elders of Iſrael join in his ſorrow, and with duſt on their heads, till even-tide, bewail their diſtreſſes; and not doubting but ſin was the cauſe, look up to God for pardon and peace: if God forſake them, all is loſt. *Note*, It is no diſparagement to the moſt courageous and intrepid, to humble themſelves under the mighty hand of God, and to tremble for fear of his diſpleaſure. 2. Joſhua pours out his complaints in prayer to God, (1.) He regrets that he had paſſed Jordan, and not reſted in the country they had before conquered; he ſpeaks as under the prevalence of unbelief, and as apprehenſive that for deſtruction, not for poſſeſſion, they were entered the land of the Amorites. *Note*, (1.) The ſtrongeſt believers have their weakneſſes and infirmities. (2.) When we find fault with God, we only diſcover our own folly: the judge of all the earth muſt do right. (2.) He appears aſtoniſhed, and at a loſs what to ſay, under this diſaſtrous event, when Iſrael, inſtead of victory, turn their backs to their enemies. Many a ſaint of God hath thus been perplexed at the myſterious ways of providence, and ready to queſtion all their former experience. (3.) He expreſſes his apprehenſions of their imminent danger; encouraged by this ſucceſs, the Canaanites would attack them, defenceleſs now if God departs, and cut them off from the earth. *Note*, Our fears are apt to magnify our dangers, and we are too ready, in difficulties, to deſpond. (4.) He pleads the great diſhonour which would be caſt on God hereby, reſerving this as his laſt argument, and what himſelf ſeemed moſt concerned about. *Note*, A gracious ſoul is ever more ſollicitous about God's glory than his own intereſts; let them ſtand or fall, if God be exalted he aſks no more.

[o] Ezra x. 2, 3.
[p] Exod. xiv. 15.
[q] Iſa. lix. 2.
[r] Chap. vi. 18.
[s] Acts v. 1, 2.
[t] Heb. iv. 13.
[u] Lev. xxv. 17. Numb. xiv. 45.
[x] Exod. xix. 10.
[y] Prov. xvi. 33.
[z] Deut. vii. 26.
[a] Exod. xi. 5.

10. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, [o] Get thee up, [p] wherefore lieſt thou thus upon thy face? 11. [q] Iſrael hath ſinned, and they alſo have tranſgreſſed [r] my covenant, which I commanded thee: for they have even taken of the accurſed thing, and [s] have alſo ſtolen, and diſſembled alſo, and [t] they have put *it* even amongſt their own ſtuff. 12. [u] Therefore the children of Iſrael could not ſtand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, becauſe they were accurſed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye deſtroy the accurſed from amongſt you. 13. Up, [x] ſanctify the people, and ſay, ſanctify yourſelves againſt to-morrow: for thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, *There is* an accurſed thing in the midſt of thee, O Iſrael: thou canſt not ſtand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accurſed thing from among you. 14. In the morning therefore ye ſhall be brought according to your tribes: and it ſhall be *that* the tribe [y] which the LORD taketh, ſhall come according to the families *thereof*; and the family which the LORD ſhall take, ſhall come by houſholds; and the houſhold which the LORD ſhall take, ſhall come man by man. 15. And it ſhall be *that* [z] he that is taken with the accurſed thing, ſhall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: becauſe he hath tranſgreſſed the covenant of the LORD, and becauſe he hath wrought folly [a] in Iſrael.

v. 10—15. Joſhua no ſooner hath done ſpeaking, than God anſwers him from the mercy ſeat, and revives his drooping heart. 1. He commands him to ariſe from the duſt, his prayer is heard, the cauſe of his mourning ſhall be removed. *Note*, Though God for a time caſt down the ſoul under ſin, yet they who ſow in tears, will ſurely and ſhortly reap in joy. 2. He informs him of the cauſe of his diſpleaſure. Sin was committed; the covenant was broken, by diſobeying the divine command, in ſecreting a part of the devoted ſpoil; and this was robbery of God, as being the firſt fruits of their victories, and claimed by him as his own. Diſſimulation had aggravated the crime; for it ſeems the queſtion had been put, and each tribe and family, and Achan among the reſt, aſſerted his innocence, whilſt he had carefully concealed the accurſed thing among his own goods in his tent. *Note*, (1.) One ſin brings on another; he that ſteals will lie to conceal it. (2.) God will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and, when the ſinner is moſt ſecure, overwhelm him with terrible conviction. 3. He threatens to bring upon them the conſumption they feared, if this matter be not immediately redreſſed; intimating withal, that hereby they would regain their former ſuperiority. *Note*, If we do not deſtroy ſin, it will deſtroy us. They who will not part from their ſins in time, will be ſeparated from God to eternity. 4. The method is preſcribed for the detection of the offender. He muſt ſanctify the people againſt the morrow, by enjoining them to beware of ceremonial uncleanneſs, and much more of moral defilement, that they may appear before God. By lot the tribe, family, houſe, and perſon ſhould be diſcovered, and immediate execution be done on the offender, who is become, by this daring ſacrilege, no leſs a traitor to his country, than a rebel againſt God. *Note*, (1.) No event is fortuitous; even the lot falls by divine decree. (2.) They who are conſcious of their own ſimplicity, will have boldneſs to appear before God. (3.) One advantage to be made of others ſins, is to make us more jealous againſt the like offences. (4.) The execution of criminals is highly neceſſary for the preſervation of the ſtate, that others may ſee and fear, and do no more wickedly. (5.) Let thoſe who rob God's altar of its due, remember Achan's end.

16. ¶ So Joſhua [b] roſe up early in the morning, and brought Iſrael by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: 17. And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarhites: and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: 18. And he brought his houſhold man by man; and Achan the ſon of Carmi, the ſon of Zabdi, the ſon of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19. And Joſhua ſaid unto Achan, My [c] ſon, give, I pray thee, [d] glory to the LORD God of Iſrael, [e] and make confeſſion unto him; and tell me now what thou haſt done, hide *it* not from me. 20. And Achan anſwered Joſhua, and ſaid, Indeed I have ſinned againſt the LORD God of Iſrael, and thus and thus have I done. 21. When [f] I ſaw among the ſpoils a goodly † Babyloniſh garment, and two hundred ſhekels of ſilver, and a wedge of gold of fifty ſhekels weight, [g] then I coveted them, and took them, and behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the midſt of my tent, and the ſilver under it. 22. ¶ So Joſhua ſent meſſengers, and they ran unto the tent, and behold, [i] *it was* hid in his tent, and the ſilver under it. 23. And they took them out of the midſt of the tent, and brought them unto Joſhua, and unto all the children of Iſrael, and † laid them out before the LORD. 24. And Joſhua, and all Iſrael with him, took Achan the ſon of Zerah, and the ſilver, and the garment, and the ‡ wedge of gold, and his [k] ſons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his aſſes, and his ſheep, and his tent, [l] and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. 25. And Joſhua ſaid, Why haſt thou [m] troubled us? [n] the LORD ſhall trouble thee this day. And all Iſrael ſtoned him with ſtones, and burned them with fire, after they had ſtoned them with ſtones. 26. And they raiſed over him a great [o] heap of ſtones unto this day: [p] So the LORD turned from the fierceneſs of his anger: wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of ‖ Achor, unto this day.

[b] 2 Cor. vii. 11. Gal. iv. 18.
[c] Luke xvi. 25.
[d] Pſ. li. 3.
[e] Prov. xxviii. 13.
[f] 1 John ii. 16.
† Heb. A cloke of Shinar. Gen. x. 10.
[g] Prov. xxviii. 16.
[h] Job xx. 15.
[i] Eccleſ. v. 13.
† Heb. Poured.
‡ Heb. Golden tongue.
[k] Gen. xviii. 25, &c.
[l] Job xx. 25.
[m] 1 Chron. ii. 7. Prov. xv. 27. Hab. i. 9.
[n] 2 Theſ. i. 6.
[o] Chap. viii. 29.
[p] 2 Sam. xxi. 14. Joel ii. 13, 18.
‖ i. e. Trouble. Ver. 25. Iſa. lxv. 10. Hoſ. ii. 15.

v. 16—26. God having directed Joſhua in the method of procedure, he riſes very early in the morning, in haſte to purge the camp from the abominable thing which was hid in it.

1. The tribes are convoked. Judah is taken, the firſt in dignity, yet now expoſed to ſhame, by one bad branch of this noble family. By repeated trials from families to houſes, and from houſes to individuals, the criminal is diſcovered, and Achan, confounded with conſcious guilt, ſtands forth the troubler of Iſrael. *Note*, When God is contending with us, we need well to examine our ways, and look if there be any way of wickedneſs in us: whilſt Achan's wedge, any allowed ſin remains, the curſe muſt be upon us. 2. The divine lot having diſcovered the offender, Joſhua, as judge, exhorts him to give glory to God by an open and unreſerved confeſſion. He does not fly out into anger or reviling againſt him, but pitying his miſery, beſeeches him to repent of his great ſin, and take to himſelf the deſerved ſhame of ſuch a guilty conduct. *Note*, (1.) Even the vileſt of criminals deſerve our pity, not reproach. (2.) The only reſtoration we can make to God for our ſins, is by an open acknowledgment. They cannot be true penitents, who ſhrink from the ſhame they have deſerved, and ſeek to excuſe and exculpate themſelves, inſtead of glorifying God by an unreſerved confeſſion. 3. Hopes of concealment had hardened his heart before, but now God hath found him out, he bows under the conviction, acknowledges his great ſin, and opens the particular fact in all the circumſtances of it; that he ſaw firſt and coveted a gorgeous Babyloniſh garment, and took it, then added a purſe of ſilver, of two hundred ſhekels, to the theft, and a wedge or tongue of gold of fifty; and that they were hid under his tent in the earth. *Note*, (1.) A burthened conſcience can only find eaſe by ſelf-accuſation, and owning his aggravated ſin againſt God. (2.) The more deeply we are affected, the more particular will be our confeſſions, and the more ſharp our ſelf-upbraidings in the review of the proceſs of our ſin. (3.) The advances to ſin are here laid down; concupiſcence is at the root, Satan preſents the bait to the eye, the heart is caught by it, the hand is ſtretched out, and the crime compleated. How ſtrict a guard ſhould we keep upon our eyes! How ſeverely repreſs the firſt motions of evil deſire? (4.) It is the devil's grand deceit, "No eye ſhall ſee thee; thy ſin may be eaſily concealed;" but God can make the ſinner turn ſelf-accuſer, and *vomit up the riches he hath ſwallowed*, Job xx. 15. 4. He receives his juſt condemnation. The goods are inſtantly fetched, his confeſſion is confirmed by the accurſed ſpoils, and ſentence paſſes upon him. God will have the trouble fall upon his own head, which he had brought on the innocent people. *Note*, (1.) Sin will bring trouble: the conſcience muſt be humbled under it in time, or be tormented for it to eternity. (2.) What we get by injuſtice, will in the end prove our plague. 5. He is inſtantly executed, dragged from the judgment-ſeat without the camp, and all Iſrael in juſt indignation riſe up to ſtone him. Nor falls he alone; his family periſhes with him, and all that belonged to him and them. They are firſt ſtoned to death, then burnt as an abomination; and thus the accurſed thing being put away, God's anger is pacified, and his favour reſtored to them. *Note*, (1.) We cannot be in too great haſte to get rid of our ſins. (2.) We ſee nothing is got by ſtealing or ſacrilege: not only the ill-gotten gain periſhes, but the fire of the curſe ſpreads to all our ſubſtance. (3.) Wicked parents are the heavieſt plague to their families, and by their bad examples uſually involve them in ruin. (4.) When ſin is repented of, and waſhed away with the blood of Jeſus, ſhed as a curſe for us, then we may expect God's love and mercy will be reſtored to us. 6. A monument is raiſed on theſe aſhes, as a warning to others, and a name given the place, correſponding to the occaſion, The valley of Achor, or Trouble. *Note*, (1.) We need to raiſe a memorial over our ſins, and the places where they were committed, that we may continually remember and lament them. (2.) The valley of Achor is a door of hope to true penitents, *Hoſea* ii. 15. and they who go down thither in ſorrow, ſhall be brought up from thence with joy.

CHAP. VIII.

The ſin being removed, 1. *God bids them renew the attack,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Joſhua gives orders accordingly,* ver. 3—9. 3. *The projected ſtratagem ſucceeds,* ver. 9—22. 4. *Joſhua becomes maſter of the city, ſlays the inhabitants, and divides the ſpoil,* ver. 23—29. 5. *The great ſolemnity of writing and reading the law before a general aſſembly of all Iſrael, on Gerizzim and Ebal,* ver. 30—35.

1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, [a] Fear not, neither be thou diſmayed: take all the people of war with thee, and ariſe, go up to Ai: ſee, [b] I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land. 2. And thou ſhalt do to Ai and her king, [c] as thou didſt unto Jericho and her king: only [d] the ſpoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, ſhall ye take for a prey unto [e] yourſelves: lay thee an ambuſh for the city behind it.

[a] Deut. i. 21. Iſa. xxxv. 4.
[b] Pſ. xliv. 3. Dan. ii. 21.
[c] Chap. vi. 21.
[d] Deut. xx. 14.
[e] Chap. vii. 1. Prov. xxviii. 20. Jer. xvii. 11.

v. 1, 2. The ſin of Achan, and the defeat of the people thereupon, had much diſheartened Joſhua: he needed therefore encouragement from God, to renew the war, nor does he long wait for it; for now the cauſe of their fall being removed, God bids them advance, and ſpoil their enemies. He commands all the people to go up to Ai, and inſtructs Joſhua to lay an ambuſcade behind the city, that by ſurprize, not by a ſlow ſiege, he might immediately enter; and whilſt all the people are devoted to the ſword, the ſpoil of this with the other cities is given to the people. *Note*, (1.) Sin among profeſſors weakens the hands of miniſters. One hypocrite does the cauſe more hurt, than the ſtrongeſt attacks of avowed enemies. (2.) Achan was in haſte to be rich, and periſhed; whilſt they who before exerciſed ſelf-denial, now find they are no looſers thereby. The way to ſolid comfort and laſting gain, is to ſeek it in God's way, and to wait God's time.

3. ¶ So Joſhua aroſe, and all the people of war, to go up againſt Ai: and Joſhua choſe out thirty thouſand mighty men of valour, and ſent them away [f] by night. 4. And he commanded them, ſaying, Behold, ye ſhall lie † in wait againſt the city, *even* behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: 5. And I, and all the people that *are* with me, will approach unto the city: and it ſhall come to paſs when they come out againſt us, as at the firſt, that we [g] will flee before them. 6. (For they will come out after us) till we have † drawn them from the city; for [h] they will ſay, They flee before us, as at the firſt: therefore we will flee before them. 7. Then ye ſhall riſe up from the ambuſh, and ſeize upon the city: for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. 8. And it ſhall be when ye have taken the city, *that* ye ſhall ſet the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD ſhall ye do. See [i] I have commanded you. 9. ¶ Joſhua therefore ſent them forth; and they went to lie in ambuſh, and abode between Beth-el and Ai, on the weſt-ſide of Ai: but Joſhua lodged that night among the people. 10. And Joſhua [k] roſe up early in the morning, and numbred the people, and went up, he and the elders of Iſrael, before the people to Ai. 11. And all the people, *even the people* of war that *were* with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north ſide of Ai: now *there was* a valley between them and Ai. 12. And he took about five thouſand men, and ſet them to lie in ambuſh between Beth-el and Ai, on the weſt ſide of the city. 13. And when they had ſet the people, *even* all the hoſt that *was* on the north of the city, and their † liers in wait on the weſt of the city: Joſhua went that night into the midſt of the valley. 14. ¶ And it came to paſs, when the king of Ai ſaw *it*, that they haſted and roſe up early, and the men of the city went out againſt Iſrael to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; [l] but he wiſt not that *there were* liers in ambuſh againſt him, behind the city. 15. And Joſhua, and all Iſrael made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderneſs. 16. And all the people that *were* in Ai, were called together to purſue after them: and they purſued after Joſhua, and [m] were drawn away from the city. 17. And [n] there was not a man left in Ai, or Beth-el, that went not out after Iſrael: and they left the city open, and purſued after Iſrael. 18. And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, Stretch out the ſpear that *is* in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joſhua [o] ſtretched out the ſpear that *he had* in his hand, toward the city. 19. And the ambuſh aroſe quickly out of their place, and they ran as ſoon as he had ſtretched out his hand: and they entred into the city, and took it, and haſted, and ſet the city on fire. 20. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they ſaw, and behold [p] the ſmoke of the city aſcended up to heaven, and † they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderneſs, turned back upon the purſuers. 21. And when Joſhua and all Iſrael ſaw that the ambuſh had taken the city, and that the ſmoke of the city aſcended, then they turned again, and ſlew the men of Ai. 22. And the other iſſued out of the city againſt them; ſo they were in the midſt of Iſrael, ſome on this ſide, and ſome on that ſide, and [q] they ſmote them, ſo that they let [r] none of them remain, or eſcape.

[f] 1 Theſ. v. 2.
† Or, in ambuſh. Pſ. cxii. 5. Eccleſ. vii. 19.
[g] Mat. x. 16.
† Heb. Pulled. Eccleſ. ix. 18.
[h] Exod. xv. 9. Judg. v. 30. Prov. i. 32. Eccleſ. viii. 11.
[i] Chap. i. 16.
[k] Pſ. ci. 8. Jer. xlviii. 10.
† Heb. Lying in wait, or ſupplanting.
[l] Eccleſ. ix. 12. Dan. iv. 30, 31. Rev. xvii. 10.
[m] Exod. xiv. 3, 4.
[n] Job v. 13.
[o] Exod. xvii. 11.
[p] Rev. xviii. 9. & xix. 3.
† Heb. In them there was no hand to flee. Job xi. 20. Pſ. lxxvi. 5. Amos ii. 14.
[q] Job. xx. 5. & xxiv. 24.
[r] Deut. vii. 2.

v. 3—22. Policy in war is lawful. At God's command Joſhua appoints a double ambuſh: the firſt, of thirty thouſand men, he ſent away by night; the other, of five thouſand, either ſtrengthened the former, or perhaps might be deſigned to take the enemy in flank, whilſt their front and rear were attacked by thoſe who took the city, and the hoſt that rallied after their retreat. The ſtratagem took; the men of the city came out on the approach of the main body, and when they pretended to retire, all the men of war from Beth-el and Ai were called to the purſuit. On this, the ambuſcade ſeized the defenceleſs city, and ſet it on fire: the riſing ſmoke was the ſignal for the retiring army to face about, and in an inſtant the men of Ai are ſurrounded, and cut off to a man, without a poſſibility to eſcape. We may here obſerve, (1.) The conduct and prudence, the courage and caution, of the general. The ambuſh is regulated by his orders; he is by night in the valley, probably to chuſe the proper place for their concealment, perhaps to be alone with God in prayer for ſucceſs. Not diſmayed at the former defeat, he advances with confidence; by retiring ſecures the victory, and when the prey is in the net, lifts up that ſpear that never reſted from ſlaughter whilſt one man remained alive. *Note*, (1.) A good general muſt ſee every thing with his own eyes, and be himſelf the moſt indefatigable man in the army. (2.) To ſpend part of that night in prayer is highly needful, when the next morning muſt lead us into the field of battle. They who come from their knees will be the braveſt to ſtretch out the ſpear. (3.) The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by yielding for a moment in his humiliation, triumphed thus more glorioſly, when, on a reſurrection-day, he turned back upon his enemies, and led captivity captive. (4.) They who have drawn the ſword againſt their ſpiritual enemies, muſt caſt away the ſcabbard, and only expect reſt and victory in the grave. 2. The infatuation of Iſrael's enemies. By ſucceſs intoxicated, they kept neither ſcouts to diſcover the ambuſh behind them, nor feared to advance to meet the approaching armies of Iſrael. When ſhouting already for victory, on the feint made to retire, lo, the flames aſcend behind them; their foes halt, face about, attack with fury irreſiſtible; whilſt they, diſmayed, have neither power to fight, nor opportunity to fly. *Note*, (1.) The proſperity of fools deſtroys them. (2.) The enemies of God's people often promiſe themſelves to glut their fury in their deſtruction, when they are only madly advancing to their own ruin. (3.) Security, and ſelf-confidence in an evil way, are among the direſt ſymptoms of a reprobate mind, and the ſureſt preſages of eternal miſery. (4.) The triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment: in death they ſhall lie down and periſh for ever.

23. [s] And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joſhua. 24. And it came to paſs when Iſrael had made an end of ſlaying all the inhabitants of Ai, in the field, in the wilderneſs wherein they chaſed them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the ſword, until they were conſumed, that all the Iſraelites returned unto Ai, and ſmote it with the † edge of the ſword. 25. And *ſo* it was, *that* all that fell that day, both of men and women, *were* twelve thouſand, *even* all the men of Ai. 26. For Joſhua [t] drew not his hand back wherewith he ſtretched out the ſpear, until he had utterly deſtroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. 27. Only the cattle and the ſpoil of that city, Iſrael [u] took for a prey unto themſelves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded Joſhua. 28. And Joſhua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, *even* a deſolation unto this day. 29. And the king of Ai he [x] hanged on a tree until eventide: and as ſoon as the ſun was down Joſhua commanded that they ſhould take his carcaſe down from the tree, and caſt it at the entring of the gate of the city, and raiſe thereon a great heap of ſtones *that remaineth* unto this day.

[s] Rev. xix. 20.
† Heb. Mouth.
[t] Exod. xvii. 11.
[u] Numb. xxxi. 26, 27.
[x] Deut. xxi. 23. Eſth. vii. 10. Pſ. cx. 5, 6. Acts xii. 23. Rev. xix. 17, 18.

v. 23—29. The king of Ai alone ſurvived the general ſlaughter, and he only ſpared to meet a more ignominious doom. He is hanged *in terrorem*, that the kings of Canaan might hear and tremble; and on his corpſe a monument is raiſed in the gate of the deſolate city, to warn all beholders of the end of thoſe who fight againſt God. Let wicked kings, who oppreſs God's people, ſtill look to this heap, and remember that the ſame avenging God lives and reigns. The people of the city, to the number of twelve thouſand, are ſacrificed to the divine juſtice, and the ſpoil divided among the hoſt, as an encouragement to them to go on boldly in fighting the Lord's battles. *Note*, They who endure hardneſs, as good ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall find to their comfort, that they who do his work, ſhall reap his wages. The ſpear of Joſhua now, like Moſes's arms, is no longer lifted up: if, as ſome ſuppoſe, it had a flag fixed to it, the taking it down might be the ſignal to retire to their tents. *Note*, In death, the believer ſhall no longer need to lift the banner of war, or to weild the ſword of the ſpirit, but retire, to enjoy the fruit of his victories among the ſaints triumphant in the camp of the Lord of Hoſts.

30. ¶ Then Joſhua [y] built an altar unto the LORD God of Iſrael in mount Ebal. 31. As Moſes the ſervant of the LORD commanded the children of Iſrael, as it is written in the book of the law of Moſes, an altar of [z] whole ſtones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and

[y] Gen. viii. 20.
[z] Exod. xx. 25.

and [a] they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the LORD, and ſacrificed peace-offerings. 32. And he wrote there [b] upon the ſtones [c] a copy of the law of Moſes, which he wrote in the preſence of the children of Iſrael. 33. And all Iſrael, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, ſtood on this ſide the ark, and on that ſide, before the prieſts the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the ſtranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over-againſt mount [d] Gerizzim, and half of them over-againſt mount [e] Ebal: as Moſes the ſervant of the LORD had commanded before, that they ſhould bleſs the people of Iſrael. 34. And afterward [f] he read all the words of the law, the bleſſings and curſings, according to all *that is* written in the book of the law. 35. There was not a word of all that Moſes commanded, which Joſhua read not before all the congregation of Iſrael, with [g] the women, and the little ones, and the ſtrangers that were converſant among them.

[a] Exod. xx. 24. Rom. xii. 1.
[b] Exod. xxiv. 1.
[c] Deut. xvii. 18.
[d] Ibid. xi. 29. & xxvii. 12.
[e] Ibid. xxvii. 13.
[f] Ibid. xxvii. 15, &c. Neh. viii. 3.
[g] Deut. xxxi. 12. Neh. viii. 2.

v. 30—35. The introduction of this ſolemn tranſaction in the midſt of the wars, if, as ſome think, the ſolemnity was now performed, intimates the diligence and zeal of the people to obſerve the divine inſtitutions. *Note*, When moſt ſurrounded with dangers, we have moſt cauſe to mind the one thing needful, the ſecuring an intereſt in the favour of God. But the diſtance of Ebal from Gilgal, and the country not yet conquered, have induced others to imagine, that what is here recorded, was not performed till a conſiderable time after, when they had farther extended their conqueſts. It was however done, whether now or afterwards, with exact conformity to the divine inſtitution, and with great ſolemnity.

1. They built an altar, and offered ſacrifice thereon, on mount Ebal, where the curſes were pronounced, intimating, 1. Their dependance upon that atonement, without which the curſes that were written in the law muſt quickly overtake them to their ruin. *Note*, Nothing but the blood of Jeſus can ſave any ſoul from the curſe of the law. 2. Their gratitude for God's mercy to them. They got not the land by their own ſword, and the beaſts they offered were the ſpoil he had given them. *Note*, (1.) We can only render to God of his own: all we poſſeſs is his. (2.) Yet God accepts the grateful offering; and they who acknowledge him in prayer and praiſe, ſhall find him proſpering their ways with increaſing bleſſings.

2. A ſolemn rehearſal was made of the bleſſings and curſes, in the preſence of all the people, great and ſmall, half on mount Ebal, half on mount Gerizim, with the ark, the prieſts, the Levites, the judges, and officers in the midſt. After each ſentence they expreſſed their aſſent aloud, and their readineſs to embrace that covenant, under which they held poſſeſſion of the land. That no ignorance might be pleaded, on a pillar of ſtone plaiſtered over, the ten commandments are written plain; and all that was contained in the book of the law, whatever Moſes enjoined, is read over in the audience of the people, from the chief princes, to the loweſt ſervant and ſtranger in the congregation. *Note*, (1.) The word of God is given not to be locked up from the common people, but to be heard and read of all men. (2.) The higheſt and the loweſt are alike intereſted to hear and obey the divine command. In God's ſight, the prince and the beggar are on a level; the ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die. (3.) All God's commands, from the leaſt to the greateſt, are enjoined by the ſame authority: no ſin ſo little, as not to be guarded by the awful ſanction of the curſe and wrath of God. (4.) Maſters of families muſt ſee that all under their roof, who are able to underſtand, ſeriouſly attend the houſe of God, and hear his word read and preached. (5.) It is thus we may hope to receive the fulneſs of the promiſe in glory, when by grace, thro' faith, we are obedient to the divine commands on earth.

CHAP. IX.

This chapter contains, 1. *The impolitic confederacy of the kings of Canaan againſt Iſrael*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The politic confederacy of the inhabitants of Gibeon with Iſrael.* (1.) *How it was ſubtilly propoſed by the Gibeonites*, ver. 3—13. (2.) *How it was unwarily conſented to by Joſhua and the Iſraelites*, ver. 14—18. (3.) *How the matter was at laſt adjuſted to the ſatisfaction of all ſides*, ver. 19—27.

1. AND it came to paſs when all the kings which *were* on this ſide Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coaſts of the great ſea over againſt Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebuſite heard *thereof*: 2. That [a] they gathered themſelves together to fight with Joſhua, and with Iſrael, [b] with one accord.

[a] Pſ. ii. 1. & lxxxiii. 2. Rev. xvi. 14.
[b] Luke xvi. 8.

v. 1, 2. The kings of Canaan begin now to think it high time to beſtir themſelves: the victories of Iſrael over Jericho and Ai are blazed abroad; and perhaps no leſs notorious was the ſolemn rehearſal of the laws by which they were to be governed, which, if now done, intimated their certain confidence of poſſeſſing the land. Hereupon they aſſociate, not to conſult how to make the beſt peace, though this was the only prudent ſtep they could take, but to confederate their armies for an united exertion of their force in war. All ſeparate quarrels are now ſilent, and their one deſign is to oppoſe the common enemy, Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe whom God will deſtroy, are generally infatuated with malice and revenge. (2.) The enemies of God's people, however divided among themſelves, are unanimous to oppoſe the truth: Deiſts, Arians, Socinians, Formaliſts, moral or profane, Conformiſts, or Separatiſts, all unite againſt the ſpiritual ſeed. (3.) When we ſee the world ſo leagued together againſt the truth, ſurely they who are faithful, ſhould overlook their trivial differences in uneſſentials, and laying every cauſe of diſpute aſide, join heart and hand againſt their common enemy.

3. ¶ And [c] when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joſhua had done unto Jericho, and to Ai, 4. They did work [d] wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambaſſadors, and took old ſacks upon their aſſes, and wine-bottles, old, and rent, and bound up, 5. And old ſhoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them, and all the bread of their proviſion was dry *and* mouldy. 6. And they went to Joſhua unto the camp at Gilgal, and ſaid unto him, and to the men of Iſrael, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us. 7. And the men of Iſrael ſaid unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us, and [e] how ſhall we make a league with you? 8. And they ſaid unto Joſhua, [f] We *are* thy ſervants. And Joſhua ſaid unto them, Who *are* ye? and from whence come ye? 9. And they ſaid unto him, From a very far country thy ſervants are come, becauſe of [g] the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt, 10. And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heſhbon, and to Og king of Baſhan, which *was* at Aſhtaroth. 11. Wherefore our elders, and all the inhabitants of our country, ſpake to us, ſaying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and ſay unto them, We *are* your ſervants: therefore now make ye a league with us. 12. [h] This our bread we took hot *for* our proviſion out of our houſes, on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: 13. And theſe bottles of wine which we filled, *were* new, and behold, they be rent: and theſe our garments and our ſhoes are become old, by reaſon of the very long journey. 14. And ‖ the men took of their victuals, [i] and aſked not *counſel* at the mouth of the LORD. 15. And Joſhua [k] made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation ſware unto them.

[c] 2 Cor. ii. 16.
[d] Luke viii. 44, 47.
[e] Exod. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 2.
[f] Deut. xx. 11.
[g] Neh. ix. 5. Pſ. lxxxvi. 9. & cxlviii. 13.
[h] Rom. xvi. 18.
‖ Or they received the men by reaſon of their victuals.
[i] Numb. xxvii. 21. 1 Chron. x. 14. Iſa. xxx. 2.
[k] Deut. xx. 10. Jer. xviii. 7, 8.

v. 3—15. The ſame event produces very different effects, according to the different tempers of men. Iſrael's ſucceſs rouſed the other Canaanites to battle, and warned the Gibeonites to make their peace, before the ſword overtook them. As no mention is made of Gibeon's king, and the three confederate cities, it ſeems they were a little republic; and whilſt the proud kings of Canaan refuſed to bow, in their ſenators there was wiſdom. We have here,

1. The method they took to obtain peace from Iſrael. Well acquainted with the late tranſaction, and being not farther than twelve miles diſtant from the camp in Gilgal, and therefore likely to be ſoon expoſed to the arm of Iſrael, and no ſtrangers to the utter extirpation of the Canaanites, which was commanded; they diſguiſed themſelves, as ambaſſadors come from a far country, on the fame of Iſrael's exploits; and, to confirm the cheat, appear before Joſhua, as having undergone a tedious journey: their bread is mouldy with age, their bottles (which were made of ſkins or leather) patched and bound up, their cloaths threadbare, and ſhoes almoſt worn from their feet, as if by long travel, ſerve well to confirm their pretended ſtory, that they came from a far country to ſeek the friendſhip of Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) They who pretend to do us moſt honour, are moſt likely to impoſe upon us. (2.) Pretences to antiquity have, we ſee, of old deceived God's Iſrael; we muſt beware of being caught with this Gibeonitiſh wile. (3.) Not every beggar who appears in rags is the object of diſtreſs: humble and true poverty hath an artleſs tale; but when Your Honour, or Your

Reverence, is pat on the tongue, this court to your pride detects the knave.

2. The Iſraelites and Joſhua have ſome ſuſpicion, and therefore begin to queſtion who they were, or whence they came. We may not be credulous to every tale, but examine well before we contract intimacy. In our ſpiritual warfare, as much need is there to be aware of the wily ſerpent, as of the roaring lion.

3. The more danger there is of diſcovery, the more need of ſtrong aſſurances and artful pleas, to gain credit to their aſſertions. Though they carefully conceal the mention of the place, they affirm they come from a far country, as if utterly unknown to Iſrael, and that their inducement was a reſpect for Iſrael's God, whoſe wonders in Egypt and the land of Baſhan they had heard, not mentioning Ai or Jericho, though the real motive to their journey. They profeſs to be ſo affected with theſe wonders of God, that on any terms they would make peace with them, and call themſelves their ſervants, as if ready to do them any ſervice which ſhould be deſired. *Note*, (1.) A Canaanite is never at a loſs for a lie. (2.) One lie ſeldom ſtands alone, but requires the addition of others to ſupport its credibility. (3.) It is very evil to ſeek a right end by wrong means: Perhaps if they had ſpoken honeſtly and openly, God would have interpoſed for them, and they had found better terms than they after obtained.

4. The ſtratagem ſucceeds, and Joſhua and the princes, having inſpected their bread, and found it agreeable to their deſcription, too haſtily concluded the truth of their ſtory; and counting it unneceſſary on ſuch an occaſion to aſk counſel of God, make an agreement with them, and confirm it with an oath, to let them live. *Note*, (1.) They who are honeſt themſelves, are leaſt ſuſpicious of fraud in others. (2.) When we are haſty in our reſolves, we ſhall often have cauſe to repent of them. (3.) Nothing of importance ſhould be tranſacted by us, without prayer to God for his direction. (4.) It is wiſe in every ſinner to imitate theſe Gibeonites; in rags of humiliation and godly ſorrow, to be found at the feet of Jeſus, ſeeking that peace without which we periſh, and we need not doubt of ſucceſs; for he will ſay unto us, Live, and, for the comfort of our hope, confirm it with an oath.

16. And it came to paſs [l] at the end of three days, after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbours, and *that* they dwelt among them. 17. And the children of Iſrael journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day: now their cities *were* Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim. 18. And the children of Iſrael ſmote them not, [m] becauſe the princes of the congregation had ſworn unto them by the LORD God of Iſrael: and all the congregation [n] murmured againſt the princes. 19. But all the princes ſaid unto all the congregation, We have ſworn unto them by the LORD God of Iſrael: [o] now therefore we may not touch them. 20. This we will do to them; we will even let them live, [p] leſt wrath be upon us, becauſe of the oath which we ſware unto them. 21. And the princes ſaid unto them, Let them live, (but let them be [q] hewers of wood, and drawers of water unto all the congregation) as the princes had promiſed them.

[l] Prov. xii. 19.

[m] 2 Sam. xxi. 7. Pſ. xv. 4. Eccleſ. ix. 2.

[n] Chap. xxii. 12. John xii. 5. Rom. x. 2.

[o] 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2. Pſ. xv. 4.

[p] Zech. v 3. Mal. iii. 5.

[q] Deut. xxix. 11.

v. 16—21. The fraud could not long be concealed: lies will quickly ſhame their maker. In three days time, on the third morning perhaps, by reconnoitring parties, or deſerters, they found they were Canaanites, and in their neighbourhood. Hereupon a detachment was made from the army, the camp ſtill abiding in Gilgal; and they came the ſame evening, the third from the day of the league, to their cities, when the cheat was diſcovered. This excited, 1. A general murmuring in the congregation. They blamed their princes for the oath; more, it is to be feared, out of love for the ſpoil, than zeal for God's glory. *Note*, Many ſinfully ſpeak evil of dignities, who are ignorant of the motives on which their rulers act. 2. The princes ſeek to pacify the diſcontented, and to give the people ſatiſfaction. 1. The lives of the Gibeonites are and ought to be ſecured to them, becauſe of the oath which they had made, though it was to their loſs, and obtained by deceit. An oath was too ſacred to be violated; and though the command of God enjoined the deſtruction of the impenitent Canaanites, it ſeems not to include thoſe who humbly ſubmitted, and renounced their idolatry, to worſhip the true God; ſince from theſe Iſrael could be in no danger of being infected, and therefore under no neceſſity to extirpate them. *Note*, (1.) Whenever we have ſworn, nothing muſt reſtrain us from a conſcientious diſcharge of our oath. (2.) It is a curſed doctrine of the church of Rome, that no faith is to be kept with heretics. (3.) The deceit of others towards us, will be no juſt plea for our unfaithfulneſs to them. (4.) Though the ſentence of death is irrevocable againſt the impenitent, yet, when ſuch return to Jeſus from the error of their way, the ſentence will be reverſed; they ſhall live, and not die. 2. They are however condemned to perpetual ſervitude; and this may ſatisfy the people. They have their labour, and that is better than their lives. Their employment was to hew wood, and draw water for the congregation; either for the camp, whilſt they dwelt in tents, or only for the ſanctuary, to be ſervants of the prieſts and Levites, in the more laborious offices about the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple. *Note*, How great the mercy ſhewn unto the ſinner, if but his life were given him for a prey; but how much greater, when his lot is aſſigned him in the temple of God, and the perfect freedom of God's ſervice becomes his happy portion.

22. ¶ And Joſhua called for them, and he ſpake unto them, ſaying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, ſaying, We *are* very far from you; when ye dwell among us? 23. Now therefore [r] ye *are* curſed, and † there ſhall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for the houſe of my God. 24. And they anſwered Joſhua, and ſaid, Becauſe it was certainly told thy ſervants, how that [s] the LORD thy God commanded his ſervant Moſes to give you all the land, and to deſtroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were ſore afraid of our lives becauſe of you, and have done this thing. 25. And now behold, we *are* in thine hand: as it ſeemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. 26. And ſo did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Iſrael, that they ſlew them not. 27. And Joſhua † made them that day hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which he ſhould chooſe.

[r] Gen. ix. 25.

† Heb. It ſhall not be cut off from you to be freed from, &c.

[s] Exod. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 2. Ver. 7.

† Heb. Delivered them over to be; hence they are called Nethinims, i. e. given or delivered over. 1 Chron. ix. 2. Ezra viii. 20.

v. 22—27. The matter being thus determined, Joſhua called for the chief men of theſe cities probably, and let them know their reſolution.

1. Joſhua reproves them for their impoſition. A lie deſerves rebuke: yet he ſpeaks with mildneſs, conſidering their ſituation, and feeling for their diſtreſs. *Note*, If we conſidered the violence of others temptation, we ſhould be leſs ſevere againſt their ſin, conſidering ourſelves, leſt we alſo ſhould be tempted. 2. They confeſs their fault, and aſſign their reaſon; which, though it will not excuſe their ſin, at leaſt is an alleviation of it. When life is at ſtake, and can only be ſaved by a lie, it requires great grace to dare ſpeak the truth. 3. Joſhua condemns them to perpetual ſervitude. Though the curſe of death was removed, the curſe of bondage was upon them. However, in its iſſue it was to be of ſervice to all parties: *To the Gibeonites themſelves*, who, being thus employed about the ſanctuary, would be better taught, and have a peculiar privilege of ſpiritual improvement: *To the prieſts and Levites*, who would be much aſſiſted by the miniſtry of theſe ſtrong men, in the very laborious work of drawing ſo much water as the frequent ablutions required, and cleaving ſo much wood as the frequent ſacrifices would need: *To the people*, who had a common intereſt in the altar, that it ſhould be well ſerved, and were probably, before this, themſelves aſſiſtants in theſe common ſervices. *Note*, (1.) God can thus over-rule the iſſue of events, and bring much good out of man's evil. (2.) This was typical of the admiſſion of the Gentiles into the goſpel church. 4. The Gibeonites readily acquieſce in the determination: they feared perhaps much worſe from the incenſed people, and are glad to eſcape with their lives for a prey. They refer themſelves entirely to Joſhua, to be and do as he pleaſed; and he ſaves them, and ſets them to their work. Their cities were given to the people, and their ſervice employed for the public. *Note*, (1.) The ſoul who refers himſelf wholly to Jeſus Chriſt, need not apprehend he ſhall be caſt away. (2.) If Chriſt receives us, we need not complain of any croſs he is pleaſed to lay upon us. (3.) They who ſerve the Saviour, will ever have reaſon to bleſs the day in which they made the exchange of carnal liberty for ſpiritual ſubjection.

CHAP. X.

We have here, 1. *The confederacy of the kings of Canaan againſt the Gibeonites*, ver. 1—5. 2. *The Gibeonites requeſt to Joſhua to aſſiſt them*, ver. 6. 3. *Joſhua's ſpeedy march*, ver. 7—9. 4. *The defeat of theſe confederate kings*, ver. 10, 11. 5. *The ſtanding ſtill of the ſun in favour of the conquerors*, ver. 12—14. 6. *The execution of the kings that eſcaped out of the battle*, ver. 15—27. 7. *The taking and deſtroying their cities*, ver. 28—42. *And laſtly the return of the army to their head quarters*, ver. 43.

1. NOW it came to paſs, when Adoni-zedek king of Jeruſalem had heard how Joſhua had taken Ai, and had utterly deſtroyed it, (as he had done to Jericho

[a] Jericho and her king, ſo he had done to [b] Ai and her king) and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Iſrael, and were among them; 2. That they [c] feared greatly, becauſe Gibeon *was* a great city, as one of the † royal cities, and becauſe it *was* greater than Ai, and all the men thereof *were* mighty. 3. Wherefore Adoni-zedek king of Jeruſalem, ſent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachiſh, and unto Debir king of Eglon, ſaying, 4. Come up unto me, and help me, that we may ſmite Gibeon: for [d] it hath made peace with Joſhua, and with the children of Iſrael. 5. Therefore [e] the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jeruſalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachiſh, the king of Eglon, gathered themſelves together, and went up, they and all their hoſts, and [f] encamped before Gibeon, and made war againſt it. 6. ¶ And the men of Gibeon ſent unto Joſhua, to the camp to Gilgal, ſaying, Slack not thy hand from thy ſervants: come up to us quickly, and ſave us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains, are gathered together againſt us.

[a] Chap. vi. 21.
[b] Chap. viii. 22.
[c] Pſ. xlviii. 6.
† Heb. Cities of the kingdom.
[d] Pſ. lxix. 7. Acts ix. 23. 2 Tim. iii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 4.
[e] Gen. xiv. 9. Rev. xix. 14.
[f] Eccleſ. iv. 4. Iſa lix. 15.

v. 1—6. Alarmed with the capture of Jericho and Ai, and more irritated with the ſurrender of Gibeon, Adoni-zedek, king of Jeruſalem, (as it was afterwards called) ſummons his neighbour kings to unite their forces againſt Gibeon; to prevent either ſo ſtrong a city, and ſo near him, from being occupied by his enemies, or to make an example of thoſe who were accounted betrayers of their country. *Note*, They who leave the ways of ſin, muſt expect not to part from the world in peace. Satan and his ſervants will proſecute thoſe as deſerters, who inliſt under the banners of Jeſus.

Alarmed with their approaching danger, they fly to Joſhua for help. Though mighty men, they knew themſelves unable to cope with theſe confederate armies, and therefore plead that league which, though fraudulently obtained, they were aſſured would be religiouſly obſerved. They are importunate, becauſe the danger was imminent, and expect protection, not only for the oath's ſake, but in honour, as allies ſuffering for their attachment to Iſrael; and in intereſt, as ſervants, whoſe deſtruction would be Iſrael's loſs. *Note*, (1.) When our ſouls are ſore thruſt at by legions of corruptions within, and temptations without, we muſt look up to Jeſus the glorious Captain of our ſalvation, whoſe hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear. (2.) If we are in fidelity cleaving to God as his ſervants, we may reſt aſſured of his protection as our Almighty Lord.

7. So Joſhua aſcended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. 8. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, [g] Fear them not; for I have delivered them into thine hand; there ſhall not a man of them ſtand before thee. 9. Joſhua therefore came unto them ſuddenly, *and* went up from Gilgal [h] all night. 10. And [i] the LORD diſcomfited them before Iſrael, and ſlew them with a great ſlaughter at Gibeon, and chaſed them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and ſmote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. 11. And it came to paſs as they fled from before Iſrael, *and* were in the going down to Beth-horon, that [k] the LORD caſt down great ſtones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; *they were* more which died with hail-ſtones, than they whom the children of Iſrael ſlew with the ſword. 12. ¶ [l] Then ſpake Joſhua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Iſrael, and he ſaid in the ſight of Iſrael, [m] Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon, and thou moon, in the valley of Ajalon. 13. And the [n] ſun ſtood ſtill, and the moon ſtayed, until the people had avenged themſelves upon their enemies. *Is* not this written in the book of † Jaſher? ſo the ſun ſtood ſtill in the midſt of heaven, and haſted not to go down about a whole day. 14. And there was [o] no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD hearkned unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Iſrael.

[g] Chap. viii. 1. Pſ. ciii. 13, 14.
[h] 2 Tim. ii. 3.
[i] Pſ. xliv. 3.
[k] Judg. v. 20. Pſ. xi. 6. & lxxvii. 18. Hebr. x. 31. Rev. xvi. 21.
[l] Jam. v. 17. Iſa. xxviii. 21.
[m] Hebr iii. 11. Ecclus xlvi. 4.
[n] Heb. xi. 33.
† Or the Upright. Num. xxi. 14. 2 Sam. i. 18.
[o] Iſa. xxxviii. 8.

v. 7—14. After the taking of Ai, the army ſeems to have reſted a while in Gilgal, and is now rouſed up to action by the attack made on their allies; in which the Canaanites being aggreſſors, the juſtice of their ruin is more evident; whilſt, by their confederacy they were brought together for a readier conſumption by the ſword of Iſrael.

1. Joſhua, animated by divine encouragement, prepares to ſuccour the trembling Gibeonites. They need not fear, who have God with them, and never-failing promiſes for their ſecurity. 2. He marches all night with a ſelect body of valiant men, in order to ſhew his readineſs to help his friends, and unexpectedly to ſurprize his enemies. *Note*, (1.) In war, a well-judged expeditious march is among the chief proofs of generalſhip. (2.) They who would ſerve the Lord Jeſus, muſt follow him night and day, and ſtick at no toil he may call them to endure. By and by their labours will end, and they ſhall reſt in eternal uninterrupted peace. 3. God's marvellous interpoſition. Though he might have deſtroyed them by the ſword in battle, he chuſes rather immediately to manifeſt his power, that Iſrael may know to whom they are indebted for victory, and their enemies be made ſenſible againſt whom they lift up themſelves. God diſcomfited them, put terror on their ſpirits, and gave them up to ſlaughter as ſheep; and from heaven, in their flight, caſt down hail-ſtones of ſuch a ſize, as ſlew more than fell by the ſword. *Note*, Upon the ungodly will he ſhortly rain a more terrible hail, *Rev.* xvi. 21. and judgments worſe than death itſelf ſhall overtake them; under which men ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them. 4. Joſhua's prayer. Fearing leſt now the darkneſs ſhould cover the flight of his enemies, and moved, no doubt, by divine impulſe to make this ſtrange requeſt, he begs that God would ſtay the motions of the heavenly bodies, (as to us they appear to move), or rather the revolution of this earthly globe, that by prolonging the light of day, they might avenge themſelves on their enemies; and being under the influence of miraculous faith, in the hearing of Iſrael, he commands the ſun to ſtand ſtill now on Gibeon in the weſt, and the riſing moon to reſt in the valley of Ajalon. 5. God hears and anſwers him: the ſun, arreſted in his ſteep deſcent, haſtes not to go down, nor the riſing moon to advance, during the ſpace of a whole day. Never was ſuch a day before, or ſince: but God fought for Iſrael, therefore he granted the prayer of Iſrael's captain. Reference is here made for this event to the book of Jaſher, which ſeems to have been the public and authentic annals of every memorable event, and might be appealed to, as a corroborating evidence of this fact. *Note*, (1.) Great is the power of effectual fervent prayer. (2.) When God ſtirs up a ſpirit of ſupplication, it is a ſure ſign of his deſign to grant the requeſts he teaches us to make. (3.) God will appear for his people's comfort, and his enemies confuſion; and, if need be, all nature ſhall engage in their quarrel. (4.) When Iſrael's enemies ſhall receive their final overthrow, at the appearing of our great God and Saviour in the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men, then ſhall our ſun no more go down, nor our moon withdraw itſelf for ever.

15. ¶ And Joſhua returned, and all Iſrael with him, unto the camp to Gilgal. 16. But theſe [p] five kings fled, and [q] hid themſelves in a cave at Makkedah. 17. And it was told Joſhua, ſaying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah. 18. And Joſhua ſaid, [r] Roll great ſtones upon the mouth of the cave, and ſet men by it for to keep them. 19. And ſtay you not, *but* purſue after your enemies, and † ſmite the hindmoſt of them, ſuffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand. 20. And it came to paſs when Joſhua and the children of Iſrael had made an end of ſlaying them with a very great ſlaughter till they were conſumed, that the reſt *which* remained of them, entred into fenced cities. 21. And all the people returned to the camp to Joſhua at Makkedah in peace: [s] none moved his tongue againſt any of the children of Iſrael. 22. Then ſaid Joſhua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out thoſe five kings unto me out of the cave. 23. And they did ſo, and brought forth thoſe five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jeruſalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachiſh, *and* the king of Eglon. 24. And it came to paſs when they brought out thoſe kings unto Joſhua, that Joſhua called for all the men of Iſrael, and ſaid unto the captains of the men of war, which went with him, Come near, [t] put your feet upon the necks of theſe kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. 25. And Joſhua ſaid unto them, Fear not nor be diſmayed, be ſtrong and of good courage: for [u] thus ſhall the LORD do to all your enemies againſt whom ye fight. 26. And afterwards Joſhua ſmote them, and ſlew them, and [x] hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. 27. And it came to paſs at the time of the going down of the ſun, *that* Joſhua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and caſt them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid [y] great

[p] Pſ. xlviii. 4. Iſa. ii. 21. Rev. vi. 15, 17.
[q] Pſ. cxxxix. 8, &c. Am. ix. 2.
[r] Job xxi. 30. Am. ix. 1, 2, 3.
† Heb. Smite them in the tail. Jer. xlviii. 10.
[s] Exod. xi. 7.
[t] Pſ. xci. 13. & cxlix. 8, 9. Mal. iv. 3. Rom. xvi. 20.
[u] Pſ. lxiii. 9. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17. Chap. viii. 29.
[x] Pſ. cxlix. 8.
[y] Chap. vii. 26.

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ſtones in the cave's mouth, *which remain* unto this very day.

v. 15—27. We have here,

1. News brought to Joſhua of the diſcovery of the five kings, who had fled for concealment into a cave near Makkedah. To ſecure them there, great ſtones are rolled to the mouth of it, and, without ſtaying to execute on them the intended judgment, the people are commanded to continue their purſuit. When our enemies are falling, we muſt purſue the blow: the more compleat the conqueſt, the more glorious the future triumph. 2. The purſuit is continued, and ended; the few who eſcaped the ſword, only eſcaped to ſpread the terror of the defeat into the neighbouring cities, whilſt Iſrael returned to Joſhua at Makkedah, without the loſs of a man, though the victory was ſo compleat, and in a ſtate ſo ſecure, that none moved his tongue againſt them. So eaſily can God turn the fury of the greateſt perſecutors into perfect tranquillity, and, after the ſevereſt ſtorm has threatned, ſay, Peace, be ſtill, and there ſhall be a great calm. 3. Now the kings are brought from their concealment, and undergo the ſevereſt humiliation, and that deſerved death, which their pride idolatry, and tyranny had merited. The captains are commanded to tread on their necks, not haughtily to inſult their miſery, but by way of terror to the kings of Canaan, and as an aſſurance, that thus ſhould all their enemies be laid low before them. They need not fear, or be diſmayed, at the moſt numerous armies or mightieſt kings, when God thus evidently fights for them. When they had ſuffered this bitter mortification, the ſword is unſheathed, they fall victims to divine juſtice, are hanged as accurſed on trees till the evening, and covered with great ſtones in the cave where they ſought their ſafety, which remained a monument long after of Iſrael's victory. *Note,* (1.) The ſinner who flies from God will find his ſecureſt retreat but a refuge of lies. (2.) Our triumphant Jeſus hath thus deſtroyed the principalities and powers of darkneſs, and will ſhortly bruiſe Satan, and all the other enemies of his people, under their feet.

28. ¶ And that day Joſhua took Makkedah, and ſmote it with the edge of the ſword, and the king thereof he utterly deſtroyed, them, and † all the ſouls that *were* therein, he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah, as he did unto the king of Jericho. 29. Then Joſhua paſſed from Makkedah, and all Iſrael with him, unto Libnah, and fought againſt Libnah. 30. And the LORD delivered it alſo, and the king thereof, into the hand of Iſrael, and he ſmote it with the edge of the ſword, and all the ſouls that *were* therein: he let none remain in it, but did unto the king thereof, as he did unto the king of Jericho. 31. ¶ And Joſhua paſſed from Libnah, and all Iſrael with him, unto Lachiſh, and encamped againſt it, and fought againſt it. 32. And the LORD delivered Lachiſh into the hand of Iſrael, which took it on the ſecond day, and ſmote it with the edge of the ſword, and all the ſouls that *were* therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah. 33. ¶ Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachiſh; and Joſhua ſmote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining. 34. ¶ And from Lachiſh, Joſhua paſſed unto Eglon, and all Iſrael with him, and they encamped againſt it, and fought againſt it. 35. And they took it on that day, and ſmote it with the edge of the ſword, and all the ſouls that *were* therein he utterly † deſtroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachiſh. 36. And Joſhua went up from Eglon, and all Iſrael with him, unto Hebron, and they fought againſt it. 37. And they took it, and ſmote it with the edge of the ſword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the ſouls that *were* therein: he left none remaining (according to all that he had done to Eglon) but deſtroyed it utterly, and all the ſouls that *were* therein. 38. ¶ And Joſhua returned, and all Iſrael with him, to Debir, and fought againſt it. 39. And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and they ſmote them with the edge of the ſword and utterly deſtroyed all the ſouls that *were* therein, he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, ſo he did to Debir, and to the king thereof, as he had done alſo to Libnah and to her king. 40. ¶ So Joſhua ſmote all the country of the hills, and of the ſouth, and of the vale, and of the ſprings, and all their kings: [z] he left none remaining, but utterly deſtroyed † all that breathed, as the LORD God of Iſrael commanded. 41. And Joſhua ſmote them from Kadeſh-barnea, even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goſhen, even unto Gibeon. 42. And [a] all theſe kings, and their land did Joſhua take at one time: becauſe [b] the LORD God of Iſrael fought for Iſrael. 43. And Joſhua returned, and all Iſrael with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

† Heb. Every ſoul. Deut. xx. 17. Ver. 40. Chap. xi. 11.

† Heb. Pulled down, as men do buildings. Lev. xxvi. 45. Job. xix. 10.

z Pſ. ix. 17. 2 Theſ. i. 7, &c. Jude 15. † Heb. Every breath.

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a Pſ. lxxx. 8. Iſa. xliii. 4. b Pſ. cxviii. 6. Rom. viii. 31.

v. 28—43. Joſhua, like a wiſe general, improves the general conſternation which the late defeat had ſpread, and makes an eaſy capture of their defenceleſs cities. Makkedah, Libnah, Lachiſh, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir, are immediately taken by ſtorm, and every living ſoul put to the ſword. Horam, king of Gezer, advancing to the ſuccour of Lachiſh, ſhares in her deſtruction; and thus at one time, in the ſpace of a few days, all the ſouth country is taken, except Jeruſalem and Jarmuth, which afterwards were, though with difficulty, ſubdued, *Judg.* i. 8. 2 *Sam.* v. 6. After theſe ſucceſsful attacks, the army retired for refreſhment into their camp at Gilgal. *Note,* (1.) The ſucceſs of our undertakings depends much on our ſeizing the proper opportunity; much may then be done in a ſhort time. (2.) The judgments of God in this ſevere extirpation of this accurſed race, ſhould lead us to conſider the end of impenitent ſinners. The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the nations who forget God. (3.) When we have compleated our victories over the powers of ſin and Satan, we ſhall return under the conduct of our divine Joſhua, to our eternal reſt in the camp of God.

CHAP. XI.

The ſouthern parts being ſubdued, we have here, 1. *The confederacy of the northern crowns againſt Iſrael,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The encouragement which God gave to Joſhua to engage them,* ver. 6. 3. *His victory over them,* ver. 7—9. 4. *The taking of the cities,* ver. 10—15. 5. *The deſtruction of the Anakims,* ver. 21, 22. 6. *The general concluſion of the ſtory of this war,* ver. 16—20, 23.

1. AND it came to paſs, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard *thoſe things,* that [a] he ſent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achſhaph, 2. And to the kings that *were* on the north of the mountains, and of the plains, ſouth of Cinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor, on the weſt; 3. *And to* the Canaanite on the eaſt and on the weſt, and *to* the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebuſite in the mountains, and *to* the Hivite under Hermon, in the land of Mizpeh. 4. And they went out, they and all their hoſts with them, much people, even [b] as the ſand that *is* upon the ſea-ſhore in multitude, with horſes and chariots very many. 5. And when all theſe kings were † met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight againſt Iſrael. 6. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, Be not afraid becauſe of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all ſlain before Iſrael: [c] thou ſhalt hough their horſes, and burn their chariots with fire. 7. So Joſhua came, and all the people of war with him, againſt them by the waters of Merom [d] ſuddenly, and they fell upon them. 8. And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Iſrael, who ſmote them, and chaſed them unto great Zidon, and unto ‡ Miſrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eaſt-ward, and they ſmote them until they left them none remaining. 9. And Joſhua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horſes, [e] and burnt their chariots with fire.

a Iſa. xxvi. 11. Jer. v. 3.

b Pſal. ii. 2. & iii. 1. & lxxxiii. 5, 8. Iſa. viii. 9, 10. Rev. xvi. 14.

† Heb. Aſſembled by appointment.

c Deut. xvii. 16. Judg. vii. 2. 2 Sam. viii. 4.

d 1 Theſ. v. 2, 3.

‡ Burnings of waters. Chap. xiii. 6. Iſa. xlvi. 9.

v. 1—9. 1. Alarmed with theſe increaſing ſucceſſes of Iſrael, the northern kings of Canaan, with Hazor at their head, and at his inſtigation, collect their forces; thoſe in the eaſt and weſt join them, ſo that the aſſociation becomes general, and with theſe united forces, amounting, ſays Joſephus, to 300,000 foot, 10,000 horſe, and 20,000 chariots, they hope to cruſh theſe cruel invaders. They become hereby the aggreſſors, and as they firſt diſturb the peace of Iſrael's camp, they juſtly fall under the power of Iſrael's arm. *Note,* The ſtrongeſt confederacy of ſinners, will only make their ruin more notorious.

2. Joſhua hereupon receives encouragement from God. Though a brave man, ſuch an army, and ſo accoutred, ſtrengthened with horſe, and chariots armed with ſcythes, which mowed down ranks of men before them, might beget ſome ſollicitude about the event of the battle. But he is commanded to attack them in their encampment at Merom, and God promiſes to give them up to the ſword, as dead men, unable to make reſiſtance. *Note,* (1.) Vain are multitudes or ſtrength againſt God.

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God. (2.) The greater dangers ſurround us, the greater ſupports from God we may expect. (3.) It is uſually wiſer to meet an approaching enemy, than wait their coming; ſafer to attack, than merely to act on the defenſive.

3. Immediately Joſhua ſummons the people, and having acquainted them, no doubt, with God's promiſe, by a ſudden march they ſurprize their enemies, who are broken on the firſt attack, and fly different ways; ſome weſtward to Zidon, others eaſtward to Mizpeh, leaving their chariots and horſes an eaſy prey to their purſuers, who hewed the one, and burnt the other with fire, according to the command of God, who would not have them truſt in theſe human ſupports, but on himſelf alone for their ſucceſs. *Note*, The more we are taken off from every dependance, and the more entirely our heart is fixed on God as our ſtrength, the more ſurely ſhall we find our ſpiritual enemies ſubdued before us.

10. ¶ And Joſhua at that time turned back and took Hazor, and ſmote the king thereof with the ſword: for Hazor before time was the head of all thoſe kingdoms. 11. And they ſmote all the ſouls that *were* therein with the edge of the ſword, utterly deſtroying *them*: there was not † any left to breathe; and he burnt Hazor with fire. 12. And all the cities of thoſe kings, and all the kings of them did Joſhua take, and ſmote them with the edge of the ſword, *and* he utterly deſtroyed them, [f] as Moſes the ſervant of the LORD commanded. 13. But *as for* the cities that ſtood ſtill in their ſtrength, Iſrael burned none of them, ſave Hazor only: *that* did Joſhua burn. 14. And all [g] the ſpoil of theſe cities, and the cattle, the children of Iſrael took for a prey unto themſelves: but every man they ſmote with the edge of the ſword, until they had deſtroyed them, neither left they any to breathe.

† Heb. Any breath.
[f] Num. xxxiii. 52. Deut. vii. 2. & xx. 17.
[g] Deut. vi. 10, 11. Prov. xiii. 22.

v. 10—14. The improvement of this victory, as the former, iſſued in the ſubjection of the neighbouring cities and country. The king of Hazor eſcaping out of the battle, is taken with his city, and put to death; and as this was the head of the confederacy, it is burnt and ruined; the reſt of the cities are preſerved for their abode, with all the ſpoil found in them; but all the people, young and old, are put to the ſword, according to the Divine command, delivered by Moſes to Joſhua. 1. This was a needful ſeverity, to prevent the people from being infected with the abominations of the Canaanites. 2. It was a juſt ſeverity, the meaſure of their iniquities being now filled. *Note*, (1.) God is juſt in all his judgments. (2.) It becomes us to give no more quarter to the leaſt of our ſins, than they to the infant Canaanite.

15. ¶ [h] As the LORD commanded Moſes his ſervant, ſo did Moſes command Joſhua, and ſo did Joſhua: he † left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moſes. 16. So Joſhua took all that land, the hills, and all the ſouth-country, and all the land of Goſhen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Iſrael, and the valley of the ſame: 17. *Even* from the ‡ mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and ſmote them, and ſlew them. 18. Joſhua made war ‖ a long time with all thoſe kings. 19. [i] There was not a city that made peace with the children of Iſrael, ſave the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon; all *other* they took in battle. 20. For [k] it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they ſhould come againſt Iſrael in battle, that he might deſtroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might deſtroy them, as the LORD commanded Moſes. 21. ¶ And at that time came Joſhua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all [l] the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Iſrael: [m] Joſhua deſtroyed *them* utterly with their cities. 22. There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Iſrael: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Aſhdod there remained. 23. So Joſhua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, and [n] Joſhua gave it for an inheritance unto Iſrael, according to their diviſions by their tribes. And the land [o] reſted from war.

[h] Exod. xxxiv. 11. Deut. vii. 2.
† Heb. Removed nothing from all, &c.
‡ Or the bald, or ſmooth mountain. Chap. xii. 7.
‖ Six years or more. Chap. xiv. 7, 10.
[i] Ibid. ix. 15.
[k] Exod. iv. 21. 1 Kings xii. 15. Rom. ix. 18.
[l] Jer. iii. 23. Amos ix. 2, 3.
[m] Heb. ii. 8. Rev. vi. 2. Rom. viii. 37.
[n] Numb. xxvi. 53. Chap. vii. 15, 16, &c.
[o] Pſal. xlvi. 9. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Heb. ix. 8, 9.

v. 15—23. The ſtory of this war concludes happily for Iſrael, in the conqueſt of the whole land, north and ſouth. Far from being warned by their neighbours calamities, or deſpairing to obtain peace, no city but Gibeon ſought for it; but hardned as Pharaoh by the Divine judgment, came out to war with Iſrael, and ruſhed upon their own deſtruction. Thus ſtill hardneſs of heart in ſome, and deſpair of mercy in others, drives them furiouſly to purſue thoſe ways of ſin, which muſt end in their eternal perdition. This war continued ſix or ſeven years before their enemies were thoroughly ſubdued; but at laſt the conqueſt is compleated in the deſtruction of the Anakims, who had fled to the faſtneſſes of the mountains: theſe dreaded foes of Iſrael now no longer make them afraid, but are hunted from their lurking places as beaſts of prey, and ſoon fall before the devouring ſword of the conquering Joſhua. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not be weary of our ſpiritual warfare, nor count the time long; we ſhall finally reap, if we faint not. (2.) Our laſt difficulties in death, may, like theſe ſons of Anak, appear the greateſt, but the victory is ſure, and when we have ſtruck this ſtroke, we ſhall for ever reſt from war.

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The people now begin to taſte the ſweets of repoſe, and diſperſe themſelves over the conquered country: for Joſhua, as an obedient ſervant, had faithfully accompliſhed his buſineſs; and God, as a faithful God, had fulfilled to them his promiſes, which he ſpake by his ſervant Moſes. *Note*, (1.) Obedience to the command, is the way to obtain the fulfilment of the promiſe. (2.) They who go forth with a dependance on God, ſhall find they are not diſappointed of their hopes. (3.) Jeſus hath accompliſhed the work of his people's ſalvation, and they who now are liſted under his banner, muſt ere long enter with him into the poſſeſſion of that glory, where their triumphs will be continued to a glorious eternity.

CHAP. XII.

This chapter is a ſummary of Iſrael's conqueſts, 1. *Their conqueſts under Moſes, on the other ſide Jordan,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Their conqueſts under Joſhua, on this ſide Jordan weſtward.* (1.) *The country they reduced,* ver. 7, 8. (2.) *The kings they ſubdued, thirty-one in all,* ver. 9—34.

1. NOW theſe *are* the kings of the land, which the children of Iſrael ſmote, and poſſeſſed their land on the other ſide Jordan, toward the riſing of the ſun: from the river [a] Arnon, unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the eaſt. 2. [b] Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heſhbon, *and* ruled from Aroer, which *is* upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead even unto the river [c] Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon: 3. And from the plain to the ſea of [d] Cinneroth on the eaſt, and unto the ſea of the plain, *even* the ſalt-ſea on the eaſt, the way to [e] Beth-jeſhimoth: and from the ſouth, under Aſhdoth-piſgah. 4. And the coaſt of Og king of Baſhan, *which was* of the [f] remnant of the [g] giants, that dwelt at Aſhtaroth, and at Edrei, 5. And reigned in mount Hermon, and in [h] Salcah, and in all Baſhan, unto the border of the [i] Geſhurites, and the [k] Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heſhbon. 6. Them did Moſes the ſervant of the LORD, and the children of Iſrael ſmite, and Moſes the ſervant of the LORD gave it *for* a poſſeſſion unto the [l] Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh.

[a] Num. xxi. 13.
[b] Ibid. 24.
[c] Ibid. Judg. xi. 13, 22.
[d] Deut. iii. 17. Chap. xi. 2.
[e] Ibid. xiii. 20. Ezek. xxv. 9.
[f] Deut. iii. 11. Chap. xiii. 12.
[g] Gen. vi. 4.
[h] Chap. xiii. 11.
[i] Deut. iii. 14. Chap. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. iii. 3. & xiii. 37.
[k] Chap. xiii. 11. 2 Sam. xxiii. 34. 2 Kings xxv. 23.
[l] Num. xxxii. 29.

v. 1—6. Former mercies muſt not be forgotten, nor the paſt ſervices of Moſes be eclipſed by the preſent glare of Joſhua's conqueſts; we have here therefore a general review of their whole conqueſts, in order to their diſtribution. The country of Og and Sihon was their firſt conqueſt, and this was divided between Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manaſſeh, in Moſes' life-time. *Note*, On this ſide Jordan, the people of God have poſſeſſion of ſome bleſſings, as pardon, peace, comfort, &c. but their chief inheritance lies beyond the grave, where the fulneſs of the promiſes ſhall be accompliſhed in the glory that ſhall be revealed.

7. ¶ And theſe *are* the kings of the country which Joſhua and the children of Iſrael ſmote on this ſide Jordan on the weſt, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon, even unto the [m] mount Halak, that goeth up to [n] Seir, which Joſhua gave unto the tribes of Iſrael *for* a poſſeſſion, according to their diviſions: 8. In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the ſprings, and in the wilderneſs, and in the ſouth-country: the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebuſites. 9. ¶ The king of [o] Jericho, one: the king of [p] Ai, which *is* beſide Beth-el, one: 10. The king of [q] Jeruſalem, one: the king of Hebron, one: 11. The king of Jarmuth, one: the king of Lachiſh, one: 12. The king of Eglon, one;

[m] Chap. xi. 17.
[n] Gen. xiv. 6. & xxxii. 3.
[o] Chap. vi. 2.
[p] Ibid. viii. 29.
[q] Ibid. x. 23.

one: the king of [r] Gezer, one: 13. The king of [s] Debir, one: the king of [t] Geder, one: 14. The king of [u] Hormah, one: the king of [x] Arad, one: 15. The king of [y] Libnah, one: the king of Adullam, one: 16. The king of [z] Makkedah, one: the king of Beth-el, one: 17. The king of Tappuah, one: the king of Hepher, one: 18. The king of Aphek, one: the king of Laſharon, one: 19. The king of [a] Madon, one: the king of [b] Hazor, one: 20. The king of [c] Shimron-meron, one: the king of Achſhaph, one: 21. The king of Taanack, one: the king of Megiddo, one: 22. The king of Kedeſh, one: the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one: 23. The king of Dor, in the coaſt of Dor, one: the king of the nations of Gilgal, one: 24. The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

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[r] Chap. x. 33.
[s] Ibid. x. 38.
[t] Ibid. xv. 36.
[u] Num. xiv. 45.
[x] Num. xxi. 3.
[y] Chap. x. 29.
[z] Ibid. 28.
[a] Ibid. xi. 1.
[b] Chap. xi. 10.
[c] Ibid. 1.

v. 7—24. The conquered countries of Canaan are here deſcribed, and the cities with their kings, no leſs than thirty-one. A proof of the vaſt fertility of the land, that could maintain ſuch a number of populous cities with their villages. But as God's bleſſing made it thus fruitful for his people's ſake, their ſin hath long ſince brought down a curſe of barrenneſs upon it, ſo that there is hardly a town of importance left, and the land ſo deſolate, that it ſcarce maintains the few wretched inhabitants which remain.

CHAP. XIII.

At this chapter begins the account of the dividing of the land of Canaan among the tribes of Iſrael by lot; a narrative not ſo entertaining and inſtructive as that of the conqueſt of it, yet neceſſary for preſerving the ſeveral inheritances to each tribe. And ſince the divine wiſdom hath penned it, we are called upon to hear and read it, and may be aſſured there is profiting to be obtained from it, if God gives the underſtanding heart. In it, 1. *God informs Joſhua what parts of the country were intended in the grant to Iſrael, and yet remained unconquered,* ver. 1—6. 2. *He appoints him to make a diſtribution of what was conquered,* ver. 7. 3. *To complete this account here is a repetition of the diſtribution Moſes had made of the land on the other ſide Jordan; in general,* ver. 8—14. *In particular, the lot of Reuben,* ver. 15—23. *Of Gad,* ver. 24—28. *Of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh,* ver. 29—33.

1. NOW Joſhua was old *and* ſtricken in years; *and* the LORD ſaid unto him, Thou art old *and* ſtricken in years, and there [a] remaineth yet very much land to be poſſeſſed. 2. This *is* the land that yet remaineth: all the border of the [b] Philiſtines, and all [c] Geſhuri. 3. From [d] Sihor, which *is* before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, *which* is [e] counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philiſtines; the Gazathites, and the Aſhdothites, the Eſhkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; alſo the Avites. 4. From the ſouth, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that is beſide the Sidonians, unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites. 5. And the land of the [f] Giblites, and all [g] Lebanon toward the ſun-riſing, from [h] Baal-gad under mount Hermon, unto the entring into [i] Hamath, 6. All the inhabitants of the hill-country from Lebanon unto [k] Miſrephoth-maim, *and* all the Sidonians, them will I drive out from before the children of Iſrael: only divide thou it by lot unto the Iſraelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.

[a] Deut. xxxi. 23.
[b] Gen. xxvi. 14. Deut. ii. 23.
[c] 2 Sam. iii. 3. & xv. 8.
[d] Num. xxxiv. 5. Jer. ii. 18.
[e] Deut. ii. 23.
[f] 1 Kings. v. 18 Pſal. lxxxiii. 7. Ezek. xxvii. 9.
[g] Deut. i. 7.
[h] John xi. 17.
[i] Iſa. x. 9. Amos vi. 2.
[k] Chap. xi. 8.
[l] Pſal. xliv. 2.

v. 1—6. Joſhua now was growing old, and the fatigues of war probably haſtened infirmities upon him, God therefore gives him reſt after his toils, and as his finiſhing ſervice, appoints him to make the diviſion of what yet ſhould be conquered, as well as of the country already poſſeſſed. *Note,* (1.) Old age wants a quiet reſting-place, and after a buſy life, to be recollected againſt the near approach of death. (2.) The ſtrongeſt muſt bow, and the beſt of men pay this tribute to nature; and they who are advancing in years, need be reminded of it, that what yet they have to do, they may do quickly. (3.) The vigour of life was fitteſt for war, but age and experience for dividing the land: thus every ſeaſon of life hath its bleſſing and buſineſs.

The country here deſcribed was very extenſive, yet God promiſes to put them in poſſeſſion of it, if they continued obedient. If the Philiſtines afterwards proved ſuch troubleſome neighbours, they muſt blame their ſins, which prevented their extirpation; and their negligence or cowardice, which reſtrained them from putting in force the liberty given them, by the Divine promiſe. *Note,* If we ſin againſt our own mercies, we have nobody but ourſelves to blame for our ſufferings.

7. Now therefore, [m] divide this land for an inheritance, unto the nine tribes, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, 8. With whom the Reubenites, and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moſes gave them beyond Jordan eaſtward, *even* as [n] Moſes the ſervant of the LORD gave them: 9. From Aroer that *is* upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that *is* in the midſt of the river, and all the plain of [o] Medeba unto [p] Dibon: 10. And all the cities of [q] Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heſhbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon: 11. And [r] Gilead, and the border of the Geſhurites, and [s] Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Baſhan unto Salcah: 12. All the kingdom of Og in Baſhan, which reigned in Aſhtaroth, and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the [t] giants: for theſe did Moſes ſmite, and caſt them out. 13. Nevertheleſs, the children of Iſrael [u] expelled not the Geſhurites, nor the Maachathites, but the Geſhurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Iſraelites until this day. 14. Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the [x] ſacrifices of the LORD God of Iſrael made by fire, *are* their inheritance, as he ſaid unto them. 15. ¶ And Moſes gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben, *inheritance* according to their families: 16. And their coaſt was from [y] Aroer that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that *is* in the midſt of the river, and all the plain by Medeba: 17. [z] Heſhbon and all her cities that *are* in the plain; Dibon and † Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, 18. And [a] Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, 19. And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zarethſhahar, in the mount of the valley, 20. And [b] Beth-peor, and Aſhdoth-piſgah, and [c] Beth-jeſhimoth, 21. And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heſhbon, whom [d] Moſes ſmote, with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, *which were* dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country. 22. ¶ [e] Balaam alſo the ſon of Beor [f] the ſoothſayer did the children of Iſrael ſlay with the ſword, [g] among them that were ſlain by them. 23. And the border of the children of Reuben, was Jordan, and the border *thereof.* This *was* the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities, and the villages thereof. 24. And Moſes gave *inheritance* unto the tribe of Gad, *even* unto the children of Gad, according to their families: 25. And their coaſt was [h] Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and [i] half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer, that *is* before [k] Rabbah: 26. And from Heſhbon unto [l] Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim: and from [m] Mahanaim unto the border of [n] Debir: 27. And in the valley, [o] Beth-aram, and [p] Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the reſt of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heſhbon, Jordan and *his* border, *even* unto the edge of the ſea of Cinnereth, on the other ſide Jordan eaſtward. 28. This *is* the inheritance of the children of Gad, after their families, the cities and their villages. 29. ¶ And Moſes gave *inheritance* unto the half-tribe of Manaſſeh: and *this* was *the poſſeſſion* of the half-tribe of the children of Manaſſeh, by their families, 30. And their coaſt was from Mahanaim, all Baſhan, all the kingdom of Og king of Baſhan, and all the towns of [q] Jair, which *are* in Baſhan, threeſcore cities: 31. And half Gilead, and [r] Aſhtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Baſhan, *were pertaining* unto the children of Machir the ſon of Manaſſeh, *even* to [s] the one half of the children of Machir by their families. 32. Theſe *are the countries* which Moſes did diſtribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab on the other ſide Jordan, by Jericho eaſtward. 33. But unto the [t] tribe of Levi Moſes gave not *any* inheritance: the LORD God of Iſrael *was* their inheritance, as he ſaid unto them.

v. 7—33. The diviſion of the land is here committed to Joſhua's care; not that it was referred to his diſcretion, but decided by lots, he preſiding to ſee them fairly drawn, and to enforce compliance, that there might be no murmuring. Every man's portion is called his inheritance; for though won by the ſword,

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[m] Ver. 1. Gal. vi. 10. 2 Pet. i. 13.
[n] Num. xxxii. 33. Deut. iii. 13. Chap. iv. 12.
[o] Num. xxi. 30. Iſa. xv. 2.
[p] Num. xxxiii. 45.
[q] Ibid. xxi. 34.
[r] Gen. xxxi. 21.
[s] 1 Sam. xxiii. 34.
[t] Chap. xii. 4.
[u] Num. xxxiii. 55. Chap. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 3.
[x] Num. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. ix. 13.
[y] Num. xxxii. 34.
[z] 1 Chron. vi. 81.
† The high places of Baal. Num. xxii. 41.
[a] Iſa. xv. 4.
[b] Num. xxv. 3.
[c] Ezek. xxv. 9.
[d] Num. xxxii. 8. Mat. vii. 15. 1 Tim. iv. 1.
[e] Num. xxiv. 25. 2 Theſ. ii. 8. Rev. xix. 20.
[f] 2 Pet. ii. 15. Jude xi.
[g] Num. xxiv. 14.
[h] Ibid. xxi. 32. & xxxii. 1, 2. Chap. xxi 30.
[i] Num. xxvi. 26. Deut. ii. 19. Judg. xi. 15.
[k] 2 Sam. xii. 26.
[l] Chap. xx. 8.
[m] Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.
[n] Chap. xv. 15.
[o] Num. xxxii. 36.
[p] Ibid. 3.
[q] Ibid. 41. 1 Chron. ii. 21, 22.
[r] Chap. xxi. 27.
[s] Num. xxxii. 39.
[t] Num. xviii. 20. Chap. xviii. 7.

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ſword, it was in virtue of the promiſe made unto their fathers. Nine tribes and half only are to inherit in Canaan; the other two tribes and half having received their inheritance, which is here deſcribed, with their cities and boundaries. They muſt know their own, that they may not, on pretence of the promiſe, diſturb the poſſeſſions allotted their neighbours by God's providence. Reuben's lot is firſt, comprehending the chief part of the kingdom of Sihon. The tribe of Gad poſſeſſed Gilead, and Manaſſeh the kingdom of Og king of Baſhan. And in this deſcription of the country, it is obſerved, 1. That the Geſhurites and Maachathites were ſuffered to dwell unmoleſted in their cities. 2. Particular notice is taken of the death of Balaam: a brand is fixed upon his wickedneſs, and we may ſtill ſay, Mark the end of ſuch men. 3. It is repeatedly mentioned that the Levites had no lot among their brethren, but they had a better, the Lord, who was their portion, and by his ſervice they were liberally provided for. *Note*, They who have a portion in the Lord, need not envy the world the poſſeſſion of the land.

CHAP. XIV.

Here is. 1. *The diviſion of the land by lot*, ver. 1—5. 2. *Caleb demands Hebron, as his by promiſe*, ver. 6—12. 3. *Joſhua grants it*, ver. 14, 15.

1. AND theſe *are the countries* which the children of Iſrael inherited in the land of Canaan, which [a] Eleazar the prieſt, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Iſrael diſtributed for inheritance unto them. 2. [b] By lot *was* their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moſes, for the nine tribes, and *for* the half-tribe. 3. For Moſes had given the inheritance of two tribes, and an half-tribe, on the other ſide Jordan: but [c] unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them. 4. For the children of Joſeph were [d] two tribes, Manaſſeh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, ſave [e] cities to dwell *in*, with their ſuburbs for their cattle, and for their ſubſtance. 5. As the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo the children of Iſrael did, and they divided the land.

[a] Num. xxxiv. 19. 1 Cor. vii. 20. Heb. v. 4.
[b] Num. xxvi. 55. Prov. xvi. 33. & xviii. 18.
[c] Chap. xiii. 4.
[d] 1 Chron. v. 1.
[e] Num. xxxv. 1, 2. Chap. xxi. 8.

v. 1—5. The land on the other ſide Jordan being already divided, it remained to aſſign each his lot in Canaan, that every man may know his own property, and not interfere with his neighbour. For this purpoſe, the ten princes appointed (*Num.* xxxiv. 17.) with Joſhua, and Eleazar the high-prieſt, proceed to the diviſion, and this by lot, referring themſelves to God's ſovereignty in the diſpoſal of the land, and chearfully ready to acquieſce in his determination. Notice is taken here of Joſeph's inheriting a double ſhare, and thus the twelve tribes are compleat, though Levi hath no inheritance among his brethren, except the cities allotted him out of each tribe. *Note*, (1.) They who refer themſelves to God to chuſe for them, will never have cauſe to repent of their lot. (2.) Believers in Jeſus Chriſt are ſaid to obtain by lot their inheritance, *Eph.* i. 11. as it is in virtue of the Divine choice and ſovereignty, that eternal life is beſtowed on them.

6. ¶ Then the children of [f] Judah came unto Joſhua in [g] Gilgal: and Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh the Kenezite, ſaid unto him, Thou knoweſt the thing that the LORD ſaid unto Moſes [h] the man of God, concerning me and thee, in Kadeſh-barnea. 7. [i] Forty years old *was* I when Moſes the ſervant of the LORD ſent me from Kadeſh-barnea to eſpy out the land; and I brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart. 8. Nevertheleſs my brethren that went up with me, made the heart of the people [k] melt: but I † wholly followed the LORD my God. 9. And Moſes [l] ſware on that day, ſaying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden, ſhall be thine inheritance, and thy childrens for ever: becauſe thou haſt wholly followed the LORD my God. 10. And now behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he ſaid, theſe forty and five years, ever ſince the LORD ſpake this word unto Moſes, while *the children of* Iſrael wandred in the wilderneſs: and now, lo, I *am* this day fourſcore and five years old. 11. As yet I *am as* ſtrong this day, as *I was* in the day that Moſes ſent me: as my ſtrength *was* then, even ſo *is* my ſtrength now, for war, both [m] to go out and to come in. 12. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD ſpake in that day, (for thou heardſt in that day how the Anakims *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fenced) [n] if ſo be the LORD *will be* with me, then I ſhall be able to drive them out, as the LORD ſaid. 13. And Joſhua [o] bleſſed him, and gave unto Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, [p] Hebron for an inheritance. 14. Hebron therefore [q] became the inheritance of Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh the Kenezite, unto this day: becauſe that he wholly followed the LORD God of Iſrael. 15. And the name of Hebron before *was* [r] Kirjath-arba, *which Arba was* a great man among the Anakims. And the land had [s] reſt from war.

[f] Num. xiv. 24. Deut. i. 36.
[g] Chap. xviii. 1.
[h] Judg. xiii. 6.
[i] Chap. xi. 18. & xiv. 7, 10.
[k] Num. xiii. 31.
† Heb. Fulfilled after the Lord. Num. xiv. 24. Rev. xiv. 1.
[l] Num. xiv. 22.
[m] Deut. xxxi. 2. Pſal. cxxi. 8.

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[n] Num. xxi. 33. 1 Sam. xiv. 7. Pſal. xviii. 32, 34. & lx. 12. Rom. viii. 31. Phil. iv. 13.
[o] Chap. xxii. 6. Cant. vi. 9.
[p] Chap. xxi. 11.
[q] Ibid. x. 37.
[r] Gen. xxiii. 2. Chap. xiii. 23.
[s] Chap. xi. 23.

v. 6—15. Caleb in right of former promiſe, when now the land was about to be divided, puts in his claim for a particular poſſeſſion in Hebron, which as being given him of God, ought not to be put into a lot, God's will being determined before by his promiſe. The children of Judah accompany him to ſupport his plea, which he urges with great ſimplicity, deep piety, and noble courage.

1. He mentions his faithful report amongſt the faithleſs ſpies; not by way of proud boaſting, but to the honour of God, whom he followed, ſpeaking the truth from his heart. *Note*, (1.) It is not pride, but due acknowledgment, to declare what a gracious God hath done for us, and by us. (2.) The more ſingular our fidelity to God hath been, the more commendable. (3.) They who ſerved God in ſimplicity in their youth, will find the comfort and bleſſing of it when they are old.

2. He repeats his long experience of God's care of him, as kept alive for the fulfilment of the promiſe; five and forty years he had been preſerved, when all the men of his own age had long ſince been buried: and he not only lived, but was as ſtrong as ever, as if reſerved at eighty-five more glorioſly to magnify the Divine power in the deſtruction of thoſe ſons of Anak, which had ſo terrified the hoſt of Iſrael in the wilderneſs. *Note*, (1.) The iſſues of life are in God's hand; nor age, nor ſickneſs, nor the ſword, can hurt thoſe whoſe preſervation he determines. (2.) Every year we are ſpared, is a call for new thankfulneſs to him, who keepeth our ſouls in life. (3.) The death of others around us, ſhould make us more ſenſible of the mercy which preſerves us. (4.) A vigorous old age is an unuſual bleſſing.

3. He pleads the promiſe made him by Moſes, *Num.* xiv. 24. The mount Hebron, though not there named, was evidently deſigned. The Anakims, who dwelt there, were ſo far from intimidating Caleb, that he deſired no better portion than to win it and wear it; and as a reward of his courage and fidelity, the promiſe was made him. *Note*, They who have God's promiſe, have good ſecurity.

4. He offers now, aged as he was, to diſpoſſeſs the Anakims, who were, after the taking the city of Hebron, retired to the faſtneſſes of the mountains, and doubts not but by the Divine bleſſing, to which alone he truſted, to be able to ſubdue them. *Note*, (1.) They who truſt on God, will find themſelves never diſappointed of their hope. (2.) If God be with us, the ſons of Anak, our giant-like corruptions, muſt fall before us.

5. Joſhua admits the claim, and conſents to the offer; commends his courage, and prays for his ſucceſs. Accordingly the country about Hebron, formerly called Kirjath-Arba, the city of Arba, perhaps from ſome great man its builder, became his inheritance, the city itſelf being given to the Levites, and appointed one of the cities of refuge. Thus Caleb received his reward, for having wholly followed the Lord; and they who carefully copy his ſteps, ſhall as ſurely ſhare his bleſſing, in a better country, that is, an heavenly.

CHAP. XV.

The diviſion of the land proceeds; the tribe of Judah has the precedence, 1. *The borders of their inheritance*, ver. 1—12. 2. *The particular aſſignment of Hebron and the country thereabouts to Caleb and his family*, ver. 13—19. 3. *The names of the ſeveral cities that fell within Judah's lot*, ver. 21—63.

1. THIS then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families, [a] *even* to the border of Edom; [b] the wilderneſs of Zin ſouthward, *was* the uttermoſt part of the ſouth-coaſt. 2. And their ſouth-border was from the ſhore of the ſalt-ſea, from the bay † that looketh ſouthward. 3. And it went out to the ſouth-ſide [c] to ‡ Maaleh-acrabbim, and paſſed along to Zin, and aſcended up on the ſouth-ſide unto Kadeſh-barnea: and paſſed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compaſs to Karkaa. 4. *From thence* it paſſed toward Azmon, and went out unto the river of Egypt, and the goings out of that coaſt were at the ſea: this ſhall be your ſouth-coaſt. 5. And the eaſt-border

[a] Num. xxxiv. 3.
[b] Ibid. xxxiii. 36.
† Heb. Tongue.
[c] Num. xxxiv. 4.
‡ Or the going up to Acrabbim.

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border *was* the ſalt-ſea, *even* unto the end of Jordan: and *their* border in the north-quarter *was* from the bay of the ſea, at the uttermoſt part of Jordan. 6. And the border went up to Beth-hogla, and paſſed along by the north of Beth-arabah, and the border went up to [d] the ſtone of Bohan the ſon of Reuben. 7. And the border went up toward Debir from the valley of Achor, and ſo northward looking towards Gilgal, that *is* before the going up to Adummim, which *is* on the ſouth-ſide of the river: and the border paſſed towards the waters of En-ſhemeſh, and the goings out thereof were at [e] En-rogel. 8. And the border went up by [f] the valley of the ſon of Hinnom, unto the ſouth-ſide of the Jebuſite, the ſame *is* Jeruſalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain, that *lieth* before the valley of Hinnom, weſtward, which *is* at [g] the end of the valley of the giants northward. 9. And the border was drawn from the top of the hill, unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron, and the border was drawn to [h] Baalah, which *is* Kirjath-jearim. 10. And the border compaſſed from Baalah weſtward unto mount Seir, and paſſed along unto the ſide of mount Jearim (which *is* Cheſalon) on the north-ſide, and went down to Beth-ſhemeſh, and paſſed on to Timnah. 11. And the border went out unto the ſide of Ekron northward: and the border was drawn to Shicron, and paſſed along to mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel; and the goings out of the border were at the ſea. 12. And the weſt-border *was* to [i] the great ſea, and the coaſt *thereof*: this *is* the coaſt of the children of Judah, round about, according to their families.

[d] Chap. xviii. 17.
[e] 2 Sam. xvii. 17. 1 Kings i. 9.
[f] 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. xix. 2, 6.
[g] Chap. xviii. 16.
[h] 1 Chron. xiii. 6.
[i] Ver. 47. Num. xxxiv. 6, 7.

v. 1—12. Judah and Joſeph being the moſt diſtinguiſhed, have the firſt lots caſt for them in Gilgal, the one at the northern, the other at the ſouthern border; and afterwards in Shiloh the other tribes had their inheritance by lot between them. Judah had all the ſouth, and each family, as well as each tribe, was ſettled in their particular inheritance, by theſe divinely-appointed commiſſioners, from whoſe deciſion there could be no reaſon to appeal. The boundaries are fixed from the ſouthern point of the ſea of Sodom, to the Mediterranean, on which frontier lay the land of Edom; the eaſtern coaſt extended the whole length of the ſalt-ſea, to the fountains of Jordan: the northern border lay along the lot of Benjamin, including mount Zion and Moriah, which became a part of Jeruſalem, as afterwards enlarged; and in it notice is taken of the ſtone of Bohan, either a ſepulchral monument, or raiſed to perpetuate the remembrance of ſome gallant action performed by this brave Reubenite; and of the valley of Achor, where a rebellious ſon of Judah was ſtoned: the weſtern border ran down to the Mediterranean ſea and its coaſts. It muſt be obſerved, however, that afterwards Simeon had a part of this weſtern coaſt allotted him; and Dan and Benjamin, who were appendant to Judah, poſſeſſed alſo ſome cities included in theſe boundaries. *Note*, (1.) It is good to have certain limits fixed, to prevent diſputes. (2.) They who have the largeſt portion to poſſeſs, have the largeſt frontiers to defend: when our advantages and diſadvantages are balanced, God's diſtributions will not be found ſo unequal, as at firſt ſight they may appear.

13. ¶ [k] And unto Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joſhua, *even* † the city of Arba the father of Anak, which *city is* Hebron. 14. And Caleb drove thence [l] the three ſons of Anak, [m] Sheſhai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. 15. And [n] he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before *was* Kirjath-ſepher. 16. ¶ And Caleb ſaid, [o] He that ſmiteth Kirjath-ſepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achſah my daughter to wife. 17. And [p] Othniel the ſon of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb took it: and he gave him Achſah his daughter to wife. 18. And it came to paſs, as ſhe came *unto him*, that ſhe moved him to aſk of her father a field: and [q] ſhe lighted off *her* aſs; and Caleb ſaid unto her, What wouldſt thou? 19. Who anſwered, Give me a bleſſing; for thou haſt given me a ſouth-land, give me alſo ſprings of water: and he gave her the upper ſprings, and the nether ſprings.

[k] Chap. xiv. 13.
† Or Kirjath-Arba. Chap. xiv. 15.
[l] Judg. i. 10, 20.
[m] Num. xiii. 22.
[n] Chap. x. 38. Judg. i. 11.
[o] 1 Cor. ix. 25. Heb. xi. 26. & xii. 2. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
[p] Judg. i. 13. & iii. 9.
[q] Gen. xxiv. 64. 1 Sam. xxv. 23.

v. 13—19. Caleb's portion, though allowed him according to his claim, falls providentially in the midſt of the lot of his brethren of the tribe of Judah. And as he muſt poſſeſs it by the ſword, we have it for his honour reported, that he conquered it from the ſons of Anak. They ſeem to have fled at his approach, becauſe they felt reſiſtance was vain: the inhabitants of Debir only ſtood on the defenſive; formerly called Kirjath-ſepher, the City of Books, as if it had been famous as a place of literature. Though this city had been taken, *chap.* x. 39. yet being deſerted, the Canaanites, it ſeems, returned and repaired the fortifications. To animate his troops therefore for the attack, he promiſes his daughter Achſah in marriage to the perſon who ſhould take the city. Othniel, his brother's ſon, ſeizes the glad occaſion; to gain the object of his love, he flies to the attack, and ſignalizes his valour in the capture of the city: an early preſage of his future advancement as judge in Iſrael. *Note*, They who in age would be reſpected, muſt ſpend their youth in deeds of honour and virtue. Caleb immediately fulfils his promiſe, and Othniel is made happy in his beloved Achſah. *Note*, Among the firſt of human bleſſings, is the union of their hands in marriage, whoſe hearts were before united in faithful love. With his wife, Othniel received an inheritance in land: Achſah obſerving the ſituation, as a ſouth land, which being expoſed to the ſun, would be parched, moved her huſband to aſk for another field, in which were ſprings of water; but Othniel ſuggeſting probably that ſhe was more likely to obtain it, in token of reſpect to her father, ſhe alighted, and aſked the bleſſing or favour of him, to beſtow upon her the ſprings of water in the upper field: but in this he exceeded her expectations, for he gave her both the upper and nether ſprings. *Note*, (1.) When parents marry their children, they are in duty bound liberally to ſupply them with what they need, and themſelves can well ſpare. (2.) Huſband and wife have but one intereſt, and ſhould have one purſe as well as one heart. (3.) We may without danger of ſin, deſire the comforts and conveniences of life, and uſe any lawful means to procure them. (4.) If an earthly father is ſo kind, ſhall we not experience greater favours from our father in heaven, when we pray unto him? (5.) They who have the nether ſprings of earthly bleſſings, and the upper ſprings of Divine grace beſtowed on them, have abundant reaſon to be ſatisfied and thankful for their lot.

20. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families. 21. And the uttermoſt cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coaſt of Edom ſouthward, were Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur, 22. And Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah, 23. And Kedeſh, and Hazor, and Ithnan, 24. Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth, 25. And Hazor, Hadattah, and Kerioth, *and* Hezron, which *is* Hazor, 26. Amam, and Shema, and Moladah, 27. And Hazar-gaddah, and Heſhmon, and Beth-palet, 28. And Hazar-ſhual, and Beer-ſheba, and Bizjothjah, 29. Baalah, and Iim, and Azem, 30. And Eltolad, and Cheſil, and Hormah, 31. And Ziklag, and Madmannah, and Sanſannah, 32. And Lebaoth, and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities *are* twenty and nine, with their villages. 33. *And* in the valley, Eſhtaol, and Zoreah, and Aſhnah, 34. And Zanoah, and Engannin, Tappuah, and Enan, 35. Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh, and Azekah. 36. And Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, † and Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their villages. 37. Zenan, and Hadaſhah, and Migdal-gad, 38. And Dilean, and Mizpeh, and [r] Joktheel, 39. Lachiſh, and Bozkath, and Eglon, 40. And Cabbon, and Lahmas, and Kithliſh, 41. And Gederoth, Beth-dagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah: ſixteen cities with their villages. 42. Libnah, and Ether, and Aſhan, 43. And Jiphtah, and Aſhnah, and Nezib, 44. And Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareſhah: nine cities with their villages. 45. Ekron with her towns, and her villages. 46. From Ekron even unto the ſea, all that *lay* ‡ near Aſhdod, with their villages. 47. Aſhdod with her towns and her villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto the river of Egypt, and the great ſea, and the border *thereof*. 48. ¶ And in the mountains, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh, 49. And Dannah, and Kirjath-ſannah, which *is* Debir, 50. And Anab, and Eſhtemoh, and Anim, 51. And [s] Goſhen, and Holon, and Giloh: eleven cities with their villages. 52. Arab, and Dumah, and Eſhean, 53. And ‖ Janum, and Beth-tappuah, and Aphekah, 54. And Humtah, and [t] Kirjath-arba (which *is* Hebron) and Zior: nine cities with their villages. 55. Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah, 56. And Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah, 57. Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages. 58. Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor, 59. And Maarath, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon: ſix cities with their villages. 60. Kirjath-baal (which *is* Kirjath-jearim) and Rabbah: two cities with their villages. 61. ¶ In the wilderneſs,

Beth-

† Or, or.
[r] 2 Kings xiv. 7.
‡ Heb. By the place of.
[s] Chap. x. 41. & xi. 16.
‖ Or Janus.
[t] Chap. xiv. 15.

Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah, 62. And Nibſhan, and the city of Salt, and En-gedi: ſix cities with their villages. 63. As for the Jebuſites the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, [u] the children of Judah could not drive them out: but [x] the Jebuſites dwell with the children of Judah at Jeruſalem unto this day.

[u] Judg. i. 8. 2 Sam. v. 7.
[x] Judg. i. 21.

v. 20—63. In Judah's lot alone lay an hundred and fourteen cities. The names of ſome of the diviſions are more than the ſum total, probably becauſe the unwalled towns, though above villages, are not reckoned among the cities. No mention is made of Bethlehem; though ſo diſtinguiſhed in after-times; it ſeems not to be yet built, or to be among the villages. Some alſo of theſe cities they never poſſeſſed, ſuch were thoſe belonging to the Philiſtines: and Jeruſalem itſelf yet was in the hands of the Jebuſites: through ſloth, or wearineſs of the war, or doubtful of their ability to take ſo impregnable a fortreſs as it was judged, they ſuffered them to remain among them till the reign of David. *Note*, Sloth and unbelief are dangerous enemies in our Chriſtian warfare; how much more could we have done for God and our ſouls, had we a heart to truſt him, and zeal to ſerve him.

CHAP. XVI.

1. *An account of the lot of the ſons of Joſeph in general, who poſſeſſed the northern as Judah did the ſouthern border*, ver. 1—4. 2. *The borders of the lot of Ephraim in particular*, ver. 5—10.

1. AND the lot of the children of Joſeph † fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto the water of Jericho on the eaſt, to the wilderneſs that goeth up from Jericho, throughout mount Beth-el, 2. And goeth out from Beth-el to [a] Luz, and paſſeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth, 3. And goeth down weſtward to the coaſt of Japhleti, unto [b] the coaſt of Beth-horon the nether, and to Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at the ſea. 4. [c] So the children of Joſeph, Manaſſeh, and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

† Heb. Went forth.
[a] Judg. i. 26.
[b] Chap. xviii. 13. 2 Chron. viii. 5.
[c] Chap. xvii. 14.

v. 1—4. We have a ſhort and leſs diſtinct account of the border of Joſeph, than of Judah, though ſufficient, no doubt, to make it clear to them at that time.

5. ¶ And the border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus*: even the border of their inheritance on the eaſt-ſide, was Ataroth-addar unto [d] Beth-horon the upper. 6. And the border went out toward the ſea to Michmethah on the north-ſide, and the border went about eaſtward unto Taanath-ſhiloh, and paſſed by it on the eaſt to Janohah: 7. And it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and [e] to Naarath, and came to Jericho, and went out at Jordan. 8. The border went out from Tappuah weſt-ward, unto the river Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at the ſea. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families. 9. And [f] the ſeparate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manaſſeh, all the cities with their villages. 10. And [g] they drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and ſerve under tribute.

[d] 2 Chron. viii. 5.
[e] 1 Chron. vii. 28.
[f] Chap. xvii. 9.
[g] Deut. vii. 2. Judg. i. 29. 1 Kings ix. 16.

v. 5—10. Ephraim's border reached ſouth to Dan and Benjamin, from eaſt to weſt from Jordan to the ſea, having Manaſſeh on the north. In it lay Samaria, the capital afterwards of the revolted tribes. Mention is here made of ſeparate cities and villages, which lay in the lot of Manaſſeh. Being brethren, they could beſt be intermixed without diſpute, as they would love as brethren. A reproach is here caſt upon them for ſparing the Gezerites, a city in their diviſion: they preferred making them tributary to extirpating them; either ſoftened by their ſubmiſſion, and becoming proſelytes, to pity them, or thro' covetouſneſs inclined to profit themſelves by their ſervice. *Note*, Though our ſins be not utterly caſt out, reſpecting their being, they muſt be broken reſpecting their power, and be brought into ſubjection by every true Iſraelite.

CHAP. XVII.

The half-tribe of Manaſſeh comes next to be provided for; and here we have, 1. *The families of that tribe that were to be portioned*, ver. 1—6. 2. *The country that fell to their lot*, ver. 7—13. 3. *The joint requeſt of the two tribes that deſcended from Joſeph, for the enlargement of their lot, and Joſhua's anſwer to that requeſt*, ver. 14—18.

1. THere was alſo [a] a lot for the tribe of Manaſſeh; (for he *was* [b] the firſt-born of Joſeph) *to wit*, for [c] Machir the firſt-born of Manaſſeh, the father of Gilead: becauſe he was [d] a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Baſhan. 2. There was alſo *a lot* for [e] the reſt of the children of Manaſſeh by their families; for the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Aſriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hepher, and for the children of Shemida: theſe *were* the male children of Manaſſeh the ſon of Joſeph by their families. 3. ¶ But [f] Zelophehad the ſon of Hepher, the ſon of Gilead, the ſon of Machir, the ſon of Manaſſeh, had no ſons, but daughters: and theſe *are* the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 4. And they came near before Eleazar the prieſt, and before Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and before the princes, ſaying, The LORD commanded Moſes to give us an inheritance among our brethren: therefore [g] according to the † commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father. 5. And there fell ten ‡ portions to Manaſſeh, beſide the land of Gilead and Baſhan, which *were* on the other ſide Jordan; 6. Becauſe the daughters of Manaſſeh had an inheritance among his ſons: and the reſt of Manaſſeh's ſons had the land of Gilead.

[a] Col. i. 2.
[b] Gen. xli. 51. & xlvi. 20. Deut. xxi. 17.
[c] Gen. l. 23. Num. xxvi. 29. & xxxii. 39.
[d] Num. xxxii. 39.
[e] Ibid. xxvi. 29.
[f] Ibid. xvi. 2. & xxvi. 33. & xxvii. 1. & xxxvi. 2.
[g] Gal. iii. 18.
† Heb. Mouth.
‡ Heb. Lines.

v. 1—6. Manaſſeh's was a divided lot, part on one ſide of Jordan, part on the other. Machir, who was diſtinguiſhed for his valour, and his poſterity inherited in Gilead and Baſhan. The other families had their lots in Canaan, which were divided into ſix ſhares, according to the number of the ſons of Gilead here mentioned. Zelophehad the ſon of Hepher having no male iſſue, his ſhare was ſubdivided between his five daughters. They had claimed it in the wilderneſs before the conqueſt, and God having approved of their plea, they might well plead their right, and aſſuredly ſucceed. *Note*, If in the wilderneſs of the world we ſecure a title to glory, under the Divine promiſe, we ſhall not fail, when the conqueſt by death is compleated, to poſſeſs our inheritance.

7. ¶ And the coaſt of Manaſſeh was from Aſher to Michmethah, that *lieth* before Shechem, and the border went along on the right-hand unto the inhabitants of En-tappuah. 8. *Now* Manaſſeh had the land of Tappuah: but Tappuah on the border of Manaſſeh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim. 9. And the coaſt deſcended unto the † river Kanah, ſouthward of the river: [h] theſe cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manaſſeh: the coaſt of Manaſſeh alſo *was* on the north-ſide of the river, and the out-goings of it were at the ſea. 10. Southward *it was* Ephraim's, and northward *it was* Manaſſeh's, and the ſea is his border, and they met together in Aſher on the north, and in Iſſachar on the eaſt. 11. And [i] Manaſſeh had in Iſſachar and in Aſher, Beth-ſhean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, *and* the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, *even* three countries. 12. Yet the children of Manaſſeh [k] could not drive out *the inhabitants of* thoſe cities, but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. 13. Yet it came to paſs, when the children of Iſrael [l] were waxen ſtrong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but ‡ did not utterly drive them out.

† Or brook of reeds. Chap. xviii. 8.
[h] Chap. xvi. 9.
[i] 1 Chron. vii. 29.
[k] Exod. xxiii. 29. Chap. xv. 63. Judg. ii. 20, 21. Rom. vii. 15—25.
[l] Judg. i. 28. 2 Sam. iii. 1. Job viii. 7. 2 Theſ. i. 3.
‡ Heb. Driving out, they drove them not out.

v. 7—13. We have here the borders of Manaſſeh, lying contiguous to Ephraim, and intermixed with it; Ephraim poſſeſſing ſeveral cities within their lot, as they alſo poſſeſſed ſome towns and villages in the lots of Iſſachar and Aſher, on which their other border lay. They alſo ſuffered the Canaanites to live among them, negligent to improve the advantage God gave them at firſt, and ſuffering them ſo to ſtrengthen themſelves in judgment afterwards, that they were not able to drive them out; but they became in time tributary, and thus were more ſerviceable than if deſtroyed. *Note*, (1.) If we loſe the opportunity God puts in our power, when we would afterwards ſucceed, it is too late. (2.) God can bring good to us out of our evil; but that is no excuſe for ſinful negligence. (3.) Ephraim's conduct probably led them into this ſtep; ſo eaſily do we follow the bad example of others, and plead them for our exculpation.

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m Ruth iv. 11. Luke xii. 48. 1 Pet. iv. 10.
† Or rephaims. Gen. vi. 4.
n Judg. i. 19. & iv. 3. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.
o Chap. xix. 18. 1 Kings iv. 12.
p Chap. xiii. 6.

14. And the children of Joſeph ſpake unto Joſhua, ſaying, Why haſt thou given me *but* one lot and one portion to inherit, ſeeing I *am* a great people, foraſmuch as the LORD hath bleſſed me hitherto? 15. And Joſhua anſwered them, [m] If thou *be* a great people, *then* get thee up to the wood-*country*, and cut down for thyſelf there in the land of the Perizzites, and of the † giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee. 16. And the children of Joſeph ſaid, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have [n] chariots of iron, *both they* who *are* of Beth-ſhean and her towns, and *they* who *are* of [o] the valley of Jezreel. 17. And Joſhua ſpake unto the houſe of Joſeph, *even* to Ephraim and to Manaſſeh, ſaying, Thou *art* a great people, and haſt great power: thou ſhalt not have one lot *only*. 18. But the mountain ſhall be thine, for it *is* a wood: and thou ſhalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it ſhall be thine: for thou [p] ſhalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, *and* though they *be* ſtrong.

v. 14—18. The children of Joſeph, whoſe lot lay together, or perhaps Manaſſeh alone, who was now become a very numerous people, bring their complaint to Joſhua.

1. They were a great people, and God had bleſſed them; for to him muſt be ever aſcribed the bleſſing of our increaſe: their lot, they ſay, therefore was too ſmall for their numbers; and the more ſo, as great part of it was in the hand of the Canaanites; and thoſe too the beſt provided for war, having chariots with iron ſcythes, to mow down men as ſtanding corn. *Note*, Unbelief heightens every difficulty, and makes us fear where no fear is.

2. Joſhua retorts upon them their own acknowledgments: if they were great, they had hands enough to labour or to fight. The wood country might be cleared, and there would be land in plenty. Induſtry will ſoon relieve neceſſity, whilſt idleneſs is uſually the only cauſe of poverty: and if, as they complain, that would not ſuffice them, they need not fear the chariots of Canaan, when God was with them, and had promiſed to drive out the Canaanites before them. *Note*, Though God ſecures the victory over corruption by his promiſes, we muſt fight the good fight, if we will wear the crown, and win the prize.

CHAP. XVIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The ſetting up of the tabernacle at Shiloh,* ver. 1. 2. *The ſtirring up of the ſeven tribes that were yet unſettled, to look after their lot, by Joſhua,* ver. 2—7. 3. *The diſtributing of the land into ſeven portions,* ver. 8, 9. 4. *The determining of theſe to the ſeven tribes yet unprovided for by lot,* ver. 10. 5. *The particular lot of the tribe of Benjamin, the borders of it,* ver. 11—20. *And the cities contained in it,* ver. 21—28.

a Chap. xix. 51. & xxi. 2. & xxii. 9. Judg. xviii. 31.
b Exod. xxv. 22.

1. AND the whole congregation of the children of Iſrael aſſembled together at [a] Shiloh, and ſet up [b] the tabernacle of the congregation there, and the land was ſubdued before them.

v. 1. The tabernacle now begins to obtain a more fixed abode. The land being ſubdued before them, and the ſeveral tribes that were its former guard, ſeparating to take poſſeſſion of their inheritances, they with great ſolemnity remove it into a city.

1. The place choſen for it is Shiloh, wherein, no doubt, they were directed by ſome notice from God. This city lay in the tribe of Ephraim, where Joſhua, their preſent chief magiſtrate, had his poſſeſſion, and much more convenient than Gilgal for the aſſembling of the people, being in the heart of the country. The name was given the place probably from the peace they now enjoyed, and might typify the place of reſt for all true believers in heaven, when, after all their ſpiritual enemies ſhall be finally ſubdued, they ſhall reſt with Chriſt, the ark of the covenant, in glory for ever.

2. The whole congregation from Gilgal accompanied it to Shiloh, and pitched there; for wherever the ark is, the true Iſraelite will follow it. In this place it remained 349 years, according to the Jewiſh writers, till, for the ſins of Eli's houſe, it was removed.

c Judg. xviii. 9. Prov. xii. 13. & xv. 19. Mat. xx. 6.
† Heb. Walk.
d Phil. iv. 8.
e Gen. xlix. 7. Chap. xix. 9.
f Rom. xv. 1. 1 Theſ. v. 14.
g Lev. i. 3. Ver. 8. 1 Cor. x. 31.
h Lev. xxii. 14.
i Chap. xiii. 14.
k Phil. ii. 4.
l Chap. xv. 1. Col. i. 12.

2. And there remained among the children of Iſrael ſeven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance. 3. And Joſhua ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, [c] How long *are* you ſlack to go to poſſeſs the land which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you? 4. Give out from among you three men for *each* tribe: and I will ſend them, and they ſhall riſe, and † go thro' the land, and [d] deſcribe it according to the inheritance of them, and they ſhall come *again* to me. 5. And they ſhall divide it into ſeven parts: [e] Judah ſhall abide in their coaſt on [f] the ſouth, and the houſe of Joſeph ſhall abide in their coaſts on the north. 6. Ye ſhall therefore deſcribe the land *into* ſeven parts, and bring *the deſcription* hither to me, that I may caſt lots for you here [g] before the LORD our God. 7. But the Levites have [h] no part among you, for [i] the prieſthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manaſſeh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the eaſt, which Moſes the ſervant of the LORD gave them. 8. ¶ And the men aroſe and went away: and Joſhua charged them that went to deſcribe the land, ſaying, Go, and walk through the land, and deſcribe it, and come again to me, that I may here caſt lots [k] for you before the LORD in Shiloh. 9. And the men went and paſſed through the land, and deſcribed it by cities into ſeven parts in a book, and came *again* to Joſhua to the hoſt at Shiloh. 10. ¶ And Joſhua [l] caſt lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joſhua divided the land unto the children of Iſrael, according to their diviſions.

v. 2—10. Though ſeven tribes were yet unſettled, there was ſuch plenty from the ſpoil of the Canaanites, and they were ſo taken with the ſtate of peace they enjoyed after the toils of war, that they ſeem not at all ſollicitous to proceed in the diviſion of the land; in doing which they muſt not only be ſeparated from each other, and many a comfortable connection be diſſolved, but muſt renew their warfare, to reſcue the cities in their ſeveral lots, that were in the hands of their enemies. *Note*, (1.) The ſweets of worldly comforts and connections are very apt to draw off our minds from deſire after our inheritance in heaven. (2.) The difficulties that appear in the way to heaven, are often diſcouragements from labouring thither, though they are uſually the creatures of our unbelief and ſloth. Joſhua obſerving this, 1. Reproves their negligence. Whilſt they were trifling, the Canaanites might recover courage and ſtrength, and they might have all their work to do over again. *Note*, To do things by halves, is always the way to have double trouble: once well done, is done for ever. 2. He ſets them upon the proper method of proceeding: three men out of each of the ſeven tribes are choſen to ſurvey the remaining country, and divide it nearly into ſeven equal ſhares. Levi having no lot, and the other five tribes being ſettled in their inheritance. This being done, and the cities and country deſcribed in a book, the lots are drawn before the tabernacle, under Joſhua's inſpection, and each tribe receives its diviſion. *Note*, Some believers enter into their reſt ſooner than others in this world; and in the next, eternal reſt is obtained as the lot of death is caſt, and we are called away in youth or age: but whether ſooner or later, the reſt is ſure to all the ſeed, and the manſions of glory ready prepared for their reception.

m Chap. xv. 1.
n Pſal. cxx. 13, 14. 1 Cor. i. 13.
o Chap. xvi. 5.
p Ibid. xv. 8.
q Ibid. 7.
r Ibid. 6.

11. ¶ And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, [m] came up according to their families: and the coaſt of their lot came forth [n] between the children of Judah, and the children of Joſeph. 12. And their border on the north-ſide was from Jordan, and the border went up to the ſide of Jericho, on the north-ſide, and went up through the mountains weſt-ward, and the goings-out thereof were at the wilderneſs of Beth-aven. 13. And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the ſide of Luz, (which *is* Beth-el) ſouthward, and the border deſcended to Atarothadar, near the hill that *lieth* on the ſouth-ſide of [o] the nether Beth-horon. 14. And the border was drawn *thence*, and compaſſed the corner of the ſea ſouth-ward, from the hill that *lieth* before Beth-horon ſouth-ward: and the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal (which *is* Kirjath-jearim) a city of the children of Judah: This *was* the weſt-quarter. 15. And the ſouth-quarter *was* from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the weſt, and went out to the well of waters of Nephtoah. 16. And the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lieth* before the valley of [p] the ſon of Hinnom, *and* which *is* in the valley of the giants on the north, and deſcended to the valley of Hinnom, to the ſide of Jebuſi on the ſouth, and deſcended to [q] En-rogel, 17. And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-ſhemeſh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which *is* over-againſt the going up of Adummim, and deſcended to [r] the ſtone of Bohan the ſon of Reuben, 18. And paſſed along toward the

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ſide over againſt † Arabah north-ward, and went down unto Arabah. 19. And the border paſſed along to the ſide of Beth-hoglah northward: and the out-goings of the border were at the north ‡ bay of the ſalt-ſea at the ſouth-end of Jordan: this *was* the ſouth-coaſt. 20. And Jordan was the border of it on the eaſt-ſide. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coaſts thereof round about, according to their families. 21. Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families, were Jericho, and Beth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz, 22. And Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Bethel, 23. And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah, 24. And Chephar-haammonai, and Ophni, and Gaba: twelve cities with their villages. 25. Gibeon, and Rama, and Beeroth, 26. And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah, 27. And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah, 28. And Zelah, Eleph, and Jebuſi, (which *is* Jeruſalem) Gibeah, *and* Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This *is* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, [s] according to their families.

† Or the plain.
‡ Or tongue.
[s] Acts xvii. 26.

v. 11—28. Benjamin's lot lay between Joſeph and Judah. United to the one by peculiar ties of blood, but cleaving to the other where the temple was, in all the after-revolutions of that country. It had Joſeph on the north, Judah on the ſouth, Jordan on the eaſt, and Dan on the weſt. Of this tribe was the great apoſtle Paul.

CHAP. XIX.

Here is, 1. *The lot of Simeon*, ver. 1—9. 2. *Of Zebulun*, ver. 10—16. 3. *Of Iſſachar*, ver. 17—23. 4. *Of Aſher*, ver. 24—31. 5. *Of Naphtali*, ver. 32—39. 6. *Of Dan*, ver. 40—48. *Laſtly, The inheritance aſſigned to Joſhua himſelf and his own family*, ver. 49, 50, 51.

1. AND the ſecond lot came forth to Simeon, *even* for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was [a] within the inheritance of the children of Judah. 2. And [b] they had in their inheritance Beer-ſheba, † and Sheba, and Moladah, 3. And Hazar-ſhual, and Balah, and Azem, 4. And Eltolad, and Bethul, and Hormah, 5. And Ziklag, and Beth-markaboth, and Hazarſuſah, 6. And Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhen: thirteen cities and their villages. 7. Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Aſhan: four cities and their villages. 8. And all the villages that *were* round about theſe cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the ſouth. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. 9. Out of the portion of the children of Judah, *was* the inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of Judah was [c] too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.

[a] Gen. xlix. 7.
[b] 1 Chron. viii. 28.
† Or, that is Sheba; for it was but one city.
[c] 1 Tim. vi. 17.

v. 1—9. The lot of Simeon lay entirely within the tribe of Judah; for on a review, it appearing that Judah had more than it could occupy, part of it was aſſigned to Simeon, who was, according to the prophecy, ſcattered in Jacob; but by this means became cloſely connected with Judah: and in the ſeparation of the tribes, chiefly adhered to the kings of Judah and the temple. *Note*, (1.) It is but juſt if our neighbour wants, and we have more than we need, to communicate to him, out of our abundance. (2.) It is a mercy to be connected with thoſe, who are in communion with God, and cloſely devoted to his worſhip and ſervice.

10. ¶ And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun, according to their families: and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid. 11. And their border went up [d] toward the ſea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbaſheth, and reached to the river that *is* before Jokneam, 12. And turned from Sarid eaſt-ward, toward the ſun-riſing, unto the border of [e] Chiſloth-tabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia, 13. And from thence paſſeth on along on the eaſt to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-methoar to Neah. 14. And the border compaſſeth it on the north-ſide to Hannathon: and the out-goings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthah-el. 15. And Kattah, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem: twelve cities with their villages. 16. This *is* the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, theſe cities with their villages.

[d] Gen. xlix. 13.
[e] Mat. xvii. 1.

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v. 10—16. According to Jacob's prophecy, *Gen.* xlix. 13. The coaſts of Zebulun were havens for ſhips, lying on the Mediterranean ſea weſt, and the ſea of Tiberias eaſt. In this tribe lay Nazareth, where Jeſus dwelt; Tabor, where he was transfigured, and the coaſts of the ſea of Galilee, the chief ſcene of his miniſtry and miracles, were all in this tribe; it produced alſo one judge, Tola, and one king of Iſrael, Baaſha.

17. ¶ *And* the fourth lot came out to Iſſachar, for the children of Iſſachar, according to their families. 18. And their border was *toward* [f] Jezreel, and Cheſulloth, and [g] Shunem, 19. And Hapharaim, and Shihon, and Anaharath, 20. And Rabbith, and Kiſhion, and Abez, 21. And Remeth, and En-gannim, and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez. 22. And the coaſt reacheth to [h] Tabor, and Shahazimah, and Beth-ſhemeſh, and the out-goings of their border were at Jordan: ſixteen cities with their villages. 23. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Iſſachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

[f] Chap. xv. 56. 1 Kings xviii. 40.
[g] 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. 2 Kings iv. 8.
[h] Judg. iv. 6. 1 Sam. x. 10.

v. 17—23. Iſſachar's lot conſiſted of ſixteen cities with their villages. It was a numerous tribe, bordering on the ſea weſtward, having Jordan on the eaſt, Manaſſeh on the ſouth, and Zebulun on the north. Jezreel, Ahab's royal city Shunem, wherein dwelt the kind hoſteſs of Elijah, Kiſhon famed for Deborah's victory, Gilboa where Saul fell, and the valley of Megiddo where Joſiah was ſlain, lay in this tribe.

24. ¶ And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Aſher, according to their families. 25. And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achſhaph, 26. And Alammelech, and Amad, and Miſheal; and reacheth [i] to Carmel † weſtward, and to Shihor-libnath, 27. And turneth toward the ſun-riſing to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley of Jiphthah-el toward the north-ſide of Beth-emek, and Neiel, and goeth out to [k] Cabul on the left hand, 28. And Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and [l] Kanah, *even* unto great [m] Zidon: 29. And *then* the coaſt turneth to Ramah, and to the ſtrong city ‡ Tyre, and the coaſt turneth to Hoſah: and the out-goings thereof are at the ſea, from the coaſt to Achzib. 30. Ummah alſo, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages. 31. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Aſher, according to their families, theſe cities with their villages.

[i] Gen. xlix. 20. Iſa. xxxiii. 9. & xxxv. 2.
† Heb. To the ſea.
[k] 1 Kings ix. 13.
[l] John ii. 1. & iv. 46.
[m] Gen. xlix. 13. Chap. xi. 8. Judg. i. 31.
‡ Heb. Izor, i. e. a rock. 2 Sam. v. 11.

v. 24—31. The lot of Aſher lay much on the ſea-coaſt. In it ſtood the city of Tyre, as ſome conjecture, a more antient place on the continent, than that afterward moſt famed mart which bore this name, and was built on an iſland a little diſtant from the ſhore.

32. ¶ The ſixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali: *even* for the children of Naphtali according to their families. 33. And their coaſt was from Helep, from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel unto Lakum: and the out-goings thereof were at Jordan. 34. And *then* the coaſt turneth weſt-ward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the ſouth-ſide, and reacheth to Aſher on the weſt-ſide, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the ſun-riſing. 35. And the fenced cities *are* Ziddim, Zer, and [n] Hammath, Rakkath, and Cinnereth, 36. And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor, 37. And Kedeſh, and [o] Edrei, and Enhazor, 38. And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-ſhemeſh: nineteen cities with their villages. 39. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, according to their families, the cities and their villages.

[n] Num. xiii. 21. 1 Kings viii. 65.
[o] Num xxi. 33. Chap. xiii. 12.

v. 32—39. Naphtali extended fartheſt north, to mount Libanus. On the fartheſt border was Laiſh, which the Danites conquered, and called Dan: and hence "From Dan to Beer-ſheba," of which mention is ſo often made, included the whole extent of the country. Capernaum and Bethſaida belonged to this tribe, where ſo many miracles were wrought, and againſt which our Lord, for their impenitence, denounced ſuch terrible woes.

40. ¶ *And* the ſeventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan, according to their families: 41.

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p Chap. x. 12. 1 Sam. xiv. 31.
q 1 Kings xv. 27. & xvi. 15.
† Or over againſt Joppa. Jona i. 3. Acts ix. 36.
r Judg. xviii. 27, &c.
‡ Heb. Mouth.

And the coaſt of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eſhtaol, and Ir-ſhemeſh, 42. And Shaalabbin, and [p] Ajalon, and Jethlah, 43. And Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron, 44. And Eltekeh, and [q] Gibbethon, and Baalath, 45. And Jehud, and Beneberak, and Gath-rimmon, 46. And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border † before Japho. 47. And the coaſt of the children of Dan went out *too little* for them: therefore [r] the children of Dan went up to fight againſt Leſhem, and took it, and ſmote it with the ‡ edge of the ſword, and poſſeſſed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leſhem Dan, after the name of Dan their father. 48. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, theſe cities with their villages.

v. 40—48. Dan being a warlike tribe, is in the poſt of danger, having the border of the Philiſtines on the weſt, Judah on the eaſt, Ephraim on the north, and Simeon on the ſouth. Their expedition to Laiſh is related, *Judg.* xviii. 7. their coaſt not being ſufficient for their numerous families. Samſon, the ſcourge of the Philiſtines, was of this tribe, and in it lay the fruitful valley of Eſhcol, and the port of Joppa.

† Heb. In the midſt of them.
‡ Heb. Mouth.
s Chap. xxiv. 30. Judg. ii. 7.
t Num. xxxiv. 17. John xiv. 2.

49. ¶ When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coaſts, the children of Iſrael gave an inheritance to Joſhua the ſon of Nun † among them: 50. According to the ‡ word of the LORD, they gave him the city which he aſked, *even* [s] Timnath-ſerah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein. 51. Theſe *are* the inheritances which [t] Eleazar the prieſt, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Iſrael, divided for an inheritance by lot, in Shiloh, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: ſo they made an end of dividing the country.

v. 49—51. The coaſt being now equitably diſtributed, it was but reaſon that Joſhua ſhould have a goodly heritage among them; though like a public-ſpirited governor, his own intereſt is his leaſt and laſt concern. He hath therefore his choice given him, each being ready to relinquiſh to him, who had deſerved ſo well of the whole. He choſe to be in his own tribe, and near the tabernacle, and pitched on Timnath-ſera, in mount Ephraim, which being aſſigned him by the Divine Oracle, he rebuilt, and there abode. *Note,* (1.) In the choice of our dwelling, to be near a goſpel-miniſtry, ſhould be the firſt recommendation. (2.) They who have ſerved the public faithfully, deſerve to reap the fruit of their labours.

CHAP. XX.

1. *The law God gave concerning the cities of refuge,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The people's deſignation of the particular cities for that uſe,* ver. 7, 8, 9.

a Chap. v. 14.
b Exod. xxi. 13. Num. xxxv. 6. Deut. xix. 2, 9.
† Heb. Through error. Exod. xxi. 14.
c Job v. 4.
‡ Heb. Gather him. Num. xi. 16. Pſal. xxvi. 9.
d Num. xxxv. 25. John viii. 36.

1. [a] THE LORD alſo ſpake unto Joſhua, ſaying, 2. Speak to the children of Iſrael, ſaying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, [b] whereof I ſpake unto you by the hand of Moſes: 3. That the ſlayer that killeth *any* perſon † unawares, *and* unwittingly, may flee thither: and they ſhall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. 4. And when he that doth flee unto one of thoſe cities, ſhall [c] ſtand at the entring of the gate of the city, and ſhall declare his cauſe in the ears of the elders of that city; they ſhall ‡ take him into the city unto them, and give him a place that he may dwell among them. 5. And if the avenger of blood purſue after him, then they ſhall not deliver the ſlayer up into his hand: becauſe he ſmote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime. 6. And he ſhall dwell in that city, until he ſtand before the congregation for judgment, *and* [d] until the death of the high-prieſt that ſhall be in thoſe days: then ſhall the ſlayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own houſe, unto the city from whence he fled.

v. 1—6. The cities of refuge were a common bleſſing for every Iſraelite, whoſe unhappy lot it might be to need their protection; and therefore it was every man's intereſt to have this proviſion made, as ſoon as they had ſettled the diviſion of the land. Hither the manſlayer might flee, and be in ſafety; and if he out-lived the high-prieſt, might return unto his own city in peace. *Note,* The goſpel hath provided for ſinners, in Chriſt Jeſus, a ſurer refuge from the avenging wrath of God; the ſoul who flies thither, ſhall not only be freed from fear of death, but be refreſhed with the conſolations of the Divine favour and love.

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† Heb. Sanctified. Deut. xi. 14.
e Chap. xxi. 32.
f Gen. xxxiii. 19. 1 Chron. xvi. 67.
g Luke i. 39.
h Deut. iv. 43. 1 Chron. vi. 78.
i 1 Chron. vi. 80.
k Num. xxxv. 15.

7. ¶ And they † appointed [e] Kedeſh in Galilee, in mount Naphtali, and [f] Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba (which *is* Hebron) in the [g] mountain of Judah. 8. And on the other ſide Jordan by Jericho eaſtward, they aſſigned [h] Bezer in the wilderneſs upon the plain, out of the tribe of Reuben, and [i] Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Baſhan out of the tribe of Manaſſeh. 9. Theſe were the cities appointed for all the children of Iſrael, and for [k] the ſtranger that ſojourneth among them, that whoſoever killeth *any* perſon at unawares, might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he ſtood before the congregation.

v. 7—9. The three cities on the other ſide Jordan had been appointed by Moſes, Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan. Theſe on this ſide Jordan, were Kedeſh in Naphtali, Hebron in Judah, and Shechem in Ephraim; and they were ſo ſituated, as to ſtand at the moſt convenient diſtances, that all the tribes might be near one or other of them. *Note,* Salvation is near, and Jeſus a very preſent help to all who call upon him. Theſe were all Levite cities, where, if the poor baniſhed manſlayer was cut off from his friends and relations, he had the beſt of company, and peculiar opportunities of ſpiritual improvement. *Note,* It will reconcile us to every providential change of ſituation, to think more of the mercies we enjoy, than of the comforts we loſe. The names of theſe cities are very ſignificative; Kedeſh, holineſs; Shechem, a ſhoulder; Hebron, fellowſhip; Bezer, a fortreſs; Ramoth, high; and Golan, joy. Thus in the perfection of our Redeemer's holineſs, lies the ſecurity of the ſinner's hope; on his ſhoulder the government is laid, ſo that no enemy can hurt us: the ſweeteſt communion is that which can be enjoyed through faith in him; his arms of love are a ſtrong-hold, and his exaltation is the pledge of our own, for he ſhall bring all who have fled to him for refuge, to Zion, with everlaſting joy upon their heads.

CHAP. XXI.

The Levites had no inheritance among their brethren, but were diſperſed in the ſeveral tribes. We have here, 1. *The motion they made to have cities aſſigned them, according to God's appointment,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The nomination of the cities, and diſtribution of them to their reſpective families,* ver. 3—8. 3. *A catalogue of the cities, forty-eight in all,* ver. 9—42. 4. *All that God promiſed fulfilled,* ver. 43—45.

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a Num. xxxv. 2.
b Rom. xv. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 7—14. Mat. x. 10. Gal. vi. 6.
c See Num. xxxv. 4.
d Ver. 6, 8, 11.
† Heb. Mouth.
e Gen. xlvi. 11. Num. iii. 27. & xvi. 32. Ezek. xviii. 14.
f Num. xxxv. 8. Ver. 8—19.
g Num. xxxv. 8. Ver. 20—26.
h Ver. 27—33.
i Ver. 34—40.

1. THEN came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the prieſt, and unto Joſhua the ſon of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Iſrael. 2. And they ſpake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, ſaying, [a] The LORD commanded by the hand of Moſes to [b] give us cities to dwell in, with [c] the ſuburbs thereof for our cattle. 3. And the children of Iſrael [d] gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance at the † commandment of the LORD, theſe cities and their ſuburbs. 4. And the lot came out for the families of the [e] Kohathites: and [f] the children of Aaron the prieſt, *which were* of the Levites, had by lot, out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities. 5. And [g] the reſt of the children of Kohath *had* by lot, out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, ten cities. 6. And [h] the children of Gerſhon *had* by lot, out of the families of the tribe of Iſſachar, and out of the tribe of Aſher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh in Baſhan, thirteen cities. 7. [i] The children of Merari by their families, *had* out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities. 8. And the children of Iſrael gave by lot unto the Levites, theſe cities with their ſuburbs, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moſes.

v. 1—8. As the Levites were to have cities in all their tribes, they wait till the land is divided, and now put in their claim, founded on the Divine appointment. *Note,* (1.) What we pray for, pleading the promiſe, we may be confident ſhall be granted. (2.) Proviſion for a goſpel-miniſtry is a Divine inſtitution.

They

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They who are backward to ſupport it, not only defraud men, but rob God. (3.) The Levites were laſt provided for: worldly intereſts muſt be among the leaſt and laſt concerns of a godly miniſter.

Their plea was immediately complied with, and each tribe, according to its extent, aſſigned a proportionable number of their cities, to make up the compliment of forty-eight, which was God's appointment. Theſe, with their ſuburbs, and a ſpace of land around them were allotted them, and being thus diſperſed through the tribes, they were a general bleſſing. Theſe cities were divided into four lots. The family of Aaron had their lot caſt in Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, God ſo ordering it, that as they were the family of prieſts, they might be neareſt that city, where in after-times his temple ſhould be built. The Kohathites had their portion in Dan, Ephraim and Manaſſeh in Canaan; the Gerſhonites in Iſſachar; Aſher, Naphtali, and Manaſſeh in Baſhan; the Merarites, moſt remote, are fixed in Reuben, Gad and Zebulun.

9. ¶ And they gave out of the tribe of the children
of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon,
theſe cities which are *here* † mentioned by name, 10.
Which the children of Aaron, *being* of the families of
the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi, had:
(for theirs was the firſt lot). 11. And they gave them
‡ the city of Arba, the father of Anak (which *city is*
Hebron) in the hill-*country* of Judah, with the ſuburbs
thereof round about it. 12. But the [k] fields of the city,
and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the ſon of
Jephunneh, for his poſſeſſion. 13. ¶ Thus [l] they gave
to the children of Aaron the prieſt, [m] Hebron with her
ſuburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the ſlayer, and [n] Libnah
with her ſuburbs, 14. And [o] Jattir with her ſuburbs,
and Eſhtemoa with her ſuburbs. 15. And ‖ Holon
with her ſuburbs, and Debir with her ſuburbs, 16.
And Ain with her ſuburbs, and Juttah with her ſuburbs,
and Beth-ſhemeſh with her ſuburbs: nine cities out of
thoſe two tribes. 17. And out of the tribe of Benjamin,
Gibeon with her ſuburbs, Geba with her ſuburbs, 18.
Anathoth with her ſuburbs, and § Almon with her ſuburbs:
four cities. 19. All the cities of the children of
Aaron, the prieſts, *were* thirteen cities with their ſuburbs.
20. ¶ And the families of the children of Kohath,
the Levites, which remained of the children of
Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot out of the
tribe of Ephraim. 21. For they gave them [p] Shechem
with her ſuburbs, in mount Ephraim, *to be* a city of refuge
for the ſlayer; and Gezer with her ſuburbs, 22.
And Kibzaim with her ſuburbs, and Beth-horon with
her ſuburbs: four cities. 23. And out of the tribe of
Dan, Eltekeh with her ſuburbs, Gibbethon with her
ſuburbs. 24. Aijalon with her ſuburbs, Gath-rimmon
with her ſuburbs: four cities. 25. And out of the half-tribe
of Manaſſeh, Tanach with her ſuburbs, and Gath-rimmon
with her ſuburbs: two cities. 26. All the cities
were ten with their ſuburbs, for the families of the
children of Kohath that remained. 27. ¶ And unto
the children of Gerſhon, of the families of the Levites,
out of the *other* half-tribe of Manaſſeh, *they gave* [q] Golan
in Baſhan with her ſuburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for
the ſlayer: and Beeſhterah with her ſuburbs: two cities.
28. And out of the tribe of Iſſachar, Kiſhon with her
ſuburbs, Dabareh with her ſuburbs, 29. Jarmuth with
her ſuburbs, En-gannim with her ſuburbs: four cities:
30. And out of the tribe of Aſher, Miſhal with her
ſuburbs, Abdon with her ſuburbs, 31. Helkath with
her ſuburbs, and Rehob with her ſuburbs: four cities.
32. And out of the tribe of Naphtali, [r] Kedeſh in Galilee
with her ſuburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the
ſlayer: and Hammoth-dor with her ſuburbs, and Kartan
with her ſuburbs: three cities. 33. All the cities of
the Gerſhonites, according to their families, *were* thirteen
cities with their ſuburbs. 34. ¶ And unto the families
of the children of Merari the reſt of the Levites, out of
the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her ſuburbs, and
Kartah with her ſuburbs, 35. Dimnah with her ſuburbs,
Nahalal with her ſuburbs: four cities. 36. And
out of the tribe of Reuben, [s] Bezer with her ſuburbs,
and Jahazah with her ſuburbs. 37. Kedemoth with
her ſuburbs, and Mephaath with her ſuburbs: four cities.
38. And out of the tribe of Gad, [t] Ramoth in
Gilead with her ſuburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the
ſlayer: and Mahanaim with her ſuburbs, 39. Heſhbon
with her ſuburbs, Jazer with her ſuburbs: four cities in
all. 40. So all the cities for the children of Merari by
their families, which were remaining of the families of
the Levites, were *by* their lot, twelve cities. 41. All
the cities of the Levites, [u] within the poſſeſſion of the
children of Iſrael, *were* forty and eight cities with their
ſuburbs. 42. Theſe cities were every one with their
ſuburbs round about them: thus *were* all theſe cities.

† Heb. Called.

‡ Or Kirjath-arba. Gen. xxiii. 2. Chap. xv. 13

[k] Num. xxxv. 5. Chap. xiv. 14. 1 Chron. vi. 56.

[l] 1 Chron. vi. 57.

[m] Chap. xv. 54.

[n] Ibid. 42.

[o] Ibid. 48.

‖ Or Hilen. 1 Chron. vi. 58.

§ Or Alemeth. 1 Chron. vi. 60.

[p] Chap. xx. 7. 1 Chron. vi. 67.

[q] Deut. iv. 43. Chap. xx. 8.

[r] Chap. xx. 7. 1 Chron. vi. 72.

[s] Deut. iv. 43. Chap. xx. 8. 1 Chron. vi. 78.

[t] Deut. iv. 43. Joſh. xx. 8. 1 Chron. vi. 80.

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[u] Gen. xlix. 7.

v. 9—42. A particular account is here given of the cities of the Levites. They were diſperſed, that all the tribes might ſhare the benefit of their inſtructions, and behold the exemplarineſs of their conduct. They were near in every diviſion, that their brethren might ſhew them kindneſs, as commanded, *Deut.* xii. 19. and to receive that counſel and inſtruction which, as daily more converſant in God's law, they were qualified to adminiſter. Their portion of cities was greater than any tribe enjoyed, except Judah; and theſe too of the beſt, becauſe God will have his ſervants honourably and comfortably lodged and cared for; and though their lands were not proportionable to their cities, yet the tythes and offerings abundantly ſupplied that lack, and left them wholly diſengaged, that they might wait upon God without diſtraction, and utterly inexcuſable if they neglected their miniſtry, for which they were ſo liberally paid, and to which they were wholly dedicated.

43. ¶ And the LORD [x] gave unto Iſrael all the land
which he ſware to give unto their fathers: and they
poſſeſſed it, and dwelt therein. 44. And the LORD
gave them reſt round about according to all that he ſware
unto their fathers: and there ſtood not a man of all their
enemies before them; [y] the LORD delivered all their
enemies into their hand. 45. [z] There failed not ought
of any good thing which the LORD had ſpoken unto
the houſe of Iſrael: all came to paſs.

[x] Luke xxi. 33. Tit. i. 2.

[y] Pſal. xliv. 3.

[z] Chap. xxiii. 14, 15.

v. 43—45. The experience of God's Iſrael will ever confirm the faithfulneſs of his promiſes. The land that had been ſo long expected, is now poſſeſſed, their enemies ſubdued, their habitations large and peaceable; no foe remained to interrupt their quiet, or endanger their perſons. Some Canaanites indeed were left, but they only were ſpared to keep poſſeſſion againſt the beaſts of the field, till Iſrael were multiplied to occupy the land; and if they afterwards prevailed, God's people have only to blame their own ſloth, cowardice, unbelief, and ſin, which robbed them of their portion. All the people ſolemnly acknowledge the exact accompliſhment of the Divine promiſes, which is repeated, 1 *Kings*, viii. 56. and all who are faithful to him, ſhall find, to their everlaſting comfort, that one jot or tittle ſhall never paſs away from his word, until the whole be fulfilled.

CHAP. XXII.

The war being ended, we have, (1.) *Joſhua's diſmiſſion of the auxiliary tribes,* ver. 1—9. (2.) *The altar they built on the borders of Jordan, in token of their communion with the land of Iſrael,* ver. 10. (3.) *The offence which the reſt of the tribes took at this altar, and the meſſage they ſent them thereupon,* ver. 11—20. (4.) *The apology which the two tribes and a half made for what they had done,* ver. 21—29. (5.) *The ſatisfaction which their apology gave to the reſt of the tribes,* ver. 30—34.

1. THEN Joſhua called the Reubenites, and the
Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, 2.
And ſaid unto them, Ye have [a] kept all that Moſes the
ſervant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed
my voice in all that I commanded you. 3. [b] Ye have
not left your brethren theſe many days unto this day, but
have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD
your God. 4. And now the LORD your God [c] hath
given reſt unto your brethren, as he promiſed them:
therefore now return ye, and get ye unto [d] your tents,
and unto the land of your poſſeſſion, which Moſes the
ſervant of the LORD gave you on the other ſide Jordan.
5. But [e] take diligent heed to do the commandment
and the law which Moſes the ſervant of the LORD charged
you, to [f] love the LORD your God, and to [g] walk in
all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to
cleave unto him, and to ſerve him with all your heart,
and with all your ſoul. 6. So Joſhua [h] bleſſed them, and
ſent them away: and they went unto their tents. 7. ¶
Now to the *one* half of the tribe of Manaſſeh Moſes had
given *poſſeſſion* in Baſhan: but unto the *other* half thereof

[a] Num. xxxii. 20. Deut. iii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 20.

[b] Phil. i. 27. Heb. vi. 10.

[c] Chap. xiv. 15. Heb. vi. 12.

[d] Num. xxxii. 33. Deut. iii. 13. Chap. xiii. 8.

[e] Exod xv. 26. 2 Kings x. 31. Pſal. xxxix. 1.

[f] Deut. x. 12. 1 Tim. i. 5.

[g] Pſal. cxix. 6.

[h] Gen. xlvii. 7. Exod. xxxix. 43. 2 Sam. vi. 18. Luke xxiv. 50.

gave Joſhua among their brethren on this ſide Jordan weſtward. And when Joſhua ſent them away alſo unto their tents, then he bleſſed them. 8. And he ſpake unto them, ſaying, Return with [i] much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with ſilver, and with gold, and with braſs, and with iron, and with very much raiment: divide the ſpoil of your enemies with your brethren. 9. ¶ And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh returned, and departed from the children of Iſrael out of Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their poſſeſſion, whereof they were poſſeſſed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moſes.

[i] Numb. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Heb. vi. 10.

v. 1—9. The auxiliary forces, ſupplied by the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manaſſeh, having fulfilled their engagement, are now diſmiſſed by Joſhua. And this,

1. With an honourable teſtimony to their obedience, patience and piety. They had ſerved him with as much fidelity as they obeyed Moſes, they had waited without offering or deſiring to return, till the whole land was ſubdued, which was ſeven years, and perhaps till the tribes divided to poſſeſs their inheritance, which was near ſeven years more; and they had kept the charge of the commandment of the Lord, not only in this inſtance of patient ſervice, but alſo in their pious conduct in the camp. *Note*, (1.) The ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt muſt object to no ſervice he enjoins them, but chearfully and readily run at his bidding. (2.) Though our warfare be long, we know we ſhall obtain an honourable diſmiſſion at death, to return to our eternal inheritance. (3.) Jeſus, at the day of his appearing, will remember and own, to their eternal honour, the faithful ſervices of his people.

2. He gives them a ſolemn charge (equally applicable to every ſpiritual Iſraelite) to keep up their religion at home, when they were ſeparated by Jordan from the tabernacle in Shiloh. *Take diligent heed* (for our ſpiritual enemies are ever lying in wait to deceive) *to do the commandment and the law of God*, this is our conſtant rule of duty, and muſt be conſcientiouſly obeyed; *to love the Lord your God*, without which no obedience can be acceptable, or indeed practicable; *to walk in his ways*, ſtrait, holy and ſelf-denying as they are, and *to cleave to him*, amidſt all the temptations which ſurround us and would turn us aſide; *and this with all your heart and ſoul.* God's ſervice requires a willing heart, and his work will never be done, unleſs it be our delight.

3. He adds his bleſſing to his advice; prays for their proſperity, and wiſhes them a comfortable and a ſafe journey, and a happy meeting with their families. Where there is a good-will there will be a good wiſh; whom we love we ſhall pray for.

4. He ſent them away laden with ſpoil, which he enjoins them to divide with their brethren, to cement their mutual love, as a return for the care of their families in their abſence, and in obedience to the divine command, that he who ſtayeth with the ſtuff ſhould ſhare as he who went to the war.

5. They return with all diligence; it was a long abſence, and no doubt a happy meeting. Here below buſineſs, war, voyages, ſeparate the deareſt relatives; but they are glad to get home in peace. How much happier for the pilgrim ſoul, when his warfare of life is accompliſhed, to croſs Jordan, and meet his brethren in glory, the family of God!

10. ¶ And when they came to the borders of Jordan, that *are* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh built there an [k] altar by Jordan, a great altar to ſee to. 11. ¶ And the children of Iſrael heard ſay, Behold, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, have built an altar over-againſt the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the paſſage of the children of Iſrael. 12. And when the children of Iſrael heard *of it*, the whole congregation of the children of Iſrael [l] gathered themſelves together at Shiloh, to [m] go up to war againſt them. 13. And the children of Iſrael [n] ſent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manaſſeh into the land of Gilead, [o] Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar the prieſt, 14. And with him ten princes, of each chief houſe a prince, throughout all the tribes of Iſrael, and each one *was* an head of the houſe of *their* fathers among the thouſands of Iſrael. 15. And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, unto the land of Gilead, and they ſpake with them, ſaying, 16. Thus ſaith the [p] whole congregation of the LORD, What treſpaſs *is* this that ye have committed againſt the God of Iſrael, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might [q] rebel this day againſt the LORD? 17. *Is* the iniquity of [r] Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleanſed until this day, (although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD) 18. But that ye muſt turn away this day from following the LORD? and it will be, *ſeeing* ye rebel to-day againſt the LORD, that to-morrow [s] he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Iſrael. 19. Notwithſtanding, if the land of your poſſeſſion *be* unclean, *then* paſs ye over unto the land of the poſſeſſion of the LORD, wherein the LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and take poſſeſſion among us: but rebel not againſt the LORD, nor rebel againſt us, in building you an altar, beſide the altar of the LORD our God. 20. Did not [t] Achan the ſon of Zerah commit a treſpaſs in the accurſed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Iſrael? and that man periſhed not alone in his iniquity.

[k] Exod. xx. 24. Lev. xvii. 8. Deut. xii. 5, 7.

[l] Lev. xvii. 8, 9. Deut. xiii. 12, 13. Judg. xx. 1.

[m] Acts xi. 2, 3. Gal. iv. 18. Rev. ii. 18.

[n] Judg. xx. 12. Prov. xxv. 9. Mat. xviii. 15.

[o] Num. xxv. 7. Prov. xxv. 13.

[p] 1 Cor. i. 10. Phil. i. 27.

[q] 1 Sam. xv. 23. 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

[r] Num. xxv. 3. Deut. iv. 27. Ezra ix. 13, 14.

[s] Chap. vii. 1.

[t] Chap. vii. 1. 5. 1 Cor. x. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 6.

v. 10—20. The two tribes and half were now returning to the land of their poſſeſſion, but fearing leaſt Jordan might, in future times, be called the boundary of Iſrael, and they excluded from the worſhip of God,

1. They reſolve to erect an altar, the pattern of that in Shiloh, for a memorial of their intereſt in the worſhip there offered. A commendable inſtance of their zeal for God, and care for their own ſouls, and the ſouls of their poſterity.

2. As they imprudently had neglected to advertiſe their brethren of their deſign, they are rouſed with a holy jealouſy, leſt they intended a defection, to ſet up altar againſt altar; and at firſt view, conſidering the command, *Deut.* xii. 57. the affair looked very ſuſpicious. *Note*, (1.) The beſt meant things may afford cauſe of ſuſpicion. (2.) It can do our brethren no injury to be jealous over them, with a godly jealouſy, even where we may be miſtaken in our fears for them. The congregation of Iſrael was preſently ſummoned to Shiloh, and breathed nothing but war againſt their ſuppoſed apoſtate brethren, determined to cruſh their rebellion in the bud, and more ſollicitous to remove ſuch diſhonour from God, than enjoy the reſt they had but ſo lately obtained. *Note*, (1.) Every thing that looks like idolatry muſt kindle the zeal of a faithful ſoul. (2.) Nothing ſhould be ſo dear to us as God's glory. (3.) Riſing corruptions and dangerous hereſies ſhould be reſiſted as ſoon as broached, leaſt the evil leaven, being permitted to ſpread, ſhould leaven the whole maſs.

3. Before the ſword is drawn they ſend to expoſtulate the matter with their brethren, and to enquire into their deſigns in this altar. It is good to hear before we judge, leaſt we condemn and cenſure others, through a miſtake we ourſelves have made of their meaning: how many diſputes and quarrels would this prevent!

4. The honourable embaſſy of princes, with Phinehas at their head, haſten to diſcharge their truſt, with the zeal and prudence becoming ſuch great and good men: a heavy charge they produce, which jealouſy for God, not deſigned cenſure, dictated; they remind them of the danger of rebellion againſt God: the inſtances of God's anger, in the caſe of Peor, need alarm them; they had ſmarted for it ſeverely then, nor were they without retaining ſomething of the ſame infection to that day, and therefore might well dread a ſecond viſitation: beſides, their guilt might not only involve themſelves in ruin, but, as in Achan's caſe, deſtroy the whole congregation of the Lord. They beg them to conſider therefore, and if their own abode diſpleaſe them, or they count their land as ſeparated from the ſacrifices in Shiloh unclean, let them paſs over into Canaan; and rather than leave them to the temptation of idolatry in Baſhan, they will readily relinquiſh a part of their poſſeſſions to them in Canaan. *Note*, (1.) Many a heavy charge is ſometimes brought, where there is the pureſt innocence, and this even by thoſe who have zeal for God. (2.) They who have ſmarted for ſin dread the thoughts of renewing their provocations. (3.) If magiſtrates connive at ſins, they are in danger of bringing down God's wrath on the land. (4.) They who deſire to recover their brethren from ſchiſm, muſt ſhew their charity towards them, and readineſs to yield every thing they lawfully may to a tender conſcience, leaſt by unchriſtian violence the rent be made worſe.

21. ¶ Then [u] the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, anſwered, and ſaid unto the heads of the thouſands of Iſrael, 22. The LORD [x] God of gods, the LORD God of gods, [y] he knoweth, and Iſrael he ſhall know, if *it be* in rebellion, or if in tranſgreſſion againſt the LORD (ſave us not this day) 23. That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt-offering,

[u] Acts x. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

[x] Deut. x. 17. Pſal. lxxxii. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Rev. xix. 16.

[y] Heb. iv. 13.

† Heb. Out of care.
Gen. xviii. 19. Acts xx. 28, 29.
‡ Heb. To-morrow.
[z] 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xx. 1.
[a] John vii. 24.
[b] Gen. xxxi. 48. Ver. 34. Chap. xxiv. 27.

offering, or meat-offering, or if to offer peace-offerings thereon, let the LORD himſelf require *it*; 24. And if we have not *rather* done it † for fear of *this* thing, ſaying, ‡ In time to come your children might ſpeak unto our children, ſaying, What have you to do with the LORD God of Iſrael? 25. For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you: ye children of Reuben, and children of Gad, ye have [z] no part in the LORD: ſo ſhall your children make our children ceaſe from fearing the LORD: 26. Therefore we ſaid, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, [a] not for burnt-offering, nor for ſacrifice: 27. But *that* it *may be* [b] a witneſs between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the ſervice of the LORD before him with our burnt-offerings, and with our ſacrifices, and with our peace-offerings, that your children may not ſay to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD. 28. Therefore ſaid we, that it ſhall be, when they ſhould *ſo* ſay to us, or to our generations, in time to come, that we may ſay *again*, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offerings, nor for ſacrifices, but it is a witneſs between us and you. 29. God forbid that we ſhould rebel againſt the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt-offerings, for meat-offerings, or for ſacrifices, beſides the altar of the LORD our God that *is* before his tabernacle.

v. 21—29. Not offended with a warm expoſtulation, which though ariſing from a miſtake, was evidently dictated by charitable zeal, the children of Reuben, Gad, and Manaſſeh, who were ſummoned to attend on the army which had not yet ſeparated, with thoſe ſoft words which turn away wrath, in meekneſs reply to the remonſtrance of their brethren.

1. They make a ſolemn appeal to God for the ſimplicity of their hearts in this matter. The God of gods, Jehovah, the ſearcher of hearts, whoſe name they alone adored, whoſe power they revered, whoſe omniſcience they appealed to, and whoſe juſtice they truſted upon, would witneſs for them; content he ſhould require it of them in heavieſt viſitations, if ever they meant to apoſtatize from him. *Note,* (1.) In all our appeals to God, the greateſt reverence and ſolemnity becomes us; for God is the God of heaven, and we worms of earth. (2.) The teſtimony of a good conſcience is a ſure ſupport againſt the heavieſt accuſations.

2. They expreſs their utter deteſtation of the crime they are ſuſpected of; nothing farther from their minds than ſuch apoſtacy. *Note,* We cannot but be warm in expreſſing our abhorrence of that by which we know God would be diſhonoured.

3. They appeal to Iſrael themſelves for their integrity, when they have explained the motives for their conduct. They had been miſunderſtood by Moſes, when they petitioned for this lot, and now by their brethren, when they returned to poſſeſs it; yet in both their integrity appears: for not to offer ſacrifice was this altar erected, but as a copy of the original in Shiloh, to which their poſterity might appeal for their right to come up and ſacrifice there to the Lord, if in future times their brethren in Canaan, being ſeparated by Jordan, ſhould diſclaim their relation to them, and attempt to prevent their religious attendance on the ſanctuary; the conſequence of which could not but end in that apoſtacy from God, which they now ſought to prevent. *Note,* (1.) We are to be careful not only to act ſimply before God, but to make our integrity appear before men. (2.) The perpetuating the means of grace to our poſterity, is the beſt method we can take to ſecure them in the ways of God. (3.) They who neglect the ordinances of God's worſhip, will ſoon prove apoſtates from his truth.

† Heb. Was good in their eyes.
Ver. 33. 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. Prov. xv. 1. Acts xi. 18.
‡ Heb. Then ye delivered. Gen. iv. 7. Iſa. lix. 1, 2.
[c] Prov. xxv. 13.

30. ¶ And when Phinehas the prieſt, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thouſands of Iſrael, which *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the children of Manaſſeh ſpake, it † pleaſed them. 31. And Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar the prieſt, ſaid unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manaſſeh, This day we perceive that the LORD *is* among us, becauſe ye have not committed this treſpaſs againſt the LORD: ‡ now ye have delivered the children of Iſrael out of the hand of the LORD. 32. ¶ And Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar the prieſt, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Iſrael, and [c] brought them word again. 33. And the thing pleaſed the children of Iſrael, and the children of Iſrael bleſſed God, and did not intend to go up againſt them in battle, to deſtroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. 34. And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, called the altar ‖ *Ed:* for it *ſhall be* a witneſs between us, that [d] the LORD *is* God.

‖ i. e. A witneſs.
[d] 1 Kings xviii. 39. Mat. iv. 10.

v. 30—34. Never was there a happier iſſue of religious controverſy! Charity tempered the zeal of the complainants, and meekneſs adorned the integrity of the defendants; thus, when the matter was well explained, both ſides were ſatisfied.

1. The princes ambaſſadors are happy in being undeceived, and conclude that God is ſurely among them, when they diſcover ſuch a zeal for his ſervice and worſhip on both ſides. They do not queſtion their aſſertions, nor blame their raſhneſs in not conſulting them, but are glad to retract their warm expoſtulation. *Note,* (1.) Charity is eaſily perſuaded, whilſt cenſoriouſneſs refuſes to acquieſce, or be convinced. (2.) They who are ſatisfied in their brethren's ſimplicity, will overlook their little ſlips of inadvertence or want of complaiſance. (3.) It gives real joy to the heart, to find our brethren more faithful than we feared.

2. The people were as readily ſatisfied with their report, and gladly laid down their arms, bleſſing God for the tidings of their brethren's fidelity. *Note,* They are often ſuſpected to deſign a breach in the unity of the church, who are moſt diligently labouring to heal her diviſions, and to preſerve to poſterity the purity of her doctrines and worſhip; but though miſtaken zeal may cry, Down with them, yet ſhortly every diſpute ſhall ceaſe. In heaven at leaſt we ſhall lay aſide the arms of contention, and learn war no more.

3. The children of Reuben and Gad preſerved their altar, and called it *Ed, a witneſs* of their adherence to the worſhip of the true God, and a memorial to their poſterity, to follow their ſteps.

CHAP. XXIII.

In this and the following chapter we have Joſhua's laſt charges to the people, 1. *A convention of the ſtate called,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Joſhua's ſpeech to them, in which,* (1.) *He minds them of what God had done for them,* ver. 3, 4, 9, 14. *and what he was ready to do yet farther,* ver. 5, 10. (2.) *He exhorts them carefully and reſolutely to perſevere in their duty to God,* ver. 6, 8, 11. (3.) *He cautions them againſt all familiarity with idolaters,* ver. 7. (4.) *He points out the fatal conſequences of revolting from God,* ver. 12—16.

† Heb. After many days, i. e. About ten years.
[a] Pſal. xlvi. 9.
[b] Gen. xlviii. 3, 4. Deut. xxxiii. 1. Acts xx. 17.
[c] Pſal. xliv. 1, 2, 3.
‡ Heb. At the ſun-ſet.
[d] Exod. xxiii. 27. Numb. xxxiii. 52.
[e] 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
[f] Deut. v. 32. & xxviii. 14.
[g] 2 Cor. vi. 14. Eph. v. 11.
[h] Pſal. xvi. 4. Hoſ. ii. 17.
[i] Zeph. i. 5.
‖ Or, For if you will cleave, &c.
[k] Deut. x. 20. Acts xi. 23.
§ Or, Then the Lord, &c.
[l] Chap. xv. 14.
[m] Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. x. 20. & xxxii. 30. Judg. iii. 31. & xv. 15.
[n] Exod. xiv. 14. & xxiii. 27.

1. AND it came to paſs, † long time after that the [a] LORD had given reſt unto Iſrael from all their enemies round about, that Joſhua waxed old, *and* ſtricken in age. 2. And Joſhua [b] called for all Iſrael, *and* for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and ſaid unto them, I am old, *and* ſtricken in age: 3. And ye have ſeen [c] all that the LORD your God hath done unto all theſe nations, becauſe of you; for the LORD your God *is* he that hath fought for you. 4. Behold, I have divided unto you by lot theſe nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great ſea ‡ weſtward. 5. And the LORD your God, [d] he ſhall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your ſight, and ye ſhall poſſeſs their land, as the LORD your God hath promiſed unto you. 6. Be ye therefore [e] very courageous, to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moſes, that ye turn not aſide therefrom, [f] to the right hand, or to the left. 7. That [g] ye come not among theſe nations, theſe that remain amongſt you, neither [h] make mention of the name of their gods, nor cauſe to [i] ſwear *by them,* neither ſerve them, nor bow yourſelves unto them: 8. ‖ But [k] cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day. 9. § For the LORD hath driven out from before you [l] great nations and ſtrong: but *as for* you, no man hath been able to ſtand before you unto this day. 10. [m] One man of you ſhall chaſe a thouſand: for the LORD your God, he *it is* that fighteth for you, [n] as he hath promiſed you.

v. 1—10. Joſhua was now old, and having but a ſhort time to live, is ſollicitous to improve it to the beſt purpoſes; his laſt words, it is to be preſumed, would be heard with peculiar attention: wherefore he ſummons thoſe, on whoſe carefulneſs and piety the well-being of the ſtate chiefly depended, and whoſe examples muſt be moſt influential over the people, the elders of the great Sanhedrim, the heads or princes of the tribes, the judges in the ſeveral cities, and the officers the executioners of juſtice, and to theſe aſſembled on this occaſion, he addreſſes his diſcourſe.

1. He reminds them of what God had done for them, to awaken a grateful return for ſuch ſurpaſſing mercies. He had thruſt out powerful nations, to make room for them, had given them ſucceſs in every attack; neither city nor army ever was able to ſtand before them; and they were now in quiet poſſeſſion of theſe valuable conqueſts. *Note*, We can never too frequently remember, or too thankfully acknowledge what great things God hath done for us in our bodies or in our ſouls.

2. He aſſures them the ſame mercy and goodneſs was engaged to attend them in their future attempts; they had enough at preſent, but when they ſhould be increaſed, the remaining Canaanites ſhould fall as eaſy a prey as their neighbours; nor needed they the aſſembled forces of Iſrael; one tribe would be ſufficient for any conqueſt, when one Iſraelite ſhould chaſe a thouſand. *Note*, It is God who giveth us the victory; though our ſpiritual enemies appear never ſo numerous or ſtrong, God fighteth for us, and then we muſt be more than conquerors.

3. He exhorts them hereupon to courage and faithful obedience. They may confidently go forth under his bleſſing, only let them take care to ſecure his favour; and, in order hereunto, they muſt be, (1.) Obedient to God's commands, careful to obſerve his inſtituted ordinances, and faithful in their adherence to him: they had been ſo, and this was an argument for their perſeverance; they had experienced the comfort of it. (2.) They muſt avoid all connexion with the Canaanites which were among them, muſt have no intercourſe with them, ſo much as to eat. The very names of their idols they may not mention in their lips, much leſs ſwear by them, or ſerve or bow down to them. Idolatry being their beſetting ſin, and the moſt provoking to God, they muſt keep at the greateſt poſſible diſtance from it. *Note*, They who would keep from evil, muſt avoid temptation, eſpecially in the caſe of their eaſily beſetting ſin.

† Heb. Your ſouls.
o Prov. xiv. 14. Heb. x. 38. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.
‡ Heb. A ſnare, and for a net, and for a ſcourge. Exod. xxiii. 33. Numb. xxxiii. 55. 1 Kings xi. 4.
p 1 Kings ii. 2. Heb. ix. 27.
q Chap. xxi. 45. 1 Sam. iii. 19. Luke xxi. 33.
r Lev. xxvi. 13. Deut. xxviii. 1.
s Lev. xxvi. 14. Deut. xxviii. 15, 68.

11. Take good heed therefore unto † yourſelves, that ye love the LORD your God. 12. Elſe, if ye do in any wiſe [o] go back, and cleave unto the remnant of theſe nations, *even* theſe that remain among you, and ſhall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: 13. Know for a certainty, that the LORD your God will no more drive out *any of* theſe nations from before you; but they ſhall be ‡ ſnares and traps unto you, and ſcourges in your ſides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye periſh from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. 14. And behold, this day I *am* [p] going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your ſouls, that [q] not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God ſpake concerning you; all are come to paſs unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. 15. Therefore it ſhall come to paſs, *that* as [r] all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promiſed you: ſo ſhall the LORD bring upon you [s] all evil things, until he have deſtroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. 16. When ye have tranſgreſſed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and ſerved other gods, and bowed yourſelves to them: then ſhall the anger of the LORD be kindled againſt you, and ye ſhall periſh quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

v. 11—16. In order to preſerve them from that ſtate of apoſtacy from God, which, with prophetic foreſight, he juſtly apprehended,

1. Joſhua exhorts them to take heed, and keep themſelves in the love of God; careleſſneſs about his ſervice would quickly bring ruin on their ſouls, and nothing can preſerve them from falling away, but a principle of love engaging their hearts to God. *Note*, (1.) When we are ſurrounded with Canaanites, temptations on every ſide, we need conſtantly watch and pray. (2.) The love of God is the great preſervative from all evil.

2. He reminds them of God's faithfulneſs, as the moſt powerful motive to engage their love; nothing had failed of all his promiſes, therefore they were inexcuſable if they forſook him. *Note*, God is faithful, and all who truſt him will find him ſo.

3. He ſpeaks of his own departure as at hand, when his warning voice would no more be heard among them, therefore the more attentively now ſhould it be heard and pondered. He was going the way of all the earth. Death is the journey we all muſt take; the greateſt of God's ſaints muſt tread this beaten road, in their removal from time into eternity. Happy they who, like Joſhua, can ſpeak of it with ſatisfaction, and are ready for their great change.

4. He warns them of the danger they were in, and the ruin which would enſue, if they joined the Canaanites in their abominations. The gradual ſteps of their departure from God he deſcribes, that avoiding the ſnare, they may keep from the danger; intercourſe with the Canaanites would introduce more intimate connexions; profane marriages with theſe idolaters then would follow, and, as the neceſſary conſequence of being yoked with unbelievers, they would ſerve their idols, and thus violate the ſacred covenant eſtabliſhed between God and them. The conſequence of this muſt be, that God, in anger, would leave them to be enſnared in their own perverſeneſs and folly; thoſe neighbours, whom they cheriſhed, would be ſnakes in their boſom, to ſting them to death, firſt leading them into ſin, and then bringing wrath upon them; their tempters would turn their tormentors; and God, in juſt judgment, give them up to their enemies, to the utter ruin of their church and nation, and the good land, where they dwelt ſo happily, ſhould caſt them out. *Note*, (1.) No ſnare ſo fatal as being unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2.) It is juſt in God to make them inſtruments in our puniſhment, whom we have made inſtruments of our ſin. (3.) The mercy which ſinners have rejected will aggravate their miſery, and the knowledge of the bliſs they have loſt increaſe the torment they feel.

CHAP. XXIV.

This chapter contains Joſhua's laſt words before the people at Shechem, ver. 1. *In which,* 1. *He recounts their multiplied mercies,* ver. 2—13. 2. *Charges them to ſerve God,* ver. 14. 3. *He ſets them upon making this the matter of their choice,* ver. 15. 4. *They ſolemnly chuſe God for their God,* ver. 16—18. 5. *He urges them to adhere to him,* ver. 19—24. 6. *A covenant made hereupon, and their diſmiſſion,* ver. 25—28. 7. *Joſhua's death and burial, and Eleazar's,* ver. 29, 30, 33. *Mention of Joſeph's bones,* ver. 32. *and the ſtate of the people at that time,* ver. 31.

1. AND Joſhua gathered all the tribes of Iſrael to [a] Shechem, and called for the elders of Iſrael, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and they preſented themſelves before God. 2. And Joſhua ſaid unto [b] all the people, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, [c] Your fathers dwelt on the other ſide of the flood in old time, *even* [d] Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and [e] they ſerved other gods. 3. And [f] I took your father Abraham from the other ſide of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and [g] multiplied his ſeed, and [h] gave him Iſaac. 4. And I gave unto Iſaac, [i] Jacob and Eſau: and [k] I gave unto Eſau mount Seir, to poſſeſs it; but [l] Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. 5. [m] I ſent Moſes alſo and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did amongſt them: and afterward I brought you out. 6. And [n] I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and you came unto the ſea, and the Egyptians purſued after your fathers with chariots and horſemen unto [o] the Red-ſea. 7. And when they cried unto the LORD, [p] he put darkneſs between you and the Egyptians, and brought the ſea upon them, and covered them, and your eyes have ſeen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderneſs [q] a long ſeaſon. 8. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other ſide Jordan; and [r] they fought with you; and I gave them into your hand, that ye might poſſeſs their land, and I deſtroyed them from before you. 9. Then Balak the ſon of Zippor, king of Moab, aroſe, and † warred againſt Iſrael, and [s] ſent, and called Balaam the ſon of Beor to curſe you: 10. But I would not hearken unto Balaam, therefore he bleſſed you ſtill: ſo I delivered you out of his hand. 11. And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and [t] the men of Jericho fought againſt you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgaſhites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites, and I delivered them into your hand. 12. And [u] I ſent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites: *but* [x] not with thy ſword, nor with thy bow. 13. And I have given you a land [y] for which ye did not labour, and [z] cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them: of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat. 14. ¶ Now [a] there-

a Gen. xxxiii. 18.
b Chap. xxiii. 2.
c Gen. xi. 26, 31. & xii. 1. Judith v. 6, 7.
d Deut. xxvi. 5.
e Gen. xxxi. 53. Iſa. li. 2.
f Acts vii. 2, 3.
g Gen. xxi. 13.
h Ibid. 2.
i Gen. xxv. 20.
k Ibid. xxxvi. 8.
l Pſal. lxxii. 5.
m Exod. iii. 10.
n Ibid. xii. 37.
o Ibid. xiv. 9.
p Ibid. 20.
q Num. xiv. 34.
r Ibid. xxi. 32.
† i. e. Purpoſed to do ſo. Judg. xi. 25.
s Num. xxii. 5. Deut. xxiii. 4.
t Chap. ii.
u Exod. xxiii. 28. Deut. vii. 20.
x Gen. xlviii. 22. Pſal. xliv. 2, 3.
y Eſth. viii. 7.
z Chap. xi. 13.
a Exod. xx. Ezra ix. 13. Pſal.

therefore, fear the LORD, and ſerve him in [b] ſincerity and in [c] truth, and put away the gods which [d] your fathers ſerved on the other ſide of the flood, and in Egypt: and ſerve ye the LORD.

[b] Gen. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3.
[c] John iv. 23.
[d] Ezek. xx. 18.

v. 1—14. Joſhua ſeems, at his laſt meeting the congregation, to have expected his diſſolution at hand, but God having ſpared him a little longer, he is glad to make uſe of the laſt moments of his life in one more ſolemn aſſembly of the heads of Iſrael. The place appointed for the convocation is Shechem, and thither the aſſembled elders, princes, judges, and officers of Iſrael haſte, and preſent themſelves before the Lord; the ark being probably, on this ſolemnity, brought from Shiloh to Shechem, that the ſenſible preſence of God might give greater weight to the ſubject of their meeting. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt God continues our lives, it is a ſign he has ſomething for us yet to do. (2.) They whoſe hearts are faithful to God, will be pleaſed with the returning ſolemnities, when they come to appear before the Lord. (3.) God is ſtill in the midſt of his people, whenever or wherever they aſſemble in his name.

The congregation being collected, Joſhua opens his farewel ſermon, commiſſioned from God to ſpeak, and therefore deſerving the moſt awakened attention: he begins with a recapitulation of the moſt ſignal mercies that, from the beginning until that time, God had ſhewn to their anceſtors, and to them. Their anceſtors who dwelt beyond the Euphrates, were ſunk, as other Gentiles, into groſs idolatry; when God, of ſovereign grace, ſeparated Abraham from them, to be a veſſel of mercy, and brought him out from thence into the land of Canaan, where they now were, multiplied his poſterity in Iſhmael, and gave him the promiſed ſeed in Iſaac. When Rebekah's barrenneſs ſeemed to reſtrain the fulfilment of the promiſe, Jacob and Eſau were born. Jacob, their great progenitor, with his increaſing houſhold, were driven into Egypt by famine; but when his ſeed were there multiplied and oppreſſed, with a mighty arm did God reſcue them from thence, protecting them with his pillar of a cloud, and overwhelming their purſuers in the ſea. Through the dreary wilderneſs he led them ſafely, defeated the plots of their enemies, and turned wicked Balaam's intended curſe into a bleſſing. After this alſo he wrought his wonders in the land of Gilead, at Jordan and Jericho, caſting out their foes before them, not by their ſword or bow, but by his army of hornets, which he ſent before them; and now at laſt he brought them into the poſſeſſion of Canaan, where peace and plenty reigned. In return for which mercies it was not more their bounden duty, than the dictates of gratitude, 1. That they ſhould fear that God whoſe wonders they had ſeen, and with a reverential ſenſe of his majeſty and mercy walk before him. 2. That they ſhould ſerve him in ſincerity and truth; for he is a heart-ſearching God, who cannot be impoſed upon, who hateth hypocriſy, and expects the ſoul in ſimplicity to be devoted to his ſervice. 3. That they ſhould put far from them ſtrange gods: not that they now worſhipped them, but they muſt never think of returning to their father's idols, nor ever entertain a deſire after them, but cleave only and perſeveringly to the Lord. *Note* (1.) God requires the heart in his worſhip; without this we can do him no acceptable ſervice. (2.) Neglect of God is not only foul diſobedience, but baſe ingratitude. (3.) That is ſtill our idol to which our affections cleave more than to the bleſſed God.

15. And if it ſeem evil unto you to ſerve the LORD, chooſe you this day whom you will ſerve, whether the gods which your fathers ſerved, that *were* on the other ſide of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whoſe land ye dwell: but [e] as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the LORD. 16. And the people anſwered and ſaid, God forbid that we ſhould forſake the LORD, to ſerve other gods. 17. For the LORD our God, he *it is* that brought us up, and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage, and which did thoſe great ſigns in our ſight, and preſerved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we paſſed. 18. And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites, which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we alſo ſerve the LORD, for he *is* our God. 19. And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, [f] Ye cannot ſerve the LORD; for he *is* an holy God: he *is* a jealous God, [g] he will not forgive your tranſgreſſions nor your ſins. 20. [h] If ye forſake the LORD, and ſerve ſtrange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and conſume you, after that he hath done you good. 21. And the people ſaid unto Joſhua, Nay, but we will ſerve the LORD. 22. And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, [i] Ye *are* witneſſes againſt yourſelves, that ye have choſen you the LORD to ſerve him. And they ſaid, *We are* witneſſes. 23. Now therefore [k] put away (*ſaid he*) the ſtrange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Iſrael. 24. And the people ſaid unto Joſhua, The LORD our God will we ſerve, and his voice will we obey. 25. So Joſhua [l] made a covenant with the people that day, and ſet them a ſtatute, and an ordinance in Shechem. 26. ¶ And Joſhua [m] wrote theſe words in the book of the law of God, and took a great ſtone and [n] ſet it up there under an oak, that *was* by the ſanctuary of the LORD. 27. And Joſhua ſaid unto all the people, Behold, [o] this ſtone ſhall be a witneſs unto us; for it hath [p] heard all the words of the LORD which he ſpake unto us: it ſhall be therefore a witneſs unto you, leſt you deny your God. 28. So Joſhua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.

[e] Rom. xii. 2.
[f] Ver. 23. Mat. vi. 24. John xv. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 5.
[g] Exod. xxiii. 21.
[h] 2 Chron. xv. 2. Ezek. xviii. 24.
[i] Job. xv. 5. Luke xix. 22.
[k] Amos v. 15. Acts vii. 43.
[l] 2 Kings xi. 17.
[m] Deut. xxxi. 26.
[n] Gen. xxviii. 18. Chap. iv. 3.
[o] Deut. xxvii. 2. Chap. xx. 34.
[p] Iſa. i. 2. Luke xix. 40.

v. 15—28. To engage them to make that their choice which was ſo evidently their duty,

1. Joſhua propoſes to them the queſtion, and declares his own reſolution, *If it ſeemed evil to them to ſerve the Lord*, if his ſervice appeared burdenſome, and they had no delight in it, let them ſeek a better maſter, either among the antient gods of their fathers, or the more modern deities of their Amoritiſh neighbours; but for his own part, ſo ſatisfied was he with the bleſſed ſervice, and ſo happy in the choice of God for his portion, that let them determine as they would, his choice was fixed in God, and his houſe at leaſt in Iſrael ſhould be faithful in the worſhip and true to the obligations of the mercies they received from Jehovah. *Note*, (1.) If the ſervice of God be not our deliberate choice from conviction of its bleſſedneſs, and experience of its comfort, a conſtrained profeſſion will laſt but a ſhort time. (2.) Thoſe who count the denial of their corrupt affections hard, and the reſtraints of religion burdenſome, have already rejected the Lord from being their God. (3.) A good and great example is very influential. (4.) They who reſolve to ſerve God themſelves, cannot but labour that all who are under their care may do ſo too. (5.) They who are faithful to God fear not to be ſingular, though all others are aſhamed of his religion, or live a diſhonour to it; their houſes ſhall be the temples for prayer and praiſe daily, and their ways unconformed to the wicked world around them.

2. A propoſition ſo evident needed no great deliberation; the unanimous voice of Iſrael is to join in their leader's reſolution, with the utmoſt deteſtation of the thought of forſaking God for idols, eſpecially after the mercies which they thankfully remember, and under the conſtrainings of which their ſouls are bound to cleave to God. *Note*, We can never heſitate whoſe ſervice to prefer, God or the world, Chriſt or Belial, if our minds are freed from the deluſions of Satan, and the bias of corrupt affections.

3. He fixes them in their good purpoſes, by intimating how they might abide in them, and how dangerous it would be to depart from them. They muſt beware of depending on their own ſufficiency, becauſe they cannot of themſelves *ſerve the Lord*, and muſt be indebted to his grace for the ability to keep their reſolution; and at the beſt, their own ſervices would not be without defect, if they truſted on them for acceptance, ſeeing he was *a holy God*, with whom they had to do, (the *Holy Ones*, as the word is, intimating the ſacred trinity of perſons), a *jealous God*, who cannot admit a rival, and a *juſt God*, who cannot pardon tranſgreſſion, and therefore they ſhould think well what they reſolved, and with whom they had to do, that humbly truſting, as ſinful, on his pardoning mercy, and as weak, on his ſupporting grace, they might be faithful to their vows; for elſe it were impoſſible for them to ſerve him: whilſt their apoſtacy from him would turn him from a friend to be their enemy, and provoke him, after all his mercies, utterly to conſume them. *Note*, (1.) The ſcripture uſes every means to work upon our fears and hopes. (2.) The more we deſpair of our own ſufficiency, the better ſhall we be enabled to ſhew our fidelity.

4. The people repeat their ſolemn purpoſe. *Nay*, no idol-gods will we ever ſerve, but only cleave to the Lord our God, dependant on his grace, and truſting on his mercy, fully purpoſed to obey his voice, and that alone as the rule of our converſation. And when again required to put away the ſtrange gods from among them, either idol-images, which ſome might have ſecreted, or rather idolatrous affections, which hateful leaven lurked in their hearts, they the third time confirm their purpoſe, of ſerving the Lord God only.

5. A ſolemn covenant concludes the aſſembly. Joſhua took them for witneſſes againſt themſelves, for the tranſactions of that day; and that it might never be forgotten, it is written on the book of the law, and laid up with it in the ark before the Lord; whilſt a great ſtone, as a monument of their ſolemn engagements, (and on it perhaps was written all the words of the covenant) is ſet up under an oak in Shechem, to remind their poſterity of their vows, or to reproach their baſeneſs, if they were unfaithful to them. And hereupon the aſſembly is diſ-

Before Chriſt 1434.

diſmiſſed, to carry home the deep impreſſion of their engagements that day before the Lord.

29. ¶ And it came to paſs after theſe things, that Joſhua the ſon of Nun, [q] the ſervant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old. 30. And they buried him in the border of his [r] inheritance in Timnath-ſerah, which *is* in mount Ephraim, on the north-ſide of the hill of Gaaſh. 31. And Iſrael ſerved the LORD all the days of Joſhua, and [s] all the days of the elders that overlived Joſhua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Iſrael. 32. ¶ And [t] the bones of Joſeph, which the children of Iſrael brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the ſons of Hamor the father of [u] Shechem, for an hundred pieces of ſilver; and it became the inheritance of the children of Joſeph. 33. And Eleazar the ſon of Aaron died, and they buried him in a hill *that pertained to* Phinehas his ſon, which was given him in mount Ephraim.

[q] Deut. xxxiv. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 8.

[r] Chap. xix. 50.

[s] 2 Kings xii. 2. Mat. xiii. 25. Acts xx. 29.

[t] Gen. l. 25. Exod. xiii. 19.

[u] Gen. xxxiii. 18.

v. 29—33. We have the account of the death of Joſhua and Eleazar, and the burying of the bones of Joſeph. This is the end of all the glory of man; and the beſt and greateſt of God's ſaints are not exempt from the common lot of mortality.

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1. Joſhua's death and burial: ſoon after he had finiſhed his work, he went to receive his everlaſting reward, in a better inheritance than he left at Timnath-ſerah. He was a hundred and ten years old, during which he had approved himſelf a faithful ſervant, of which God bears him honourable teſtimony; his ſepulchre was in Gaaſh, in a field of his own. For then the public places of aſſembly, or the houſe of God, were thought unfit receptacles even of the corpſe of the bleſſed. Pity it is that worſe cuſtoms have ſince obtained.

2. Mention is made of the burial of Joſeph's bones, according to his prophetic and dying requeſt, brought up from Egypt, and interred in the ſepulchre of his fathers; which if done, as is not improbable, at their laſt ſolemn meeting, muſt have given ſtill greater energy to the exhortations of Joſhua.

3. Eleazar quickly followed Joſhua, one loſs ſeldom comes alone, and was buried in a piece of ground which belonged to Phinehas his ſon, in the hill Ephraim, which either was his eſtate by marriage, or by gift of ſome pious Iſraelite, for the convenience of being always near the tabernacle in Shiloh.

4. As long as theſe worthies, and their cotemporaries lived, who had ſeen God's wonders, religion flouriſhed among the people; but their ſad decays will ſhortly appear. So much are good miniſters miſſed, and ſo common is it to ſee the moſt flouriſhing congregations moulder away, when their paſtors are departed. But the reſidue of the ſpirit is with our divine Joſhua; and though one people, or congregation, turn from him, he will revive his work in another, and never want a ſpiritual ſeed and a viſible church upon earth.

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THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
JUDGES.

This Book is entitled Judges, as containing the hiſtory of the people of Iſrael under thoſe governors who were extraordinarily and occaſionally called to the chief adminiſtration of affairs. Their office was to deliver them from their oppreſſions, lead their armies to battle, reform them from idolatry, and adminiſter juſtice to the people.

The author of this Book is generally thought to be Samuel, who compiled it from authentic records, written probably by the Judges themſelves. The hiſtory of the Judges in ſucceſſion we have to the end of chap. xvi. *the laſt five chapters contain ſome memorable events that happened during their days, though the date of them is not aſcertained. This form of adminiſtration continued, as is generally computed, two hundred and ninety-nine years. Four of theſe, Gideon, Barak, Sampſon and Jephtha, are mentioned among the worthies,* Heb. xi. 32. *as inſtances of the power of divine faith. The general tenor of the book is the repreſentation of Iſrael's backſlidings, and God's diſpenſations of judgment and mercy towards them; a ſad evidence how prone the heart is to depart from God, and a bleſſed inſtance how wonderful God's patience is to his own poople; who, though he viſits their iniquities with a rod, and their ſin with ſcourges, takes not his loving-kindneſs from them.*

Before Chriſt about 1434.

CHAP. I.

This chapter informs us what progreſs the ſeveral tribes of Iſrael made in the reducing of Canaan after the death of Joſhua. 1. *The united tribes of Judah and Simeon took Bezek, Jeruſalem, Hebron, Debir, Horma, Gaza, and other places,* ver. 1—19. *Yet where there were chariots of iron their hearts failed them,* ver. 19. *Mention is made of the Kenites ſettling among them,* ver. 16. 2. *The other tribes, in compariſon with theſe, did but little.* (1.) *Benjamin failed,* ver. 21. (2.) *The houſe of Joſeph took Beth-el,* ver. 22—26. *but in other places did not improve their advantages, nor Manaſſeh,* ver. 27, 28. *nor Ephraim,* ver. 29. (3.) *Zebulun ſpared the Canaanites,* ver. 30. (4.) *Aſher did not make them even tributary,* ver. 31, 32. (5.) *Naphtali was kept out of the full poſſeſſion of ſeveral of his cities,* ver. 33. (6.) *Dan was ſtraitned by the Amorites,* ver. 34.

1. NOW [a] after the death of Joſhua, it came to paſs, that the children of [b] Iſrael, aſked the LORD, ſaying, Who ſhall go up for us againſt the Canaanites firſt to fight againſt them? 2. And the LORD ſaid, [c] Judah ſhall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into [d] his hand. 3. And Judah ſaid unto [e] Simeon his brother, Come up with me into [f] my lot, that we may fight againſt the Canaanites, and I likewiſe will go with thee into [g] thy lot. So Simeon went with him. 4. And Judah went up, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they ſlew of them in Bezek ten thouſand men. 5. And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek: and they fought againſt him, and they ſlew the Canaanites, and the Perizzites. 6. But Adoni-bezek fled, and they purſued after him, and caught him, and [h] cut off his thumbs and his great toes. 7. And Adoni-bezek ſaid, [i] Threeſcore and ten kings, having † their thumbs and their great toes cut off, ‡ gathered *their meat* under my table: [k] as I have done, ſo God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jeruſalem, and there he died. 8. (Now [l] the children of Judah had fought againſt Jeruſalem, and had taken it, and ſmitten it with the edge of the ſword, and ſet the city on fire.)

[a] Joſh. xxiv. 30.
[b] Numb. xxvii. 21. Chap. xx. 18.
[c] Gen. xlix. 8.
[d] Pſal. lxxii. 8. Dan. vii. 14.
[f] Joſh. xix. 1.
[g] Pſal. ii. 8. 2 Sam. x. 11. Dan. ii. 13.

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[h] Lev. xxiv. 19. Iſa. xxxiii. 1. James ii. 13.
[i] Pſal. xxxvii. 36, 38.
† Heb. The thumbs of their hands and of their feet.
‡ Or gleaned.
[k] 1 Sam. xv. 33. Mat. vii. 2. Rev. xiii. 10. & xvi. 6. Rom. ii. 15.
[l] Joſh. xv. 63.

v. 1—8. After Joſhua's death, the children of Iſrael multiplying, began to think of enlarging their borders, by a farther extirpation of the Canaanites. On which,

1. They conſult the Lord which tribe ſhould go up, and he, by an articulate voice, which was probably the way of anſwering by Urim and Thummim, commands Judah to begin, with aſſurance of ſucceſs. He which was moſt honourable, moſt numerous, and firſt provided for, muſt lead the way for his brethren's encouragement. *Note,* (1.) They who have the place of honour muſt maintain it, by being firſt to do God's work. (2.) Where God gives the beſt abilities he expects proportionable ſervice. (3.) Confidence of ſucceſs gives courage for the battle. (4.) Though the victory is God's gift, the warfare muſt be ours.

2. Judah hereupon muſters his armies, and as Simeon was his brother by the ſame mother, as well as father, and their lots lay together, he ſollicits his aſſiſtance, and promiſes in return to ſhew him the ſame brotherly kindneſs. *Note,* (1.) We muſt ſeek to aſſiſt one another, and ſtrengthen the hands of our brethren

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brethren in their warfare againſt the enemy of ſouls. (2.) God will help thoſe with his grace, who help one another in love.

3. Their ſucceſs is recorded. The Lord delivered their enemies into their hands; the army of the Canaanites was routed, ten thouſand ſlain in Bezek, the field of battle, or a city ſo called, and their king Adonibezek taken priſoner, as he was attempting to eſcape. His barbarity to others returns now on his own head. As he had, during the courſe of his reign, thus ſerved ſeventy other captive kings, his great toes and thumbs are cut off; and the juſtice of this judgment of God upon him he is forced to acknowledge. They brought him to Jeruſalem, where with grief, or of his wounds, he quickly died. *Note*, (1.) God often repays the wicked in their own coin. (2.) The proudeſt are not too high for God to humble; let kings remember they are in ſlippery places. (3.) When God's judgments awaken the conſcience, we ſhall own his righteouſneſs, and ſtand ſelf-condemned before him.

4. Notice is taken of the conqueſt of Jeruſalem: ſome, as our tranſlators, regard it as a paſt tranſaction; others, as now atchieved. That it was in part in the poſſeſſion of the children of Judah, ſeems pretty evident, from *Joſh.* xv. 63. Perhaps during their wars it was neglected, and re-inhabited by the Jebuſites, who are now the ſecond time diſpoſſeſſed of the city, though they held the citadel till the time of David. *Note*, Though the believer's enemies ſtruggle long and hard, yet their end will be, to be rooted out at the laſt.

[m] Joſh. x. 36. & xi, 21. & xv. 13.
† Or, low country.
[n] Pſ. xxxiii. 17. Eccleſ. ix. 11.
1444.
[o] 1 Sam. xvii. 25.
[p] Gen. xlviii. 20. 1 Sam. xvi. 11.
[q] Gen. xxxiii. 11. Hebr. vi. 7.
[r] Exod. xviii. 1.
[s] Rom. viii. 31.
† Or, poſſeſſed the mountain.
[t] Joſh. vii. 11. & xiii. 6. Mat. xvii. 19.
[u] Joſh. xvii. 18.
[x] Num. xiii. 22. Ver. 10.

9. ¶ And [m] afterward the children of Judah went down to fight againſt the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountain, and in the ſouth, and in the † valley. 10. And Judah went againſt the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron, (now the name of Hebron before *was* Kirjath-arba) and they ſlew [n] Sheſhai, and Ahiman, and Talmai. 11. And from thence he went againſt the inhabitants of Debir: (and the name of Debir before *was* Kirjath-ſepher). 12. And Caleb ſaid, He that ſmiteth Kirjath-ſepher, and taketh it, [o] to him will I give Achſah my daughter to wife. 13. And Othniel the ſon of Kenaz, Caleb's [p] younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achſah his daughter to wife. 14. And it came to paſs, when ſhe came *to him*, that ſhe moved him to aſk of her father a field: and ſhe lighted from off her aſs; and Caleb ſaid unto her, What wilt thou? 15. And ſhe ſaid unto him, Give me [q] a bleſſing: for thou haſt given me a ſouth-land, give me alſo ſprings of water. And Caleb gave her the upper ſprings, and the nether ſprings. 16. ¶. And the children of [r] the Kenite, Moſes's father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm-trees with the children of Judah, into the wilderneſs of Judah, which *lieth* in the ſouth of Arad, and they went and dwelt among the people. 17. And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they ſlew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly deſtroyed it: (and the name of the city was called Hormah). 18. Alſo Judah took Gaza with the coaſt thereof, and Aſkelon with the coaſt thereof, and Ekron with the coaſt thereof. 19. And [s] the LORD was with Judah, and he † drave out *the inhabitants of* the mountain, but [t] could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, becauſe they had [u] chariots of iron: 20. And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moſes ſaid: and he expelled thence [x] the three ſons of Anak.

v. 9—20. We have here, 1. A farther account of Judah and Simeon's ſucceſs againſt the Canaanites in the valley, to which they went down from Jeruſalem; and here is inſerted Caleb's conqueſt of Hebron, which was either now firſt made, and mentioned before by anticipation; or rather it was performed by Caleb, with the aſſiſtance of his brethren, and is mentioned here among the exploits of Judah, becauſe Caleb belonged to that tribe. Simeon too, with Judah's aſſiſtance, took Zephath, and deſtroyed it, as alſo three of the Philiſtine cities; but by neglecting to ſlay the inhabitants, they afterwards loſt them, and for many years felt the ſcourge of their diſobedience, in the ſufferings they endured under the Philiſtine yoke. The inhabitants of part of the valley alſo were ſuffered to remain quiet. Their chariots of iron diſcouraged Judah; and, as a puniſhment for ſuch unbelief, God left them for a ſcourge. *Note*, (1.) They who do the work of the Lord unfaithfully, will ſurely ſmart for it. (2.) The neglect of a favourable opportunity can oft-times never be recovered. (3.) Unbelief of God's promiſes is the cauſe of all our complaints under the prevalence of ſin. 2. The Kenites, the poſterity of Jethro by Hobab, who came up with Iſrael into Canaan, and ſettled at firſt around Jericho, removed now into the lot of Judah; and, as they were permitted to chuſe their abode, they fixed on the wilderneſs of Judah, where was paſture for their cattle, and which alſo beſt ſuited their love of ſolitude. *Note*, They who willingly ſhare with God's Iſrael in their ſufferings in the wilderneſs, ſhall ſhare alſo with them the inheritance in glory.

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[y] Joſh. xviii. 11. 2 Sam. v. 6.
[z] 2 Kings xviii. 7.
[a] Chap. xviii. 2. Pſ. cxii. 5.
[b] Joſh. ii. 14. Ver. 25.
[c] Joſh. xvii. 12. Chap. iii. 4.
[d] Exod. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 2. Phil. ii. 21.
† Heb. Driving out he drave them not out. 1 Sam. xv. 9. Jer. xlviii. 10.
[e] Pſ. cvi. 35. & cxx. 5.
† Heb. Was heavy.

21. And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebuſites that [y] inhabited Jeruſalem: but the Jebuſites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jeruſalem unto this day. 22. ¶ And the houſe of Joſeph, they alſo went up againſt Beth-el: and [z] the LORD *was* with them. 23. And the houſe of Joſeph ſent to [a] deſcry Beth-el: (now the name of the city before *was* Luz). 24. And the ſpies ſaw a man come forth out of the city, and they ſaid unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and [b] we will ſhew thee mercy. 25. And when he ſhewed them the entrance into the city, they ſmote the city with the edge of the ſword: but they let go the man and all his family. 26. And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which *is* the name thereof unto this day. 27. ¶ Neither did Manaſſeh drive out *the inhabitants of* Beth-ſhean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites [c] would dwell in that land. 28. And it came to paſs when Iſrael was ſtrong, that they put the Canaanites to [d] tribute, and † did not utterly drive them out. 29. ¶ Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them. 30. ¶ Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol: but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries. 31. ¶ Neither did Aſher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor Achzib, nor Helbah, nor Aphik, nor of Rehob: 32. But the Aſherites [e] dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out. 33. ¶ Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-ſhemeſh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheleſs, the inhabitants of Beth-ſhemeſh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them. 34. And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not ſuffer them to come down to the valley. 35. But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the houſe of Joſeph † prevailed, ſo that they became tributaries. 36. And the coaſt of the Amorites *was* from the going up to Akrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

v. 21—36. The ſucceſs of the other tribes was not equal to the example ſet them. Benjamin neglected to conquer the part of Jeruſalem, (which ſeems to have been a ſeparate fortreſs from that taken by the men of Judah) which fell to his lot. The houſe of Joſeph did a little, yet nothing great as might have been expected, when it is ſaid the Lord was with them. By the help of one of the inhabitants, who, on promiſe of life and liberty, conducted them into a part of the city which was not guarded, they ſurprized Beth-el, but neglected to improve their ſucceſs. The Canaanites were permitted to dwell in ſeveral cities in the lot of Manaſſeh, though they were made tributary; and, in Ephraim, Gezer ſeems to have maintained its freedom. Zebulun followed their evil examples, and rather choſe to ſubject than deſtroy the inhabitants of Kitron and Nahalol. Aſher ſtill more baſely yielded to dwell among the Canaanites, and left many towns in their poſſeſſion; ſo that they were rather ſubjects than maſters. Naphtali was negligent like the reſt, and contented himſelf with making Beth-ſhemeſh and Beth-anath tributary. Dan fared worſt of all. The Amorites making head againſt him, not only kept their poſſeſſions, but ſtraitened him in that part of the lot which was conquered, till, by the aſſiſtance of his brethren of the houſe of Joſeph, they were at laſt reduced, and became tributary. From the whole we may obſerve, that ſloth and covetouſneſs, unbelief of God's power, and want of deteſtation of idolatry, were ſtill too rooted in this ſtiff-necked people; yet God bore with them; yea, bleſſed them. *Note*, Though the remainders of evil ſtill war within us, and we ſuffer for them, yet God doth not caſt away his people, but multiplies his pardons and mercies towards them.

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CHAP. II.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A meſſage which God ſent to Iſrael by an angel, and the impreſſion it made upon them,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The ſtate of Iſrael during the government of the judges. In which obſerve,* (1.) *Their adherence to God while Joſhua and the elders lived,* ver. 6—10. (2.) *Their revolt afterwards to idolatry,* ver. 11—13. (3.) *God's diſpleaſure againſt them,* ver. 14, 15. (4.) *His pity towards them,* ver. 16—18. (5.) *Their relapſe into idolatry after the judgment was over,* ver. 17—19. (6.) *The full ſtop God in anger put to their ſucceſſes,* ver. 20—23. *Theſe are the contents, not only of this chapter, but of the whole book.*

1. AND an † angel of the LORD came up from [a] Gilgal to [b] Bochim, and ſaid, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I [c] ſware unto your fathers; and I ſaid, I will never break my covenant with you. 2. And [d] ye ſhall make no league with the inhabitants of this land, you ſhall [e] throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: Why have ye done this? 3. Wherefore I alſo ſaid, [f] I will not drive them out from before you: but they ſhall be *as thorns* in your [g] ſides, and their [h] gods ſhall be a ſnare unto you. 4. And it came to paſs, when the angel of the LORD ſpake theſe words unto all the children of Iſrael, that the people [i] lift up their voice and wept. 5. And they called the name of that place † Bochim: and they ſacrificed there unto the LORD.

† Or, meſſenger. Mal. iii. 1.
a Joſh. v. 9.
b Ver. 5.
c Gen. xxiv. 7. Exod. vi. 8.
d Exod. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 14.
e Deut. xii. 3.
f Joſh. vii. 2. 2 Chron. xv. 2.
g Numb. xxxiii. 55.
h Exod. xxiii. 33. Joſh. xxiii. 13. 1 Kings xxi. 1, 7.
i Ezra x. 2. Prov. xvii. 10.
† i. e. Weepers. Joſh. vii. 26.

v. 1—5. Such a glaring violation of the divine command, as they had committed in their treatment of the Canaanites, could not fail of a divine rebuke. Accordingly, when they were aſſembled, probably at one of the three ſolemn feaſts at Shiloh, God ſends them a ſolemn meſſage.

1. The perſon who brought it is called an angel of the Lord. The glorious angel of the covenant, the eternal Redeemer, Jeſus the Son of God, who ſpeaks in his own name. He came from Gilgal, in ſome glorious manner probably, that attracted their notice, and as the ſame perſon who had there before appeared to Joſhua as the captain of the Lord's hoſts.

2. His expoſtulation with them is ſharp and pointed. He reminds them of his mercies in bringing them from Egypt; of his gracious covenant that on his part had been, and would have been for ever, if they were faithful, punctually fulfilled. He mentions the reaſonable expectations he had, they ſhould comply with his orders, in eraſing every monument of idolatry, and utterly deſtroying the people. In direct oppoſition to which, they had ſpared the Canaanites, and connived at their worſhip; for all which they were without excuſe. Therefore, as the juſt puniſhment of ſuch neglect and diſobedience, God will ſtay the current of their victories; will make thoſe ſinners they have ſpared their ſcourge, and leave them to follow thoſe gods, whoſe altars they refuſed to deſtroy. *Note,* (1.) Sinners are without excuſe. (2.) They who expect advantage from friendſhip with the enemies of God, will be utterly deceived. (3.) Thoſe corruptions to which we allow the loweſt meaſure of indulgence, will ſoon gain ſtrength, and quickly prove our conquerors. (4.) They who offend God by one ſin, provoke him to give them up to a greater.

3. Struck with the alarming meſſage, and confounded by the preſence of their Lord, the tears of penitential ſorrow burſt from their eyes. They cried aloud for mercy, that they might avert the judgments which were threatned; offered ſacrifices, that by the blood of atonement they might obtain pardon of their ſin; and called the name of the place Bochim, *weepers,* to perpetuate the memory of their humiliations. *Note,* (1.) They who have felt the bitterneſs of ſin, are no ſtrangers to the tears of penitence. (2.) When God's word makes the heart tremble, there is hope; for to this man will God look. (3.) The ſins we lament we muſt reform, elſe our repentance will be hypocriſy. Many melt under the terrors of God's word, that quickly return to their iniquities, as the dog to his vomit. (4.) Not all our tears are available to waſh away our ſins; the blood of the Lamb that was ſlain is alone able to make us pure from our iniquity.

6. ¶ And when Joſhua had [k] let the people go, the children of Iſrael went every man unto his inheritance to poſſeſs the land. 7. And the people ſerved the LORD all the days of Joſhua, and all the days of the elders that † out-lived Joſhua, who had ſeen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Iſrael. 8. And Joſhua the ſon of Nun, the ſervant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old. 9. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north ſide of the hill Gaaſh. 10. And alſo all that generation were [l] gathered unto their fathers: and there aroſe another generation after them, which [m] knew not the LORD, nor yet [n] the works which he had done for Iſrael. 11. ¶ And the children of Iſrael did evil in [o] the ſight of the LORD, and ſerved Baalim: 12. And they forſook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed [p] other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and [q] bowed themſelves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. 13. And they forſook the LORD, and ſerved Baal and Aſhtaroth. 14. ¶ And the anger of the LORD was hot againſt Iſrael, and he delivered them into the hands of ſpoilers that [r] ſpoiled them, and he [s] ſold them into the hands of their enemies round about, ſo that they could not any longer ſtand before their enemies. 15. [t] Whitherſoever they went out, [u] the hand of the LORD was againſt them for evil, [x] as the LORD had ſaid, and as the LORD had ſworn unto them: and they were greatly diſtreſſed. 16. ¶ Nevertheleſs, the LORD [y] raiſed up judges, which † delivered them out of the hand of thoſe that ſpoiled them. 17. And yet [z] they would not hearken unto their judges, but they [a] went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themſelves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not ſo. 18. And when the LORD raiſed them up judges, then [b] the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: (for it [c] repented the LORD becauſe of their [d] groanings, by reaſon of them that oppreſſed them, and vexed them). 19. And it came to paſs [e] when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and † corrupted *themſelves* more than their fathers, in following other gods, to ſerve them, and to bow down unto them: they ‡ ceaſed not from their own doings, nor from their || ſtubborn way. 20. ¶ And the anger of the LORD was hot againſt Iſrael; and he ſaid, Becauſe that this people hath tranſgreſſed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkned unto my voice: 21. [f] I alſo will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the nations which Joſhua [g] left when he died: 22. That through them I may [h] prove Iſrael, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it,* or not. 23. Therefore the LORD left thoſe nations, without driving them out haſtily, neither delivered he them into the hand of Joſhua.

k Joſh. xxiv. 28.
† Heb. Prolonged days after Joſhua. Joſh. xxiv. 31.

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l Gen. xxv. 8. & xlix. 33.
m Iſa. v. 12. Tit. i. 16.
n Pſ. xcii. 5, 6.
o Gen. xxxviii. 7. 2 Kings xx. 3.
p Gen. xxxv. 2.
q Exod. xx. 5.
r 2 Kings xvii. 20. Iſa. xxi. 2.
s Chap. iv. 19. Pſ. xliv. 12.
t Deut. x viii. 16. 2 Chron. xv. 15.
u Iſa. xxvi. 11.
x Lev. xxvi. 15, 25.
y Chap. iii. 9. & iv. 1. & viii. 23.
† Heb. Saved.
z 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16.
a Lev. xvii. 7. Hoſ. ii. 2.
b Joſh. i. 5.
c Gen. vi. 6.
d Gen. xxi. 17. Exod. ii. 24. Pſ. xii. 5.
e Joſh. xxiv. 31. Chap. iii. 12.
† Or, were corrupt.
‡ Heb. Let nothing fall of them.
|| Heb. Hard way. Mat. xiii. 4.
f. Pſ. lxxxi. 11.
g Chap. iii. 1, &c.
h Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. xiii. 3. Joſh. xxiii. 13.

v. 6—23. We have here,

1. A recapitulation of what was mentioned before concerning the death and burial of Joſhua, and the piety which was preſerved in Iſrael during his life, and the lives of the elders who ſurvived him, who had ſeen God's mighty works. *Note,* The life and power of religion ſeldom flouriſhes in one place for more than one generation at a time.

2. The generation which aroſe after the elders were dead, greatly declined from their godly walk and converſation. They forgot the good inſtructions delivered to them, and yielding themſelves up to the indulgence of their appetites in that land of plenty, neglected God's worſhip, and, ſtrange to tell! not only with baſe ingratitude, and moſt impious perfidy, loſt all remembrance of the true God, but with blind ſtupidity went a whoring after dumb idols, and worſhipped Baalim and Aſhtaroth, the male and female deities of their wretched neighbours, the ſun and moon, and the hoſts of heaven. *Note,* (1.) Forgetfulneſs of God is the door at which every abomination enters. (2.) Nobody knows how brutiſh in ſin he may become, if once given up to his own heart's luſts.

3. The anger of God was juſtly provoked by ſuch abominations, committed by a people ſo favoured. In juſt judgment therefore he gave them up into their enemies hand; every where they were vanquiſhed by thoſe they had before enſlaved, and forced to fly from thoſe, of whom one Iſraelite had chaſed a thouſand. Thus ſpoiled, oppreſſed, and inſulted, by the meaneſt of the ſurrounding nations, they were diſtreſſed beyond meaſure, without power to help, or ſtrength to relieve themſelves. *Note,* (1.) They who ſell themſelves to work wickedneſs, will find their plague in their ſin. (2.) They who forſake God, have only themſelves to blame for the miſeries that enſue.

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4. In their ſtate of helpleſs wretchedneſs God pitied them. Their groaning, though not ſo much the cry of ſorrow for ſin, as of anguiſh for ſuffering, came before him, and he repented him of the evil. Soon he changed his diſpenſations towards them, and though he might juſtly have left them to periſh in their iniquities, yet, as beloved for the father's ſake, and for purpoſes of his own glory, he raiſed them up judges, men extraordinarily qualified to deliver them from their oppreſſors, and recover them from their back-ſlidings. With theſe God vouchſafed his preſence, bleſſing their labours, and giving ſucceſs to their undertakings. *Note*, (1.) In the church's greateſt diſtreſs and degeneracy, God doth uſually raiſe up ſome eminently qualified, and as eminently zealous for his ſervice and the ſalvation of men's ſouls. (2.) Whom God calls to his work, he will own with his bleſſing.

5. Many, it ſhould ſeem the moſt, under mercies as well as judgments, continued as impenitent as ever: even during the judge's adminiſtration, they were refractory, would not hearken to their reproofs, or be guided by their counſels; and if for a moment they ſeemed to relent, they turned quickly again to their old evil ways. Their reformation vaniſhed as the early cloud, and as the morning dew. At fartheſt, at the judge's death, the nation with a general revolt returned to their former abominations, and grew worſe and worſe, more deeply ſunk in idolatry, which is ſpiritual adultery, and more brutiſh and barbarous in the worſhip of their ſtrange gods. *Note*, (1.) They who are not converted by the word of God, are hardened under it. (2.) They who apoſtatize from the profeſſion of religion they have made, grow uſually more abandoned than any others.

6. Provoked with ſuch impenitence and determined revolt, God reſolves to let the Canaanites remain to be their ſcourge, to bring them to repentance, and for a conſtant trial of their fidelity in God's worſhip and ſervice; and therefore Joſhua did not compleat the conqueſt of them. *Note*, (1.) Our indwelling corruptions are ſuffered to remain for the trial of our graces, and to magnify the power of God in our preſervation and ſupport againſt their power and prevalence. (2.) Though a child of God be long ſuffered to bear the yoke of his corruptions, and to groan being burdened, God will not, though caſt down, leave him to deſpair. (3.) After all their ſufferings, the day is coming, when, through their divine Joſhua, the people of God ſhall perfect their conqueſt, and not a Canaanite remain in the land, not an unſubdued ſin be left in their hearts.

CHAP. III.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A general account of Iſrael's enemies,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The brave exploits done by the three firſt judges.* 1. *Othniel, who ſubdued the king of Meſopotamia,* ver. 8—11. 2. *Ehud, who reſcued Iſrael out of the hands of the Moabites,* ver. 12—30. *and* 3. *Shamgar, who ſignalized himſelf in a rencounter with the Philiſtines,* ver. 31.

1. NOW theſe *are* the nations which the LORD left to [a] prove Iſrael by them, (*even* as many *of Iſrael* as had not known all the wars of Canaan; 2. Only that the generations of the children of Iſrael might know to [b] teach them war, at the leaſt ſuch as before [c] knew nothing thereof) 3. *Namely*, five lords of the Philiſtines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon, unto the entring in of Hamath. 4. And they were to prove Iſrael by them, [d] to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moſes. 5. And the children of Iſrael dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebuſites: 6. And [e] they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their ſons, and [f] ſerved their gods. 7. And the children of Iſrael did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their God, and ſerved Baalim and the groves.

[a] Deut. viii. 2. Chap. ii. 22.
[b] Pſ. lxxxi. 13.
[c] Joſh. xxiii. 10. Pſ. xliv. 13.
[d] Deut. viii. 2. John ii. 24.
[e] Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 2.
[f] 1 Kings xi. 2, 3.

v. 1—7. We have the ſad account of Iſrael's apoſtacy from God, by means of the Canaanites, who were left to prove them, whether they would continue faithful, and to keep the riſing generation from that effeminacy which eaſe and affluence might produce. The five lords of the Philiſtines ſtood firm, and again recovered thoſe three cities which had been taken. The northern Canaanites, Zidonians, and Hivites, in mount Lebanon, kept their poſſeſſions, whilſt in every part of the country there continued multitudes of the devoted nations, whom Iſrael, thro' ſloth and covetouſneſs, had ſpared, and ſuffered ſtill to dwell among them. With theſe they ſoon mingled, joined in marriages, and, as the conſequence thereof, followed after their idols, worſhipped *Baalim* and the groves, the idols which were placed there, and forgat God. *Note*, (1.) Corruption remains in the regenerate to prove them, and exerciſe their graces. (2.) A wife of the daughters of Canaan is the moſt dangerous ſnare the devil can put in the way of God's Iſrael. (3.) Forgetfulneſs of God is a beſetting ſin; and when He is forgotten, the reins are let looſe upon the neck of every luſt.

Before Chriſt 1394.

8. ¶ Therefore the anger of the LORD was [g] hot againſt Iſrael, and he [h] ſold them into the hand of Chuſhan-riſhathaim king of † Meſopotamia: and the children of Iſrael ſerved Chuſhan-riſhathaim ‡ [i] eight years. 9. And when the children of Iſrael cried unto the LORD, the LORD raiſed up a ‖ deliverer to the children of Iſrael, who delivered them, *even* Othniel the ſon of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Iſrael, and went out to war, and the LORD delivered Chuſhan-riſhathaim king of Meſopotamia into his hand: and his hand prevailed againſt Chuſhan-riſhathaim. 11. And the land had [l] reſt forty years: and Othniel the ſon of Kenaz died.

[g] Deut. xxxii. 16.
[h] Chap. ii. 14. Mat. x. 28.
† Heb. Arumnaharim.
‡ Reckoning from Joſhua's death.
[i] Lev. xxvi. 18. Ver. 14. Chap. iv. 3. & vi. 1. & x. 8.
[k] Pſ. lxxviii. 34.
‖ Heb. Saviour. 1 Tim. iv. 16.
[l] Joſh. xi. 23. Eſth. ix. 22.
About 1394, reckoning ſtill from Joſhua's death.

v. 8—11. Iſrael is ſcarcely ſettled before they forget God, and turn aſide after idols; but their ſufferings follow quick on their ſins. We have here,

1. Their diſtreſs. Becauſe they ſold themſelves to work wickedneſs, God ſold them as captives into the hand of the king of Meſopotamia, and eight years his heavy hand was upon them. *Note*, If our troubles be long or heavy, they are however leſs than our iniquities deſerve.

2. They who forget God in proſperity, cry to him in their diſtreſs. It is by affliction God uſually brings home to him his back-ſliding Iſrael. No doubt, they cried long and often before the mercy came, God exerciſing their faith and patience by keeping them for eight years waiting for the mercy. *Note*, We muſt always pray, and not faint. Though we do not always ſpeed at firſt, yet, if we perſevere, we are ſure not to be diſappointed at laſt.

3. God heard and anſwered their prayer. Othniel, Caleb's ſon-in-law, whoſe valour was before recorded, is raiſed up for their deliverer. The Spirit of God moving him to undertake the work, and aſſiſting him in the accompliſhment of the undertaking, he judged Iſrael, reproved them for their iniquities, and brought them back to the worſhip of the true God; and under his hand the power of their oppreſſors was broken, and they had reſt forty years. *Note*, (1.) There is a Saviour at hand for thoſe who groan under the burden of ſin. (2.) If we would have Chriſt to deliver us from outward troubles, be it our care to put away inward iniquity. (3.) They who have Chriſt for their Saviour, ſhall find a longer reſt than forty years, even to the years of eternity.

12. ¶ And the children of Iſrael did [m] evil again in the ſight of the LORD: and the LORD [n] ſtrengthned Eglon the king of Moab againſt Iſrael, becauſe they had done evil in the ſight of the LORD. 13. And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and ſmote Iſrael, and poſſeſſed the city of palm-trees. 14. So the children of Iſrael ſerved Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. 15. But when the children of Iſrael [o] cried unto the LORD, the LORD raiſed them up a deliverer, Ehud the ſon of Gera, † a Benjamite, a man ‡ left-handed: and by him the children of Iſrael ſent a preſent unto Eglon the king of Moab. 16. But Ehud made him a dagger (which had two ‖ edges) of a cubit length, and he did gird it under his raiment, upon his right thigh. 17. And he brought the preſent unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon *was* a very fat man. 18. And when he had made an end to offer the preſent, he ſent away the people that bare the preſent. 19. But he himſelf turned again from the † quarries that *were* by Gilgal, and ſaid, I have a ſecret errand unto thee, O king: who ſaid, Keep ſilence. And all that ſtood by him went out from him. 20. And Ehud came unto him, and he was ſitting in ‡ a ſummer-parlour, which he had for himſelf alone, and Ehud ſaid, I have a meſſage from God unto thee. And he aroſe out of *his* ſeat. 21. And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and [p] thruſt it into his belly. 22. And the haft alſo went in after the blade: and the fat cloſed upon the blade, ſo that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly, and † the dirt came out. 23. Then Ehud went forth through the

[m] Pſ. lxxviii. 32. Hoſ. vi. 4.
[n] Pſ. cxl. 8. John xix. 11.
About 1376.
[o] Pſ. l. 15.
† Or, the ſon of Jemini.
‡ Heb. Shut of his right hand. Chap. xx. 16.
‖ Heb. Mouths. Pſ. cxlix. 6.
† Or, graven images. Joſh. iv. 20.
‡ Or, Parlour of cooling. Amos iii. 15.
[p] Num. xxv. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xv. 33.
† Or, It came out at the fundament.

Before Christ 1376.

the porch, and ſhut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them. 24. When he was gone out, his ſervants came; and when they ſaw, that behold, the doors of the parlour *were* locked, they ſaid, Surely he ‡ covereth his feet in his ſummer-chamber. 25. And they tarried till they were aſhamed: and behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour: therefore they took a key, and opened *them*, and behold, their lord *was* fallen down dead on the earth. 26. And Ehud eſcaped while they tarried, and paſſed beyond the quarries, and eſcaped unto Seirath. 27. And it came to paſs when he was come, that he [q] blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Iſrael went down with him from the mount, and he before them. 28. And he ſaid unto them, Follow after me: for [r] the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and ſuffered not a man to paſs over. 29. ¶ And they ſlew of Moab at that time about ten thouſand men, all † luſty, and all men of valour; and there eſcaped not a man. 30. So Moab was ſubdued that day under the hand of Iſrael: and the land had reſt fourſcore years.

‡ Or, Doth his eaſement.

[q] Chap. vi. 34.

[r] 1 Sam. xvii. 47. Pſ. xv. 1.

† Heb. Fat. Pſ. xvii. 10.

About 1314, reckoning from Othniel's death.

v. 12—30. Far from being ſuitably affected with their late deliverance, after Othniel's death, the long enjoyment of eaſe and affluence plunged them again into their old ſins, and provoked God to give them up to new oppreſſors.

1. The king of Moab, who in vain, in former years, attempted to ſtand againſt them, now that God is no longer their defence, ariſes to war, ſtrengthens himſelf by the forces of Ammon and Amalek, and prevails againſt them. The Iſraelites, unable to reſiſt, are every where beaten, their ſtrong-holds taken, and the city of palm-trees, a fort it ſhould ſeem near Jericho, garriſoned to keep them under the yoke. Eighteen years they endured this ſervitude, and paid tribute to their oppreſſors. *Note*, (1.) When we return to ſin, we may expect God will return to judgment. (2.) If lighter corrections are ineffectual, God will make them longer and heavier. (3.) No inſtrument ſo deſpicable, but whenever God pleaſes, he can make it the rod of his anger.

2. Iſrael had again recourſe to prayer, and though their ſuffering was prolonged, at laſt God pities and delivers them by the hand of Ehud, a Benjamite. The tribe of Benjamin lying neareſt the garriſon of the Philiſtines, might probably be moſt oppreſſed, and, weakened as they were ſome time before by that ſtroke, recorded *chap.* xx. leſs able to reſiſt; but God can work by the weakeſt means the greateſt deliverances. Ehud, raiſed up under a divine impulſe, embraces the firſt opportunity to accompliſh the ſtroke he meditated for the reſcue of the people. Being ſent with a preſent to Eglon king of Moab, he conceals on his right thigh a ſhort dagger, which, being a left-handed man, was moſt conveniently thus ſituated. Having obtained an audience, and preſented the gifts he brought, he was graciouſly diſmiſſed, and departed with his ſervants on his return. At the quarries of Gilgal, (a place where ſtones were hewn; or, as ſome have ſuggeſted from the word, which ſignifies engravings, or graven images, where the king of Moab had ſet up his idols upon Joſhua's twelve ſtones) he diſmiſſed his ſervants, and turned back again alone, under pretence of a meſſage of importance to the king, which required privacy. His gifts had paved the way for a ready acceſs, and eaſier credibility: Eglon diſmiſſes his ſervants, and now alone with Ehud in his ſummer parlour, waits to know the ſubject of his errand; when, approaching him nearer, and telling him it was a meſſage from God, the king, though very corpulent, reſpectfully aroſe. Ehud immediately plunged the dagger into his bowels, which being ſhort, the fat cloſed over it, and he fell down dead on the ſpot. On this Ehud iſſues forth, locks the door behind him, paſſes through the guards unmoleſted, and haſtens away. Long time his attendants waited, ſuppoſing he ſlept in his ſummer parlour, and cared not to be diſturbed; at laſt, wearied with waiting, they opened the door, and to their aſtoniſhment beheld their king dead on the floor. It was now too late to purſue the fugitive, who was eſcaped to a place of ſafety. Ehud, on his return, inſtantly proclaims his late atchievement, and by ſound of trumpet ſummons the men of mount Ephraim to finiſh the ſtroke he had begun, with aſſurance of ſucceſs. Thick as the cluſtering bees they ſwarm around his ſtandard, and, under his command, one party ſeizes the fords of Jordan, whilſt the reſt attack the diſpirited garriſon, not a man of which was ſuffered to eſcape. Ten thouſand of the moſt valiant Moabites fell that day, and therewith ended the dominion of Moab. The conſequence of this victory was a reſt of eighty years. *Note*, (1.) This act of Ehud's was by a particular command of God, and is not to be pleaded as a precedent for aſſaſſination. (2.) The greateſt dangers do not intimidate, nor the greateſt difficulties entangle thoſe, whom God arms with holy courage, and ſupplies with the ſpirit of wiſdom. (3.) It is a great mercy to have reſt from our ſpiritual enemies; let us improve it by diligence to grow in grace, that we may be better prepared for their reception, when they ſhall renew their attacks.

Before Christ 1294.

31. ¶ And after him was Shamgar, the ſon of Anath, which ſlew of the Philiſtines ſix hundred men with [s] an ox-goad, and he alſo delivered Iſrael.

[s] Chap. xv. 15. 1 Cor. i. 27.

v. 31. Whilſt one part of the country ſuffered from one enemy, the oppoſite border was infeſted by another. The Philiſtines made inroads, and ravaged their coaſts, plundering the villages, and making it unſafe to travel, *See chap.* v. 6. Shamgar, the ſon of Anath, on ſome ſudden attack, immediately leaves his plough, and with no better weapon than an ox-goad ſlew ſix hundred of them, and cleared the country of the ſpoilers. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt men have often ariſen from the meaneſt employments. (2.) When God calls a ploughman to the government, or a fiſherman to the apoſtleſhip, he will qualify them for their work, and bleſs them with ſucceſs.

CHAP. IV.

1. *Iſrael revolts from God*, ver. 1. 2. *Is oppreſſed by Jabin*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *Judged by Deborah*, ver. 4, 5. 4. *Their deliverance is concerted between Deborah and Barak*, ver. 6—9. 5. *Barak takes the field*, ver. 10. 6. *Siſera, Jabin's general, meets him*, ver. 12, 13. 7. *Deborah encourageth him*, ver. 14. 8. *Siſera's army is routed*, ver. 15, 16. 9. *The general flees, and is ſlain by Jael*, ver. 17—21. 10. *This compleats Iſrael's deliverance*, ver. 23, 24.

1. AND the children of Iſrael [a] again did evil in the ſight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. 2. And the LORD [b] ſold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whoſe hoſt *was* Siſera, which dwelt in Haroſheth of the Gentiles. 3. And the children of Iſrael cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppreſſed the children of Iſrael.

[a] Chap. iii. 12. Jer. v. 3.

[b] Chap. ii. 14.

About 1294.

v. 1—3. During the life of Ehud their deliverer, the people it ſeems behaved well; but no ſooner is he dead, than, like a broken bow, they ſtart aſide, and return to their former abominations. This provoked a heavier ſcourge than either of the former, under Jabin, king of Canaan, whoſe royal ſeat was Hazor, formerly deſtroyed by Joſhua, but now re-built and reſtored, through the negligence and ſloth of the Iſraelites. His captain, Siſera, alſo dwelt in Haroſheth of the Gentiles, another fortreſs probably, where the fugitives of the ſeveral nations who had fled collected themſelves, and now were become ſo ſtrong, as mightily to oppreſs their former conquerors. The numerous hoſts, and nine hundred chariots of iron, which he maintained, left no hope of redreſs, and in deſpair and anguiſh Iſrael is once more driven unto God. *Note*, (1.) When leſſer viſitations do not anſwer their purpoſe, we may expect heavier. (2.) They who abuſe proſperity, ſhall know the cries of adverſity. (3.) Whilſt there is a tongue in the ſinner to ſpeak, God hath ſtill an ear to hear.

4. ¶ And Deborah a propheteſs, the wife of Lapidoth, ſhe judged Iſrael at that time. 5. And [c] ſhe dwelt under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim, and the children of Iſrael came up to her for judgment. 6. And ſhe ſent and called Barak the ſon of Abinoam, out of Kedeſh-naphtali, and ſaid unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Iſrael commanded, *ſaying*, Go, and draw towards mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thouſand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun? 7. And [d] I will draw unto thee, to the river [e] Kiſhon, Siſera the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots, and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. 8. And Barak ſaid unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, *then* I will not go. 9. And ſhe ſaid, I will ſurely go with thee; notwithſtanding, the journey that thou takeſt ſhall not be for thine honour: for the LORD ſhall ſell Siſera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah aroſe, and went with Barak to Kedeſh.

[c] Gen. xxxv. 8.

[d] Exod. xiv. 4. Mat. vi. 13.

[e] . Kings xviii. 40. Pſ. lxxxiii. 9.

v. 4—9. Twenty years the iron yoke of Jabin lay heavy upon them, when now at laſt God hears his people's cry, and comes to deliver them.

Deborah, a propheteſs, the wife of Lapidoth, at that time judged Iſrael. She was raiſed up by the Spirit of God, endued with wiſdom, and favoured with prophetic foreſight. All theſe gifts, as her name implies, *a bee*, ſhe induſtriouſly employed for the public good; ſweet to her friends, but armed with a ſting to ſmite her enemies. To her the people reſorted for judgment in their controverſies, and for direction in their religious concerns. Her abode, or rather her ſeat of juſtice, was under a palm-tree in mount Ephraim, which afterwards became famous, and bore her name. Grieved at the ſufferings of the people, ſhe here, under a divine impulſe, forms the plan for their reſcue; but being, as a woman, unfit to head the armies in the field, ſhe calls Barak to her aſſiſtance. Him ſhe directs what forces to levy, points out the place of encampment, and aſſures him from God, that, ſtrong as the hoſts of Jabin were, yet they and their captain ſhould both fall into his hand. Barak heſitates; yet, if ſhe will go with him, conſents to undertake the expedition; her preſence, as a propheteſs, being more his dependance than the ſword of his ſoldiers: ſhe refuſes not to go, but warns him, that it would rob him of the honour, as the victory would be aſcribed to her, and foretels him, that a woman ſhould gain the glory of Siſera's deſtruction. *Note*, (1.) When we go to war againſt our ſpiritual enemies, it is a great encouragement to have their advice and prayers, whoſe experience and piety we can depend upon. (2.) When God will deſtroy his enemies, their reſiſtance is vain; and their gathering to battle, is only ruſhing into the ſnare.

10. ¶ And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedeſh, and he went up with ten thouſand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him. 11. Now Heber the Kenite, *which was* of the children of Hobab the father-in-law of Moſes, had ſevered himſelf from the † Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which *is* by Kedeſh. 12. And they ſhewed Siſera, that Barak the ſon of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor. 13. And Siſera ‡ gathered together all his chariots, *even* nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that *were* with him, from Haroſheth of the Gentiles, unto the river of Kiſhon. 14. And Deborah ſaid unto Barak, Up; for this *is* the day in which the LORD hath delivered Siſera into thine hand: [f] Is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thouſand men after him. 15. And [g] the LORD diſcomfited Siſera, and all *his* chariots, and all *his* hoſt, with the edge of the ſword, before Barak: ſo that Siſera lighted down off *his* chariot, and fled away on his feet. 16. But Barak purſued after the chariots, and after the hoſt, unto Haroſheth of the Gentiles, and all the hoſt of Siſera fell upon the edge of the ſword, *and* there was not † a man left.

† Heb. Kaim. Exod. ii. 18.

‡ Heb. Gathered by cry, or proclamation.

[f] Chap. v. 19. 2 Sam. v. 24. Iſa. xxiv. 23. & lii. 12.

[g] Chap. v. 20. Pſ. lxxxiii. 9, 10.

† Heb. Left unto one. Pſ. civ. 35. Rom. ii. 12.

v. 10—16. Barak, at Deborah's command, having quickly raiſed the ten thouſand men, chiefly out of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, encamped on mount Tabor; and Deborah, according to her promiſe, accompanied him. Siſera is ſoon informed of theſe military preparations, either by the Canaanites or the Kenites, who lately removed into this part of the country out of Judah, and were at peace with Jabin. Immediately he collects his army, eſpecially his nine hundred chariots of iron, in which his chief ſtrength lay, and againſt which ten thouſand footmen were a very unequal match. When the armies were thus encamped, the one at the brook beneath, and the other in the mountain above,

1. Deborah iſſues the order for the battle to begin. Barak and the people might well tremble at the ſight before them, but ſhe aſſures them they need not fear; God is with them, and this very day they ſhould ſee his great ſalvation. The victory is already won, ſince God hath promiſed it. *Note*, If God be for us, let us never fear who are againſt us.

2. Barak obeys. He truſts not to his encampment on the mountain, nor waits there to be attacked; but, truſting on the divine promiſe, boldly deſcends. Struck with a panic fear, the army of Siſera dares not abide his coming, but, diſcomfited of God, ſeek by flight in vain to ſave themſelves from the ſword of Barak. *Note*, (1.) They who go forth in faith, muſt return victorious. (2.) When God purſues the ſinner, flight is vain.

3. A total overthrow is given theſe numerous hoſts. They are purſued to the very gates of their city, and not a man ſpared from the ſword: both chariots and horſes are fallen, and Siſera alone eſcapes on foot, only to fall more ignominiouſly in the tent of Jael. *Note*, (1.) When God begins with his enemies, he will alſo make an end. (2.) We do well to proſecute our ſucceſſes againſt our corruptions, and quicken our diligence the more we prevail againſt them.

17. Howbeit Siſera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for *there was* peace between Jabin the king of Hazor, and the houſe of Heber the Kenite. 18. ¶ And Jael went out to meet Siſera, and ſaid unto him, Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me, fear not: and when he had turned in unto her into the tent, ſhe covered him with a mantle. 19. And he ſaid unto her, Give me, I pray thee, [h] a little water to drink, for I am thirſty: and ſhe opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him. 20. Again he ſaid unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and it ſhall be when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and ſay, Is there any man here? that thou ſhalt ſay, [i] No. 21. Then Jael Heber's wife took [k] a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went ſoftly unto him, and ſmote the nail into his temples, and faſtened it into the ground: (for he was faſt aſleep, and weary) ſo he died. 22. And behold, as Barak purſued Siſera, Jael came out to meet him, and ſaid unto him, Come, and I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt. And when he came into her *tent*, behold, Siſera lay dead, and the nail *was* in his temples. 23. So [l] God ſubdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan, before the children of Iſrael. 24. And the hand of the children of Iſrael † proſpered and prevailed againſt Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had [m] deſtroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

[h] Chap. v. 25.

[i] Eccleſ. iii. 7.

[k] Chap. iii. 31. & v. 25, 26. 1 Sam. xvii. 49. 1 Cor. i. 27.

[l] Neh. ix. 24.

† Heb. Going, went and became hard. Deut. xxviii. 50. Pſ. cxl. 8. Zech. i. 15. 2 Tim. iii. 13.

[m] 1 Sam. iii. 12.

v. 17—24. The army being deſtroyed, we have here an account of the death of their general.

1. His flight. His chariot was now no longer his ſafety; and though in this confidence he drew near to battle, he finds by experience how vain a thing this is to ſave a man. Creature-dependances thus uſually fail us. The tents of the Kenites ſeemed to promiſe a ſafe retreat, and as there was peace between Jabin and them, he flees thither for protection.

2. His reception here was ſeemingly as hoſpitable as he could wiſh. Jael, the wife of Heber, ſtood at the tent door, invited him in to repoſe in her apartment, refreſhed him thirſty with his flight, and covered him up as weary, for ſleep as well as for concealment. Having wiſhed her to deny others entrance there, and by a lie to divert his purſuers, he thinks he may now lie down in peace, and take his reſt. How deluſive are appearances! how often is our danger neareſt, when moſt ſecure, and our ruin meditating by thoſe in whom we place the greateſt confidence. *Note*, They who truſt on man will uſually be diſappointed; they who truſt on God, never.

3. His death. Fatigued with his flight, his ſenſes were ſoon locked up in ſleep, and Jael (on divine warrant, no doubt) meditates and performs the fatal deed. Stealing ſoftly to him, with one of the nails of the tent, and a hammer in her hand, as he lay on his ſide, ſhe ſmote him through both his temples, and faſtened him to the ground: ſo he fell, as was foretold, by the hand of a woman. *Note*, (1.) God often chuſes the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. (2.) When our fate is determined, flight or reſiſtance are alike in vain.

4. Barak comes, and finds Siſera ſlain. Jael welcomes him to her tent, and ſhews him his enemy fallen, to their common joy. *Note*, The death of an oppreſſive tyrant is a general mercy.

5. From that day Iſrael purſued the blow, ſubdued Jabin, and deſtroyed his people and cities; and thus, taught by experience, acted more conformably to the divine command and their own advantage, in utterly deſtroying this devoted people. *Note*, (1.) It is wiſdom to improve under paſt experience. (2.) God's commands and our real intereſts are inſeparable.

CHAP. V.

This chapter contains the triumphant ſong of Deborah and Barak for this ſignal victory. 1. *They begin with praiſe to God*, ver. 2, 3. 2. *Compare his appearances on this occaſion, with his appearances on mount Sinai*, ver. 4, 5. 3. *Magnify this deliverance from their calamitous condition*, ver. 6—8. 4. *Call upon thoſe to join in praiſe, that ſhared in the benefits of the ſucceſs*, ver. 9—13. 5. *Reflect honour upon thoſe that were forward, and diſgrace on thoſe that were backward in the ſervice*, ver. 14—19, 23. 6. *Take notice how God himſelf fought for them*, ver. 20—22. 7. *Celebrate Jael, that ſlew Siſera*, ver. 24—30. 8. *Conclude with a prayer to God*, ver. 31.

1. THEN [a] ſang Deborah and Barak the ſon of Abinoam, on that day, ſaying, 2. Praiſe ye the LORD for the [b] avenging of Iſrael, when the people [c] willingly offered themſelves. 3. [d] Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, *even* I, will ſing unto the LORD, I will ſing *praiſe* to the LORD God of Iſrael. 4. LORD, when thou [e] wenteſt out of Seir, when thou marchedſt out of the field of Edom, [f] the earth trembled,

[a] Exod. xv. 1. Rev. xix. 1, 4.

[b] Pſ. xciv. 1.

[c] Ver. 9. Pſ. cx. 3. 1 Mac. ii. 42.

[d] Pſ. ii. 10. Eccleſ. v. 8.

[e] Deut. iv. 11. & xxxiii. 2.

[f] Deut. xxxii. 2. Pſ. lxviii. 8. Iſa. lxiv. 3. Hab. iii. 3. Rev. vi. 15.

bled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds alſo drop-
ped water. 5. The mountains † melted from before
the LORD, *even* that Sinai from before the LORD God
of Iſrael.

† Heb. Flowed.

v. 1—5. The grateful heart of Deborah, big with thankfulneſs, in ſtrains more ſublime, more tender, than Sappho or Homer ever ſung, under the guidance of the true inſpirer, dictates and leads the ſong among the victorious hoſts of Iſrael, *on that day*, either the very day of battle, or on occaſion of it, in ſome future ſolemnity. Barak and the people with joy united their voices, and praiſed with her the glorious God of hoſts. *Note*, Praiſe is comely, and as pleaſing to God as comfortable to ourſelves.

1. She opens with exultation, Praiſe ye the Lord; and abundant reaſon is given, in the wondrous interpoſition which appeared when vengeance overtook their enemies. As God, after ſuch a length of deſerved ſervitude, had in mercy again ſtirred up the people's hearts to ſhake off the galling yoke, therefore to Him, the Lord Jehovah, the God of irreſiſtible power, the Lord God of Iſrael, their covenant God, I, ſo bound in duty, ſo filled with gratitude, I, even I, will ſing. *Note*, God muſt have all the glory of his own work; however he uſes inſtruments, yet the praiſe for the ſucceſs is purely his own.

2. She demands attention from the great ones of the earth, whether the neighbouring kings and princes, who ſhould hear and tremble, or the great men of Iſrael, who ſhould rejoice with her.

3. She deſcribes the glorious appearances of God in time paſt, when at Sinai the mountain trembled, and a mighty tempeſt was ſtirred up round about him; or when invading the country of Sihon, ſuch terror went before them, that the hearts of the people ſhook with fear: their nobles, compared to the heavens, were weak as water, and the kings of Canaan, though high as the mountains, melted before the ark of God. He is ſtill the ſame, wonderful in power, and glorious in majeſty, his people's ſafeguard, his enemies deſtroyer.

6. In the days of Shamgar the ſon of Anath, in the
days of Jael, [g] the high-ways were unoccupied, and the
travellers walked through by-ways. 7. *The inhabitants*
of [h] the villages ceaſed, they ceaſed in Iſrael, until that
I Deborah aroſe, that I aroſe a mother in Iſrael. 8.
They choſe [i] new gods; then *was* war in the gates:
[k] was there a ſhield or ſpear ſeen among forty thouſand
in Iſrael? 9. My heart *is* toward the governors of Iſ-
rael, that offered themſelves willingly among the peo-
ple: Bleſs ye the LORD. 10. [l] † Speak ye that ride
on [m] white aſſes, ye that [n] ſit in judgment, and walk by
the way. 11. *They that are delivered* from the noiſe of
[o] archers in the places of drawing water; there ſhall they
rehearſe the ‡ righteous acts of the LORD, *even* the
righteous acts *towards the inhabitants* of his villages in
Iſrael: then ſhall the people of the LORD go down to
the gates.

[g] Lev. xxvi. 22. Lam. i. 4. Mic. iii. 11, 12.
[h] Eſth. ix. 19.
[i] Deut xxxii. 16. Chap. ii. 10.
[k] Lev. xxvi. 36. 1 Sam. xiii. 19.
[l] Pſ. cxlv. 11.
† Or, meditate.
[m] Chap. x. 4. & xii. 14.
[n] Pſ. cvii. 32.
[o] Lam. v. 4, 9.
‡ Heb. Righteouſneſſes of the Lord.

v. 6—11. Deborah proceeds, in her triumphant ſong,

1. To deſcribe the wretched ſtate to which Iſrael was reduced, from the days of Shamgar, to the days of Jael, who had lately ſo ſignalized herſelf. During twenty years nothing was ſeen but ravages and deſolation. Infeſted with robbers, the high-ways were unſafe to travel: all trade was ſtagnated, all tillage neglected; the villages were deſerted for fear of theſe plunderers, and incurſions made even to the gates of the city; ſo that going forth to draw water was dangerous: the adminiſtration of juſtice was interrupted, and they, either diſarmed by their oppreſſors, or negligent and cowardly, had not a ſufficient number of ſwords and ſpears left to arm even forty thouſand of the numerous hoſts of Iſrael; or, as it may ſignify, not one in forty thouſand had arms to defend themſelves. Yet, worſe than all this, and what more contributed to their ruin, they forſook God, who alone could help them; and, as if the former idols were not enough, they choſe new ones, to increaſe their abominations. *Note*, No wonder they who forſake God, are forſaken by him.

2. She mentions with delight the deliverance God had wrought by her means; not out of pride, or vain conceit of her work or agency in it, but to the glory of God, who had enabled her for, and called her to the bleſſed ſervice. Herein ſhe acknowledges the ready aſſiſtance of thoſe governors, who willingly offered themſelves to fight the Lord's battles. Her heart was towards them in love for their fidelity, and drawn out to God in praiſe, for having inclined them to follow her. *Note*, They juſtly deſerve the regard of man, who boldly ſtand up for the cauſe of God.

3. She enjoins the ſeveral ranks of men to praiſe God for the happy change. The nobles, who were diſtinguiſhed by riding on white aſſes; the judges, that ſat in the gate; the plowman, that now ſecurely broke the ſod; the traveller, that ſafely trod the lately unoccupied path; the drawer of water, that drank before at the peril of his life; all muſt unite their hearts and voices to adore the great Deliverer, and to bleſs the Lord, who had done for them ſuch marvellous things. *Note*, Every man in his ſtation hath peculiar mercies to be thankful for.

12. [p] Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter
a ſong: ariſe, Barak, and [q] lead thy captivity captive,
thou ſon of Abinoam. 13. Then he made him that re-
maineth have dominion over the nobles among the peo-
ple: The LORD made me have [r] dominion over the
mighty. 14. Out of Ephraim *was there* a root of them
againſt Amalek; after thee Benjamin, among thy peo-
ple: out of Machir came down governors, and out of
Zebulun they that † handle the pen of the writer. 15.
And the princes of Iſſachar *were* with Deborah: even
Iſſachar, and alſo Barak, he was ſent ‡ on foot into the
valley: ‖ for the diviſions of Reuben † *there were* great
thoughts of heart. 16. Why abodeſt thou among the
ſheep-folds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? for the
diviſions of Reuben *there were* great ſearchings of heart.
17. Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan
remain in ſhips? Aſher continued on the ſea-ſhore, and
abode in his breaches. 18. Zebulun and Naphtali *were*
a people *that* [t] jeoparded their lives unto the death, in
the high places of the field. 19. [u] The kings came *and*
fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach,
by the waters of Megiddo, they took no gain of money.
20. [x] They fought from heaven, the ſtars in their courſes
fought againſt Siſera. 21. The river of Kiſhon ſwept
them away, that ancient river, the river Kiſhon: O
my ſoul, thou haſt trodden down ſtrength. 22. Then
were [y] the horſe-hoofs broken, by the means of the pran-
ſings, the pranſings of their mighty ones. 23. Curſe
ye Meroz, (ſaid the angel of the LORD) curſe ye bit-
terly the inhabitants thereof: becauſe they came not
[z] to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD
againſt the mighty.

[p] Pſal. lvii. 8.
[q] Ibid. lxviii. 18.
[r] Ibid. xlix. 14. Rev. ii. 26.
† Heb. Draw with the pen.
‡ Heb. On his feet.
‖ Or, in the diviſions. Acts xv. 38.
† Heb. The impreſſions of the heart were great. 2 Cor xi. 2.
[s] Numb. xxxii. 1. Phil. i. 21.
[t] Eſth. iv. 16. Acts xx. 24. 1 John iii. 16. Rev. xii. 11.
[u] Pſ. xlviii. 4. Rev. xvii. 14.
[x] Pſ. lxxvii. 16.
[y] Pſ. xxxiii. 17.
[z] 1 Sam. xvii. 47. Rev. xvii. 14.

v. 12—23. Deborah proceeding in her ſeraphic ſong, kindles as ſhe recites the righteous acts of the Lord, and calls up all the faculties of her ſoul, to ſtretch their utmoſt powers in uttering his praiſe. Let Barak now ariſe, and lead the captive nobles of Canaan bound to his chariot wheels, and let the meaneſt of the Iſraelites, who have ſurvived their oppreſſors, trample on the necks of the mighty: yea, Deborah herſelf, though a woman, ſhall triumph in the dominion God hath given her. With juſt praiſe ſhe mentions the brave warriors who aſſiſted her, with wonder the mighty foes who fell before them, and with juſt indignation ſtamps with infamy the coward tribes that ſat unconcerned ſpectators of the war.

1. She praiſes Ephraim and Benjamin, for thence was the root and foundation of this expedition; and they ſeem to have detached a body to fall upon the Amalekites, who were Jabin's confederates, and advancing to reinforce his army. Machir ſupplied valiant officers: and Zebulun, famed for penmanſhip, laid down the quill to graſp the ſword. Iſſachar too ſent princes, men of courage and diſtinction, to join their brethren, and fought on foot in the midſt of danger: but Zebulun and Naphtali eſpecially diſtinguiſhed themſelves: out of them the chief part of the army was raiſed. They, as they had been neareſt Jabin's kingdom, and had moſt ſeverely felt his yoke, were the moſt determinedly reſolved to aſſert their liberty, or periſh in the attempt. Yet all theſe united forces were the leaſt part of their ſtrength: the ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera. Either the angelic hoſts of heaven appeared, or thunders and lightnings, ſtorm and tempeſt, burſt upon them, as armed inſtruments of divine vengeance. They diſcomfited the army, and frighted their warlike ſteeds, till, entangled in their harneſs, their very hoofs were broken with their prancings. Nor had they where to flee to; the waters of Kiſhon ſwept away thoſe who attempted to ford its rapid ſtream. Thus was the ſtrength of Iſrael's enemies trodden down, and Deborah's ſoul triumphed. *Note*, (1.) They who are zealous for God, ſhall aſſuredly hear of it ſhortly to their everlaſting honour. (2.) When we go to war againſt the enemies of our ſouls, we need be determined, ſince conqueſt or death eternal muſt be the iſſue. (3.) The whole creation is armed to avenge God's quarrel againſt his own and his people's enemies.

2. The enemies they combated with were warlike, numerous, and inveterate in their hatred againſt Iſrael. Amalek, their ſworn foe, and the kings of Canaan who yet remained, came with hearty readineſs to ſerve under Siſera's banners, and fight againſt their common enemy. They ſerved not for pay, but voluntarily engaged in humbling Iſrael, in hope to be enriched with their ſpoil, but were diſappointed of their expected gain. *Note*, The world, like theſe confederates, are ever cloſely

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linked againſt the children of God, and they hate them with a bitter hatred.

3. Deborah juſtly ſtigmatizes thoſe, who refuſed to lend a helping hand in the glorious work.—Reuben ſtands firſt in the tranſgreſſion: torn with inteſtine diviſions, they were wholly occupied at home, or ſeparated from their brethren in affection, as much as by their ſituation they were content to ſit ſtill, to the grief of thoſe who beheld their ungenerous conduct. Their worldly concerns engroſſed their regard; the bleating of their ſheep was better muſic than the trump of war; and as they were diſtant from the ſcene of oppreſſion, they cared too little for their brethren's ſufferings. *Note*, Selfiſh worldly ſpirits are ſo wrapped up in purſuit of their own little intereſts, that they care not to trouble themſelves about the cauſe of God, or hazard the diſturbance of their own repoſe, however urgently their brethren call for their aſſiſtance.—Dan and Aſher followed Reuben's bad example. Engaged in traffic and merchandize, they refuſed to be engaged in ſuch an expedition, and pleaded, perhaps, their ſea-faring way of life as their excuſe. *Note*, They who have no mind to engage in God's warfare, are never at a loſs for a pretext. But above all the reſt, Meroz moſt offended, and therefore a bitter curſe deſcends from God upon the inhabitants thereof. This ſeems to have been a city ſituated near the field of battle, whoſe people refuſed their aſſiſtance, and were more afraid of Siſera's army, than affected with God's promiſes. *Note*, (1.) They who would ſave their lives by their coward fears, ſhall loſe them. (2.) There is no neutrality to be obſerved between God and the world: whoſoever is afraid or aſhamed to join God's people, is a deſerter from the camp of God, and ſhall be treated accordingly.

24. [a] Bleſſed above women ſhall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, bleſſed ſhall ſhe be above women in the tent. 25. He aſked water, *and* ſhe gave *him* milk, ſhe brought forth butter in a lordly diſh. 26. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmens hammer: and † with the hammer ſhe ſmote Siſera, ſhe ſmote off his head, when ſhe had pierced and ſtricken through his temples. 27. ‡ At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, there he fell down ‖ dead.

[a] Luke i. 28.
† Heb. She hammered, &c.
‡ Or, Between.
‖ Heb. Deſtroyed. Pſal. lii. 7.

v. 24—27. Jael, the wife of Heber, receives her deſerved encomium for that noble deed againſt the enemy of God and his Iſrael. Lulled into ſecurity by her invitation and treatment, Siſera without ſuſpicion drank of her cup, and lay down to ſleep; when, by a divine impulſe ſtirred up, her manly ſoul approached the devoted victim, and with unrelenting ſteadineſs ſhe ſtruck the deadly blow. Awaking, at her feet he fell; the ſhadows of death hung heavy on his eye-lids, he bowed, he fell; he bowed, he fell down dead, not in the bed of honour, or ſlain by the devouring ſword, but by the hand of a woman, ſurprized without the power of reſiſtance. His head is ſevered from his body; the terror of the mighty now lies low, and pride is humbled to the duſt: thus will it ſhortly be with thoſe that now are ſunk in ſin, and aſleep in ſecurity; ſoon the arrows of the almighty will ſtick faſt in them; they muſt bow under the ſtroke of vengeance, and fall not into the arms of death only, but into the belly of hell.

28. The mother of Siſera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattefs, Why *is* his chariot ſo long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots? 29. Her wiſe ladies anſwered her, yea, ſhe returned anſwer to herſelf, 30. [b] Have they not ſped? have they *not* divided the prey, § to every man a damſel *or* two? to Siſera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both ſides, *meet* for the necks of *them that take* the ſpoil? 31. [c] So let all thine enemies periſh, O LORD: but *let* them that [d] love him, *be* [e] as the ſun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had reſt forty years.

[b] Exod. xv. 9.
§ Heb. To the head of a man.
[c] Pſal. viii. 9, 10.
[d] Eph. vi. 24.
[e] 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Pſ. xxxvii. 6.
About 1274, reckoning from Ehud's death.

v. 28—31. Moſt elegantly Deborah deſcribes the vain confidence, impatience, and vanity of Siſera's mother; eager to ſee her triumphant ſon return, ſhe chides the lingring chariot wheels: her wiſe women would ſuggeſt the reaſon, yea ſhe anſwers her own queſtion, and fooliſhly flatters herſelf that they are now *dividing the prey*. To the ſcandal of their ſex, theſe Canaanitiſh ladies wantonly pleaſe themſelves with the view of Iſrael's daughters violated by the inhuman ſoldiers, whilſt Siſera's mother vainly revolving in her mind her own expected ſpoil, ſome gaudy robe, wrought with moſt exquiſite beauty of needle-work, ſtruts in this her fancied garb of honour. How bitter then her diſappointment, to find her princely veſtments changed for priſon garments, and this out-ſtretched neck bowed under captive bands. *Note*, (1.) Among the moſt beſetting ſins of women, is vanity of dreſs. (2.) When our hearts beat higheſt with worldly hopes, and after worldly gratifications, our diſappointments will be proportionably bitter.

Before Chriſt 1274.

The ſong concludes with a fervent prayer for the continuance of Iſrael's ſucceſs. *Let thine enemies periſh.* Since their enemies are his, and it is for God's glory to puniſh thoſe who continue impenitent, it may ſafely be the matter of our prayer: *but let thoſe who love him*, his faithful people, ſhine bright as the ſun when it goeth forth in its meridian ſplendor, victorious over all their enemies, and exemplary in all holy converſation and godlineſs. *Note*, They who have fought the Lord's battles, and in faith and love approved themſelves to him here below, ſhall ſhortly ſhine as the ſun in the firmament of glory above for ever and ever.

The effect of this victory was another forty years reſt. Happy for them had they improved it more wiſely than before, and prevented the return of judgments, which they had already ſo ſeverely felt.

CHAP. VI.

Here is, 1. *Iſrael harraſſed by the inroads of the Midianites,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The meſſage God ſent them by a prophet,* ver. 7—10. 3. *A commiſſion ſent from God to Gideon by an angel, and confirmed by a ſign,* ver. 11—24. 4. *Gideon's reforming his father's houſe,* ver. 25—32. 5. *The preparations he made for a war with the Midianites, and the encouragement given him by a ſign,* ver. 33—40.

1. AND the children of Iſrael did evil in the ſight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of [a] Midian ſeven years. 2. And the hand of Midian † prevailed againſt Iſrael: *and* becauſe of the Midianites, the children of Iſrael made them [b] the dens which *are* in the mountains and caves, and ſtrong-holds. 3. And *ſo* it was, when Iſrael had ſown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the eaſt, even they came up againſt them: 4. And they encamped againſt them, and [c] deſtroyed the increaſe of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no ſuſtenance for Iſrael, neither ‡ ſheep, nor ox, nor aſs. 5. For they came up with their cattle, and their tents, and they came [d] as graſhoppers for multitude, *for* both they and their camels ‖ were without number: and they entred into the land to deſtroy it. 6. And Iſrael was greatly impoveriſhed becauſe of the Midianites; and the children of Iſrael [e] cried unto the LORD.

[a] Gen. xxv. 2. Num. xxv. 18.
About 1267.
† Heb. Was ſtrong.
[b] 1 Sam. xiii. 6. Hebr. xi. 38.
[c] Deut. xxviii. 30.
‡ Or goat.
[d] Chap. viii. 10.
‖ Heb. Had no number. Chap. vii. 12.
[e] Pſal. lxxviii. 34. Hoſ. v. 15.

v. 1—6. Nothing but almighty grace can effect an abiding change on the heart. The ſevereſt providences, like the thunder-clap, only ſtartle us for a moment, and are forgotten. The reſt they had enjoyed, opened a door for ſin to enter among them, and far from improving by paſt experience, they ſtarted aſide again from God. The conſequence of this was, a new ſcourge from a deſpicable and vanquiſhed enemy. The eaſtern Midianites bordering on Moab, whom they had ſmitten, *Num.* xxxi. recovered themſelves, ſo as to make inroads on the country. They came not as a regular army to fight, but as troops of Banditti, to rob and plunder; yet in ſuch multitudes with their camels, and oxen, and ſheep, that they eat up all the land. For fear of them, the Iſraelites, who had loſt their courage when they left their God, fled to the dens in the mountains for ſhelter, ſuffering all the miſeries of famine in a land of plenty, and ſeeing others eat the harveſt they had ſown. At laſt, after ſeven years affliction, they began to remember themſelves, returned with deep humiliation to God, and cried to him in their diſtreſs. *Note*, (1.) They who abuſe God's gifts in prodigality and luxury, often live as a juſt puniſhment to feel the want of them in hunger and nakedneſs. (2.) A guilty and accuſing conſcience makes men cowards. (3.) In the day of judgment, it will be vain to call to the mountains to cover us, or the rocks to hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne. (4.) The only hope that remains for the ſinner, is to make now ſupplication to God.

7. ¶ And it came to paſs when the children of Iſrael cried unto the LORD, becauſe of the Midianites; 8. That the LORD ſent a † prophet unto the children of Iſrael, which ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the houſe of bondage, 9. And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppreſſed you, and [f] drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; 10. And I ſaid unto you, I *am* the LORD your God, [g] fear not the

† Heb. A man, a prophet. Chap. iv. 4.
[f] Pſal. xliv. 2, 3.
[g] 2 Kings xvii. 38. Jer. x. 2.

the gods of the Amorites, in whoſe land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

v. 7—10. God heard the prayer of the poor deſtitute, and pitied them; though it was not their ſins but their ſufferings that raiſed their cries. Hereupon,

1. He ſends a prophet to awaken them to a ſenſe of their ſins, and bring them to repentance. *Note*, (1.) It is a gracious ſymptom of mercy in ſtore for a ſinful people, when God raiſes them up faithful miniſters, to reprove their backſlidings.

2. The meſſage he brought. God expoſtulates with them on their ingratitude and folly in leaving him, who had delivered them ſo wonderfully from Egypt, ſo often ſubdued their enemies before them, reſcued them from their oppreſſors, and given them their land for an inheritance. The returns he aſked for ſuch mercies were highly reaſonable, to cleave to him alone, and never fear or worſhip the idol gods of the Amorites, who had neither power to help or hurt them. Yet they obeyed not his voice; though ſo plain the duty, and ſo vile the ſin, they wilfully as wickedly refuſed to hearken, and left the living God to follow ſtocks and ſtones. *Note*, (1.) Ingratitude to the God of grace and mercy, is one of the greateſt aggravations of our ſin. (2.) God's ſervice is the moſt reaſonable. The folly of diſobedience is as great as its evil. (3.) Miniſters muſt ſpeak plainly and cloſely to the ſinner's conſcience, and charge home the accuſations of God's violated laws.

11. ¶ And there [h] came an angel of the LORD, and ſat under an oak which *was* in Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joaſh the Abi-ezrite: and his ſon Gideon threſhed wheat by the wine-preſs, † to hide *it* from the Midianites. 12. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and ſaid unto him, [i] The LORD *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13. And Gideon ſaid unto him, [k] Oh my lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and [l] where *be* all his miracles which our fathers told us of, ſaying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forſaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14. And [m] the LORD looked upon him, and ſaid, Go in this thy might, and thou ſhalt ſave Iſrael from the hand of the Midianites: [n] have not I ſent thee? 15. And he ſaid unto him, Oh my lord, [o] wherewith ſhall I ſave Iſrael? behold, ‡ my family *is* poor in Manaſſeh, and I *am* [p] the leaſt in my father's houſe. 16. And the LORD ſaid unto him, Surely [q] I will be with thee, and thou ſhalt ſmite the Midianites, as one man. 17. And he ſaid unto him, If now I have found grace in thy ſight, then [r] ſhew me a ſign that thou talkeſt with me. 18. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my ‖ preſent, and ſet *it* before thee. And he ſaid, I will tarry until thou come again. 19. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the fleſh he put in a baſket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought *it* out unto him under the oak, and preſented *it*. 20. And the angel of God ſaid unto him, Take the fleſh and the unleavened cakes, and lay *them* upon this rock, and [s] pour out the broth. And he did ſo. 21. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the ſtaff that *was* in his hand, and touched the fleſh, and the unleavened cakes: and there roſe up fire out of the rock, and conſumed the fleſh and the unleavened cakes: then the angel of the LORD departed out of his ſight. 22. And when Gideon perceived that he *was* an angel of the LORD, Gideon ſaid, [t] Alas, O Lord God: for becauſe I have ſeen an angel of the LORD face to face. 23. And the LORD ſaid unto him, [u] Peace *be* unto thee, fear not, thou ſhalt not die. 24. Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it § Jehovah-ſhalom: unto this day it *is* yet in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

[h] Chap. v. 23. Ver. xiv. 16.

† Heb. To cauſe it to flee.

[i] Dan. ix. 23. Luke i. 28. Rom. viii. 31.

[k] Gen. xliii. 20.

[l] Pſal. xxv. 6. Iſa. lix. 1. & lxiii. 14.

[m] John xx. 22.

[n] Joſh. i. 9. Chap. iv. 6.

[o] Luke i. 34. Hebr. xi. 32.

‡ Heb. My thouſand is the meaneſt. Exod. xviii. 25. Mic. v. 2.

[p] Jer. l. 45. 1 Cor. xv. 9.

[q] Exod. iii. 12. Joſh. i. 5.

[r] Exod. iv. 8. 2 Kings xx. 8. Pſal. lxxxvi. 17.

‖ Or meat-offering. Gen. xviii. 5. Chap. xiii. 19.

[s] 1 Kings xviii. 33—38.

[t] Gen. xv. 12. Exod. xxxiii. 20. Chap. xiii. 22.

[u] John. xx. 19, 26.

§ i. e. The Lord ſend peace. Jer. xxxiii. 16.

v. 11—24. Whilſt God is leaving the people to ruminate upon the meſſage he had ſent them, he begins to interpoſe for their deliverance by the hand of Gideon, the ſon of Joaſh, of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh on this ſide Jordan. To him the angel of the everlaſting covenant, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, appeared in a human form, as he was threſhing wheat by the wine-preſs, to hide it from the Midianites; for ſuch was the diſtreſs to which they were reduced, that the very bread they did eat, muſt be ſecreted. *Note*, When our caſe appears moſt deſperate, then is the time God chuſes to glorify his power in ſaving us. We have here that which paſſed between the angel of the Lord and Gideon.

1. The angel accoſts him with a very comfortable ſalutation, *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.* Probably in mournful meditation over Iſrael's griefs, and fervent ejaculations for ſpeedy help, Gideon was lifting up his heart to God, and now he is anſwered: this unexpected viſitant aſſures him of God's preſence with him. *Note*, However bleſt we may be with natural gifts, unleſs God be with us, we poſſeſs them in vain. Without him the valiant are weak, and the mighty ſoon brought low.

2. Gideon, indulging his melancholy views of the hard oppreſſion his people now ſuffered, doubts the truth of the meſſage, and ſeems to call in queſtion the former miracles which were recorded, becauſe for a time, as the juſt puniſhment of their ſins, God had left them under the power of Midian. *Note*, (1.) It is ſometimes difficult to reconcile our afflictive experiences with the great and precious promiſes, and not to ſay, If this be true, why am I thus? (2.) The greateſt ſaints have given many a ſad token of the power of unbelief in their hearts. (3.) We are not to queſtion the truth of paſt miracles, becauſe they continue not to be ſtill wrought. (4.) We are not haſtily to conclude that God hath forſaken us, becauſe for our ſins he hath for a ſeaſon hid his face from us.

3. The Lord anſwers his doubts, by giving him orders to work the people's deliverance from the hand of Midian. With a look of complacence, and with a ſolemnity that added weight to his word, He who can enable him for the ſervice, bids him go, and aſſures him of ſucceſs. Jehovah ſpeaks; let Gideon hear and believe. *Note*, (1.) It is the Lord's work alone to enable us for that which he doth command. (2.) Nothing inſpires the heart with ſuch earneſtneſs to contend againſt our ſpiritual enemies, as the aſſurance that we ſhall at laſt be more than conquerors.

4. Gideon is unprovided either with men or money to ſupport a war againſt Midian; his family reduced, and himſelf inconſiderable, he heſitates at the command, and through diſtruſt of God, or rather modeſt diffidence of himſelf, expreſſes his apprehenſion of his inability for ſuch an undertaking. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who are little in their own eyes, God delights to exalt. (2.) When we find our own weakneſs, and ſpread it in prayer before God, then ſhall we, like Gideon, out of weakneſs be made ſtrong.

5. God can give us no greater confirmation than his word of promiſe. Therefore he repeats it for Gideon's ſatisfaction, with a ſolemn aſſeveration, *Surely* I will be with thee; and then his poverty, or his want of human help, ſhould be no bar to his compleat victory over the hoſts of Midian. *Note*, If God be for us, no matter who are againſt us, the day is ours.

6. As the commiſſion was extraordinary, for his own and others ſatisfaction, he aſks a ſign, as an aſſurance of the truth of what was ſaid to him; and begs him to ſtay whilſt he fetched him ſome refreſhment, and treated him as a meſſenger from God. The angel conſents to ſtay, the plain repaſt is quickly provided, and Gideon returns from his father's houſe with part of a boiled kid, ſome broth, and unleavened cakes in a baſket. *Note*, (1.) They who know the comfort of communion with God, or fellowſhip with his ſaints, will contrive to prolong the viſit. (2.) Chriſtians muſt uſe hoſpitality, and break their bread with chearfulneſs to the hungry. (3.) They who give but a cup of cold water with regard to God, ſhall in no wiſe loſe their reward.

7. Inſtead of ſpreading the table for repaſt, this divine ſtranger enjoins him to lay the meat on a rock near them, and pour the broth upon it. Gideon without heſitation obeys: when, lo! the ſign he aſked, appears: the angel, who ſeemed like a traveller, with his ſtaff gently touched the proviſion as it lay, when inſtantly fire burſts forth, and conſumes the offering; and thereupon the Lord diſappears, leaving Gideon the ſtrongeſt evidence of the truth of what he had told him.

8. Gideon, though a man of valour, and from every circumſtance he might conclude the gracious deſign of all he had ſeen and heard, trembles at the thought of having ſeen an angel; and as Jacob before, and Manoah after, fears he ſhall die.

9. The Lord ſilences his fears, by an audible voice probably, though he could not ſee the angel, he could hear him ſay, Thou ſhalt not die, fear not. *Note*, Though every meſſage from the world of ſpirits juſtly makes man, a ſinner, to tremble; yet when by faith our hearts have reſted on God's promiſes, then have we nothing to fear from thence, but every thing to hope for.

Laſtly, Gideon ſets up an altar on this rock for a memorial, and calls it very properly, Jehovah-Shalom, the Lord is peace; for he had ſpoken peace to him when he was troubled, had brought him a meſſage of peace for his afflicted brethren, and would give them peace from all their enemies round about. *Note*, They who have God at peace with them, are happy indeed, and bound to erect the grateful altar, and offer him the ſacrifices of never-ending praiſe.

This altar continued till the time of Samuel, when this book is ſuppoſed to be compiled.

Before Chriſt 1267.

25. ¶ And it came to paſs the ſame night, that the LORD ſaid unto him, Take [x] thy fathers young bullock, † even the ſecond bullock of ſeven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that *is* by it: 26. And build an altar unto the LORD thy God, upon the top of this ‡ rock, in the ordered place, and take the ſecond bullock, and offer a burnt ſacrifice with the wood of the grove, which thou ſhalt cut down. 27. Then Gideon took ten men of his ſervants, and [y] did as the LORD had ſaid unto him: And *ſo* it was, becauſe he feared his father's houſhold, and the men of the city, that he could not do *it* by day, that he did *it* [z] by night. 28. ¶ And when the men of the city roſe early in the morning, behold the altar of Baal was caſt down, and the grove was cut down that *was* by it, and the ſecond bullock was offered upon the altar *that was* built. 29. And they ſaid one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and aſked, they ſaid, Gideon the ſon of Joaſh hath done this thing. 30. Then the men of the city ſaid unto Joaſh, Bring out thy ſon, [a] that he may die: becauſe he hath caſt down the altar of Baal, and becauſe he hath cut down the grove that *was* by it. 31. And Joaſh ſaid unto all that ſtood againſt him, Will [b] ye plead for Baal? will ye ſave him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilſt *it is yet* morning: if he *be* a god, let him plead for himſelf, becauſe *one* hath caſt down his altar. 32. Therefore on that day he called him ‖ Jerubbaal, ſaying, Let Baal plead againſt him, becauſe he hath thrown down his altar.

[x] Gen. xxxv. 2. Job xxii. 23. Pſal. ci. 2. 1 Tim. iii. 5.
† Or, and.
‡ Heb. Strong place.
[y] Mat. xvi. 24. Gal. i. 16.
[z] Pſal. cxii. 5.
[a] John xvi. 2.
[b] Exod. xx. 3. Deut. vi. 14.
‖ i. e. Let Baal contend. He is called Jerubbeſheth, 2 Sam. xi. 21.

v. 25—32. Before God will advance him as judge in Iſrael, he will prove his piety as well as courage. Therefore,

1. The ſame night after he had appeared to him at the wine-preſs, he ſpeaks to him in a viſion on his bed, and commands him to overthrow the altar of Baal, which his father had erected, and at which the men of the city paid their devotions, to cut down the grove around it, or perhaps the image upon it, then build an altar on the rock, where the Lord had cauſed the fire to break forth, and offer there his father's young bullock, deſigned for Baal, the ſecond in the ſtall; or, *and the ſecond*, another of ſeven years old, the two beſt of his herd, and this with the wood of the grove, or image, which he had cut down. *Note*, (1.) God often chuſes unlikely inſtruments, as now raiſing up an eminent reformer, out of a houſe devoted to Idolatry. (2.) When the blood of atonement is ſhed, there is comfortable hopes that the ſin being pardoned, the affliction will end. (3.) Chriſt is both our rock and altar; thoſe will be acceptable ſacrifices that are offered through him. (4.) It is a wiſe improvement of the unrighteous mammon, when like theſe monuments of idolatry, we can make it ſubſervient to the work and ſervice of God.

2. Gideon no ſooner hears than he obeys. The ſame hour probably he aroſe, and as the night beſt favoured his deſigns, and prevented interruption, before the morning, by the help of his faithful ſervants, whom he ſummoned to attend him, Baal's altar was laid in the duſt, and God's new-raiſed altar ſmoaking with the grateful ſacrifice. *Note*, (1.) In an idolatrous houſe, ſome are often found who bow not the knee to Baal, but, though in ſecret, cleave unto the Lord their God. (2.) He feared not his father's, or the people's diſpleaſure: where the fear of God is, it ſwallows up every other concern. (3.) When we are called to God's work, it becomes us to make haſte and delay not. What thou doeſt, do quickly.

3. The morning ſoon diſcloſed the ſcene. The men of Baal haſting to their devotions, are ſurprized to find their grove and altar ruined. Gideon ſoon bears the ſuſpicion, from his known diſaffection to their god; enraged even to madneſs, nothing will ſatisfy them but his blood. To this end, they call on Joaſh, his father, to deliver him into their hands. *Note*, (1.) They who will be zealous for God againſt men's ſins, muſt ſtill put their life in their hands. (2.) How early was Baal's altar viſited? Shall not their falſe worſhip riſe up in judgment againſt thoſe, who neither early nor late bow their knees before the true God?

4. Joaſh boldly refuſes to comply with ſo cruel and unreaſonable a requeſt. Whether out of natural affection for his ſon, or more probably informed by Gideon of the motives for his conduct, and convinced of the evil of the abominable idolatry in which he had before lived. He therefore juſtly rebukes them or pleading for Baal, in oppoſition to the Divine command, and inſtead of giving up his ſon, juſtly threatens (for which he might plead the expreſs law of God) the perſon that ſhould dare ſpeak a word for this idol with inſtant death. He alſo contemptuouſly challenges Baal, if he were a God, to plead for himſelf in order to convince them, from his impotence, of their folly as well as ſin, in truſting upon him. *Note*, (1.) If we have been zealous in a bad cauſe, we ſhould with greater zeal ſeek to amend what we have done amiſs, by our open appearance for the truth. (2.) Nothing muſt prevail on us to give up the innocent, whoever combine to deſtroy them. (3.) Though it may be highly dangerous to reprove a wicked people, we muſt do our duty, and truſt God with the event.

5. Gideon gets hereupon the name of Jerubbaal, let Baal plead: and this could not but be a great encouragement to himſelf and ſoldiers; for having proved victorious over their God, he need the leſs fear the Midianites, his worſhippers.

Before Chriſt 1267.

33. ¶ Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites, and the children of the eaſt were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel. 34. But the ſpirit of the LORD † came upon Gideon, and he [c] blew a trumpet, and Abiezer was ‡ gathered after him. 35. And he ſent meſſengers throughout all Manaſſeh, who alſo was gathered after him, and he ſent meſſengers unto Aſher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali, and they came up to meet them. 36. ¶ And Gideon ſaid unto God, [d] If thou wilt ſave Iſrael by mine hand, as thou haſt ſaid, 37. Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor: *and* if [e] the dew be on [f] the fleece only, and *it be* dry upon all the earth *beſide*, then ſhall I know that thou wilt ſave Iſrael by mine hand, as thou haſt ſaid. 38. And it was ſo: for he roſe up early on the morrow, and thruſt the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. 39. And Gideon ſaid unto God, [g] Let not thine anger be hot againſt me, and I will ſpeak but this once: Let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; [h] let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. 40. And God did ſo that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

† Heb. Clothed. 1 Chron. xii. 18. Luke xxiv. 49. Rom. xiii. 14. Gal. iii. 27.
[c] Num. x. 3. Chap. iii. 27.
‡ Heb. Was called after.
[d] Pſal. ciii. 13, 14.
[e] Deut. xxxii. 2. Hoſ. xiv. 5.
[f] Pſal. cxlvii. 19, 20. Mat. x. 5, 6. & xv. 24.
[g] Gen. xviii. 32.
[h] Mat. viii. 12. Acts xxii. 21. Rom. xi. 20.

v. 33—40. The harveſt being ready for reaping, we have here, as during the preceding years,

1. An inroad made by the confederate hoſts of Midian, Amalek, and the Arabians, who, confident of ſucceſs, were come to collect the ſpoil. Thus emboldened by ſucceſs, the ſinner uſually advances, till God, from the pinnacle of his felicity, hurls him down into the depths of miſery.

2. God ſtirs up Gideon to oppoſe them; *the Spirit of the Lord came upon him*, or *clothed him*; a ſpirit of unuſual courage rouſed him with zeal to beſtir himſelf. He blows the trumpet, invites all volunteers to his ſtandard, and thoſe who would have ſtoned him yeſterday, are to-day the firſt to follow his orders. Of Manaſſeh chiefly he compoſed his army, though Aſher, Zebulun and Naphtali alſo generouſly lent their aſſiſtance. *Note*, (1.) In a common cauſe, we ſhould be ready to ſhare the danger with our brethren. (2.) In the men of Abiezer, we ſee what changes God can work. Thus hath Divine Grace, often at a ſtroke, changed perſecutors into preachers, and the moſt abandoned into converts to truth and holineſs. (3.) When God gives us a ſpirit of grace and courage, however ſtrong our corruptions within, or ſpiritual enemies without, he will ſubdue them under our feet.

3. Gideon hereupon, for the confirmation of his own faith, or rather perhaps for the encouragement of thoſe who were with him, aſks a ſign of God, to aſſure him of victory over the numerous hoſts of Midian. God conſents to it: Gideon lays the fleece on the floor; and on the morrow, according to his own propoſal, the fleece is filled with water, and the ground dry around it. *Note*, It is a bleſſed token for good in a miniſter's labours, when his own ſoul, like Gideon's fleece, is repleniſhed with the dew of divine grace.—Once more he preſumes to aſk; aſhamed of his own boldneſs, and begging pardon for his requeſt: Let the ſign be inverted; the fleece dry, the floor wet. God conſents, and it is done; thus ſilencing every doubt of the certainty of his ſucceſs. *Note*, There are ſeaſons, every Chriſtian knows, when his own ſoul, like Gideon's fleece, is dry amidſt the moſt refreſhing dews of divine influence that fall on others around him.

CHAP. VII.

We have here, 1. *The reduction of Gideon's army to* 300 *men*, ver. 1—8. 2. *The encouragement God gave him to attack the enemy*, ver. 9—15. 3. *How he formed his attack upon the enemy's camp*, ver. 16—20. 4. *The ſucceſs of this attack*, ver. 21—25.

1. THEN [a] Jerubbaal (who *is* Gideon) and all the people that *were* with him, roſe up early, and pitched beſide the well of † Harod: ſo that the hoſt of the Midianites were on the north-ſide of them, by the hill

[a] Chap. vi. 32.
† i. e. Trembling.

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hill of Moreh, in the valley. 2. And the LORD ſaid unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee, *are* [b] too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, left Iſrael vaunt themſelves againſt me, ſaying, [c] Mine own hand hath ſaved me. 3. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, ſaying, [d] Whoſoever *is* fearful and afraid, let him return and ‡ depart early from mount Gilead: and there returned of the people twenty and two thouſand, and there remained ten thouſand. 4. And the LORD ſaid unto Gideon, The people *are* yet too many: bring them down unto the water, and I will ‖ try them for thee there: and it ſhall be, *that* [e] of whom I ſay unto thee, This ſhall go with thee, the ſame ſhall go with thee; and of whomſoever I ſay unto thee, This ſhall not go with thee, the ſame ſhall not go. 5. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD ſaid unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue as a dog lappeth, him ſhalt thou ſet by himſelf; likewiſe every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. 6. And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the reſt of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7. And the LORD ſaid unto Gideon, [f] By the three hundred men that lapped will I ſave you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place. 8. So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he ſent all *the reſt of* Iſrael, every man unto his tent, and retained thoſe three hundred men: and the hoſt of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

[b] Zech. iv. 6.
[c] Exod. viii. 9.
[d] Deut. xx. 8. 1 Mac. iii. 56. Mat. xiii. 21. Rev. xvii. 14.
‡ Heb. Flee away.
‖ Heb. Separate, purify. Mal. iii. 2, 3.
[e] 1 Sam. xvi. 6, 7.
[f] Chap. xviii. 1 Sam. xiii. 6.

v. 1—8. Gideon, now fully convinced of his miſſion, is in haſte to execute it. At early dawn he riſes, his army is drawn out, and his camp fixed near the well of Harod. Diligence in duty muſt follow faith on the promiſe.—The diſproportion was very great indeed between the hoſts of Midian and Iſrael, but inſtead of leſſening, God will have it increaſed, that they may ſee it was not their own arm which ſaved them. For this purpoſe, God commands,

1. Proclamation to be made through the camp, for the fearful and faint-hearted to depart before the next morning. Gideon obeys, and more than two-thirds of this little army ſhamefully turn their backs, and embrace the offer. Probably they had run together in haſte at firſt, but when they ſaw the numerous hoſts of Midian, wiſhed themſelves ſafe at home again. *Note*, (1.) Many take up with the profeſſion of Chriſt's ſervice, who have never weighed the conſequences, and therefore quickly ſtart aſide like a broken bow. (2.) They who are enſlaved by the fear of man, are better out of God's camp than in it, as their fearfulneſs is apt to be contagious, and diſcourage the faithful.

2. Ten thouſand remained, and theſe were yet too many: they might think their valour made up for want of numbers, and aſcribe the victory to themſelves; therefore another ſeparation is made, by bringing them to the water to drink, and ſelecting thoſe who lapped out of their hands, from thoſe who kneeled down to drink, which reduced their numbers to 300 men, and all the reſt were diſmiſſed. Thus Gideon's faith was eminently diſplayed, and his readineſs to truſt the matter entirely with God appeared. *Note*, (1.) God's ways are often myſterious, and he reduces his people to the greater ſtraits, that his own glory may the more be magnified in their preſervation. (2.) When faith is in exerciſe, no difficulties will make us ſtagger at the promiſe.

3. The three hundred that remain when their brethren were diſmiſſed, are alſo in no wiſe accoutred as combatants. They are armed with trumpets inſtead of ſwords, and carry their victuals in their hands, as if God had deſigned they ſhould ſpend the day with muſick and feaſting, inſtead of meeting their enemies in a field of battle. *Note*, (1.) God's work is often accompliſhed by the moſt unlikely means. (2.) When God commands to arms, and appoints our weapons, we may ſafely advance againſt our moſt formidable enemies, though armed only with a trumpet, or five ſmooth ſtones.

9. ¶ And it came to paſs the ſame [g] night, that the LORD ſaid unto him, Ariſe, [h] get thee down unto the hoſt, for I have delivered it into thine hand. 10. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy ſervant down to the hoſt. 11. And thou ſhalt hear what they ſay, and afterwards ſhall [i] thine hands be ſtrengthned to go down unto the hoſt. Then went he down with Phurah his ſervant unto the outſide of the † armed men that *were* in the hoſt. 12. And the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and all the children of the eaſt, lay along in the valley like graſhoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, [k] as the ſand ‡ by the ſea-ſide for multitude. 13. And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and ſaid, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, [l] a cake of barley-bread tumbled into the hoſt of Midian, and came unto a tent, and ſmote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. 14. And his fellow anſwered and ſaid, [m] This *is* nothing elſe ſave the ſword of Gideon the ſon of Joaſh, a man of Iſrael: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the hoſt. 15. ¶ And it was *ſo* when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the ‖ interpretation thereof, that he worſhipped, and returned into the hoſt of Iſrael, and ſaid, [n] Ariſe; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the hoſt of Midian.

[g] Gen. xlvi. 2. Job iv. 13, 15. Mat. i. 20.
[h] Iſa. xliii. 2. Hebr. xiii. 5.
[i] Acts xxviii. 15.
† Heb. Ranked by five. Exod. xiii. 18.

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[k] Chap. vi. 5. Iſa. viii. 9.
‡ Heb. On the lip of the ſea.
[l] Chap. iii. 31. 2 Kings vi. 20. 1 Cor. i. 27
[m] Num. xxiii. 5.
‖ Heb. Breaking.
[n] 2 Cor. i. 4, 5.

v. 9—15. Whilſt Gideon with his little band is now waiting his orders from God, the ſame night God comes to him, bids him advance, and aſſures him, that his enemies are delivered into his hand. *Note*, When in God's cauſe we are reduced to the greateſt ſtraits, we ſhall experience the ſtrongeſt ſupports: yet farther to ſtrengthen his faith, he is ordered to go down with his ſervant to the camp of Midian, that any remaining fear might be utterly baniſhed, by what he ſhould there hear. Accordingly,

1. At dead of night, he approaches the out-ſkirts of their tents, where they lay thick as graſhoppers, and liſtening, hears one ſoldier report a dream, which another interprets: a barley-cake ſeemed to roll from the hill above them, into the camp, and ſtruck a tent, which inſtantly fell before it. This his comrade interprets to be the ſword of Gideon, which ſhould deſtroy their hoſt; whence he might well conclude the panic which had gone out among them. There is ſomething very ſtrange in the phenomenon of dreaming, and uſually to diſregard theſe disjointed ideas is beſt; leaſt we be often made needleſsly uneaſy. But ſometimes, no doubt, for wiſe purpoſes there may be more than the rovings of fancy in theſe viſions of the night; and God may thus communicate notices to our ſpirits, which deſerve our moſt ſerious regard.

2. Gideon, affected with the occurrence, and fully perſuaded that the dream was certain, and the interpretation ſure, worſhips God on the ſpot; praiſing him for the encouragement given him, and praying to be enabled to proſecute the blow he meditated. Immediately he returns, ſummons his companions, relates, no doubt, what had happened, and bids them march to certain victory. *Note*, When God is pleaſed to ſtrengthen or comfort our own ſouls, our buſineſs ſhould be to tell of his goodneſs, for the ſtrength and comfort of our brethren.

16. And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and [o] lamps within the pitchers. 17. And he ſaid unto them, Look on me, and do likewiſe: and behold when I come to the outſide of the camp, it ſhall be *that* as I do, ſo ſhall ye do. 18. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets alſo on every ſide of all the camp, and ſay, [p] *The ſword* of the LORD, and of Gideon. 19. ¶ So Gideon, and the three hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outſide of the camp, [q] in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly ſet the watch, and they blew the trumpets, and [r] brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands. 20. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, The ſword of the LORD, and of Gideon. 21. And [s] they ſtood every man in his place, round about the camp: and [t] all the hoſt ran, and cried, and fled. 22. And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and [u] the LORD ſet every man's ſword againſt his fellow, even throughout all the hoſt: and the hoſt fled to Beth-ſhittah in Zererath, *and* to the border of Abel-meholah and Tabbath.

[o] 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7.
[p] 1 Sam. xvii. 47. 2 Chron. xx. 15.
[q] Exod. xiv. 24. Rev. xvi. 15.
[r] Pſal. ii. 9.
[s] Exod. xiv. 13. 2 Chron. xx. 17.
[t] 2 Kings vii. 7. Prov. xxviii. 1.
[u] 1 Sam. iv. 15. 2 Chron. xx. 23.

v. 16—22. We have here an account,

1. Of the manner in which he made the attack upon the Midianites. His little army is divided into three companies, each of an hundred men, armed not with ſword or bow, but with a trumpet in one hand, and lamps concealed in pitchers, in the other. A little paſt midnight they advanced, juſt as the watch was ſet, to give the ſpeedier alarm, and the order is to follow Gideon's example: when lo! in an inſtant, the trumpets are blown, the pitchers broken, the lights blazing on every ſide,

and they ſhout aloud, The ſword of the Lord and of Gideon. *Note*, (1.) By the trumpet of the everlaſting goſpel, and the light held forth from the earthen veſſels of faithful miniſters, the powers of Satan's kingdom are ſhaken. (2.) Though the work be of men, the excellency of power is of God; if Gideon has the honour to weild the ſword, it is God who tempers its edge, and directs its point. (3.) If theſe pitchers, trumpets, and ſhoutings, thus diſmayed the hoſts of Midian, how much greater terrors will overwhelm the ſleeping ſinner, when, ſtartled with the midnight cry, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, he ſhall, aſtoniſhed, behold the ſword of juſtice drawn, and ſtand unable to eſcape amidſt the flames of diſſolving elements, before the dread tribunal of an offended God.

2. The Midianites awake affrighted, apprehending, no doubt, the army of Iſrael in their camp, and ſeized with panic fears, they cry out and run they know not whither; but in their haſte to fly, counting every one they met a foe, each man's ſword is ſet againſt his fellow, and Gideon and his army have only to ſtand ſtill, and ſee the great ſalvation of God: the few who eſcape hurry on to a place of ſafety, as if the ſword of Gideon was at their heels. *Note*, (1.) The wicked fleeth when no man purſueth. (2.) In violent frights the exerciſe of reaſon is, for a time, ſuſpended, and men act in direct oppoſition to their own preſervation. (3.) God often ſets his people's enemies at variance, and puniſhes them by their own hands. (4.) Though now there is hope to eſcape from the ſword of the Lord, if we fly to Jeſus, our true city of refuge, yet if the preſent moment is loſt, in the next it may be too late.

23. And the men of Iſrael [x] gathered themſelves together out of Naphtali, and out of Aſher, and out of all Manaſſeh, and purſued after the Midianites. 24. ¶ And Gideon ſent meſſengers throughout all mount Ephraim, ſaying, Come down againſt the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themſelves together, and took the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan. 25. And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and [y] they ſlew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and and Zeeb they ſlew [z] at the wine-preſs of Zeeb, and purſued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other ſide Jordan.

[x] Chap. vi. 35.
[y] Iſa. x. 26.
[z] Rev. xiv. 19.

v. 23—25. The victory was quickly blazed; the men of Naphtali, Aſher, and Manaſſeh, haſten to the purſuit; probably the laſt body which was diſmiſſed, waited to ſee the event, at no great diſtance; and even the cowards, who departed for fear, now dare to purſue a flying enemy. Mean time Gideon diſpatches particular meſſengers to the Ephraimites, who were neareſt Jordan, to ſeize the fords, that no Midianites might eſcape; they inſtantly arm and obey him, and into their hands two chief commanders of the hoſts of Midian fell, Oreb and Zeeb, whom they ſlew, and brought their heads to Gideon, giving their names to the places where they were put to death, in remembrance of this glorious day. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould be always ready to lend God's people a helping hand. (2.) 'Tis in vain to fly from the decree of God. (3.) We ſhould ſet up always our grateful memorial, whenever we receive mercies from God, for the confirmation of our faith in future exigences, and to awaken continual returns of thankfulneſs for paſt favours.

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter Gideon, (1.) *Pacifieth the Ephraimites*, ver. 1, 2, 3. (2.) *Purſues the Midianites*, ver. 4, 10, 11, 12. (3.) *Chaſtiſeth the men of Succoth and Penuel*, ver. 5—17. (4.) *Slays the two kings of Midian*, ver. 18—21. (5.) *He declines the government of Iſrael*, ver. 22, 23. (6.) *Sets up an ephod in his own city, which proves a great ſnare*, ver. 24—27. (7.) *Keeps the country quiet forty years*, ver. 28—32. (8.) *And dies in honour*, ver. 32. (9.) *Both he and his God are ſoon forgot*, ver. 33—35.

1. AND the men of Ephraim ſaid unto him, † Why haſt thou ſerved us thus, that thou calledſt us not when thou wenteſt to fight with the Midianites? and they did chide with him ‡ ſharply. 2. And he ſaid unto them, [a] What have I done now in compariſon of you? *Is* not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? 3. [b] God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in compariſon of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had ſaid that.

† Heb. What thing is this that thou haſt done unto us.
‡ Heb. Strongly.
[a] Prov. xv. 1. Phil. ii. 3.
[b] 2 Chron. xx. 17. Pſal. xliv. 3. & cxv. 1.

v. 1—3. Inſtead of congratulating Gideon, as might be expected, on his courage and conduct, the Ephraimites, envious of his ſucceſs, ſeek to quarrel with him.

1. They pretend it was an high affront that they were not called to the battle againſt Midian; as if their courage was ſuſpected, or as though Gideon meant to exalt his own tribe, Manaſſeh, by carrying away alone the honour of the victory. *Note*, (1.) Only from pride cometh contention. (2.) In the eye of the envious man every exaltation of his neighbour is conſtrued an injury done himſelf. (3.) When the danger is paſt every coward vaunts his valour.

2. Gideon, by an anſwer ſuited to their preſent temper, ſeeks to ſooth their exaſperated ſpirits. He doth not reproach them with the unreaſonableneſs of their charge, or return chiding with chiding, but magnifies their performance, as if they had done more in the purſuit, *in their gleanings*, than he in the battle, *the vintage of Abiezer*; and deſires to give them particularly the honour of having ſlain the generals, and much exceeded him and his little company in their exploits. *Note*, (1.) True humility will always lead a man to think and ſpeak lowly of his own doings, and to put the honour from himſelf upon his neighbour. (2.) The only way to pacify wrath is by yielding. (3.) All a man's gifts, graces, and attainments appear with double luſtre, when above all he is cloathed with humility.

3. The effect is anſwerable to his wiſhes. The anger of the Ephraimites abated. *Note*, (1.) We muſt let a man cool before we can hope to convince him of his error. (2.) We muſt not count it ſtrange, if thoſe who are moſt obliged to us, take occaſion from our very ſervices to find fault with us.

4. ¶ And Gideon came to Jordan, *and* paſſed over, he, and the three hundred men that *were* with him, [c] faint, yet purſuing *them*. 5. And he ſaid unto the men of Succoth, [d] Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me, for they *be* faint, and I am purſuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian. 6. ¶ And the princes of Succoth ſaid, [e] *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that [f] we ſhould give bread unto thine army? 7. And Gideon ſaid, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear your fleſh with the thorns of the wilderneſs, and with briers. 8. And he went up thence to Penuel, and ſpake unto them likewiſe: and the men of Penuel anſwered him as the men of Succoth had anſwered *him*. 9. And he ſpake alſo unto the men of Penuel, ſaying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower. 10. ¶ Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* in Karkor, and their hoſts with them, about fifteen thouſand *men*, all that were left of all the hoſts of the children of the eaſt: for there fell an hundred and twenty thouſand men that drew ſword. 11. ¶ And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents, on the eaſt of Nobah and Jogbehah, and ſmote the hoſt: for [g] the hoſt was ſecure. 12. And when Zebah and Zalmunna [h] fled, he purſued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and diſcomfitted all the hoſt. 13. ¶ And Gideon the ſon of Joaſh returned from battle before the ſun *was up*, 14. And caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and inquired of him, and he deſcribed unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, *even* threeſcore and ſeventeen men. 15. And he came unto the men of Succoth, and ſaid, Behold, Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me; ſaying, *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we ſhould give bread unto thy men *that are* weary? 16. And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderneſs, and briers, and with them he † taught the men of Succoth. 17. And he beat down the tower of Penuel, and ſlew the men of the city.

[c] 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. Pſal. xxxvii. 24.
[d] Deut. xxiii. 4. 2 Sam. xvii. 28.
[e] 1 Kings xx. 11. 2 Kings xiv. 9. Ezra iv. 4.
[f] Chap. v. 23. 1 Sam. xxv. 10. Phil. ii. 21. Prov. xviii. 23.
[g] Chap. xviii. 27. 1 Sam. xv. 32. 1 Theſ. v. 3.
[h] Amos ii. 14. Rev. vi. 15, 16.
† Heb. He made to know. Prov. x. 13.

v. 4—17. Though the battle is won, and a vaſt ſlaughter already made of one hundred and twenty thouſand men of war, yet the ſword of Gideon cannot reſt whilſt Zeba and Zalmunna, with fifteen thouſand men, are ſtill alive in Karkor. We have therefore,

1. His hot purſuit of them. With his three hundred men, not one of whom were miſſing, he paſſes Jordan; and ſince God had ſo eminently holpen him, ſeeks no other aſſiſtance: though faint with watching, want of food, and fatigue, he ſlacks not his pace, nor is diſcouraged with the refuſal of refreſhment he met at Succoth or Penuel, but continues his march, and having taken a compaſs out of the ſtrait road, he ſurpriſed the fugitive Midianites, who thought themſelves ſecure, and gone beyond the poſſibility of being overtaken. As before, they ſeek their ſafety in flight, and whilſt moſt of them are ſlain, their two kings remain priſoners with the conquerors. *Note*, (1.) Though

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in our ſpiritual warfare our fleſh and heart often ſeem ready to fail, we muſt be ſtill looking up for ſtrength, and purſue. (2.) Thoſe from whom we might expect the moſt cordial aſſiſtance, often, like the men of Succoth and Penuel, ſeek to weaken our hands and diſcourage our hearts. (3.) Patient perſeverance will infallibly be crowned with ſucceſs.

2. His heavy chaſtiſement of his unnatural countrymen, according to his threatning, when they refuſed to aſſiſt him with proviſions in the purſuit; his requeſt was ſmall, he aſked only a few loaves of bread, his neceſſities urgent, and his deſerts at the hand of every Iſraelite ſuch as entitled him to their beſt entertainment; but they, whether afraid of the reſentment of the Midianites, or led from the ſmallneſs of Gideon's forces, to treat his attempt as raſh and deſperate not only ſhut up their bowels of compaſſion from him, as a brother, but ridiculed his vain purſuit, as they conceived it, caſting contempt on his faith in God. Juſtly incenſed at ſuch treatment, where not himſelf was more injured than God diſhonoured; he had threatened to viſit them, and though he could not then interrupt his march to chaſtiſe their inſolence, now that he is returned he will do it more deliberately and ſeverely. Accordingly, having got intelligence of the chief men, by whoſe inſtigation he had been ſo uſed, he ſeizes their cities and perſons: after upbraiding them with their baſeneſs, and ſhewing them the captive kings in chains, as he had threatned he ſcourged thoſe of Succoth with thorns and briers, that by this correction they might know their folly and their ſin, whilſt the men of Penuel are put to the ſword, and their fortreſs demoliſhed. *Note*, (1.) They who ſin will ſmart for it, either now under the rod of correction, or eternally under the wrath of God. (2.) It is no new thing to have the world ridicule the purſuits of God's people; but they who counted their lives madneſs, will ſhortly ſee the folly was in themſelves. (3.) In the ſevereſt chaſtiſements God means not our deſtruction, but correction: happy they who acknowledge God's hand, and correſpond with the deſigns of his grace.

18. ¶ Then ſaid he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What
manner of men *were they* whom ye ſlew at Tabor? And
they anſwered, [l] As thou *art*, ſo *were* they, each one †
reſembled the children of a king. 19. And he ſaid, They
were my brethren, *even* the ſons of my mother: *as* the
LORD liveth, if ye had ſaved them alive, I would not
ſlay you. 20. And he ſaid unto Jether his firſt-born,
Up, *and* ſlay them: but the youth drew not his ſword:
for he feared, becauſe he *was* yet a youth. 21. Then
Zeba and Zalmunna ſaid, Riſe thou and fall upon us:
for as the man *is*, *ſo is* his ſtrength. And Gideon [k] aroſe,
and ſlew Zeba and Zalmunna, and took away the ‡ ornaments
that *were* on their camel's necks.

[l] Pſal. xii. 2.
† Heb. According to the former.
[k] Pſ. lxxxiii. 11. & cxlix. 9.
‡ Or, ornaments like the moon.

v. 18—21. After judgment paſſed on his falſe brethren, he proceeds to the condemnation of his avowed enemies the princes of Midian.

1. He tries and convicts them on their own confeſſion; little did they think, in their inroads and ravages, that ever inquiſition would be made for the blood that was ſhed; but God often ſtrangely brings the murderer to juſtice. Gideon, as the avenger of his brethren's blood, who had been ſlain by theſe princes, charges them with the fact; they own it, and this occaſions their death, for though he would otherwiſe have ſpared them as captives, juſtice forbids they ſhould live, as murderers. *Note*, The day is coming when every ſecret thing will be brought to light, and ſuch conviction flaſh on the offenders, that they ſhall no longer be able to conceal their guilt.

2. The ſentence being paſſed, execution is ordered, and Gideon bids his eldeſt ſon, as the avenger of blood, draw his ſword, and ſlay theſe kings; but the youth is afraid, as unuſed to ſuch bloody work. Zeba and Zalmunna fearing ſo timid an executioner would prolong their ſufferings, beg Gideon himſelf, if it muſt be ſo, to diſpatch them inſtantly. Which done, he ſpoils their camels of their ornaments, either chains of gold about their neck, or round tires like the moon, ſee *Iſa.* iii. 18. worn in honour of the goddeſs Aſtarte. *Note*, (1.) Courage doth not always run in a family. (2.) We muſt ever ſuit the burden to the back. (3.) They who fight God's battles ſhall be enriched thereby, and reap the fruits of their victories in glory.

22. ¶ Then the men of Iſrael ſaid unto Gideon, Rule
thou over us, both thou and thy ſon, and thy ſon's ſon
alſo: for thou haſt delivered us from the hand of Midian.
23. And Gideon ſaid unto them, [l] I will not rule over
you, neither ſhall my ſon rule over you: [m] the LORD
ſhall rule over you. 24. And Gideon ſaid unto them, I
would deſire a requeſt of you, that you would [n] give me
every man the ear-rings of his prey: (for they had
golden ear-rings, becauſe they *were* Iſhmaelites.) 25.
And they anſwered, We will willingly give *them*. And
they ſpread a garment, and did caſt therein, every man
the ear-rings of his prey. 26. And the weight of the
golden ear-rings that he requeſted, was a thouſand and
ſeven hundred *ſhekels* of gold, beſides ornaments and collars,
and purple raiment that *was* on the kings of Midian,
and beſide the chains that *were* about their camels necks.
27. And [o] Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in
his city, *even* in Ophrah: and all Iſrael went thither a
whoring after it: which thing became a ſnare unto Gideon,
and to his houſe. 28. ¶ Thus was Midian ſubdued
before the children of Iſrael, ſo that they lifted up
their heads no more: and the country was in quietneſs
forty years in the days of Gideon.

[l] 1 Pet. v. 3.
[m] 1 Sam. viii. 7. & x. 19. & xii. 12.
[n] Exod. xxxii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.
[o] Iſa. viii. 20. Rom. x. 2.
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v. 22—28. Though he met with ſo ill a reception from the men of Penuel and Succoth, he met with a more honourable one from the reſt of Iſrael.

1. They offer him the government, and to make it hereditary in his family. So affected were they with the greatneſs of their deliverance, that they thought no returns adequate to the deſerts of their captain. *Note*, They who have ſeen the Lord Jeſus appearing for their ſalvation, cannot but with hearty choice ſay unto him, Come and reign over us.

2. Gideon modeſtly and piouſly declines the propoſal: tho' he would ſerve them as a judge, he will not rule over them as a king; this would be to change the eſtabliſhed government, which was a theocracy, and therefore neither his ſons, any more than himſelf, may aſſume ſuch authority. *Note*, The ambition of exalting a family is a great ſnare; but a true patriot, who means not himſelf, but the public, will decline rather than ſeek thoſe honours, ſatisfied with the conſciouſneſs of his own integrity, and deſiring not to rule but to ſerve his country.

3. Though he declined their offer, he hath a requeſt to make to them. He aſked the golden ear-rings of their ſpoil, to which he added what fell to his own ſhare, of jewels and fine garments, and with theſe he made an ephod, either deſigned for a memorial of his victory to be preſerved in Ophrah, or, conceiving that as God had ordered him to build an altar, and accepted his ſacrifice, he might continue to miniſter before him, and aſk advice and direction from God, though not of the order of Aaron; and perhaps, as Shiloh lay in the tribe of Ephraim, who had diſobliged him, he the rather fell on this method to prevent his going up to the altar of the Lord there. But however honeſtly it was meant, it proved a dangerous ſnare, leading Gideon, and his own houſe, into a breach of God's commands, and proving a temptation to Iſrael, always too prone to idolatry. *Note*, (1.) In God's worſhip we muſt carefully adhere to God's word, avoiding all ſuperſtition. (2.) What may be indifferent or innocent to one man, may, to a weaker brother, be a dangerous ſnare. (3.) From ſmall beginnings aroſe all the preſent horrid idolatry of the church of Rome.

4. After Gideon's victory the land had again reſt for forty years, during which time he judged them, and kept them, it is to be hoped, in the ways and ſervice of God. *Note*, It is a great mercy to any people, to have the lives of faithful miniſters long ſpared among them.

29. ¶ And Jerubbaal the ſon of Joaſh [p] went and
dwelt in his own houſe. 30. And Gideon had threeſcore
and ten ſons † of his body begotten: for he had many
wives. 31. And his concubine that *was* in Shechem,
ſhe alſo bare him a ſon, whoſe name he called Abimelech.
32. ¶ And [q] Gideon the ſon of Joaſh died in a good old
age, and was buried in the ſepulchre of Joaſh his father,
in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites. 33. And it came to paſs
[r] as ſoon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Iſrael
turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made
Baal-berith their god. 34. And [s] the children of Iſrael
remembred not the LORD their God, who had delivered
them out of the hand of all their enemies on every ſide:
35. [t] Neither ſhewed they kindneſs to the houſe of Jerubbaal,
namely Gideon, according to all the goodneſs
which he had ſhewed unto Iſrael.

[p] Neh. v. 14, 15.
† Heb. Going out of his thigh. Chap. ix. 5.
[q] Gen. xviii. 15. Job v. 26.
[r] Joſh. xxiv. 31. 2 Kings xii. 2.
[s] Pſ. lxxviii. 11. & cvi. 13, 21.
[t] Chap. ix. 16, 17. Ecclus ix. 14, 15.

v. 29—35. We have here,

1. The hiſtory of the remainder of Gideon's life and death. He lived in peace in his own city, had many wives, as was too common in thoſe days, and by them had a numerous family, no leſs than ſeventy ſons, beſides one by a concubine, which proved the ruin of his father's houſe. At laſt old age crept ſilently upon him; and death put a period to his life of uſefulneſs, and carried him to receive that crown in heaven, which on earth he had piouſly refuſed.

2. Iſrael's backſliding. No ſooner is Gideon dead than their idolatrous affections appear, and they go a whoring after new gods; and ungrateful to man, as apoſtates from the Lord, the

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family of their late deliverer is utterly neglected. *Note*, (1.) We need not wonder they are ungrateful to us, who ſhew themſelves deſtitute of all gratitude to God. (2.) They who are kept from evil, not by their own choice, but by the reſtraint of others, will, like the ſlackened bow, ſtart aſide the moment the ſtring is looſed.

CHAP. IX.

The apoſtaſy of Iſrael after the death of Gideon is puniſhed by inteſtine broils, occaſioned by Abimelech's cruelty, 1. *He, by ſubtilty, uſurps the government of Shechem, and murders all his brethren but one,* ver. 1—6. 2. *His doom is read in a parable by Jotham,* ver. 7—21. 3. *What ſtrifes there were between Abimelech and the Shechemites,* ver. 22—41. 4. *How this ended in the ruin of the Shechemites,* ver. 42—49. *And of Abimelech himſelf,* ver. 50—57. *Thus, as was once ſaid of a tyrant, he came in like a fox, ruled like a lion, and died like a dog.* For the tranſgreſſion of a land, *ſuch* are the princes thereof.

1. AND Abimelech the ſon of Jerubbaal went to Shechem, unto [a] his mother's brethren, and [b] communed with them, and with all the family of the houſe of his mother's father, ſaying, 2. Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, † Whether *is* better for you, either that all the ſons of Jerubbaal (*which are* threeſcore and ten perſons) reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember alſo that I *am* your bone and your fleſh. 3. And [c] his mother's brethren ſpake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all theſe words: and their hearts inclined ‡ to follow Abimelech; for they ſaid, He *is* our brother. 4. And they gave him threeſcore and ten *pieces* of ſilver, out of the houſe of Baal-berith: wherewith Abimelech hired [d] vain and light perſons which followed him. 5. And he went unto his father's houſe at Ophrah, and [e] ſlew his brethren the ſons of Jerubbaal, *being* threeſcore and ten perſons, upon one ſtone: notwithſtanding, yet Jotham the youngeſt ſon of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himſelf. 6. And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the houſe of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, by the ‖ plain of the pillar that *was* in Shechem.

[a] Chap. viii. 31.
[b] 1 Kings xii. 28. Jer. xviii. 18. Pſal. lxxxiii. 3.
† Heb. What is good? whether, &c.
[c] Pſal. x. 3.
‡ Heb. After.
[d] 2 Chron. xiii. 7. Job xxx. 8.
[e] 2 Kings x. 7. & xi. 1.
‖ Or, Oak of the pillar. Joſh. xxiv. 26.

v. 1—6. Abimelech, (ſo called probably by his mother, out of vanity, *my father, a king)* reſolves, if poſſible, to ſecure that crown Gideon had refuſed, and though neither called of God, nor choſen of men, by art and inſinuation he thruſts himſelf into the throne.

1. He makes application ſecretly to his mother's friends in Shechem, and they, at his inſtigation, engaged in his intereſt the leading men of the city. The plea he uſed to ſupport his ſollicitation was a lying inſinuation of his brethren, as if they intended to lord it over the land, and their number would make the burden of ſuch a government inſupportable: though it never appears they had the leaſt intention of doing ſo, as it was expreſsly contrary to their father's ſolemn declarations. *Note*, (1.) They who have a wicked purpoſe to ſerve, ſtick not at a lie to accompliſh it. (2.) They who are conſcious of their own bad deſigns, are ready to ſuſpect each other of the ſame ill intentions.

2. His application was as ſucceſsful as he could wiſh. The men of Shechem were very well pleaſed to have one of their brethren a king and their city a metropolis, expecting, no doubt, their advantage therein; and therefore, to ſupport him in his deſign, they ſupply him with money out of the common treaſury, which was in the temple of their idol Baal-berith, or it may be from the hallowed things they had dedicated to him, imagining there muſt needs be ſucceſs from ſuch a ſupport: with this he raiſes a band of men, profligate as himſelf, to perpetrate the crimes he meditated. *Note*, (1.) Self is at the bottom of every worldly man's policy. (2.) They who help the wicked often prepare a rod for themſelves.

3. It is often the caſe, that where there is a rage to reign, men muſt wade to a crown through blood. Preſuming his father's ſons would juſtly object to his advancement, he reſolves firſt to diſpatch them, and all but one are ſlain together on one ſtone, by himſelf and his wicked aſſociates. *Note*, Ambition never heſitates; neither conſcience nor natural affection, fear of God or love of men, can bind thoſe who are under its baleful influence.

4. Far from deteſtation of ſo inhuman a deed, the men of Shechem in counſel aſſembled at Millo, the council-hall, or with a family of diſtinction who bore this title, and without conſent of their brethren, or conſulting them upon it, elect Abimelech their king. From ſuch a proceeding no good can be expected to enſue.

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7. ¶ And when they told *it* to Jotham, he went and ſtood in the top of mount Gerizzim, and lift up his voice, and cried, and ſaid unto them, Hearken unto me, you men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. 8. [f] The trees went forth *on a time* to anoint a king over them, and they ſaid unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us. 9. But the olive-tree ſaid unto them, Should I leave my fatneſs, [g] wherewith by me they honour God and man, and † go to be promoted over the trees? 10. And the trees ſaid to the fig-tree, Come thou, *and* reign over us. 11. But the fig-tree ſaid unto them, [h] Should I forſake my ſweetneſs, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? 12. Then ſaid the trees unto the vine, Come thou, *and* reign over us. 13. And the vine ſaid unto them, Should I leave my wine, [i] which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? 14. Then ſaid all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, *and* reign over us. 15. And the bramble ſaid unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, *then* come *and* put your truſt in my ſhadow: and if not, [k] let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon. 16. Now therefore, if ye have done truly and ſincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his houſe, and have done unto him according to the deſerving of his hands: 17. (For my father fought for you, and ‡ adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian: 18. And ye are riſen up againſt my father's houſe this day, and have ſlain his ſons, threeſcore and ten perſons, upon one ſtone, and have made Abimelech the ſon of his maid-ſervant, king over the men of Shechem, becauſe he *is* your brother.) 19. If ye then have dealt truly and ſincerely with Jerubbaal, and with his houſe this day, *then* rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him alſo rejoice in you: 20. But if not, [l] let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the houſe of Millo: and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the houſe of Millo, and devour Abimelech. 21. And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

[f] 2 Kings xiv. 9.
[g] Pſal. civ. 15.
† Heb. Go up and down for other trees.
[h] Deut xxxii. 15.
[i] Pſal. civ. 15.
[k] Exod. xv. 9. Ver. 49. Dan. iii. 15.
‡ Heb. Caſt his ſoul from over againſt you. Eſth. iv. 16. Rev. xii. 11.
[l] Ver. 15. Pſal. xxviii. 4.

v. 7—21. Jotham alone, of all the ſons of Gideon, eſcaped; and on a day when the men of Shechem were aſſembled, perhaps the very day Abimelech is elected, in the plain, from the top of mount Gerizim, whence he could be heard, and yet eſcape if they attempted to ſeize him, he gives the Shechemites a reproof for their baſeneſs, and a warning of the conſequences of their folly, and this he couches under an elegant fable, the contrivance of which is as beautiful as the application was apposite.

1. The fable itſelf. The trees are repreſented as chuſing a king; the olive, vine, and fig-tree, to whom the ſovereignty is offered, decline the honour, whilſt the wretched bramble graſps at the dominion, vaunts the protection he would give them, and threatens to fire the cedars that ſhould dare refuſe allegiance and ſubmiſſion. In the one we ſee the modeſty of Gideon's ſons, in the other the vanity of Abimelech, and the ſcourge they might expect from this fiery bramble. *Note*, (1.) The high office which the proud man covets, the humble and wiſe decline, knowing its weight. (2.) They who are elected to public ſervice, muſt forego all private advantages, as the trees in this fable intimate. (3.) None ſo inſolent and overbearing, as a low perſon raiſed above his ſtation.

2. He makes a pathetic application to the people; reminds them of the ſervices of his father, reproaches them for their ingratitude to their benefactor's family, appeals to their conſciences for the baſeneſs of their proceedings, and to the iſſue of them for a proof of their wickedneſs, imprecating upon them the judgments they deſerved, and therein prophetically warning them of the mutual miſeries and contentions which would enſue from their preſent choice. *Note*, (1.) Ungrateful man is ſadly apt to forget his generous benefactors. (2.) When we ſee men rejoice in proſperous wickedneſs, mark their end, and we ſhall uſually be convinced, here below, that there is a God that judgeth the earth.

3. Jotham flies hereupon from the reſentment of Abimelech, and finds a ſafe retreat at Beer; where if he hath not Abimelech's greatneſs, he hath better, a good conſcience, and his low eſtate is his ſecurity.

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22. ¶ When Abimelech had reigned three years over Iſrael, 23. Then [m] God ſent an evil ſpirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem: and [n] the men of Shechem dealt treacherouſly with Abimelech: 24. [o] That the

[m] 1 Kings xii. 15. & xxii. 21. 2 Theſ. ii. 11.
[n] Iſa. xxxiii. 1. Mat. vii. 2.
[o] 1 Sam. xv. 33. Eſth. ix. 25. Mat. xxiii. 35.

the cruelty *done* to the threeſcore and ten ſons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother which ſlew them, and upon the men of Shechem which aided him in the killing of his brethren. 25. And the men of Shechem ſet liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech. 26. And Gaal the ſon of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem: and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. 27. And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode *the grapes*, and [p] made merry, and went into the houſe of their god, and did eat and drink, and curſed Abimelech. 28. And Gaal the ſon of Ebed ſaid, [q] Who *is* Abimelech, and who *is* Shechem, that we ſhould ſerve him? *is* not *he* the ſon of Jerubbaal, and Zebul his officer? ſerve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem? for why ſhould we ſerve him? 29. And [r] would to God this people were under my hand; [s] then would I remove Abimelech. And he ſaid to Abimelech, Increaſe thine army, and come out.

[p] Iſa. xvi. 9. Amos vi. 13.
[q] 1 Sam. xxv. 10. 1 Kings xii. 16.
[r] Deut. v. 29. 2 Sam. xv. 4.
[s] 1 Kings xx. 11. Rom. i. 30.

v. 22—29. For a time the wickedneſs of Abimelech ſeemed to proſper, and three years he enjoyed in peace his ill-gotten dignity; but the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, like ſunſhine before the thunder ſtorm. For,

1. There was a ſpirit of diſſention ſown between him and the Shechemites; God, in juſt judgment for the blood which was ſhed, viſiting their ſins upon them by the hands one of another. They who ſet up Abimelech, now tired of his government, conſpire to ſlay him; ſo tottering is that throne that hath been eſtabliſhed by cruelty and blood-ſhed. *Note*, (1.) They who have acted a perfidious part once, are ſeldom ever again to be truſted. (2.) Blood will cry for vengeance. (3.) Conſpiracies in iniquity have uſually but feeble bands. (4.) They who promiſe themſelves comfort in ill-gotten rule will be deceived, and find the crown they wear to be lined with thorns.

2. Gaal the ſon of Ebed, who ſeems to have been a Canaanite, hearing of the diſcontent of the men of Shechem, comes in hopes to turn it to his own uſe, and fiſh for himſelf in theſe troubled waters; they entertain him gladly, and he ſeeks to foment the diſſention, and to inflame the minds of the people more againſt their king. At their entertainments, inflamed with wine and feaſting, he boldly broaches the treaſon, ſpeaks contemptuouſly of Abimelech, his family, and his officers, vaunting his own courage if they would make him their captain, and challenging Abimelech to aſſert his title, intimating that it were more eligible to ſerve a Canaanitiſh king than ſuch a one. *Note*, (1.) An artful leader, with an inflamed populace, can do a world of miſchief. (2.) When men are intoxicated with wine, then they are fit for murders, treaſon, and every evil work. (3.) To ſpeak evil of dignities is highly criminal. (4.) They who are moſt valiant over a bottle, prove often cowards when the ſword muſt decide.

30. ¶ And when Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the ſon of Ebed, his anger was † kindled. 31. And he ſent meſſengers unto Abimelech ‡ privily, ſaying, Behold, Gaal the ſon of Ebed, and his brethren, be come to Shechem; and behold, they fortify the city againſt thee. 32. Now therefore up by night, thou and the people that *is* with thee, and lie in wait in the field. 33. And it ſhall be, *that* in the morning as ſoon as the ſun is up, thou ſhalt riſe early, and ſet upon the city: and behold, *when* he and the people that *is* with him come out againſt thee, then mayſt thou do to them ‖ as thou ſhalt find occaſion. 34. ¶ And Abimelech roſe up, and all the people that *were* with him, by night, and they laid wait againſt Shechem in four § companies. 35. And Gaal the ſon of Ebed went out, and ſtood in the entring of the gate of the city: and Abimelech roſe up, and the people that *were* with him from lying in wait. 36. And when Gaal ſaw the people, he ſaid to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul ſaid unto him, Thou ſeeſt the ſhadow of the mountains, as *if they were* men. 37. And Gaal ſpake again, and ſaid, See, there come people down by the † middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of ‡ Meonenim. 38. Then ſaid Zebul unto him, Where *is* now thy mouth, wherewith thou ſaidſt, Who *is* Abimelech, that we ſhould ſerve him? *is* not this the people that thou haſt deſpiſed? go out, I pray now, and fight with them. 39. And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. 40. And Abimelech chaſed him, and he fled before him, and many were overthrown, *and* wounded, *even* unto the entring of the gate. 41. And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and Zebul thruſt out Gaal and his brethren, that they ſhould not dwell in Shechem. 42. And it came to paſs on the morrow, that the people went out into the field, and they told Abimelech. 43. And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and behold, the people *were* come forth out of the city, and he roſe up againſt them and ſmote them. 44. And Abimelech, and the ‖ company that *was* with him, ruſhed forward, and ſtood in the entring of the gate of the city: and the two *other* companies ran upon all *the people* that *were* in the fields, and ſlew them. 45. And Abimelech fought againſt the city all that day, and he took the city, and ſlew the people that *was* therein, and beat down the city, and [t] ſowed it with ſalt. 46. ¶ And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard *that*, they entred into an hold of the houſe of the god Berith. 47. And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48. And Abimelech gat him up to mount Zalmon, he and all that people that *were* with him; and Abimelech took an ax in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid *it* on his ſhoulder, and ſaid unto the people that *were* with him, What ye have ſeen § me do, make haſte *and* do as I *have done*. 49. And all the people likewiſe cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put *them* to the hold, and ſet the hold on fire upon them; ſo that all the men of [u] the tower of Shechem died alſo, about a thouſand men and women.

† Heb. Hot.
‡ Heb. With craft.
‖ Heb. As thine hand ſhall find. 1 Sam. x. 7. & xxv. 8. Eccluſ ix. 10.
§ Heb. Heads.
† Heb. Navel.
‡ Or, Star-gazers, or ſoothſayers.
‖ Heb. Heads.
[t] Pſ. cvii. 34. Jer. xvii. 6. Zeph. ii. 9.
§ Heb. I have done.
[u] Ver. 46. Pſ. cxv. 8.

v. 30—49. Such proceedings were too public to be concealed, and too dangerous to be neglected.

1. Zebul, Abimelech's governor of Shechem, having got intelligence of their meetings, and incenſed at their contemptuous treatment of himſelf, informs his maſter, adviſes him to come thither without delay, and ſurpriſe the conſpirators before they were ready to oppoſe him. *Note*, (1.) Much miſchief is prevented by nipping evil deſigns in the bud. (2.) The imprudence and improvidence of rebellious ſpirits is often as great as their wickedneſs; it blaſts their deſigns, and ſinks the projectors of them in ruin.

2. Zebul, by pretending friendſhip to Gaal, betrays him. Abimelech having, according to Zebul's advice, marched all night, in the morning appears with his forces deſcending from the mountain: Gaal, from the gate, deſcrying the hoſt, Zebul, either to lull him into ſecurity, or ridicule his fears, ſuggeſts that what he ſaw was only the ſhadow of the mountains, until a nearer approach removed the poſſibility of deception, when he throws off the maſk, and inſults him for his former bravado. *Note*, (1.) An inſolent tongue is often put to ſhame by his own vaunting. (2.) They who are rebels themſelves, muſt not expect fidelity from their aſſociates.

3. Gaal now could not refuſe to go out, but he is quickly routed in the field, and Zebul having recovered the ſuperiority in the city, he and his abettors are that night expelled. Thus may every traiterous deſign be blaſted!

4. Abimelech at that time puſhed his victory no farther, and the men of Shechem having expelled the traitor, promiſed themſelves now that his anger was appeaſed, and conclude they may ſecurely gather their harveſt; but treaſon is not ſo lightly paſt over, nor is the wrath of a king, and ſuch a king, ſo ready to ſubſide. Therefore, underſtanding their ſecurity, he marches from Arumah, dividing his forces into three companies, with two he falls on the people in the fields, with the other he ſeized the city; after he had got poſſeſſion of it havock was indeed dreadful, for he utterly deſtroyed the city, and ſowed it with ſalt, in vengeance for their rebellion. *Note*, The wickedneſs of the wicked returns upon their own head: rebellion uſually ends in the ruin of the traitors.

5. To compleat the deſtruction of the remainder of the Shechemites, Abimelech beſieges the men of the tower of Shechem (a place at no great diſtance probably from the city, perhaps the houſe of Millo) who had fortified themſelves in the temple of the God Baal-berith, either truſting to the ſtrength of the ſituation, or to Abimelech's veneration for that place whence he firſt roſe to the kingdom; but their refuge, like that of other ſinners, proves a refuge of lies unto them. Though he could not carry the place by aſſault, policy prevails more than the ſword; at his command his men follow his example, and ſurrounding it with fuel, they ſet the place on fire, and men, women and children, to the number of about a thouſand, all periſh in the flames. *Note*, (1.) Civil wars are moſt inhuman, the innocent and the guilty there fall often together. (2.) Vain

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is every covering to hide from the wrath of God, when his fire ſhall be ſtirred up round about the ſinner, it will burn, and none can quench it.

50. ¶ Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped againſt Thebez, and took it. 51. But there was a ſtrong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and ſhut *it* to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower. 52. And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought againſt it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53. And [x] a certain woman caſt a piece of a milſtone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his ſkull. 54. Then he called haſtily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and ſaid unto him, [y] Draw thy ſword and ſlay me, that [z] men ſay not of me, A woman ſlew him. And his young man thruſt him through, and he died. 55. And when the men of Iſrael ſaw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place. 56. ¶ [a] Thus God rendred the wickedneſs of Abimelech which he did unto his father, in [b] ſlaying his ſeventy brethren. 57. And all the evil of the men of Shechem, did God render upon their heads: and upon them came the curſe of Jotham the ſon of Jerubbaal.

[x] Job xxxi. 3. Jer. l. 45. 1 Cor. i. 27.
[y] 1 Sam. xxxi. 45.
[z] 2 Sam. xi. 21.
[a] Ver. 24. Pſ. xi. 6. Prov. v. 22. Rev. ix. 20, 21.
[b] Acts xxviii. 4.

v. 50—57. Abimelech had not yet glutted his revenge, and no ſooner ſucceeds in the deſtruction of Shechem, than he determines to wreak his vengeance on the men of Thebez, who ſeem to have been confederates with the Shechemites. He ſucceeds in his attack upon the city, and promiſes as eaſily to carry the caſtle, to which the men of the city fled, by fire as before; but as he is eagerly preſſing to the door to burn it, God, who had in judgment permitted him hitherto, ſtops his career; a ſtone thrown by a woman from the walls, breaks that guilty head which wore the bloody crown. Vexed at the thought of ſuch an ignominious death from a woman's hand, the pride that led him to murder others, urges him when dying to ſelf-murder, to cover his ſhame, leaſt they ſhould ſay a woman ſlew him; his armour-bearer therefore diſpatches him, and hereupon his army immediately diſperſed. Thus God's juſtice viſited Abimelech's bloody deeds, and the wickedneſs of his aſſiſtants in Shechem, bringing upon them the curſe of Jotham, the ſon of Jerubbaal. *Note,* (1.) They who thirſt for blood, God will at laſt give them their own blood to drink. (2.) When the rod of God's indignation hath done his work it is eaſily burnt. (3.) The weak in God's hand can confound the mighty, and thoſe who walk in pride God is able to abaſe. (4.) They who in life conſulted nothing but their pride and ambition, will uſually die as they live, more ſollicitous that their honour ſhould be preſerved on earth, than their ſouls be ſaved from hell. (5.) The methods proud men take to ſecure a great name, only ſerve to perpetuate their infamy. (6.) Though the wicked flouriſh for a ſeaſon like a green bay-tree, yet their end is near, and their deſtruction determined.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter, 1. *Iſrael enjoys peace under the government of Tola and Jair,* ver. 1—5. 2. *They are oppreſſed for ſin,* ver. 6—9. 3. *They repent and find mercy,* ver. 10—16. 4. *They prepare for war,* ver. 17, 18.

1. AND after Abimelech, there [a] aroſe to defend Iſrael, Tolah the ſon of Puah, the ſon of Dodo, a man of Iſſachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim. 2. And he judged Iſrael twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir. 3. ¶ And after him aroſe Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Iſrael twenty and two years. 4. And he had thirty ſons [b] that rode on thirty aſs colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead. 5. And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

[a] Judg. iii. 9. Heb. v. 4.
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[b] Chap. v. 10. & xii. 14.

v. 1—5. One tumultuous reign we have had, which needed two peaceable ones to repair its deſolations.

1. Tola, of the tribe of Iſſachar, ſucceeded Abimelech, not an uſurping king, but raiſed up of God to be a righteous judge, to reform their abuſes, decide their controverſies, heal their inteſtine diviſions, and protect them from foreign invaſions. For the greater convenience of adminiſtering juſtice, he reſided in mount Ephraim, and judged Iſrael twenty-three years. *Note,* Though a warlike king looks greater in the annals of hiſtory, a peaceable and mild government is more for the proſperity and comfort of every nation.

2. Jair, of the half tribe of Manaſſeh, beyond Jordan, followed; for God divided now the honour, ſometimes calling men of one tribe, ſometimes of another, to the office of judge and captain. During his adminiſtration the peace of Iſrael was maintained; his thirty ſons, a numerous family, as his aſſiſtants, for the people's convenience, rode their circuits to adminiſter juſtice; each of them poſſeſſed of a noble patrimony, having a lordſhip to themſelves, which bore their names in after times. Twenty-two years this government laſted, when Jair died, and was buried in Camon, a city of Gilead. *Note,* The impartial adminiſtration of juſtice is, next to the goſpel, the greateſt bleſſing of any land.

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6. And [c] the children of Iſrael did evil again in the ſight of the LORD, and ſerved Baalim, and Aſhtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philiſtines, and forſook the LORD, and ſerved not him. 7. ¶ And the anger of the LORD was hot againſt Iſrael, and [d] he ſold them into the hands of the Philiſtines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon. 8. And that year they vexed and oppreſſed the children of Iſrael: eighteen years, all the children of Iſrael that *were* on the other ſide Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which *is* in Gilead. 9. [e] Moreover, the children of Ammon paſſed over Jordan, to fight alſo againſt Judah, and againſt Benjamin, and againſt the houſe of Ephraim; ſo that Iſrael was ſore diſtreſſed.

[c] Chap. ii. 11.
[d] Ibid. 14.
[e] Deut. xxviii. 65.

v. 6—9. No ſooner were theſe good men gone, than the people, as before, returned to their abominations. Their idolatry grew worſe and worſe, their idols were multiplied, God was forgotten, and his ſervice neglected; and as the conſequence, when they leave him he leaves them. The Philiſtines on one ſide, and the Ammonites on another, oppreſſed and cruſhed them, as the corn between the upper and nether mill-ſtone. Eighteen years this ſervitude continued very rigorous, and yet the people returned not unto God; at laſt the Ammonites having thoroughly plundered thoſe on one ſide Jordan, ſeek to increaſe their ſpoil by attacking Ephraim, Judah, and Benjamin, whilſt theſe diſheartned tribes, having loſt God's preſence, loſe all courage, and are unable to make head againſt their invaders. *Note,* (1.) Reformation without converſion of heart will be of no long continuance. (2.) God never leaves us until we forſake him. (3.) They fall an eaſy prey to Satan, who are left deſtitute of Divine grace and protection.

10. ¶ And [f] the children of Iſrael cried unto the LORD, ſaying, We have ſinned againſt thee, both becauſe we have forſaken our God, and alſo ſerved Baalim. 11. And [g] the LORD ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, *Did* not *I deliver you* from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philiſtines? 12. The Zidonians alſo, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites did oppreſs you, and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. 13. [h] Yet ye have forſaken me, and ſerved other gods, wherefore [i] I will deliver you no more. 14. [k] Go and cry unto the gods which ye have choſen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation. 15. ¶ And the children of Iſrael ſaid unto the LORD, We have ſinned, [l] do thou unto us whatſoever ſeemeth good unto thee, [m] deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. 16. And [n] they put away the ſtrange gods from among them, and ſerved the LORD: and [o] his ſoul was grieved for the miſery of Iſrael. 17. Then the children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead: and the children of Iſrael aſſembled themſelves together, and encamped at Mizpeh. 18. And the people *and* princes of Gilead ſaid one to another, [p] What man *is he* that will begin to fight againſt the children of Ammon? he ſhall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

[f] Chap. iii. 9.
[g] Chap. ii. 1. Mic. vi. 3.
[h] Deut. xxxii. 15. Jer. ii. 13.
[i] Jer. xviii. 7, 8.
[k] 1 Kings xviii. 27. 2 Kings iii. 13. Jer. ii. 28.
[l] 1 Sam. iii. 18. Acts xxi. 14.
[m] Luke xiii. 8, 9.
[n] 2 Chron. vii. 14.
[o] Joel ii. 13.
[p] Deut. xx. 5, 6. Pſal. xxxiv. 14, 15.

v. 10—18. It was long before they bowed the knee of penitence, but better late than never. We have,

1. Their humbling confeſſion. They had committed two great evils, they had forſaken God, the fountain of living water, and had hewn themſelves idols, broken ciſterns which could hold no water; their ſuffering was therefore juſt, and they acknowledge their deſerts. *Note,* The firſt ſtep of a ſinner's return to God is the diſcovery of his own great guilt, and a ſenſe of his deſerved ruin.

2. God ſends them a ſharp and upbraiding anſwer to their cries. He turns not away his ear from their prayers, nor ſinks them in utter deſpair, but ſpeaks ſo as to awaken their conſciences, and confound them under the ſenſe of their baſeneſs and

ingratitude. Many a time they had been delivered, and thoſe very oppreſſors ſubdued under them; yet they had vilely ſinned againſt their own mercies: therefore he refers them to the gods whom they ſerved, for help, to upbraid their folly, and convince them of the weakneſs of theſe lying vanities. He refuſes to deliver them any more, that is, conditionally, as long as their idols were kept among them. *Note*, (1.) If God frowns upon the returning ſinner, let him not deſpair; it is only his deſert, indeed, if he be utterly rejected: yet with the Lord there is mercy and forgiveneſs. (2.) When we are brought to a real ſenſe of our ſins, we ſhall ſee the vanity and inſufficiency of thoſe things, to make us happy, on which formerly we truſted.

3. The people of Iſrael ſolemnly aſſembled, it ſhould ſeem, when this meſſage by an angel, or prophet, was brought unto them, own their juſt deſerts, ſurrender themſelves up to God; yet humbly intreat that once more he would ſpare them; and, convinced of their vanity, inſtantly put away their abominations. *Note*, (1.) When we come to God we muſt pretend no excuſe for our ſin, but plead guilty, and reſt ourſelves on the mercy of our judge. (2.) If we would approve our repentance real, we muſt inſtantly renounce the ſins we confeſs. (3.) When ſin is our bitterneſs and burden, though we may ſtand trembling under the black review, there is yet hope.

4. God regards them with tender compaſſion, and, to ſpeak as a man, beholds their miſery with bowels which yearn over them. *Note*, No prodigal returns to God but his fatherly heart is touched with the feeling of his wretchedneſs, and ready to embrace the moſt miſerable of ſinners.

5. The princes of Gilead hereupon, ſtirred up by the ſecret working of God, during the abſence of their oppreſſors, begin to aſſemble themſelves for war; on hearing this the Ammonites return over Jordan, and encamp in Mizpeh, in order to ſuppreſs this riſing in the bud. The Gileadites reſolve now to make a ſtand for their liberty; but though united in their purpoſe, they want a commander, and ſuch an one, brave and able, is ſought by proclamation throughout the hoſt, who, as the fruit of his victory, would be advanced to be the head of his people. *Note*, (1.) The ſucceſs of every enterprize depends as much on the prudence and bravery of the general, as on the courage of the people. (2.) They who fight the Lord's battle, are aſſured they ſhall reign with him.

CHAP. XI.

Here is, 1. *Jephthah's baſe birth and expulſion from his father's houſe*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The Gileadites choice of him to be commander againſt the Ammonites*, ver. 4—11. 3. *His ſeeking to make up the differences between the two ſtates*, ver. 12—28. 4. *His war with the Ammonites entered upon with a ſolemn vow*, ver. 29—31, *and ended with a glorious victory*, ver. 32, 33. 5. *The ſtraits he was brought into by his vow*, ver. 34—40.

1. NOW [a] Jephthah the Gileadite was a [b] mighty man of valour, and he *was* the ſon of † an harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah. 2. And Gilead's wife bare him ſons, and his wife's ſons grew up, and they thruſt out Jephthah, and ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt not inherit in our father's houſe, for thou *art* the ſon of [c] a ſtrange woman. 3. Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered [d] vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

[a] Heb. xi. 32.
[b] 2 Kings v. 1.
† Heb. A woman, an harlot.
[c] Prov. ii. 16. & v. 19.
[d] Chap. ix. 4. 1 Sam. xxvii. 2.

v. 1—3. The people being reduced to ſtraits, and a captain wanted, we have here an account of one whom, though under a brand of diſgrace, God chuſes to be their deliverer. A Gileadite, whoſe name was Jephthah, the ſon of an harlot, or a Gentile; whoſe brethren, on their father's deceaſe, counting him a ſcandal to the family, expelled him the houſe: being brought hereby into great diſtreſs, and a man of valour, he reſolves to live by his ſword; and collecting a band of men, whoſe wants or extravagance made them chuſe ſuch a captain, he maintained them and himſelf either by plunder, or more probably by incurſions on Iſrael's enemies. *Note*, (1.) They who indulge lawleſs luſt, entail commonly miſery and ſhame upon the unhappy fruit of their guilty amours. (2.) A man ſhould not be reproached with the unhappineſs of his birth, when his ways beſpeak him deſerving a more honourable relation. (3.) They who know the difficulties of adverſity, are beſt prepared for the bleſſings of proſperity.

4. ¶ And it came to paſs † in proceſs of time, that the children of Ammon made war againſt Iſrael. 5. And it was ſo, that when the children of Ammon made war againſt Iſrael, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob: 6. And they ſaid unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon. 7. And Jephthah ſaid unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's houſe? And why are ye come unto me now, when ye are in diſtreſs? 8. And the elders of Gilead ſaid unto Jephthah, [e] Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayſt go with us, and fight againſt the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. 9. And Jephthah ſaid unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight againſt the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, ſhall I be your head? 10. And the elders of Gilead ſaid unto Jephthah, The LORD ‡ be witneſs between us, if we do not ſo according to thy words. 11. Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words [f] before the LORD in Mizpeh.

† Heb. After days. Chap. x. 8.
[e] Luke xvii. 3.
‡ Heb. Be the hearer between us. Deut. i. 16. 1 Kings iii. 11.
[f] Joſh. xviii. 1.

v. 4—11. Many days had now paſſed while Jephthah ſuffered an uncomfortable exile; but the fame of his courage being noiſed, in their diſtreſs from the children of Ammon, the men of Gilead bethought them of Jephthah. Hereupon,

1. They ſend him an honourable embaſſage to invite him to take the command of their armies. They were collected, but they wanted a head, and ſuch an one as he had ſhewn himſelf, a man of conduct and courage, and therefore they urge him to give them no denial. *Note*, The providences which are, to appearance, our greateſt misfortune, are often neceſſary to fit us for the work for which God deſigns us.

2. Jephthah, at firſt, upbraids them with their ill uſage of him; it ſhould ſeem his brethren were in the embaſſy, or that the elders of the city had connived at the violence ſhewn him; and as it muſt appear that it was not reſpect for him, but regard to themſelves, which produced the invitation, he might juſtly refuſe to go. *Note*, In diſtreſs of ſoul men will have recourſe to thoſe miniſters and people of God, whom before they inſulted.

3. They acknowledge their wrong dealing, and intreat him to forgive and forget it, and come with them to lead their army, and, as the beſt recompence they can make, offer to make him captain-general of their tribe. *Note*, (1.) The leaſt we can do when we have injured a man, is to beg his pardon. (2.) We ſhould never deſpiſe or trample on any man: we know not how much we may need him before we die.

4. Too generous to retain reſentment, though juſt, he conſents to aſſiſt them in their diſtreſs, but firſt ſolemnly queſtions them concerning their offer; Whether they would really make him their ruler, if the Lord bleſſed him with ſucceſs? they confirm what they had ſaid with the moſt poſitive aſſurances, for the truth of which they appeal to God; on this therefore he accompanies them to Mizpeh. *Note*, (1.) In all that we take in hand we muſt acknowledge God's bleſſing. (2.) Chriſt, who hath fought for us, muſt rule in and over us. (3.) No injuries ſhould make us implacable; we muſt forgive, as we hope to be forgiven.

5. The whole is ſolemnly recognized in Mizpeh, between Jephthah and the aſſembly. He then ſpreads the matter before the Lord, praying for direction and ſucceſs in the arduous enterprize. *Note*, (1.) That undertaking is like to end well, that is begun with fervent prayer. (2.) In our agreements it is well to be explicit and ſolemn, that afterwards there may be no room to retract.

12. ¶ And Jephthah [g] ſent meſſengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, ſaying, What haſt thou to do with me, that thou art come againſt me, to fight in my land? 13. And the king of the children of Ammon anſwered unto the meſſengers of Jephthah, Becauſe [h] Iſrael took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon, even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore reſtore *thoſe* lands again peaceably. 14. And Jephthah ſent meſſengers [i] again unto the king of the children of Ammon: 15. And ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith Jephthah, [k] Iſrael took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: 16. But when Iſrael came up from Egypt, and walked through the wilderneſs, unto the Red-ſea, and came to Kadeſh; 17. Then Iſrael ſent meſſengers unto the king of Edom, ſaying, Let me, I pray thee, paſs through thy land: but [l] the king of Edom would not hearken *thereto*. And in like manner they ſent unto the king of Moab; but he would not *conſent*: and Iſrael abode in Kadeſh. 18. Then they went along through the wilderneſs, and compaſſed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the eaſt-ſide of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other ſide of Arnon, but [m] came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon *was* the border of Moab. 19. And [n] Iſrael ſent meſſen-

[g] Deut. xx. 10.
[h] Pſal. xxvii. 12. Prov. xix. 5.
[i] Pſ. cxx. 7. Rom. xii. 18.
[k] Deut. ii. 9, 10. Neh. vi. 8. Acts xxiv. 12.
[l] Deut. ii. 29.
[m] Num. xxi. 13.
[n] Deut. ii. 26.

gers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of
Heſhbon; and Iſrael ſaid unto him, Let us paſs, we
pray thee, through thy land unto my place. 20. But
Sihon truſted not Iſrael to paſs through his coaſt: but
Sihon gathered his people together, and pitched in Jahaz,
and fought againſt Iſrael. 21. And the LORD
God of Iſrael delivered Sihon and all his people into the
hand of Iſrael, and they ſmote them: ſo Iſrael poſſeſſed
all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that
country. 22. And [o] they poſſeſſed all the coaſts of the
Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the
wilderneſs even unto Jordan. 23. So now the LORD
God of Iſrael hath diſpoſſeſſed the Amorites from before
his people Iſrael, and ſhouldſt thou poſſeſs it? 24. Wilt
not thou poſſeſs that which Chemoſh thy god giveth
thee to poſſeſs? [p] So whomſoever the LORD our God
ſhall drive out from before us, them will we poſſeſs.
25. And now *art* thou † any thing better than Balak the
ſon of Zippor king of Moab? did he ever ‡ ſtrive againſt
Iſrael, or did he ever fight againſt them, 26. While Iſrael
dwelt in Heſhbon and her towns, and in Aroer and
her towns, and in all the cities that *be* along by the
coaſts of Arnon, three hundred years? why therefore did
ye not recover *them* within that time? 27. Wherefore I
have not ſinned againſt thee, but thou doſt me wrong
to war againſt me: the LORD [q] the Judge be judge
this day between the children of Iſrael and the children
of Ammon. 28. [r] Howbeit, the king of the children of
Ammon hearkned not unto the words of Jephthah which
he ſent him.

[o] Deut. ii. 36.

[p] Jude iii.

† Heb. Better, better. Num. xxii. 5, 6. Joſh. xxiv. 9.

‡ Heb. Striving, ſtrive.

[q] Gen. xxxviii. 35. 1 Sam. xxiv. 12. Pſ. l. 6.

[r] Prov. xxi. 29.

v. 12—28. Jephthah now being conſtituted captain, before he draws the ſword of war, ſeeks a peaceable accommodation.

1. He ſends to enquire the reaſon of this invaſion of the Ammonitiſh king: as they had given him no offence, he wiſhes him quietly to retire, and not oblige him to uſe force againſt force. *Note*, We muſt follow peace with all men, and never ſeek litigious redreſs till every fair propoſal is rejected.

2. The Ammonite, unwilling to plead the law of arms, trumps up a demand of a former title, that at leaſt he might ſeem to cover his pretenſions with a ſpecious plea of juſtice. *Note*, (1.) They who are deſtitute of conſcience or honeſty, are not willing to appear ſo. (2.) They who ſeek a pretext for a quarrel will never be at a loſs to find one.

3. Jephthah makes a moſt ſatisfactory reply to the unreaſonable demand. The lands in queſtion between Arnon and Jabbok, were not in poſſeſſion of the Ammonites, but of the Amorites, when Iſrael diſpoſſeſſed them; and though the land might originally belong to the Ammonites, they had ſuffered them peaceably to enjoy it, and quitted to them the title. So far were the people of Iſrael from offering the leaſt violence to the children of Lot or Eſau, that when refuſed a paſſage through their countries, though able, if they had choſen it, to have opened their way by force, they rather underwent the fatigue of a long march to compaſs their territories, than ſet a foot upon them, much leſs ſeize them for their own uſe; nor would they have touched the land of Sihon, if himſelf had not been the aggreſſor, and not only refuſed to let them go through, but alſo came out, unprovoked, to attack them, and thus brought his ruin on his own head. God having delivered Sihon into their hand, his land became theirs by lawful conqueſt, and by the gift of God, nor was there the leaſt reaſon why they ſhould conquer it for the Ammonites: he appeals to him, What would be his own conduct in a like caſe? Would he quit what he thought he had conquered, under the influence of his idol god, or give up his own land to the original inhabitants whom he had diſpoſſeſſed? Why then ſhould he expect it of the Iſraelites? He pleads farther their long uninterrupted enjoyment of this country for near three hundred years, during which time neither Balak nor his ſucceſſors ever pretended to claim it; and the Moabites had an equal if not a better right to it than the Ammonites: ſo that, on all theſe accounts, the war muſt appear moſt unjuſt, and unprovoked, and therefore Jephthah appeals to God for a deciſion of the controverſy, if he perſevered in his demands. *Note*, (1.) When we have juſtice and truth on our ſide, we may confidently appeal to the God of truth for a deciſion in our favour. (2.) When our own harmleſs and inoffenſive conduct ſpeaks our peaceableneſs, it is at their peril who then make them ready for battle. (3.) If we cannot, by fair means, prevail on thoſe who injure us to deſiſt, we may lawfully make uſe of the ſword of war or of juſtice for our vindication.

4. The king of Ammon pays no regard to Jephthah's arguments, but bent on their ſpoil, reſolves to determine the controverſy by the ſword. *Note*, They who will not hearken to reaſon will rue for it.

29. ¶ Then the Spirit of the LORD † came upon
Jephthah, and he paſſed over Gilead and Manaſſeh, and
paſſed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of
Gilead he paſſed over *unto* the children of Ammon. 30.
And Jephthah [s] vowed a vow unto the LORD, and
ſaid, If thou ſhalt without fail deliver the children of
Ammon into mine hands, 31. Then it ſhall be, That
whatſoever cometh forth of the doors of my houſe to
meet me, when I return in peace from the children of
Ammon, ſhall ſurely be the LORD's, and ‡ I will offer
it up for a burnt-offering. 32. ¶ So Jephthah paſſed
over unto the children of Ammon to fight againſt
them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands.
33. And he ſmote them from Aroer, even till thou come
to Minnith, *even* twenty cities, and unto the plain of the
vineyards, with a very great ſlaughter. Thus the
children of Ammon were ſubdued before the children
of Iſrael. 34. ¶ And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto
his houſe, and behold, his daughter came out to meet
him with timbrels and with dances, and ſhe *was his* only
child: beſide her he had neither ſon nor daughter. 35.
And it came to paſs when he ſaw her, that [t] he rent
his clothes, and ſaid, Alas, my daughter, thou haſt
brought me very low, and [u] thou art one of them that
trouble me: for [x] I have opened my mouth unto the
LORD, and [y] I cannot go back. 36. And ſhe ſaid unto
him, My father, *if* thou haſt opened thy mouth unto
the LORD, do to me according to that which hath
proceeded out of thy mouth; foraſmuch as the LORD
hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, *even*
of the children of Ammon. 37. And ſhe ſaid unto
her father, let this thing be done for me: Let me
alone two months, that I may go up and down upon
the mountains, and [z] bewail my virginity, I and my
fellows. 38. And he ſaid, Go. And he ſent her away
for two months; and ſhe went with her companions, and
bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 39. And it
came to paſs at the end of two months, that ſhe returned
unto her father, who did with her *according* to his vow
which he had vowed: and ſhe knew no man. And it
was a cuſtom in Iſrael, 40. *That* the daughters of
Iſrael went yearly to † lament the daughter of Jephthah
the Gileadite four days in a year.

† Heb. Was. Hebr. ii. 11, 32.

[s] Gen. xxviii. 20. Gal. iv. 18.

‡ i. e. If lawful to be offered. Lev. xxvii. 11, &c. Iſa. lxvi. 3.

[t] Job i. 20.

[u] Pſ. liv. 5.

[x] Eccleſ. v. 2.

[y] Pſ. xv. 4.

[z] 1 Sam. i. 6. Luke i. 25.

† Or, ſpeak with, or talk together.

v. 29—40. Peace being deſpaired of, each party prepares for war; and hereupon we have Jephthah's raſh vow and glorious victory.

1. His victory is glorious. Not waiting for the approach of the Ammonites, he immediately carries the war into their own country. The Spirit of the Lord, as a ſpirit of wiſdom, coming upon him to direct, and as a ſpirit of fortitude to ſtrengthen him. The effect of his expedition correſponds with his moſt ſanguine wiſhes; the Ammonites are every where beaten, twenty cities taken, and all the men of war put to the ſword; ſo that the Ammonites could no more lift up their heads to moleſt Iſrael. *Note*, They who go forth under God's call, dependent on his care, and with zeal for his cauſe, may confidently expect ſucceſs in their undertakings.

2. His vow was raſh, unjuſtifiable in the making, and more ſo in the performance of it. The learned are divided reſpecting the nature of his vow, and the manner in which it was fulfilled. Jephthah, at his going out to war, ſolemnly devotes to God for a burnt-offering whatever ſhould firſt meet him on his return, if he obtained the victory; and this happened to be his only daughter. The firſt opinion concerning this vow is, that it was literally fulfilled; that, through a miſtake of the meaning of *Lev.* xxvii. 29. he might think it allowable, and, from the obligation of his vow, neceſſary. Perhaps from Abraham's precedent he might conclude it a high pitch of obedience, really to ſacrifice her to the Lord, and that therefore he actually did ſo, after allowing her two months to bewail her virginity, it being counted among the greateſt of misfortunes to die childleſs. Againſt this it is objected, that it is expreſsly againſt the command of God; that parents had no ſuch power over their children's lives; that a devoted child was to be redeemed, and the price ſettled; that neither prieſts nor people would be found to conſent to ſo inhuman an action; that it is never cenſured by any inſpired writer; and that Jephthah is counted among the faithful worthies, *Heb.* xi. 32. from which ſuch a ſhocking tranſaction muſt have excluded him. The next opinion is, that ſhe was ſeparated from the converſe of men, and lived a virgin given up to God, till the day of her death, and viſited four days in the year by her virgin fellows, to conſole her, or to praiſe her conſtancy. But there are great difficulties here alſo; for there does not appear the leaſt traces of ſuch a voluntary

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luntary virginity, as a religious act among the Jews; rather the very contrary; nor had any father ſuch a right of compulſion. The father's anguiſh on meeting her beſpeaks a heavier ſtroke; and her preparative on this ſuppoſition by no means appears ſignificant: beſides, the obvious meaning of the words militates againſt this explication. Humanity would make one prefer the latter interpretation, though the former ſeems the beſt to correſpond with the text. However, in either caſe the vow was raſh and unadviſed, and in its conſequences involved both of them in deep diſtreſs. Her conſtancy, ſubmiſſion, and chearfulneſs, diſplay a beautiful character, and, whichever was her lot, make us wiſh her a happier diſpoſal. Learn hence, (1.) The great danger of a raſh vow, that, like a two-edged ſword, whether kept or broken, involves the ſoul in guilt. (2.) Whenever, without diſhonour to God, or injury to our neighbour, we can do it, no private inconvenience muſt ſway us from the fulfilment of our vows. (3.) The dutiful obedience of children to parents raſh or ſevere commands, is highly commendable. (4.) Other's ſorrows ſhould be our own, and by partaking we ſhould ſeek to alleviate them. (5.) Our brighteſt days, like Jephthah's, have ſome dark clouds. It is well there is nothing perfect beneath the ſun; it makes us more deſirous to come to the ſtate of perfection above it. (6.) If there are matters of doubtful diſputation in the ſcripture, they concern not at all the great truths of our ſalvation. (7.) When we meet with a dark paſſage, it is good to be content to be ignorant, where God ſeems to draw the veil.

CHAP. XII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Jephthah's rencounter with the Ephraimites,* ver. 1—6. 2. *His death,* ver. 7. 3. *An account of three other judges, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdan,* ver. 8—15.

† Heb. Were called. Chap. viii. 1, &c.

a Pſ. cix. 4. John x. 32.

b 1 Sam. xix. 5. Pſ. cxix. 109.

c 1 Sam. ii. 25.

d 1 Sam. xxv. 10. Neh. iv. 4.

† i.e. A ſtream or ford. Mat. xxvi. 73.

e Prov. xviii. 19.

About 1180.

1. AND the men of Ephraim † gathered themſelves together, and went northward, and ſaid unto Jephthah, Wherefore paſſedſt thou over to fight againſt the children of Ammon, and didſt not call us to go with thee? [a] We will burn thine houſe upon thee with fire. 2. And Jephthah ſaid unto them, I and my people were at great ſtrife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. 3. And when I ſaw that ye delivered *me* not, [b] I put my life in my hands, and paſſed over againſt the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: Wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day to fight againſt me? 4. [c] Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead ſmote Ephraim, becauſe they ſaid, [d] Ye Gileadites *are* fugitives of Ephraim, among the Ephraimites, *and* among the Manaſſites. 5. And the Gileadites took the paſſages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was *ſo*, that when thoſe Ephraimites which were eſcaped, ſaid, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead ſaid unto him, *Art* thou an Ephraimite? If he ſaid, Nay: 6. Then ſaid they unto him, Say now † Shibboleth: and he ſaid, Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce *it* right. Then they took him and ſlew him at the paſſages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites [e] forty and two thouſand. 7. And Jephthah judged Iſrael ſix years: then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in *one of* the cities of Gilead.

v. 1—7. No ſooner is Jephthah delivered from foreign enemies, than he is diſturbed with domeſtic feuds.

1. The men of Ephraim, jealous of the honour Manaſſeh had got, ſeek occaſion to quarrel with him, as they had before done with Gideon, under pretence of being ſlighted, becauſe not called to the war againſt Ammon, and threaten with outrageous violence to fire Jephthah's houſe over his head. *Note,* (1.) Quarrels between brethren are uſually moſt bitter and violent. (2.) They who have done the greateſt ſervices to the cauſe of God, are not ſecure from the greateſt inſults, even ſometimes from the pretended friends of the cauſe. (3.) The moſt ſpotleſs characters are the faireſt mark for the foul fangs of envy to faſten upon.

2. Jephthah remonſtrates againſt their violence and accuſation. Their charge was as falſe as malicious: he had called them, and they had refuſed to come. When therefore the danger was ſo imminent, at the riſk of his life, he went out to battle, and, through the ſtrength of God, prevailed; was this a cauſe for their anger? Ought it not rather to be cauſe of thankfulneſs? *Note,* (1.) The greateſt bullies are uſually the greateſt cowards. (2.) They who are themſelves moſt in fault, would often ſave themſelves by clamouring againſt the innocent. (3.) They well deſerve the honour, who purchaſe it at the peril of their lives.

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3. The ill temper of the Ephraimites will not be pacified, and their ill tongue provokes the Gileadites, who came to interpoſe with them in behalf of their captain. They call them fugitives, a vagabond race, pretending as if they were expelled Canaan from the Ephraimites and Manaſſites, as unworthy their relation. Such inſult is too much for men of war uſually to bear: ſwords are inſtantly drawn, and the Ephraimites juſtly puniſhed for their inſolence. They are routed in the field, and the paſſes of Jordan being ſecured by the men of Gilead, by the pronunciation of the word *Shibboleth,* which, being accuſtomed ſo to ſpeak, they called *Sibboleth,* they are all detected, and ſlain, to the number of forty-two thouſand. *Note,* (1.) A haſty and lying tongue uſually occaſions much miſchief to its owner. (2.) They who inſolently upbraid others, quickly get themſelves into a worſe caſe.

4. Six years ended Jephthah's government; perhaps grief for his daughter might contribute not a little to ſhorten his days. He was buried in Gilead, probably in his own city Mizpeh. *Note,* Great and good men muſt die, as well as others; but there is one liveth, who will never leave his people to want a friend and protector in time of need.

8. ¶ And after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Iſrael. 9. And he had thirty ſons, and thirty daughters, *whom* he ſent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his ſons. And he judged Iſrael ſeven years. About 1173. 10. Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem. 11. ¶ And after him, Elon a Zebulonite judged Iſrael, and he judged Iſrael ten years. About 1163. 12. And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulon. 13. ¶ And after him, Abdon the ſon of Hillel a Pirathonite judged Iſrael. 14. And he had forty ſons and thirty nephews, that rode on threeſcore and ten [f] aſs-colts: and he judged Iſrael eight years. 15. And Abdon the ſon of Hillel, the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites. About 1155.

f Chap. v. 10. & x. 4.

v. 8—15. We have a ſhort account of three ſucceeding judges.

1. Ibzan, of Bethlehem in Judah, judged Iſrael eight years. In his adminiſtration nothing remarkable is recorded; but his family was large, and he took care to ſettle them well in the world before he went out of it. *Note,* It is among the greateſt bleſſings parents can enjoy, to ſee their children provided for before they die.

2. Elon, a Zebulonite, ſucceeded Ibzan, and miniſtred juſtice, and directed their affairs during ten years in peace, then was gathered to his fathers.

3. Abdon, an Ephraimite, was then raiſed up of God, and he preſided eight years. He lived to a good old age, and ſaw his children's children, forty ſons, and thirty grandchildren, and all men of diſtinction, who rode in ſtate as princes, or in circuit about the country, as judges and officers. Death, the common lot of man, at laſt removed him from all his earthly bleſſings. *Note,* (1.) Whatever we hear of any man, great or good, we are ſure to hear one thing of him, that he died. Let us read, and learn ſo to number our days, as to apply our hearts unto wiſdom. (2.) If we muſt ſo ſoon bid a final adieu to every thing ſeen and temporal, let us by faith look forward to thoſe things that are not ſeen, and are eternal.

CHAP. XIII.

At this chapter begins the ſtory of Samſon, the laſt and the greateſt of Iſrael's judges. He was both an eminent believer, Heb. xi. 32. *and a glorious type of him who with his own arm wrought ſalvation. Here is,* 1. *The oppreſſion of Iſrael by the Philiſtines,* ver. 2. 2. *His birth foretold by an angel to his mother,* ver. 2—5. 3. *Her relation of it to his father,* ver. 6, 7. 4. *The angel's return, and directions to Manoah's wife,* ver. 5—14. 5. *The reſpect they ſhewed him,* ver. 15—18. 6. *His departure in the flame of the altar,* ver. 19—23. 7. *Samſon's birth,* ver. 24, 25.

† Heb. Added to commit.

a Gen. xvi. 1. & xxv. 21. 1 Sam. i. 7. Luke i. 7.

b Chap. vi. 11. Ver. 16.

c Pſ. cxxvii. 3.

1. AND the children of Iſrael † did evil again in the ſight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philiſtines forty years. 2. ¶ And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whoſe name *was* Manoah, and his wife *was* [b] barren and bare not. 3. And [a] the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and ſaid, unto her, Behold now, thou *art* barren, and beareſt not: but [c] thou ſhalt conceive and bear a ſon. 4. Now

therefore beware, I pray thee, and [d] drink not wine, nor ſtrong drink, and eat not any unclean *thing*. 5. For lo, thou ſhalt conceive and bear a ſon, and [e] no razor ſhall come on his head: for the child ſhall be [f] a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he ſhall begin to deliver Iſrael out of the hand of the Philiſtines. 6. ¶ Then the woman came and told her huſband, ſaying, [g] A man of God came unto me, and his countenance *was* like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I aſked him not whence he *was*, neither told he me his name. 7. But he ſaid unto me, Behold, thou ſhalt conceive and bear a ſon; and now drink no wine, nor ſtrong drink, neither eat any unclean *thing*: for the child ſhall be a Nazarite to God, from the womb to the day of his death.

[d] Num. vi. 2, 3.
[e] Ibid. 5. 1 Sam. i. 11.
[f] Num. vi. 2.
[g] Joſh. xiv. 6. 2 Kings iv. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 11.

v. 1—7. There is no end of Iſrael's evil, or of God's mercy: Where ſin abounds, we ſee his grace much more abound. Once more the heavy hand of the Philiſtines is upon them, and during forty years, more or leſs, they bear the puniſhment of their ſins under theſe oppreſſors, till God, in the perſon of Samſon, raiſes up a deliverer for them.

1. His tribe and parentage: of Dan, which bordered neareſt on the Philiſtines, and of parents who had long been childleſs. *Note*, (1.) Where there is the greateſt danger, and the leaſt proſpect of relief, there God often chuſes to diſplay his power and glory. (2.) The fruit of the womb is an heritage and gift which cometh of the Lord.

2. An angel appears to Manoah's wife, even the glorious angel of the everlaſting covenant, who now comes in the faſhion of a man, as afterwards really partaking of the ſame nature.

3. The meſſage he brings her is moſt welcome and unexpected, and the charge he delivers ſtrict and ſolemn. He compaſſionately mentions her misfortune of barrenneſs; this ſhall be her grief no longer; ſhe ſhall conceive and bear a ſon, who, being appointed for ſingular ſervice, muſt be a Nazarite, not only from his birth, but alſo from his conception; for which end, during her pregnancy, ſhe muſt not touch any thing that came of the vine, nor eat any unclean thing; nor is a razor ever to come on his head, God intending by him to begin his people's deliverance. *Note*, (1.) God ſees and compaſſionates our ſecret griefs. (2.) They who would preſerve themſelves in holineſs for God, muſt deny themſelves the indulgence of their appetites. (3.) The offspring uſually partakes of the parent's bodily habit. Temperate parents have healthy children, whilſt the curſe of lewdneſs and luxury deſcends often on the fruit of the womb. (4.) The beginnings of ſalvation are glorious, how much more the completion of it. (5.) Samſon is the type of him who foretold his birth: he was thus holy, undefiled, and ſeparate from ſinners, conceived of the Holy Ghoſt, a Nazarite purer than ſnow, raiſed up not only to begin, but to perfect the ſalvation of his people.

4. With a tranſport of joy ſhe flies to carry her huſband an account of what had paſſed. Struck at the majeſtic and venerable appearance of the meſſenger, ſhe deſcribes his countenance as luminous, like Moſes's face, or bright with divine irradiation as an angel. His words ſhe repeats, but neither dared aſk his name, or whence he came. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould call thoſe who are near and dear to us to partake in our joys. (2.) True yoke-fellows ſhould communicate their experiences for their mutual comfort and edification.

8. ¶ Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and ſaid, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didſt ſend, come again unto us, and [h] teach us what we ſhall do unto the child that ſhall be born. 9. And [i] God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as ſhe ſat in the field: but Manoah her huſband *was* not with her. 10. And the woman made haſte, and ran, and [k] ſhewed her huſband, and ſaid unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the *other* day. 11. And Manoah aroſe, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and ſaid unto him, *Art* thou the man that ſpakeſt unto the woman? And he ſaid, I *am*. 12. And Manoah ſaid, Now let thy words come to paſs: † How ſhall we order the child, and *how* ſhall we do unto him? 13. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto Manoah, Of all that I ſaid unto the woman, let her beware. 14. She may not [l] eat of any *thing* that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or ſtrong drink, nor eat any unclean *thing*: [m] all that I command her, let her obſerve.

[h] Acts ix. 6.
[i] Pſ. lxv. 2. Mat. vii. 7.
[k] John i. 45. & iv. 28, 29.
† Heb. What ſhall the child's judgment and work be? Gen. xviii. 19. Prov. iv. 4. Eph. vi 4.
[l] Num. vi. 3, 4.
[m] Mat. xxviii. 20.

v. 8—14. 1. Manoah rejoices at the news, ſtaggers not at the promiſe, but confidently depending on its fulfilment, prays for direction how to manage this child, when he ſhould be born, agreably to God's will; and for this purpoſe begs God would ſend the ſame meſſenger, to give them farther information. *Note*, (1.) To improve God's bleſſings to his glory, is the prayer and labour of every gracious ſoul. (2.) When we have met with a refreſhing viſit from God, we cannot but cry, Return, O God of hoſts, return. (3.) They who wiſh a meſſenger from God, a preacher of his word, to be ſent among them, would do well to make it the matter of their fervent prayer.

2. God refuſed not his requeſt. The ſame day, probably, not another day, as our tranſlation ſeems to make it, the angel of the covenant returns the ſecond time to Manoah's wife when alone, either in her buſineſs, or retired for converſe with God. She entreats permiſſion to call her huſband: this granted, ſhe runs to inform him, and he gladly attends her to wait on their celeſtial viſitant, and there ſollicitouſly enquires about the management of the child, which in faith he believed ſhould be given them. *Note*, (1.) They who ſeek God, will find him to their comfort. (2.) When we are alone with God, he will manifeſt himſelf to us as he doth not unto the world. (3.) They who have experienced the bleſſing of God's preſence and love, would fain call thoſe who are near and dear to them, to taſte and ſee with them how good the Lord is. (4.) When we are called to approach God, our hearts ſhould never be backward to the gracious invitation. (5.) The care of children is a great concern, and parents need beg often of God, to direct them how to manage them ſo, as to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

3. The angel repeats the ſame inſtructions. *Note*, (1.) It is good to have line on line, and precept on precept. (2.) When our treacherous memories would forget, or treacherous hearts neglect God's commands, it is good to have near us a loving and careful remembrancer. (3.) They who would be holy to the Lord, muſt watch with jealouſy againſt the defilement of ſin.

15. ¶ And Manoah ſaid unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, [n] let us detain thee, until we ſhall have made ready a kid for thee. 16. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, [o] thou muſt offer it unto the LORD: for Manoah knew not that he *was* an angel of the LORD. 17. And Manoah ſaid unto the angel of the LORD, What *is* thy name, that when thy ſayings come to paſs, [p] we may do thee honour? 18. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto him, [q] Why aſkeſt thou thus after my name, ſeeing it *is* † ſecret? 19. So Manoah took a kid, with a meat-offering, and [r] offered *it* upon a rock unto the LORD: and *the angel* did [s] wonderouſly, and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20. For it came to paſs, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD aſcended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on *it*, and [t] fell on their faces to the ground. 21. (But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife.) Then Manoah knew that he *was* an angel of the LORD. 22. And Manoah ſaid unto his wife, [u] We ſhall ſurely die, becauſe we have ſeen God. 23. But [x] his wife ſaid unto him, If the LORD were pleaſed to kill us, [y] he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering at our hands, [z] neither would he have ſhewed us all theſe *things*, nor would as at this time have told us *ſuch things* as theſe.

[n] Chap. vi. 18, 19.
[o] Heb. xi. 6.
[p] 1 Kings ix. 7, 8. 2 Kings xiv. 3.
[q] Gen. xxxii. 29.
† Or, wonderful. Iſa. ix. 6.
[r] Chap. vi. 26.
[s] Joſh. v. 13. Chap. xv. 15. 1 Kings xviii. 38.
[t] Ezek. i. 28. Mat. xvii. 6.
[u] Chap. vi. 22.
[x] 1 Cor. xii. 21.
[y] Gen. iv. 4, 5.
[z] Pſ. xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 32. John xiv. 22.

v. 15—23. We have here a continuation of what paſſed at this interview.

1. Manoah intreats him to prolong his ſtay, and take ſome refreſhment with him before he departed. *Note*, When God ſends his meſſengers with glad tidings to us, the leaſt we can do is to afford them kind entertainment.

2. The angel declines accepting his offer, though he forbids him not to prepare the kid for ſacrifice, which he might offer to the Lord, the only true object of worſhip. *Note*, The ſervices we do or offer to God's miniſters, are acceptable ſacrifices to God.

3. He refuſes to gratify Manoah's curioſity, enquiring who he was, and where he lived, that he might, after the event, do him honour, either ſpread his fame, or ſend him a preſent on the birth of his ſon. His name is ſecret, not to be known, for who by ſearching can find out God? or *wonderful*, as Chriſt is called, *Iſa.* ix. 6. whoſe perſon, incarnation, and office, deſerve this title. *Note*, (1.) It is highly deſirable to cultivate acquaintance with a good man. (2.) If we aſk in prayer what is not good for us to receive, the beſt anſwer is a denial. (3.) In our enquiries in religion, vain curioſity is dangerous. There are ſecret things which belong only unto God, where it is our higheſt wiſdom to be contentedly ignorant.

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4. Manoah having prepared the offering and ſacrifice, and laid it on the rock, the angel did wonderouſly; either, as in Gideon's ſacrifice, he brought forth fire from the rock to conſume it; or, if Manoah kindled the flame, to his aſtoniſhment he ſees him aſcend in the midſt of the fire, and diſappear; hereby evidently intimating his acceptance of the oblation, and diſcovering himſelf to them, who now were convinced that he was more than man who talked with them. *Note*, (1.) When we bring our hearts to God in prayer, Jeſus will kindle the holy fire, and lift up our ſouls to heaven as the flame aſcends. (2.) The aſcent of the angel betokened the acceptableneſs of the offering. Jeſus our aſcended Lord is thus gone up to heaven, to preſent our ſacrifices to God, as, for his ſake, a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour.

5. For a time in ſilent wonder and dread, Manoah and his wife, after this ſtrange ſight, remained on their faces: when riſing to reflect on this tranſaction, Manoah expreſſes his fearful apprehenſions, leſt (as was then the general opinion) this divine appearance portended his death certain and near. *Note*, (1.) So weak are we, that we are afraid ſometimes of our very mercies. (2.) In the habitual exerciſe of faith, ſome riſings of unbelief will at times diſtreſs and diſturb us. (3.) A good man may at ſeaſons be afraid to die.

6. His wife appears not only the ſtrongeſt believer, but the wiſeſt reaſoner. She ſuggeſts the groundleſſneſs of his fears from two arguments, ſtrongly evidencing the favour of God towards them; 1. The acceptance of their ſacrifice; and, 2. the promiſe he had made them, for the accompliſhment of which they muſt needs live. *Note*, (1.) It is a ſingular mercy to have ſuch an help-mate as Manoah's. (2.) When the ſinner is caſt down, he ſhould remember what Chriſt hath done for him by his bloody ſacrifice, a ſure proof that he deſigns not his death. (3.) The faithful, in times of diſcouraging providences or ſore temptations, ſhould remember the paſt experience of God's goodneſs, as a ground of preſent ſupport. He that hath helped us hitherto, means not to deſtroy us at the laſt.

24. ¶ And the woman bare a ſon, and called his name Samſon: and the child grew, and the LORD bleſſed him. 25. And [a] the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eſhtaol.

[a] Rom. viii. 14.

v. 24, 25. According to the divine promiſe, in due time Samſon is born, and from his infancy began to diſcover ſome extraordinary tokens of the divine bleſſing upon him. At particular times, deep impreſſions were made on his mind from God; or ſome uncommon inſtances of wiſdom, courage, and ſtrength appeared in him, either in the camp of Dan, where the Danites had aſſembled to oppoſe the ravages of the Philiſtines, or in Mehaneh-Dan, which might be the place of his reſidence. *Note*, (1.) God often in earlieſt infancy is pleaſed to make the moſt gracious impreſſions on the minds of ſome of his choſen people. (2.) They who ſpend their youth under God's bleſſing, promiſe, when in years, to be men of ſingular uſe to their generation.

CHAP. XIV.

Here is, 1. *Samſon's courtſhip and marriage to a daughter of the Philiſtines,* ver. 1—5, 7, 8. 2. *His conqueſt of a lion,* ver. 5, 6, 8, 9. 3. *His riddle propoſed,* ver. 10—14. *and unriddled by the treachery of his wife,* ver. 15—18. 4. *The occaſion this gave him to kill thirty of the Philiſtines,* ver. 19. *and to break off his new alliance,* ver. 20.

About 1155. 1. AND Samſon went down to Timnath, and ſaw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philiſtines. 2. And he came up and told his father and his mother, and ſaid, I have ſeen a woman in Timnath, of the daughters of the Philiſtines: now therefore [a] get her for me to wife. 3. Then his father and his mother ſaid unto him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goeſt to take a wife of the [b] uncircumciſed Philiſtines? And Samſon ſaid unto his father, Get her for me, for ſhe pleaſeth me well. 4. But his father and his mother knew not that [c] it *was* of the LORD, that he ſought an occaſion againſt the Philiſtines: for at that time the Philiſtines had dominion over Iſrael. 5. Then went Samſon down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and behold, a young lion † roared againſt him. 6. And [d] the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and [e] *he had* nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. 7. And he went down, and talked with the woman, and ſhe pleaſed Samſon well. 8. ¶ And after a time, he returned to take her, and he turned aſide to ſee the carcaſe of the lion: and behold, *there was* a ſwarm of bees, and honey in the carcaſe of the lion. 9. And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcaſe of the lion.

[a] Gen. xxi. 21. Deut. vii. 3.
[b] Gen. xxxiv. 14. Exod. xxxiv. 12. Deut. vii. 2.
[c] Exod. iii. 22. 1 Kings xii. 15. 2 Chron. x. 15. Pſ. cxv. 3.
† Heb. Roared in his meeting.
[d] 1 Sam. xvii. 34.
[e] Zech. iv. 6.

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v. 1—9. Samſon is no ſooner grown a man, than occaſion offers to fall on the Philiſtines.

1. In his viſits to Timnath, a place in the tribe of Judah, but now under the power of the Philiſtines, he ſaw a woman who pleaſed his fancy, and reſolves, with his father's conſent, to make her his wife. His father juſtly remonſtrates againſt ſo imprudent and unbecoming a match; but ſeeing him much ſet upon it, at laſt conſents. His father could not conceive any good from ſuch an alliance, and perhaps Samſon meant only to pleaſe himſelf, and did not ſee what God deſigned to do in overruling his paſſion for the beginning of his people's deliverance. *Note*, (1.) It is a dangerous thing in the choice of a wife, to be guided by the eye alone. The face of an angel may conceal the violent ſpirit of a Philiſtine. (2.) Conſulting parents in the diſpoſal of our perſons is not only to conſult our own advantage, but a matter of abſolute duty, by the ſixth commandment. (3.) A godly parent will object to nothing ſo urgently, as to their children's chuſing a profane or irreligious partner. (4.) Nothing ſo likely to corrupt the heart from God, as ſuch unequal marriages. (5.) Though parents do well to diſſuade or reaſon, yet, when they ſee their children's choice is ſtrongly fixed, it were uſually better to comply with an unreaſonable requeſt, than exaſperate them by an unrelenting ſeverity. (6.) God knows how to over-rule even our imprudencies and perverſeneſs, and bring to himſelf glory, and to us good out of the evil.

2. Having conſented to the match, his father and mother go down with him to ſee his intended bride; and as they went the firſt time, Samſon being at a diſtance from them in the vineyards, out of the common path, a roaring lion met him, which, under a powerful impreſſion of God's ſpirit, he ſtrangled as eaſily as a kid, though entirely unarmed and defenceleſs. He ſoon rejoined his parents after this exploit, and modeſtly withholds the mention of his own proweſs. Some time after, on a ſecond viſit with his parents, when the nuptials were to be ſolemnized, he turned aſide to ſee what was become of the lion, when, by this time the fleſh having been conſumed, and the ſkeleton only remaining, a ſwarm of bees, which abounded in that country, had taken up their abode in it, and filled it with combs and honey. Of theſe he took and eat himſelf, and gave unto them, but ſaid nothing where he got it, perhaps meditating now on the riddle, which afterwards he deſigned to propoſe. *Note*, (1.) Humility is the crown of great exploits. (2) They who wander out of the ſtrait way into the vineyards of worldly enjoyment, will put their ſouls in imminent danger, though they may eſcape deſtruction. (3.) A good child will be happy to ſhare with his parents every worldly comfort. (4.) They who are dead to God themſelves, may poſſeſs gifts which may be uſeful to others; and, though in a lion's carcaſe, the honey is good. (5.) We have here a type of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The devil is this roaring lion, whom our divine Samſon hath deſtroyed; and from his victory conſolations are brought to the believer's ſoul, ſweeter than honey and the honey-comb.

10. ¶ So his father went down unto the woman, and Samſon made there [f] a feaſt: for ſo uſed the young men to do. 11. And it came to paſs when they ſaw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. 12. ¶ And Samſon ſaid unto them, I will now put forth † a riddle unto you: If you can certainly declare it me within [g] the ſeven days of the feaſt, and find *it* out, then I will give you thirty ‡ ſheets, and thirty change of garments. 13. But if ye cannot declare *it* me, then ſhall ye give me thirty ſheets, and thirty change of garments. And they ſaid unto him, Put forth thy riddle that we may hear it. 14. And he ſaid unto them, † Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the ſtrong came forth ſweetneſs. And they could not in three days expound the riddle. 15. And it came to paſs on the ſeventh day, that they ſaid unto Samſon's wife, [h] Entice thy huſband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, leſt we burn thee and thy father's houſe with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? *is it* not *ſo*? 16. And Samſon's wife wept before him, and ſaid, [i] Thou doſt but hate me, and loveſt me

[f] John ii. 9.
† Heb. To riddle a riddle. Ver. 13, 16. Ezek. xvii. 2.
[g] Gen. xxix. 27.
‡ Or ſhirts.
† Heb. Eating went forth from the eater. Mat. xxiv. 28. John vi. 51.
[h] Job ii. 9. Mic. vii. 5.
[i] Chap. xvi. 15.

Before Chriſt 1115. me not: thou haſt put forth a riddle unto the children
of my people, and haſt not told *it* me. And he ſaid
unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor
my mother, and ſhall I tell *it* thee? 17. And ſhe
wept before him the ſeven days, while their feaſt laſted:
and it came to paſs on the ſeventh day, that he told
her, becauſe ſhe lay ſore upon him: and ſhe told the
riddle to the children of her people. 18. And the
men of the city ſaid unto him on the ſeventh day, before
the ſun went down, What *is* ſweeter than honey,
and what *is* ſtronger than a lion? And he ſaid unto
k Mic. vii. 5. them, [k] If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had
not found out my riddle. 19. ¶ And the Spirit of
the LORD came upon him, and he went down to
Aſhkelon, and ſlew thirty men of them, and took their
ſpoil, and gave change of garments unto them which
expounded the riddle: and his anger was kindled, and
he went up to his father's houſe. 20. But Samſon's
† Heb. Became to his companion. Chap. xv. 2. wife † was *given* to his companion, whom he had uſed
as his friend.

v. 10—20. We have here,

1. Samſon keeping his bridal feaſt. He refuſed not to comply with an innocent cuſtom, nor would, on ſuch an occaſion, appear moroſe or ſingular. *Note*, Unneceſſary ſingularity proceeds more from pride than piety.

2. Thirty young men are brought to do him honour on the occaſion, and to be his companions during theſe feſtal days. Civility and reſpect are amiable, even in Philiſtines.

3. To amuſe them with the innocent paſtime, and to exerciſe their ingenuity, Samſon propoſes a riddle to them, and offers to lay thirty changes of raiment, and as many ſheets, or ſhirts, againſt their diſcovery of the meaning of it. The offer is accepted, and the riddle propoſed. *Note*, (1.) Many diſpenſations of God for a time, like this riddle, ſeem dark and inexplicable. (2.) The ſweeteſt mercies of God to our ſouls come from the ſevereſt trials, as meat from the eater, and honey from the lion.

4. Three days in vain they puzzled to diſcover the ſecret; the fourth, which was the ſabbath, or ſeventh day, they come to Samſon's wife, and threaten to burn her and her father's houſe with fire, unleſs ſhe extorted it from him, and ſaved them the loſs of their wager, though to her own huſband's ſo great diſadvantage: a requeſt unreaſonable and villainous, and a threatning moſt barbarous and inhuman. *Note*, (1.) Unreaſonable and wicked men ſtick at nothing, when their worldly intereſts are at ſtake. (2.) Though wagers are always better avoided, yet they are ſure to be ſinful, when their loſs is ſuch, as may injure our circumſtances, or endanger the ruffling our tempers.

5. This falſe and faithleſs woman immediately began to importune him for a diſcovery, upbraiding him with want of love, and plying him with tears, which he could not behold without the tendereſt emotions. In vain he expoſtulates on the unreaſonableneſs of the demand, when he had not told even his parents; ſhe wearies him with ceaſeleſs importunity, till he can no longer reſiſt her crocodile tears, and unkind accuſations; and on the ſeventh day he truſted her with the important ſecret. *Note*, (1.) The inordinate love of women makes wiſe men fools. (2.) A woman's tears are often her ſtrongeſt argument: he muſt be more than Samſon, who can ſteel his heart againſt them.

6. No ſooner is the ſecret known, than communicated: perhaps the pride of her power operated as ſtrongly as her fears or perfidy, to make her eager to know, and haſty to reveal it. With this explication they come to Samſon before the ſeven days are expired, and claim the wager. He acknowledges it to be theirs, but hints their unfair dealing, in making uſe of his own wife to betray him, which he calls plowing with his heifer, without which they had never unravelled the clue. *Note*, (1.) When we truſt a ſecret out of our own breaſt, we muſt not expect it will long continue ſuch. (2.) Our corrupt affections are the heifer Satan plows with, and by theſe he prevails.

7. Though the wager is loſt, it ſhall not be at Samſon's coſt; the Philiſtines ſhall rue for it. The Spirit of the Lord coming upon him to authorize and enable him for the work, he deſcends to Aſhkelon, ſeizes thirty Philiſtines, ſlays and ſtrips them, and with theſe garments pays his companions. And now, from experience of their perfidy, heartily ſick of his wife and them, he leaves the country, and retires to his father's houſe. *Note*, (1.) An ill-judged and raſh marriage ends frequently in an unhappy ſeparation. (2.) It were well if the ill uſage of the world drove us out of it in affection, to ſeek our true reſt at home with our God and Father.

8. No ſooner has he turned his back, than his wife is given to his companion: perhaps, for his ſake ſhe had betrayed her huſband's ſecret, and now heſitates not to defile his bed. *Note*, (1.) A forſaken wife is in a dangerous ſtate. (2.) The friendſhips of the world are often faithleſs. (3.) If a woman's affections ſtray from her huſband, it is to be feared her perſon will ſoon follow them.

Before Chriſt 1155.

CHAP. XV.

We have here Samſon's farther exploits; ſtrange indeed! but armed with divine power all things are poſſible. 1. For the perfidiouſneſs of his wife and her father, he burns the corn of the Philiſtines, ver. 1—5. 2. *He ſmites them with a great ſlaughter*, ver. 6—8. 3. *In Lehi he kills one thouſand of them with the jawbone of an aſs*, ver. 9—17. 4. *God gives him water in his thirſt*, ver. 18—20.

1. BUT it came to paſs within a while after, in About 1155.
the time of wheat-harveſt, that Samſon viſited
his wife with a kid, and he ſaid, [a] I will go in to my a Gen. vi. 4.
wife into the chamber. But her father would not ſuffer
him to go in. 2. And her father ſaid, I verily thought
that thou hadſt utterly hated her, therefore I gave her
to thy companion: *is* not her younger ſiſter fairer than
ſhe? take her, I pray thee, inſtead of her. 3. And
Samſon ſaid concerning them, † Now ſhall I be more † I am at this time blameleſs from the Philiſtines when I do, &c.
blameleſs than the Philiſtines, though I do them a diſpleaſure.
4. And Samſon went and caught three hundred
foxes, and took fire-brands, and turned tail to tail, and
put a fire-brand in the midſt between two tails. 5. And
when he had ſet the brands on fire, he let *them* go into
the ſtanding corn of the Philiſtines, and burnt up both
the ſhocks, and alſo the ſtanding corn, with the vineyards
and olives. 6. ¶ Then the Philiſtines ſaid, Who
hath done this? and they anſwered, Samſon the ſon-in-law
of the Timnite, becauſe he had taken his wife,
and given her to his companion. And the Philiſtines
came up, and [b] burnt her and her father with fire. 7. b Chap. xiv. 15. 1 Theſ. iv. 6.
¶ And Samſon ſaid unto them, Though ye have done
this, yet [c] will I be avenged of you, and after that I c Chap. xiv. 19. Rom. xii. 19.
will ceaſe. 8. And he ſmote them [d] hip and thigh with d Deut. xxviii. 35. Ezek. ix. 5, 6.
a great ſlaughter; and he went down and dwelt in the
top of the rock Etam.

v. 1—8. In proceſs of time Samſon's anger began to abate; for though moſt injuriouſly treated, it becomes us not to retain anger for ever, but to forgive and forget. Hereupon,

1. He reſolves to pay a viſit to his wife, and with a kid, to make a ſupper of reconciliation, goes down to her father's houſe. *Note*, (1.) A wife, though her behaviour were juſtly provoking, is not haſtily to be put away. (2.) The wiſeſt, though offended, will be the firſt to ſeek peace, and the readieſt to paſs by a tranſgreſſion.

2. When he would have entered his wife's apartment, unacquainted with what had paſſed, his father-in-law ſtays him, as having given her to another. To juſtify which, he pretends, that by his anger and abſence he concluded he had hated her, and never meant to return; but if it will be any ſatisfaction to him for the injury, he offers his younger daughter, which was the handſomer, in her ſtead. This Samſon rejects. *Note*, (1.) Unreaſonable jealouſies often produce the greateſt injuries. (2.) The bad practices of Canaan, however cuſtomary, will not ſuit a true Iſraelite.

3. Samſon hereupon meditates a ſevere correction. As the injury regarded him as an Iſraelite, as much as a private perſon, he reſolves as a public perſon, to make the Philiſtines rue for it: and as he concludes the juſtice of his quarrel from what had paſſed, he, without delay, procures a number of foxes, and tying a fire-brand between two tails, ſends them into the fields of the Philiſtines, and into their vineyards, where, as it was now harveſt, the fire ſoon made dreadful ravages. Some have thought, from the ſtrangeneſs of the contrivance, that the word *Shualim* ſhould be tranſlated *ſheaves*, or *ſhocks*; but it never appears elſewhere in this ſenſe. The word *caught* is never applied to any thing but taking a thing by force of arms, or by cunning; nor the word tail uſed in ſcripture, but of a living creature; ſo that the literal ſenſe is to be adhered to. *Note*, (1.) When we have done our duty to prevent a quarrel, we cannot be charged with the conſequences of it. (2.) When we ſtagger at God's word, becauſe our fooliſh reaſon objects to the methods of his proceeding, it is a ſure ſign we deſire to be wiſe above what is written.

4. Provoked at their loſs, the Philiſtines enquire into the cauſe, and wreak their vengeance on the Timnite and his daughter; ſet fire to their houſe, and conſume them in the flames; thus executing upon the woman the ſentence of adultery, and involving her in the very ruin which by her perfidy ſhe endeavoured to avoid. *Note*, (1.) God often makes uſe of his people's enemies to avenge their quarrel. (2.) They who

by ſin ſeek to avoid ſuffering, only bring upon themſelves more ſwift and ſure deſtruction.

5. Though they had avenged his quarrel, and thereby thought to have ingratiated themſelves with him, he had not done with them. Being raiſed up for his people's deliverance, he falls upon them, and, though unarmed, makes vaſt havock, and then retired to the rock Etam, waiting another occaſion to renew his attacks upon them. *Note*, They who fight the Lord's battles muſt expect but little repoſe, but after one conteſt and temptation prepare for another.

9. Then the Philiſtines went up and pitched in Judah, and ſpread themſelves in † Lehi. 10. And the men of Judah ſaid, Why are ye come up againſt us? And they anſwered, To bind Samſon are we come up, to do to him, as he hath done to us. 11. Then three thouſand men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam, and ſaid to Samſon, Knoweſt thou not that the Philiſtines *are* [e] rulers over us? What *is* this *that* thou haſt done unto us? And he ſaid unto them, As they did unto me, ſo have I done unto them. 12. And they ſaid unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that [f] we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philiſtines. And Samſon ſaid unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourſelves. 13. And they ſpake unto him, ſaying, No: but we will bind thee faſt, and deliver thee into their hand: but ſurely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock. 14. ¶ *And* when he came unto Lehi, the Philiſtines [g] ſhouted againſt him: and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that *were* upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands † looſed from off his hands. 15. And he found a new jaw-bone of an aſs, and put forth his hand and took it, and ſlew a thouſand men therewith. 16. And Samſon ſaid, With the jaw-bone of an aſs, heaps upon heaps, [h] with the jaw-bone of an aſs, have I ſlain a thouſand men. 17. And it came to paſs, when he had made an end of ſpeaking, that he caſt away the jaw-bone out of his hand, and called that place † Ramath-lehi.

† i. e. A jaw-bone. Ver. 17.
[e] Deut. xxviii. 13, 47, 48. Chap. xiii. 1.
[f] Chap. viii. 6. Acts vii. 25. Phil. ii. 21.
[g] Exod. xix. 5. Chap. v. 30.
† Heb. Melted. Pſ. cxviii. 11. Phil. iv. 3.
[h] Chap. iii. 31. Zech. iv. 6. 1 Cor. i. 27.
† i. e. The lifting up of the jaw-bone.

v. 9—17. Unable any longer to bear ſuch treatment, the Philiſtines gathered their armies, not to fight with Iſrael, but to oblige them to give up their enemy Samſon, to be put to death for the outrages he had committed. Hereupon,

1. The men of Judah underſtanding the reaſon of their invaſion, inſtead of bravely ſetting Samſon at their head to fight for their liberty, baſely reſolve to make a ſacrifice of him to his enemies, preferring ignominious ſervitude before a generous ſtruggle for their country. Inſtead of honouring him for his courage, they blame him for his raſhneſs, and deſire him peaceably to ſubmit to their bonds. Samſon might well expoſtulate with them, that what he had done was for their good, and a juſt correction for the wrongs he had received; but knowing that this was from God, that he might have a new occaſion to deſtroy them, he peaceably ſubmits to be bound; and having firſt engaged his brethren to do him no harm, conſents to be delivered into the hands of the Philiſtines. *Note*, We have here in Samſon a lively figure of the Lord Jeſus. A band of armed men ſurround him in the garden; he is betrayed, and forſaken by his own diſciples; though able to deſtroy at a ſtroke thoſe who came to bind him, yet quietly ſubmiſſive, and led as a lamb to the ſlaughter.

2. With joy the Philiſtines behold their captive approaching, and ſhout aloud, as now triumphant over their deſtroyer: but how momentary the triumphing of the wicked! Inſtant a ſudden impulſe of divine power comes upon him; like tow his captive bands are burſt aſunder: no better weapon is at hand than the jaw-bone of an aſs's carcaſe: this he ſeizes, flies on his amazed foes, and turns the ſhouts of joy into ſhrieks of horror; for ſoon with irreſiſtleſs fury he mows down their ranks, and heaps the ſlain on the ſlain. A thouſand fell on the ſpot, and wearineſs of killing and flight only ſaved the remainder. *Note*, (1.) When God will work, the moſt deſpicable inſtruments in his hand ſhall be effectual. (2.) Though tied and bound with the chains of our ſins, the Spirit of the Lord can looſe theſe captive bonds, and ſet us free. (3.) Unequal as the conteſt is between one poor believer and all the hoſts of hell and earth without, and corruption within, yet Divine Grace can make him more than conqueror. (4.) When his rejoicing enemies were moſt ſecure, and under the ſeal and ſtone had thus bound up the dead body of our crucified Lord, then, like Samſon, he broke the bands of death, awaked as a giant refreſhed with wine, confounded his foes, and led captivity captive.

3. Samſon celebrates his victory, not out of vanity, but to the glory of God, who with ſo unfit a weapon, had enabled him to make ſo great a ſlaughter. The ſame Hebrew word ſignifying an aſs and an heap, makes, in the original, an elegant paronomaſia, not to be expreſſed in a tranſlation. Then, having finiſhed his ſong of praiſes, he caſts away the uſeleſs jaw, and, in memory of this ſignal event, calls the place Ramath-Lehi, *The lifting up of the jaw-bone*. *Note*, (1.) God muſt have the glory of his own work. (2.) Songs of praiſe are as honourable to him, as reviving to our own ſouls.

18. ¶ And he was ſore [i] athirſt, and called on the LORD, and ſaid, [k] Thou haſt given this great deliverance into the hand of thy ſervant: And now ſhall I die for thirſt, and fall into the hand of the uncircumciſed? 19. But God clave an hollow place that *was* in † the jaw, and there came water thereout: and when he had drunk, [l] his ſpirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof ‡ En-hakkore, which *is* in Lehi unto this day. 20. And he judged Iſrael in the days of the Philiſtines twenty years.

[i] John xix. 28.
[k] Pſ. iii. 7, 8.
† Or, in Lehi.
[l] Iſa. xl. 29.
‡ i. e. The fountain of him that called or cried. Pſ. xxxiv. 6. & cxx. 1.
About 1135.

v. 18—20. The with-holding the moſt common neceſſaries of life, little as we are apt to value them, would be more fatal than the ſword. The want of a draught of water brought Samſon nearer to the grave, than all the hoſts of Philiſtia.

1. We ſee him here ready to die with thirſt; no water was near, and he was ſo parched and weak, as to be unable to ſeek farther. In this diſtreſs he calls upon God, who alone could relieve him. In his prayer he pleads God's paſt mercies as an argument for preſent help, and urges the diſhonour which would be caſt on God, if now he ſhould be given into the hands of the uncircumciſed, after ſuch an inſtance of divine interpoſition. *Note*, (1.) Jeſus on the croſs cried thus, I thirſt. (2.) In time of diſtreſs, prayer is our beſt reſource. (3.) Paſt mercies ſhould encourage us to wait upon God, and no plea ſo prevalent as his own glory.

2. God heard and anſwered him, permitting the diſtreſs only to exerciſe his faith, keep his ſpirit humble, and magnify his own power and grace. Out of the jaw-bone itſelf, or out of a hollow in Lehi, the name Samſon had given the place, a ſtream of freſh water ſprung up, and hereupon his fainting ſpirit revived, and his departing life returned. *Note*, (1.) Every day we have to praiſe God for a new life given us. (2.) Without the conſtant ſupply of living ſtreams from the fountain of grace, our ſouls muſt quickly faint and die.

3. He gives the place a name correſponding to the mercy, Enhakkore, *The fountain of him that was calling*, in remembrance of his own diſtreſs, and God's gracious anſwer to his prayer.

4. Twenty years he judged Iſrael, during which the Philiſtines, though not utterly ſubdued, ſeem not to oppreſs them as before, checked by the terror of his arm; ſo that they had reſpite from the yoke, if not perfect freedom. *Note*, (1.) It is a mercy to have our afflictions alleviated. (2.) If we improve the beginning of our mercies, we may expect they will be continued and perfected.

CHAP. XVI.

In this chapter, 1. *Samſon in great danger carries away the gates of Gaza*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He falls in love with Dalilah*, ver. 4. 3. *He tells her, and ſhe tells the Philiſtines, wherein his ſtrength lay*, ver. 5—17. 4. *They rob him of it*, ver. 18—20. 5. *They put out his eyes, and impriſon him*, ver. 21—24. 6. *He pulls down the houſe in which the Philiſtine Lords were aſſembled, and dies in the ruins*, ver. 26—31.

1. THEN went Samſon to Gaza, and ſaw there † an harlot, and went in unto her. 2. *And it was told* the Gazites, ſaying, Samſon is come hither. And [a] they compaſſed *him* in, and laid wait for him [b] all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, ſaying, In the morning, when it is day, we ſhall kill him. 3. And Samſon lay till midnight, and aroſe at midnight and [c] took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two poſts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put *them* upon his ſhoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that *is* before Hebron.

† Heb. A woman, an harlot. Ezra ix. 14.
[a] 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. Pſ. xxii. 16.
[b] Pſ. cxxvii. 2.
[c] Pſ. cvii. 16. Iſa. xlv. 2. Mark xvi. 4.

v. 1—3. As woman firſt was man's ruin, how often ſince hath ſhe been his ſnare? Other paſſions have ſlain their thouſands, the love of women its ten thouſands.

1. Samſon, who could not be taken in the toils of the Philiſtines, is enſnared with the attire of an harlot: to his ſhame the ſtory is recorded. He went down to Gaza, on what occaſion is not mentioned; but the bad tendency of familiarity with Philiſtines is left for our admonition. He ſaw a woman, who pleaſed his eye, and, paſſion overcoming conſcience, he went in to her. *Note*, (1.) The ſtrongeſt in grace need deeply

cry, Lead us not into temptation. (2.) They who ramble into places of vain company, muſt not wonder if they ſmart for it.

2. Though perhaps he came in diſguiſe, he was not long concealed; and whilſt he is lying in the arms of an harlot, danger and death await him at the gate. *Note*, (1.) In our moſt ſecret ſins God will find us out. (2.) Men would not ſleep quiet on the bed of lewdneſs, could they ſee the wrath of God which is hanging over them. (3.) The more ſecurely the ſinner ſleeps, the more dangerous his ſtate.

3. Whether the convictions of his conſcience terrified him, or a dream monitory of his danger awakened him, or ſome intelligence was brought him of the Philiſtines deſigns, at midnight he aroſe, and finding the gates of the city barred, and the guards aſleep probably, little expecting ſuch a viſitant; he took up poſts, gates, and bars together on his ſhoulders, and carried them to a diſtant hill, to let his enemies ſee how vain were their attempts againſt him. Thus Chriſt, on his reſurrection day, carried off the gates of death, mocking at the impotent deſigns of his enemies, and opening a paſſage for all his people to follow him to the hill of God.

4. ¶ And it came to paſs afterward, that [d] he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whoſe name *was* † Delilah. 5. And the lords of the Philiſtines came up unto her, and ſaid unto her, [e] Entice him, and ſee wherein his great ſtrength *lieth*, and by what *means* we may prevail againſt him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and [f] we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred *pieces* of ſilver. 6. And Delilah ſaid to Samſon, [g] Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great ſtrength *lieth*, and wherewith thou mighteſt be bound to afflict thee. 7. And Samſon ſaid unto her, If they bind me with ſeven green withs that were never dried, then [h] ſhall I be weak, and be as another man. 8. Then the lords of the Philiſtines brought up to her ſeven green withs, which had not been dried, and ſhe bound him with them. 9. (Now *there were* men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber) And ſhe ſaid unto him, The Philiſtines *be* upon thee, Samſon. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire: [i] ſo his ſtrength was not known. 10. And Delilah ſaid unto Samſon, Behold, thou haſt mocked me, and told me lies: [k] now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mighteſt be bound. 11. And he ſaid unto her, If they bind me faſt with new ropes † that never were occupied, then ſhall I be weak, and be as another man. 12. Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and ſaid unto him, The Philiſtines *be* upon thee, Samſon. (And *there were* liers in wait abiding in the chamber) And he brake them from off his arms like a thread. 13. And Delilah ſaid unto Samſon, Hitherto thou haſt mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mighteſt be bound. And he ſaid unto her, If thou weaveſt the ſeven locks of my head with the web. 14. And ſhe faſtned *it* with the pin, and ſaid unto him, The Philiſtines *be* upon thee, Samſon. And he awaked out of his ſleep, and [l] went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web. 15. ¶ And ſhe ſaid unto him, How canſt thou ſay, I love thee, when thine heart *is* not with me? Thou haſt mocked me theſe three times, and haſt not told me wherein thy great ſtrength *lieth*. 16. And it came to paſs, when ſhe preſſed him daily with her words, and urged him, *ſo* that his ſoul was † vexed unto death; 17. That [m] he told her all his heart, and ſaid unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head: for I *have been* a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: [n] If I be ſhaven, then my ſtrength will go from me, and I ſhall become weak, and be like any *other* man.

[d] Neh. xiii. 26. Pſ. cxliv. 3. 1 Cor. x. 6.
† i. e. A conſumer.
Prov. v. 11.
[e] Chap. xiv. 15. Prov. vii. 26.
[f] Gen. xx. 16. Num. xxii. 17. Chap. xvii. 2. Mat. xxvi. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 10. Jude 11.
[g] Pſ. xii. 2. Prov. xxiii. 27. & xxvi. 28.
[h] Pſ. xxv. 21. & cxix. 8.
[i] John v. 14.
[k] Prov. vi. 26. & vii. 13.
† Heb. Wherewith work hath not been done.
[l] Ezra ix. 13, 14.
† Heb. Shortened.
Job. xxi. 4. Prov. vii. 26.
[m] 2 Chron. xv. 2.
[n] Num. vi. 5.

v. 4—17. We find here this mighty man ſinking under the power of his beſetting ſin. Once and again he had been brought by it into the moſt imminent danger; yet again relapſes, and, the third time, ſeverely ſuffers. What a warning to every man of God to make a covenant with his eyes, and watch againſt and deny the ſinful luſts of the fleſh, which are as eaſily beſetting, as difficult to be reſiſted.

1. Another harlot caught his eye, and enſnared his heart. In criminal converſation with her he paſſed the day, and him whom armies could not move, a woman enſlaves.

2. The Philiſtines ſeize the opportunity, and hope at laſt to prevail againſt him. Perſuaded that there was ſome charm or ſpell, which gave him ſuch matchleſs ſtrength, which if once diſcovered, they might be able to bind him, they offer Delilah a large bribe, amounting to near ſeven thouſand pounds, to get the ſecret out of him; and, farther to induce her, engage not to kill, but only to diſarm and ſecure him from doing them farther miſchief. *Note*, (1.) Where the love of money is rooted in the heart, bribe high enough, and you may buy body, ſoul, and all. (2.) By this was the Son of God betrayed; the love of thirty pieces of ſilver prevailed on the traitor Judas.

3. On the firſt opportunity, when careſſes had paved the way for an eaſier entrance into his heart, ſhe wiſhes he would gratify her curioſity with informing her where lay his ſtrength, and how he might be ſo bound, as to be unable to help himſelf. Loth to declare the real ſecret, and hoping to put her off, he heſitates not at a lie; but when, to make the experiment, the oſiers bound him, and an alarm of danger was given, the deceit appeared. Again ſhe tries; again he miſinforms her: the new ropes were as tow on his hands. The third time, upbraiding him with his deceit, ſhe wearies him to tell the truth; but ſtill reluctant, he gives her a falſe information; and when ſhe had wove his locks with her web, and faſtened them to the beam, no ſooner was the cry heard, "The Philiſtines be upon thee," than pin, beam, and all were carried away. *Note*, (1.) We muſt never expect fidelity from thoſe, who ſhew their utter unfaithfulneſs to God. (2.) When the heart is infatuated with luſt, repeated warnings of danger will be diſregarded. (3.) They who feel themſelves unable to reſiſt the importunity of their tempter, ſhould inſtantly fly from their company.

4. At laſt, wearied out with her ceaſeleſs upbraidings, and enſlaved by his violent paſſion for her, the fatal ſecret is extorted. He could not bear to be ſuſpected as wanting in affection to her, and, rather than not convince her of it, by gratifying her moſt unreaſonable requeſts, his own reputation, life, yea worſe, God's honour, and the people's ſafety, are baſely betrayed into the power of a faithleſs woman. *Note*, (1.) They who are ſlaves to their luſts, are the worſt of ſlaves, and ſtick at nothing to gratify them. (2.) They who truſt their honour with a vile woman, deſerve to be betrayed.

18. And when Delilah ſaw that he had told her all his heart, ſhe ſent and called for the lords of the Philiſtines, ſaying, Come up this once, for he hath ſhewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philiſtines came up unto her, and [o] brought money in their hand. 19. And [p] ſhe made him ſleep upon her knees, and ſhe called for a man, and ſhe cauſed him to ſhave off the ſeven locks of his head, and ſhe began to afflict him, and his ſtrength went from him. 20. And ſhe ſaid, The Philiſtines *be* upon thee, Samſon. And he awoke out of his ſleep, and ſaid, I will go out as at other times before, and ſhake myſelf. And he wiſt not that [q] the LORD was departed from him. 21. ¶ But the Philiſtines took him, and † put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and [r] bound him with fetters of braſs, and he did grind in the priſon-houſe.

[o] 1 Tim. vi. 10.
[p] Prov. vii. 21, 23. Heb. iii. 13.
[q] Joſh. vii. 12. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Mat. xvii. 16, 20.
† Heb. Digged or bored out.
[r] Pſ. cvii. 11. Hoſ. ix. 12.

v. 18—21. Fully convinced now, from the ſeriouſneſs of his manner, or the name of God which he had uſed, that he had diſcovered to her his whole heart, ſhe ſummons the lords of the Philiſtines once more to attend her, who, by being ſo often diſappointed, had returned home in deſpair; and they, ready to attend her, take the money in their hands, and haſte away. Behold and pity this unhappy victim, deſtined now as a ſheep to the ſlaughter. *Note*, It is juſt in God to give up thoſe to ſuffer, who give themſelves up to ſin.

1. When her aſſiſtants were ready, this treacherous wretch ſpreads the ſoft lap of love, and, after dalliance ſweet, the mighty Samſon ſinks down to reſt, and cloſes thoſe eyes, that, faſcinated with beauty's charm, can ſee no danger in that pleaſing pillow. But now the fatal razor approaches; his ſeven locks fall off; his ſtrength departs; ſome ſymptoms of it in ſleep perhaps appeared; and now the Philiſtines, at her cry, ruſh in, and, to his utter confuſion, he diſcovers his irreparable ruin. At firſt when he awoke, he thought he might ſhake himſelf as before, and wiſt not his dire miſhap; but God was departed, and therefore reſiſtance is vain. *Note*, (1.) Indulgence of ſenſual appetite ſtupifies the conſcience, and rocks the ſoul aſleep in ſecurity; but Satan wakes, and inſenſibly leads us into the pit of ruin. (2.) Many a ſinner cloſes his eyes in peace, which the alarm of death or judgment will open, only to diſcover his ſtate of everlaſting deſpair. (3.) When God is provoked to depart, though we may think we can do as at other times, our weakneſs will appear to our confuſion, and we ſhall ſink under our wickedneſs. (4.) Let every one who reads, beware of Samſon's ſin, leſt they bring themſelves, like him, into the depths of miſery.

2. The Philiſtines ſecure him faſt. No longer now the terror of the mighty, they drag him down to Gaza in triumph, and, to diſable him for ever, put out his eyes, and with fetters of braſs chain him to the mill; at once to ſuffer and ſerve them,

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them, and ſtand the deriſion of every beholder. How art thou fallen, ſon of the morning! how is the glory departed from Iſrael! *Note*, (1.) His puniſhment correſponds with his ſins; thoſe eyes that enſnared his heart, are now for ever cloſed in darkneſs. The ſinner's portion will be the outer darkneſs, where there is wailing and gnaſhing of teeth. (2.) They who yield their members inſtruments of iniquity, will find Satan's ſervice baſe and bitter, when in chains of ſin they groan, being burdened. (3.) Former manifeſtations of God's mercy to ſinners will but aggravate their torment in hell, as the remembrance of the gates of Gaza made the doors of the priſon more ignominious and afflictive.

22. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow
again after he was ſhaven. 23. Then the lords of the
[s] Chap. ix. 27. Dan. v. 4. Rev. xi. 10. Philiſtines gathered them together, for [s] to offer a great
ſacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they
ſaid, Our god hath delivered Samſon our enemy into our
hand. 24. And when the people ſaw him, they praiſed
their god: for they ſaid, Our god hath delivered into
our hands our enemy, and the deſtroyer of our country,
† Heb. And who multiplied our ſlain. † which ſlew many of us. 25. And it came to paſs,
when their hearts were merry, that they ſaid, Call for
Samſon, that [t] he may make us ſport. And they called
[t] Job xxx. 9. Pſal. xxxv. 16. Heb. xi. 36. for Samſon out of the priſon-houſe; and he made them
ſport: and they ſet him between the pillars. 26. And
Samſon ſaid unto the lad that held him by the hand,
Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the houſe
ſtandeth, that I may lean upon them. 27. Now the
houſe was full of men and women; and all the lords of
the Philiſtines *were* there: and *there were* upon the roof
about three thouſand men and women, that beheld while
Samſon made ſport. 28. And [u] Samſon called unto the
[u] 2. Chron. xx. 12. Pſ. l. 15. & cxvi. 4. John iii. 1. Heb. xi. 32. LORD, and ſaid, O Lord God, remember me, I pray
thee, and ſtrengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O
God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philiſtines
for my two eyes. 29. And Samſon took hold of the
‡ Or, He leaned on them. two middle pillars, upon which the houſe ſtood, and ‡ on
which it was born up, of the one with his right hand,
and of the other with his left. 30. And Samſon ſaid,
‖ Heb. My ſoul. Let ‖ me die with the Philiſtines: and he bowed himſelf
[x] Job xxxi. 3. Eccleſ. ix. 12. Mat. xxiv. 38. 1 Theſ. v. 3. with *all his* might; and [x] the houſe fell upon the lords,
and upon all the people that *were* therein: ſo [y] the dead
which he ſlew at his death, were more than *they* which
[y] Col. ii. 15. Heb. ii. 14. he ſlew in his life. 31. Then his brethren, and all the
houſe of his father, came down, and took him, and
About 1135. brought *him* up, and buried him between Zorah and Eſhtaol,
in the burying-place of Manoah his father: and he
judged Iſrael twenty years.

v. 22—31. In this ignominious employment, unhappy Samſon had ſeaſon given him for reflection, bitter reflection! where all was dark without, and all as dark within. Yet how preferable his ſituation! Far better grind in Gaza than ſleep in the boſom of Dalilah. Repentance ſeems now to have been vouchſafed him; his hair began to grow, and, as a token that God had not utterly left him, his ſtrength probably returned with it, God ſtill deſigning him for great exploits, and in his death to wipe away the foul ſtains of his paſt ungracious conduct.

1. The Philiſtines aſſemble to celebrate the praiſes of their god Dagon, half man, half fiſh, to whoſe favour they aſcribe their victory over the mighty Samſon. With ſongs of praiſe the lofty roofs reſound, and echo back their idol's victory. To make their joy compleat Samſon is led forth, inſult added to his ſufferings, and he degraded to be the ſport of fools. *Note*, (1.) If even a Philiſtine could aſcribe his victories only to his dunghill god, how much more are we bound to give our God the glory due unto his name, for all he doth by us, in us, and for us. (2.) They who by their ill-conduct have brought diſhonour upon God, juſtly deſerve to bring contempt upon themſelves. (3.) They who have ſported in ſin to their own deceiving, will find themſelves at laſt expoſed to everlaſting ſhame, when even God himſelf will mock at their calamity.

2. Little thought the lords of the Philiſtines what ruin hung over their heads. In mirth and wine the joyful day was ſpent, and beſides the capital nobility, a vaſt concourſe of men and women crouded the temple within and without, no leſs than three thouſand being on the roof: unhappy Samſon ſtood the ſpectacle of their delight, fallen from his high eſtate, trampled upon by every foot, and led blind along by a little lad, the guide and guard of this once renowned hero. Either wearied with walking round, or grinding at the mill, he wanted to reſt his limbs, or meditating the fatal blow, having informed himſelf of the ſupporters of the roof, he deſires the lad to lead him, that he may lean againſt them; there pauſing for awhile on this great deed, he lifts his heart to God in prayer, for power to avenge, as a public perſon, his own and Iſrael's wrongs, and for his people's ſake chearfully devotes himſelf to death. With arms extended then he graſps the maſſy pillars, and feeling an anſwer to his prayer, in the renewed ſtrength beſtowed on him, he bows himſelf forward, the pillars rock, the building totters, the roof, incumbered with the weight of the ſpectators, ruſhes down, and death, in every tremendous ſhape, appears. Cruſhed under the load, or daſhed to pieces in the fall, thouſands expire; their muſic now is changed to dying groans; and ſhrieks of agonizing pain, inſtead of ſongs of triumph, fill the air. Thus dies the mighty Samſon, glorious in his fall, and more terrible to the Philiſtines in his death, than even during his life. *Note*, (1.) They who ſport and mock at God's ſervants, fill faſt the meaſure of their iniquities. (2.) When we return unto God in penitent prayer, God will return unto us in mercy, and renew our ſtrength. (3.) To die for our country is great, to die for God is greater ſtill. (4.) Samſon's death is a type of Chriſt's; his arms were thus extended on the croſs; laying down a life that none could elſe take from him; ſaving his people by ſhedding his own blood, and caſting down thereby the throne of Satan, ruining his temple in the hearts of men, and deſtroying the power of ſin, death, and hell, their mortal enemies.

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3. His father and friends, during the conſternation, went up and took his dead body from the ruins, the Philiſtines not daring to oppoſe them, or, as having no juſt quarrel with them, permitting it quietly, and buried it in his father's ſepulchre. Twenty years his government laſted, and had the people but followed his example they had no more felt the yoke of Philiſtia. *Note*, 'Tis our own faults if we live and die the ſervants of ſin, becauſe we neglect to uſe the means of grace God vouchſafes us.

CHAP. XVII.

What is related in this, and the reſt of the chapters to the end of this book, was done ſoon after the death of Joſhua, in the days of Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar, chap. xx. 28. *But is placed laſt, in order that it might not interrupt the hiſtory of the Judges. Here is,* 1. *The beginnings of idolatry in the family of Micah,* ver. 1—6. 2. *His conſecration of a Levite to be his prieſt,* ver. 7—13.

1. AND there was a man of mount Ephraim whoſe
name *was* Micah. 2. And he ſaid unto his mother,
The eleven hundred *ſhekels* of ſilver, that were
taken † from thee, about which thou curſedſt, and ſpakeſt † Heb. To thee.
of alſo in mine ears; behold, the ſilver *is* with me, I took
it. And his mother ſaid, Bleſſed *be thou* of the LORD,
my ſon. 3. And when he had reſtored the eleven hundred
ſhekels of ſilver to his mother, his mother ſaid, [a] I [a] Exod. xx. 4. Lev. xix. 12. Deut. xii. 8. Chap. viii. 27.
had wholly dedicated the ſilver unto the LORD, from
my hand, for my ſon to make a graven image, and a
molten image: now therefore I will reſtore it unto thee.
4. Yet he reſtored the money unto his mother, and his
mother took [b] two hundred *ſhekels* of ſilver, and gave them [b] Iſa. xlvi. 6.
to the founder, who made thereof a graven image, and
a molten image: and they were in the houſe of Micah.
5. And the man Micah had an houſe of gods, and made
an ephod, and teraphim, and ‡ conſecrated one of his ‡ Heb. Filled the hand. 1 Kings xii. 31.
ſons, who became his prieſt. 6. In thoſe days *there was*
[c] no king in Iſrael, *but* [d] every man did *that which was* [c] Chap. xviii. 1. & xxi. 25. [d] Deut. xii. 8. Prov. xiv. 12. Jer. x. 23.
right in his own eyes.

v. 1—6. During the government of Joſhua and the elders, the people continued careful of the worſhip of God, but on their death began to apoſtatize to falſe worſhip; the introduction of which is here related.

1. The mother of one Micah, of the tribe of Ephraim, had, by her frugality, hoarded up a large ſum of money; which coming to the knowledge of her ſon, he made no ſcruple to ſteal it, for the uſe of his family: the mother, enraged at the loſs of her ſilver, is in a rage, and denounces grievous imprecations on the thief, in the hearing of the ſon, whom perhaps ſhe ſuſpected. Stung with the ſenſe of the evil of the deed, and fearing the curſe, he confeſſes the theft, brings back the money to his mother; who hereupon recalls her denunciations, and gives him her bleſſing. *Note*, (1.) Covetouſneſs is the beſetting ſin of old age; they who can ſhorteſt enjoy the world, are uſually moſt anxious to lay up the largeſt proviſion. (2.) Parents by their niggardlineſs put great temptations in their children's way to rob them, or wiſh them dead, that they may poſſeſs their hoard. (3.) He is a wicked ſon that robs his parents. (4.) The loſſes which make one man pray, make others curſe and blaſpheme. (5.) They who are haſty in their imprecations, will ſometimes lay them where they would not wiſh

they ſhould light. (6.) The curſe of a parent is a heavy load. (7.) When we have done ill we muſt confeſs and reſtore, if we would regain peace of conſcience. (8.) They who return and repent will find the curſe they have deſerved turned into a bleſſing.

2. Better the money had been loſt for ever, than found for the uſe to which it is applied. Micah's mother, either before it was ſtolen, or as a vow if ſhe recovered it, had dedicated the money to the Lord, but in a way which was moſt abominable in his ſight, to make a graven and a molten image with it; hereunto the ſon too eaſily complies, the ſilver is given to the founder, either the whole nine hundred for the images, and two hundred for the making, or a part only; the love of her money and of her idols dividing her heart, and making her willing to reſerve the beſt ſhare for herſelf of the dedicated ſum. *Note*, The contending corruptions of a ſinner's heart oftentimes jar with each other, and one can only be indulged on the denial of another.

3. The images being made, Micah ſets them up with an ephod and teraphim, little houſhold gods for divination, in imitation of the urim and thummim; and having ſet apart a room or built a houſe for his gods, conſecrated one of his ſons, probably the eldeſt, as prieſt to miniſter before them. At firſt they ſeem to intend only the worſhip of Jehovah, in and through theſe repreſentations of him; but the breach of one commandment ſoon deſtroyed the other, and ſapped the foundation of all. *Note*, (1.) Corruptions in the church ariſe from ſmall beginnings; to avoid idolatry we muſt keep from ſuperſtition. (2.) It matters little whether the idol be ſet up in the heart or the houſe; whatever alienates the affections from God leads us into idolatry.

4. The reaſon is given why this met no reproof: there was no judge in Iſrael; and they muſt be bad days indeed when no magiſtrates reſtrain ſin, and miniſters are negligent to reprove it.

7. ¶ And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah, of the family of Judah, who *was* a Levite, and he ſojourned there. 8. And the man departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah, to ſojourn [c] where he could find *a place:* and he came to mount Ephraim, to the houſe of Micah, as he journeyed. 9. And Micah ſaid unto him, Whence comeſt thou? And he ſaid unto him, I *am* a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to ſojourn where I may find *a place*. 10. And Micah ſaid unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a [f] father and a prieſt, and I will give thee ten *ſhekels* of ſilver by the year, and † a ſuit of apparel, and [g] thy victuals. So the Levite went in. 11. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man, and the young man was unto him as one of his ſons. 12. And Micah conſecrated the Levite, and the young man became his prieſt, and was in the houſe of Micah. 13. Then ſaid Micah, [h] Now know I that the LORD will do me good, ſeeing I have a Levite to *my* prieſt.

[c] Rom. xvi. 18.

[f] 2 Kings vi. 21. & viii. 9. & xiii. 14.

† Or, A double ſuit. Heb. An order of garments.

[g] Ezek. xiii. 19.

[h] Prov. xiv. 12.

v. 7—13. Micah had probably been content with his ſon's ſervice, if an accident had not brought him a more acceptable chaplain in a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, who was, by his mother's ſide, of the tribe of Judah, and had reſided at Beth-lehem; either through the neglect of God's worſhip, which began to take place, he could no longer gain a maintenance from the miniſtry, and was forced to ſeek a livelihood; or perhaps of a rambling genius, unſettled, and uneaſy to be confined at home: it may be alſo hearing of Micah's houſe of gods, and hoping for better preferment in his ſervice, abominable as it was, than at the altar of God. *Note*, (1.) They muſt be bad times indeed, when God's miniſters want a maintenance. (2.) A roving ſpirit ill becomes a Levite's office. (3.) The prieſt who ſets out with an eye to preferment, is certainly in the high road to hell. (4.) The miniſtry is the beſt calling, but the worſt trade in the world.

Micah having at the door enquired whence he came, and learned his profeſſion, invites him in; offers, if he will officiate for him, to treat him with reſpect as a father; to provide him meat, drink and two ſuits a year, and give him beſide ten ſhekels, about twenty-five ſhillings, as a ſalary. The Levite conſents, the bargain is concluded, and as he found it a good houſe, though the work was ſcandalous, and the wages mean, he thought himſelf well ſettled. Micah hereupon preſumptuouſly conſecrates him for his prieſt, and ſhews him all reſpect and affection; fooliſhly concluding himſelf now happy in a Levite for his prieſt, and vainly promiſing himſelf God's bleſſing, whilſt taking the moſt direct means to bring down his curſe upon him. *Note*, (1.) They whoſe office and duty it is to rebuke ſin, for the ſake of their belly, and a good table, are often wicked and mean enough to ſit by and countenance it. (2.) They who chuſe their own deluſions, would fain flatter themſelves, that God approves of them. (3.) More, like Micah, derive their hopes from the prieſt and the altar, their worſhip, and external devotions, than from ſpirituality of temper and real purity of heart. (4.) The deeds the ſelf-righteous boaſt of, as moſt commending them to God's favour, are thoſe God moſt abhors, and which moſt effectually ſeal them up under wrath.

CHAP. XVIII.

How great a matter doth a little fire kindle! The idolatry of a family ſoon infects a tribe. We are told, (1.) *How the Danite ſpies ſent to view Laiſh got acquainted with Micah's prieſt,* ver. 1—6. (2.) *The encouraging report theſe ſpies brought back,* ver. 7—10. (3.) *What forces were ſent to conquer Laiſh,* ver. 11—13. (4.) *How they by the way plundered Micah of his gods,* ver. 14—26. (5.) *How eaſily they conquered Laiſh,* ver. 27—29. *and wickedly ſet up the graven image in it,* ver. 30, 31.

1. IN thoſe days *there was* [a] no king in Iſrael: and in thoſe days the tribe of [b] the Danites ſought them an inheritance to dwell in: for unto that day *all their* inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Iſrael. 2. And the children of Dan ſent of their family five men from their coaſts, men of valour, from Zorah, and from Eſhtaol, to ſpy out the land, and to ſearch it; and they ſaid unto them, Go, ſearch the land: who when they came to mount Ephraim, to the houſe of Micah, they lodged there. 3. When they *were* by the houſe of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and ſaid unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makeſt thou in this *place?* and what haſt thou here? 4. And he ſaid unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his prieſt. 5. And they ſaid unto him, [c] Aſk counſel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go ſhall be proſperous. 6. And the prieſt ſaid unto them, [d] Go in peace: [e] before the LORD *is* your way wherein ye go.

[a] Chap. xvii. 6. & xxi. 25.

[b] Joſh. xix. 47.

[c] Chap. xvii. 5. Pſ. cxv. 7. Hoſ. iv. 12.

[d] Neh. vi. 8. Acts viii. 10.

[e] Jer. xxiii. 21.

v. 1—6. A great part of the inheritance of the Danites remained unconquered, *chap*. i. 34, 35. and the Amorites ſtraitning them yet more, one family of the tribe bethought them of looking out ſome eaſier conqueſt; and having the city of Laiſh allotted them in the northern border,

1. They ſend out five men as ſpies to ſearch the land, that they might know its condition, and what force would be neceſſary to attack it. *Note*, With good advice make war.

2. In their way paſſing by Micah's houſe, and ſpending a night there, one of them, by his voice, diſcovers the Levite, whom he had formerly known; this produces enquiry into his buſineſs there, and he informs them of his office, and Micah's agreement with him.

3. Far from being ſhocked at the account, or ready to reprove this idolatry, they beg this unhallowed prieſt to aſk counſel of his teraphim, and think it a lucky accident that they have ſuch an opportunity of enquiring whether their undertaking ſhould proſper. Strange folly! to aſk direction of idols when Shiloh was ſo nigh, and prefer an intruding ſelf-made prieſt, to the anointed of the Lord. Thus ſtill the blind lead the blind, and the people love to have it ſo.

4. The Levite prieſt pretends to give them hereupon an anſwer from God, and aſſures them of the ſucceſs of their enterprize. Their way was under divine direction, and God would guard and proſper them in it. *Note*, They may comfortably go on their ways, whoſe goings the Lord upholds and guides.

7. ¶ Then the five men departed, and came to † Laiſh, and ſaw the people that *were* therein, how they dwelt careleſs, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and ‡ ſecure, and *there was* no magiſtrate in the land that might [f] put *them* to ſhame in *any* thing, and they *were* far from the Zidonians, and had no buſineſs with *any* man. 8. And they came unto their brethren to Zorah, and Eſhtaol: and their brethren ſaid unto them, What *ſay* ye? 9. And they ſaid, Ariſe, that we may go up againſt them: for we have ſeen the land, and behold, it *is* very good: and *are* ye ſtill? be not ſlothful to go, *and* to enter to poſſeſs the land. 10. When ye go, ye ſhall come unto a people ſecure, and to ‖ a large land: for God hath given it into your hands: a place where *there is* no want of any thing that *is* in the earth. 11. ¶ And there went from thence of the family of the Danites

† Or, Leſhen. Joſh. xix. 47.

‡ Heb. Confident. Rev. xviii. 7.

[f] Pſal. xii. 4. Jer. xliv. 17.

‖ Heb. A land wide in ſides.

nites out of Zorah and out of Eſhtaol, ſix hundred men, appointed with weapons of war. 12. And they went up, and pitched in Kirjath-jearim in Judah: wherefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan unto this day: behold, *it is* behind Kirjath-jearim. 13. And they paſſed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto [g] the houſe of Micah.

[g] Chap. xvii. 1.

v. 7—13. The five ſpies proceeded on their journey to Laiſh, of which we have here an account.

1. The people were living in the moſt ſupine ſecurity, without guards to protect, or governors to reſtrain them. Wickedneſs met with no reproof, and knew no ſhame, ſo that they appeared ripe for judgment; and as they entirely neglected their gates, and were at a diſtance from any help, nothing could be an eaſier prey. *Note,* (1.) If there be no magiſtrate to bear the ſword, or negligence lets it ſleep in the ſcabbard, barefaced iniquity will quickly walk in triumph. (2.) Shame is a great reſtraint on ſin; when that is loſt, men grow utterly abandoned. (3.) The ſecurity of ſinners is their ruin.

2. They carry this report back to their brethren, and earneſtly preſs them to make no delay to go up; the conqueſt is eaſy, the people ſecure, the land excellent, and nothing wanting but to put off their ſloth, and march and poſſeſs it. *Note,* (1.) Sloth is a great enemy to the ſoul, in its ſpiritual warfare. (2.) We need exhort one another daily, to ariſe and be doing; none knows how much comfort he loſes here, and how much glory hereafter, by his ſinful negligence. (3.) Heaven is a good land, and if we have a heart to travel thither, and bravely enter, we ſhall find every want ſupplied for ever.

3. The family of the Danites, to whom the city was allotted, begin their march; ſix hundred men of war, with their houſholds and ſubſtance, as if to certain victory. *Note,* They who go out in faith are ſure to prevail.

14. ¶ Then anſwered the five men that went to ſpy out the country of Laiſh, and ſaid unto their brethren, Do ye know that [h] there is in theſe houſes an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? Now therefore [i] conſider what ye have to do. 15. And they turned thitherward, and came to the houſe of the young man the Levite, *even* unto the houſe of Micah, and † ſaluted him. 16. And the ſix hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which *were* of the children of Dan, ſtood by the entring of the gate. 17. And the five men that went to ſpy out the land, went up, *and* came in thither, *and* took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the prieſt ſtood in the entring of the gate with the ſix hundred men *that were* appointed with weapons of war. 18. And theſe went into Micah's houſe, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: then ſaid the prieſt unto them, What do ye? 19. And they ſaid unto him, Hold thy peace, [k] lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a prieſt: *is it* better for thee to be a prieſt unto the houſe of one man, or that thou be a prieſt unto a tribe and a family in Iſrael? 20. And [l] the prieſt's heart was glad, and he took the ephod and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midſt of the people. 21. So they turned and departed, and put the little ones, and the cattle, and the carriage before them. 22. ¶ *And* when they were a good way from the houſe of Micah, the men that *were* in the houſes near to Micah's houſe, were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. 23. And they cried unto the children of Dan: and they turned their faces, and ſaid unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comeſt with ſuch a company? 24. And he ſaid, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the prieſt, and ye are gone away: and [m] what have I more? and what *is* this *that* ye ſay unto me, What aileth thee? 25. And the children of Dan ſaid unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, leſt ‡ angry fellows run upon thee, and thou ‖ loſe thy life, with the lives of thy houſhold. 26. And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah ſaw that they *were* too ſtrong for him, he turned and went back unto his houſe.

[h] Chap. xvii. 5.

[i] Prov. xix. 27. Iſa. viii. 20.

† Heb. Aſked him of peace.

[k] Job xxi. 5. & xxix. 9.

[l] Prov. xxx. 15. Iſa. lvi. 10. Jer. iii. 6. Ezek. xiii. 19. Phil. iii. 19. 2 Pet. ii. 3.

[m] Jer. l. 38. & li. 17. Rev. xvii. 2.

‡ Heb. Men of bitter ſoul. 2 Sam. xvii. 8.

‖ Heb. Gather thy ſoul and the ſoul of thy houſe. Pſ. xxvi. 9.

v. 14—26. As their rout lay not far from Micah's houſe, when they came in ſight of it, the five men, who had gone to ſpy out Laiſh, informed their brethren of Micah's houſe of gods, and of the uſe they had made of them, throwing in a hint, whether it might not be worth conſideration, either to conſult them at preſent, or perhaps take them along with them by way of oracle. No ſooner is the hint dropped than the advice is followed.

1. The five men, who knew the avenues to the chapel, are ſent to ſteal the images, ephod, and teraphim, whilſt the prieſt in the gate is held in converſe with the men of war. Strange that they could have dependance upon gods ſo little able to defend themſelves! and ſtranger ſtill, to hope that ſtolen gods ſhould bring a bleſſing with them! How blind and ſtupid is the ſinner!

2. The prieſt, ſurprized at ſeeing them return with his treaſure, expoſtulates with them againſt the theft; but his complaints are eaſily ſilenced; no ſooner do they propoſe to him to go along with them, and ſet in his view better wages and greater preferment, than he very readily conſents to follow his gods, and leave a private cure for a ſee, little concerning himſelf about the charge, or the infamous means of his advancement. Accordingly now the Danites think themſelves furniſhed, and with their prieſt and gods in the midſt of them, march on confidently. *Note,* (1.) When a prieſt's heart is more glad of his preferment, than concerned about the weight of his office, it is a ſure ſign he ſerves an idol god. (2.) When a man chuſes the miniſtry for the ſalary, not the ſouls, it cannot be but that he muſt ſcandalize his profeſſion.

3. Micah no ſooner found his gods and his prieſt thus ſtolen away, than collecting his neighbours, who reſorted to his idols with him, he purſues the Danites, and in the greateſt anguiſh of heart complains of his irreparable loſs; they, deaf to his cries, give him a ſurly anſwer, and bid him take care of himſelf, leaſt his ill-judged importunity ſhould provoke them to murder him: frightned with the menace, Micah returns; not, it is to be feared, to renounce his idolatry, but to mourn over his idols. *Note,* (1.) They are ſtill idolaters, who, under afflictive providences, refuſe to be comforted, as if to be deprived of creature-comforts was to loſe their all. (2.) If Micah appeared ſo diſtreſſed for his idols, with how much greater cauſe ſhould the ſoul, from whom God hath withdrawn himſelf, lament and mourn after him. (3.) Where power is with oppreſſors, to complain of injuſtice is only to meddle to our harm. (4.) They who dare commit theft will hardly ſcruple, if needful to ſecure their ill-gotten wealth, to commit murder.

27. And they took *the things* which Micah had made, and the prieſt which he had, and came unto Laiſh, unto a people *that were* at quiet, and ſecure; and they ſmote them with the edge of the ſword, and burnt the city with fire. 28. And *there was* no deliverer, becauſe it *was* far from Zidon, and they had no buſineſs with *any* man; and it *was* in the valley that *lieth* by Beth-rehob: and they built a city and dwelt therein. 29. And they called the name of the city [n] Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Iſrael: howbeit, the name of the city *was* Laiſh at the firſt. 30. ¶ And the children of Dan † ſet up the graven image: and Jonathan the ſon of Gerſhom, the ſon of Manaſſeh, he and his ſons were prieſts to the tribe of Dan, [o] until the day of the captivity of the land. 31. And they ſet them up Micah's graven image, which he made, [p] all the time that the houſe of God was in Shiloh.

[n] Joſh. xix. 47.

† Heb. Set up before them.

[o] 1 Sam. iv. 10. Pſal. lxxviii. 60.

[p] Joſh. xviii. 1.

v. 27—31. Proceeding on their expedition they arrive at Laiſh, where, according to the report of the ſpies, the people were in perfect ſecurity; but when ſinners cry, Peace, peace, then cometh the ſword.

1. They ſmote them without any reſiſtance, put the people to the ſword, and burnt the city, which they afterwards rebuilt, and called it Dan, to preſerve their connection with their brethren, leaſt, by their diſtance from them, they might afterwards be diſowned.

2. They ſet up Micah's idols there, probably imputing their ſucceſs to their preſence; and the Levite, whoſe name was Jonathan, the ſon of Gerſhom, the ſon of Manaſſeh, or Moſes, as ſome read it, he and his ſons were prieſts there, until the ark was taken by the Philiſtines, in the time of Eli. And though this idol-worſhip ſeems to be ſuppreſſed during the days of Samuel, David and Solomon, yet enough of the old leaven remained to make Jeroboam's calves welcome. *Note,* (1.) Proſperity in an evil way encourages the heart to perſevere in it. (2.) If pious parents could look out of their graves upon their degenerate children, it would ſhock and grieve them. (3.) When bad habits are long indulged, it is very hard to eradicate them; and if, for a ſeaſon, they are reſtrained, yet relapſes are greatly to be feared.

CHAP. XIX.

The following chapters relate a ſhocking hiſtory of the wickedneſs of the men of Gibeah with a Levite's concubine, and the ruin of the tribe

tribe of Benjamin, who eſpouſed their cauſe. We have, (1.) *The elopement of a Levite's concubine,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *The journey he took to fetch her home,* ver. 3. (3.) *Her father's kind entertainment of him,* ver. 4—9. (4.) *The neglect that he met with from the men of Gibeah,* ver. 10—15. (5.) *His being kindly entertained by an Ephraimite,* ver. 16—21. (6.) *Their ſetting upon him in his quarters,* ver. 22—24. (7.) *Their forcing his concubine till ſhe died,* ver. 25—28. (8.) *The notice he ſent of this to all the tribes of Iſrael,* ver. 29, 30.

1. AND it came to paſs in thoſe days, when *there was* [a] no king in Iſrael, that there was a certain Levite ſojourning on the ſide of mount Ephraim, who took to him † a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah. 2. And [b] his concubine played the whore againſt him, and went away from him unto her father's houſe to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there four whole months. 3. And her huſband aroſe and went after her to ſpeak ‡ friendly unto her, *and* to bring her again, having his ſervant with him, and a couple of aſſes: and ſhe brought him unto her father's houſe, and when the father of the damſel ſaw him, he rejoiced to meet him. 4. And his father-in-law, the damſel's father, retained him, and he abode with him three days: ſo they did eat and drink, and lodged there. 5. And it came to paſs on the fourth day, when they aroſe early in the morning, that he roſe up to depart: and the damſel's father ſaid unto his ſon-in-law, ‖ Comfort thine heart with a morſel of bread, and afterward go your way. 6. And they ſat down and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damſel's father had ſaid unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and let thine heart § be merry. 7. And when the man roſe up to depart, his father-in-law urged him: therefore he lodged there again. 8. And he aroſe early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damſel's father ſaid, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried † until afternoon, and they did eat both of them. 9. And when the man roſe up to depart, he and his concubine, and his ſervant; his father-in-law, the damſel's father, ſaid unto him, Behold, now the day draweth towards evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry: and to-morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayſt go home. 10. But the man would not tarry that night, but he aroſe up and departed, and came over-againſt [c] Jebus, (which *is* Jeruſalem) and *there were* with him two aſſes ſaddled, his concubine alſo *was* with him. 11. *And* when they *were* by Jebus, the day was far ſpent, and the ſervant ſaid unto his maſter, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this city of the Jebuſites, and lodge in it. 12. And his maſter ſaid unto him, We will not turn aſide hither into the city of a ſtranger, that *is* not of the children of Iſrael: we will paſs over to [d] Gibeah. 13. And he ſaid unto his ſervant, Come, and let us draw near to one of theſe places to lodge all night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah. 14. And they paſſed on, and went their way, and the ſun went down upon them *when they were* by Gibeah, which *belongeth* to Benjamin. 15. And they turned aſide thither to go in *and* to lodge in Gibeah: and when he went in, he ſat him down in a ſtreet of the city: for *there was* no man that ‡ took them into his houſe to lodging.

[a] Chap. xvii. 6.
† Heb. A wife, a concubine. Gen. xxii. 24. Mal. ii. 15.
[b] Prov. xxx. 20.
‡ Heb. To her heart. Lev. xix. 17. Gal. vi. 1.
‖ Heb. Strengthen. Gen. xviii. 5. 1 Kings xiii. 7. Pſ. civ. 15.
§ Heb. Be good.
† Heb. Until the day declined.
[c] Joſh. xv. 63. 2 Sam. v. 6.
[d] Joſh. xviii. 28.
‡ Heb. Gathered. Mat. xxv. 35. Heb. xiii. 2.

v. 1—15. The events of the following chapters are proofs how great a miſery it is to any people to be without good government. We have here,

1. The journey of a Levite of mount Ephraim, after his wife or concubine, whom he had taken out of Beth-lehem-judah. She had proved falſe to him, left his houſe, and returned to her father; but ſtill retaining his affection for her, and hearing, it ſeems, of her ſorrow for her ill-conduct, he went to ſpeak comfortably to her, and fetch her home again. *Note,* (1.) Unfaithfulneſs to marriage vows, makes a breach that, of all others, can moſt difficultly be healed. (2.) Where there is real remorſe in the offender, let not the injured be implacable. (3.) Though parents ſhould be very jealous how they receive thoſe into their houſes who have deſerted their huſbands, yet it is highly dangerous, by ſeverity, to render thoſe deſperate, who, by milder methods may be reclaimed.

2. The reception he met with from the father was very affectionate. The reconciliation was matter of great joy to him, he makes a three days entertainment to welcome his ſon, and, when he was preparing to depart on the fourth, importunes him to dine firſt; and, as it then ſeemed too late to ſet off, prevails with him to ſtay the night. The next day he uſed the ſame importunity, but though he prevailed on his ſon-in-law to dine with him, his uneaſineſs would not permit a longer abſence from home, and in the evening he ſet out on his journey, and took his concubine along with him. *Note,* (1.) Generous hoſpitality to our friends and relations is very becoming, and a proof of our regard to them. (2.) Though we may yield ſomewhat to the importunity of friends, yet every man hath calls at home, and Levites eſpecially, that will not permit long abſence. (3.) Let kind friends beware of ſelfiſhneſs in their ſollicitations, leaſt their intended kindneſs do us real injury. (4.) They who would have a proſperous journey, ought to take day-light before them.

3. Being reſolved to go, though late, he haſtens onward; but night approaching, his ſervant ſuggeſts to him whether they had not beſt lodge at Jebus, leaſt they ſhould be benighted on the journey; to this his maſter objects, not chuſing to lodge among ſtrangers, when cities of his brethren were near, which they might reach in time. Accordingly they go on for Gibeah, or Ramah; but it growing dark apace, they turn in at Gibeah, as neareſt: and as there was then no public inns, they ſat down in the ſtreet, waiting for ſome invitation, but in that inhoſpitable place, no man was kind enough to offer them a lodging. *Note,* (1.) It becomes us to be very careful with whom we contract intimacies. (2.) Where we have reaſon to expect the greateſt kindneſs, we ſometimes receive the moſt mortal injuries. (3.) When we lodge at an inn, let us not complain of the accommodation, but thank God we are not compelled to lodge in the ſtreet.

16. ¶ And behold, there came an old man [e] from his work out of the field at even, which *was* alſo of mount Ephraim; and he ſojourned in Gibeah, but the men of the place *were* Benjamites. 17. And when he had lift up his eyes, he ſaw a wayfaring man in the ſtreet of the city: and the old man ſaid, Whither goeſt thou? and whence comeſt thou? 18. And he ſaid unto him, We *are* paſſing from Beth-lehem-judah, toward the ſide of mount Ephraim, from thence *am* I: and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I *am now* going to the houſe of the LORD, and there *is* no man that † receiveth me to houſe. 19. Yet there is both ſtraw and provender for our aſſes: and there is bread and wine alſo for me and for thy handmaid, and for the young man *which is* with thy ſervants: *there is* no want of any thing. 20. And the old man ſaid, Peace *be* with thee: howſoever, *let* all thy wants *lie* upon me, only lodge not in the ſtreet. 21. So he brought him into his houſe, and [f] gave provender unto the aſſes: and they waſhed their feet, and did eat and drink.

[e] Gen. iii. 19. Pſ. civ. 23. Eccleſ. i. 13. Eph. iv. 28. 2 Theſ. iii. 10.
† Heb. Gathereth. Ver. 15.
[f] Mat. x. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 14.

v. 16—21. Though the men of the city were ſo unkind or uncivil, there was one, though a ſojourner, who was of another ſpirit. He was an Ephraimite himſelf, but ſeems to have had ſome poſſeſſions near Gibeah, an old man, who had lived in better days, and conſented not to the wickedneſs of the riſing generation; having ſpent the day induſtriouſly in the field, returning at night he ſees and enquires into this ſtranger's buſineſs, and ready to open his hoſpitable doors, receives him, doubly welcome as a Levite, and his countryman alſo. The Levite wanted nothing but a lodging, having ſufficient proviſion and provender with him; but the good old man, too generous to permit this, entertains him at his table, and takes care of his cattle: this done they, without doubt, began to look upon themſelves as happy in the opportunity of ſpending a comfortable evening together. *Note,* (1.) A truly charitable heart looks out for, and is happy in an opportunity of doing good. (2.) The company of a miniſter of God is good payment for a hearty welcome. (3.) A good man will not wiſh to be troubleſome to others, when he hath a proviſion of his own. (4.) We are ſometimes rejoicing that our troubles are at an end, when we foreſee not the darker cloud which is gathering.

22. ¶ *Now* as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain ſons of † Belial, beſet the houſe round about, *and* beat at the door, and ſpake to the maſter of the houſe, the old man, ſaying, Bring forth the man that came into thine houſe, that [g] we may know him. 23. And the man, the maſter of the houſe, went out unto them, and ſaid unto them, Nay, my brethren, *nay,* I pray you, do not *ſo* wickedly; ſeeing that this man is come into mine houſe, [h] do not this folly. 24. Behold, *here is* my daughter a maiden, and his concubine, them I will bring out now, and [i] humble ye them, and do with them what ſeemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not ‡ ſo vile a thing.

† i. e. Without profit, or without yoke. Gen. xix. 4. Hoſ. ix. 9. Deut. xiii. 13.
[g] Gen. xix. 5. Rom. i. 26.
[h] Gen. xxxiv. 7. 2 Sam. xiii. 12.
[i] Gen. xix. 8. Deut. xxi. 14.
‡ Heb. The matter of this folly.

Before Chriſt 1426.

25. But the men would not hearken to him; ſo the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her and abuſed her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to ſpring, they let her go. 26. Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and ‖ fell down at the door of the man's houſe, where [k] her lord *was*, till it was light. 27. And her lord roſe up in the morning, and opened the doors of the houſe, and went out to go his way: and behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the houſe, and her hands *were* upon the threſhold. 28. And he ſaid unto her, Up, and let us be going: but none anſwered. Then the man took her *up* upon an aſs, and the man roſe up, and gat him unto his place. 29. ¶ And when he was come into his houſe, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, § *together* with her bones, into twelve pieces, and ſent her into all the coaſts of Iſrael. 30. And it was ſo, that all that ſaw it ſaid, there was no ſuch deed done nor ſeen, from the day that the children of Iſrael came up out of the land of Egypt, unto this day: [l] conſider of it, take advice, and ſpeak *your minds*.

‖ Heb. Fell there.
[k] 1 Pet. iii. 6.
§ Or, Through her bones.
[l] Chap. xx. 13. Prov. xiii. 10.

v. 22—30. Behold another Lot in another Sodom! We have here,

1. The tumultuous aſſembly of the men of Gibeah. This ſhould have been a city of Levites, but perhaps not being ſufficiently numerous, the Benjamites, in whoſe tribe it lay, yet inhabited it; and a vile ſet of wretches they were, ſons of Belial, who neither feared God nor regarded man, ſet only upon the indulgence of their brutal luſts, and ſticking at nothing to gratify them. In defiance of all laws, human and divine, they beſet the houſe, demand the ſtranger, and dare avow their infamous deſigns upon him. *Note*, (1.) Continuance in lewdneſs breeds barefaced impudence. (2.) When a ſinner is given up to his own heart's luſts, he eaſily ſinks into the moſt unnatural crimes, which are ſhocking but to mention.

2. The good man of the houſe goes out to expoſtulate with them, pleads the rights of hoſpitality, and the wickedneſs of their demands, nay proffers to bring them (a very ſinful propoſal, which never can be vindicated) his own daughter, and the Levite's concubine, that he might, by a leſſer evil, divert them from a greater; but they are deaf to remonſtrance, and their heart is fully ſet in them to do evil. *Note*, (1.) Sinners often grow deſperate in wickedneſs, and, like the raging ſea, neither will bear reſtraint nor hear admonition. (2.) We may never commit one evil, to avoid a greater, but chuſe the greateſt ſuffering preferably to the leaſt ſin.

3. The Levite's wife, probably more handſome than the old man's daughter, being thruſt out to them, they ſeize her; and perhaps ſeeing the old man reſolute to gratify them no farther, they make her the object of their brutal luſt. All night they abuſed her, till the dawning day, caſting unwelcome light on ſuch deeds of darkneſs, they left her and retired. Her ſtrength exhauſted, her ſpirit ſunk with grief and ſhame, her body covered with mortal bruiſes, and murdered with this inhuman treatment, ſhe juſt crawls to the door, falls down and dies. *Note*, (1.) The luſt which had been her ſin, is now, in juſt judgment, made her puniſhment. (2.) They who have ruined the objects of their guilty pleaſure may think lightly of their crimes, but will ſurely meet an avenging God.

4. In the morning the Levite aroſe to go, and ſeeing his wife in this poſture, thinks her aſhamed of what had paſſed, or aſleep on the ground, and therefore bids her ariſe; but he ſoon finds his miſtake, ſhe is dead. Hereupon he quietly took her on his beaſt, glad to eſcape with his own life from ſuch a ſcene of abominations; home he haſtens, inſtead of going to Shiloh, as he propoſed: and as there was no king or general council, from whom he could ſeek redreſs, he takes a method which could not but tend to make every Iſraelite ſhudder with horror; he divided the dead body into twelve parts, and ſent one to each tribe, with an account of what had paſſed, referring it to them to conſider what puniſhment ſuch atrocious wickedneſs deſerved; one part was probably ſent to Benjamin, as well as the other tribes, if perhaps ſome might be found different from their brethren, or elſe two parts were for Manaſſeh, whoſe lot was divided.

5. Struck with indignation and horror at the deed, the whole body of the people, as one man, declare their ſenſe of ſuch an unparalleled crime. A ſolemn aſſembly is reſolved upon, where they might meet to determine the puniſhment of the offenders, and in the mean time the matter is recommended to the weighty conſideration of each man, that when they met in council they might be ready to reſolve upon a proper method of proceeding. *Note*, (1.) Even where the provocation is great, we do well to proceed with deliberation, leaſt our anger biaſs our reſolutions. (2.) They who would obtain God's bleſſing on the land muſt ſeek to purge iniquity from it, by executing juſtice on the criminals.

CHAP. XX.

A melancholy ſcene does this chapter preſent. We have, (1.) *The Levite's cauſe heard in a general convention of the tribes,* ver. 1—7. (2.) *An unanimous reſolve to avenge his quarrel upon the men of Gibeah,* ver. 8—11. (3.) *The Benjamites appearing in defence of the criminals,* ver. 12—17. (4.) *The defeat of Iſrael in the firſt and ſecond day's battle,* ver. 18—25. (5.) *Their humbling themſelves before God upon that occaſion,* ver. 26—28. (6.) *The total rout they gave the Benjamites in the third engagement,* ver. 29—48.

1. THEN all the children of Iſrael went out, and the congregation was gathered together [a] as one man, [b] from Dan even to Beer-ſheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD in Mizpeh. 2. And the chief of all the people, *even* of all the tribes of Iſrael, preſented themſelves in the aſſembly of the people of God, four hundred thouſand footmen that drew ſword. 3. (Now [c] the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Iſrael were gone up to Mizpeh.) Then ſaid the children of Iſrael; Tell *us*, how was this wickedneſs? 4. And † the Levite, the huſband of the woman that was ſlain, anſwered and ſaid, I came into Gibeah that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine to lodge. 5. And the men of Gibeah roſe againſt me, and beſet the houſe round about upon me by night, *and* thought to have ſlain me: *and* my concubine have they forced, that ſhe is dead. 6. And I took my concubine and cut her in pieces, and ſent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Iſrael: for [d] they have committed lewdneſs and folly in Iſrael. 7. Behold, [e] ye *are* all children of Iſrael, give here your advice and counſel. 8. ¶ And all the people aroſe as one man, ſaying, [f] We will not any *of us* go to his tent, neither will we any *of us* turn into his houſe. 9. But now, this *ſhall be* the thing which we will do to Gibeah, *we will go up* by lot againſt it: 10. And we will take ten men of an hundred, throughout all the tribes of Iſrael, and an hundred of a thouſand, and a thouſand out of ten thouſand, to fetch victual for the people; that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Iſrael. 11. So all the men of Iſrael were gathered againſt the city, ‡ knit together as one man.

[a] Ver. 8, 11.
[b] 1 Sam. iii. 20. 2 Sam. iii. 10. & xxiv. 2.
[c] Prov. xxii. 3. Mat. v. 25.
† Heb. The man, the Levite.
[d] Gen. xxxiv. 7. Chap. xix. 23.
[e] Exod. xix. 6.
[f] Gen. xlix. 6.
‡ Heb. Fellows.

v. 1—11. Fired with holy zeal againſt ſuch a crying enormity, the whole congregation aſſembles in Mizpeh, near Shiloh, that they may not only deliberate but conſult God's mind and will in the matter. Four hundred thouſand men, under their captains of hundreds and thouſands, furniſhed with weapons of war, are ready to put in force the ſentence which ſhall be reſolved upon. The children of Benjamin alone, though acquainted with the aſſembling of Iſrael, and the cauſe of it, refuſe to come up, and determine to protect the delinquents, becoming thereby parties in the crime, *ex poſt facto*, by their vindication of it.

1. A ſolemn examination and depoſition is taken from the Levite, and probably from the old man and his ſervant, who were preſent, *v.* 3. the circumſtances of the ſtory are related and confirmed. The Levite modeſtly interprets their deſign to have ſlain him, as the leſſer crime of the two, and to which he had ſooner ſubmitted than to their unnatural luſt, and in fact they had ſlain his concubine. Such lewdneſs and folly, eſpecially in Iſrael, deſerved, no doubt, a ſevere ſcourge; he refers himſelf for this to their wiſe and vigorous reſolutions, as children of Iſrael, who would wipe off ſuch a defiling ſtain from among them. *Note*, (1.) Lewdneſs in Iſrael is doubly criminal. (2.) Before we proceed to judgment, the evidence ſhould be clear and diſtinct. (3.) They who are God's people will at leaſt, by their conduct, teſtify their abhorrence of the iniquity which may be found among them, and cut off from their communion that wicked perſon.

2. The fact being undoubted, their reſolution is unanimous. They ſwear never to ſeparate till they have obtained ſatisfaction; and in order that the army may be ſupplied in their encampment before Gibeah, forty thouſand men are deputed to provide forage and proviſions. *Note*, (1.) When there is union in the cabinet, it promiſes ſucceſs in the field. (2.) 'Tis good to be zealouſly affected in the cauſe of God, and without delay carry our purpoſes into action.

12. ¶ And the tribes of Iſrael [g] ſent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, ſaying, What wickedneſs *is* this that is done among you? 13. Now therefore deliver *us* the men, [h] the children of Belial, which *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Iſrael. But the children of Benjamin would [i] not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Iſrael: 14. But the children of Benjamin gathered themſelves together out of the cities, unto Gibeah, to go out to battle againſt the children of Iſrael. 15. And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time out of the cities, twenty and ſix thouſand men that drew ſword, beſide the inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbred ſeven hundred choſen men. 16. Among all this people, *there were* ſeven hundred choſen men † left-handed, every one could ſling ſtones at an hair-*breadth*, and not miſs. 17. And the men of Iſrael, beſide Benjamin, were numbred four hundred thouſand men that drew ſword; all theſe *were* men of war.

[g] Deut. xx. 10. Joſh. xxii. 13. Rom. xii. 18.
[h] Deut. xiii. 13. Chap. xix. 22.
[i] 1 Sam. ii. 25. Rom. i. 32. Rev. xviii. 4.
† Heb. Shut or lock'd on their right hand. Chap. iii. 15.

v. 12—17. As wiſe men, who not for revenge but for the glory of God, deſired the execution of the criminals,

1. They ſend to their brethren the tribe of Benjamin, to admoniſh them of the great wickedneſs perpetrated among them, and to demand the delivery of the offenders, to put them to death. *Note*, (1.) We are bound to follow peace with all men, and muſt with reluctance have recourſe to the redreſs of the law or the ſword. (2.) If our traitor-ſins are with-held, there can be no hopes of peace with God. (3.) It is cruelty to the community to ſpare thoſe who, for atrocious crimes, are guilty of death.

2. The men of Benjamin reject their reaſonable demand, either thinking it beneath them to ſubmit, or looking upon it as ungenerous to deſert their brethren and companions in ſin. They are indeed unequal in numbers, and more unequal in the badneſs of their cauſe; yet ſuch confidence have they in the courage and dexterity of their ſlingers, that they dare meet their brethren in the field. *Note*, (1.) They who countenance others in their ſins, are juſtly reckoned alike criminal with them. (2.) Proud ſelf-dependance is the ruin of the ſinner's ſoul. (3.) They who draw the ſword in a bad cauſe, may expect to ſee it bathed in their own blood.

18. ¶ And the children of Iſrael aroſe, and went up to the houſe of God, and [k] aſked counſel of God, and ſaid, Which of us ſhall go up [l] firſt to the battle againſt the children of Benjamin? And the LORD ſaid, Judah *ſhall go up* firſt. 19. And the children of Iſrael roſe up in the morning, and encamped againſt Gibeah. 20. And the men of Iſrael went out to battle againſt Benjamin, and the men of Iſrael put themſelves in aray to fight againſt them at Gibeah. 21. And the children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and [m] deſtroyed down to the ground of the Iſraelites that day, twenty and two thouſand men. 22. And the people, the men of Iſrael, encouraged themſelves, and ſet their battle again in aray, in the place where they put themſelves in aray the firſt day. 23. (And the children of Iſrael went up and wept before the LORD until even, and aſked counſel of the LORD, ſaying, Shall I go up again to battle againſt the children of Benjamin my brother? and the LORD ſaid, Go up againſt him). 24. And the children of Iſrael came near againſt the children of Benjamin the ſecond day. 25. And Benjamin went forth againſt them out of Gibeah the ſecond day, and [n] deſtroyed down to the ground of the children of Iſrael again, eighteen thouſand men; all theſe drew the ſword.

[k] Exod. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21. Joſh. ix. 14. Chap. i. 1. Pſ. l. 15.
[l] Chap. i. 1. Ver. 28.
[m] Jer. xii. 1. Pſal. lxxiii. 18.
[n] Job ix. 12. Pſ. xcvii. 2.

v. 18—25. Peace being rejected, the ſword is drawn. But,

1. The people of Iſrael wait upon God, to know who ſhould firſt go up to the battle, and have the poſt of honour. Judah is appointed to it. Confiding in the juſtneſs of their cauſe, and perhaps proud of their numbers, they made no doubt of their ſucceſs: but the event by no means anſwers their expectations; they are routed with the loſs of twenty-thouſand men. *Note*, The race is not always to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong.

2. Alarmed at this diſaſter, a deputation from the camp haſtes to Shiloh in tears, as ſenſible they had ſins enough to lament, which might juſtly provoke God; they beg him to direct them, whether they ſhould go up again, or retire from their brother Benjamin. On being again ordered to go up, though they aſked not concerning the ſucceſs, nor was it promiſed, they ſet once more the battle in array, and to their increaſing confuſion their numerous hoſts are again diſcomfited, and eighteen thouſand men put to the ſword. What could they think of this ſtrange event, when in ſo good a cauſe, and under God's direction, they met with ſo ſhameful a defeat? This might be, (1.) To humble them, as having truſted too much to the arm of fleſh. (2.) To puniſh them for the idolatry which had began with impunity to ſpread among them? If they are ſo zealous to revenge corporal lewdneſs, God will be jealous for ſpiritual adultery. We may learn alſo hence, (1.) That the beſt of cauſes, even of God and religion, may fall under triumphant wickedneſs. (2.) Not to judge of right and wrong by outward proſperity and ſucceſs. (3.) To wait patiently for the great day, when the myſteries of providence ſhall be explained, and God will appear clear in his ſayings, and juſt in his judgments.

26. ¶ Then all the children of Iſrael, and all the people went up, and came unto the houſe of God, and wept, and ſat there before the LORD, and [o] faſted that day until even, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings before the LORD. 27. And the children of Iſrael enquired of the LORD, (for the ark of the covenant of God *was* there in thoſe days. 28. And [p] Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar, the ſon of Aaron, [q] ſtood before it in thoſe days) ſaying, Shall I yet again go out to battle againſt the children of Benjamin my brother, or ſhall I ceaſe? And the LORD ſaid, Go up, for to-morrow I will deliver them into thine hand. 29. And [r] Iſrael ſet liers in wait round about Gibeah. 30. And the children of Iſrael went up againſt the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themſelves in aray againſt Gibeah, as at other times. 31. And the children of Benjamin went out againſt the people, *and* were drawn away from the city, and they began to ſmite of the people, † *and* kill as at other times, in the high-ways, of which one goeth up to ‡ the houſe of God, and the other to Gibeah [s] in the field, about thirty men of Iſrael. 32. And the children of Benjamin ſaid, They *are* ſmitten down before us, as at the firſt. But the children of Iſrael ſaid, Let us flee, and draw them from the city, unto the high-ways. 33. And all the men of Iſrael roſe up out of their place, and put themſelves in aray at Baal-tamar: and the liers in wait of Iſrael came forth out of their places, *even* out of the meadows of Gibeah. 34. And there came againſt Gibeah ten thouſand choſen men out of all Iſrael, and the battle was ſore: but [t] they knew not that *evil* was near them. 35. And the LORD ſmote Benjamin before Iſrael: and the children of Iſrael deſtroyed of the Benjamites that day, twenty and five thouſand and an hundred men, all theſe drew the ſword. 36. So the children of Benjamin ſaw that they were ſmitten: for the men of Iſrael gave place to the Benjamites, becauſe they truſted unto the liers in wait which they had ſet beſide Gibeah. 37. And the liers in wait haſted, and ruſhed upon Gibeah, and the liers in wait ‖ drew *themſelves* along, and ſmote all the city with the edge of the ſword. 38. Now there was an appointed ſign between the men of Iſrael and the liers in wait, that they ſhould make a great flame with ſmoke to riſe up out of the city. 39. And when the men of Iſrael retired in the battle, Benjamin began to ſmite *and* kill of the men of Iſrael about thirty perſons; for they ſaid, § Surely they are ſmitten down before us, as *in* the firſt battle. 40. But when the † flame began to riſe up out of the city, with a pillar of ſmoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and behold, the flame of the city aſcended up to heaven. 41. And when the men of Iſrael turned again, the men of Benjamin were amazed: for they ſaw that evil was come upon them. 42. Therefore they turned *their backs* before the men of Iſrael, unto the way of the wilderneſs, but the battle overtook them: and them which *came* out of the cities, they deſtroyed in the midſt of them. 43. *Thus* they incloſed the Benjamites round about, *and* chaſed them, *and* trode them down with eaſe over againſt Gibeah toward the ſun-riſing. 44. And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thouſand men; all theſe *were* men of valour. 45. And they turned and fled toward the wilderneſs, unto [u] the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the high-ways, five thouſand men, and purſued hard after them unto Gidom, and ſlew two thouſand men of them. 46. So that all which fell that day of Benjamin, were twenty and five thouſand men that drew the ſword; all theſe *were* men of valour. 47. But

[o] Joel ii. 12, 13.
[p] Num. xxv. 7.
[q] Deut. x. 8.
[r] Joſh. viii. 4. 2 Sam. v. 23.
† Heb. Stabbing.
‡ Or, Bethel.
[s] Joſh. xviii. 24. Chap. x. 13.
[t] Joſh. viii. 14. Job xxi. 13. Prov. xxix. 6. Eccleſ. viii. 11, 12. Iſa. xlvii. 11. 1 Theſ. v. 3.
‖ Or, Made a drawing, or long ſound.
Joſh. vi. 5. Chap. iv. 6.
§ Heb. Being ſmitten, he is ſmitten.
† Heb. The whole conſumption.
[u] Joſh. xv. 31. 1 Chron. vi. 77.

But [x] ſix hundred men turned and fled to the wilderneſs unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months. 48. And the men of Iſrael turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and ſmote them with the edge of the ſword, † as well the men of *every* city, as the beaſt, and all that came to hand: alſo they ſet on fire all the cities that they came to.

[x] Iſa. i. 9. Jer. xiv. 7. Hab. iii. 2.

† Heb. Of the whole city, even to the beaſt, yea, all that was found; they ſet fire on all the cities that were found.

v. 26—48. Confounded at theſe repeated ſtrokes, the whole congregation aſſemble before the Lord at Shiloh.

1. In deep affliction they compaſs God's altar, humbling their ſouls under the ſenſe of conſcious guilt, and crying for pardon and help from him, who alone can ſave either body or ſoul from ruin. They offer ſacrifices of atonement, and peace-offerings; and having now rejected every vain confidence, and enquired of God, not only whether they ſhould go up, but whether they ſhould ſucceed, God gives them aſſurance of victory, and bids them draw near to the battle. *Note*, (1.) When in true humiliation the ſoul is brought low before God, the end of its ſufferings is near. (2.) It is by the one great ſacrifice alone, the ſinner can hope for the favour and preſence of God.

2. On divine warrant they now draw near to the battle, and with a ſucceſs equal to their moſt ſanguine wiſhes. Having contrived an ambuſh near Gibeah, as at Ai, the army advances; but when the Benjamites come forth, they retire precipitately. The Benjamites, concluding they were ſmitten as before, eagerly purſue, and about thirty men are ſlain in the retreat. But now the men of Gibeah and Benjamin being at a diſtance, the ambuſh ariſes, and the defenceleſs city is ſeized and burnt. At the ſight of the aſcending ſmoke, the ſignal given, the men of Iſrael face about at Baal-tamar; the battle is renewed; the Benjamites look back, and too late diſcover the evil which had overtaken them. They are attacked in front and rear at once, routed with eaſe, and, hemmed in as they are, flight is vain. Eighteen thouſand are ſlain on the ſpot, five thouſand in the purſuit, and two thouſand at Gidom, a place they had fled to, or where they made a ſtand. Theſe, with perhaps a hundred left to guard the city, amount to twenty-five thouſand one hundred; and leſs than one thouſand could ſcarce have fallen in the former battles. Thus the very name of Benjamin had been blotted out, if ſix hundred men had not eſcaped to the rock Rimmon; for in their heat, or for their oath ſake in Mizpeh, they fell upon the cities, burnt them, ſlew men, women, and children, and every living creature, as they had done by the devoted Canaanites, and left the land ſwept as with the beſom of deſtruction. *Note*, (1.) What deſolations ſin makes on the earth! (2.) It is vain to fight where God is our foe, or to fly when he purſues. (3.) When God awakes to judgment in the laſt day, not a ſinner ſhall eſcape; no rock can then hide, no mountain cover him.

CHAP. XXI.

Here is, 1. *The lamentation which Iſrael made for Benjamin,* ver. 1—4, 6, 15. 2. *The men of Jabeſh-gilead are ſlain, for not joining againſt Benjamin, and their daughters given to the ſix hundred men, that a tribe might not periſh,* ver. 5, 7—14. 3. *Theſe not ſufficing, the daughters of Shiloh are ſeized,* ver. 16—25.

1. NOW [a] the men of Iſrael had ſworn in Mizpeh, ſaying, There ſhall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife. 2. And [b] the people came to the houſe of God, and abode there till even before God, and lift up their voices, and wept ſore. 3. And ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, [c] why is this come to paſs in Iſrael, that there ſhould be to-day one tribe lacking in Iſrael? 4. And it came to paſs on the morrow, that the people roſe early, and [d] built there an altar, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings. 5. And the children of Iſrael ſaid, Who *is there* among all the tribes of Iſrael, that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? for they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, ſaying, [e] He ſhall ſurely be put to death. 6. And the children of Iſrael repented them for Benjamin their brother, and ſaid, There is one tribe cut off from Iſrael this day: 7. How ſhall we do for wives for them that remain, ſeeing we have ſworn by the LORD, that we will not give them of our daughters to wives? 8. ¶ And they ſaid, What one *is there* of the tribes of Iſrael, that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And behold, there came none to the camp from Jabeſh-gilead to the aſſembly. 9. For the people were numbered, and behold, *there were* none of the inhabitants of Jabeſh-gilead there. 10. And the congregation ſent thither twelve thouſand † men of the valianteſt, and commanded them, ſaying, Go, and ſmite the inhabitants of Jabeſh-gilead with the edge of the ſword, with the women and the children. 11. And this *is* the thing that ye ſhall do, [f] ye ſhall utterly deſtroy every male, and every woman that † hath lien by man. 12. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeſh-gilead, four hundred ‡ young virgins that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan. 13. And the whole congregation ſent *ſome* to ſpeak to the children of Benjamin that *were* in [g] the rock Rimmon, and to † call peaceably unto them. 14. And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had ſaved alive of the women of Jabeſh-gilead: and yet ſo they ‡ ſufficed them not. 15. And the people repented them for Benjamin, becauſe that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Iſrael.

[a] Chap. xx. 8.

[b] Ibid. 23.

[c] Iſa. lxiii. 17.

[d] Joſh. xxii. 11. 2 Sam. xxiv. 25. Heb. xiii. 10.

[e] Gal. iv. 18.

† Heb. Sons of the army.

[f] Num. xxxi. 17. Deut. ii. 34.

† Heb. Knoweth the lying with man.

‡ Heb. Damſels virgins.

[g] Chap. xx. 47.

† Heb. Proclaim peace. Pſ. lxxviii. 38. Iſa. xii. 1.

‡ Heb. Found they not for them.

v. 1—15. Their zeal for the deſtruction of Benjamin was ſcarce ſo great, as their anguiſh is when their warmth is now ſubſided. What increaſes their grief is, at Mizpeh they bound themſelves by a ſolemn execration, not only to deſtroy every city who ſhould neglect their ſummons, but alſo never to give their daughters in marriage to a Benjamite: ſo that having ſlain all the women, and by their oath being unable to give them others, whilſt it was forbidden them to marry with the nations around them, though the ſix hundred men have eſcaped, the tribe is in danger of being extinct. *Note*, (1.) True zeal may be carried too far. (2.) When our ſpirits are exaſperated, we too often ſpeak and do, what in cooler moments we wiſh unſaid and undone. On this mournful occaſion,

1. They wept before God in bitterneſs of ſoul. More affected with Benjamin's deſtruction, than pleaſed with their own victory, they ſpread their complaints before the ſanctuary, and offer up their ſacrifices in ſuch abundance, that they built a temporary altar for that ſervice. *Note*, (1.) Our diſtreſſes ſhould drive us to God. (2.) Under all our griefs the blood of atonement will afford us relief. (3.) They who pour out their complaints to the God of all grace, will uſually find a way to extricate themſelves from their difficulties.

2. The method they took to prevent the ruin of the tribe. On reviewing the troops, the men of Jabeſh-gilead are found abſent. As bound by their oath, they immediately detach twelve thouſand of their moſt valiant troops, to ſmite men, women, and children, except ſuch as had not known man: theſe are to be reſerved for their diſtreſſed brethren. Having performed this ſervice in the utter ruin of Jabeſh-gilead, they returned with four hundred young virgins to the camp in Shiloh. Meſſengers had now been diſpatched to the men who remained in the rock Rimmon: they, glad to embrace the offer of peace, come down to their brethren, and thankfully receive the wives provided for them, though there yet remained a great deficiency. *Note*, (1.) The quarrels of brethren are uſually bitter, and ſeldom end thus in bands of firmer friendſhip. (2.) They who make raſh vows, have only themſelves to blame for the difficulties in which they are involved.

16. ¶ Then the elders of the congregation ſaid, How ſhall we do for wives for them that remain, ſeeing the women are deſtroyed out of Benjamin? 17. And they ſaid, *There muſt be* an inheritance for them that be eſcaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not deſtroyed out of Iſrael. 18. Howbeit, we may not give them wives of our daughters: for [h] the children of Iſrael have ſworn, ſaying, Curſed *be* he that giveth a wife to Benjamin. 19. Then they ſaid, Behold, [i] *there is* a feaſt of the LORD in Shiloh † yearly *in a place* which *is* on the north ſide of Beth-el, on the eaſt ſide of the high-way that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the ſouth of Lebonah. 20. Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, ſaying, Go, and lie in wait in the vineyards: 21. And ſee, and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to [k] dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22. And it ſhall be when their fathers, or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will ſay unto them, † Be favourable unto them for our ſakes: becauſe we reſerved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, *that* you ſhould be guilty. 23. And the children of Benjamin did ſo, and took *them* wives according to their number,

[h] Ver. 1. Eccleſ. v. 2.

[i] Num. x. 10.

† Heb. From days to days.

[k] Exod. xv. 20. Chap. xi. 34. 2 Sam. vi. 14.

† Heb. Have compaſſion on us for them. Col. iii. 12.

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ber, of them that danced, whom they caught ; and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and [l] repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. 24. And the children of Iſrael departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe, and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance. 25. In thoſe days *there was* [m] no king in Iſrael : [n] every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes.

v. 16—25. We have here the expedient uſed to provide wives for the remaining two hundred men of Benjamin, without violation of their oaths. A bad ſhift 'tis true, but better than none.

1. At one of the annual feaſts, probably the feaſt of tabernacles, the daughters of Shiloh uſe to meet in a place at ſome diſtance from the city, to rejoice before the Lord, as David afterwards did, with ſacred muſic and dancing. It was not a mixed company, or lewd aſſembly : all men were excluded, which made the following ſcheme more eaſily put in execution. *Note,* They who plead ſcripture to countenance the modern mixed aſſemblies, neither conſider the manner nor the end of the precedents they quote.

2. The elders adviſe the two hundred men to lie in wait near the place where this ſolemnity was kept, and, when the virgins came thither, to ruſh in, and take each a wife, and retire ; promiſing to be their advocates with the enraged fathers of the damſels, whoſe oath was not broken, becauſe they were forcibly taken ; and who need not think their daughters ill diſpoſed of, when among theſe few ſurvivors the whole inheritance of Benjamin now muſt be divided. *Note,* (1.) One raſh ſtep draws on a train of bad conſequences. Had they been more conſiderate in their vow, they had not been reduced to ſuch a diſagreeable expedient. (2.) Though a ſtolen match is both ſinful before God, and unjuſt towards man, parents muſt not be implacable in their reſentments, but receive their children into favour again.

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3. The men of Benjamin followed the advice, and ſucceeded ; and thus the ſurvivors of the tribe are again ſettled, and in a way to repair its deſolations. The children of Iſrael diſband ; every man returns to his inheritance ; and it is again repeated, that there was no king in Iſrael, as the cauſe of all the evil and confuſions related in the foregoing chapters. *Note,* Next to a good miniſtry, we have reaſon to eſteem magiſtracy among the chief of earthly bleſſings ; and if we know our own mercies, we have much reaſon to be thankful, that there is not only a king in England, but ſuch a king.

[l] Chap. xx. 48.

[m] Chap. xvii. 6. & xviii. 1.

[n] Deut. xii. 8. Prov. iii. 5. & xiv. 12. Jer. x. 23.

THE EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR; OR, A PRACTICAL COMMENT Upon the BOOK of RUTH.

The Title of this Book is Ruth, ſo called; not becauſe compoſed by her, but becauſe ſhe is the ſubject of it. The writer is generally thought to be Samuel. It contains the providential hiſtory of one family, and ſhews how piety, patience in afflictions, humility, and induſtry, are often rewarded here below; but the principal cauſe for which it ſeems recorded, is, becauſe from Ruth, the chief character in the ſtory, David the great King, and Chriſt the glorious Saviour, afterwards ſprung. His deſcent from a Jew and Gentile, ſhews him deſigned to be the Saviour of both: the converſion of Ruth may be conſidered as an emblem and pledge of the Gentile church. The ſcene is laid in Bethlehem, where Jeſus was born.

CHAP. I.

Before Chriſt 1376.

In this chapter we have Naomi, 1. *forced by famine to remove into the land of Moab,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Bewailing the death of her huſband and her two ſons,* ver. 3—5. 3. *Returning in poverty to her own country,* ver. 6—13. 4. *Her daughters accompany her on her journey: one at her intreaty returns back, the other reſolves to abide with her,* ver. 14—15. 5. *The notice taken of her, and her relation of her mournful circumſtances,* ver. 19—22.

1. NOW it came to paſs in the days when the judges † ruled, that there was [a] a famine in the land: and [b] a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to ſojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife, and his two ſons. 2. And the name of the man *was* ‡ Elimelech, and the name of his wife ‖ Naomi, and the name of his two ſons, § Mahlon and † Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah: and they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. 3. And Elimelech Naomi's huſband died, and ſhe was left, and her two ſons. 4. And [c] they took them wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and [d] they dwelled there about ten years. 5. And Mahlon and Chilion died alſo, both of them: and [e] the woman was left of her two ſons and her huſband.

† Heb. Judged.
[a] Deut. xxviii. 23. Pſal. cvii. 34.
[b] Gen. xii. 10. Pſal. xxxiii. 18, 19.
‡ Heb. i. e. My God is King.
‖ i. e. Pleaſant.
§ i. e. Weakneſs.
† i. e. Conſumption.
[c] Deut. vii. 3.
[d] Pſal. cxx. 5.
[e] Pſal. xxxiv. 19.

v. 1—5. The date of this hiſtory is uncertain. Moſt probably it happened under the adminiſtration of Ehud or Gideon.

1. We have an account of the removal of the family of a man of Bethlehem-Judah, into the land of Moab, to ſojourn, on account of a famine in Canaan. His name was Elimelech, *My God is King*; his wife's name Naomi, *ſweet* or *pleaſant*, and his ſons Mahlon and Chilion, *weakneſs* and *conſumption*, ſo called, probably from their bodily habit. *Note*, (1.) God's enemies have often plenty, when God's Iſrael is in diſtreſs and want. (2.) A diligent care to provide for the wants of our families, is highly neceſſary and commendable.

2. Elimelech died ſoon, and his two ſons, now introduced into a Moabite acquaintance, and deſtitute of their father's advice and authority, take them wives of the daughters of the land. *Note*, (1.) It is a great loſs to be deprived of a pious parent. (2.) An unequal match with a Moabitiſh woman, is for a true Iſraelite a dangerous ſnare.

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3. They lived about ten years, but were childleſs, and then Naomi had the double affliction of parting with both ſoon after each other. As before a diſconſolate widow, now her griefs are renewed in all their bitterneſs, bereft of children, deſolate, and deſtitute. *Note*, (1.) When death ſtrikes in a family, it is to warn the ſurvivors, that he is ready to ſmite again. (2) How often do we find our death in the place where we hope to prolong our lives? (3.) Worldly comforts and croſſes are nearer than we ſuſpect: whilſt we are rejoicing in the ſettlement of our children, the pleaſing proſpect vaniſhes in an inſtant, and death lays all our hopes in the grave.

6. ¶ Then ſhe aroſe with her daughters in law, that ſhe might return from the country of Moab: for ſhe had heard in the country of Moab, how that [f] the LORD had viſited his people, in giving them bread. 7. Wherefore ſhe went forth out of the place where ſhe was, and [g] her two daughters in law with her: and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. 8. And Naomi ſaid unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's houſe: [h] the LORD deal kindly with you, as [i] ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. 9. The LORD grant you that you may find reſt, each *of you* in the houſe of her huſband. Then [k] ſhe kiſſed them: and they lift up their voice, and wept. 10. And they ſaid unto her, Surely [l] we will return with thee unto thy people. 11. And Naomi ſaid, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? *are* there yet *any more* ſons in my womb, that they may be your huſbands? 12. Turn again, my daughters, go

[f] Pſal. ciii. 8, 9. Luke i. 68.
[g] Prov. xviii. 17.
[h] 2 Tim. i. 18.
[i] Col. iii. 18.
[k] Gen. xxix. 11.
[l] Pſal. xvi. 3. & cxix. 63.

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your way, for I am too old to have an huſband: if I ſhould ſay, I have hope, *if* I ſhould have an huſband alſo to-night, and ſhould alſo bear ſons: 13. Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye ſtay for them from having huſbands? nay, my daughters: for † it grieveth me much for your ſakes, that [m] the hand of the LORD is gone out againſt me. 14. And they lift up their voice, and wept again: and [n] Orpah kiſſed her mother-in-law, but [o] Ruth clave unto her. 15. And ſhe ſaid, Behold, thy ſiſter-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: [p] return thou after thy ſiſter-in-law. 16. And Ruth ſaid, † Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goeſt, I will go: and where thou lodgeſt, I will lodge: thy people *ſhall be* my people, and [q] thy God my God: 17. Where thou dieſt, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do ſo to me, and more alſo, *if ought* but death part thee and me. 18. When ſhe ſaw that ſhe was ſtedfaſtly minded to go with her, then [r] ſhe left ſpeaking unto her.

† Heb. I have more bitterneſs than you.
[m] Job. xix. 21. Pſ. xxxix. 10.
[n] 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[o] Luke xix. 26.
[p] Joſh. xxiv. 19. Luke xxiv. 28.
† Heb. Be not againſt me. Mat. xvi. 23. Acts xxi. 13.
[q] 1 Theſ. i. 6, 9.
[r] Acts xxi. 14.

v. 6—18. Naomi, having heard that plenty was again reſtored to Iſrael,

1. Reſolves to return to her own country. Moab was now a land of ſorrow to her; every object around her renewed the bitter remembrance of her loſſes, and no comforter near, who, with diſcourſe of holy reſignation to Iſrael's God, could alleviate her griefs. Perhaps too, conſcience might now remonſtrate, that ſhe was out of the way of duty, and therefore juſtly ſmitten with the rod of correction. *Note*, (1.) They who are compelled for a time to dwell among thoſe who are ſtrangers to God, ought to embrace the firſt moment of liberty to return to God's people and ordinances. (2.) Change of place is often a means to aſſiſt in calming the griefs which are exaſperated by the ſight of objects, which remind us of thoſe who are taken from us. (3.) When God afflicts, it is well for us to examine, whether ſomething in us hath not brought his rod upon us. (4.) It is a mercy to have this land of our ſojourning imbittered to us, that we may be more weaned from earth, and have our converſation in heaven.

2. Her daughters accompany her to the borders of Moab, and there Naomi with tender affection intends to diſmiſs them, praying God to give them a comfortable ſettlement, each in the houſe of her huſband, and acknowledging, to their great commendation, the affection they had ſhewn to the living and the dead, as good wives, and dutiful daughters. They kiſs, embrace, then burſt into a flood of tears, the involuntary effuſion of tenderneſs, that cannot bear the heart-breaking ſeparation from thoſe we love. *Note*, (1.) When friends part in prayer, they may comfortably hope, either in time or eternity, to meet in praiſe. (2.) They who conſcientiouſly diſcharge their relations in life, will have the comfort of it in a parting hour. (3.) The more uncommon it is to meet with a dutiful and affectionate daughter-in-law, the more is it commendable. (4.) Though the parting of tender and affectionate friends is painful, it is a pleaſing pain of which we wiſh not to be inſenſible.

3. Unable to ſupport the thought of parting, they both reſolve to accompany her: but Naomi, fearful leſt they ſhould after repent the haſty reſolution, and to try whether they had any deſire after the worſhip of the God of Iſrael as their motive, ſeeks to diſſuade, and adviſes them to well weigh the matter, before they determined. They could hope for nothing with her, as ſhe was too old now to have children whom they might marry; or, were it poſſible, it were too long for them to wait. Beſides, God's afflicting hand was upon her, her circumſtances diſtreſſed, and no proviſion for them in Bethlehem, which grieved her more for their ſakes than her own; or, as it may be rendered, *I have exceedingly more bitterneſs than you*; her former croſſes heavier, and her preſent parting more grievous to herſelf than it could be to them. Such a remonſtrance produced a freſh torrent of tears. Orpah, though affectionately attached to Naomi, diſcouraged now by the difficulties, kiſſes her, and returns. Ruth, more determined by the evident tenderneſs of her mother's affection, refuſes to go back, and reſolves to cleave to her. *Note*, (1.) Haſty reſolutions are eaſily broken. (2.) Tender hearts can better want themſelves, than ſee thoſe whom they love expoſed to it. (3.) They who would follow Chriſt, ought firſt to count the coſt. (4.) Many ſay, I will go with thee, who, on the firſt difficulties, turn back, and walk no more with Jeſus. (5.) The difficulties of the way will bind the faithful ſoul cloſer to the Saviour.

4. To make the laſt eſſay of Ruth's determined purpoſe, Naomi again urges her to return, and pleads her ſiſter's example, who was returned to her people and her gods. But Ruth was fixed, and her choice unalterable. She begs her mother to deſiſt, or *be not againſt me*, as if ſhe was her enemy in diſſuading her. Though the place be diſtant, and the country unknown, I will go with thee; if thy lodging be a cottage, I ſeek no better covering; thy people ſhall be my people, in their manners, cuſtoms, and religion; and thy God, my God, renouncing every abomination of Moab, and owning Iſrael's God alone; never will I quit thee; on the ſame ſpot our dying eyes ſhall cloſe, and in the ſame grave our kindred duſt ſhall mingle, and make the clods of the valley ſweeter by the union. Such is her purpoſe; and, to prevent farther entreaty, ſhe binds her ſoul by a ſolemn vow, never but by death to part from her. *Note*, (1.) Nothing will be able to ſeparate that heart from Jeſus which his mighty love conſtrains; no, not death itſelf. (2.) They are truly our enemies, that ſeek to turn us back from God and godlineſs. (3.) When we have given our hearts to God, and choſen our portion among God's poor people, then in life or death we ſhall ſurrender ourſelves up to be diſpoſed of by him, as ſhall pleaſe him, content in every ſtation, and welcoming every croſs.

5. Naomi, ſatisfied now, attempts no more to diſſuade her; happy, no doubt, to hear her daughter's pious choice; and glad, amidſt every diſtreſs, to bring her to the worſhip of Iſrael's God, and to the communion of his people.

19. ¶ So [s] they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to paſs when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they ſaid, [t] *Is* this Naomi? 20. And ſhe ſaid unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me † Mara: for [u] the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. 21. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, ſeeing [x] the LORD hath teſtified againſt me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me? 22. So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabiteſs her daughter-in-law with her, which [y] returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley-harveſt.

[s] 2 Tim. iv. 11.
[t] Lam. ii. 15.
† i. e. Bitterneſs.
[u] Heb. xii. 11.
[x] Job x. 17
[y] Pſ. xci. 11.

v. 19—22. On now they travelled, and ſweetly, no doubt, beguiled the tedious way, in ſuch diſcourſe as might confirm Ruth's holy purpoſe, and comfort them together, in hope of God's bleſſing upon them. On their arrival at Beth-lehem notice is taken,

1. Of the reception they met with. Collecting together on the rumour of her return, the women, who remembered her former beauty and affluence, and now beheld her wrinkles and poverty, ſome perhaps in pity, ſome in ſcorn and upbraiding, and ſome in ſurprize, ſaid, Is this Naomi? *Note*, (1.) Age and wrinkles make ſtrange alterations on the faireſt face. It is a poor thing to be vain of what is ſo fading. (2.) They who have any feelings of humanity, and much more thoſe who have the bowels of Chriſt, will ſeek compaſſionately to alleviate the ſorrows of the miſerable. (3.) They who have carried themſelves moſt humble in proſperity, will be moſt regarded in adverſity.

2. Her name reminded her of her former condition; ſhe wiſhes therefore for one more befitting her circumſtances: *Call me Mara*, bitterneſs. She went out full of earthly comforts, with huſband and children; but now returns a childleſs widow: yet, not murmuring at the afflictive providence, ſhe ſees and acknowledges God's hand, receives the correction, and ſubmits to his will, as holy, juſt, and good. *Note*, (1.) It is a bleſſed ſign of a ſoul devoted to God, when, in humbling providences, the ſpirit is brought down to the condition. (2.) Though under affliction God permits us to complain, he forbids us to murmur. (3.) When God afflicts us, it is not only no more than we deſerve, but he knows it is what we need; and therefore whom he loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.

3. The harveſt was juſt begun, providence ſo ordering it for the ſake of the events which follow. *Note*, The moſt minute circumſtances of our lives are directed by an over-ruling wiſdom.

CHAP. II.

Here is, 1. *Ruth gleaning corn in Boaz's field*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The favour which Boaz ſhewed her*, ver. 4—16. 3. *The return of Ruth to her mother-in-law*, ver. 18—23.

1. AND Naomi had [a] a kinſman of her huſband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* Boaz. 2. And Ruth the Moabiteſs ſaid unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and [b] glean ears of corn after *him*, in whoſe ſight I ſhall find grace. And ſhe ſaid unto her, Go, my daughter. 3. And ſhe went, and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and [c] her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

[a] Prov. vii. 4.
[b] Lev. xix. 9. Deut. xxiv. 19. Eph. iv. 28.
[c] Prov. xvi. 33. Mat. x. 25.

v. 1—3. We have here an account,

1. Of Boaz, whoſe name is famous in the following ſtory. He was a near kinſman of Naomi, an inhabitant of Beth-lehem, a man of great wealth and generoſity too. He had heard of her return, though Naomi, out of modeſty, and unwillingneſs to trouble her rich relations, ſeems not to have made him acquainted with the diſtreſs of her circumſtances. *Note*, (1.) The worthleſs are importunate and clamorous, while the deſerving are modeſt and ſilent. (2.) Many have rich relations, whom they are little the better for. (3.) It is a ſure mark of a proud unthankful heart, to overlook or diſregard poor relations.

2. Of Ruth, the Moabiteſs, whoſe character ſhines with diſtinguiſhed luſtre under the ſevereſt preſſures of poverty; for ſuch hath God choſen, poor in this world, but rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom: and now that faith is tried, whether ſhe can prefer the land of Iſrael, with all the inconveniences ſhe ſuffers, to the plenty ſhe might have enjoyed in Moab. We hear no mention of the leaſt deſire in her to return: though unuſed probably to ſuch a method of getting her living, her mind is conformed to her circumſtances. She is willing not only to work for her own bread, but deſirous alſo to maintain her aged mother. In order to this ſhe aſks leave to go and glean in any field, where ſhe might, through the maſter's kindneſs, be admitted. Her mother, pleaſed with ſuch an inſtance of filial piety, affectionately lets her go. *Note*, (1.) None know to what ſtraits they may be reduced. It is good not to be brought up too delicately. (2.) To be content under the preſſures of poverty, is a bleſſed evidence of a faithful heart. (3.) They who know the value of their ſouls, will prefer Chriſt and a cruſt, to all the affluence and glory of the world without him. (4.) They who are poor, need be thankful for the leaſt favour ſhewn them. (5.) Induſtry in young people is highly commendable; never came there any good from an idle hand.

3. She happened to light on Boaz's field, God directing her thither for purpoſes of his own glory. *Note*, Circumſtances which to us appear utterly fortuitous, proceed under the unalterable decree of God: and from the moſt unexpected incidents, he can bring about the greateſt events.

4. ¶ And [d] behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and ſaid unto the reapers, The LORD *be* with you: and they anſwered him, The LORD bleſs thee. 5. Then ſaid Boaz unto his ſervant that was [e] ſet over the reapers, Whoſe damſel *is* this? 6. And the ſervant that was ſet over the reapers, anſwered and ſaid, It *is* the Moabitiſh damſel, that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: 7. And ſhe ſaid, [f] I pray you let me glean, and gather after the reapers amongſt the ſheaves: So ſhe came, and [g] hath continued even from the morning until now, that ſhe tarried a little in the houſe. 8. Then ſaid Boaz unto Ruth, Heareſt thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but [h] abide here faſt by my maidens. 9. *Let* thine eyes *be* on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men, that [i] they ſhall not touch thee? and when thou art athirſt, [k] go unto the veſſels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn. 10. Then ſhe [l] fell on her face, and bowed herſelf to the ground, and ſaid unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou ſhouldſt [m] take knowledge of me, ſeeing I *am* a ſtranger? 11. And Boaz anſwered and ſaid unto her, [n] It hath fully been ſhewed me, [o] all that thou haſt done unto thy mother-in-law ſince the death of thine huſband: and *how* thou [p] haſt left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou kneweſt not heretofore. 12. [q] The LORD recompence thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Iſrael, [r] under whoſe wings thou art come to truſt. 13. Then ſhe ſaid, Let me find favour in thy ſight, my lord, for that thou haſt comforted me, and for that thou haſt ſpoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though [s] I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. 14. And Boaz ſaid unto her, At meal-time come thou hither, and [t] eat of the bread, and dip thy morſel in the vinegar. And [u] ſhe ſat beſide the reapers: and he reached her parched *corn*, and ſhe did eat and was ſufficed, and [x] left. 15. And when [y] ſhe was riſen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, ſaying, Let her glean even among the ſheaves, and † reproach her not. 16. And [z] let fall alſo *ſome* of the handfuls of purpoſe for her, and leave *them*, that ſhe may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.

[d] Eſth. vi. 1, 2.
[e] Gen. xxiv. 2.
[f] Deut. xxiv. 19.
[g] Rom. xii. 11.
[h] Lev. xix. 9. Deut. xxiv. 19.
[i] Job xxix. 12. Pſ. cv. 15.
[k] Mat. x. 42.
[l] 1 Sam. xxv. 23.
[m] Mat. v. 5. Luke i. 48.
[n] Pſ. xxxvii. 6.
[o] Prov. xxxi. 31.
[p] Pſ. xlv. 10.
[q] Heb. vi. 10. 2 John 8.
[r] Pſ. xvii. 8. Iſa. xvii. 8. & xxxvi. 7.
[s] 1 Sam. xxv. 41.
[t] Prov. xi. 25.
[u] Luke i. 52.
[x] Deut. xi. 15.
[y] Prov. xxxi. 27. 2 Theſ. iii. 10.
† Heb. Shame her not.
[z] Pſ. cxii. 9.

v. 4—16. Boaz was a great man, but not too great to ſuperintend his own buſineſs. The maſter's eye makes quick work. We have him here viſiting his reapers. Obſerve,

1. The mutual ſalutations which paſſed between them; a proof that Boaz was as pious as proſperous, and that his ſervants under his care had partaken of their maſter's bleſſing. *Note*, (1.) Though a formal "God bleſs you," is often a profanation of the name of God, and a compliment of courſe, a thoughtful and ſerious benediction is the mark of trueſt regard. (2.) It is likely to go well with that family, where the maſter's kindneſs meets with an equal return in the ſervant's hearty regard for him and his concerns.

2. The enquiry Boaz makes concerning a ſtranger whom he obſerved, probably ſitting in the booth erected in the field, and the anſwer given him by the overſeer of the reapers. She was that Moabitiſh damſel, whoſe love for her mother, and regard for God, had brought her to Beth-lehem: ſhe had modeſtly aſked leave to glean, and, during the whole morning, had been induſtriouſly employed, till juſt now that in the heat ſhe had reſted for a moment in the houſe, and was again returned to her labour. *Note*, They who are entruſted by their maſters, as overſeers, muſt look carefully to their maſter's intereſts, and make a faithful report.

3. Boaz accoſts the poor ſtranger with great kindneſs, calls her daughter, bids her continue in his field during the harveſt, follow his maidens, and keep them company. He gives orders alſo to the young men to ſhew her no rudeneſs, nor give her any moleſtation; invites her to eat and drink with his reapers, and go as one of them to the booth whenever ſhe was thirſty, and at meal-time ſhare their entertainment. He adds the excellent character he had heard of her, as deſerving every token of his regard; prays God to recompence her work of filial piety, and her adherence to the worſhip of Jehovah, under whoſe wing ſhe had taken ſhelter: and then turning to the reapers, bids them purpoſely drop a handful here and there behind them, and let her glean among the ſheaves, and not reproach her for it, as if ſhe took what was not allowed her. *Note*, (1.) There is a manner of doing a kindneſs, that makes it doubly acceptable. (2.) They deſerve commendation and regard, who, for the ſake of God, leave all behind them. (3.) In the end they will be no looſers. (4.) A generous heart is happy in an occaſion to relieve the wants of the deſerving.

4. Ruth, overcome with ſuch kindneſs, is at a loſs to expreſs her gratitude, bows to the earth before him, in token of deepeſt reſpect, profeſſes her unworthineſs of the favour ſhewn her, *v.* 10, 13. admires his condeſcenſion, begs the continuance of his regard, and receives his ſpeech as the moſt friendly and reviving cordial. Accordingly, at meal-time ſhe accepts his invitation, and, to make it more welcome, he reaches her the parched corn, and by his own behaviour engages his ſervants to ſhew her every kind civility. *Note*, (1.) A grateful heart often wants expreſſions to ſpeak its ſenſibility. (2.) A kind look or a good word from a ſuperior, is often very uſeful: ſo cheap a charity who then need grudge. (3.) They who are moſt deſerving will have the loweſt opinion of their own deſerts.

17. So ſhe gleaned in the field [a] until even, and beat out that ſhe had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. 18. ¶ And ſhe took *it* up, and went into the city: and her mother-in-law ſaw what ſhe had gleaned: and ſhe brought forth, and gave to her that ſhe had reſerved, after ſhe was ſufficed. 19. And her mother-in-law ſaid unto her, Where haſt thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughteſt thou? bleſſed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And ſhe ſhewed her mother-in-law with whom ſhe had wrought, and ſaid, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day *is* Boaz. 20. And Naomi ſaid unto her daughter-in-law, [b] Bleſſed *be* he of the LORD, [c] who hath not left off his kindneſs to the living and to the dead. And Naomi ſaid unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, † one of our next kinſmen. 21. And Ruth the Moabiteſs ſaid, He ſaid unto me alſo, Thou ſhalt keep faſt by my young men, until they have ended all my harveſt. 22. And Naomi ſaid unto Ruth, her daughter-in-law, [d] *It is* good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that [e] they meet thee not in any other field. 23. [f] So ſhe kept faſt by the maidens of Boaz to glean, [g] unto the end of barley-harveſt, and of wheat-harveſt; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

[a] Prov. xxxi. 17.
[b] Job xxix. 13. 2 Tim. i. 16.
[c] Prov. xvii. 17.
† Or, One that hath a right to redeem. Lev. xxv. 25. Deut. xxv. 5, 7.
[d] Cant. i. 8.
[e] John xv. 6.
[f] Prov. xiii. 1.
[g] Prov. vi. 8. 1 Tim. v. 13.

v. 17—23. Ruth having refreſhed herſelf at dinner, returns again with diligence to her work, and at even,

1. She beats out and winnows the corn ſhe had gathered, which was between ſix and ſeven gallons of barley, and taking it up, carries it home to her mother. *Note*, Induſtry

and plenty are twin-ſiſters; even the induſtrious poor need never want.

2. On her arrival ſhe ſhews her mother what ſhe had gleaned, gives her of the proviſion which ſhe had left at dinner, *v.* 14. and, in anſwer to Naomi's queſtion, who was pleaſingly ſurprized at the quantity ſhe had brought home, relates the adventures of the day, and the kind providence which had directed her to the field of Boaz. *Note*, (1.) A good child will always divide his morſel with his aged parent. (2.) In all our ways we muſt acknowledge God. (3.) When we go out in the way of duty, we may hope to return, and bring a bleſſing along with us.

3. Naomi hereupon bleſſes God for the mercy, and prays for his proſperity, who had ſo kindly treated her daughter. The name of Boaz awakens her remembrance of former kindneſs to her family, and ſhe now mentions what either ſhe had forgotten, or had not told her daughter before, that he was a very near kinſman to them, and by law their *Goel* redeemer, one of them to whom it belonged to redeem the mortgaged land of the family. This reflection perhaps now firſt ſtruck her mind, and therefore, in hope of farther kindneſs, ſhe bids her daughter accept the kind invitation ſhe had related, and, during the harveſt, follow his reapers, and go no where elſe. Theſe directions Ruth carefully followed, and, when the harveſt was ended, dwelt at home with her mother on the proviſion which her induſtry had collected. *Note*, (1.) The beſt returns for kindneſs are the prayers of the poor. (2.) Whatever mercies we receive from men, God muſt have the praiſe. (3.) Humility will make us ſilent of our connections, rather than boaſt, as many do, who are poor, the greatneſs of their relations. (4.) A caſual word or hint, dropped undeſignedly, is ſometimes pregnant with ſtrange conſequences. (5.) They who have the bleſſed Jeſus for their redeemer, cannot keep too cloſe to him and his reapers: his paſt favours are the earneſt of greater ſtill in ſtore for them.

CHAP. III.

Here is, 1. *The directions Naomi gave Ruth how to claim Boaz for her huſband*, ver. 1—5. 2. *Ruth's punctual obſervance of thoſe directions*, ver. 6, 7. 3. *The kind and honourable treatment Boaz gave her*, ver. 8—15. 4. *Her return to her mother-in-law*, ver. 16—18.

1. THEN Naomi her mother-in-law ſaid unto her, My daughter, [a] ſhall I not ſeek reſt for thee, that it may be well with thee? 2. And now [b] *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with whoſe maidens thou waſt? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threſhing-floor. 3. Waſh thyſelf therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyſelf known unto the man, until he ſhall have done eating and drinking. 4. And it ſhall be when he lieth down, that thou ſhalt [c] mark the place where he ſhall lie, and thou ſhalt go in, and † uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou ſhalt do. 5. And ſhe ſaid unto her, [d] All that thou ſayeſt unto me, I will do.

[a] 1 Cor. vii. 36.
[b] Deut. xxv. 5, 6.
[c] Cant. i. 7.
† Or, Lift up the cloaths that are upon his feet.
[d] Eph. vi. 1.

v. 1—5. We have here,

1. Naomi's ſollicitude to get her daughter comfortably ſettled, and at reſt in the houſe of her huſband, that ſhe might no longer be expoſed to the difficulties they now ſtruggled under. She informs Ruth, that Boaz's kindred to her, ſhe apprehended, laid him under an obligation to take his brother's widow, and raiſe up ſeed unto his brother. *Note*, (1.) It ſeems ſafeſt and beſt that the younger widows marry, 1 *Tim.* v. 14. (2.) Parents ſhould ſeek the ſettlement of their children in marriage, as one great part of their duty reſpecting them. (3.) The reſt of the marriage-ſtate conſiſts in union of affection. To have a wandering heart there, is not only to be criminal, but to be wretched.

2. The method Naomi purſued to accompliſh her deſigns. Underſtanding Boaz had a feaſt on winnowing his barley, ſhe thought this a proper time to remind him of his duty, as Ruth's kinſman; for which purpoſe, ſhe bids her waſh and anoint herſelf, put on her beſt garments, and go down in the evening to the floor where they winnowed. There ſhe was to wait till the company was parted, to obſerve where Boaz went to lie down at night, and then at his feet to lay herſelf, which would give her an opportunity to remind Boaz of his relation, as the law ſeems to intimate it was her buſineſs to do, and his anſwer would determine her conduct. This proceeding ſome commentators blame, as unjuſtifiable; whilſt others vindicate, as right. It is true, the experiment to us ſeems dangerous; but as the cuſtoms of nations differ, as her intentions were honourable, and her claim juſt, it might no doubt be very capable of vindication: not to add, that there might be much of divine direction in the caſe; and this ſeems intimated in Naomi's confidence, that *he would tell her what ſhe ſhould do*. *Note*, (1.) As water is much eaſier had than paint, ſo is it a much greater recommendation to the perſon. (2.) Dreſs is then becoming, when uſed to engage their affections whom it is our duty to pleaſe. (3.) There may be occaſion given for the moſt unjuſt aſperſions ſometimes, where there is the greateſt purity of intention. (4.) The ſoul that lies down at the feet of Jeſus, will find directions for his comfort and conduct.

6. ¶ And ſhe went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bad her. 7. And when Boaz had [e] eaten and drunk, and his heart was † merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and ſhe came ſoftly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down. 8. ¶ And it came to paſs at midnight, that [f] the man was afraid, and turned himſelf: and behold, a woman lay at his feet. 9. ¶ And he ſaid, Who *art* thou? And ſhe anſwered, I *am* Ruth thine handmaid: [g] ſpread therefore thy ſkirt over thine handmaid, for thou *art* [h] a near kinſman. 10. And he ſaid, Bleſſed *be* thou of the LORD, my daughter: *for* thou haſt ſhewed more kindneſs [i] in the latter end, than at the beginning, inaſmuch as [k] thou followedſt not young men, whether poor or rich. 11. And now, my daughter, fear not, I will do to thee all that thou requireſt: for all the city of my people doth know, that [l] thou *art* a virtuous woman. 12. And now it is true, that I *am* *thy* near kinſman: howbeit there is a kinſman [m] nearer than I. 13. Tarry this night, and it ſhall be [n] in the morning, *that* if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinſman, well, let him do the kinſman's part; but if he will not do the part of a kinſman to thee, then [o] will I do the part of a kinſman to thee, *as* the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

[e] 1 Cor. x. 31.
† Or, good.
[f] 1 Cor. vi. 18.
[g] Ezek. xvi. 8. Rev. iii. 18.
[h] Chap. ii. 20.
[i] Chap. i. 8.
[k] 1 Tim. v. 11. Tit. ii. 12.
[l] Prov. xii. 4. & xxxi. 31.
[m] Deut. xxv. 5, 6. 1 Theſ. iv. 6.
[n] Pſ. cxix. 60.
[o] Joſh. xxiv. 15. Phil. iv. 8.

v. 6—13. Little did Boaz think among his gueſts he ſhould find one, that, though unlooked for, would prove ſo welcome.

1. He went down to the floor, to have an eye upon his ſervants; when the work was done, he entertained them chearfully, and after ſupper lay down with a *merry* heart, or a *good* heart, as it may be rendered, thankful for his mercies, and commending himſelf to the protection of a gracious God. Nor was it thought mean or unuſual in theſe days of ſimplicity, for great men thus to be among their winnowers, or to ſleep in their threſhing-floor, which, though in the open air, was in theſe hot countries more cool and refreſhing. *Note*, (1.) A good maſter, who looks well to his ſervants, can beſt afford to be a generous one to reward them. (2.) They who lie down on their beds in a gracious diſpoſition, may comfortably hope to be preſerved from the evils of the night.

2. Ruth, having obſerved her mother's directions, as ſoon as Boaz was compoſed to ſleep, ſteals ſoftly, and raiſing up the ſkirt of his garment, in which he wrapped himſelf, lies down at his feet, waiting for his awaking, that ſhe might remind him of his relation to her. At midnight Boaz turning himſelf, ſtartles at finding a perſon ſo near him, and perceiving her a woman, he haſtily interrogates her name and buſineſs. Ruth now humbly and modeſtly mentions her relation to him, and the conſequent claim thence reſulting; then waits that anſwer her mother bid her be directed by. *Note*, (1.) When temptation ſoftly ſteals upon us, as ſoon as our eyes are open, we muſt ſtart at the danger, and turn from it. (2.) The ſinner that humbly ſeeks the Saviour's ſkirt of love to be ſpread over him, will find his requeſt graciouſly received and anſwered.

3. Boaz, far from offering her any rudeneſs, or blaming her conduct as immodeſt or forward, is convinced of her chaſtity from her former behaviour, ſtands reproved for his own backwardneſs to do her juſtice, and reſolves immediately to ſee her ſettled as ſhe deſerved. He commends her kindneſs to her mother and her family in this inſtance of her obedience; prays God to bleſs her; mentions it to her honour, that ſhe preferred the huſband the law allotted her, though aged, before younger ſuitors, which her beauty might have attracted; and promiſes to reward her virtue, which all the city knew, by marrying her immediately, if the kinſman who was nearer than himſelf, to whom the firſt right of redemption of the mortgaged eſtate belonged, ſhould refuſe. This he confirms with an oath, for her full ſatisfaction of his kind intentions. *Note*, (1.) They, whoſe conduct is exemplary, ſhall hear of it to their honour. (2.) In the choice of a partner, godlineſs ſhould be the firſt recommendation.

14. ¶ And ſhe lay at his feet until the morning: and ſhe roſe up before one could know another. And he ſaid, [p] Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor. 15. Alſo he ſaid, Bring the vail that *thou haſt* upon thee,

[p] Eccleſ. vii. 1. Rom. xii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 12.

thee, and hold it. And when ſhe held it, [q] he meaſured ſix *meaſures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and ſhe went into the city. 16. And when ſhe came to her mother-in-law, ſhe ſaid, Who *art* thou, my daughter? And ſhe told her all that the man had done to her. 17. And ſhe ſaid, Theſe ſix *meaſures* of barley gave he me; for he ſaid to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law. 18. Then ſaid ſhe, [r] Sit ſtill, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in reſt, until he have finiſhed the thing this day.

q Gal. vi. 10.

r Pſ. xxxvii. 3, 5. Iſa. xxviii. 16.

v. 14—18. 1. Boaz, unwilling to diſmiſs her at that hour of the night, bids her reſt in peace till morning; yet, to avoid thoſe reflections which might be made if it were known, he adviſes her early to depart, that her being there might be a ſecret. At her departure, in token of his regard, he gave her a handſome preſent of ſix homers of barley, to take home with her. *Note*, (1.) We cannot be too careful to remove occaſion from the envenomed tongue of ſlander; and what would be liable to be miſinterpreted, had better not be known. (2.) A preſent in token of love is twice acceptable for the giver's ſake.

2. Ruth haſtens home, and, probably, knocking for admittance before Naomi was up, ſhe enquires if it was her daughter: or it may imply a queſtion, how ſhe ſped, and whether the match were likely to ſucceed. Hereupon ſhe relates all the circumſtances which had paſſed; from which Naomi concludes, that the matter was as good as compleated; that ſhe had no more to do, but to ſit down and wait, for Boaz would not reſt till the affair was ſettled. *Note*, When we have waited upon God in the way of duty, we may ſit ſtill, and confidently hope to ſee his great ſalvation.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter, 1. *Boaz gets clear of his rival*, ver. 1—8. 2. *Marries Ruth publicly*, ver. 9—12. 3. *Begets Obed, the grandfather of David*, ver. 13—17. 4. *The pedigree of David laid down*, ver. 18—22.

1. THEN went Boaz up to the gate, and ſat him down there: and behold, the kinſman of whom Boaz ſpake, came by: unto whom he ſaid, Ho, ſuch a one, turn aſide, ſit down here. And he turned aſide, and ſat down. 2. And [a] he took ten men of the elders of the city, and ſaid, Sit ye down here. And they ſat down. 3. And he ſaid unto the kinſman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, ſelleth a parcel of land, which *was* our brother Elimelech's. 4. And † I thought to advertiſe thee, ſaying, buy *it* before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*; but if thou wilt not redeem *it*; *then* tell me that I may know: for *there is* none to redeem *it* beſides thee, and I *am* after thee. And he ſaid, [b] I will redeem *it*. 5. Then ſaid Boaz, What day thou buyeſt the field of the hand of Naomi, thou muſt buy *it* alſo of [c] Ruth the Moabiteſs, the wife of the dead, to raiſe up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. 6. ¶ And the kinſman ſaid, I cannot redeem *it* for myſelf, leſt I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyſelf, for I cannot redeem *it*. 7. Now [d] this *was the manner* in former time in Iſrael, concerning redeeming, and concerning changing, for to confirm all things: a man plucked off his ſhoe, and gave *it* to his neighbour: and this *was* a teſtimony in Iſrael. 8. therefore the kinſman ſaid unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee: ſo he drew off his ſhoe.

a Exod. xviii. 21.

† Heb. I ſaid, I will reveal it in thine ear. Prov. xxi. 3.

b Lev. xxv. 25.

c Deut. xxv. 5.

d Deut. xxv. 7.

v. 1—8. Boaz, ſollicitous to terminate the affair, and, it ſhould ſeem, ſo pleaſed with Ruth's conduct as to count himſelf happy in ſuch a partner, haſtens to the gate, where was the ſeat of judgment; and having ten elders with him, to form a court for the judicial determination of the matter,

1. He ſummons the perſon who was Ruth's neareſt kinſman, perhaps as he was juſt then paſſing out at the gate, to appear, and plead his right. His name is not recorded; perhaps for this purpoſe concealed, becauſe his refuſal of his duty might have ſtamped it with infamy. Naomi having a parcel of land to ſell, the right of redemption was his; and, till he quitted his claim, Boaz will not preſume to buy it. *Note*, We muſt never be guilty of under-hand dealings, but act ſo as all honeſt men may approve our ſimplicity and integrity.

2. The kinſman readily enough accepts the offer; but when he finds it clogged with Mahlon's widow, either according to the law of the brother's widow, *Deut.* xxv. 5. or rather by Naomi's reſolution not to part with the land, without providing for her daughter, he declines the affair, and gives for a reaſon, leſt he ſhould mar his own inheritance, which, if he married a young widow who was poor, and had many children by her, might be the caſe. *Note*, Prudence in marriage is highly commendable; though we may not make worldly proviſion the firſt concern, yet it is a neceſſary conſideration.

3. A fair ſurrender is hereupon made to Boaz, in open court, of his right to the redemption; and this was done by the ceremony of drawing off the ſhoe, and delivering it in token of transferring the right and property in queſtion: and this ſeems to be a general form of conveyance, not that referred to, *Deut.* xxv. 9. which was reputed reproachful. *Note*, What we honeſtly come by, will be comfortably enjoyed.

9. ¶ And Boaz ſaid unto the elders, and *unto* all the people, Ye *are* witneſſes this day, that [e] I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. 10. Moreover, Ruth the Moabiteſs, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchaſed to be my wife, to raiſe up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye *are* witneſſes this day. 11. And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders ſaid, *We are* witneſſes: [f] the LORD make the woman that is come into thine houſe, like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the houſe of Iſrael: and † do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Beth-lehem. 12. And let thy houſe be like the houſe of Pharez, (whom [g] Tamar bare unto Judah) of the ſeed which the LORD ſhall give thee of this young woman.

e Mat. xx. 16.

f Gen. xxvi. 2. Pſ. cxxvii. 3. & cxxviii. 3.

† Or, Get thou riches or power.

g Gen. xxviii. 29. 1 Tim. i. 15.

v. 9—12. No ſooner had the neareſt kinſman quitted his right, than Boaz,

1. Puts in his claim, ready to pay the money for the land to Naomi, and purchaſe Ruth for his wife, in order to raiſe ſeed unto Mahlon; and he calls upon them to witneſs the contract, and inſert it in the public regiſter. *Note*, Thus hath our Goel, our divine Redeemer, when we were poor and deſtitute, and none were either able or willing to purchaſe the inheritance, which we by ſin had ſo deeply mortgaged, yea, utterly forfeited, paid down the price, even at the expence of marring his own inheritance; having left the realms of bliſs and glory for our ſake, and then eſpouſing us to himſelf, hath made us ſharers of that glory, to which the Father, as the reward of his ſufferings, hath exalted him. What love, what fidelity, conſtancy, and ſubjection, then do we owe him!

2. The people and elders receive the appeal, and declare themſelves witneſſes. It was no clandeſtine marriage, or what he was aſhamed to own in the face of the congregation. Ruth, it ſeems, was now preſent, waiting probably to ſee the iſſue of the affair; the elders and people therefore join in a ſolemn prayer for the proſperity of this new-married couple; for her, that ſhe may be fruitful as Rachel and Leah; for him, that his worth in every relation may be more diſplayed, and his name ſhine illuſtrious in the annals of futurity; for both, that the increaſe of their houſe may be like the houſe of Pharez, from whom the Beth-lehemites were deſcended, a great and numerous poſterity. *Note*, (1.) They who enter into new relations have need of our prayers. (2.) The increaſe of a family is a bleſſing from God. (3.) They who live exemplary in their generation, will be remembered with honour in ſucceeding ages, and ſtand as patterns worthy imitation.

13. ¶ So [h] Boaz took Ruth, and ſhe was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and ſhe bare a ſon. 14. And [i] the women ſaid unto Naomi, Bleſſed *be* the LORD which hath not † left thee this day without a ‡ kinſman, that his name may be famous in Iſrael. 15. And he ſhall be unto thee a reſtorer of *thy* life, and a § nouriſher of thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law which loveth thee, [k] which is better to thee than ſeven ſons, hath born him. 16. And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her boſom, and became nurſe unto it. 17. And [l] the women her neighbours gave it a name, ſaying, There is a ſon born to Naomi, and they called his name † Obed: he *is* the father of Jeſſe, the father of David. 18. ¶ Now theſe *are* the generations of [m] Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, 19. And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, 20. And Amminadab begat Nahſhon, and Nahſhon begat Salmon, 21. And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, 22. And Obed begat Jeſſe, and Jeſſe begat [n] David.

h Pſ. xv. 4.

i Luke i. 58. Rom. xii. 15.

† Heb. Cauſed to ceaſe unto thee.

‡ Or, Redeemer.

§ Heb. to feed. Gen. xlv. 11. Pſ. lv. 22.

k 1 Sam. i. 8.

l Luke i. 58.

† i. e. A ſervant.

m 1 Chron. ii. 4, &c. Mat. i. 3, &c. Luke iii. 31. &c.

n Pſ. lxxv. 6. & cxiii. 7.

Before Chriſt 1376.

v. 13—22. Ruth is now made happy in a loving huſband, and a liberal proviſion: ſhe finds at laſt, that ſhe hath loſt nothing by what ſhe left in Moab. Thus does God, even in this world, recompenſe thoſe who are faithful to him an hundred fold, for whatever they have forſaken on his account. Notice is taken,

1. Of Ruth's conception. God gave her a ſon; for from him is the fruit of the womb.

2. The congratulation of the holy women to Naomi hereupon. They praiſed God for the bleſſing of a child born, and expreſſed their kind wiſhes, by a confident concluſion, that ſhe would find in him a reſtorer of her life, the comforts of which former afflictions had imbittered to her; and a nouriſher of her old age, which was now coming apace upon her. Nor is her daughter forgotten: they ſpeak of her with a deſerved encomium, as if her affectionate tenderneſs was better than ſeven ſons. *Note,* (1.) It is Chriſtian-like to rejoice with thoſe who do rejoice. (2.) The ſupport of aged parents ſhould be the care and delight of children. (3.) God, when he deprives us of one comfort, often more than repays us, in beſtowing another.

Before Chriſt 1176.

3. The child is called *Obed, ſerving*, as deſigned from earlieſt infancy to be educated to ſerve the Lord Chriſt, or in view of the ſervice he would afford his aged grandmother. Naomi, pleaſed at the heart, takes the child, lays it in her boſom, and with tendereſt fondneſs nurſes it as her own. *Note,* On grandchildren often a double portion of maternal fondneſs reſts.

4. The book concludes with the genealogy of David, the grandſon of this child that is born to Boaz; and the hiſtory takes occaſion from thence to trace downward the pedigree from Pharez, his more diſtant anceſtor, like unto whom, the elders had prayed, might the family of Boaz be; and they are anſwered, ſince from him deſcends the Meſſiah, the Son of David, whoſe ſeed is more numerous than the ſand, and more glorious than the kings of the earth.

THE

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the FIRST BOOK of
SAMUEL.

This book, and that which follows it, bears the name of Samuel. *Probably he was the penman of ſo much of it as fell within his own times, to the twenty-fifth chapter, in which we have an account of his death; and Gad, or Nathan, might finiſh it,* See 1 Chron. xxix. 29. *The firſt book contains a large account of his birth and childhood, his life and government; and of Eli, under whom he was brought up. The reſt of theſe two volumes relates the hiſtory of the reigns of Saul and David, who were both anointed by him. Thus they may be conſidered as an appendix to the book of* Judges, *and an introduction to the hiſtory of the* Kings. *They contain a conſiderable part of the ſacred hiſtory, are ſometimes referred to in the New Teſtament, and often in the titles of David's Pſalms, which, if placed in their order, would fall in, in theſe books. This firſt book gives us a full account of Eli's fall, and Samuel's riſe and good government,* chap. i——viii. *Of Samuel's reſignation of the government, and Saul's advancement and male-adminiſtration,* chap. ix——xv. *The choice of David, his ſtruggles with Saul, Saul's ruin at laſt, and the opening of the way for David to the throne,* chap. xvi——xxxi. *And theſe things are written for our learning.*

Before Chriſt 1115.

CHAP. I.

The hiſtory of Samuel here begins as early as that of Samſon did, even before he was born. He is the child of prayer, given to Hannah when barren, on her importunate application. Thus fervent and effectual prayer availeth. Here is, 1. *Her affliction becauſe ſhe was childleſs, and this affliction aggravated by her rival's inſolence,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Her vow to God under this affliction,* ver. 9—18. 3. *The birth of Samuel,* ver. 19—23. 4. *The preſenting of him to the Lord,* ver. 24—28.

1. NOW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name *was* † Elkanah, the ſon of Jeroham, the ſon of Elihu, the ſon of Tohu, the ſon of Zuph, an Ephraimite: 2. And he had [a] two wives, the name of the one *was* ‡ Hannah, and the name of the other § Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but [b] Hannah had no children. 3. And this man went up out of his city ‖ yearly, to worſhip and to ſacrifice unto the LORD of hoſts in Shiloh; and the two ſons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the prieſts of the LORD, *were* there. 4. ¶ And when the time was that Elkanah [c] offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her ſons and her daughters, portions. 5. But unto Hannah he gave [d] a worthy portion: for [e] he loved Hannah, but the LORD had ſhut up her womb; 6. And [f] her adverſary alſo provoked her ſore, for to make her fret, becauſe the LORD had ſhut up her womb; 7. And *as* he did ſo year by year, † when ſhe went up to the houſe of the LORD, ſo ſhe provoked her; therefore ſhe wept, and did not eat. 8. Then ſaid Elkanah her huſband to her, Hannah, [g] why weepeſt thou? and why eateſt thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? *am* not I better to thee than ten ſons?

† i. e. God hath poſſeſſed.
[a] Gen. iv. 23.
‡ i. e. Beautiful.
§ i. e. A diamond.
[b] Judg. xiii. 2.
‖ Heb. From year to year. Exod. xxiii. 17. Deut. xvi. 16.
[c] Lev. iii. 4, 5. Deut. xvi. 11.
[d] Gen. xliii. 34.
[e] Gen. xvi. 2. & xxix. 30. & xxx. 2.
[f] Lev. xviii. 18.

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† Heb. From her going up.
[g] Job vi. 14. 1 Theſ. v. 14.

v. 1—8. This chapter opens,

1. With an account of Samuel's parentage and birth-place. His father was of the family of Korah; a good branch from a bad ſtock. His reſidence was mount Ephraim, in a city called Ramathaim-Zophim, from two eminences on which it was built, or from watch-towers, which were on them.

2. He was the ſon of pious parents. His father Elkanah, ſignifying *God hath poſſeſſed*, a Levite, went up annually to ſacrifice at Shiloh with his family, unto the Lord of Sabaoth, or hoſts, (which title of God here firſt occurs) a rare inſtance of adherence to God, when Iſrael in general had apoſtatized from him; and tho' offended with the immoralities of the prieſts Hophni and Phinehas, did not therefore withdraw himſelf from the worſhip of the tabernacle. *Note*, (1.) It is among the greateſt bleſſings, to be the child of pious parents. (2.) The more others turn away from God, the cloſer ſhould we cleave to him. (3.) We need not ſcruple to receive the ſacraments from the hands of a miniſter, juſtly ſcandalous by his immorality, ſeeing the validity of them depends on God's inſtitution, not man's miniſtration.

3. Notice is taken of Elkanah's two wives; one ought to have ſufficed him. Probably as he had no children by the firſt, he was tempted to take a ſecond; but tho' he got his wiſh on one hand,

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hand, his comfort was greatly embitter'd on the other, in the conteſts and vexations occaſioned between Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah ſignifies *beautiful*, and had engaged Elkanah's beſt affections; Peninnah, *a diamond*; ſhe enriched his family with children, but was rough and ſharp in her temper. She could not bear Elkanah's partiality to her rival, and therefore took every occaſion to provoke and exaſperate her. *Note*, (1.) When we ſtep out of the way of God's providence and law, to gather worldly comforts, we ſhall find the ſweet we expected embittered with gall. (2.) Jealous love cannot bear a rival; let it admoniſh us to keep our hearts ſingle for God.

4. The quarrel breaks out between the two wives, even before the Lord in Shiloh: for what place ſo ſacred as to exclude the intruſion of human corruption! Peninnah, envious of Hannah's intereſt in her huſband, upbraids her with her barrenneſs, ſeeking maliciouſly to deſtroy *her* comfort, if ſhe cannot engage *his* regard. And this ſhe did at each returning feaſt, when the appearance of Elkanah's partial love to Hannah rouſed her jealouſy and reſentment. Hannah, unable to bear the aggravating taunts, and afflicted beyond meaſure under her barrenneſs, too eaſily gratified her rival's malice, by the ſenſibility ſhe expreſſed at her reproaches. Melancholy and diſcontented, ſhe would not eat, and did nothing but weep, inſtead of rejoicing before the Lord, and counting herſelf happy in the bleſſing of her huſband's affection. *Note*, (1.) A malicious ſpirit, like the devil, takes delight in the miſeries others ſuffer by its means. (2.) Thoſe who are of a fretful temper, lay themſelves open to continual uneaſineſs. (3.) Moſt of our miſeries we make ourſelves by our unthankfulneſs: did we weigh our mercies, we ſhould be aſhamed to complain. (4.) When we are moſt deſirous to ſerve God, perhaps on our knees before him, Satan will be eſpecially buſy to diſcompoſe and ruffle our ſpirits.

5. Elkanah by every kind endearment ſeeks to ſooth the ſorrows of her heart. His love to her was not at all affected by her barrenneſs. He carves the niceſt part at the feſtal board, to teſtify his fond regard, and with ſoft tenderneſs gently chides the uneaſineſs he with grief beheld. Why weepeſt thou? Why eateſt thou not theſe offerings of peace with a grateful heart to the God of thy mercies? Is not my love better to thee than ten ſons? *Note*, (1.) Love hides all blemiſhes, and ſees no faults. (2.) As barrenneſs is from God, it ill becomes us to quarrel with him; and it were cruel in a huſband to add affliction to the afflicted. (3.) We cannot ſee thoſe we love weeping, without feeling for them the tendereſt diſtreſs, and eagerly longing to relieve them. (4.) Many of our ſorrows are of our own making. It were well if we aſked ourſelves often, Why weepeſt thou? (5.) That ſorrow is to be condemned as ſinful, that unfits us for, or diverts us from, the worſhip of God. (6.) Religion and reaſon will afford us a cure for all our diſtreſſes: if we poſſeſs the one, and exerciſe the other aright, we ſhall ſoon dry up our tears.

9. ¶ So Hannah roſe up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk: (now Eli the prieſt ſat upon a ſeat by a poſt of [h] the temple of the LORD). 10. And ſhe *was* † in bitterneſs of ſoul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept ſore. 11. And [i] ſhe vowed a vow, and ſaid, O LORD of hoſts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then [k] I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there ſhall no razor come upon his head. 12. And it came to paſs, as ſhe ‡ continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. 13. Now Hannah, [l] ſhe ſpake in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli [m] thought ſhe had been drunken. 14. And Eli ſaid unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. 15. And Hannah anſwered and ſaid: No, [n] my lord, I *am* a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit: I have drunk neither wine nor ſtrong drink, but have [o] poured out my ſoul before the LORD. 16. Count not thine handmaid for [p] a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my § complaint and grief have I ſpoken hitherto. 17. Then Eli anſwered and ſaid, [q] Go in peace: and the God of Iſrael grant *thee* thy petition that thou haſt aſked of him. 18. And ſhe ſaid, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy ſight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and [r] her countenance was no more *ſad*.

[h] 2 Sam. vii. 2.
† Heb. Bitter of ſoul.
[i] Gen. xxviii. 20. Num. xxx. 8. Eccleſ. v. 4.
[k] Num. vi. 5. Judg. xiii. 5.
‡ Heb. Multiplied to pray.
[l] Exod. xiv. 15. Neh. ii. 4. Rom. viii. 26.
[m] Acts xi. 3. 1 Cor. xiii. 7.
[n] Prov. xv. 1.
[o] Pſ. lxii. 8. & cxlii. 2.
[p] Deut. xiii. 13.
§ Or, meditation.
[q] 2 Kings v. 19.
[r] Eccleſ. ix. 7. Rom. xv. 13.

v. 9—18. Hannah received the kind reproof, and profited by it.

1. She accompanied him to the table, and perhaps eat and drank a little with them, though not of wine or ſtrong drink.

2. She took the firſt opportunity to retire, to pour out her complaints into the boſom of a compaſſionate God. She felt a bitterneſs which only he could remove, and mingles her tears with her prayers in the fervor of her devotion. Her petition was, that God would grant her a ſon, which, if beſtowed, ſhe vowed to dedicate as a Nazarite to God from the womb. *Note*, (1.) No relief like prayer for an afflicted ſoul. (2.) The tears we ſhed upon our knees are thoſe *flittings* God *puts in his bottle*, and which this Father of Mercies will wipe away by an anſwer of peace to the burdened ſoul.

3. Eli, the high-prieſt, who ſat at the gate of the court of the tabernacle, here called the temple, obſerving her moving her lips, but not hearing her voice, (for her prayer was mental, and in ſilent anguiſh the Lord who ſaw her heart, read her importunate deſires) haſtily concludes her drunken, and gives her a ſharp rebuke for her ſuppoſed impiety. *Note*, (1.) Haſty ſuſpicions and raſh cenſures are very ſinful. (2.) The prayer of the heart is that which God chiefly regards, and without words he can read our deſires. (3.) It is no new thing to have God's praying people abuſed as hypocrites.

4. Hannah's anſwer is as reſpectful and humble, as Eli's charge was haſty and cenſorious. Far from being provoked at an accuſation ſo contrary to the truth, ſhe with reverence addreſſes him, My lord, and meekly explains the true cauſe of her behaviour. She begs him not to have ſo ill an opinion of her, as to think her ſuch a daughter of Belial. It was not wine, but the bitterneſs of her affliction, that made her appear diſcompoſed and diſordered. Her cry was internal to the God of mercy, and her lips moved not in folly, but in prayer. *Note*, (1.) Every drunkard is a child of Belial, but a drunken woman doubly infamous. (2.) When unjuſtly cenſured, let us never return railing for railing. (3.) We do well to explain the motives of our conduct, to remove thoſe prejudices of our brethren, which might be entertained againſt us, however unjuſtly.

5. Eli readily receives her plea, rejoices in her vindication, is ſorry for his own raſhneſs, and makes her amends by the benediction he beſtows, and his earneſtly ſeconding her prayers, by his ſupplication to God in her behalf for an anſwer of peace. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould be pleaſed to find ourſelves miſtaken in our miſapprehenſion of our brethren, and endeavour to repair the error immediately. (2.) A good man's benediction and prayers are valuable bleſſings.

6. Hannah having now caſt her care upon God, puts off her ſorrow, and regains a peaceful mind, departing in faith that the Lord had heard, and would anſwer the voice of her humble petitions. *Note*, The prayer of faith can chear the ſinking heart, and ſmooth the diſcompoſed countenance of the afflicted.

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19. ¶ And they roſe up in the morning early, and [s] worſhipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their houſe to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembred her. 20. Wherefore it came to paſs † when the time was come about, after Hannah had conceived, that ſhe bare a ſon, and called his name ‡ Samuel, *ſaying*, Becauſe I have aſked him of the LORD. 21. And the man Elkanah, and all his houſe went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly ſacrifice, and his vow. 22. But [t] Hannah went not up, for ſhe ſaid unto her huſband, *I will not go up* until the child be weaned, and *then* I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever. 23. And Elkanah her huſband ſaid unto her, Do what ſeemeth thee good, tarry until thou have weaned him, only [u] the LORD eſtabliſh his word: ſo the woman abode, and gave her ſon [x] ſuck until ſhe weaned him. 24. ¶ And when ſhe had weaned him, [y] ſhe took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the houſe of the LORD in Shiloh: and [z] the child *was* young. 25. And they ſlew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. 26. And ſhe ſaid, O my lord, [a] *as* thy ſoul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that ſtood by thee here, [b] praying unto the LORD. 27. For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I aſked of him: 28. Therefore alſo I have lent him to the LORD as long as he liveth, § he ſhall be lent to the LORD. And he worſhipped the LORD there.

[s] Gen. xxiv. 26.
† Heb. In the revolution of days.
About 1114.
‡ i. e. Aſked of God.
[t] Exod. xxiii. 17.
[u] 2 Sam. vii. 25.
[x] Pſ. xxii. 9.
About 1112.
[y] Luke ii. 24.
[z] 2 Tim. iii. 15.
[a] Gen. xlii. 15. 2 Kings ii. 2, 4, 6.
[b] Mat. vii. 7.
§ Or, He whom I have obtained by petition ſhall be returned.

v. 19—28. The days of the ſolemn feaſt being accompliſhed, we have,

1. The return of Elkanah and his family, after having riſen up early to worſhip God, before they proceeded on their journey. *Note*, (1.) Early devotions promiſe a happy day. (2.) However urgent our journey, we ſhall loſe nothing by taking God's bleſſing along with us before we ſet off.

2. Hannah becomes a joyful mother. God anſwers her according to her prayers, and ſhe acknowledges the mercy in the name ſhe gives her ſon, *Samuel*, as *aſked of the Lord*. *Note*, God's mercies deſerve to be kept in everlaſting remembrance.

3. The care ſhe took in nurſing the infant. She was not unnatural, as ſome mothers, to deny their breaſts to the fruit of their womb, but ſuckled him herſelf; and when Elkanah went up to ſacrifice to the Lord, as uſual, and pay his vow, made perhaps on the birth of his ſon, ſhe excuſed herſelf from going till ſhe had weaned the child, that he might, according to his dedication, miniſter before the Lord, and return to his father's houſe no more. In this Elkanah acquieſces, begging *the Lord to eſtabliſh his word*, that he might live, and, as was propoſed, ſerve him continually in his tabernacle. *Note*, (1.) When we have a lawful let from the houſe of God, ſuch as ſuckling an infant, we may look up with comfort to him over the cradle, and expect God's bleſſing and preſence there. (2.) The beſt improvement of our mercies received from God is to devote them to God.

4. When the child is weaned, as it is generally thought at three years old, Hannah performs her vows, goes up with her ſon, and takes along with her ſacrifices and offerings, as grateful acknowledgments of the mercy God had beſtowed. Preſenting him to Eli, ſhe reminds him of what had paſſed, and ſurrenders up the precious gift to the perpetual ſervice of the God that gave him, then offers her ſacrifice, and rejoices before the Lord. *Note*, (1.) Though we may have juſt reaſon to delay, yet muſt we in their ſeaſon pay our vows. (2.) They who are ſurrendered up to God, muſt henceforth regard themſelves no longer as their own, but his for ever.

5. Samuel was early taught: no ſooner learned to liſp, than prayer was the language. Though a child, he worſhipped before the Lord. *Note*, (1.) Children ſhould early be taught the way to a throne of grace. (2.) The minds of little ones are very early ſuſceptible of divine impreſſions.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Hannah's ſong of thankſgiving*, ver. 1—10. 2. *Their return home with Eli's bleſſing*, ver. 11, 20. *The increaſe of their family*, ver. 21. *Samuel's growth and improvement*, ver. 11, 18, 21, 26. *and the care Hannah took to clothe him*, ver. 19. 3. *The great wickedneſs of Eli's ſons*, ver. 12—17, 22. 4. *The over-mild reproof that Eli gave them for it*, ver. 23—25. 5. *The ruin of his family threatened for the wickedneſs of his ſons*, ver. 27—36.

1. AND Hannah [a] prayed, and ſaid [b] My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, [c] mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged [d] over mine enemies: becauſe I rejoice [e] in thy ſalvation. 2. *There is* [f] none holy as the LORD: for *there is* [g] none beſide thee: neither *is there* [h] any rock like our God. 3. Talk no more ſo exceeding proudly, [i] let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD *is* a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. 4. [k] The bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and [l] they that ſtumbled are girt with ſtrength. 5. [m] *They that were* full, have hired out themſelves for bread; and *they that were* hungry ceaſed: ſo that [n] the barren hath born ſeven; and ſhe that hath many children is waxed feeble. 6. [o] The LORD killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. 7. [p] The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. 8. [q] He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghil, to ſet *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for [r] the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and he hath ſet the world upon them. 9. [s] He will keep the feet of his ſaints, and [t] the wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs; for [u] by ſtrength ſhall no man prevail. 10. [x] The adverſaries of the LORD ſhall be broken to pieces: out of heaven ſhall he thunder upon them: the LORD ſhall judge the ends of the earth, and [y] he ſhall give ſtrength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

[a] Phil. iv. 6.
[b] Luke i. 46, &c.
[c] Pſ. xcii. 10.
[d] Rev. xviii. 20.
[e] Exod. xv. 2.
[f] Ibid. xv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 4.
[g] Pſ. lxxiii. 25.
[h] Deut. xxxii. 4, 30, 31. Iſa. xxxii. 2. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[i] Mal. iii. 13. Jude 15.
[k] Judg. iv. 15. Pſ. lxxvi. 3.
[l] Hebr. xi. 34.
[m] Luke i. 53. Jam. v. 6.
[n] Ruth iv. 11.
[o] Deut. xxxii. 39, &c. Jon. ii. 3. Acts xvi. 6. & xx. 9, 12. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.
[p] Job i. 21.
[q] Job xlii. 10, 12. Pſ. cxiii. 7, 8.
[r] Pſ. xxiv. 7. & cii. 25. & civ. 5.
[s] Pſ. cxxi. 5, 8.
[t] Judg. i. 7. Mat. xxii. 12.
[u] Chap. xvii. 49. Eccleſ. ix. 11. Pſ. cxv. 1.
[x] Pſ. ii. 9.
[y] Ibid. 2. Mat. xxviii. 18.

v. 1—10. The grateful Hannah, big with praiſe, out of the abundance of her heart, utters this triumphant ſong. Very like it is that of Mary, *Luke* i. 46.

1. She opens with expreſſions of her joy in God. Not her ſon, not her huſband, not all the worldly bleſſings ſhe enjoyed, are to be compared with the ſenſe of his favour and regard. It is this revives her drooping heart, and raiſes her horn on high, her head in triumph, and her voice in praiſe. Her enemies now ſhall lick the duſt, Peninnah's lips be ſilent in ſhame, or prophetically ſhe foreſees the confuſion of Iſrael's enemies; therefore will ſhe rejoice in God's ſalvation, in his preſent mercy, and much more in hope of his eternal glory through the great Redeemer Jeſus. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is comely for the upright. (2.) To poſſeſs a grateful heart, is the ſure way to ſecure continuance of our mercies. (3.) The great joy of the believer is the ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt; compared with this, all beſide is counted but σκυϐαλα, dung and loſs.

2. She exalts God's glorious perfections. A God of immaculate holineſs, like to whom there is no other, neither men nor angels: the one Jehovah, the only God, infinite in power, a rock of ages, an everlaſting refuge to all who truſt upon him, in wiſdom unſearchable, in his vaſt mind at one view comprehending the paſt, the preſent, and the future; clearly diſcerning the characters of men, and from whom nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret. He weighs men's actions in the ſcale of impartial juſtice, and renders to every man according as his work is. *Note*, (1.) The conſideration of God's attributes fills the believing ſoul with wonder and praiſe. (2.) Is he holy? ſeek to be like him. Is he almighty, truſt on him in all difficulties. Is he wiſe? depend on him for direction. Is he juſt? then confidently expect the reward of glory, ſince he is the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.

3. She adores him for his providential diſpenſations in the diſpoſal of the affairs of mankind; inſtancing, in various particulars, where he makes his interpoſition appear. *The bows of the mighty are broken:* they who ſeemed ſure of victory, bow under their priſoners; whilſt *they who ſtumbled*, were ſo weak that they were ready to deſpair, are ſupported by the almighty arm, *are girt with ſtrength*. This is gloriouſly true of our ſpiritual enemies: they were too mighty for us, but Jeſus hath broken their power, and we who ſtumbled, and were unable to reſiſt their furious attacks, are out of weakneſs made ſtrong, yea, more than conquerors. *The full have hired out themſelves for bread*. So quick is often the tranſition from affluence to want, when God blows upon our poſſeſſions; whilſt, on the other hand, *the hungry ceaſed*, repleniſhed with the abundance of God's providential gifts. *Note*, (1.) In poverty or riches, let God's hand be acknowledged. (2.) The rich, the full of their own righteouſneſs and ſelf-ſufficiency, will know a change in the day of God, when they will be ſent empty away; whilſt the hungry, the humble ſoul, that craves the bread of life, Chriſt Jeſus, and thirſts after his righteouſneſs, ſhall be filled with the preſent bleſſings of grace, and by and by receive the fullneſs of glory, when he ſhall hunger no more, and thirſt no more. The increaſe and diminution of families is from God; her own experience can ſpeak it to his praiſe: *She who was barren, hath born ſeven*. Seven, a perfect number uſed to expreſs many, ſhe having, beſides Samuel, five children afterwards, given of the Lord; in confidence of which increaſe ſhe now rejoices: *and ſhe that hath many children is waxed feeble*, meaning perhaps Peninnah, who now ceaſed to bear children, or by death had loſt ſome of her numerous offspring. This ſhould reconcile us to the loſs of children, that it is the Lord's doing, and make us rejoice in thoſe he adds, as his gift, and to be educated for his glory. *The Lord killeth and maketh alive*. The iſſues of life and death are in his hands; his decree fixes the boundaries of life. The moſt likely to live he often ſmites ſecretly and ſuddenly; whilſt he delivereth thoſe appointed unto death. Yea, in the ſame perſon we ſee ſtrange changes; brought to the gates of the grave, more eminently to appear a monument of mercy. And ſpiritually alſo he killeth, caſting the ſinner into eternal death, or maketh alive, quickening his dead ſoul by his ſpirit, and raiſing up his dead body in the day of glory. *Note*, (1.) Death never comes by chance, but by a fixed decree. (2.) They have matter of everlaſting thankfulneſs, that by experience know God's quickning power on their ſouls, and who are paſſed from death unto life. *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghil, to ſet them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of glory*. Such wondrous changes we ſee in the world of nature; but how much more frequently and glorioufly do they appear in the world of grace, where the poor in ſpirit, and the deſtitute of all help, confeſs their wants and wretchedneſs; and the rich and ſovereign grace of God is extended towards them: ſo that they are raiſed up among God's princes, and made to inherit that throne of glory which fadeth not away. *For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's:* his upholding power and providence are ſeen in all theſe inſtances. Or, figuratively, the pillars may ſignify the princes mentioned before, and intimates his ſovereignty in the diſpoſal of the different eſtates of men. Let great men conſider this, and think who raiſed them to their high eſtates, and to whom they are reſponſible for their conduct.

4. She prophetically foretels the proſperity of God's people, and the perdition of his enemies, which literally and ſpiritually hath been, and will be, fulfilled in its ſeaſon. 1. Literally; Under Samuel's adminiſtration, the Philiſtines, the adverſaries of the Lord, were broken to pieces: the thunder deſtroyed them, *See chap.* vii. Saul and David were anointed by him,

and

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and the kingdom of Iſrael greatly ſtrengthened and enlarged by them. The feet of God's ſaints were, under his guidance, kept aright, and inteſtine idolatry, confounded, fled into darkneſs; whilſt their outward oppreſſors were ſubdued and ſilenced. 2. Spiritually; it continues gloriouſly fulfilling, reſpecting all God's people. *He will keep the feet of his ſervants*, hold them up in the rough way, and direct them in the right way: as he hath choſen them to be holy, he will preſerve them, that they ſhall not depart from him. *The wicked, the adverſaries of the Lord and his people, ſhall be broken under the rod of judgment*, their preſent deſigns againſt his church diſappointed and confounded, and their doom at laſt be the outer *darkneſs*, where they ſhall *be ſilent*, condemned eternally, without a plea to object to the righteous ſentence, or power to avoid it. *Jeſus the King*, whom the Father hath exalted, and called *My ſtrength*, he ſhall perform the glorious work, accompliſh thus his people's ſalvation; and when his elect are gathered in, come *to judge the ends of the earth*, to give his people their inheritance, and conſign his enemies to their place of torment. And all this ſhall be purely his own work: his people *prevailed* not *by their* own *might* to ſave themſelves, but purely by his ſovereign grace; and his enemies ſtruggle in vain to oppoſe his power, or to eſcape his vengeance.

11. And Elkanah went to Ramah to his houſe; and the child did miniſter unto the LORD before Eli the prieſt. 12. ¶ Now the ſons of Eli *were* [z] ſons of Belial, [a] they knew not the LORD. 13. And [b] the prieſt's cuſtom with the people *was*, *that* when any man offered ſacrifice, the prieſt's ſervant came, while the fleſh was in ſeething, with a fleſh-hook of three teeth in his hand: 14. And he ſtruck *it* into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; [c] all that the fleſh-hook brought up, [d] the prieſt took for himſelf: ſo they did in Shiloh, unto all the Iſraelites that came thither. 15. Alſo before they burnt the fat, the prieſt's ſervant came, and ſaid to the man that ſacrificed, Give fleſh to roaſt for the prieſt, for he will not have ſodden fleſh of thee, but raw. 16. And *if* any man ſaid unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat preſently, and *then* take *as much* as thy ſoul deſireth: then he would anſwer him, *Nay*, but thou ſhalt give *it me* now: and if not, I will take *it* by force. 17. Wherefore [e] the ſin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for [f] men abhorred the offering of the LORD. 18. ¶ But Samuel miniſtred before the LORD, *being* a child, girded with [g] a linen ephod. 19. Moreover, his mother made him a little coat, and brought *it* to him from year to year, when ſhe came up with her huſband to offer the yearly ſacrifice. 20. ¶ And [h] Eli bleſſed Elkanah, and his wife, and ſaid, The LORD give thee ſeed of this woman, for the † loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home. 21. And the LORD viſited Hannah, ſo that ſhe conceived, and [i] bare three ſons, and two daughters: and [k] the child Samuel grew before the LORD. 22. ¶ Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his ſons did unto all Iſrael, and how they lay with the women that ‡ aſſembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 23. And he ſaid unto them, Why do ye ſuch things? for I hear of your evil dealings, [l] by all this people. 24. Nay, my ſons: for *it is* no good report that I hear; ye make the LORD's people to § tranſgreſs. 25. If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him: but [m] if a man ſin againſt the LORD, who ſhall intreat for him? Notwithſtanding [n] they hearkned not unto the voice of their father, [o] becauſe the LORD would ſlay them. 26. (And the child Samuel [p] grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and alſo with men.)

[z] Deut. xiii. 13.
[a] Rom. i. 28. Tit. i. 16.
[b] Rom. i. 30.
[c] Exod. xxix. 27.
[d] Iſa. lvi. 11.
[e] Gen. x. 8.
[f] Mal. ii. 8.
[g] Exod. xxviii. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 14.
[h] Gen. xiv. 19.
† Or petition which ſhe aſked.
[i] Eph. iii. 20.
[k] Luke i. 80. & ii. 40.
About 1102.
‡ Heb. Aſſembled by troops. Exod. xxxviii. 8. Num. iv. 23.
[l] Iſa. iii. 9.
§ Or, cry out.
[m] Num. xv. 30, 31.
[n] Prov. xv. 10.
[o] 2 Theſ. ii. 11, 12.
[p] Prov. iii. 4. Luke i. 80. & ii. 52. Acts ii. 47. Rom. xiv. 18.

v. 11—26. The characters of theſe families, thus contraſted, appear more conſpicuous. The negligence of Eli, the high-prieſt, makes Elkanah's diligence more remarkable; and the piety of Samuel caſts a double gloom upon the ungodlineſs of Eli's ſons.

1. Concerning Elkanah and his family, we have,

(1.) Their return unto Ramah, leaving Samuel behind, with Eli's bleſſing upon them for the loan they had lent unto the Lord, and the effect of that bleſſing taking place, in five children given to Hannah in return for Samuel. *Note*, Nothing returns ſo ſurely with intereſt, as that which is lent unto the Lord, and devoted to his ſervice.

(2.) Their regular and ſtated worſhip of God at Shiloh, and their care of their darling ſon, providing him with cloaths during his noviciate at the tabernacle. *Note*, (1.) Though we muſt be in ſpirit always worſhipping, yet regular and ſtated returns for prayer are carefully to be kept up. (2.) A due proviſion for children is a parent's duty, and ſhould be their delight, never grudging the expence of it.

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(3.) The progreſs Samuel made under Eli's care and inſpection. Though ſurrounded with the bad examples of Eli's ſons, he carefully attended to Eli's inſtructions, and miniſtred before him in any little ſervice in which he was capable of being employed; and Eli, obſerving no doubt his extraordinary delight in the work, and reflecting on the extraordinary circumſtances of his birth, took care betimes to train him up to the ſervice of the tabernacle, and put him on a linnen ephod; though not a prieſt, and before he was of the uſual age to miniſter before the Lord. As he increaſed in ſtature, his underſtanding and gracious diſpoſitions, like the expanding roſe-bud, diſcloſed their ſweet perfume, and attracted the regard of God and man. *Note*, (1.) Under careful and pious teachers, we may hope for the bloſſoms of early piety. (2.) God is pleaſed with the graces he beſtows.

2. Concerning Eli and his houſe, we are told,

(1.) Their exceeding bad character. *They were ſons of Belial.* Though born of ſo godly a man, and, during their youth, brought up under his prayers and inſtructions, yet they turned out profane and profligate. *They knew not the Lord*, payed him no regard, made their office a mere benefice, and, though prieſts, were atheiſtical, perhaps in opinions, certainly in their practice. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of parents have often lived to ſee themſelves in Eli's unhappy caſe. Grace cannot be communicated but from God only. (2.) It were greatly to be wiſhed, that Eli's ſons had been the laſt of ſuch prieſts; but there are ſtill too many of their ſucceſſors, whoſe profeſſion makes their immoralities and infidelity more infamous and more guilty.

(2.) The particular acts of their wickedneſs are recorded to their everlaſting ſhame. *Rapacious:* They were not ſatisfied with their allotted portion, the breaſt and ſhoulder, but imperiouſly by their ſervants ſent and plundered the people, with a prong ſtriking into the caldron, where they boiled what was deſigned to feaſt the offerer and his family, and taking away all that it brought up. Nor ſatisfied with this, they demanded more of the undreſſed meat, ſuch as the prieſt liked. *Profane:* They would not ſuffer the fat to be burnt on God's altar, till they were ſerved. And *adulterous*, taking occaſion to ſeduce the women, who came up to worſhip, into their apartments, and debauching them, to gratify their vile luſts. In view of ſuch abominations, no marvel the people abhorred the offerings of the Lord, where ſuch impiety was practiſed, and that God with a deep brand ſtamped their wickedneſs before him, to be remembred quickly to their eternal confuſion. *Note*, (1.) A rapacious prieſt is accurſed of God, and abhorred of men. (2.) They who make a god of their belly, but add to their impiety, by the mockery of wearing Chriſt's livery. (3.) To abuſe the credit of the ſacred office, to ſucceed in the gratification of beſtial appetite, is the higheſt ſtep of human villainy, and abandoned wickedneſs.

(3.) Their hardened reſiſtance of their father's reproof. He heard of their ill-doings: no doubt the injured complained to him; but he was old, and unable therefore himſelf to inſpect the concerns of his office; and his ſons were too headſtrong to be reſtrained by him. Yet he remonſtrates with them on their evil doings, expoſtulates on the ill tendency of their wickedneſs, in leading God's people to tranſgreſs, and warns them of the dreadful danger of it to their own ſouls, when, without an advocate, they ſhould appear before God, and receive that eternal condemnation which their crimes provoked. But words ſignified little to them; they needed ſeverer correction; and for Eli's ſinful indulgence of them, God will viſit him, when he takes vengeance on them: for, having reſolved to ſlay them, God had given them up to the blindneſs and hardneſs of their own hearts; and therefore they hearkened not to their father, but went on in their iniquities. *Note*, (1.) There is not a more hopeleſs character, than a diſobedient child. (2.) Parents have often much reaſon to blame their ſinful lenity and indulgence, and not only are chargeable with guilt before God, for with-holding the rod of correction; but are made here to ſmart for it by their children's undutifulneſs and ſufferings. (3.) There is a ſin unto death, for which there is no entreating: let us tremble at every approach to this unpardonable ſtate. (4.) God gives men up to one ſin as the puniſhment of another, and thus hardens them, till ripe for deſtruction.

(4.) Samuel's character cloſes the narrative. His piety ſerved to remove that diſguſt which Eli's ſons had given, and his behaviour the more conciliated the regard of God's people, as it appeared more eminent and exemplary in the midſt of ſuch bad company. *Note*, It is ſome comfort, when great impiety and wickedneſs hath crept into the church of God, that ſome burning and ſhining lights continue to be raiſed up in it, that we might not be as Sodom, or become like unto Gomorrah.

27. ¶ And there came [q] a man of God unto Eli, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, [r] Did I plainly appear unto the houſe of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's houſe? 28. And [s] did I chooſe him out of all the tribes of Iſrael *to be* my prieſt, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incenſe, to wear an ephod before me? and [t] did I give unto the houſe of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Iſrael? 29. Wherefore [u] kick ye at my ſacrifice, and at mine offering, which I have commanded *in my* habitation, and [x] honoureſt thy ſons above me, to make yourſelves fat with the chiefeſt of all the offerings of Iſrael my people? 30. Wherefore the LORD God of Iſrael ſaith, I ſaid indeed *that* thy houſe, and the houſe of thy † father ſhould walk before me for ever: but now the LORD ſaith, [y] Be it far from me; for [z] them that honour me, I will honour, and [a] they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed. 31. Behold, the days come that [b] I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's houſe, that there ſhall not be an old man in thine houſe. 32. And thou ſhalt ſee ‡ an enemy *in my* habitation, in all *the wealth* which *God* ſhall give Iſrael: and there ſhall not be an old man in thine houſe for ever. 33. And the man of thine, *whom* I ſhall not cut off from mine altar, *ſhall be* to conſume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increaſe of thine houſe ſhall die in the flower of their age. 34. And [c] this *ſhall be* a ſign unto thee, that ſhall come upon thy two ſons, on Hophni and Phinehas: [d] in one day they ſhall die both of them. 35. And I will raiſe me up [e] a faithful prieſt, *that* ſhall do according to *that* which *is* in mine heart, and in my mind: And I will build him || a ſure houſe, and he ſhall walk before mine Anointed [f] for ever. 36. And it ſhall come to paſs, *that* [g] every one that is left in thine houſe, ſhall come *and* crouch to him for a piece of ſilver, and a morſel of bread, and ſhall ſay, Put me (I pray thee) into one of the prieſt's offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.

[q] Judg. xiii. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Pet. i. 21.
[r] Exod. iv. 27. & xvi. 13.
[s] Exod. xxviii. 1.
[t] Lev. ii. 3, 10. & vi. 16.
[u] Deut. xxxii. 15.
[x] Lev. xix. 15. Mat. x. 37.
† i. e. Ithamar.
[y] 1 Chron. xv. 2.
[z] Pſal. xci. 14, 15.
[a] Mal. ii. 9.
[b] 1 Kings ii. 27.
‡ Or, The affliction of the tabernacle for all the wealth. Chap. iv. 11.
[c] 1 Kings xiii. 3.
[d] Chap. iv. 11.
[e] 1 Kings ii. 35. 1 Chron. xxix. 22. Ezek. xliv. 15. Heb. vii. 24—28.
|| Heb. Faithful houſe. Iſa. xxii. 23.
[f] Pſ. cx. 4.
[g] 1 Kings ii. 27.

v. 27—36. Becauſe Eli was ſo remiſs in reproving his ſons, God, by the mouth of a prophet, ſends him a ſharp rebuke.

1. He reminds Eli of the peculiar bleſſings he enjoyed. God had appeared to Aaron, his great progenitor, in Egypt; had conferred on his family, on their delivery from thence, the diſtinguiſhed honour of the prieſthood, and annexed thereto that liberal proviſion from the ſacrifices, which might ſupport the dignity of their office. It was therefore the more culpable in him who enjoyed theſe favours, to act with ſuch negligence. *Note*, (1.) Where God hath ſhewn peculiar mercies, he juſtly expects eſpecial returns. (2.) The honour of miniſtring before God is great, and his proviſion an engagement to our fidelity; how criminal then to neglect that ſervice, more ſo to devour the wages, and never do the work; and moſt of all, by open immoralities, to bring a ſcandal on the holy profeſſion. For theſe things God will viſit.

2. The charge alledged is the abuſes committed by his ſons, his own connivance at theſe abominations, to the diſhonour of God, inſtead of turning them out of their office, and his partaking with them in the meat thus ſcandalouſly obtained. *Note*, (1.) Our children's ſins are our own, when committed under our eye without immediate correction. (2.) They who feed themſelves to the full, will quickly kick at God's ſervice. (3.) A fat luxurious prieſt ſeems conſecrated rather to eat than pray, and to ſacrifice to his belly rather than any other god.

3. The puniſhment denounced on ſuch a diſobedient conduct, excluſion from the high-prieſthood, and the perpetual ignominy and deſolation of his family. [1.] Excluſion from the high-prieſthood. How it came ſettled in the houſe of Ithamar, from whom Eli deſcended, inſtead of Eleazar, in whoſe family it had at firſt been, is not recorded; but had they continued faithful, to walk before God, it had not again reverted to the line of Eleazar. Now the mercy is forfeited, and the honour gone, though not immediately transferred, yet the ſentence is paſſed, and it was fulfilled in Zadok, whom Solomon appointed in the room of Abiathar. And the reaſon of his determination God gives, *thoſe that honour me I will honour, but they who deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed. Note*, (1.) They who are a diſhonour to the prieſthood ſhould be degraded from it. (2.) Though godlineſs may be now deſpiſed, and proſperous iniquity in honour; yet oftentimes even here, and certainly hereafter, God will exalt the horn of his people, and cover their enemies with ſhame and confuſion. (3.) All God's proceedings will ſhortly appear to be directed by the moſt perfect wiſdom, and guided by impartial juſtice. [2.] The deſolation and ignominy of Eli's family are threatned. Their power and authority ſhould be deſtroyed, their days ſhortned, dying in the flower of youth, their poſſeſſions moulder away, the ark, before which they miniſtered, be in the hand of the enemy (or perhaps *ver.* 32d alludes to the tranſlation of the prieſthood to their rivals) whilſt the few who remained of his poſterity ſhould be a grief and bitterneſs to thoſe who begat them, and be reduced ſo low as to beg admittance into the meaneſt offices of the tabernacle, that they might not famiſh through want, ſee 1 *Kings* xi. 26, 27. The beginning of theſe ſorrows his own eyes ſhould ſee, in the death of his two ſons Hophni and Phinehas, in one day, and this ſhould be the ſign of the fulfilment of all the reſt. *Note*, (1.) Let every ungodly miniſter read the doom of Eli's houſe and tremble. (2.) They who abuſed their power are juſtly puniſhed with infamy, and thoſe reduced to want who lived in wantonneſs. (3.) Better ſee a child in the grave than living in wickedneſs. (4.) To ſerve in the prieſt's office merely for bread, is miſerable ſervice indeed. (5.) They who have been companions in iniquity may expect to periſh together.

4. God promiſes to raiſe up to himſelf a faithful prieſt, and to preſerve to him an enduring prieſthood, to miniſter before God's anointed, as were the kings of Iſrael. This was *literally* fulfilled in Zadoc, whoſe poſterity continued in this office 'till the captivity in Babylon, if not 'till the coming of the Meſſiah. *Spiritually* it was accompliſhed in Chriſt, who put an end to the Levitical prieſthood, and remaineth a prieſt for ever. *Note*, (1.) Though ſome are unfaithful to the truſt of the miniſtry, God will take care his church ſhall not be left utterly deſtitute. (2.) Every believer is one of that ſure houſe which, in Chriſt, the great high-prieſt, is eſtabliſhed before God for ever.

CHAP. III.

Here is, (1.) *God's manifeſtation of himſelf to Samuel*, ver. 1—10. (2.) *The meſſage ſent by him to Eli*, ver. 11—14. (3.) *Eli's ſubmiſſion to the righteouſneſs of God, when he hears it*, ver. 15—18. (4.) *The eſtabliſhment of Samuel to be a prophet in Iſrael*, ver. 19—21.

1. AND [a] the child Samuel miniſtred unto the LORD before Eli: and [b] the word of the LORD was precious in thoſe days; *there was* no † open viſion. 2. And it came to paſs at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place, and [c] his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not ſee: 3. And ere [d] the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God *was*, and Samuel was laid down to *ſleep*: 4. That the LORD [e] called Samuel, and he anſwered, Here *am* I. 5. And he ran unto Eli, and ſaid, Here *am* I, for thou calledſt me. And he ſaid, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. 6. And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel aroſe and went to Eli, and ſaid, Here *am* I, for thou didſt call me. And he anſwered, I called not, my ſon; lie down again. 7. ‡ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. 8. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he aroſe, and went to Eli, and ſaid, Here *am* I, for thou didſt call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child. 9. Therefore Eli ſaid unto Samuel, Go, lie down, and it ſhall be, if he call thee, that thou ſhalt ſay, Speak LORD, for thy ſervant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10. And the LORD came, and ſtood and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel anſwered, [f] Speak, for thy ſervant heareth.

[a] Chap. ii. 11.
[b] Pſ. lxxiv. 9. Amos viii. 11.
† Heb. Broken. Judg. vii. 15.
[c] Chap. iv. 15.
[d] Exod. xxvii. 21. Lev. xxiv. 3. 2 Chron. xiii. 11.
[e] 1 Cor. xii. 28. Gal. i. 15. Heb. v. 4.
‡ Or, Thus did Samuel before he knew the Lord, and before, &c. Acts xix. 2.
[f] Acts ix. 6.

v. 1—10. Juſtly provoked with the ill conduct of the prieſts, God had withdrawn his gracious appearances from them. Darkneſs now reigns in the deſolate ſanctuary, and neither viſion nor dream, for a long time, had been vouchſafed; but God having raiſed up Samuel for extraordinary ſervices, and early prepared him, by his exemplary piety, for communion with his bleſſed ſelf, begins, whilſt he is yet a youth, to manifeſt himſelf to him in Shiloh. *Note*, Early piety is uſually favoured with eſpecial communications of divine conſolations. We have,

1. The time when God appeared to him, in the night, when Eli, ſinking under age and infirmities, was retired for repoſe, and Samuel in ſome room near him, to be ready at Eli's call; the lamp of God yet burning, which ſeems to intimate, that it was towards morning. *Note*, We have to bleſs God for the bed of repoſe, on which we can ſleep in peace, and ſtill more if with refreſhing dreams he makes that repoſe doubly profitable for our ſouls as well as bodies.

2. The manner in which he appeared. By an audible voice, calling Samuel by his name; either awakened with the ſound,

or awake before, and employed in holy meditation before the morning light, he anſwers immediately, ſuppoſing it Eli's voice, and runs to his chamber, to enquire what he wanted. Eli aſſures him he did not call, and bids him lie down again. *Note,* (1.) A willing ſervant runs at his maſter's voice, happy, and therefore in haſte, to ſerve him. (2.) They who ſee their ſervants officious to pleaſe them, ought, in return, to ſhew themſelves tender of them, and to conſult their comfort and repoſe.

3. Repeated calls are given, and Samuel returns to Eli, perſuaded the voice was his; for he was a child, and had not as yet been uſed to any ſuch extraordinary manifeſtation of God's preſence, nor had received any prophetical revelation from him. At firſt Eli ſends him back to his bed, but after a ſecond and third call, he began to reflect, and to conclude the voice divine; he therefore bids him lie down again, and at the next call to anſwer, Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth, as attentive to the notice, and ready to obey the command. Hereupon, no ſooner was he compoſed on his bed, than the Lord ſtood before him, probably in a human form, as he afterwards appeared in earneſt, and called him Samuel, Samuel; Samuel, according to Eli's inſtructions, anſwers, Here am I. *Note,* (1.) When God deſigns to call a ſoul, he will open his ears to hear, and repeat thoſe calls ſo often, that amidſt all our miſtakes and errors, they ſhall at laſt become effectual to lead us in the right way. (2.) We may expect ſome gracious manifeſtation from God, when our obedient ear is attentive to the Divine call, and out of his word we are enquiring, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do. (3.) Such as are elder, and more experienced in the ways of God, ſhould delight to inſtruct the younger, who are training up in the ſame ways. (4.) They who are careful to obſerve the good inſtructions they receive, will find the bleſſing of ſo doing.

11. ¶ And the LORD ſaid to Samuel, Behold, [g] I will do a thing in Iſrael, [h] at which both the ears of every one that heareth it ſhall tingle. 12. In that day, [i] I will perform againſt Eli, all *things* which I have ſpoken concerning his houſe: † when I begin, I will alſo make an end. 13. For I have told him, that I will judge his houſe for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: becauſe his ſons made themſelves ‡ vile, and he ‖ reſtrained them not. 14. And therefore I have ſworn unto the houſe of Eli, that [k] the iniquity of Eli's houſe ſhall not be purged with ſacrifice nor offering for ever. 15. ¶ And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the houſe of the LORD: and Samuel [l] feared to ſhew Eli the viſion. 16. Then Eli called Samuel, and ſaid, Samuel my ſon, And he anſwered, Here *am* I. 17. And he ſaid, What *is* the thing that *the LORD* hath ſaid unto thee? I pray thee hide *it* not from me: God do ſo to thee, and more alſo, if thou hide *any* thing from me, of all the things that he ſaid unto thee. 18. And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he ſaid, It *is* the LORD: [m] let him do what ſeemeth him good.

[g] Amos xiii. 6.
[h] 2 Kings xxi. 12. Pſ. cxix. 120. Jer. xix. 3.
[i] Chap. ii. 31. Zech. i. 6.
† Heb. Beginning and ending.
‡ Or, Accurſed.
‖ Heb. Frowned not upon them.
[k] Chap. ii. 25 Jer. vii. 16. & xv. 1. Ezek. xxiv. 13. Heb. x. 26, &c. 1 John v. 16.
[l] Dan. iv. 19.
[m] Pſ. xxxix. 9. Iſa. xxxix. 8.

v. 11—18. As the former warning ſeems not ſufficiently to have wrought its effect on Eli, another was needful to rouſe him to a ſeverer correction of his ungodly children. We have,

1. The ſhort but terrible meſſage Samuel receives from God concerning his judgments, and particularly on Eli's houſe. With what terror would every Iſraelite hear the ark was taken, and Eli's concern how aggravated in the loſs of both his ſons? They had made themſelves vile indeed, and Eli, by his negligence to correct them, becauſe he did not even frown upon them, though he knew their abomination, was become a party in their crime; therefore God confirms, with an oath, his former denunciations; judgment ſhall proceed againſt them, God will begin, and that ſoon, in the death of Hophni and Phinehas, and make an end in the utter diſgrace and deſolation of his family in the days of Solomon; no ſacrifice or offering could be accepted for them, the decree was gone forth, and it was too late to cry for mercy. *Note,* (1.) They who make themſelves vile by ſin, God will make them viler by ſuffering, when they ſhall be caſt off from his preſence, and become an abhorring to all fleſh. (2.) They who ſee ſin, eſpecially magiſtrates, maſters, and parents, without juſt rebuke, are chargeable with the guilt of the evil they connive at. (3.) When God ariſes to judgment, and pronounces the ſinner's final doom, *Go accurſed, &c.* it will be a ſound that will ring with terror in their ears, through a miſerable eternity. (4.) Though the ſacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin, yet there may be a time when God hath given up the ſinner to a reprobate mind, and having loſt all feeling to pray for himſelf, God forbids us alſo to pray for him, 1 *John* v. 16.

2. Though Samuel was afraid to ſpeak to Eli, Eli's ſollicitude to know extorts from him the dreadful meſſage. [1.] He lay till morning; ſtruck, no doubt, with the awful apprehenſions of this approaching judgment, and meditating on the ſtrange manifeſtation which had been made to him; at early dawn ariſing, he applies himſelf to his wonted taſk of opening the doors of the Lord's houſe; not thinking himſelf, becauſe called to be a prophet, above being a door-keeper in the houſe of the Lord: unwilling to be the meſſenger of evil, he conceals from Eli the viſion. *Note,* (1.) Unleſs our thoughts be lifted up to God 'tis dangerous to lie awake. (2.) The riſing morn ſhould meet us at the gates of God's temple in prayer. (3.) They who are called to the higheſt honours in God's houſe think themſelves happy to be employed in the meaneſt ſervice for him. (4.) We ſhould be tender and careful not to grieve our dear friends, and rather, if we can, conceal from them what might burden their hearts with ſorrow. [2.] Eli was as ſollicitous to know the viſion as Samuel to hide it from him; perhaps ſuſpecting that it boded him no good, and willing to know the worſt, that he might prepare for ſubmiſſion: no ſooner was Samuel therefore ſtirring than Eli calls him, and obſerving, probably, ſome reluctance to communicate what had paſſed, adjures him to conceal nothing from him. *Note,* They who have God's meſſage entruſted to them muſt faithfully deliver it, nor, becauſe it may be grating or terrible to the ſinner's ears, through fear conceal it from them, leaſt thereby their judgment ſhould lie at our door, and their blood be required at our hands. [3.] Samuel faithfully relates, and Eli as piouſly and humbly acquieſces in the Divine will, terrible as it muſt be to nature. He knew, as it was of God, it muſt be juſt, and he acknowledged the equity of the ſentence; and as the oath of God had eſtabliſhed it, it muſt be irreverſible; he dares not pray for a change, but prepares to ſubmit, with holy reſignation of himſelf into the Lord's hands. *Note,* (1.) Acquieſcence in the juſtice of the divine judgments, is the beſt ſymptom of a truly humbled ſoul. (2.) Reſignation to the Divine will is the way to lighten our heavieſt burdens; the half of our bitterneſs is removed, when we can ſay, It is the Lord, let him do as ſeemeth him good.

19. ¶ And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and [n] did let none of his words fall to the ground. 20. And all Iſrael, from Dan even to Beerſheba, knew that Samuel *was* eſtabliſhed *to be* a prophet of the LORD. 21. And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himſelf to Samuel in Shiloh, [o] by the word of the LORD.

[n] 1 Kings viii. 56. Iſa. xliv. 26.
[o] John i. 2.

v. 19—21. As Samuel increaſed in years he grew more diſtinguiſhed by Divine manifeſtations, and more eſteemed by the people of God.

1. The Lord appeared to him again, by the word of the Lord, the incarnate word, whoſe voice had ſpoken to him before; and all his predictions were verified in the accompliſhment, and all his words weighty and profitable. *Note,* (1.) They who improve one gracious viſit from God, ſhall not be long without a ſecond. (2.) God will not ſuffer the words of his miniſters to be ſpilt as water on the ground, or drop as an arrow to the earth, ere it hath reached the mark, but will cauſe his word in their mouth to be cloathed with power, and to accompliſh the thing whereunto he ſendeth it.

2. The people knew and honoured the riſing prophet; his fame ſpread throughout the land, and his piety made him as diſtinguiſhed as his prophecy. *Note,* Though we are not to ſeek our own honour, yet we ſhould eſteem it a valuable acquiſition to poſſeſs the eſteem and reſpect of good men.

CHAP. IV.

Here is, (1.) *The loſs Iſrael ſuſtained in a rencounter with the Philiſtines,* ver. 1, 2. (2.) *The ark of God brought into the camp,* ver. 3, 4. *which made them ſecure,* ver. 5. *and the Philiſtines afraid,* ver. 6—9. (3.) *The fatal conſequences of it: Iſrael was beaten, and the ark taken,* ver. 10, 11. (4.) *The confuſion of the city upon hearing this,* ver. 12, 13. (5.) *Eli's death,* ver. 14—18. (6.) *His daughter-in-law's miſcarriage and death,* ver. 19—22.

1. AND [a] the word of Samuel † came to all Iſrael. Now Iſrael went out againſt the Philiſtines to battle, and pitched beſide [b] Eben-ezer: and the Philiſtines pitched in Aphek. 2. And the Philiſtines put themſelves in aray againſt Iſrael: and *when* ‡ they joined battle, [c] Iſrael was ſmitten before the Philiſtines: and they ſlew of the army in the field about four thouſand men. 3. ¶ And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Iſrael ſaid, [d] Wherefore hath the LORD ſmitten us to day before the Philiſtines? [e] Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, [f] it may ſave us out of the hand of our enemies. 4. So the people

[a] Chap. iii. 11.
† Heb. was.
About 1095.
[b] Chap. xvii. 12.
‡ Heb. The battle ſpread itſelf.
[c] Joſh. vii. 12.
[d] Ibid. 7, 8.
[e] Ibid. ix. 14.
[f] 2 Sam. xv. 25. Jer. vii. 8.

Before Chriſt 1095.

people ſent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hoſts, [g] which dwelleth *between* the cherubims: and the two ſons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there, with the ark of the covenant of God. 5. And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Iſrael [h] ſhouted with a great ſhout, ſo that the earth rang again. 6. And when the Philiſtines heard the noiſe of the ſhout, they ſaid, What *meaneth* the noiſe of this great ſhout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they underſtood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp. 7. And the Philiſtines were afraid, for they ſaid, God is come into the camp. And they ſaid, [i] Wo unto us; for there hath not been ſuch a thing ‖ heretofore. 8. Wo unto us: Who ſhall deliver us out of the hand of theſe mighty Gods? theſe *are* the Gods that ſmote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderneſs. 9. Be ſtrong, and quit yourſelves like men, O ye Philiſtines, that ye be not ſervants unto the Hebrews, [k] as they have been to you: quit yourſelves like men, and fight.

[g] Exod. xxv. 22. Num. vii. 89. Pſ. xcix. 1.
[h] Ver. 13. Job xv. 1.
[i] Exod. xiv. 25.
‖ Heb. Yeſterday, or, the third day.
[k] Judg. xiii. 1.

v. 1—9. The prophecy of Samuel concerning Eli's houſe was ſoon ſpread, and men waited with ſuſpenſe for the fulfilment which quickly began in this war with the Philiſtines, which is here recorded, and happened towards the latter end of Eli's government, about forty years after the death of Samſon.

1. There was a pitched battle between the hoſts of Iſrael and Philiſtia, wherein the former were worſted with the loſs of four thouſand men; nor need we wonder, when they ſeem neither to have conſulted God in their war, nor to have repented of their ſins.

2. On retiring to their camp a counſel of war is held; wherein they ſeem not ſo much as to have aſcribed the ſtroke to God, under a humbling ſenſe of their deſerts, as to expreſs their anger for his Providence; and, inſtead of conſulting his will, fooliſhly propoſe a contrivance of their own to ſecure their future victory, by bringing down the ark of God among them; as if the preſence of that would enſure to them the power of him who dwelt between the cherubims over it. The reſolution is no ſooner taken than put in force, the ark ſent for, and Eli's ungodly ſons bring it down: how little bleſſing could be hoped from the ark in ſuch hands! *Note*, (1.) The afflictive providences which humble the penitent, exaſperate the hardned, and make them fret againſt the Lord. (2.) They who are moſt deſtitute of the power of godlineſs, have the greateſt dependance on the form of it, are moſt zealous for the ark, the liturgy, the prieſthood, and the ritual obſervances, and truſt more on theſe for ſalvation, than on the blood, righteouſneſs, and grace of the Redeemer, working the ſpiritual renovation of their hearts. (3.) However good any eſtabliſhment may be, whilſt the miniſters are graceleſs, the ark they bear will be an empty coffer, and no divine bleſſing can be expected to attend them.

3. Joy and triumph now ſwell the hearts of every Iſraelite, and they ſhout till the earth rings with their acclamations. *Note*, They uſually glory moſt in external privileges, who have leaſt experience of inward religion; and their ſhouting, like Iſrael's, is the prelude not of victory, but of their everlaſting ſhame and confuſion.

4. The Philiſtines heard the ſhouts of Iſrael, and by their ſpies quickly learned the cauſe which filled their hoſt with conſternation. Suppoſing the ark was Iſrael's God, they expreſs their apprehenſions of his preſence: they had not ſo ſhouted before, nor was the ark of God with them, when they were before defeated; and reflecting upon the traditionary notices of the former wonders God had wrought in Egypt, though they miſtake in the circumſtances, they tremble for the conſequences. However, their leaders encourage the ſoldiers not utterly to deſpond, but if the danger be great, exert the greater courage to extricate themſelves from it, reminding them of their former victories over Iſrael, and holding up to them the ignominy of ſervitude under thoſe who had ſerved them. *Note*, (1.) It becomes commanders to put on a good countenance in the greateſt dangers. (2.) Their triumphing will be ſhort, whoſe truſt is formality, and whoſe hope is deluſion.

10. ¶ And the Philiſtines fought, and Iſrael was ſmitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and [l] there was a very great ſlaughter, for there fell of Iſrael thirty thouſand footmen. 11. And [m] the ark of God was taken; and [n] the two ſons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were ſlain.

[l] Pſ. lxxviii. 62. Iſa. x. 5, 6. Jer. vii. 12.
[m] Pſ. lxxviii. 60, 61.
[n] Chap. ii. 34.

v. 10, 11. The event little correſponded with the ſanguine expectations of the Iſraelites. They were ſmitten before their enemies, thirty thouſand of them ſlain in the battle, among which fell the wicked ſons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas; and, to crown the victory, that ark in which they truſted, falls into the hands of their enemies. *Note*, (1.) The wickedneſs of thoſe who undertake to eſpouſe it often makes a good cauſe to ſuffer. (2.) The firſt and soreſt judgments of God will fall upon the heads of wicked and faithleſs miniſters. (3.) They who go out of God's way, and act without his advice, can expect no ſucceſs in their enterprizes.

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12. ¶ And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the ſame day [o] with his clothes rent, and [p] with earth upon his head. 13. And when he came, lo, Eli ſat upon a ſeat by the way-ſide, watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told *it*, all the city cried out. 14. And when Eli heard the noiſe of the crying, he ſaid, What *meaneth* the noiſe of this tumult? And the man came in haſtily, and told Eli. 15. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old, and [q] his eyes were dim, that he could not ſee. 16. And the man ſaid unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled today out of the army. And he ſaid, † What is there done, my ſon? 17. And the meſſenger anſwered, and ſaid, Iſrael is fled before the Philiſtines, and there hath been alſo a great ſlaughter among the people, and thy two ſons alſo, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken. 18. And it came to paſs [r] when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the ſeat backward by the ſide of the gate, and [s] his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man and heavy. And he had judged Iſrael forty years.

[o] Joſh. vii. 6.
[p] 2 Sam. i. 2. Neh. ix. 1. Job ii. 12.
[q] Chap. iii. 2.
† Heb. What is the thing?
[r] Ver. 22. Pſ. xxvi. 8. Pſ. xlii. 3, 10.
[s] Eccleſ. ix. 1, 2. Rom. xi. 33.

v. 12—18. Bad news flies faſt. We have here,

1. A meſſenger of evil, haſting from the routed hoſts to carry the doleful tidings to Shiloh; a Benjamite; his name is not mentioned, but his concern was evident in expreſſive ſigns of ſorrow, his garments rent, and earth on his head. He entred the city, and either by paſſing Eli as unwilling to acquaint him firſt, or entring by another gate, reports the iſſue of that dreadful day. *Note*, The deſolations of God's Iſrael are a bitter grief to a faithful ſoul.

2. The news inſtantly fills the city with ſhrieks and cries of bitter anguiſh, men and women aloud bewailing this terrible calamity. *Note*, They who refuſe to ſhed the tears of penitence, are often made to ſhriek under the ſtrokes of judgment.

3. Eli's anxiety is remarked. He ſat near the way, eager to hear the tidings, yet fearing the event: the ark of God engaged his thoughts more than all beſide, and he trembled probably to think to whoſe hands it was entruſted, and to what danger it was expoſed; and perhaps condemned his own eaſy compliance in parting with it. *Note*, Every godly miniſter knows ſomething of Eli's concern, whilſt he looks round upon ſo many like Hophni and Phinehas in their lives, men as immoral in their conduct, as unſound in their doctrine, to whom the ark is entruſted, and who have the chief ſeats in the viſible church of God.

4. The cries of the people ſoon increaſed his terrors, and awakened his enquiries into the cauſe. The meſſenger is introduced, relates what he had ſeen; the people routed, ſad tidings for a judge in Iſrael; his ſons ſlain, more doleful ſounds for an aged parent; but moſt inſupportable for the high-prieſt of God, the ark is taken. Death-ſtruck at the mention, he falls backward from his ſeat, and being old, and very heavy or fat, his neck brake, and thus ended his government of Iſrael, after a forty years chief preſidency in the church and ſtate over them. *Note*, (1.) Every loſs and croſs of his own houſe affect not a man of God ſo much as the ſufferings of the cauſe of God. (2.) God permits thoſe ſometimes to die uncomfortable, who have ſuch juſt cauſe to reproach themſelves for having been unfaithful. (3.) Though a man dies unhappy, we muſt not always conclude he is undone.

19. ¶ And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, was with child, *near* † to be delivered: and when ſhe heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law, and her huſband were dead, ſhe bowed herſelf and travailed; for her pains ‡ came upon her. 20. And about the time of her death, the women that ſtood by her, ſaid unto her, [t] Fear not, for thou haſt born a ſon. But ſhe anſwered not, ‖ neither did ſhe regard it. 21. And ſhe named the child § I-chabod, ſaying, The glory is departed from Iſrael: (becauſe the ark of God was taken, and becauſe of her father-in-law and her huſband) 22. And ſhe ſaid, [u] The glory is departed from Iſrael: for the ark of God is taken.

† Heb. To cry out.
‡ Heb. Were turned.
[t] Gen. xxxv. 17, 18. John xvi. 20.
‖ Heb. She ſet not her heart upon it. Pſ. lxxvii. 2. Prov. xxv. 20.
§ i. e. Where is the glory? or, there is no glory. Pſ. lxxviii. 61.
[u] Neh. ii. 3. Pſ. cxxxvii. 6.

v. 19—22. Death upon death in Eli's family ſhews the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning it. The wife of Phinehas being

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being with child, and near her time, no ſooner heard thoſe accumulated evils, her huſband ſlain, her father dead, and above all, the ark taken, than her ſorrows inſtantly came upon her. Her ſpirits, ſunk under the load, are unable to ſupport her in nature's ſtruggle; the news a child was born could no longer comfort her. The glory was departed from Iſrael, this broke her heart, and with her dying breath ſhe ſpeaks her bitter anguiſh in the name ſhe gives the wretched new-born babe, Ichabod, *no glory*; every proſpect was dark and diſmal, ſince Iſrael's glory, the ark, was taken: ſhe can wiſh to live no longer, cloſes her eyes, and expires. *Note*, (1.) When the pain and peril of child-birth approaches we need ſupports; fear and diſtreſs of ſoul in that hour, make the pangs doubly bitter and dangerous. (2.) In a dying hour how vain and inſipid is every worldly comfort! (3.) If God depart from us, if his ordinances are removed, and the light of his countenance with-held, neither earth, nor the things of it, have any more ſweetneſs or glory; all is under a diſmal eclipſe, univerſal darkneſs reigns, and the ſoul experiences the foretaſtes of the outer darkneſs, in eternal death.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter, (1.) *The Philiſtines triumph over the ark*, ver. 1, 2. (2.) *The ark triumphs over Dagon their god*, ver. 3—5. (3.) *Over themſelves, who were ſorely plagued with emerods*, ver. 6—10. (4.) *They reſolve to ſend the ark back*, ver. 11, 12. *For when God judgeth, he will overcome.*

1. AND the Philiſtines took the ark of God, and brought it from [a] Eben-ezer unto Aſhdod. 2. When the Philiſtines took the ark of God, they brought it into the houſe of Dagon, and ſet it by Dagon. 3. ¶ And when they of Aſhdod aroſe early on the morrow, behold, [b] Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the earth, before the ark of the LORD: and they took Dagon and ſet him in his place again. 4. And when they aroſe early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the ground, before the ark of the LORD: and [c] the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands *were* cut off upon the threſhold, † only *the ſtump of* Dagon was left to him. 5. Therefore neither the prieſts of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's houſe, [d] tread on the threſhold of Dagon in Aſhdod, unto this day.

[a] Chap. vii. 12.
[b] Exod. vii. 12. Luke x. 18.
[c] Iſa. xli. 22, 23.
† Heb. Only Dagon, i. e. The fiſhy part.
[d] Zeph. i. 9.

v. 1—5. Though Iſrael utterly ſeems to have neglected the ark of God, and neither by force nor treaty ſeek to recover it, yet God will not ſuffer the ungodly to triumph for ever. We have here,

1. The Philiſtines triumphing over their priſoner. With ſolemnity they carry it down to their principal city Aſhdod, and place it in the temple of their great idol Dagon, as a trophy of the glorious victory obtained under his auſpices. *Note*, (1.) The cauſe of God is often ſunk ſo low, that it ſeems paſt recovery, and given up into the enemy's hand. (2.) God doth then more glorioufly diſplay his power, and make it appear how vain a thing they imagine, who ſhout, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.

2. Little honour doth Dagon get from the vicinity of his captive; when his devotees aroſe to worſhip him, or his prieſts to rehearſe the praiſes of his victory, behold the miſerable idol on his face in the duſt, proſtrate before the ark, as if confeſſing his own vanity, and directing them to that God who is the only true object of worſhip. Thus ſhall all the powers of darkneſs, error and corruption, fall before the bright beams of truth, and the mighty work of God's ſpirit on the hearts of men; let the oppreſſed church be comforted, and the ſoul that is fainting under the power of corruption hang ſtill upon God, their diſtreſs ſhall but magnify his glory and grace in their deliverance.

3. In vain his worſhippers ſeek to repair his diſgrace, by faſtening him again in his place: the next morning preſents him ſtill more deſpicable; his ſtump, the fiſhy tail, joined to the human body, only remained; his head and hands cut off lay on the threſhold, a headleſs monſter, emblem of their folly who worſhipped him, and handleſs, to intimate the impotence of his arm to ſave himſelf or them. *Note*, (1.) The papiſt that worſhips the images of ſaints which never lived, is more culpable and abominable, in the eyes of God, than the Philiſtines which worſhipped monſters which never exiſted. (2.) All the devices of wicked men and devils againſt the church of God, ſhall, in the iſſue, prove as impotent as this attempt to faſten Dagon in his place again.

4. The folly of worſhipping ſuch a wretched god who could not help himſelf, one ſhould think, muſt now have appeared: yet, ſtrange to tell! they reverence the very place of his diſgrace, and honour that threſhold where his mutilated limbs were laid. *Note*, Where ſuperſtition reigns, nothing is ſo abſurd or impious, but it may be conſecrated into an act of religion, as we ſee in the church of Rome, even to pay reſpect unto dead men's bones, and the very broken pieces of their wretched images.

6. But [e] the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Aſhdod, and he deſtroyed them, [f] ſmote them with emerods, *even* Aſhdod and the coaſts thereof. 7. And [g] when the men of Aſhdod ſaw that *it was* ſo, they ſaid, The ark of the God of Iſrael ſhall not abide with us: for his hand is ſore upon us, and [h] upon Dagon our God. 8. They ſent therefore, and gathered all the lords of the Philiſtines unto them, and ſaid, [i] What ſhall we do with the ark of the God of Iſrael? And they anſwered, Let the ark of the God of Iſrael be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Iſrael about *thither*. 9. And it was *ſo*, that after they had carried it about, [k] the hand of the LORD was againſt the city with a very great deſtruction: and he ſmote the men of the city, both ſmall and great, and they had emerods in their ſecret parts. 10. Therefore they ſent the ark of God to Ekron: and it came to paſs as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, ſaying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Iſrael † to us, to ſlay us and our people. 11. So they ſent and gathered together all the lords of the Philiſtines, and ſaid, Send away the ark of the God of Iſrael, and let it go again to his own place, that it ſlay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly deſtruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. 12. And [l] the men that died not, were ſmitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

[e] Exod. ix. 3. Dan. v. 3, 5, 6. Acts xiii. 11.
[f] Chap. vi. 5. Job xxxi. 3. Pſ. lxxviii. 66. Rev. xvi. 2.
[g] Iſa. xxvi. 11.
[h] Jer. xlvi. 25.
[i] Prov. xxi. 30. Iſa. viii. 10.
[k] Ver. 6. Amos ii. 14.
† Heb. To me, to ſlay me and my people.
[l] Jer. xlviii. 44.

v. 6—12. Since they will not ſee their folly, and be aſhamed of it, God will make them feel his arm, and ſmart for it.

1. The men of Aſhdod are viſited with a vile and painful diſeaſe, the burning anguiſh of which is only known by thoſe who have felt it. They were ſmitten with hæmorrhoids, or the piles, which was very mortal among them, and brought many of them in agonies to their graves. *Note*, They who riſe up againſt God do it to their ſhame and ruin.

2. The men of Aſhdod could not but perceive the hand of God in the thing; yet, far from ſeeking to him, and renouncing their idolatry, they are concerned only to get rid of the ark, that they might ſave their god as well as themſelves from deſtruction. A council is called, and the ark removed to Gath; the princes ſuſpecting, perhaps, the diſeaſe might not be from God, but epidemical. *Note*, When men are in danger of death, what haſte are they in to get rid of their diſeaſe; when men are in danger of hell, how unready to part with their ſins!

3. Change of place wrought no change of judgment. The men of Gath ſmarted more ſeverely ſtill, with *a very great deſtruction*; high and low, young and old, were ſmitten with internal hæmorrhoids, which brought on mortification and death. *Note*, No ſinner too great for God's judgments, or too little to be unnoticed.

4. The men of Gath reſolved immediately to be rid of this unwelcome viſitant, and haſten away the ark to Ekron. Struck with deſerved apprehenſions, the Ekronites cry out, and the iſſue proved their fears not groundleſs, *for a deadly deſtruction was throughout all the city*.

5. The lords of the Philiſtines are ſummoned, and whilſt they deliberate, death ravages the place; the men of Ekron urge the ſending back the ark, their cries proclaim their anguiſh, and they hope for no reſt till their deſtroyer is removed. *Note*, (1.) It were a happy thing if we were but half as ſollicitous to get rid of our ſins, as of the judgments they provoke. (2.) They who perſiſt in tempting God, will find every eſſay more embittered by his curſe and heavy hand upon them.

CHAP. VI.

In this chapter, 1. *The Philiſtines ſend back the ark, with rich preſents*, ver. 1—11. 2. *The Iſraelites receive it with joy*, ver. 12—18. 3. *For unwarrantably looking into it many are ſtruck dead*, ver. 19—21.

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1. AND the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philiſtines, ſeven months. 2. And [a] the Philiſtines called for the prieſts and the diviners, ſaying, What ſhall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we ſhall ſend it to his place. 3. And they ſaid, If ye ſend away the ark of the God of Iſrael, [b] ſend it not empty; but † in any wiſe return him a treſpaſs-offering:

[a] Exod. vii. 11.
[b] Ibid. xxiii. 15. Deut. xvi. 16.
† Heb. Rendering to him.

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offering: then ye ſhall be healed, and [c] it ſhall be known to you, why his hand is not removed from you. 4. Then ſaid they, What *ſhall be* the treſpaſs-offering which we ſhall return to him? They anſwered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, *according to* the number of the lords of the Philiſtines: for † one plague *was* on you all, and on your lords. 5. Wherefore ye ſhall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land, and [d] ye ſhall give glory unto the God of Iſrael: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and [e] from off your gods, and from off your land. 6. Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts as the Egyptians and [f] Pharaoh hardned their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed? 7. Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch-kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart: and bring their calves home from them: 8. And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart, and put the ‖ jewels of gold which ye return him *for* a treſpaſs-offering, in a coffer by the ſide thereof, and ſend it away, that it may go. 9. And ſee, if it goeth up by the way of his own coaſt to Beth-ſhemeſh, *then* he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we ſhall know that *it is* not his hand *that* ſmote us; it *was* a chance *that* happened to us.

[c] Ver. 9.
† Heb. The ſame plague on them all, and on their lords.
Job xxxiv. 19.
[d] Joſh. vii. 19. John ix. 24. Rev. xvi. 9.
[e] Exod. xii. 12. Chap. v. 3, 4.
[f] Exod. viii. 15.
‖ Heb. Golden veſſels. Ver. 5.

v. 1—9. At the Ekronites importunate requeſt, we have here,

1. A new counſel aſſembled. The ark of God had been with them now ſeven months, and long months they ſeemed, when every day preſented new ſcenes of ſorrow. The princes conſult the prieſts and diviners, and their unanimous voice is to ſend it back without delay. *Note*, (1.) They who keep back their ſins, only prolong their ſorrows. (2.) The heathen princes reverenced and conſulted the prieſts of Dagon, Shall not they condemn the preſent irreligious contempt of the miniſters of God?

2. How it muſt be ſent, is the next conſideration; and the prieſts and diviners direct the manner, and urge inſtant compliance. (1.) They admoniſh them of the danger of delay, from the Hiſtory of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, with which they appear to be acquainted. Experience what Iſrael's God had done, ſhould warn them not to harden their hearts. *Note*, It is far better to be warned by others experience than by our own. (2.) They preſcribe a treſpaſs-offering, that it may not return empty, but with an acknowledgment of their humiliation according to the nature of their plagues, five golden images of the hemorrhoids, and five golden mice, according to the number of their princes; for it ſeems this contemptible animal made as great havock in their fields, as the vile diſeaſe did on their perſons. They ſeem to have learnt the neceſſity of a ſatisfaction to offended juſtice, though they miſerably miſtook the way. (3.) In this caſe, they hoped the diſeaſe would be removed, or alleviated; and this would be a proof that their detention of the ark was the cauſe of it. *Note*, When we have repented of our ſin, we may hope for the removal of our ſorrow. (4.) To put the caſe beyond all doubt, whether their plagues were of God, they preſcribe a cart to carry it, drawn by two milch-kine, whoſe calves being detained at home, would naturally return thither, and who being without a driver, would hardly be ſuppoſed of themſelves to take the road of Beth-ſhemeſh, the neareſt city of Iſrael; yet on this they would reſt the evidence, from whoſe hand their plagues came; and if the beaſts went not the direct road, which were a miracle itſelf if they did, they would conclude their diſeaſe to be a mere chance, and not of God. *Note*, (1.) Wicked men would fain ſhift off their convictions, and aſcribe their ſufferings to any cauſe, rather than the hand of God. (2.) The very means men take to confirm them in infidelity, through God's ſovereign grace, ſometimes turn out to their more unanſwerable conviction of the truth.

10. ¶ And the men did ſo: and took two milch-kine, and tied them to the cart, and ſhut up their calves at home: 11. And they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold, and the images of their emerods. 12. And the kine took the ſtraight way to the way of Beth-ſhemeſh, † *and* went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aſide to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philiſtines went after them unto the border of Beth-ſhemeſh. 13. And *they of* Beth-ſhemeſh *were* reaping their wheat-harveſt in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and ſaw the ark, and rejoiced to ſee *it*. 14. And the cart came into the field of Joſhua a Beth-ſhemite, and ſtood there, where *there was* a great ſtone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt-offering unto the LORD. 15. And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that *was* with it, wherein the jewels of gold *were*, and put *them* on the great ſtone: and the men of Beth-ſhemeſh offered burnt-offerings, and ſacrificed ſacrifices the ſame day unto the LORD. 16. And when the five lords of the Philiſtines had ſeen *it*, they returned to Ekron the ſame day. 17. And theſe *are* the golden emerods which the Philiſtines returned *for* a treſpaſs-offering unto the LORD: for Aſhdod one, for Gaza one, for Aſkelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one. 18. And the golden mice *according to* the number of all the cities of the Philiſtines, *belonging* to the five lords, *both* of fenced cities, and of country-villages, even unto the ‡ great *ſtone of* Abel, whereon they ſet down the ark of the LORD: *which ſtone remaineth* unto this day, in the field of Joſhua the Beth-ſhemite.

† Heb. In a ſtreet they went going lowing.
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‡ Heb. The great Abel, or ſtone. Gen. l. 11.

v. 10—18. In haſte to get rid of the ark, they immediately prepare the offering of golden hæmorrhoids and mice, put them in a little coffer, and with the ark, ſend them away on the new cart, drawn by two milch-kine.

1. No ſooner were they yoked in, than, wonderful to behold! though unaccuſtomed to draw without a driver, the way quite ſtrange to them, and the ſtrong attractive of their calves behind them, lowing with parental inſtinct to leave them, yet without the leaſt miſtake or reluctance, they purſue the ſtrait road to Beth-ſhemeſh, whilſt the lords of the Philiſtines who followed them, were fully convinced from whoſe hands their plagues came.

2. Little thought the men of Beth-ſhemeſh what an invaluable preſent was ſent them. They were reaping when the ark arrived; and, with a tranſport of wonder, laid down their hooks to run to welcome it. *Note*, (1.) Though induſtry is highly commendable, it becomes ſinful ſelfiſhneſs, when it makes us neglect the more needful work of prayer and praiſe to God. (2.) The return of God's preſence, and the revival of his pure worſhip, is matter of unſpeakable delight to every faithful ſoul.

3. They immediately remove the ark and coffer with the jewels of gold, and place them on a great ſtone, in the field of Joſhua, near which the kine had ſtopped, as at their journey's end; the Levites (among whom might be prieſts alſo) to whom this city belonged, take it down; and as the caſe was ſo extraordinary, they think themſelves authorized to offer ſacrifices before the ark, though out of the inſtituted way. The cart ſerves for fuel, and the kine which drew it, though females, are offered up for a burnt-offering: beſides which, they add other ſacrifices, in token of their thankfulneſs for the mercy. *Note*, If in an extraordinary caſe, a man moved with zeal for God's glory, ſteps out of the inſtituted way of worſhip, we ought not to be too ſevere cenſurers of the irregularity.

4. The ſtone whereon the ark reſted, with the coffer, containing the mice and emerods, for which every city under each of the five lords ſeems to have contributed, long remained a memorial of Philiſtia's ſhame, and of the glory of Iſrael's God.

19. ¶ And he ſmote the men of Beth-ſhemeſh, [g] becauſe they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he [h] ſmote of the people fifty thouſand and threeſcore and ten men: and the people lamented becauſe the LORD had ſmitten *many* of the people with a great ſlaughter. 20. And the men of Beth-ſhemeſh ſaid, [i] Who is able to ſtand before this holy LORD God? and to whom ſhall he go up from us? 21. ¶ And [k] they ſent meſſengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, ſaying, The Philiſtines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, *and* fetch it up to you.

[g] Exod. xix. 12. Num. iv. 5, 20. Deut. xxix. 29. Joſh. iii. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 7. Pſal. cxxxi. 1. Rom. xii. 3.
[h] Prov. xi. 31. 1 Pet. iv. 17.
[i] 2 Sam. vi. 8, 9. Mal. iii. 2.
[k] Pſal. lxxviii 6. Jer. vii. 12.

v. 19—21. We have here,

1. The puniſhment of the Beth-ſhemites, for their ſinful curioſity. The ark was in general hid from common eyes; the high-prieſt alone beheld it, and that only on one day of the year: this might tempt them to ſeize the opportunity given them, of prying into its contents, as we too commonly covet what is forbidden; but they ſuffer for it. Our tranſlation makes 50070 men ſlain; but ſome, from the unuſual poſition of the numbers in the Hebrew, and from the improbability, that ſo many men ſhould belong to one city, or its villages, imagine only ſeventy were ſlain in Beth-ſhemeſh; and take the 50,000 to refer to the Philiſtines, others interpret it by 50 out of 1000; ſo that 70 out of 1400, who were guilty, ſuffered for it, which would be a kind of ſemi-decimation.

2. Such a ſudden ſtroke from God greatly terrified them. *They cry out, Who is able to ſtand before this holy Lord God?* convinced of their ſin and guilt, and trembling with juſt apprehenſion

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ſion where the ruin would ſtop. They are earneſt therefore to have the ark removed, and ſend to the men of Kirjath-jearim, in the tribe of Judah, to fetch it, ſeeming to do them honour, but in truth meaning to get it away from themſelves. *Note*, (1.) They who look within the ark to the law only, muſt needs be in the terrors of death: but they who look above it to Jeſus Chriſt, the mercy-ſeat, may look and live. (2.) They ſometimes do us the greateſt kindneſs, who meant only to ſerve themſelves.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The abode of the ark in Kirjath-jearim for many years,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The public appearing of Samuel, as Iſrael's reformer and judge. He is here active,* (1.) *In recovering Iſrael from their idolatry,* ver. 3, 4. (2.) *In the reviving of religion among them,* ver. 5, 6. (3.) *In praying for them againſt the Philiſtines,* ver. 7, 8, 9. *over whom God, in anſwer to his prayer, gave them a glorious victory,* ver. 10, 11. (4.) *In erecting a thankful memorial of that victory,* ver. 12. (5.) *In the improvement of that victory,* ver. 13, 14. (6.) *In the adminiſtration of juſtice,* ver. 15—17.

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1. AND the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetcht up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the houſe of Abinadab in the hill, and ſanctified Eleazar his ſon, to keep the ark of the LORD. 2. And it came to paſs while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the houſe of Iſrael [a] lamented after the LORD.

[a] 2 Sam. iii. 33.

v. 1, 2. Though one place thruſts from it the privileges of the goſpel, another will receive them. The ark which was a burdenſome ſtone to the eyes of the men of Beth-ſhemeſh, is a bleſſing to the men of Kirjath-jearim.

1. They are no ſooner called, than they come and bring it up to their city, with great reverence; provide an abode for it in the houſe of Abinadab, which ſtood on an eminence: a man, it ſhould ſeem, who counted himſelf highly honoured with ſuch a gueſt, and conſecrated his ſon to keep it, not to offer ſacrifice before it, for he was no prieſt; nor was there here any altar; but to keep the place clean, to prevent curious intruders, and to be ready to wait on thoſe pious Iſraelites, who might deſire to pray before it. *Note*, (1.) More zeal for God and his cauſe is often ſeen in one private Iſraelite, than in many a prieſt. (2.) When the church is under perſecution, and in diſtreſs, a private houſe may be converted into a temple, and a common Iſraelite's ſervice be diſpenſed with.

2. The abode of the ark at Abinadab's houſe was long, between forty and fifty years in all. During the firſt twenty of which, it ſeems to have been almoſt forgotten and diſregarded, till probably by the miniſtry of Samuel, that ſpirit of repentance was diffuſed which was here taken notice of, and they began to lament after the Lord; ſenſible of their great provocations, and deſiring the return of his preſence among them. *Note*, (1.) Though for a time, the church, like the ark, in this city in the woods, be driven into the wilderneſs, and continue under a cloud, yet ſhall ſhe again ariſe, and ſhine bright and glorious as the ſun, when the eclipſe is over. (2.) They who would return to God, muſt lament over thoſe ſins which have eſtranged them from him.

3. ¶ And Samuel ſpake unto all the houſe of Iſrael, ſaying, If ye do [b] return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* [c] put away the ſtrange gods, and Aſhtaroth from among you, and [d] prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and [e] ſerve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philiſtines. 4. Then the children of Iſrael did put away [f] Baalim, and Aſhtaroth, and ſerved the LORD only. 5. And Samuel ſaid, Gather all Iſrael to Mizpeh, and [g] I will pray for you unto the LORD. 6. And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and [h] poured *it* out before the LORD, and [i] faſted on that day, and ſaid there, [k] We have ſinned againſt the LORD. And [l] Samuel judged the children of Iſrael in Mizpeh.

[b] Joel ii. 12.
[c] Joſh. xxiv. 14, 23.
[d] Amos iv. 13.
[e] Deut. vi. 13.
[f] Judg. ii. 11, 13.
[g] Rom. i. 9.
[h] Pſal. vi. 6. & cxix. 139.
[i] Dan. ix. 3.
[k] Ezra ix. 5—10. Job xl. 4. & xlii. 6. Pſal. xxxviii. 3—8 Jer. xxxi. 19. Luke xv. 18.
[l] Ezek. xx. 4.

v. 3—6. Though Samuel is not mentioned, yet he ſeems to have been inſtrumental in this repentance, which began to appear; and obſerving as he went about in circuit, ſymptoms of returning to God,

1. He ſolemnly charges them to put away their idols, their male and female deities Baalim and Aſhtaroth: there could be no return unto God whilſt they were kept back. He therefore calls on them to prepare their hearts for the Lord, and cleave to him alone; and then they might hope he would appear for them, and reſcue them from the hand of the Philiſtines, who had ſo long oppreſſed them. *Note*, (1.) No allowed idol ſin muſt be reſerved, when we would truly turn to God. (2.) The burden of ſin is heavier than the yoke of Philiſtia; but whenever we repent and believe, it will be lightened.

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2. Great was the effect of his exhortation. A general reformation enſued; they put away their idols, and ſerved the Lord only. To confirm them in theſe good purpoſes, therefore, he appoints a ſolemn aſſembly in Mizpeh, to perfect what was ſo happily begun; and promiſes to pray for them there, that the Divine Bleſſing and Preſence might return again unto them. *Note*, (1.) God ſometimes works great and general changes in the manners of a people, and revives the work of religion, when it ſeems utterly decayed. (2.) A miniſter's prayers ſhould accompany his preaching, that God may make his words effectual to the converſion of men's ſouls. (3.) We ſhall always enter the pulpit with greater comfort and confidence, when we go thither from our knees.

3. The people readily obey his ſummons, and when met in Mizpeh, appear deeply affected with their ſins. In token of their ſorrow, ſincerity, and utter renouncing them, they poured out water before the Lord, wept, faſted, and made ſupplication to God, confeſſing their ſins, and imploring forgiveneſs. *Note*, (1.) The confeſſions and tears of penitence are the ſure forerunners of peace and joy. (2.) National ſins require national faſts, and public humiliation.

4. Samuel judged them there, reformed them from idolatry, puniſhed the incorrigible, eſtabliſhed the true worſhip of God, and adminiſtred juſtice.

7. And [m] when the Philiſtines heard that the children of Iſrael were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philiſtines went up againſt Iſrael: and when the children of Iſrael heard *it*, [n] they were afraid of the Philiſtines. 8. And the children of Iſrael ſaid to Samuel, † Ceaſe not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will ſave us out of the hands of the Philiſtines. 9. ¶ And Samuel took a ſucking lamb, and offered *it for* a burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD; and Samuel [o] cried unto the LORD for Iſrael, and [p] the LORD heard him. 10. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philiſtines drew near to battle againſt Iſrael: but [q] the LORD thundred with a great thunder on that day upon the Philiſtines, and diſcomfited them, and they were ſmitten before Iſrael. 11. And the men of Iſrael went out of Mizpeh, and purſued the Philiſtines, and ſmote them, until *they came* under Beth-car. 12. Then Samuel [r] took a ſtone, and ſet *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it † Eben-ezer, ſaying, [s] Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

[m] Amos vii. 10.
[n] 2 Chron. xx. 3.
† Be not ſilent from us from crying. Iſa. xxxvii. 4.
[o] Pſal. xcix. 6. Hebr. vii. 25.
[p] Iſa. lxv. 24.
[q] Joſh. x. 10. Chap. ii. 10. Zech. iv. 6. Ecclus xlvi. 17.
[r] Joſh. iv. 9, 20. Judg. xv. 19.
† i. e. The ſtone of help. Chap. iv. 1.
[s] Acts xxvi. 22.

v. 7—12. Satan will begin to roar, when ſinners begin to pray.

1. No ſooner was Iſrael aſſembled at Mizpeh to repent, than the Philiſtines take the alarm, and aſſemble to cruſh them, ſuſpecting (as the ſuſpicious are ever ready to do) that their deſigns were evil, and conſtruing their repentance towards God, into rebellion againſt them. *Note*, The firſt ſtruggles for glory are often the hardeſt.

2. The news terrifies the people; broken with their long ſervitude, though they had never leſs reaſon to fear, than when thus found on their knees before God, they cry to Samuel to help them with his prayers; more dependant now on the arm of God for their ſafety, than on the arm of fleſh. *Note*, Weak as we are to encounter the numerous hoſts of our ſpiritual enemies, we have a prevailing advocate with the Father, and if he prays for us, it is impoſſible we ſhould finally fail or fall.

3. Samuel *is as ready to pray, as they to deſire him*, deeply intereſted in Iſrael's ſafety; a ſucking lamb he offers for a burnt-offering, and with the blood of atonement to plead, in faith and prayer approaches the throne of grace. *Note*, (1.) Jeſus Chriſt is the ſlain lamb, offered up to God for us ſinners. (2.) Thro' the efficacy of his ſacrifice, we may come before God; aſſured whatſoever we aſk, believing, we ſhall receive.

4. God hears, and anſwers his requeſt. The Philiſtines drew near, whilſt the ſacrifice was offering, and never was an attack ſo ill-timed for them, ſo critical for Iſrael. Armed with hot thunder-bolts, in wrath the God of Iſrael aroſe, and who can ſtand before the blaſting breath of his diſpleaſure? The flaſhing lightnings glare around, the terrible thunders roll above them, terror and amaze ſeize their affrighted hoſts, they turn, they fly; whilſt the men of Iſrael, ſhouting, purſue their defenceleſs foes, and ſmite them down, like ſheep appointed for the ſlaughter. *Note*, (1.) When God ariſes, his enemies muſt be ſcattered. (2.) Glorious and inſtant are the anſwers God often gives to the prayer of faith.

5. Samuel commemorates the glorious victory, by ſetting up a great ſtone on the ſpot, and calling it Ebenezer, *The Stone of help*. And it is remarkable, this was the very place where Iſrael, *chap.* iv. 1. were defeated by the Philiſtines, in which paſſage

this name is given it by anticipation. *Note,* (1.) Anſwers of prayer, deſerve memorials of gratitude. (2.) Every chriſtian may, by experience, ſet up his Ebenezer, and whilſt he acknowledges paſt help, confidently depend on the continuance of the ſame protection.

13. ¶ So the Philiſtines were ſubdued, and they came no more into the coaſt of Iſrael: and the hand of the LORD was againſt the Philiſtines, all the days of Samuel. 14. And the cities which the Philiſtines had taken from Iſrael were reſtored to Iſrael, from Ekron even unto Gath, and the coaſts thereof did Iſrael deliver out of the hands of the Philiſtines: and [t] there was peace between Iſrael and the Amorites. 15. And Samuel judged Iſrael [u] all the days of his life. 16. And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Iſrael in all thoſe places. 17. And his return *was* to Ramah; for there *was* his houſe: and there he judged Iſrael, and there he built an altar unto the LORD.

[t] Prov. xvi. 17.
[u] Acts xiii. 20.

v. 13—17. Great were the bleſſings which followed this victory, under Samuel's wiſe and ſpirited adminiſtration.

1. The Philiſtines were ſo broken and intimidated, that they gave Iſrael no more diſturbance, whilſt Samuel preſided; but quitted all the cities, which they had taken between Ekron and Gaza peaceably to them. And the Amorites, now ſtruck with terror, were glad to be left quiet, ſo that peace was perfectly reſtored within their borders. *Note,* (1.) When a man's ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him. (2.) Prayer and penitence can do more for a nation, than the ſword.

2. The internal peace of the people was ſecured to them by the regular adminiſtration of juſtice. Samuel went his yearly circuit, to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, where he heard and determined the cauſes which were brought before him; and at his reſidence in Ramah, judged Iſrael, who brought their complaints thither, and abode by his deciſions; and perhaps came thither to worſhip and offer ſacrifices, and to hear his preaching, and partake of his prayers: for Samuel had built an altar at Ramah, as no other place was yet fixed for ſtated offerings to God. As a prophet raiſed up of God, he might be authorized to offer his own and the people's ſacrifices there, till the ark and tabernacle-worſhip ſhould be again ſet up. *Note,* (1.) The adminiſtration of impartial juſtice is among the greateſt bleſſings any land can enjoy. (2.) They will be upright in their deciſions among men, who, like Samuel, keep God always before them, and walk in his fear and worſhip. An irreligious judge cannot be truly impartial.

CHAP. VIII.

Iſrael's good days ſeldom continue long. We have here, 1. *Samuel decaying,* ver. 1. 2. *His ſons degenerating,* ver. 2, 3. 3. *Iſrael's petition to Samuel for a king,* ver. 4, 5. 4. *Samuel's prayer and God's anſwer,* ver. 7—18. 5. *Their petition inſiſted on,* ver. 19, 20. 6. *A promiſe of a king is made them,* ver. 21, 22.

1. AND it came to paſs when Samuel was old, that [a] he made his ſons judges over Iſrael. 2. Now the name of his firſt-born was † Joel, and the name of his ſecond, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beer-ſheba. 3. And [b] his ſons walked not in his ways, but [c] turned aſide after lucre, and [d] took bribes, and perverted judgment.

[a] Judg. viii. 23. Neh. vii. 2. 1 Tim. v. 22.
† Called Vaſhni, 1 Chron. vi. 28.
[b] Ecclus ii. 19. Jer. xxii. 15, 17.
[c] Exod. xviii. 21. Deut. xvi. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 10.
[d] Pſal. xxvi. 10. Iſa. xxxiii. 15.

v. 1—3. Samuel now began to ſink under age and infirmities, and being no longer able to undergo the fatigue, appoints his ſons aſſiſtant judges; not out of partiality for them, we may hope, but becauſe they were beſt qualified, had a good education, and promiſed to tread in his ſteps; but they ſadly degenerated from their father's example, being fixed at Beerſheba, at a diſtance from him, for the convenience of that part of the country, they took bribes, and perverted judgment; deciding in favour not of him who had moſt right, but moſt money. *Note,* (1.) Old age will put a period to our uſefulneſs, therefore, before the evil days come, what our hand findeth to do, let us do it with our might. (2.) A good education does not always produce a gracious conduct; nor a pious father tranſmit his virtues to his children. (3.) Though outward decency may be kept up, under the eye of a careful inſpector, when the heart is unconverted, diſtance quickly removes the reſtraint, and the inward corruption appears. (4.) Covetouſneſs is among the moſt dangerous ſnares to the ſoul. (5.) A corrupt judge is a great curſe to any people.

4. Then all the elders of Iſrael gathered themſelves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah. 5. And ſaid unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy ſons walk not in thy ways: now [e] make us a king to judge us like all the nations. 6. ¶ But [f] the thing diſpleaſed Samuel, when they ſaid, Give us a king to judge us: and [g] Samuel prayed unto the LORD. 7. And the LORD ſaid unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they ſay unto thee: for they have not rejected [h] thee, but they have rejected [i] me, that [k] I ſhould not reign over them. 8. According to all the works which they have done ſince the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forſaken me, and ſerved other gods: ſo do they alſo unto thee. 9. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: † howbeit, yet proteſt ſolemnly unto them, and ſhew them the manner of the king that ſhall reign over them. 10. ¶ And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people, that aſked of him a king. 11. And he ſaid, This will be the manner of the king that ſhall reign over you: [l] He will take your ſons, and appoint *them* for himſelf, for his chariots, and *to be* his horſemen, and *ſome* ſhall run before his chariots. 12. And he will appoint him captains over thouſands, and captains over fifties, and *will ſet them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harveſt, and to make his inſtruments of war, and inſtruments of his chariots. 13. And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers. 14. And [m] he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, *even* the beſt *of them,* and give *them* to his ſervants. 15. And he will take the tenth of your ſeed, and of your vineyards, and give to his ‡ officers, and to his ſervants. 16. And he will take your men-ſervants, and your maid-ſervants, and your goodlieſt young men, and your aſſes, and put *them* to his work. 17. He will take the tenth of your ſheep: and ye ſhall be his ſervants. 18. And [n] ye ſhall cry out in that day, becauſe of your king which ye ſhall have choſen you; and [o] the LORD will not hear you in that day. 19. ¶ Nevertheleſs [p] the people refuſed to obey the voice of Samuel; and they ſaid, [q] Nay, but we will have a king over us: 20. That [r] we alſo may be like all the nations and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. 21. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearſed them in the ears of the LORD. 22. And the LORD ſaid to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel ſaid unto the men of Iſrael, Go ye every man unto his city.

[e] Deut. xvii. 14, 15. Hoſ. xiii. 10. Acts xiii. 21.
[f] Chap. xii. 17.
[g] Jam. i. 5.
[h] Ex. xvi. 8.
[i] Chap. xii. 19. Hoſ. xiii. 10, 11.
[k] Luke xix. 27.
† Or, notwithſtanding when thou haſt ſolemnly proteſted againſt them, then thou ſhalt ſhew, &c.
[l] Chap. xiv. 52.
[m] 1 Kings xxi. 7.
‡ Heb. Eunuchs. Gen. xxxvii. 36.
[n] Iſa. viii. 21.
[o] Job xxvii. 9. Prov. i. 26, 27. Iſa. i. 15. Mic. iii. 4.
[p] Pſal. lxxxi. 11. Iſa. lxvi. 4. Jer. vii. 13. Ezek. xxxiii. 31.
[q] Jer. xliv. 16.
[r] Ver. 5.

v. 4—22. We have here a motion made for the alteration of the government, and the introduction of monarchy among the Jewiſh people.

1. Taking occaſion from the ill conduct of Samuel's ſons, ſome intriguing ſpirits excite the people in general to a change of government, and for this purpoſe they aſſemble in a body at Ramah, with a remonſtrance of their grievance, and a petition for redreſs in the appointment of a king over them, like the nations around them, that he might keep a *court,* and appear in *ſtate* and dignity amongſt them. A requeſt not only highly ſinful againſt God, but moſt ungrateful to Samuel, whoſe own adminiſtration had been ſo upright, and who deſerved no blame for his ſon's ill conduct, having given them better advice, and being ready to have ſuperſeded their commiſſions on the people's juſt complaints. *Note,* It is not unuſual for thoſe to meet with ungrateful returns, and to be neglected when they are old, who have ſpent their lives in the ſervice of the public.

2. Samuel deeply reſents the propoſal, not becauſe of their ill uſage of himſelf, but ſenſible of their great ſin againſt God, and therefore ere he returns an anſwer, he flies to God for direction, and probably intercedes with him for their pardon, fearing leaſt wrath ſhould go forth againſt them. *Note,* (1.) When we are in difficulties, it is a great relief to have a God of wiſdom and love to cry to. (2.) They who uſe us ungratefully, muſt have a remembrance in our prayer, not only to engage God to pardon them, but ourſelves to forgive and love them.

3. God anſwers his prayer, and gives him directions what to reply to the people. He muſt not be grieved at the inſult offered him, ſince it was more aimed againſt God himſelf. He was their king, and is rejected by them; nor was their ingratitude to their governors a new thing: ever ſince they came from Egypt, they had acted thus, even to Moſes and Aaron; nor was it to be wondered they ſought a new king, when they had ſo often ſought new gods: let them have therefore their requeſt, but it ſhall be a king in anger, and of this Samuel muſt ſolemnly warn them; ſince they will be like the nations

around them, they ſhall feel the kingly ſceptre to be an iron rod. *Note*, (1.) When we come to God in prayer, he will anſwer us for our direction and comfort. (2.) We may not expect kind returns from thoſe, who have ſhewn their ingratitude to others before us.

4. Samuel makes a faithful report of the Divine meſſage; admoniſhing them of God's diſpleaſure at their requeſt, and the conſequences which would follow from the eſtabliſhment of that kingly government they were ſo ſet upon. They looked only to the pomp, but conſidered not they muſt bear the burden. Under his deſpotic ſway, their ſons would be enſlaved, liſted in his guards as ſoldiers, or as footmen attendant on his chariot, or as ſervants employed to till and reap his ground. His table, covered with luxury, would require their daughters laborious ſervice, to prepare for it proviſions and delicacies: to gratify his favourites, or reward his officers, the inſtruments of his oppreſſion, the beſt of their poſſeſſions would be plundered; whilſt rivalling the tabernacle of God, another tenth of their increaſe muſt be paid for ſupport of his grandeur. When theſe burdens were felt, they would complain, but in vain: God would juſtly reject their petitions, and leave them to the miſery they had courted. *Note*, (1.) The gratification of our inordinate deſires brings a plague along with it. (2.) They who rejected God, are juſtly rejected by him.

5. Far from deſiſting on this repreſentation, they obſtinately perſevere in their demands, and will have a king, diſcrediting Samuel's report; perhaps ſuſpecting him of deſign. They will be like the nations, tho' ſlaves, and have a king to go before them to battle; though taught by late experience, how much better it was to have God to fight for them, than to fight for themſelves. *Note*, (1.) No reproofs will reſtrain the obſtinate ſinner. (2.) The kindeſt advice is ſometimes liable to be miſrepreſented as ſelfiſh and deſigning.

6. Samuel, at God's command, conſents to their requeſt: having retired to wait upon God, and know his final reſolution, he is commanded to aſſure them, they ſhall have a king, and bids them in the mean time return, and expect ſhortly to hear the nomination of the perſon God would chuſe to reign in Iſrael.

CHAP. IX.

Here is, 1. *Saul's parentage and perſon*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *His ſearch for his father's aſſes*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *His determination to conſult Samuel about them*, ver. 6—10. 4. *His finding him out*, ver. 11—14. 5. *Samuel being informed of God concerning him*, ver. 17. *treats him with reſpect*, ver. 18—24. *and ſurprizes him with the news that he muſt be king*, ver. 25—27.

1. NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whoſe name *was* Kiſh, the ſon of Abiel, the ſon of Zeror, the ſon of Bechorath, the ſon of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of † power. 2. And he had a ſon, whoſe name *was* Saul, [a] a choice young man, and a goodly; and *there was* not among the children of Iſrael a goodlier perſon than he: from [b] his ſhoulders and upward, *he was* higher than any of the people.

† Or ſubſtance.
[a] Gen. vi. 2. Chap. xvi. 6, 7.
[b] Chap. x. 23. Jer. ix. 23.

v. 1, 2. It being reſolved a king ſhould reign, this chapter opens with an account of a perſon who ſeemed to correſpond to the people's wiſhes. A Benjamite, whoſe name is Saul, the ſame the great Apoſtle bore, who was of this tribe alſo. The ſon of Kiſh, a great man in wealth and influence; his perſon remarkably noble and tall, graceful, and finely proportioned, ſo that to look upon, Iſrael produced not ſuch another. *Note*, (1.) A good look is a ſtrong letter of recommendation. (2.) A noble preſence in a king, adds double dignity to his ſtation.

3. And [c] the aſſes of Kiſh, Saul's father, were loſt; and Kiſh ſaid to Saul his ſon, Take now one of the ſervants with thee, and ariſe, go ſeek the aſſes. 4. And he paſſed through mount Ephraim, and paſſed through the land of Shaliſha, but they found *them* not: then they paſſed through the land of Shalim, and *there they were* not: and he paſſed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not. 5. *And* when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul ſaid to his ſervant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; leſt my father leave *caring* for the aſſes, and take thought for us. 6. And he ſaid unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this city [d] a man of God, and *he is* [e] an honourable man; [f] all that he ſaith, cometh ſurely to paſs: now let us go thither; peradventure he can ſhew us our way that we ſhould go. 7. Then ſaid Saul to his ſervant, But behold, *if* we go, [g] what ſhall we bring the man? for the bread is ſpent in our veſſels, and *there is* not a preſent to bring to the man of God: what have we? 8. And the ſervant anſwered Saul again, and ſaid, Behold, † I have here at hand the fourth part of a ſhekel of ſilver: *that* will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way. 9. (Beforetime in Iſrael, when [h] a man went to enquire of God, thus he ſpake, Come, and let us go to the ſeer: for *he that is* now *called* a Prophet, was beforetime called [i] a Seer.) 10. Then ſaid Saul to his ſervant, † Well ſaid, come, let us go: ſo they went unto the city where the man of God *was*.

[c] Ver. 16. Eſth. vi. 1.
[d] Deut. xxxiii. 1. Judg. xiii. 6.
[e] 1 Theſ. v. 13.
[f] Chap. iii. 19. Zech. i. 5, 6.
[g] Judg. vi. 18. 1 Kings xiv. 13. 2 Kings viii. 8.
† Heb. There is found in my hand.
[h] Gen. xxv. 22. Judg. i. 1.
[i] 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. Amos vii. 12.
‡ Heb. Thy word is good. Ecclus iv. 9.

v. 3—10. Few would have looked for a king choſen from ſuch an employment; but God's choice is often marvellous in our eyes. We have here,

1. Saul ſent to ſeek his father's aſſes, which were ſtrayed. Agreable to the ſimplicity of thoſe days, when no man was too great to mind his own affairs, Kiſh ſends his ſon with a ſervant in queſt of the ſtrayed aſſes; and his ſon, forward to obey his parent's orders, and induſtrious in his buſineſs, immediately ſets himſelf to make ſearch after them.

2. Their ſearch was long and fruitleſs; and Saul, apprehenſive his father would be uneaſy at his abſence, reſolves to give over and return. Dutiful children will always thus tenderly conſult their parents peace.

3. The ſervant reflecting they were near Ramah, where Samuel dwelt, ſuggeſts whether it might not be worth their while to conſult him on the occaſion; he gives him a great character as a man of God, and a moſt reſpectable perſon; a ſeer, whoſe prophecies always come to paſs, and who might be able to inform them of their loſt aſſes. *Note*, (1.) When we are near a man of God, it is worth while to call upon him, and not to paſs by without a word of advice. (2.) People are uſually more ſollicitous about the things of the world, than the things of God: and ſo prepoſterous in their care, that they who would run to conſult a miniſter of God, could he direct them to the recovery of loſt goods, will neither conſult nor be directed by him, for the recovery of their loſt ſouls.

4. The advice was good; but Saul heſitates, becauſe their money was ſpent, and their victuals almoſt finiſhed, and therefore they could not make the cuſtomary preſent: not as the price for divination, but the token of reſpect, which was common from inferiors to their ſuperiors in the eaſt. This objection the ſervant anſwers, by producing a bit of ſilver, the fourth part of a ſhekel; whereupon they proceed to the city, where Samuel the *ſeer* dwelt, which name is taken notice of, as the general appellation then, of thoſe who were afterwards ſtiled prophets. *Note*, They who are appointed to teach others, muſt firſt ſee the truth diſtinctly themſelves.

11. ¶ *And* as they went up the hill to the city, [k] they found young maidens going out to draw water, and ſaid unto them, Is the ſeer here? 12. And they anſwered them, and ſaid, He is; behold *he is* before you: make haſte now, for he came to day to the city; for *there is* a † ſacrifice of the people to day [l] in the high place. 13. As ſoon as ye be come into the city, ye ſhall ſtraightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, becauſe he doth bleſs the ſacrifice, *and* afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up, for about this time ye ſhall find him. 14. And they went up into the city: *and* when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out againſt them, for to go up to the high place.

[k] Gen. xxiv. 11.
† Heb. Feaſt.
Chap. vii. 9. & xvi. 2.
[l] 1 Kings iii. 2.

v. 11—14. Saul drawing nigh to Ramah, meets ſome maidens, of whom he enquires concerning the ſeer, and receives very particular information concerning him. His houſe was juſt before them, but they muſt make haſte, for he was juſt going to the high place in the city, it being a day of ſolemn ſacrifice, which as there was no ſettled place for God's worſhip at preſent, might be performed on Samuel's altar, *chap.* vii. 17. and the people waited for his benediction on the table, before they ſat down to feaſt on their ſacrifice. *Note*, (1.) Whether we eat or drink, it ſhould be to the glory of God, and after having firſt craved his bleſſing: irreverent meals ſhew an irreligious temper. (2.) Thoſe who are enquiring after a true prophet, we ſhould delight to help on their way.

15. ¶ Now [m] the LORD had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, ſaying, 16. To morrow about this time I will ſend thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou ſhalt anoint him *to be* captain over my people Iſrael, that he may ſave my people out of the hand of the Philiſtines: for I have looked upon my people, becauſe their cry is come unto me. 17. And

[m] Chap. xv. 1. Amos iii. 7.

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when Samuel ſaw Saul, [n] the LORD ſaid unto him, Behold the man whom I ſpake to thee of: this ſame ſhall ‡ reign over my people.

[n] Chap. xvi. 12.
‡ Heb. Reſtrain.
Neh. xiii. 19, 25. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

v. 15—17. Samuel was now juſt coming from his door when Saul appears in ſight. He had, by a ſecret whiſper from God the preceding day, been informed of his deſign, to ſend to him the perſon appointed to be the ruler of his people; and though in anger this king was given, yet God hath deſigns of grace to anſwer: though they ſhall ſmart by their king, they ſhall be ſaved by him from their enemies. Their cry God hath heard; whether the cry of diſtreſs from fear of the Philiſtines, or their former ſupplication to Samuel; and now behold the man whom God hath appointed *to reign over* Iſrael as a king; or as the word ſignifies, *to reſtrain* them from the evil of their ways. *Note*, (1.) Circumſtances that appear utterly fortuitous, are yet all ordered of God with deep deſign. (2.) When God will puniſh his people, he will in wrath remember mercy.

18. Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and ſaid, Tell me, I pray thee, where the ſeer's houſe *is*. 19. And Samuel anſwered Saul, and ſaid, I *am* the ſeer: go up before me unto the high place, for ye ſhall eat with me to day; and to-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart. 20. And as for thine aſſes that were loſt three days ago, ſet not thy mind on them, for they are found: and on whom *is* all the deſire of Iſrael? *is it* not on thee, and on all thy father's houſe? 21. And Saul anſwered and ſaid, *Am* not I a Benjamite [o] of the ſmalleſt of the tribes of Iſrael? and [p] my family the leaſt of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then ſpeakeſt thou ſo to me? 22. And Samuel took Saul, and his ſervant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them ſit in the chiefeſt place among them that were bidden, which *were* about thirty perſons. 23. And Samuel ſaid unto the cook, Bring [q] the portion which I give thee, of which I ſaid unto thee, Set it by thee. 24. And the cook took up the [r] ſhoulder, and *that* which *was* upon it, and ſet *it* before Saul: and *Samuel* ſaid, Behold, that which is left, ſet *it* before thee, *and* eat; for unto this time hath it been kept for thee, *ſince* I ſaid, I have invited the people: ſo Saul did eat with Samuel that day. 25. ¶ And when they were come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* communed with Saul [s] upon the top of the houſe. 26. And they aroſe early: and it came to paſs about the ſpring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the houſe, ſaying, Up, that I may ſend thee away. And Saul aroſe, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad. 27. *And* as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel ſaid to Saul, Bid the ſervant paſs on before us, (and he paſſed on) but ſtand thou ſtill a while, that I may † ſhew thee the word of God.

[o] Judg. xx. 46, 48.
[p] Ibid. vi. 15. Chap. xv. 17.
[q] Gen. xliii. 34. Chap. i. 5.
[r] Lev. vii. 32, 33.
[s] 2 Sam. xi. 2. Jer. xix. 13. Mark ii. 4. Acts x. 9.
† Heb. Cauſe thee to hear.

v. 18—27. We have here the firſt interview between Saul and Samuel. Meeting a man in the gate of the city, bearing no marks of diſtinction about him, Saul enquired after the ſeer, and was not a little ſurprized when he heard him reply, I am he.

1. Samuel hereupon, without his enquiry, ſatisfies him concerning the buſineſs he came upon: the aſſes are found, he need not farther concern himſelf about them; he preſſes him to ſpend the day with him at the feaſt, ſends him up before him to the high place, either as giving him precedence, or as having ſome buſineſs to do by the way, and drops an intimation of that preferment, which, little as he thought of it, God intended for him.

2. Saul heſitates at the meſſage, and can ſcarce believe him in earneſt, modeſtly ſpeaking of his family and ſelf, as unworthy of ſuch an honour. *Note*, An humble mind is the ornament of every ſtation.

3. At the feaſt, Samuel treats him with peculiar diſtinction: he is ſet in the higheſt place, and the beſt diſh carried to him; which before he came had been deſigned and ſet apart for him, and his ſervant ſhares in his maſter's honour, and partakes of the entertainment. *Note*, (1.) Whom God honours, we muſt reſpect for his ſake, and yield that place to them which Providence has aſſigned. (2.) We muſt not envy thoſe whom God is pleaſed to advance, though we ourſelves may be eclipſed by them.

4. When they came down from the high place, Samuel ſpent the evening and next morning in communion with Saul on the roof of his houſe, which was flat, and for coolneſs much reſorted to; and we may ſuppoſe, fully informed him concerning God's election, his own readineſs to reſign to him, and the behaviour ſuitable to his ſtation, and probably prayed for him and over him, that he might be faithful to his truſt. Thus very early in the morning, he brought him on his journey, and having deſired him to diſmiſs his ſervant, he confirms the word which he had ſpoken to him from God, by a ſolemn anointing him as king, as the beginning of the next chapter will inform us.

CHAP. X.

We have, 1. *The anointing of Saul,* ver. 1. *The ſigns Samuel gave him,* ver. 2—6. *And inſtructions,* ver. 7, 8. 2. *The accompliſhment of thoſe ſigns to the ſatisfaction of Saul,* ver. 9—13. 3. *His return to his father's houſe,* ver. 14—16. 4. *His public election by lot, and ſolemn inauguration,* ver. 17—25. 5. *His return to his own city,* ver. 26, 27.

1. THEN Samuel took [a] a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, and [b] kiſſed him, and ſaid, *Is it* not becauſe [c] the LORD hath anointed thee *to be* captain over [d] his inheritance? 2. When thou art departed from me to day, then thou ſhalt find two men by [e] Rachel's ſepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah: and they will ſay unto thee, The aſſes which thou wenteſt to ſeek are found: and lo, thy father hath left the care of the aſſes, and ſorroweth for you, ſaying, What ſhall I do for my ſon? 3. Then ſhalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou ſhalt come to the plain of Tabor, and there ſhall meet thee three men going up to God to Bethel, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine. 4. And they will † ſalute thee, and give thee two *loaves* of bread, which thou ſhalt receive of their hands. 5. After that, thou ſhalt come to the hill of God, [f] where *is* the garriſon of the Philiſtines: and it ſhall come to paſs when thou art come thither to the city, that thou ſhalt meet ‡ a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a pſaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them, and [g] they ſhall propheſy. 6. And the ſpirit of the LORD will ‖ come upon thee, and [h] thou ſhalt propheſy with them, and [i] ſhalt be turned into another man. 7. And let it be when theſe ſigns are come unto thee, § *that* thou do as occaſion ſhall ſerve thee, for [k] God *is* with thee. 8. And thou ſhalt go down before me to Gilgal, and behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt-offerings, *and* to ſacrifice ſacrifices of peace-offerings: [l] ſeven days ſhalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and ſhew thee what thou ſhalt do.

[a] Chap. xvi. 13. 1 Kings i. 39.
[b] Pſal. ii. 12.
[c] Acts xiii. 21.
[d] Exod. xix. 5. Deut. xxxii. 9.
[e] Gen. xxxv. 19.
† Heb. Aſk thee of peace. Judg. xviii. 15.
[f] Chap. xiii. 3.
‡ Heb. A cord, or ſtring. Ver. 10. 1 Cor. i. 10.
[g] 1 Cor. xiv. 1. 1 Theſ. v. 20.
‖ Heb. Break in upon thee. Acts ii. 2.
[h] Num. xi. 25. Mat. vii. 22.
[i] Ver. 19.
§ Heb. Do for thee as thy hand ſhall find. Judg. ix. 33.
[k] Gen. xxi. 20.
[l] Chap. xiii. 8, 10.

v. 1—8. Samuel now gives Saul a confirmation of the word of God he had ſpoken to him.

1. By anointing him ſolemnly as God's king elect, and kiſſing him in token of hearty congratulation and chearful homage. Theſe unctions pointed to the Great King, emphatically called the Meſſiah, who was anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows, and on whom the fulneſs of the ſpirit in all his gifts and graces reſted.

2. By giving him certain ſigns for the confirmation of his faith in this tranſaction. (1.) That in the way at Rachel's ſepulchre, at Zelzah, he ſhould meet two men, who would inform him that the aſſes he ſought were found, and his father now in pain for his return. (2.) That afterwards he ſhould meet three men going to Bethel, where was an high place to ſacrifice, with three kids, three loaves, and a bottle of wine; and though unknown to them, they would ſalute him, and give him two loaves of bread, which he ſhould receive, not only as proviſion for his journey, but as the firſt-fruits of his office as king. (3.) That a more extraordinary thing ſhould happen to him at Geba, where was a garriſon of the Philiſtines, and a ſchool of prophets, educated under the care of ſome eminent man, and trained up in religious exerciſes, pſalmody, and the ſtudy of the law: theſe he ſhould meet coming down from ſacrificing on the high place, with inſtruments of muſic praiſing God; hereupon he ſhould inſtantly be ſeized with ſacred rapture, and though untaught before, be enabled to join with them in theſe divine exerciſes, and prophecy or praiſe in the midſt of them, and in his ſpirit ſhould alſo experience a great change, ſo that he ſhould be another man, filled with thoſe qualifications befitting the high office he was appointed unto. Theſe ſigns conveyed leſſons of inſtruction; at Rachel's ſepulchre, he might read the vanity of grandeur; from the bread he received, to be kind to the poor; and from this firſt connection with God's prophets, to maintain and ſupport thoſe ſeminaries of religion and learning, which would conduce much to the benefit of his people.

3. Samuel gives him directions to act hereupon, as occaſion ſhould ſerve, according to the wiſdom God would give him; and on emergencies he ſhould go down to Gilgal, where, within

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in ſeven days after notice, Samuel would meet him, and offer ſacrifices for him, and ſhew him what to do; but he muſt by no means proceed to ſacrifice till Samuel come. The diſobedience to this order was afterwards the forfeiture of his kingdom.

† Heb. Turned his heart.
Ver. 6, 10.
[m] Mat. xiii. 55. & xxi. 9, 10, 15. John vii. 15.
[n] Pſal. viii. 2. Prov. ii. 6. Jam. i. 17.
[o] Prov. xxix. 11.

9. ¶ And it was *ſo*, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God † gave him another heart: and all thoſe ſigns came to paſs that day. 10. And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him, and the ſpirit of God came upon him, and he propheſied among them. 11. And it came to paſs when all that knew him beforetime, ſaw, that behold, he propheſied among the prophets, then the people ſaid one to another, What *is* this *that* is come unto the ſon of Kiſh? [m] *Is* Saul alſo among the prophets? 12. And one of the ſame place anſwered and ſaid, But [n] who *is* their father? Therefore it became a proverb, *Is* Saul alſo among the prophets? 13. And when he had made an end of propheſying, he came to the high-place. 14. ¶ And Saul's uncle ſaid unto him, and unto his ſervant, Whither went ye? And he ſaid, To ſeek the aſſes; and when we ſaw that *they were* no where, we came to Samuel. 15. And Saul's uncle ſaid, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel ſaid unto you. 16. And Saul ſaid unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the aſſes were found. But [o] of the matter of the kingdom whereof Samuel ſpake, he told him not.

v. 9—16. Saul and Samuel now part. Saul returns homeward, and feels a wondrous change paſſed upon him; no longer groveling cares, nor ſervile labours engage his thoughts, but high and elevated ſentiments becoming a king, the redreſſing Iſrael's grievances, and the weighty concerns of the ſtate poſſeſs his ſoul. The ſigns happened according to the prediction, and the laſt of them is particularly taken notice of.

No ſooner was he come to the hill, than he met the prophets, and inſtantly joined in their devout exerciſes. As he was ſo near home, and well known there, thoſe who ſaw him expreſſed their aſtoniſhment, that an untutor'd huſbandman, the ſon of Kiſh, ſhould be thus engaged; when one of the company well obſerved, *Who is their father?* Is not all prophecy from God? What ſignifies whoſe ſon he is, or what was his employment, if God calls and qualifies him? This afterwards became a proverb, when a perſon of low ſtation was raiſed to any dignity, or a perſon of immoral character reclaimed, *Is Saul alſo among the prophets? Note*, (1.) Many ſuch a wonder hath divine grace wrought, where the chief of ſinners have become moſt eminent among the ſaints. (2.) Let not great and ſudden changes be too much depended on. A man may have a new tongue, new company, new manners, and yet not truly become a new man.

When he had made an end of prophecying, the gift not continuing always, he came to the high place to acknowledge the mercies he had received, and then returned. His uncle meeting him as he arrived, enquired of his journey, the cauſe of which he informs him, and their viſit to Samuel; on which his uncle, perhaps ſuſpecting ſomething from the univerſal expectation which was raiſed of a king, is ſollicitous to know what paſſed. But Saul prudently concealed what related to the kingdom; as it ſeemed not yet a proper occaſion to declare himſelf, and Samuel might have enjoined him to ſecrecy, till the time came, when his election ſhould be publickly notified; and therefore he only ſpeaks of the anſwer Samuel gave him concerning the aſſes. *Note*, (1.) The art of prudent concealment is a piece of true wiſdom. (2.) The heirs of God's kingdom will be content to be unknown in the world, till God himſelf ſhall proclaim their glory.

[p] Judg. xi. 11. & xx. 1.
[q] Judg. vi. 8.
[r] Chap. viii. 6, 7.
[s] Ibid. viii. 19.
[t] Num. x. 36. Mic. v. 2.
[u] Joſh. vii. 14. Acts i. 26.
[x] Judg. i. 1.

17. ¶ And Samuel called the people together [p] unto the LORD to Mizpeh; 18. And ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, [g] I brought up Iſrael out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, *and* of them that oppreſſed you. 19. And ye have this day [r] rejected your God, who himſelf ſaved you out of all your adverſities and your tribulations: and ye have ſaid unto him, [s] *Nay*, but ſet a king over us. Now therefore preſent yourſelves before the LORD by your tribes, and [t] by your thouſands. 20. And when Samuel had cauſed all the tribes of Iſrael to [u] come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. 21. When he had cauſed the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the ſon of Kiſh was taken: and when they ſought him, he could not be found. 22. Therefore [x] they enquired of the LORD further, if the man ſhould yet come thither: and the LORD anſwered, Behold, [y] he hath hid himſelf among the ſtuff. 23. And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he ſtood among the people, [z] he was higher than any of the people, from his ſhoulders and upward. 24. And Samuel ſaid to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath choſen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people ſhouted, and ſaid, † God ſave the king. 25. Then Samuel told the people [a] the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD: and Samuel ſent all the people away, every man to his houſe. 26. ¶ And Saul alſo went home to Gibeah, and there went with him a band of men, whoſe hearts God had touched. 27. But [b] the children of Belial ſaid, How ſhall this man ſave us? And they deſpiſed him, and [c] brought him no preſents: but he ‡ held his peace.

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[y] Chap. ix. 21. & xv. 17. Luke xiv. 11.
[z] Chap. ix. 2.
† Heb. Let the King live. 1 Kings i. 25.
[a] Deut. xvii. 18. Chap. viii. 11.
[b] Deut. xiii. 13. Chap. xi. 12.
[c] 1 Kings iv. 21. Mat. ii. 11.
‡ Heb. Was as though he had been deaf.

v. 17—27. The people's impatience for a king is now to be gratified. A ſolemn convocation is called at Mizpeh, under Samuel as preſident, in order to fix on the perſon.

1. Samuel opens the convocation, with a ſevere rebuke of their wickedneſs in thus reſolving to have a king, which was in fact rejecting God, who had hitherto governed them more immediately himſelf, and ſaved them by multiplied miracles. What man could they chuſe like unto him? *Note*, They who reject God's government, ſin againſt their own mercies.

2. The choice of the perſon being yet to be referred to God, Samuel cauſes the tribes to come near, by their repreſentatives, in order to caſt lots, and Benjamin is choſen. Of the families of Benjamin, the lot falls on Matri, and Saul the ſon of Kiſh is fixed upon as the man. But whilſt any man beſides would have been eager to ſhew himſelf, they cannot find him: for perceiving how the lot was going, and expecting from what had paſſed, that it would come to him, he hid himſelf, unwilling to take a charge for which he apprehended he was too unqualified; fearing too perhaps, that this crown would be a crown of thorns, when God's diſpleaſure at the matter had been ſo ſolemnly declared, and the ſtate of affairs from the Philiſtines and Amorites looked ſo lowring and dangerous.

3. The people hereupon enquire farther; whether he who was choſen, ſhould yet come to the aſſembly, or how they might find him? and they are directed to fetch him from his hiding-place among the baggage, which was immediately done.

4. When he appeared, his majeſtic preſence ſeemed deſigned for the dignity to which he was advanced. Samuel bids them look upon him, tall as a cedar, and admire the divine choice of a perſon, ſo ſuited to their wiſhes: hereupon the earth rings with ſhouting, *God ſave the King*, or *Let the King live*; let his reign be long and glorious, under the Divine protection and bleſſing. *Note*, It is the duty of every good ſubject, to pray for the life and proſperity of the ſovereign whom God appoints over him.

5. The King being choſen of God, muſt rule according to divine preſcription. The manner of the kingdom, how he muſt govern, and they obey, Samuel declares; and for the continual obſervance of theſe rules, writes them in a book, to be laid up in the tabernacle, and referred to on occaſion. Hereupon the people are diſmiſſed, Saul not immediately taking upon him the exerciſe of government. *Note*, Kings muſt remember, though they are above others, they are not above law.

6. The congregation broke up with very different ſentiments of their king. Some reſpected the Divine choice, and when Saul returned to his houſe at Gibeah, they accompanied him as body guard, to do him honour; having *their hearts touched of God*, inclined to pay the duty they owed their new ſovereign. But others, ſons of Belial, who had no regard for a king of God's appointment, and arrogantly conceiting they could have choſen a man of greater power, influence, and rank, than the ſon of Kiſh; perhaps envious at his advancement, and thinking themſelves injured by the preference given him; deſpiſed him, as a mean contemptible fellow, unfit to be a king, would not congratulate him on his acceſſion, nor bring him any preſents, in token of their ſubmiſſion and allegiance. This contempt Saul wiſely overlooked, till a proper occaſion offered, to ſhew how deſerving he was of the honour conferred on him, by deeds of valour which ſhould ſhame his enemies to an acknowledgment of his deſert. *Note*, (1.) When God touches the heart, we ſhall be inclined to follow chearfully Jeſus our king. (2.) They who are offended at the meanneſs of Jeſus in the manger, will tremble before him, when he ſhall come at the head of his angelic hoſts. (3.) It is wiſdom to diſſemble ſometimes our knowledge of the wrongs done us, leaſt the breach be made irreparable, which patience and forbearing might have healed.

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CHAP. XI.

In this chapter we have the firſt-fruits of Saul's government, in the reſcue of Jabeſh-gilead. Here is, 1. *The great extremity to which the city was reduced by the Ammonites,* ver. 1—3. 2. *Saul's readineſs to come to their relief,* ver. 4—10. 3. *The ſucceſs of his attempt,* ver. 11. 4. *His tenderneſs to thoſe that had oppoſed him,* ver. 12, 13. 5. *The public confirmation of his election to the government,* ver. 14, 15.

1. THEN Nahaſh the Ammonite came up, and
encamped againſt Jabeſh-gilead: and all the men
of Jabeſh ſaid unto Nahaſh, [a] Make a covenant with us,
and we will ſerve thee. 2. And Nahaſh the Ammonite
anſwered them, [b] On this *condition* will I make *a covenant*
with you, that I may thruſt out all your right eyes, and
lay it *for* a reproach upon all Iſrael. 3. And the elders
of Jabeſh ſaid unto him, † Give us ſeven days reſpite, that
we may ſend meſſengers unto all the coaſts of Iſrael: and
then if *there be* no man to ſave us, we will come out to
thee. 4. ¶ Then came [c] the meſſengers to Gibeah of
Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and
all the people lift up their voices, and wept.

[a] Deut. xx. 1, 3.
[b] Prov. xii. 10. Dan. iii. 6. Rev. xiii. 17.
† Heb. Forbear us.
[c] Chap. x. 26.

v. 1—4. Jabeſh-gilead is hardly yet reinhabited and recovered from its deſolations, *Judg.* xxi. 10. before it is threatned with a ſecond ſcourge from the ſword of Ammon.

1. Nahaſh king of the Ammonites beſieges them; and fearing themſelves unable to reſiſt his forces, they ſue for peace, and offer to become tributary.

2. The conditions propoſed by this haughty king, are cruel and ignominious; not content with their ſervice, he would torment them with the loſs of their right eye, unfit them for war, and leave a brand upon the whole nation, as unable to defend themſelves. *Note,* They who offer to become ſervants to ſin and Satan, will find the bitterneſs and baſeneſs of this ſervice.

3. They deſire ſeven days reſpite, to acquaint their brethren of their diſtreſs; and if during this time they are not ſuccoured, they will ſubmit to his tyrannical demands. This being granted from the confidence of the impoſſibility of help, they ſend to Saul at Gibeah; and their ſituation, when known in the city, produces a general lamentation. *Note,* The ſorrows of his brethren, a Chriſtian heart feels as his own.

5. And behold, Saul came after the † herd out of the
field, and Saul ſaid, What *aileth* the people that they
weep? and they told him the tidings of the men of Jabeſh.
6. And [d] the ſpirit of God came upon Saul, when
he heard thoſe tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.
7. And he took a yoke of oxen, and [e] hewed them
in pieces, and ſent *them* throughout all the coaſts of Iſrael
by the hands of meſſengers, ſaying, Whoſoever
cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, [f] ſo ſhall it
be done unto his oxen: and the fear of the LORD fell
on the people, and they came out ‡ with one conſent.
8. And when he numbred them in Bezek, the children
of Iſrael were three hundred thouſand, and the men of
Judah thirty thouſand. 9. And they ſaid unto the meſſengers
that came, Thus ſhall ye ſay unto the men of
Jabeſh-gilead, To-morrow by *that time* the ſun be hot,
ye ſhall have help. And the meſſengers came and ſhewed
it to the men of Jabeſh, and they were glad. 10.
Therefore the men of Jabeſh ſaid, To-morrow we will
come out unto you, and ye ſhall do with us all that
ſeemeth good unto you. 11. And it was *ſo* [g] on the
morrow, that Saul put the people in three ‖ companies,
and they came into the midſt of the hoſt [h] in the morning
watch, and ſlew the Ammonites, until the heat of the
day: and it came to paſs, that they which remained
were ſcattered, ſo that [i] two of them were not left together.

† Or oxen. Pſal. lxxviii. 71.
[d] Judg. iii. 10. Chap. x. 10.
[e] Judg. xix. 29.
[f] Ibid. xxi. 8, 11.
‡ Heb. As one man. Judg. xx. 1.
[g] Pſal. xlvi. 1.
‖ Heb. Heads.
[h] Pſal. ci. 8.
[i] Exod. xiv. 30. Jam. ii. 13.

v. 5—11. The ſons of Belial now ſhall ſee whether Saul is able to ſave them or not.

1. Saul was in the field tending his cattle when the meſſage came. Though choſen to be a king, yet returning to his old employment till God ſhould call him out to action. As he followed his cattle home, the cry of the people excited his enquiry; and when he heard the cauſe, anger againſt the inhuman Ammonite kindled in his boſom; he felt his ſpirit moved with unuſual ardour, and inſtantly reſolves the reſcue of Jabeſh-gilead. *Note,* (1.) We muſt not hear the ſorrows of the afflicted, without kind enquiries, and proffering ready help to alleviate their miſeries. (2.) A holy indignation againſt deeds of cruelty and wickedneſes is highly commendable.

2. The method he took to raiſe the forces of Iſrael. He hewed a yoke of oxen in pieces, and ſent theſe by the meſſengers into all the coaſts, threatning ſo to do by their oxen who ſhould be abſent from the general rendezvous; and joined Samuel's name with his own, both to pay him honour, and to engage the readier ſubmiſſion. The effect produced was great; God put his fear upon the people, and they inſtantly aſſembled from every quarter, to the number of three hundred thouſand men of Iſrael, beſides thirty thouſand of Judah; whoſe proportion, though apparently ſmaller than might be expected, may eaſily be accounted for, as the Philiſtines lay on their borders, againſt whom they muſt be guarded. *Note,* Where the fear of God is in the heart, there men will make conſcience of their duty in every ſtation, and be on principle good ſubjects, good ſoldiers, and good ſervants.

3. Confident of ſucceſs, Saul ſends the meſſengers back with aſſurance of immediate relief: he doubted not but on the morrow he ſhould be with them, which filled the city with joy. To perform his promiſe, he marches inſtantly in three bodies; and though the diſtance was ſixty miles, and all on foot, on the third day before morning watch, he broke into the camp of the Ammonites, lulled into ſecurity with the meſſage the men of Jabeſh-gilead had ſent them, on the return of the meſſengers, that they would come out to them the next day. A general rout enſued; till mid-day they made havock of the flying Ammonites, and ſo diſperſed and deſtroyed them, that not two were left together, of all their numerous hoſts. *Note,* When we go out, dependant upon God, we ſhall return crowned with victory.

12. ¶ And the people ſaid unto Samuel, Who *is* he
that ſaid, [k] Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that
we may put them to death. 13. And Saul ſaid, [l] There
ſhall not a man be put to death this day: for to day
the LORD hath wrought ſalvation in Iſrael. 14. Then
ſaid Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal,
and renew the kingdom there. 15. And all the
people went to Gilgal, and there [m] they made Saul king
before the LORD in Gilgal: and there they ſacrificed
ſacrifices of peace-offerings before the LORD: and there
Saul and all the men of Iſrael rejoiced greatly.

[k] Chap. x. 27. Luke xix. 27.
[l] 2 Sam. xix. 22.
[m] Chap. x. 24.

v. 12—15. Samuel, it ſeems, had either accompanied them in the expedition, or met them on their return. And, jealous now for the honour of their king, endeared to them by his victory, though they had before taken no notice of the inſult, the people apply to him, as judge in Iſrael, for the death of theſe ſons of Belial, who had deſpiſed the anointed of the Lord. Saul, like a good king, taking more pleaſure in exerciſing his clemency, than executing the offenders, interpoſes, and will not have that day ſtained with Iſraelitiſh blood, in which God had wrought ſo great a ſalvation for them. *Note,* All our ſucceſſes muſt be aſcribed to God; for it is his arm alone that obtains the victory for us, over our enemies ſpiritual and temporal. Samuel now ſeizes the favourable diſpoſition of the people, to confirm the kingdom to Saul: He led them to Gilgal; and amidſt the joyful ſacrifices for their paſt victory, Saul is ſolemnly inveſted with the ſupreme power by univerſal conſent, and with great ſolemnity. *Note,* It is good to make uſe of the favourable gale that blows.

CHAP. XII.

In this chapter, we have Samuel's ſpeech to the general aſſembly of the ſtates, when he reſigned the government into the hands of Saul. In which he, 1. *Calls them to witneſs to the uprightneſs of his adminiſtration,* ver. 1—5. 2. *He reminds them of what God had done for them, and for their fathers,* ver. 6—13. 3. *Sets before them good and evil, the bleſſing and the curſe,* ver. 14, 15. 4. *Awakens them to regard what he ſaid, by calling to God for thunder,* ver. 16—19. *And* 5. *Gives them hopes that all ſhould be well,* ver. 20—25.

1. AND Samuel ſaid unto all Iſrael, Behold, I have
hearkned unto your voice in all that ye ſaid unto
me, and [a] have made a king over you. 2. And now
behold, the king walketh before you: And [b] I am old,
and gray-headed, and behold, my ſons *are* with you:
and I have walked before you from my childhood unto
this day. 3. Behold, [c] here I *am*, witneſs againſt me
before the LORD, and before his anointed: [d] whoſe ox
have I taken? or whoſe aſs have I taken? or whom
have I defrauded? whom have I oppreſſed? or of whoſe
hand have I received *any* bribe to [e] blind mine eyes therewith?
and I will reſtore it you. 4. And they ſaid,
[f] Thou haſt not defrauded us, nor oppreſſed us, neither
haſt thou taken ought of any man's hand. 5. And he

[a] Chap. x. 1, 24.
[b] Chap. viii. 1, 5. 2 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 14.
[c] Ecclus xlvi. 19.
[d] Num. xvi. 15. Acts xx. 33. 1 Theſ. ii. 5, 10. Rev. xiv. 5.
[e] Deut. xvi. 19.
[f] Dan. vi. 4. 3 John 12.

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ſaid unto them, the LORD *is* witneſs againſt you, and his anointed *is* witneſs this day, that [g] ye have not found ought in my hand. And they anſwered, *He is* witneſs.

g Acts xxiv. 16.

v. 1—5. Before Samuel parted with the aſſembly, he addreſſes himſelf to them,

1. By way of appeal for his own integrity among them. He had now reſigned the government; their king ſtood before them, and he was a ſubject as well as they, and ready to anſwer any man who would call him to account; and his ſons are now private perſons, and open to any accuſation which might be laid againſt them. He reminds them of his grey hairs, which they ſhould have regarded with greater reverence, as coming upon him in their ſervice, in which, from earlieſt infancy he had been employed. He challenges them to lay the leaſt crime to his charge, of bribery or oppreſſion committed by him during all his adminiſtration, and therein tacitly reflects upon their own ſin and folly in rejecting one who, without fee or reward, had governed them with ſuch impartial juſtice. *Note*, (1.) To vindicate our character from the aſperſions of calumny, is a debt due to a man's good name. (2.) They who are conſcious of their own integrity, are not afraid of enquiry into their conduct.

2. The people willingly bear teſtimony to his uprightneſs among them. He had never oppreſſed them in the leaſt matter, nor received ought at their hands, as a reward for his ſervice. The Lord therefore is appealed to againſt any future charge, as their own confeſſions proclaim his innocence, and they replied, *He is witneſs*, that they had fully cleared him from every ſuſpicion of mal-adminiſtration. *Note*, It is a great comfort to have the witneſs of God for our integrity.

6. ¶ And Samuel ſaid unto the people, [h] *It is* the LORD that advanced Moſes and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. 7. Now therefore ſtand ſtill, that [i] I may reaſon with you before the LORD, of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers. 8. [k] When Jacob was come into Egypt, and [l] your fathers cried unto the LORD, then [m] the LORD ſent Moſes and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers, out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place. 9. And [n] when they forgat the LORD their God, [o] he ſold them into the hand of Siſera, captain of the hoſt of Hazor, and into the hand of [p] the Philiſtines, and into the hand of [q] the king of Moab, and they fought againſt them. 10. And they cried unto the LORD, and ſaid, [r] We have ſinned, becauſe we have forſaken the LORD, and [s] have ſerved Baalim and Aſhtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will ſerve thee. 11. And the LORD ſent [t] Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and [u] Jephthah, and [x] Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every ſide, and ye dwelled ſafe. 12. And when ye ſaw that Nahaſh the king of the children of Ammon came againſt you, ye ſaid unto me, [y] Nay, but a king ſhall reign over us; when [z] the LORD your God *was* your king. 13. Now therefore behold [a] the king whom ye have choſen, *and* whom ye have deſired: and behold, [b] the LORD hath ſet a king over you. 14. [c] If ye will fear the LORD, and ſerve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel againſt the commandment of the LORD, then ſhall both ye, and alſo the king that reigneth over you, continue following the LORD your God. 15. But [d] if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel againſt the commandment of the LORD, then ſhall the hand of the LORD be againſt you, as *it was* againſt your fathers.

h Exod. iv. 19, 21.
i Iſa. i. 18. Mic. vi. 3, 4.
k Gen. xlvi. 5, 6.
l Exod. ii. 23.
m Exod. iii. 10, & iv. 16.
n Deut. xxxii. 15.
o Judg. iv. 2.
p Ibid. x. 7.
q Ibid. iii. 12.
r Ibid. x. 10.
s Ibid. ii. 13.
t Ibid. vi. 14.
u Ibid. xi. 1.
x Chap. vii. 13.
y Chap. viii. 5, 19.
z Judg. viii. 23. Chap. viii. 9.
a Chap. x. 24.
b Hoſ. xiii. 11. Mat. xix. 8.
c Joſh. xxiv. 14.
d Lev. xxvi. 15, 16. Pſ. lxxxi. 11, 12.

v. 6—15. Samuel having vindicated himſelf, proceeds to remind them of what God had done for them, as a proof of their ingratitude in rejecting him; yet with inſtructions how this change might iſſue to their good.

1. He abridges their hiſtory. God had delivered them from Egypt; but their ungrateful fathers forſook him for idols, and brought themſelves thereby into bitter diſtreſs, under Siſera, the Philiſtines, and Moabites: yet, whenever they returned to him in penitence, he returned to them in mercy, and delivered them by the hands of judges divinely raiſed up, until his own time, who had been the laſt of them. Notwithſtanding, they were bent on a king, and God had gratified them. He reaſons therefore with them on the obligation they were under to this gracious God, and their ingratitude in reſolving to have another king; in which alſo his compliance with their requeſt was a freſh token of his patience and mercy towards them. *Note*, (1.) The more we reflect upon God's dealings with us, the more reaſon we ſhall have to chuſe his government, and to condemn the folly and ingratitude of ever leaving him. (2.) Paſt experience ſhould be remembered for preſent conduct. They who forſook God, always ſuffered for it.

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2. He inſtructs them how the alteration of the government might turn to their good. If they were faithful to God, obſervant of his worſhip, and perſevering in his ſervice, then God would keep them in his holy ways, and it ſhould go well with them and their king: but if they apoſtatized from God, then they might expect to feel his heavy hand, till they were conſumed together. *Note*, (1.) They who are faithful to the grace beſtowed, as their reward, ſhall have that grace confirmed and ſtrengthened. (2.) God's ſervice brings a preſent reward along with it now, and enſures an eternal reward hereafter. (3.) They who will not be brought under the yoke of God's laws, muſt be broken by the rod of his judgments.

16. Now therefore ſtand and ſee this great thing which the LORD will do before your eyes. 17. [e] *Is it* not wheat-harveſt to-day? [f] I will call unto the LORD, and he ſhall ſend thunder and rain: that ye may perceive and ſee that [g] your wickedneſs is great, which ye have done in the ſight of the LORD, in aſking you a king. 18. So Samuel called unto the LORD, and [h] the LORD ſent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly [i] feared the LORD and Samuel. 19. And all the people ſaid unto Samuel, Pray for thy ſervants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our ſins, *this* evil, to aſk us a king. 20. ¶ And Samuel ſaid unto the people, Fear not: (ye have done all this wickedneſs: yet [k] turn not aſide from following the LORD, but [l] ſerve the LORD with all your heart; 21. And turn ye not aſide: for then [m] *ſhould ye go* after vain *things*, which cannot profit nor deliver, for they *are* vain) 22. For the LORD will not forſake his people, [n] for his great name's ſake: becauſe [o] it hath pleaſed the LORD to make you his people. 23. Moreover, as for me, [p] God forbid that I ſhould ſin againſt the LORD, in ceaſing to pray for you: but [q] I will teach you the good and the right way. 24. Only fear the LORD, and ſerve him in truth with all your heart: for [r] conſider how great *things* he hath done for you. 25. But if ye ſhall ſtill do wickedly, [s] ye ſhall be conſumed, both ye and your king.

e Prov. xxvi. 1.
f Jer. xv. 1. Jam. v. 17, 18.
g Chap. viii. 7.
h Ezra x. 9.
i Exod. xiv. 31.
k Exod. xxxiv. 6. Jer. iii. 3.
l Deut. vi. 5.
m Jer. x. 8. Hab. ii. 18. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
n Ezek. xx. 9.
o Deut. vii. 7, 8. Mal. i. 2. Mat. xi. 26.
p Rom. i. 9. 1 Theſ. iii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 3.
q Col. i. 28.
r Ezra ix. 12, &c.
s Job xxxiv. 19.

v. 16—25. Whatever God of his ſovereign grace pleaſed to do for them in a way of mercy, that did not at all leſſen their guilt before him. Therefore, though he had given them a promiſe juſt before, and they were now to appearance ſucceſsful in their choice, yet he would remind them, that their ſin was great. *Note*, Succeſs in an evil way never ſanctifies it. To convince them of this, he uſes an argument more effectual than words, to which they might be inattentive, and dull of hearing. For,

1. He prays to God in their preſence, and inſtantly terrible thunders utter their voice, and though the day was ſerene before, and in that ſeaſon of the year, it being wheat-harveſt, rain never fell in Judea; yet now the thick clouds gather round, and pour down a torrent of water. Theſe were manifeſt evidences of God's diſpleaſure, of their folly in preferring the ſword of a king, before the prayers of ſuch a prophet, and warnings how ſoon their ſin would turn their preſent peaceful calm into a ſtorm of wrath. *Note*, (1.) All the elements are ready armed to avenge God's quarrels, whenever he pleaſes to ſend them. (2.) It is a dangerous thing to turn the prayers of God's miniſters againſt us, for their quarrel is the Lord's.

2. Terror and diſmay ſeize the affrighted congregation. Fearing God's diſpleaſure, and perceiving the power of Samuel's prayers, they confeſs their guilt and folly, and earneſtly intreat him to intercede for them, that they periſh not, as they were conſcious they had deſerved to do. *Note*, (1.) The time will come, when ſinners will cry for their prayers, whom now they deſpiſe. (2.) Though the terrors of the Lord put men into a fright, they work no laſting change; when the ſtorm is blown over, they quickly relapſe into their former ways.

3. Samuel kindly undertakes to be their advocate, their comforter, and friendly adviſer. He bids them not fear. Theſe thunders were not to deſtroy, but to humble them, and bring them to a ſenſe of their great wickedneſs. As God had choſen them, not for their deſerts, but for his own great name's ſake, he would keep them; only they muſt beware not to turn aſide unto idols, which never could profit them. For his own part, he could not but pray for them without ceaſing, and ſhould continue to give them his beſt advice, to preſerve them in fidelity to their covenant God; exhorting them earneſtly to fear the Lord, and ſerve him in ſimplicity, both in gratitude and love, for the great things he had already done for them, and leſt their diſobedience ſhould provoke him to deſtroy both them and the

king in whom they gloried. *Note*, (1.) God's choice is ſovereign; and as of his grace he calls, ſo by his grace he will keep his choſen: though their ſins provoke him to ſcourge them, yet will he not utterly deſtroy them. (2.) Whatever creature engages our affections from God, it makes the heart idolatrous, and will deceive our expectations. (3.) Thoſe who injure us, we muſt ſtill pray for; how much more thoſe who turn and ſay, Forgive. (4.) Miniſters muſt not ceaſe teaching people the good and right way, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. (5.) The more we conſider what God has done for us, the more ſhall we feel ourſelves conſtrained to love and ſerve him. (6.) When a miniſter is faithful, if the people continue refractory, he will have the comfort of having delivered his own ſoul. (7.) Apoſtacy from God, and eternal ruin, are inſeparably connected.

CHAP. XIII.

We have here, 1. *The diſpoſition of Saul's army*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Jonathan's exploit*, ver. 3. 3. *The invaſion of the Philiſtines thereupon*, ver. 3—7. 4. *Saul's ſacrifice at Gilgal with his army, before Samuel came*, ver. 8—10. 5. *His rejection for diſobedience*, ver. 11—14. 6. *His march to Gibeah, whilſt the Philiſtines encamp in Michmaſh*, ver. 15, 16. 7. *The Philiſtine ſpoilers meet with no reſiſtance, the Hebrews in general being without arms, their ſmiths having been taken away*, ver. 17—23.

1. SAUL † reigned one year, and when he had reigned two years over Iſrael, 2. Saul choſe him three thouſand *men* of Iſrael, *whereof* two thouſand were with Saul in Michmaſh and in mount Bethel, and a thouſand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the reſt of the people he ſent every man to his tent. 3. And [a] Jonathan ſmote the garriſon of the Philiſtines that *was* in ‡ Geba, and the Philiſtines heard *of it*: and Saul [b] blew the trumpet throughout all the land, ſaying, Let the Hebrews hear. 4. And all Iſrael heard ſay, *that* Saul had ſmitten a garriſon of the Philiſtines, and *that* Iſrael alſo § was had in abomination with the Philiſtines: and the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal. 5. ¶ And the Philiſtines gathered themſelves together, to fight with Iſrael, thirty thouſand chariots, and ſix thouſand horſemen, and people as the ſand which *is* on the ſea-ſhore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmaſh, eaſtward from Beth-aven. 6. When the men of Iſrael ſaw that they were in a ſtrait, (for the people were diſtreſſed) then [b] the people did hide themſelves in caves and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. 7. And *ſome of* the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead: as for Saul, he *was* yet in Gilgal, and all the people ‖ followed him trembling.

† Heb. The ſon of one year in his reigning. Chap. x. 24. & xi. 15.
About 1065.
[a] Chap. x. 5.
‡ Or, the hill.
[b] Num. x. 3. Judg. vi. 34.
§ Heb. Did ſtink.
[b] Judg. vi. 2.
‖ Heb. Trembled after him.

v. 1—7. Saul reigned one year, counting from his being anointed at Ramah, to his inauguration at Gilgal; and when he had reigned two years over Iſrael, he choſe three thouſand men, as his guard: of theſe, two thouſand were with himſelf in mount Bethel, and one with Jonathan in Gibeah. Peace ſeems to have ſubſiſted at preſent between the Iſraelites and the Philiſtines, who had garriſons in ſome cities, to keep the people of Iſrael in ſubjection. Saul determines to diſpoſſeſs them, and thereby brings himſelf into the greateſt difficulties.

1. Jonathan, at his command, ſurprizes the garriſon of Geba, which was near to Gibeah, his ſtation; and as this ſeems to have been done treacherouſly, whilſt they relied on the peace, and all might perhaps be put to the ſword, the Philiſtines juſtly reſented it, and abhorred the perfidious manner in which they acted. To oppoſe therefore the ſtorm which he expected, Saul, by ſound of trumpet, ſummons the people to attend; but whether diſliking his conduct, or dreading the power of the Philiſtines, few gathered to his ſtandard. *Note*, (1.) Haſty and ill-adviſed proceedings often involve us in difficulties, which conſideration might have foreſeen and avoided. (2.) The ſins of profeſſors bring the greateſt reproach upon the cauſe of God.

2. The Philiſtines, exaſperated to the uttermoſt, and breathing revenge, aſſemble all their forces, and raiſe their confederates. Their foot being as the ſand on the ſea-ſhore for multitude, their horſe ſix thouſand, and their chariots thirty thouſand, they probably thought themſelves ſure of ſucceſs, and collected ſuch an incredible number, not for war, but to remove their ſpoil. This interpretation I would rather prefer to the ſuppoſition of ſome, that the number is a miſtake of the copier for three thouſand; or of others, who would refer this to the men who fought in the chariots. *Note*, The powers of darkneſs leagued againſt us are more numerous, and the leaſt of them mightier than theſe chariots or horſemen: how unable then muſt we needs be to ſtand, unleſs God fight for us.

3. The Iſraelites in their danger have loſt all courage. Far from animating each other to ſtand their ground, and make a noble effort for their liberty, ſome fly to rocks and thickets for ſhelter; others haſte to the moſt diſtant border to Gilead, that they may be as far as poſſible from the danger; whilſt the few who remain are quite diſpirited, and, though aſhamed to deſert their king, yet follow him trembling. *Note*, (1.) God will make men rue their folly ſoon: they would have a king, and now they ſuffer for it. (2.) They who are conſcious of their unpreparedneſs for death, cannot but tremble at its approach.

8. ¶ And he tarried [c] ſeven days, according to the ſet time that Samuel *had appointed*: but Samuel came not to Gilgal, and the people were ſcattered from him. 9. And Saul ſaid, [d] Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And he offered the burnt-offering. 10. And it came to paſs, that [e] as ſoon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him, that he might † ſalute him. 11. ¶ And Samuel ſaid, What haſt thou done? And Saul ſaid, Becauſe I ſaw that the people were ſcattered from me, and *that* [f] thou cameſt not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philiſtines gathered themſelves together to Michmaſh: 12. Therefore [g] ſaid I, the Philiſtines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not ‡ made ſupplication unto the LORD: [h] I forced myſelf therefore, and offered a burnt-offering. 13. And Samuel ſaid to Saul, [i] Thou haſt done fooliſhly: thou haſt not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have eſtabliſhed thy kingdom upon Iſrael for ever. 14. But now [k] thy kingdom ſhall not continue: [l] the LORD hath ſought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, becauſe thou haſt not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.

[c] Chap. x. 8.
[d] Deut. xii. 6. Chap. xv. 22. Prov. iii. 5. Iſa. xxviii. 16.
[e] Pſ. xxxvii. 7. Prov. xx. 22.
† Heb. Bleſs him.
[f] Jer. ix. 3.
[g] 1 Kings xii. 26.
‡ Heb. Intreated the face.
[h] Jam. i. 14.
[i] Deut. iv. 6. Prov. xix. 3. Mat. xiv. 4.
[k] Dan. iv. 31. & v. 26, 27.
[l] Chap. xvi. 12. Pſ. iv. 3. & lxxviii. 70. & lxxxix. 20. Acts xiii. 22.

v. 8—14. We have here,

1. Saul's diſobedience. Samuel had given him in charge, *Chap*. x. 8. to wait for him ſeven days in Gilgal, either in any general difficulty, or with an eye to this particular ſeaſon, and he would come and ſacrifice for him, and give him inſtructions how to proceed. Saul waited ſix days; on the ſeventh, ſeeing the people deſerting him, and the Philiſtines advancing upon him, he haſtily concludes, that Samuel either would not come, or would come too late; and therefore preſumes to ſacrifice without him, though neither prieſt nor prophet to authorize him for ſuch a deed. But juſt as he had made an end of the burnt-offering, a meſſage is brought that Samuel was near. Conſcious of his guilt, he haſtens to meet him; and, in anſwer to Samuel's enquiry, ſeeks to excuſe what he had done, with the plauſible pleas of piety towards God, regard for the people, and the urgency of his affairs, which forced him againſt his own inclinations and conſcience, not without a reflection on Samuel's delay, as if he had broke his promiſe. But Samuel, though he had deferred his coming, to try Saul's faith and obedience, to the laſt day, had not exceeded the time appointed, as he inſinuated, the ſeventh day being not yet expired. *Note*, (1.) Impatience to help ourſelves, and unwillingneſs to leave our concerns in God's hands, ſerve only to involve us in new troubles. (2.) Diſobedience againſt a poſitive precept can have no excuſe; and every attempt to extenuate our guilt, is a proof of an unhumbled ſpirit. (3.) The more we ſin againſt conviction, the more aggravated our tranſgreſſions. (4.) Pretences to religion, whilſt we act in oppoſition to God's commands, are barefaced hypocriſy.

2. Samuel's rebuke. Though a king, he is not afraid to condemn his wickedneſs, and reproach his folly; yea, to denounce upon him the ſentence of God. He tells him plainly, that he that ſet him up, will, for his diſobedience, caſt him down. His kingdom ſhall not continue; another is choſen in his room, a man after God's own heart, to be captain over his Iſrael. After this, Samuel turns, and leaves him to meditate on his folly. *Note*, (1.) Plain and faithful rebukes become God's miniſters, even before kings. (2.) Folly and wickedneſs are twin ſiſters; and the ſinner will by and by reproach himſelf for his want of ſenſe, as much as want of grace. (3.) Sins, which to us may appear little, have dangerous conſequences. (4.) They who reject God's government, are juſtly excluded from his everlaſting kingdom.

15. And Samuel aroſe, and gat him up from Gilgal, unto Gibeah of Benjamin: and Saul numbred the people *that were* preſent with him, [m] about ſix hundred men. 16. And Saul and Jonathan his ſon, and the people † *that*

[m] Judg. vii. 7.
† Heb. Found with him.

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were preſent with them, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philiſtines encamped in Michmaſh. 17. ¶ And the ſpoilers came out of the camp of the Philiſtines, in three companies: one company turned unto the way *that leadeth to* Ophrah, unto the land of Shual. 18. And another company turned the way *to* Beth-horon: and another company turned *to* the way of the border, that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderneſs. 19. ¶ Now [n] there was no ſmith found throughout all the land of Iſrael: (for the Philiſtines ſaid, Leſt the Hebrews make *them* ſwords or ſpears) 20. But all the Iſraelites went down to the Philiſtines, to ſharpen every man his ſhare and his coulter, and his ax, and his mattock. 21. Yet they had ‡ a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to ſharpen the goads. 22. So it came to paſs in the day of battle, that there was neither ſword nor ſpear found in the hand of any of the people that *were* with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his ſon was there found. 23. And the † garriſon of the Philiſtines went out to the paſſage of Michmaſh.

[n] Judg. v. 8. 2 Kings xxiv. 14. Jer. xxiv. 1.

‡ Heb. A file with mouths.

† Or, ſtanding camp.

v. 15—23. Samuel in diſpleaſure retires to Gibeah, and Saul, with the few who adhered to him, no more than ſix hundred men, the reſt having deſerted him, goes thither alſo. Perhaps this was a defenſible place, where they might ſtand a ſiege, tho' they were unable to meet the Philiſtines in the field. Hereupon two things are obſerved,

1. The havock made by the Philiſtines. As there was no army to oppoſe them, they made ſeveral detachments from their main body, that they might the ſooner plunder and ſubdue the country; and, to prevent all interruption of their parties, they ſeize the paſſage of Michmaſh, which was near to Gibeah, purpoſing probably to lay ſiege quickly to that place. *Note,* They who provoke God to leave them in diſtreſs, have only themſelves to blame for their ſufferings.

2. The wretched and weak ſtate of the people of Iſrael. When they need moſt the weapons of war to defend themſelves, by the policy of the Philiſtines they are quite unarmed. They had, during the time of their power, taken care to remove all the ſmiths, and to forbid any Iſraelite exerciſing the trade; ſo that, even to make or repair his utenſils of huſbandry, every man was obliged to go down to the Philiſtines, either to their country, or to their garriſons; only each man was allowed a file, to ſharpen thoſe that were in conſtant uſe. But as for ſword or ſpear, there were none found among all the hoſts of Iſrael, ſave with Saul and Jonathan, which is indeed wonderful, conſidering the victories lately obtained over the Philiſtines and Ammonites. It may be, the ſucceſs they then had, from the divine interpoſition, made them leſs careful to provide for their future defence; or they truſted chiefly to bows and arrows, or to their ſlingers, for which Benjamin was ſo famous. It argues, however, Saul's overſight, and ſhews the reaſon of the preſent faint-heartedneſs of the people, being thus defenceleſs. *Note,* When the ſword of the Spirit, the word of God, is wreſted out of our hands, we cannot but become an eaſy prey to the enemy of our ſouls.

CHAP. XIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Jonathan's brave exploit againſt the Philiſtines,* ver. 1—15. 2. *The purſuit of them by the Iſraelites,* ver. 16—23. 3. *Saul's raſh vow,* ver. 24. 4. *Broken through Jonathan's ignorance,* ver. 24—30. *And like to prove his death,* ver. 36—46. 5. *The bad effect of it on the people,* ver. 31—35. 6. *Saul's exploits and family,* ver. 47—52.

1. NOW it came to paſs upon a day, that Jonathan the ſon of Saul ſaid unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philiſtines garriſon, that *is* on the other ſide: but he told not his father. 2. And Saul tarried in the uttermoſt part of Gibeah, under a pomegranate-tree, which *is* in Migron: and the people that *were* with him *were* about ſix hundred men; 3. And † Ahiah the ſon of Ahitub, [a] I-chabod's brother, the ſon of Phinehas, the ſon of Eli, the LORD's prieſt in Shiloh, wearing an ephod; and the people knew not that Jonathan was gone. 4. ¶ And between the paſſages, by which Jonathan ſought to go over unto the Philiſtines garriſon, *there was* ‡ a ſharp rock on the one ſide, and a ſharp rock on the other ſide: and the name of the one *was* Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. 5. The § forefront of the one *was* ſituate northward over-againſt Michmaſh, and the other ſouthward over-againſt Gibeah. 6. And Jonathan ſaid to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garriſon of [b] theſe uncircumciſed: [c] it may be that the LORD will work for us: for *there is* no reſtraint to the LORD, [d] to ſave by many or by few. 7. And his armour-bearer ſaid unto him, Do all that *is* in thine heart: turn thee, behold, I *am* with thee according to thy heart. 8. Then ſaid Jonathan, Behold, we will paſs over unto *theſe* men, and we will diſcover ourſelves unto them. 9. [e] If they ſay thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will ſtand ſtill in our place, and will not go up unto them. 10. But if they ſay thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand; and this *ſhall be* a ſign unto us. 11. And both of them diſcovered themſelves unto the garriſon of the Philiſtines: and the Philiſtines ſaid, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes, where they had hid themſelves. 12. And the men of the garriſon anſwered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and ſaid, Come up to us, and [f] we will ſhew you a thing. And Jonathan ſaid unto his armour-bearer, Come up after me; for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Iſrael. 13. And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and [g] they fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer ſlew after him. 14. And that firſt ſlaughter which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were § an half acre of land, *which* a yoke *of oxen might plow.* 15. And [h] there was trembling in the hoſt, in the field, and among all the people: the garriſon, and the ſpoilers, they alſo trembled, and the earth quaked: ſo it was † a very great trembling.

† Called Abimelech, Chap. xxii. 9.

[a] Chap. iv. 21.

‡ Heb. A tooth of a rock.

§ Heb. Tooth.

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[b] Chap. xvii. 36. Eph. ii. 12.

[c] Deut. xxxii. 30. Joſh. xxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xiv. 11.

[d] Judg. vii. 4. 1 Mac. iii. 18. Mat. xix. 26.

[e] Gen. xxiv. 14. Judg. vi. 37. & vii. 11.

[f] Judg. viii. 16. Chap. xvii. 43.

[g] Pſ. xviii. 29. Heb. xi. 34.

§ Or, half a furrow of an acre of land.

[h] Joſh. ii. 9. Judg. vii. 22. Job xviii. 11.

† Heb. A trembling of God. Gen. xv. 5. Dan. v. 6.

v. 1—15. Never did Iſrael appear in a more diſtreſſed ſituation: they have neither courage nor arms; God is offended; their enemies are at the gate; and they without place to flee to, or power to reſiſt: but, for his own name's ſake, God will not utterly forſake his people, though they ſo juſtly deſerved it. We have here,

1. Saul reduced to the greateſt ſtraits; no increaſe of his army; retired to the uttermoſt part of Gibeah, for the greater ſecurity, or more ready flight, if the Philiſtines advanced; his tent ſpread under a pomegranate-tree, or under Rimmon, perhaps the noted rock, *Judg.* xx. 47. where the tribe of Benjamin had before taken ſhelter. Hither, to conſult God in his difficulties, ſince Samuel had left him, he ſends for the ark of God, and Ahiah the high-prieſt, hoping by this application to God in his own way he might have better ſucceſs, than when he ſacrificed for himſelf. *Note,* (1.) Drowning men catch at ſtraws. They will have the prieſt and ſacrament at their dying bed, who in their lives were negligent of both. (2.) If the power of godlineſs be abſent, the form of it can profit us nothing; nay, only deceive us, if we truſt on it, to our ruin.

2. Jonathan's noble exploit. Moved, as we muſt ſuppoſe, by a divine impulſe, he ſecretly quits the camp in Gibeah, and, with his armour-bearer, advances towards the Philiſtines garriſon, who ſeem to have been poſted on one of the craggy rocks near Michmaſh, to guard the paſs that was between them. Jonathan propoſes to his armour-bearer to go boldly up and fall upon them, ſince, if the Lord pleaſed, he could ſave as well by few as many. The propoſal being agreed to, Jonathan determines to reſt the matter upon a providential iſſue. He would appear in ſight of the garriſon; if the men called to them to ſtand, and threatened to come over, then they ſhould advance no further; but if they ſaid, in contempt of them, Come up; then they ſhould fall on, aſſuredly concluding God was with them. Juſt as he ſaid, God directed their word. The Philiſtines concluded them famiſhed for hunger, and forced to ſurrender, and therefore deridingly bid them come up, and then they ſhould ſee how they would treat them. Inſpired with divine courage and confidence, they now advance, aſſuredly concluding God had delivered them into their hands. Though ſteep the precipice, they climb the craggy rock, whilſt, expecting no danger, the Philiſtines probably looked on, and ſported themſelves with the eagerneſs of theſe deſpiſed Hebrews. But no ſooner had Jonathan and his armour-bearer firm footing, than they fell on furiouſly and unexpectedly, and twenty men preſently were ſlain within the ſpace of half an acre of land. Probably theſe were a party of ſcouts, who, thus ſmitten, fled, and carried a panic along with them into the garriſon and camp, God ſpreading the terror on every ſide; whilſt, to compleat their diſmay, the earth quaked under them, as ready to ſwallow them up: ſo that the apprehenſions of danger became very terrible, and God's hand was heavy upon them. *Note,* (1.) The greatneſs of danger ſerves only for the more glorious exerciſe of faith in the ſaints of God. (2.) Whatever our difficulties are, if we have Om-

nipotence on our ſide, we may boldly advance. (3.) It is good to follow the leadings of providence. (4.) They who ſport at God's Iſrael, will do it at their coſt. (5.) God can with ſecret terrors reach the hearts of his enemies, and turn their own ſwords againſt them. (6.) They who commit their ways unto the Lord, will find he can bring to paſs the moſt improbable events. No man ever truſted him, and was confounded.

16. And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down *one another*. 17. Then ſaid Saul unto the people that *were* with him, Number now, and ſee who is gone from us. And when they had numbred, behold, Jonathan and his armour-bearer *were* not *there*. 18. And Saul ſaid unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God: (for the ark of God was at that time with the children of Iſrael.) 19. ¶ And it came to paſs, while Saul talked unto the prieſt, that the noiſe that *was* in the hoſt of the Philiſtines went on, and increaſed: and Saul ſaid unto the prieſt, [i] Withdraw thine hand. 20. And Saul, and all the people that *were* with him, aſſembled themſelves, and they came to the battle: and behold, [k] every man's ſword was againſt his fellow, *and there was* a very great diſcomfiture. 21. Moreover, the Hebrews *that* were with the Philiſtines before that time, which went up with them into the camp *from the country* round about, even they alſo *turned* to be with the Iſraelites, that *were* with Saul and Jonathan. 22. Likewiſe all the men of Iſrael which had hid themſelves in mount Ephraim, *when* they heard that the Philiſtines fled, even they alſo followed hard after them in the battle. 23. So [l] the LORD ſaved Iſrael that day: and the battle paſſed over unto Beth-aven.

[i] Joſh. ix. 14. Chap. xiii. 11.
[k] Judg. vii. 22. 2 Chron. xx. 23.
[l] Pſ. xliv. 2. Hoſ. i. 7.

v. 16—23. The terror of the Philiſtines was ſoon obſerved by the ſentinels in Gibeah, who, to their aſtoniſhment, beheld them melting like ſnow, and falling one on another. Tidings are inſtantly brought to Saul, who calls over the muſter-roll, that he might ſee who was abſent, and Jonathan and his armour-bearer are wanting. Hereupon,

1. Saul bids Ahiah bring the ark, and conſult God about what he ſhould do in the caſe; but whilſt he was talking with him, the noiſe increaſing, and the flight of the Philiſtines evident, he bids him deſiſt, being in haſte to purſue. *Note*, (1.) In all our proceedings, to enquire at God's word is the ſureſt way to ſucceed. (2.) They who are impatient to run before they are ſent, will be in danger of making more haſte than good ſpeed.

2. They immediately follow the flying hoſts, nor needed ſword or ſpear, when the Philiſtines fell faſter by the hands of each other. Not only the ſix hundred men who were with Saul, aſſembled, but the deſerters and priſoners turned upon the fugitives; and thoſe who refuſed to fight, and fled to the mountains, dare now purſue. Thus the Lord ſaved Iſrael, and the diſcomfiture here was very great, becauſe it was his doing. *Note*, (1.) All our ſalvation muſt be aſcribed to God's free grace and mercy alone. (2.) The Lord Jeſus hath conquered for us; let us not then, weak as we are, fear to purſue, and ſeize the prey.

24. ¶ And the men of Iſrael were diſtreſſed that day: for Saul had [m] adjured the people, ſaying, Curſed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until the evening, [n] that I may be avenged on mine enemies: ſo none of the people taſted *any* food. 25. And all *they of* the land came to a wood, and there was [o] honey upon the ground. 26. And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped, but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath. 27. But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that *was* in his hand, and dipt it in † an honey-comb, and put his hand to his mouth; and [p] his eyes were enlightened. 28. Then anſwered one of the people, and ſaid, Thy father ‡ ſtraitly charged the people with an oath, ſaying, Curſed *be* the man that eateth *any* food this day. And the people were faint. 29. Then ſaid Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: ſee, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, becauſe I taſted a little of this honey: 30. How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the ſpoil of their enemies which they found? § for had there not been now a much greater ſlaughter among the Philiſtines? 31. And they ſmote the Philiſtines that day from Michmaſh to Aijalon: and the people were very faint. 32. And the people flew upon the ſpoil, and took ſheep, and oxen, and calves, and ſlew *them* on the ground: and the people did eat *them* [q] with the blood. 33. ¶ Then they told Saul, ſaying, Behold, the people ſin againſt the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And he ſaid, [r] Ye have tranſgreſſed: roll a great ſtone unto me this day. 34. And Saul ſaid, Diſperſe yourſelves among the people, and ſay unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his ſheep, and ſlay *them* here, and eat; and ſin not againſt the LORD in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox with him that night, and ſlew *them* there. 35. And Saul [s] built an altar unto the LORD: ‖ the ſame was the firſt altar that he built unto the LORD.

[m] Judg. xi. 30. Prov. xi. 9.
[n] Rom. x. 2.
[o] Exod. iii. 8. Num. xiii. 27.
† Or wood-honey. Mat. iii. 4.
[p] Chap. xxx. 12.
‡ Heb. Adjuring, adjured.
§ Heb. But now that defeat of the Philiſtines is not great.
[q] Lev. vii. 26, 27. & xvii. 10. Deut. xii. 16.
[r] Mat. vii. 5. Rom. ii. 1.
[s] Gen. viii. 20. Joſh. xxii. 10. Chap. vii. 12.
‖ Or, that altar he began to build.

v. 24—35. As Saul's impolitic conduct had brought them into their diſtreſs, his raſh oath prevents their making the beſt uſe of their victory.

1. Saul forbad the people to taſte any refreſhment until evening, fearing leſt they ſhould be detained from the purſuit, and with a curſe devoted to death the perſon who ſhould be found diſobedient. *Note*, (1.) He that caſteth abroad curſes, caſteth fire-brands and death, and endangers his own houſe to be conſumed. (2.) Haſty reſolves generally afford matter for leiſurely repentance.

2. The ill effects produced by this adjuration. 1. Jonathan, who was abſent when the order was given, ignorantly tranſgreſſes. As he paſſed through a wood, weary and hungry, where was plenty of honey, he thruſt his rod, or ſpear, into an honey-comb, and took it, and eat it, and felt himſelf exceedingly refreſhed, being faint with want of food, and his eyes dim. One of the people obſerving him, informed him of his father's adjuration; and ſo obſervant of it were the people, that none dared to touch the honey which dropped around them, though diſabled more by hunger, than the way, from a briſk purſuit of their enemies. Jonathan, by experience of the refreſhment he had received, could not but condemn his father's ill-adviſed reſtraint, which, ſo far from furthering the victory, greatly prevented the improvement of it. *Note*, (1.) Many a good ſon is involved in difficulties by the folly of an inconſiderate father. (2.) When we follow our own heads, without waiting to conſult God, we ſhall certainly live to repent our raſhneſs. (3.) If, for fear of the curſe of a wicked king, an Iſraelite can deny even the innocent cravings of hunger; ſhall not we fear to incur the Anathema of a holy God, by gratifying our ſinful appetites? 2. The people at even are ſo impatient through hunger, that, before the blood was drained from the beaſts, they flew on them raw, or half-dreſſed. Saul quickly hears, and rebukes the tranſgreſſion of the people, though the fault lay chiefly at his own door. Proclamation is made through the camp to ſtay ſuch irregularities, by ordering all the cattle for food to be ſlain on a ſtone under his own eye; and there he built an altar unto the Lord, the firſt he had yet erected for God's worſhip, to offer ſacrifices of thankſgivings for his victory. As it might be rendered, *He began to build*: ſome think he was in ſuch haſte, that he left the altar unfiniſhed, through eagerneſs to purſue the victory. *Note*, (1.) How much readier are we to rebuke the ſins which lie at others doors, than to acknowledge how culpable we are ourſelves? (2.) Exceſs in eating is as dangerous to the body, as ſinful to the ſoul.

36. ¶ And Saul ſaid, Let us go down after the Philiſtines by night, and ſpoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they ſaid, Do whatſoever ſeemeth good unto thee. Then ſaid the prieſt, [t] Let us draw near hither unto God. 37. And Saul [u] aſked counſel of God, Shall I go down after the Philiſtines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Iſrael? But he anſwered him [x] not that day. 38. And Saul ſaid, Draw ye near hither all the † chief of the people: and know and ſee [y] wherein this ſin hath been this day. 39. For *as* the LORD liveth, which ſaveth Iſrael, though it be in Jonathan my ſon, he ſhall ſurely die. But *there was* not a man among all the people that anſwered him. 40. Then ſaid he unto all Iſrael, Be ye on one ſide, and I and Jonathan my ſon will be on the other ſide. And the people ſaid unto Saul, Do what ſeemeth good unto thee. 41. Therefore Saul ſaid unto the LORD God of Iſrael, ‡ Give a perfect *lot*. And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people eſcaped. 42. And Saul ſaid, Caſt *lots* between me and Jonathan my ſon. And Jonathan was taken. 43. Then Saul ſaid to Jonathan, Tell me what thou haſt done. And Jonathan told him, and ſaid, I did but taſte a little honey

[t] Numb. xxvii. 21.
[u] Judg. i. 1.
[x] Ver. 24, 29.
† Heb. Corners. Judg. xx. 2.
[y] Joſh. vii. 1, &c.
‡ Or, Shew the innocent one. Prov. xvi. 33.

with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and* lo I muſt die. 44. And Saul anſwered, God do ſo, and more alſo: for [z] thou ſhalt ſurely die, Jonathan. 45. And the people ſaid unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great ſalvation in Iſrael? God forbid: *as* the LORD liveth, [a] there ſhall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for [b] he hath wrought with God this day. So the people reſcued Jonathan, that he died not. 46. Then Saul went up from following the Philiſtines: and the Philiſtines went to their own place.

[z] Gen. xxxviii. 24. 2 Sam. xii. 5.
[a] 2 Sam. xiv. 11. Mat. x. 30.
[b] 2 Cor. vi. 1. Rev. xix. 14.

v. 36—46. Saul has no ſooner given his army a moment's refreſhment, than he is eager to purſue again the flying Philiſtines; and, though weary and wanting repoſe, his men, as faithful ſoldiers, are ſubmiſſive to his orders, and ready to follow him. But,

1. Abiathar deſires to conſult God firſt, and Saul conſents to the motion; but when they drew near, God gave them no anſwer. *Note*, It is good to have near us a faithful miniſter, to adviſe and admoniſh us of our duty.

2. Saul hereupon concludes, that ſome ſin had been committed, which provoked God thus to withdraw, and therefore as paſſionately reſolves to puniſh, as he had imprudently bound them under a curſe. To determine the caſe, lots are caſt; and though none dared or cared to inform againſt Jonathan, God is pleaſed, at Saul's prayer, to give the diſcovery in the perſon of Jonathan his ſon, on whom the lot fell. *Note*, (1.) We may well conclude God is angry, when our prayers find no anſwer of peace from him. (2.) We ſhould ſollicitouſly enquire what it is wherein we have offended, that we may put away iniquity from us.

3. Jonathan, at Saul's injunction, acknowledges he had taſted a little honey that day in the wood; and though he thinks it hard to die for ſuch a fault, ſpeaks as expecting it from his father's raſh and unrelenting ſpirit; whilſt Saul, agreably to his character, binds his reſolution with a ſolemn oath, that nothing ſhould ſave him. *Note*, (1.) Violent tempers will ſacrifice to their paſſions even the deareſt relatives. (2.) An angry judge cannot but paſs a raſh and unjuſt ſentence. (3.) They that ſwear in heat, will often not only be guilty of profaneneſs, but perjury.

4. The people are highly diſpleaſed at Saul's reſolution, and bind themſelves by oath to prevent the execution. It was unjuſt to condemn Jonathan for ignorantly offending, and ungrateful to put him to death, who, under God, that day had ſaved their lives and all Iſrael; therefore they *reſcued*, or *redeemed*, him out of his hands. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe whom God in his cauſe evidently honours with his bleſſing, we muſt ſtand by againſt all oppoſers. (2.) When kings act madly againſt the laws of God, and tyrannical againſt the lives and liberties of the people; reſiſtance, that tends to reduce them to their duty, without injuring their perſons, or leſſening their lawful authority, is, no doubt, true patriotiſm, and agreable to true piety.

5. The ſeaſon of purſuit being loſt by altercation, and God reſerving the Philiſtines for a further ſcourge, thoſe who eſcaped from the battle, got into places of ſafety, and Saul returned to Gibeah. Thus diſſentions between the generals have often loſt the advantages of victory.

47. ¶ So Saul took the kingdom over Iſrael, and fought againſt all his enemies on every ſide, againſt Moab, and againſt the children of Ammon, and againſt Edom, and againſt the kings of Zobah, and againſt the Philiſtines: and whitherſoever he turned himſelf, [c] he vexed *them*. 48. And he gathered an hoſt, and ſmote the Amalekites, and delivered Iſrael out of the hands of them that ſpoiled them. 49. Now the ſons of Saul were Jonathan, and Iſhui, and Melchi-ſhuah: and the names of his two daughters *were theſe*; the name of the firſt-born Merab, and the name of the younger Michal: 50. And the name of Saul's wife *was* Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the captain of his hoſt *was* Abner the ſon of Ner, Saul's uncle. 51. And Kiſh *was* the father of Saul; and Ner, the father of Abner, *was* the ſon of Abiel. 52. And there was ſore war againſt the Philiſtines all the days of Saul: and when Saul ſaw any ſtrong man, or any † valiant man, he took him unto him.

[c] 2 Kings xiv. 27.
† Son of valour. Chap. viii. 11.

v. 47—52. We have here,

1. An account of Saul's military exploits. Having reaſſumed the exerciſe of his power, which ſeemed almoſt annihilated, he recruits his army with picked men out of all Iſrael, and by making every where head againſt his enemies, he defeated them, and waged ſore war with the Philiſtines all his days. *Note*, The comforts of reigning are dearly purchaſed, at the expence of the conſtant care, danger, and toil, which attends it.

2. His family are taken notice of, his wife and five children, though he had others by Rizpah his concubine, who, as illegitimate, are not mentioned; and his uncle Abner was his general. His houſe was now eſtabliſhed, like his kingdom, great and proſperous; but how fading are all ſublunary things! In a few years his houſe becomes ruined, and his kingdom removed. Let us never place confidence then in any thing beneath the ſun. The faſhion of this world paſſeth away.

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter we have the final rejection of Saul from being king, for his diſobedience. Here is, 1. *The commiſſion God gave him utterly to deſtroy the Amalekites,* ver. 1—3. 2. *Saul's preparation for it,* ver. 4—6. 3. *His ſucceſs, and partial execution of this commiſſion,* ver. 7—9. 4. *His examination before Samuel, and ſentence paſt upon him for his diſobedience,* ver. 10—31. 5. *The ſlaying of Agag,* ver. 32, 33. 6. *Samuel's final farewel to Saul,* ver. 34, 35.

1. SAmuel alſo ſaid unto Saul, [a] The LORD ſent me to anoint thee *to be* king over his people, over Iſrael: now therefore [b] hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. 2. Thus ſaith the LORD of hoſts, [c] I remember *that* which Amalek did to Iſrael, [d] how he laid *wait* for him in the way when he came up from Egypt. 3. Now go, and ſmite Amalek, and [e] utterly deſtroy all that they have, and ſpare them not; but ſlay both man and woman, infant and ſuckling, [f] ox and ſheep, camel and aſs. 4. And Saul gathered the people together, and numbred them in Telaim, two hundred thouſand footmen, and ten thouſand men of Judah. 5. And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and † laid wait in the valley. 6. ¶ And Saul ſaid unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get [g] you down from among the Amalekites, leſt I deſtroy you with them: for [h] ye ſhewed kindneſs to all the children of Iſrael when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 7. And Saul ſmote [i] the Amalekites from Havilah, *until* thou comeſt to Shur, that *is* over-againſt Egypt. 8. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly deſtroyed all the people with the edge of the ſword. 9. But Saul and the people [k] ſpared Agag, and [l] the beſt of the ſheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all *that was* good, and would not utterly deſtroy them: but every thing *that was* vile and refuſe, that they deſtroyed utterly.

[a] Chap. x. 1.
[b] Chap. xiii. 13. Pſ. cxvi. 12.
[c] Rev. xviii. 5.
[d] Exod. xvii. 8. Numb. xxiv. 20. Deut. xxv. 17.
[e] Rev. xviii. 8.
[f] Gen. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 20.
† Or fought.
[g] Gen. xix. 12. Rev. xviii. 4.
[h] Exod. xviii. 10.
[i] Job xxi. 30. Eccleſ. viii. 12.
[k] Ver. 3.
[l] 1 Tim. vi. 10.

v. 1—9. Though Saul had been threatned, he had not yet been utterly rejected; but now the critical moment comes, when his fate is to be determined.

1. Samuel is ſent from God to remind him by whoſe favour he reigned, and to exhort him to dutiful obedience, particularly in the expedition for which he muſt now prepare. Amalek had behaved cruelly to God's Iſrael, when they came from Egypt, and God had long threatned to blot out their remembrance from under heaven; and now God remembers their old iniquities, and Saul muſt be the executioner of divine juſtice, nor ſpare any thing which breathed, but utterly deſtroy man and beaſt. *Note*, (1.) God will certainly remember the injuries done his people, eſpecially the diſcouragements put in the way of young converts. (2.) Though God is patient, even towards the veſſels of wrath, yet their deſolations are determined, and their ruin certain. (3.) God will not want executioners of juſtice, when the meaſure of a nation's ſins is full.

2. Saul inſtantly proceeds, and is followed by a numerous army of two hundred thouſand men, beſides ten thouſand of Judah, whoſe ſmall proportion ſome aſcribe to envy, others to the neceſſity of guarding their borders, as moſt expoſed during the abſence of the army. When he arrived in the enemies country, he ſent a friendly meſſage to the Kenites, who for the convenience of paſturage had gone thither, to come up, leſt they ſhould fall in the promiſcuous ruin, which they immediately did; and the reaſon of this kindneſs he gives in the friendſhip they had ſhown to Iſrael when they came from Egypt. *Note*, (1.) Kindneſſes done to God's people ſhall often be recompenſed in this world, but certainly in the reſurrection of the juſt. (2.) They are in danger of ſharing with ſinners in their plagues, who by choice take up their reſidence among them. (3.) We cannot make too much haſte to ſeparate ourſelves from the communion of the ungodly.

3. No ſooner were the Kenites in ſafety, than the Amalekites begin to feel the ſword. The ambuſh in the valley ſucceeds, their army is routed, the capital taken, the country ra-

vaged from end to end, and the king himſelf a priſoner. But Saul, through falſe pity, or covetouſneſs, ſpared him from death, with the beſt of the cattle, and utterly deſtroyed the reſt, though ſome, it ſeems, with their effects, eſcaped by flight, and for a little while longer preſerved the dying name of Amalek. *Note*, (1.) Partial obedience detects the hypocrite. (2.) Covetouſneſs is often its own puniſhment. He made a bad bargain, who, to ſecure the cattle of Amalek, loſt the kingdom of Iſrael.

10. ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, ſaying, 11. [m] It repenteth me that I have ſet up Saul *to be* king, for [n] he is turned back from following me, and [o] hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and [p] he cried unto the LORD all night. 12. And when Samuel roſe early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, ſaying, Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he ſet him up a place, and is gone about, and paſſed on, and gone down to Gilgal. 13. And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul ſaid unto him, Bleſſed *be* thou of the LORD: [q] I have performed the commandment of the LORD. 14. And Samuel ſaid, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the ſheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? 15. And Saul ſaid, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for [r] the people ſpared the beſt of the ſheep and of the oxen, to ſacrifice unto the LORD thy God, and the reſt we have utterly deſtroyed. 16. Then Samuel ſaid unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath ſaid to me this night. And he ſaid unto him, Say on. 17. And Samuel ſaid, [s] When thou *waſt* little in thine own ſight, *waſt* thou not *made* the head of the tribes of Iſrael, and the LORD anointed thee king over Iſrael? 18. And the LORD ſent thee on a journey, and ſaid, Go, and [t] utterly deſtroy the ſinners the Amalekites, and fight againſt them until they be conſumed. 19. Wherefore then didſt thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but [u] didſt fly upon the ſpoil, and didſt evil in the ſight of the LORD? 20. And Saul ſaid unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD ſent me, and [x] have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly deſtroyed the Amalekites. 21. But [y] the people took of the ſpoil, ſheep and oxen, the chief of the things which ſhould have been utterly deſtroyed, to ſacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal. 22. And Samuel ſaid, [z] Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt-offerings and ſacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, [a] to obey *is* better than ſacrifice; *and* to hearken, than the fat of rams. 23. For [b] rebellion *is as* the ſin of witchcraft, and ſtubbornneſs *is as* iniquity and idolatry: becauſe thou haſt rejected the word of the LORD, he hath alſo rejected thee from *being* king.

[m] Gen. vi. 6.
[n] Num. xiv. 24.
[o] Deut. xxvii. 26.
[p] Chap. xvi. 1. Mat. v. 44.
[q] Ver. 11. Prov. xxvii. 2. Luke xviii. 11.
[r] Gen. iii. 12. Ver. 9.
[s] Judg. vi. 15. Chap. ix. 21.
[t] Ver. 3.
[u] Prov. xv. 27. Jude 11.
[x] Luke xix. 22.
[y] Prov. xxx. 20.
[z] Prov. xxi. 3. Jer. vii. 21, 22.
[a] Pſal. l. 13, 14. Iſa. i. 13, &c. Hoſ. vi. 6.
[b] Joſh. xxii. 19. Prov. xxviii. 13. Mat. xxvii. 4.

v. 10—23. We have here the interview between Samuel and Saul returning from his victory, which made his bright day cloſe with darkneſs.

1. God informs Samuel of Saul's diſobedience, his repentance that he had made him king, and the removal of the crown from his family, determined thereupon. *Note*, Repentance with God ſignifies not a change of mind, but of his methods of dealing with men.

2. Samuel is bitterly afflicted herewith, and ſpends the night in prayers and tears, to gain the reverſion of the ſentence, but in vain. *Note*, The ruin of ſinners is the bitter grief of God's faithful miniſters.

3. According to appointment he goes to Carmel, to meet Saul, and not finding him there, where he had ſtaid no longer than to erect a trophy of his victory, he follows him to Gilgal.

4. Saul comes to meet him, with great confidence boaſting his obedience, and bleſſing Samuel for the proſperous undertaking on which he had ſent him. *Note*, They who are trumpeters of their own good works, will ſoon diſcover the vanity of their pretences.

5. Samuel's ears are more attentive to the bleating of the ſheep, than the boaſting of the king; and he upbraids him for the falſeneſs and folly of his conduct, of which his ſpoils afforded ſuch inconteſtible evidence.

6. Saul ſeeks to excuſe the fact he cannot deny, by laying the fault on the people, pretending to deſign God's glory in the ſacrifice of the cattle, and the honour of Iſrael in ſhewing them the captive king; but his plea was falſe as frivolous: none would have dared to act without his orders, and his own profit and glory was at the bottom of his pretended piety. *Note*, (1.) In vain do we vaunt our expenſive ſacrifices, and keep up the outward pomp and form of religion, if pride, luſt, and covetouſneſs are in poſſeſſion of the heart; our very boaſted ſervices are an abomination. (2.) They who ſeek to exculpate themſelves by accuſing others who were partners, or tempters in their guilt, ſhew themſelves utterly unhumbled under it.

7. His plea is rejected, and his excuſes confuted. Samuel, as commanded of God, delivers his meſſage, and having his authority, claims an audience. He reminds him of the exaltation to which, from his low eſtate, God had brought him, and which ſhould, in gratitude, have kept him obedient; the orders he received, on the preſent occaſion, were plain and expreſs, ſo that the offence muſt be wilful and deliberate; wherefore he expoſtulates with him on the inexcuſableneſs of his conduct, and the greatneſs of his ſin. *Note*, (1.) Though it be a terrible meſſage God gives us againſt the ſinner, we muſt not fear to deliver it plainly and faithfully. (2.) The more God's mercy hath been ſhewn us, the more ungrateful are our ill returns.

8. Saul interrupts the prophet in his meſſage, with repeated aſſertions of his obedience; though his own acknowledgments give the lie to his profeſſions. *Note*, They who are hardened in ſin and formality, will not be beat out of their vain confidence by the plaineſt confutation.

Laſtly. Samuel ſilences him with an appeal to his own conſcience; the moſt coſtly ſervices bear no proportion with dutiful obedience; rebellion againſt God's expreſs command, was criminal as witchcraft, and ſtubbornneſs in maintaining his innocence an aggravation of his iniquity like unto idolatry itſelf. Therefore, as the juſt reward of ſuch tranſgreſſion, he denounces his doom, God hath rejected him from being king, and cut off the entail of the government from his family. *Note*, (1.) Obedience to God is the moſt acceptable ſacrifice we can offer; a heart ſubmiſſive to his holy will is better than a hecatomb. (2.) All diſobedience is ſpiritual idolatry, as it ſets up the will of the creature above the will of God. (3.) Let kings know, that though they have no ſuperior on earth, they have a King of kings; and rebellion againſt him by ſin will be viſited with condign puniſhment.

24. ¶ And Saul ſaid unto Samuel, [c] I have ſinned: for I have tranſgreſſed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: becauſe [d] I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. 25. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my ſin, and turn again with me, that I may worſhip the LORD. 26. And Samuel ſaid unto Saul, [e] I will not return with thee: for thou haſt rejected the word of the LORD, and [f] the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Iſrael. 27. And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the ſkirt of his mantle, and it rent. 28. And Samuel ſaid unto him, [g] The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Iſrael from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *that is* better than thou. 29. And alſo the † ſtrength of Iſrael [h] will not lie, nor repent; for [i] he *is* not a man that he ſhould repent. 30. Then he ſaid, I have ſinned; *yet* honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Iſrael, and turn again with me, that I may worſhip the LORD thy God. 31. So Samuel turned again after Saul, and Saul worſhipped the LORD.

[c] Exod. ix. 27. Num. xxii. 34.
[d] Ver. 9. Jer. xiii. 23.
[e] Pſal. xv. 4.
[f] Chap. ii. 30.
[g] Chap. xxviii. 17. 1 King. xi. 31.
† Or, Eternity, or, victory.
[h] Tit. i. 2.
[i] Num. xxiii. 19. Ezek. xxiv. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 13.

v. 24—31. Such evidence Saul can no longer withſtand. Therefore,

1. He confeſſes his ſin, yet in ſuch a way as makes him appear more ſollicitous to gain Samuel's favour, than God's forgiveneſs, and more anxious to ſave his credit with the world, than his conſcience from the guilt of his iniquity; his confeſſion is neither humbling nor ſincere, and he ſtill endeavours to extenuate his fault, with urging his fears of the people. *Note*, (1.) To confeſs the guilt we cannot conceal is no proof of real penitence. (2.) They who are more afraid of the ſhame of their ſins before men, than of the guilt of them before God, are ſtrangers to true conviction of the evil of ſin.

2. Samuel refuſes to return with him, and repeats God's determined purpoſe concerning him. As he was turning to go from him, Saul ſeized the ſkirt of his garment to ſtay him, and it rent in his hand; this the prophet immediately interprets the rending his kingdom from him, and takes occaſion thence to confirm the irreverſible decree of God. The *Strength*, or *Victory of Iſrael*, the God who protected his people, and to whom they were indebted for every ſucceſs, was incapable of falſhood or change of mind; yet when Saul pleaded his honour before the people, whom ſuch an abrupt departure of the prophet might have exaſperated againſt him, Samuel turned again, changing his mind, or receiving a divine notice to alter his reſolution; and ſince Saul was, for a time, to continue in poſſeſſion of the throne, he would not leſſen his authority; and he had alſo another commiſſion to execute, in the death of Agag, whom Saul had ſpared. *Note*, (1.) We are guilty of no lie, when we ſee cauſe to

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alter our reſolution from ſome new reaſons which did not before appear. (2.) Repentance comes too late when the judgment of rejection is gone forth.

32. ¶ Then ſaid Samuel, Bring you hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites: and Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag ſaid, [k] Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt. 33. And Samuel ſaid, [l] As thy ſword hath made women childleſs, ſo ſhall thy mother be childleſs among women. And Samuel [m] hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal. 34. ¶ Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his houſe to Gibeah of Saul. 35. And Samuel [n] came no more to ſee Saul until the day of his death: nevertheleſs, Samuel [o] mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Iſrael.

[k] 1 Theſ. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 7.
[l] Exod. xvii. 11. Num. xiv. 45.
[m] 1 Kings xviii. 40. 2 Kings i. 10, 12.
[n] Chap. xix. 24.
[o] Jer. ix. 1, 2.

v. 32—35. We have,

1. Samuel executing juſtice upon Agag. He commands Agag to be brought, and he appears dreſſed like a king, delicately, or as the Vulgate tranſlation, and the Septuagint add, yet trembling, between fear and hope, flattering himſelf that the bitterneſs of death is paſt, but he ſoon finds his ſad miſtake; Samuel reproaching him with his former cruelties, denounces the juſt ſentence of retaliation upon him, and with the ſword himſelf, or ſome other by his orders, hews him in pieces before the Lord, as a ſacrifice to divine juſtice. *Note,* (1.) Bloody kings will meet an avenging God. (2.) Death is bitter to the ſinner, but to the believer in Jeſus, ſin being removed from his conſcience, the bitterneſs of death is paſſed. (3.) Many promiſe themſelves life and peace, who do not ſee the dart of death, like this ſword of Samuel, ready to pierce them to the heart.

2. Samuel takes his final leave of Saul, and never came to ſee him more, to the day of his death; that is, he never viſited him as a friend, though he might afterwards undeſignedly ſee him, as he did at Ramah, *chap.* xix. 24. yet he mourned for him, under the ſenſe of his terrible ſituation, and the ruin which hung over him, God having utterly rejected him. *Note,* It is bitter to nature to ſee thoſe we love in the ways of death and hell; we cannot but mourn over them.

CHAP. XVI.

At this chapter begins the ſtory of David, who, both with his ſword and his pen, ſerved the honour of God and the intereſts of Iſrael, as much as moſt ever did, and was as illuſtrious a type of Chriſt. 1. Samuel is commiſſioned to anoint one of Jeſſe's ſons king, ver. *1—5. 2. All his elder ſons are paſſed by, and David the youngeſt is choſen and anointed,* ver. *6—13. 3. Saul growing melancholy, David plays before and relieves him,* ver. *14—23. Thus ſmall are the beginnings of that great man.*

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1. AND the LORD ſaid unto Samuel, [a] How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, ſeeing I have rejected him from reigning over Iſrael? [b] fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will ſend thee to Jeſſe the Beth-lehemite: for [c] I have provided me a king among his ſons. 2. And Samuel ſaid, [d] How can I go? if Saul hear *it,* he will kill me. And the LORD ſaid, Take an heifer with thee, and ſay, [e] I am come to ſacrifice to the LORD. 3. And call Jeſſe to the ſacrifice, and I will ſhew thee what thou ſhalt do: and thou ſhalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee. 4. And Samuel did that which the LORD ſpake, and came to Beth-lehem: and [f] the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and ſaid, † Comeſt thou peaceably? 5. And he ſaid, Peaceably: I am come to ſacrifice unto the LORD: [g] ſanctify yourſelves, and come with me to the ſacrifice. And he ſanctified Jeſſe and his ſons, and called them to the ſacrifice.

[a] Chap. xv. 11, 35.
[b] Chap. x. 1.
[c] Pſ. lxxviii. 70.
[d] Mat. x. 16.
[e] Chap. ix. 12. & xx. 29.
[f] Chap. xxi. 1. Hoſ. xi. 10.
† Heb. Is thy coming peace. 1 Kings ii. 13. 2 Kings ix. 22.
[g] Exod. xix. 10.

v. 1—5. The prophet long bewailed in Ramah his rejected friend, and now retired from public eyes, ſpent his time in the care of the ſchool of the prophets. Here God again appears to him, either in a viſion of the night, or ſpeaking with an articulate voice.

1. He blames his inordinate grief for Saul, which was not only exceſſive in meaſure and duration, but fruitleſs alſo, ſeeing he was rejected for ever. *Note,* We are not forbidden to mourn, but immoderate grief is ſinful.

2. He ſends him on an important errand, even to anoint another king in the room of Saul, or rather as his ſucceſſor. An employment full of danger, conſidering the ſtate of Saul's mind, and at which Samuel heſitates through fear, leaſt Saul ſhould hear of it and kill him; but God inſtructs him how to proceed, ſo as to be without ſuſpicion or danger, *ver.* 2. and there he would fix upon the perſon, and give him directions for his conduct. *Note,* (1.) The beſt of men, this ſide the grave, have fears at times; 'tis recorded for the comfort of thoſe who have weak faith. (2.) They who follow God in his ways ſhall be directed aright.

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3. Samuel obeys, goes to Beth-lehem with his ſacrifice, and being met by the elders, who were in fear leaſt ſuch an unexpected viſit boded no good, or leaſt Saul ſhould reſent their entertainment of him, if he came thither as a place of refuge, they aſk if he came peaceably. Samuel quickly removes their fears, and invites them to come to the ſacrifice he had provided; in order to which they are commanded to ſanctify themſelves with the uſual ablutions, and Jeſſe and his ſons are particularly called to the feaſt. *Note,* They who would draw near to God with acceptance, muſt have their conſciences ſanctified through the blood of Jeſus, and the waſhing of regeneration.

6. And it came to paſs when they were come, that he looked on [h] Eliab, and ſaid, Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before him. 7. But the LORD ſaid unto Samuel, [i] Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature; becauſe I have refuſed him: for *the LORD ſeeth* not as man ſeeth; for man looketh on the † outward appearance, but [k] the LORD looketh on the heart. 8. Then Jeſſe called Abinadab, and made him paſs before Samuel: and he ſaid, Neither hath the LORD choſen this. 9. Then Jeſſe made [l] Shammah to paſs by: and he ſaid, Neither hath the LORD choſen this. 10. Again Jeſſe made ſeven of his ſons to paſs before Samuel: and Samuel ſaid unto Jeſſe, The LORD hath not choſen theſe. 11. And Samuel ſaid unto Jeſſe, Are here all *thy* children? and he ſaid, There remaineth yet the youngeſt, and behold, he keepeth the ſheep. And Samuel ſaid unto Jeſſe, [m] Send and fetch him: for we will not ſit down till he come hither. 12. And he ſent, and brought him in: Now [n] he *was* ruddy, *and* withal ‡ of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD ſaid, Ariſe, anoint him: for this *is* he. 13. Then Samuel [o] took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midſt of his brethren: and [p] the ſpirit of the LORD came upon David, from that day forward: ſo Samuel roſe up and went to Ramah.

[h] Called Elihu. 1 Chron. xxvii. 18.
[i] Pſ. cxlvii. 10.
† Heb Eyes.
[k] 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Pſal. vii. 9. Jer. xi. 20. & xvii. 10. & xx. 12.
[l] Called Shimeah, 2 Sam. xiii. 3.
[m] 2 Sam. vii. 8. Pſal. lxxviii. 70.
[n] Cant. v. 10. Lam. iv. 7.
‡ Heb Fair of eyes.
[o] 2 Sam. v. 17. Pſal. lxxxix. 20.
[p] Judg. xiii. 25. & xiv. 6. Acts xiii. 22.

v. 6—13. The king being to be choſen out of the ſons of Jeſſe, which was probably communicated to their father, though not to them, we have them here paſſing in review before Samuel.

1. The eldeſt came, and being a goodly perſonage, tall, majeſtic, Samuel was ready to conclude this was God's elect; ſo much does a noble preſence prejudice us in a man's favour: but God let him know he is miſtaken. God judgeth not as man, by outward qualifications, but by the heart, the diſpoſitions of which he regards, and with the inmoſt thought of it he is acquainted. Six more of Jeſſe's ſons appear, yet none of theſe doth God chuſe. *Note,* God's choice is ſovereign; he often makes the laſt to be firſt. For hereupon,

2. Samuel aſks Jeſſe if he has no other children, and receives anſwer that the youngeſt, the little one, was with the ſheep. Inſtantly he is ſent for, his preſence was the moſt needful of any at the feaſt; he appears in his ſhepherd's dreſs, the bloom of youth was on his ruddy cheek, his countenance, or, as the word ſignifies, *his eyes* beautiful and ſparkling, and his aſpect and manner beſpoke the more pleaſing diſpoſitions of his mind: this is he. God commands and Samuel obeys; the horn of oil is poured upon him, in token of the divine deſignation, and in or rather from the midſt of his brethren he is anointed, as choſen out of them, or in private from them, as it was a ſecret which required concealment. *Note,* (1.) Youth and beauty are pleaſing recommendations; and when the mind is fraught with divine grace, and natural ſweetneſs, it ſpreads a new luſtre on the gifts of nature, and makes the poſſeſſor twice amiable. (2.) Diligence in an inferior ſtation is the way to riſe to greater honour. (3.) This ſhepherd-king is the type of that anointed Jeſus, his ſon and ſucceſſor, who ſhould feed his flock like a ſhepherd.

3. He is no ſooner anointed, than the Lord pours out upon him an extraordinary meaſure of his ſpirit, fitting him for the great deſigns he has in view; increaſing not only his ſpiritual gifts and graces, but filling him with courage, and probably beſtowing an extraordinary ſkill in muſic and poetry. *Note,* Every ſoul whom God chuſes to the heavenly kingdom, hath an unction from the Holy One; and they who experience the work of his ſpirit, may be aſſured of the election of his grace.

4. Samuel now retires to Ramah, where he lives and dies in peace, and is but once more mentioned in this hiſtory. He had finiſhed his work, and God brings him ſhortly to his reward.

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14. ¶ But [q] the ſpirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and [r] an evil ſpirit from the LORD troubled him. 15. And Saul's ſervants ſaid unto him, Behold now, an evil ſpirit [s] from God troubleth thee. 16. Let our lord now command thy ſervants *which are* before thee, to ſeek out a man *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it ſhall come to paſs when the evil ſpirit from God is upon thee, that he ſhall play with his hand, and [t] thou ſhalt be well. 17. And Saul ſaid unto his ſervants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me. 18. Then anſwered one of the ſervants, and ſaid, Behold, I have ſeen a ſon of Jeſſe the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and [u] a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in † matters, and a comely perſon, and the LORD *is* with him. 19. ¶ Wherefore Saul ſent meſſengers unto Jeſſe, and ſaid, Send me David thy ſon, [x] which *is* with the ſheep. 20. And Jeſſe took an aſs *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and ſent *them* by David his ſon unto Saul. 21. And David came to Saul, and ſtood before him; and [y] he loved him greatly, and he became his armour-bearer. 22. And Saul ſent to Jeſſe, ſaying, Let David, I pray thee, ſtand before me; for he hath found favour in my ſight. 23. And it came to paſs, when the *evil* ſpirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: ſo Saul was refreſhed, and was well, and [z] the evil ſpirit departed from him.

[q] 1 Sam. vii. 15. Hoſ. ix. 12. Mat. xiii. 12.
[r] Judg. ix. 23. Chap. xviii. 10. & xix. 9. Iſa. xix. 14.
[s] 1 Kings xxii. 23.
[t] 2 Kings iii. 15.
[u] Chap. xvii. 39.
† Or, Speech.
[x] Chap. xvii. 15. Pſ. cxiii. 8.
[y] Ecclus xxxi. 30. Mark vi. 20, 27.
[z] Mat. xii. 43, &c.

v. 14—23. Behold,

1. Saul a miſerable ſpectacle, forſaken of God, deprived of his wonted wiſdom and courage, and haunted by an evil ſpirit, terrified with the gnawings of remorſe, gloomy, timorous, cruel, raving; diſtracted with ſuſpicion and envy, and mad with deſpair. *Note*, How like a devil may man become in this world, when the reſtraints of God's ſpirit are taken from him, and he is given up to an evil conſcience and the power of ſatan!

2. His ſervants, perhaps his phyſicians, beholding his ſtrange diſeaſe, knew medicine was vain; they tell him their apprehenſion of his caſe, and preſcribe a palliative, if not a cure, to ſooth the ruffled paſſions of his mind, and lull his troubled boſom to repoſe. Muſic hath magic powers, and melody might harmonize the jarring diſcord of his ſoul; a cunning player on the harp would be his beſt phyſician. Saul reſolves to try the preſcription, and commands ſuch an one to be procured: one of his ſervants hearing his order, recommends the ſon of Jeſſe, a man eminent for every endowment of mind and perſon, handſome, wiſe, valiant, and, for muſical ſkill and execution peerleſs. Him therefore Saul inſtantly ſends for to court. *Note*, (1.) It were pity that ſo divine a ſcience as muſic ſhould ever, by lewd ſonnets, be proſtituted to inflame thoſe paſſions it was deſigned to calm and ſuppreſs. (2.) It is fatally dangerous for the ſoul to ſeak eaſe in ſenſual delights, inſtead of carrying a troubled conſcience to a pardoning God. (3.) When God is pleaſed to diſtinguiſh a ſoul by his gifts and graces, obſcurity cannot hide the luſtre.

3. No ſooner is he ſent for than he comes. His father, according to the cuſtom of the times, ſends a preſent by him, to teſtify his dutiful ſubjection, and Saul is charmed with his behaviour, makes him his armour-bearer, and deſires his father's leave to keep him continually about his perſon; for ſoon he experienced the efficacy of David's muſic. The evil ſpirit ſeizing him as uſual, his melancholy reflections returned; then David took the harp, and in ſounds melodious ſoothed his ſorrows, and, as Joſephus ſaith, joined to his melting lyre a voice ſeraphic as the ſong: at this the ravings of the king ſubſide, the evil ſpirit leaves him, and he regains his uſual ſerenity. *Note*, (1.) Muſic hath power over ſome ſouls, which they who feel can only tell. (2.) It once was found ſucceſsful to drive the evil ſpirit from the ſoul: Satan perceived the good, and liſted muſic in his cauſe; and how hath it ſerved ſince to convey to the enchanted mind, with deeper poiſon, the ſentiments of luſt, revelling, and creature idolatry, and to drive from the ſoul not the evil ſpirit, but the good!

CHAP. XVII.

We had David great in the court, now he appears greater in the camp. Able to handle the ſling as nicely as the harp. We have here, 1. *The great figure Goliath makes, and his defiance of Iſrael*, ver. 1—11. 2. *David's mean figure when providence brought him to the army*, ver. 12—30. 3. *His undertaking to encounter this Philiſtine*, ver. 31—39. 4. *His reſolution in attacking him*, ver. 40—47. 5. *The glorious victory he obtained over him with a ſling and a ſtone, and the advantage which the Iſraelites thereby gained againſt the Philiſtines*, ver. 48—54. 6. *The notice taken of David at court*, ver. 55—58.

Before Chriſt 1063.

1. NOW the Philiſtines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. 2. And Saul and the men of Iſrael were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and † ſet the battle in aray againſt the Philiſtines. 3. And the Philiſtines ſtood on a mountain on the one ſide, and Iſrael ſtood on a mountain on the other ſide: and *there was* a valley between them. 4. ¶ And there went out a ‡ champion out of the camp of the Philiſtines, named Goliath, of Gath, [a] whoſe height *was* ſix cubits and a ſpan; 5. And *he had* an helmet of braſs upon his head, and he *was* armed with a coat of mail: and the weight of the coat *was* five thouſand ſhekels of braſs. 6. And *he had* greaves of braſs upon his legs, and a target of braſs between his ſhoulders. 7. And the ſtaff of his ſpear *was* like a weaver's beam, and his ſpear's head *weighed* ſix hundred ſhekels of iron: and one bearing a ſhield went before him. 8. And he ſtood and cried unto the armies of Iſrael, and ſaid unto them, Why are ye come out to ſet *your* battle in aray? *am* not I a Philiſtine, and you ſervants to Saul? chooſe you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 9. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your ſervants: but if I prevail againſt him, and kill him, then ſhall ye be our ſervants, and ſerve us. 10. And the Philiſtine ſaid, [b] I defy the armies of Iſrael this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. 11. When Saul and all Iſrael heard thoſe words of the Philiſtine, they were diſmayed, and greatly afraid.

† Heb. Ranged the battle.
‡ Or, treader down.
[a] Jer. ix. 23. Zech. iv. 6.
[b] 2 Sam. xxi. 21. Neh. ii. 19.

v. 1—11. When David had ſucceeded, and no relapſe for ſome time made his ſtay longer neceſſary, he returned to his father's houſe at Bethlehem; probably not reliſhing the diſſolute manners of a court, and infinitely happier in retirement and communion with God, whilſt he kept his father's flock. Here he ſeems to have been almoſt, if not altogether, forgotten, till a new incident calls him once more into the preſence and family of the king.

1. The Philiſtines recover from their late defeat, and encouraged, no doubt, by the accounts they had received of Saul's quarrel with Samuel, and his diſtracted ſtate of mind, again invade Iſrael. But Saul, now recovered, is enabled to make head againſt them, and with his army encamps on the hill oppoſite his enemies. *Note*, The enemies of God's people are always watching to take advantage, and eſpecially to profit by their diſputes and diviſions.

2. A mighty champion went out of their camp, their boaſt and glory, and proudly defied the armies of Iſrael; his height was prodigious, according to the beſt calculation ſomewhat more than eleven feet four inches; his armour was proportioned to his ſize, his helmet braſs, his coat of mail conſiſted of plates of braſs, that lay one over another like fiſhes ſcales, and weighed upwards of one hundred and fifty-ſix pounds, beſides the greaves of braſs on his legs, and corſlet of braſs between his ſhoulders; all together a weight more than an ordinary man could well ſupport. His ſpear vaſt and huge, the handle large as a weaver's beam, the head of iron weighing ſix hundred ſhekels, near nineteen pounds; and his ſhield carried before him by his eſquire, either for pomp or to be uſed, if any daring Iſraelite accepted his challenge. Forth he marches, proud in his ſtrength and ſtature, and with a voice loud as thunder, challenges the armies of Iſraelites to ſend a man to fight with him, offers in bravado to have the fate of either kingdom decided by the iſſue of the combat, and vaunts his own condeſcenſion in thus ſubmitting, though a prince in Philiſtia, to accept a man out of their army, who were no better than ſervants to Saul. *Note*, Pride will ſooner or later have a fall.

3. The effect this produced on Saul and the Iſraelites. They were quite diſpirited, and ready to fly before a ſingle Philiſtine. *Note*, When we have provoked God to depart from us, fear will terrify us on every approach of danger.

12. ¶ Now [c] David *was* the ſon of that Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah, whoſe name *was* Jeſſe, and he had eight ſons: and the man went among men *for* an old man in the days of Saul. 13. And the three eldeſt ſons of Jeſſe went, *and* followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three ſons that went to the battle, *were* Eliab the firſt-born, and next unto him, Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14. And David *was* the youngeſt: and the three eldeſt followed Saul. 15. But David went, and returned from Saul, [d] to feed his father's ſheep at Beth-lehem. 16. And the Philiſtine drew near, morning and evening, and preſented himſelf forty days. 17.

[c] Chap. xvi. 10, &c.
[d] Chap. xvi. 19. Pſal. lxxviii. 70. Prov. xv. 33.

And Jeſſe ſaid unto David his ſon, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched *corn*, and theſe ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren. 18. And carry theſe ten cheeſes unto the captain of *their* thouſand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge. 19. Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Iſrael *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philiſtines.

v. 12—19. Forty days the armies lay encamped, and, morning and evening, the champion of Philiſtia renewed his challenge, and reproached the cowardice of his foes; when lo! an adverſary appears, little thought of, and, to human view, very unequal for the combat. Three of Jeſſe's ſons, being ſoldiers in Saul's army, were gone down to the battle, Jeſſe himſelf being a very aged man, and unable to bear the fatigues of war. David had for ſome time paſt returned from court to his old occupation, and fed his father's ſheep at Bethlehem. Here he receives his father's orders to carry down proviſions to his brethren, who, by the length of the encampment, might be diſtreſſed, (as it is thought every ſoldier then provided his own victuals), and a preſent to their captain, and take their pledge, either redeem what they had pawned for their ſuſtenance, or bring back a token from them of their welfare. *Note*, They who take the field as ſoldiers, muſt be prepared to endure hardneſs

20. ¶ And David roſe up early in the morning, and left the ſheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jeſſe had commanded him; and he came to the † trench, as the hoſt was going forth to fight, and ſhouted for the battle. 21. For Iſrael and the Philiſtines had put the battle in aray, army againſt army. 22. And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and ‡ ſaluted his brethren. 23. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion (the Philiſtine of Gath, Goliath by name) out of the armies of the Philiſtines, and ſpake according to the ſame words: and David heard *them*. 24. And all the men of Iſrael, when they ſaw the man, fled § from him, and were ſore afraid. 25. And the men of Iſrael ſaid, Have ye ſeen this man that is come up? ſurely to defy Iſrael is he come up: and it ſhall be *that* the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and [e] will give him his daughter, and make his father's houſe free in Iſrael. 26. And David ſpake to the men that ſtood by him, ſaying, What ſhall be done to the man that killeth this Philiſtine, and [f] taketh away the reproach from Iſrael? for who *is* this uncircumciſed Philiſtine, that he ſhould defy the armies of [g] the living God? 27. And the people anſwered him after this manner, ſaying, So ſhall it be done to the man that killeth him. 28. ¶ And Eliab his eldeſt brother heard when he ſpake unto the men; and [h] Eliab's anger was kindled againſt David, and he ſaid, Why cameſt thou down hither? and with whom haſt thou left thoſe few ſheep in the wilderneſs? [i] I know thy pride, and the naughtineſs of thine heart; for thou art come down, that thou mighteſt ſee the battle. 29. And David ſaid, What have I now done? [k] *Is there* not a cauſe? 30. ¶ And he turned from him towards another, and ſpake after the ſame ‖ manner: and the people anſwered him again after the former manner.

† Or, Place of carriage. Chap. xxvi. 5.

‡ Heb. Aſked his brethren of peace, Gen. xxxvii. 14. xix. 42.

§ From before his face. Deut. xxxii. 20.

e Joſh. xv. 16. Rev. ii. 7, 17.

f 2 Kings xix. 4.

g Deut. v. 26.

h Prov. xviii. 19. Mat. x. 36. Mark iii. 21.

i Pſal. xxxv. 11. Jude 10

k Ver. 17. Prov. xv. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

‖ Heb. word.

v. 20—30. David, in obedience to his father's commands, and in love to his brethren, though, if we may judge of their paſt by their preſent conduct, they little deſerved it at his hands, having left his ſheep with a keeper, haſtes to the camp, and enters it juſt as the hoſt was marching forth to engage. As he could not then carry the proviſions to his brethren, he left them with thoſe who guarded the baggage, and ran to ſalute his brethren, and diſcharge his commiſſion to them from his father. And whilſt he talked with them, juſt then Goliath marches forth from the ranks of the Philiſtines, and renews his proud challenge; where we may obſerve,

1. The cowardice of the people. They fled from him; not a man dared face him.

2. The great reward Saul promiſed, to encourage any man who would venture to engage this mighty warrior; wealth and honour for himſelf and for his family, freedom from all taxes, and hereditary nobility.

3. David hearing the blaſphemy of the Philiſtine, felt his ſpirit kindling in his boſom. He could not bear that an uncircumciſed Philiſtine ſhould thus triumph in his proud boaſting, or that the armies of the living God ſhould be thus defied, and a reflection thereby caſt on his honour. Therefore he enquires concerning the reward, as if he wondered that none dared accept the challenge; and, by the earneſtneſs and repetition of his queſtion, intimated his own readineſs to do it. *Note*, A ſoul filled with holy zeal cannot bear to ſee God or his cauſe blaſphemed, without riſing up in its vindication.

4. Eliab's anger riſes againſt him. He could not hear his enquiries, and the daring ſpirit he ſhewed, without feeling the workings of jealouſy and envy againſt him: perhaps ſtung too with the reflection of David, as if he among the reſt wanted courage for the combat. To quench therefore this riſing ſpark of zeal, he abuſes him as a negligent youth, who had, through pride and curioſity, quitted his calling, and left the few ſheep of his poor father, to come down to ſee the battle; inſolently and cenſoriouſly pretending to know the pride and naughtineſs of his heart, and ſeeking not only to diſcourage his own ſpirit, but to make him appear deſpicable, and his words diſregarded, by thoſe to whom he addreſſed himſelf. *Note*, (1.) The enmity of an offended brother is moſt bitter and implacable. (2.) The moſt upright and innocent intentions envy can eaſily miſrepreſent. (3.) cenſoriouſneſs will not only make men miſinterpret our actions, but pretend to know thoſe ſecrets of the heart, which are open to God alone.

5. David, unprovoked with ſuch unjuſt and illiberal abuſe, mildly confutes his miſrepreſentation. Was there not a cauſe for his coming? Was it not his father's orders, and on a meſſage of kindneſs to him? And was there not reaſon to expreſs reſentment at ſuch an impious defiance? He therefore turns from him, and, undiſmayed, continues his enquiries, and intimates his readineſs to undertake this boaſter. *Note*, (1.) A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath. (2.) We muſt not be diſcouraged in well doing, nor ceaſe becauſe our good intentions are miſrepreſented or abuſed.

31. And when the words were heard which David ſpake, they rehearſed *them* before Saul: and he ſent for him. 32. ¶ And David ſaid to Saul, [l] Let no man's heart fail becauſe of him; [m] thy ſervant will go and fight with this Philiſtine. 33. And Saul ſaid to David, [n] Thou art not able to go againſt this Philiſtine, to fight with him: for thou *art but* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. 34. And David ſaid unto Saul, Thy ſervant † kept his father's ſheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. 35. And I went out after him, and ſmote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he aroſe againſt me, I caught *him* by his beard, and [o] ſmote him, and ſlew him. 36. Thy ſervant ſlew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumciſed Philiſtine ſhall be as one of them, ſeeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 37. David ſaid moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, [p] he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philiſtine. And Saul ſaid unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee. 38. And Saul ‡ armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of braſs upon his head, alſo he armed him with a coat of mail. 39. And David girded his ſword upon his armour, and he aſſayed to go, for he had not proved *it*: and David ſaid unto Saul, [q] I cannot go with theſe: for I have not proved *them*. And David put them off him.

l Rom. xv. 1.

m Chap. xiv. 6. 2 Cor. v. 7.

n Num. xiii. 31.

† Or, was feeding among the ſheep.

o Judg. xiv. 16.

p. Pſ. lxxvii. 11. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17.

‡ Heb. Cloathed with his cloaths.

q Hoſ. i. 7. Zech. iv. 6. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

v. 31—39. Such repeated enquiries, and apparent reſolution, are quickly carried to the ears of Saul, and David is ſent for to his tent.

1. He offers to engage in ſingle combat with the Philiſtine, and, with the intrepidity of a hero, dares encourage the timorous hoſts that fled before him. *Note*, The righteous is as bold as a lion.

2. Saul diſcourages him from the undertaking, by pleading his youth and inexperience; great as his courage might be, the conteſt was utterly unequal. *Note*, We muſt not judge by appearances. They who have God for them, have more with them than can be againſt them.

3. David modeſtly anſwers the objection of the king; he was not ſo unuſed to hazardous enterprizes as he ſeemed to apprehend. As he fed his flock a lion, fierce with hunger, came and ſeized a lamb, which he purſued, ſeized by the beard, and ſlew him unarmed; a bear too, who made the ſame attempt, ſhared the ſame fate: and if God ſtrengthened him thus againſt the lion and the bear, how much more would he deliver him from the hand of a Philiſtine, who, by his defiance of the armies of the living God, had provoked the God of Iſrael's armies to deſtroy him. *Note*, (1.) We need never be aſhamed of an honeſt calling, though mean. (2.) David is the type of him, who, from the mouth of the roaring lion, hath delivered the lambs of his flock. (3.) Paſt experience ſhould be preſent encouragement.

4. Saul, ſatisfied, conſents to his going, and prays the Lord to be with him, and give him ſucceſs; and to equip him for the battle, brings down a ſuit of armour, and fits it on him; but after eſſaying to go in it, either his ſpirit was admoniſhed not to make uſe of theſe defences, leaſt God's arm might not be ſo much ſeen; or, more probably, not being accuſtomed to walk in armour, he felt it encumbered rather than aſſiſted him, therefore he put it off, reſolving to advance juſt as he was. *Note*, They have the beſt armour that go forth with a good conſcience in a good cauſe.

40. And [r] he took his ſtaff in his hand, and choſe him [s] five ſmooth ſtones out of the brook, and put them in his ſhepherd's bag which he had, even in a ſcrip, and his ſling *was* in his hand, and he drew near to the Philiſtine. 41. And the Philiſtine came on and drew near unto David, and the man that bare the [t] ſhield *went* before him. 42. And when the Philiſtine looked about and ſaw David, [u] he diſdained him: for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. 43. And the Philiſtine ſaid unto David, *Am* I a dog, that thou comeſt to me with [x] ſtaves? and the Philiſtine curſed David by his gods. 44. And the Philiſtine ſaid to David, Come to me, and [y] I will give thy fleſh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beaſt of the field. 45. Then ſaid David to the Philiſtine, Thou comeſt to me with a ſword, and with a ſpear, and with a ſhield; but I come to thee [z] in the name of the LORD of hoſts, the God of the armies of Iſrael, whom thou haſt defied. 46. [a] This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand, and I will ſmite thee, and take thine head from thee, and I will give [b] the carcaſes of the hoſt of the Philiſtines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beaſts of the earth; [c] that all the earth may know that there is a God in Iſrael. 47. And all this aſſembly ſhall know that [d] the LORD ſaveth not with ſword and ſpear: for [e] the battle *is* the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands.

[r] Pſ. xxiii. 4.
[s] Judg. vii. 16. 1 Cor. i. 27.
[t] Gen. xv. 1. Pſ. iii. 3.
[u] Chap. xiv. 11, 12.
[x] Mat. xxvi. 55.
[y] Prov. i. 32.
[z] 2 Chron. xxxii. 8. Pſal. xx. 7. & cxviii. 10, 11. Prov. xviii. 10.
[a] Rom. iv. 19.
[b] Deut. xxviii. 26.
[c] Pſal. lviii. 11. Dan. ii. 47. & vi. 26.
[d] Pſ. xliv. 6. Zech. iv. 6.
[e] 2 Chron. xx. 15.

v. 40—47. David having put off his armour, in his ſhepherd's dreſs, with his ſling in his hand, marches down toward this proud Philiſtine, and chuſes five ſmooth ſtones from the brook which ran in the valley, nor was at all terrified with the formidable appearance of his antagoniſt, ſince God was the ſtrength of his hope.

1. Goliath, looking on ſuch a puny foe, a youth, and, ſo accoutred, with high diſdain treated his inſolence in daring to approach him, as if a dog, to be beaten with a ſhepherd's ſtaff; and curſing him by his gods, threatens, as eaſily as a lion tears the lamb, to give his fleſh to the birds and beaſts. *Note*, (1.) The curſe that is cauſeleſs falls only on the head that utters it. (2.) The preſumption of the proud deſtroys them.

2. David replies with confidence and dependance upon God, and hurls back this boaſter's threatnings into his face; having authority from the God of Iſrael, whom, in his people, Goliath had defied, dependent on the arm of that omnipotent Lord of hoſts, who alone giveth victory in the battle, he threatens that his carcaſs, and thoſe of his countrymen, ſhall this day afford a nobler feaſt to the birds and beaſts: the nations around ſhall then acknowledge the glory of Iſrael's God, and his church and people adore him for a ſalvation ſo great and wonderful.

48. And it came to paſs when the Philiſtine aroſe, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David haſted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philiſtine. 49. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a ſtone, and ſlang *it*, and ſmote the Philiſtine in his forehead, that the ſtone † ſunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50. So [f] David prevailed over the Philiſtine with a ſling and with a ſtone, and ſmote the Philiſtine and ſlew him; but *there was* no ſword in the hand of David. 51. Therefore David ran and ſtood upon the Philiſtine, and took his ſword, and drew it out of the ſheath thereof, and ſlew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philiſtines ſaw their champion was dead, they fled. 52. And the men of Iſrael and of Judah aroſe, and ſhouted and purſued the Philiſtines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron: and the wounded of the Philiſtines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. 53. And the children of Iſrael returned from chaſing after the Philiſtines, and they ſpoiled their tents. 54. And David took the head of the Philiſtine, and [g] brought it to Jeruſalem; but he put his armour in ‡ his tent. 55. And when Saul ſaw David go forth againſt the Philiſtine, he ſaid unto Abner the captain of the hoſt, Abner, whoſe ſon *is* this youth? And Abner ſaid, *As* thy ſoul liveth, O king, I cannot tell. 56. And the king ſaid, Enquire thou whoſe ſon the ſtripling *is.* 57. And as David returned from the ſlaughter of the Philiſtine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philiſtine in his hand. 58. And Saul ſaid to him, Whoſe ſon *art* thou, *thou* young man? And David anſwered, *I am* the ſon of thy ſervant Jeſſe the Beth-lehemite.

† Heb. Sunk as a ſtone in the water.
Judg. iii. 31. Matt. xix. 26.
[f] Ecclus xlvii. 4. 1 Mac. iv. 30.
[g] Exod. xvi. 33.
‡ i. e. God's tabernacle. Chap. xxi. 9. 1 Chron. xv. 1.

v. 48—58. We have here the iſſue of this unequal match, and ſee the battle is not always to the ſtrong.

1. Like a Coloſſus huge Goliath ſtrides along, glittering in burniſhed armour; David, with nimbler ſtep, haſtes to meet him, and having fitted the ſtone into his ſling, aimed at the broad mark of this Philiſtine's forehead. Swift flew the meſſenger of death, reſiſtleſs pierces through his ſkull, and backward fell the mighty hero, extended breathleſs on the plain. Probably deſpiſing ſuch a youth, he turned back the caſket of his helmet, or through the eye the ſtone might enter, as the Targum intimates; or, ſince it was of God, through the brazen helmet, and hardened forehead, it might paſs ſwift as lightning, and reſiſtleſs as the thunderbolt. With eagerneſs now David flies on his prey, draws forth the vanquiſhed champion's ſword, and ſevers his head from his body, as the trophy of his victory. *Note*, (1.) Vain is the arm of fleſh againſt the power of God. (2.) Thus hath Jeſus conquered the powers of darkneſs, and ſpoiled them openly; and thus ſhall every believer conquer thoſe giant-like corruptions that wage war againſt his ſoul.

2. A panic ſeizes the hoſts of Philiſtia, when they behold their boaſted hero fallen, whilſt Iſrael's armies, ſhouting for victory, purſue the diſpirited fugitives even to the gates of their cities, and on their return plunder the camp. *Note*, They who truſt on man will find their dependance but a broken reed.

3. David ſpoiled the Philiſtine of his armour, as well as his head; and having carried the latter in triumph round the cities of Iſrael, fixed it up at Jeruſalem, as a terror to the Jebuſites who ſtill held the fortreſs of Zion; the armour he laid up in his tent, or perhaps in God's tent or tabernacle, as a monument of the victory, where we find the ſword of Goliath, *chap.* xxi. 9.

4. Saul makes enquiries about this young hero, having forgotten David by his abſence from court, and ſo differently dreſſed, and in ſo different a character; or if he recollected him, he was, as the queſtion ſeems to import, ſollicitous to know his family and extraction, whether he were nobly deſcended, having engaged to marry his daughter to him. Abner profeſſes his ignorance of his family; but David appears and ſatisfies his enquiries, with a modeſt account of his parentage, as the ſon of Jeſſe the Beth-lehemite. *Note*, It is not high birth, but deeds of high deſert, that conſtitute true nobility.

CHAP. XVIII.

We have here, 1. *David's ſettlement at court, and Jonathan's friendſhip for him,* ver. 1—4. 2. *He became the darling of his country,* ver. 5—7, 16. 3. *Saul's envy and wicked attempt,* ver. 8—11. 4. *His fear, and contrivances to deſtroy him,* ver. 12—17. 5. *His propoſal to marry his daughter to him; but* (1.) *He balks him of the eldeſt,* ver. 19. *and,* (2.) *Gives him the younger upon hard terms,* ver. 20—25. 6. *David's performance of the conditions,* ver. 26, 27. 7. *His univerſal eſteem,* ver. 28—30. *Thus, through much tribulation, we muſt come to the kingdom.*

1. AND it came to paſs, when he had made an end of ſpeaking unto Saul, that [a] the ſoul of Jonathan was knit with the ſoul of David, and Jonathan loved him, as his own ſoul. 2. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's houſe. 3. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, becauſe he loved him as his own ſoul. 4. And Jonathan ſtript himſelf of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his ſword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. 5. ¶ And David went out whitherſoever Saul ſent him, *and* † behaved himſelf [b] wiſely: and Saul ſet him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the ſight of all the people, and alſo in the ſight of Saul's ſervants.

[a] Gen. xliv. 30. Chap. xx. 17. Prov. xvii. 17.
† Or, Proſpered.
[b] Mat. x. 16. Col. iv. 5.

v. 1—5. David is now fixed at court.

1. Saul reſolves to keep him about his perſon, advances him to the command of a troop, and employs him often in his affairs of ſtate; in all which David approves himſelf a faithful

and diligent ſervant. Thus he learnt to obey, before he came to rule.

2. Jonathan, Saul's ſon, is raviſhed with the excellences that appear in him, and from his behaviour conceives the warmeſt affection for him; probably their age was nearly equal, their manners ſimilar, and their ſouls, as generous ſpirits always are, ſuſceptible of the tendereſt feelings of friendſhip. To give him an immediate mark of his regard, Jonathan carries him to his tent, ſtrips off his own cloaths, even to his ſword and his girdle; and as David muſt appear at court, will have him dreſſed as a courtier, and ſuitable to his high deſerts. There, to perpetuate the bands of friendſhip, a ſolemen covenant is made between them, to be faithful to each other 'till death. *Note*, (1.) A faithful friend is among the greateſt of human bleſſings. (2.) True friendſhip is conſtant, and ſtartles not at aſſurances. (3.) They who are Chriſt's friends would bind themſelves to be his for ever.

3. David's conduct got him univerſal eſteem; his valour made him loved abroad, and his humility kept him from being envied at court. *Note*, In high ſtations 'tis a difficult part ſo to act as to procure honour without provoking envy.

6. And it came to paſs as they came when David was returned from the ſlaughter of the Philiſtine, that the women came out of all cities of Iſrael, [d] ſinging and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with inſtruments of muſic. 7. And the women [e] anſwered *one another* as they played, and ſaid, [f] Saul hath ſlain his thouſands, and David his ten thouſands. 8. And Saul was very wroth, and the ſaying † diſpleaſed him; and he ſaid, They have aſcribed unto David ten thouſands, and to me they have aſcribed *but* thouſands; and *what* can he have more but [g] the kingdom? 9. And Saul [h] eyed David from that day and forward. 10. ¶ And it came to paſs on the morrow, that [i] the evil ſpirit from God came upon Saul, and [k] he propheſied in the midſt of the houſe: and David played with his hand, as at other times; and *there was* a javelin in Saul's hand. 11. And [l] Saul caſt the javelin; for he ſaid, I will ſmite David even to the wall *with it*: and David avoided out of his preſence twice.

[d] Exod. xv. 21. Judg. xi. 34. Rev. xix. 1, 2.
[e] Exod. xv. 21.
[f] Chap. xxi. 11. & xxix. 5. Ecclus xlvii. 6.
† Heb. Was evil in his eyes.
Prov. xxvii. 4. 3 John 9, 10.
[g] Chap. xv. 28.
[h] Gen. iv. 5, &c. Pſ. x. 9. Mat. xx. 15.
[i] Chap. xvi. 14.
[k] 1 Kings xviii. 29. Acts xvi. 16.
[l] Chap. xix. 10. Prov. vi. 34.

v. 6—11. To allay the joy of his preferment his troubles quickly follow.

1. Saul becomes jealous of his growing greatneſs; having made a triumphant progreſs through the cities of Iſrael, after the victory, and being met by the women, ſinging the praiſes of the conquerors, his ſoul is ſtung with envy to hear ten thouſands ſlain aſcribed to David, and to himſelf but thouſands. From that day forward his look of complacence changed into the frown of diſpleaſure, and dark ſuſpicions troubled him, conſcious that his kingdom was forfeited, and fearing that this was his rival, who would dethrone him. *Note*, (1.) The praiſes of merit are, in the ears of envy, grating diſcord. (2.) An evil and malignant eye betrays the rancour of the heart.

2. He attempts to deſtroy him. Brooding all night over theſe dark thoughts, next day his former demoniacal phrenzy returns upon him; pretending prophetic impulſe, his geſtures were ſtrange, or, perhaps, he really predicted, as a Jewiſh writer ſays, his own ruin and David's advancement. David, obſerving his unhappy caſe, ran to his harp, that before had ſoothed his rage; but Saul, mad with envy, hurls his javelin at him, with ſuch violence as to faſten him with it to the wall. *Note*, (1.) They who indulge the evil thoughts of their own hearts, invite the devil to take poſſeſſion of them. (2.) Jealouſy is cruel as the grave, and thirſts for the precious life.

3. David eſcapes the wicked attempt, twice made on his life, either the ſame day or once afterwards, *chap*. xix. 9. He perhaps obſerved Saul's trembling hand, and ſlipt away from the ſtroke aimed at his heart, or God, in watchful mercy, turned the javelin aſide. *Note*, God guards his people from many a mortal blow their great enemy aims at them, to deſtroy them.

12. ¶ And Saul was afraid of David, becauſe the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. 13. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and [m] made him his captain over a thouſand; and [n] he went out and came in before the people. 14. And David behaved himſelf wiſely in all his ways: and the LORD *was* with him. 15. Wherefore when Saul ſaw that he behaved himſelf very wiſely, he was afraid of him. 16. But all Iſrael and Judah loved David, becauſe he went out and came in before them. 17. ¶ And Saul ſaid to David, [o] Behold, my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife: only be thou † valiant for me, and [p] fight the LORD's battles: for Saul ſaid, [q] Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philiſtines be upon him. 18. And David ſaid unto Saul, [r] Who *am* I? and what *is* my life, *or* my father's family in Iſrael, that I ſhould be ſon-in-law to the king? 19. But it came to paſs at the time when Merab Saul's daughter ſhould have been given to David, that ſhe was given unto Adriel the Meholathite to wife. 20. And Michal Saul's daughter loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleaſed him. 21. And Saul ſaid, I will give him her, that [s] ſhe may be a ſnare to him, and that [t] the hand of the Philiſtines may be againſt him. Wherefore Saul ſaid to David, Thou ſhalt this day be my ſon-in-law in *the one of* the twain. 22. And Saul commanded his ſervants, *ſaying*, Commune with David ſecretly, and ſay, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his ſervants love thee: now therefore be the king's ſon-in-law. 23. And Saul's ſervants ſpake thoſe words in the ears of David: and David ſaid, Seemeth it to you *a* light *thing* to be a king's ſon-in-law, ſeeing that [u] I *am* a poor man, and lightly eſteemed? 24. And the ſervants of Saul told him, ſaying, ‡ On this manner ſpake David. 25. And Saul ſaid, Thus ſhall ye ſay to David, The king deſireth not [x] any dowry, but an hundred foreſkins of the Philiſtines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philiſtines. 26. And when his ſervants told David theſe words, it ‖ pleaſed David well to be the king's ſon-in-law: and the days were not expired. 27. Wherefore David aroſe and went, he and his men, and ſlew of the Philiſtines two hundred men; and [y] David brought their foreſkins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's ſon-in-law: and Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife. 28. ¶ And Saul ſaw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal Saul's daughter loved him. 29. And [z] Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually. 30. Then the princes of the Philiſtines went forth, and it came to paſs after they went forth, *that* David behaved himſelf § more wiſely than all the ſervants of Saul, ſo that his name was † much ſet by.

[m] Ver. 17, 25. Prov. xii. 10.
[n] Pſ. cxxi. 8.
[o] Pſ. lv. 21. & cxl. 5. Luke xx. 20.
† Heb. A ſon of valour.
[p] Pſ. xii. 2.
[q] 2 Sam. xii. 9.
[r] Ibid. vii. 18.
[s] Pſ. ix. 16. & xxxviii. 12.
[t] Pſ. vii. 16.
[u] Luke xiv. 11.
‡ Heb. According to theſe words.
[x] Gen. xxix. 18.
‖ Heb. Was right in the eyes of David.
[y] 2 Sam. iii. 14.
[z] Job v. 12, 13.
§ Or, valianter.
† Heb. Precious.

v. 12—30. What Saul cannot perpetrate by open violence, he ſeeks to accompliſh by ſecret fraud.

1. His fears, the more increaſed by the evident bleſſing of God upon David, put him upon removing him from court. But this he ſeeks to do in ſuch a way as, under pretence of preferment, to expoſe him to danger and death; he therefore makes him captain of a thouſand, and ſends him out to fight the Philiſtines, and to whet his ardor, the more to endanger his life, gives him hopes that he will beſtow on him his eldeſt daughter to wife, if he returns victorious, and approves himſelf in deeds of valour. This indeed was what he before deſerved, though he had not claimed her, and now modeſtly profeſſes himſelf unworthy ſuch an honour; ready, however, to obey his ſovereign, and zealous for Iſrael's glory, his exploits ſerve to ſpread his fame, and ingratiate him with the army, whilſt his prudent conduct engages the regard of all. *Note*, (1.) God can overrule the wickedeſt deſigns of our enemies, for our good, and to the confuſion of their authors. (2.) Modeſt worth ſhines with double luſtre.

2. The more David proſpers the more Saul fears; therefore, to exaſperate him into ſome raſh word, or falſe ſtep, he affronts him, by giving his daughter to another, perhaps on the very day fixed for the bridal feaſt.

3. Saul lays a new ſnare for him. Though he had robbed him of one daughter he would entice him with the other, and ſets his courtiers to encourage him to hope for the honour of being yet the king's ſon-in-law, pretending the pleaſure that Saul took in him, and propoſing the dowry that Saul expected, an hundred foreſkins of the Philiſtines. He hoped that this expedition might prove fatal to him, as the Philiſtines would be exaſperated at ſuch inſult offered them, and he ſhould get rid thus of his enemy; at leaſt, if he ſucceeded, he promiſed himſelf his daughter would take part with him againſt her huſband. But as wicked men's ſchemes, however deep laid, often are, he was diſappointed of the one by David's valour, and of the other by Michal's love.

4. David at firſt declined the hints of the courtiers, and behaved the more cautiouſly, as he ſaw them wait for his halting. He humbly urges the greatneſs of the honour, and his own unworthineſs of it, whoſe fortune or faſhion were not, in anywiſe, anſwerable to ſuch a match; but ſeeing, at laſt, that it was really the king's mind, he liked very well the propoſal, and ere the time propoſed was expired, he doubled the number of fore-

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ſkins, that ſince this was to be the dowry he might not appear deficient: and now he hath Michal's hand, as he before poſſeſſed her heart. *Note*, (1.) Kings never want wicked inſtruments to further their baſeſt deſigns. (2.) True humility will make a man rather undervalue than over-rate his own importance. (3.) If it be ſuch an honour to be a king's ſon-in-law, how much greater to become the ſons and heirs of the eternal king, as every believer is that is joined to the Lord.

5. His marriage kept him not from the field. He diſtinguiſhed himſelf again beyond all Saul's ſervants againſt the princes of the Philiſtines, and gained a great name among the people, whilſt Saul's envy increaſed in proportion with David's eminence. So will God confound the wiſe in their own craftineſs, and in ſpite of every danger exalt the man whom he delighteth to honour.

CHAP. XIX.

We have here four eſcapes of David from the ſword of Saul, 1. *By the mediation of Jonathan*, ver. 1—7. 2. *By his own quickneſs*, ver. 8—10. 3. *By Michal's fidelity*, ver. 11—17. 4. *By Samuel's protection*, ver. 18—24. *Thus God has many ways of preſerving his people. Providence is never at a loſs.*

1. AND [a] Saul ſpake to Jonathan his ſon, and to all his ſervants, that they ſhould kill David. 2. But Jonathan Saul's ſon [b] delighted much in David: and [c] Jonathan told David, ſaying, Saul my father ſeeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyſelf until the morning, and abide in a ſecret *place*, and hide thyſelf: 3. And I will go out and ſtand before my father in the field where thou *art*, and I will commune with my father of thee: and what I ſee, that I will tell thee. 4. ¶ And Jonathan ſpake good of David unto Saul his father, and ſaid unto him, Let not the king [d] ſin againſt his ſervant, againſt David: becauſe [e] he hath not ſinned againſt thee, and becauſe his works *have been* to thee-ward very good. 5. For [f] he did put his life in his hand, and ſlew the Philiſtine, and [g] the LORD wrought a great ſalvation for all Iſrael: thou ſaweſt *it*, and didſt rejoice; [h] wherefore then wilt thou ſin againſt innocent blood, to ſlay David without a cauſe? 6. And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul [i] ſware, *As* the LORD liveth, he ſhall not be ſlain. 7. And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan ſhewed him all thoſe things: and Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his preſence, as in times paſt.

[a] Prov. xxvii. 4. Jer. ix. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 13.
[b] Chap. xviii. 1.
[c] Prov. xvii. 17. Acts xxiii. 12.
[d] Exod. xx. 13.
[e] Prov. xvii. 13. Jer. xviii. 20.
[f] Judg. vi. 17. & xii. 3. Chap. xxviii. 21. Pſ. cxix. 109.
[g] Pſ. iii. 8.
[h] Chap. xx. 32. Mat. xxvii. 4.
[i] Ver. 10. Pſ. xv. 4.

v. 1—7. Saul no longer ſeeks to cloak his bloody deſigns, but gives public orders to kill David as a traitor, and particularly to Jonathan, to diſpatch the rival of his crown; but Jonathan's love was ſtronger than the ambition of a throne; and Saul's malice, by being undiſguiſed, was the eaſier diſappointed.

1. He warns David of his danger, and bids him hide himſelf till the morning in ſome ſecret place, becauſe of the order which had been given, and by that time he hoped to procure ſome change in his cruel father, or at leaſt to let David know how to proceed.

2. He takes the firſt opportunity, the next morning, to expoſtulate with his father, and to pacify his reſentment. He urges the kindneſſes David had ſhewn him, the great obligations the whole land owed him, nay Saul's own acknowledgments of it. How ungrateful and baſe then to murder ſo faithful a ſervant, and ſo valiant a ſubject! Had he committed ought worthy of death indeed this might cancel his paſt ſervices, but Saul muſt be conſcious of his innocence; and therefore, to ſhed his blood would be as inhuman as unjuſt. *Note*, Such a friend as Jonathan, ſo diſintereſted, ſo faithful, is rare.

3. Saul having ſlept, his paſſion was cooled. Conviction accompanied Jonathan's arguments; he ſwears to ſave David harmleſs, revokes his bloody edict, and reſtores him to his place at court, with every apparent mark of regard and confidence. *Note*, (1.) The oath of a common ſwearer is bad ſecurity. (2.) Good advice, though from an inferior, deſerves attention. (3.) Sudden changes of paſſionate men prognoſticate no long continuance.

8. And there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philiſtines, and ſlew them with a great ſlaughter; and they fled from him. 9. And [k] the evil ſpirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he ſat in his houſe with his javelin in his hand: and David played with *his* hand. 10. And [l] Saul ſought to ſmite David even to the wall with his javelin; but he ſlipt away out of Saul's preſence: and he ſmote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and [m] eſcaped that night.

[k] Chap. xvi. 14.
[l] Ver. 6. Prov. xxvi. 25.
[m] Job v. 14, 15. Prov. xxi. 30.

v. 8—10. David is ever armed in Iſrael's cauſe; we find him again in the field, fighting the Lord's battles, and again victorious over the Philiſtines. But every freſh laurel on David's brow puts a ſharp thorn in Saul's boſom; his melancholy returns; and willing to relieve him, his ſon thinks it not beneath his dignity again to handle the harp: but whilſt, in kind regard, he ſought to ſooth the torments of his heart, he little ſuſpects the ſpear that ſtood ready to pierce his own. Swift and violent Saul hurls the javelin, to pierce him to the wall, but his agility avoids the blow, and leaving his preſence, where it was no longer ſafe to ſtay, he ſeeks, by flight, to ſave himſelf from the enraged monarch. *Note*, (1.) Something will always be found to allay the joys of our triumphs. (2.) No kindneſs can cure the ranklings of inveterate malice.

11. Saul alſo [n] ſent meſſengers unto David's houſe to watch him, and to ſlay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, ſaying, If thou ſave not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou ſhalt be ſlain. 12. ¶ So Michal let David down [o] through a window: and he went and fled, and eſcaped. 13. And Michal took † an image and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pillow of goat's *hair* for his bolſter, and covered *it* with a cloth. 14. And when Saul ſent meſſengers to take David, ſhe ſaid, He *is* ſick. 15. And Saul ſent the meſſengers *again* to ſee David, ſaying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may ſlay him. 16. And when the meſſengers were come in, behold, *there was* an image in the bed, with a pillow of goat's *hair* for his bolſter. 17. And Saul ſaid unto Michal, [p] Why haſt thou deceived me ſo, and ſent away mine enemy, that he is eſcaped? And Michal anſwered Saul, He ſaid unto me, Let me go; why ſhould I kill thee?

[n] Pſ. xxxiv. 19. & lix. 3.
[o] Joſh. ii. 15. Iſa. liv. 17. Acts ix. 24, 25.
† Heb. A teraphim. Judg. xvii. 5.
[p] Exod. i. 17. Chap. xxii. 17. Mat. ii. 16.

v. 11—17. David was now in imminent danger; for Saul ſuppoſing him fled to his own houſe, diſpatches a party to watch him and kill him there; but through mercy he eſcapes.

1. Michal, from whom Saul hoped to ruin him, loves him too well to betray him; no ſooner is ſhe apprized of his danger, than ſhe informs him; and in the night, through the window, lets him down, that he might not be perceived by thoſe who had beſet the houſe: and in the morning, to give him more leiſure to eſcape, feigns he is ſick, puts an image in his bed, and deceives thus the meſſengers of Saul. *Note*, (1.) Wives muſt love their huſbands, and cleave to them even beyond their own parents. (2.) A woman's wits are often ſharper than her huſband's; it is no diſparagement for a man to follow his wife's advice.

2. Saul's rage will not put up with excuſe; he will have David brought in his bed, that he may have the ſatisfaction of murdering him by his own hand. *Note*, Wicked men grow worſe and worſe as they reſiſt their convictions, and provoke God to give them up to their violent paſſions.

3. Michal, when the cheat was diſcovered, well knowing her father's mad rage, ſeeks to appeaſe him; and as ſhe ſtuck not at one lie to ſave her huſband, ſhe heſitates not at another to excuſe herſelf, even at the expence of her huſband's character. *Note*, One lie uſually hardens the conſcience for another.

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18. ¶ So David fled, and eſcaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him: and he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth. 19. And [q] it was told Saul, ſaying, Behold, David *is* at Naioth in Ramah. 20. And Saul ſent meſſengers to take David: and when they ſaw the company of the prophets propheſying, and Samuel ſtanding *as* appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the meſſengers of Saul, and [r] they alſo propheſied. 21. And when it was told Saul, he ſent other meſſengers, and they propheſied likewiſe: and Saul ſent meſſengers again [s] the third time, and they propheſied alſo. 22. Then went he alſo to Ramah, and came to a great well that *is* in Sechu: and he aſked and ſaid, Where *are* Samuel and David? And *one* ſaid, Behold, *they be* at Naioth in Ramah. 23. And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and [t] the Spirit of God was upon him alſo, and he went on and [u] propheſied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah: 24. And he ſtript off his clothes alſo, and propheſied before Samuel in like manner † and lay down naked all that day, and all that night. Wherefore they ſay, [x] *Is* Saul alſo among the prophets?

[q] Prov. xxix. 12.
[r] Chap. x. 11. & xviii. 10. John vii. 45.
[s] Prov. xxvii. 22. Jer. xiii. 23.
[t] Prov. xxi. 1.
[u] Mat. vii. 22.
† Heb. Fell down. Num. xxiv. 4.
[x] Chap. x. 11.

v. 18—24. We have here,

1. David's flight to Samuel, to conſult him in his diſtreſs, and to have his faith ſupported, with regard to the kingdom, now ſeverely ſhaken by theſe perſecutions. *Note*, God's miniſters, in our diſtreſſes, are the propereſt adviſers.

2. Saul is no ſooner informed of the place of his abode, than he ſends meſſengers to Naioth in Ramah, to ſeize him. But God ſo over-ruled their ſpirits, that inſtead of bringing David priſoner, they no ſooner came into the congregation of the prophets, with Samuel at their head, than themſelves were ſeized with the ſacred enthuſiaſm, and propheſied among them: repeated meſſengers feel the ſame irreſiſtible impulſe, yet Saul, breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter, will not deſiſt; preſuming his own heart ſecure from the impreſſion, he will go in perſon, and rather than not deſtroy David will be himſelf his executioner. But how vain are man's impotent deſigns! He too again feels the ſtrange influence. Before he approaches the gates of Ramah his fury ſubſides, and laying aſide his military garb and weapons of war, he lay down at Samuel's feet a day and night, to the admiration of the beholders, who revived the proverb on ſeeing ſo ſtrange an alteration; Is Saul alſo among the prophets? Mean time David had an opportunity given him to eſcape. *Note*, (1.) Many have come into the aſſembly of God's people with the moſt violent deſigns, who have fallen before the power of God, and been forced to hang down the arms deſigned to be lifted up in wrath. (2.) God can turn perſecutors into preachers, and make thoſe who breathed out threatnings ſing his praiſes. (3.) It is no ſtrange thing to ſee wicked men prophecy in his name, and do wonderful works; but all theſe without a change of heart only aggravate their final reprobacy and eternal ruin.

CHAP. XX.

David, before he reſolves on any farther ſtep for his ſafety, conſults his faithful Jonathan, 1. *He complains to him of his preſent diſtreſs, and engageth him to be his friend,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Jonathan promiſes to give him intelligence, how his father ſtood affected to him, and renews the covenant of friendſhip with him,* ver. 9—23. 3. *Jonathan finds his father implacable to David,* ver. 24—34. 4. *He gives David notice of this,* ver. 35—42.

a 2 Pet. ii. 9. 1. AND David [a] fled from Naioth in Ramah, and
b Chap. xii. 3. came and ſaid before Jonathan, [b] What have I
done? what *is* mine iniquity? and what is my ſin before
† Heb. His ſoul. Mat. ii. 20. thy father, that he ſeeketh my † life? 2. And he ſaid
unto him, God forbid; thou ſhalt not die: behold, my
father will do nothing either great or ſmall, but that he
‡ Heb. Uncover mine ear. will ‡ ſhew it me: and why ſhould my father hide this
thing from me? it *is* not *ſo*. 3. And David ſware
moreover, and ſaid, Thy father certainly knoweth that
I have found grace in thine eyes; and he ſaith, Let not
Jonathan know this, leſt he be grieved: but truly, as
c Pſ. cxvi. 11. the LORD liveth, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, [c] *there is* but
a ſtep between me and death. 4. Then ſaid Jonathan
‖ Heb. Aſketh. Chap. xviii. 1. unto David, Whatſoever thy ſoul ‖ deſireth, I will even
do *it* for thee. 5. And David ſaid unto Jonathan, Behold,
to-morrow is the new-moon, and I ſhould not fail
to ſit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may
hide myſelf in the field unto the third *day* at even.
6. If thy father at all miſs me, then ſay, David earneſtly
d John vii. 42. aſked *leave* of me, that he might run to Beth-lehem [d] his
§ Or, Feaſt. city: for *there is* a yearly § ſacrifice there for all the family.
7. If he ſay thus, *It is* well; thy ſervant ſhall
have peace: but if he be very wroth, *then* be ſure that
evil is determined by him. 8. Therefore thou ſhalt deal
e Chap. xviii. 3. kindly with thy ſervant; for [e] thou haſt brought thy ſervant
into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwith-
f Joſh. xxii. 22. ſtanding, if [f] there be in me iniquity, ſlay me thyſelf;
for why ſhouldſt thou bring me to thy father?

v. 1—8. Whilſt Saul continued bound at Naioth, David embraces the opportunity to fly to Jonathan, and adviſe with him about the ſteps he ſhould take.

1. We have their converſation together. David, conſcious of his innocence, appeals to Jonathan, and expreſſes his juſt fears for his life. Jonathan is willing to hope his father's oath, if nothing elſe, would bind him, and that it was not ſo: but David ſolemnly aſſures him he was on the brink of death, that his ruin was reſolved, and that becauſe of his friendſhip for him only, Saul concealed it from him. *Note*, (1.) We may apply David's expreſſion every day, and it is an awakening one, *There is but a ſtep between us and death.* (2.) Though charity bids us hope the beſt, it does not oblige us to ſhut our eyes againſt conviction.

2. Jonathan is ready to do every thing for his friend, and David propoſes a method to come at the knowledge of Saul's ſentiments. The morrow was the new moon, on which eſpecial ſacrifices were offered; and afterwards Saul kept a feaſt for his family, or chief officers, to either of which David belonged. On ſuch a ſolemnity he would be expected to appear, and Jonathan muſt excuſe his abſence, by declaring, he had given him leave to attend a yearly ſacrifice at Beth-lehem, which no doubt was the real truth. If Saul accepted the excuſe, it would be a ſign his reſentment was ſubſided; but if he appeared angry, then miſchief, no doubt, was in his heart. Againſt the third day, at even, he would be in a neighbouring field, and there expect to hear from Jonathan; confident in his kindneſs, pleading the covenant between them for the continuance of it, and offering himſelf readily to be ſlain by him, if he was guilty; and more eligible it would be to die by his hand, than to be delivered up to his father. *Note*, (1.) At the ſolemn feſtivals, many are regular to appear at the Lord's feaſt, whoſe formality only ſerves to deceive them, whilſt their evil tempers continue unmortified. (2.) Though whenever God calls, we muſt be ready to lay down our lives: yet are we called to take every prudent method to preſerve them.

9. And Jonathan ſaid, Far be it from thee: for if I
knew certainly, that evil were determined by my father
to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee? 10.
Then ſaid David to Jonathan, Who ſhall tell me? or
what *if* thy father anſwer thee roughly? 11. ¶ And
Jonathan ſaid unto David, Come and let us go out into
the field. And they went out both of them into the
field. 12. And Jonathan ſaid unto David, O LORD
God of Iſrael, when I have † ſounded my father, about † Heb. Searched. Prov. x. 5.
to morrow any time, *or* the third *day*, and behold, *if*
there be good toward David, and I then ſend not unto
thee, and ſhew it thee; 13. [g] The LORD do ſo, and g Ruth. i. 17.
much more to Jonathan: but if it pleaſe my father *to do*
thee evil, then I will ſhew it thee, and ſend thee away,
that thou mayſt go in peace: and [h] the LORD be with h Phil. ii. 5.
thee, as he hath been with my father. 14. And thou
ſhalt not only while yet I live, ſhew me the kindneſs of
the LORD, that I die not: 15. But *alſo* [i] thou ſhalt not i 2 Sam. ix. 1. & xxi. 7.
cut off thy kindneſs from my houſe for ever: no not
when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David,
every one from the face of the earth. 16. So Jonathan
‡ made *a covenant* with the houſe of David, *ſaying*, [k] Let ‡ Heb. Cut. Gen. xv. 18.
the LORD even require *it* at the hand of David's enemies. k Gen. ix. 5. 2 Sam. xxi. 7.
17. And Jonathan cauſed David to ſwear again,
‖ becauſe he loved him: for he loved him § as he loved ‖ Or by his love towards him.
his own ſoul. 18. Then Jonathan ſaid to David, To
morrow is the new moon: and thou ſhalt be miſſed, be- § Heb. With the Soul of his ſoul. Chap. xviii. 1. 2 Sam. i. 26. Prov. xvii. 17.
cauſe thy ſeat will be empty. 19. And *when* thou haſt
ſtayed three days, *then* thou ſhalt go down quickly, and
come to the place [l] where thou didſt hide thyſelf, † when l Chap. xix. 2.
the buſineſs was *in hand*, and ſhalt remain by the ſtone ‡ † Heb. To the day of this buſineſs.
Ezel. 20. And I will ſhoot three arrows on the ſide ‡ Or that ſheweth the way.
thereof, as though I ſhot at a mark. 21. And behold,
I will ſend a lad, *ſaying*, Go, find out the arrows. If
I expreſly ſay unto the lad, Behold, the arrows *are* on
this ſide of thee, take them; then come thou: for *there*
is peace to thee, and no hurt; *as* the LORD liveth.
22. But if I ſay thus unto the young man, Behold the
arrows *are* beyond thee: go thy way, for the LORD
hath ſent thee away. 23. And *as touching* the matter
which thou and I have ſpoken of, behold, the LORD
be between thee and me for ever.

v. 9—23. As David was now in ſore diſtreſs, Jonathan endeavours to comfort him with the warmeſt profeſſions of regard.

1. He aſſures him he was perfectly convinced of his innocence, and would conceal nothing from him of his father's deſigns. For greater privacy, he carries him into the fields, and there makes a ſolemn appeal to God of his fidelity and care, to inform him what ſhould paſs, and prays affectionately for God's bleſſing to reſt upon him, as it had done on his father, till for his ſins he was rejected. *Note*, Solemn appeals to God in caſes of importance, are lawful, and give great ſatisfaction.

2. They there confirm the covenant of love between them and their families. Jonathan, perſuaded of David's deſignation to the kingdom, would ſecure his regard to his children, as well as himſelf; that when he came to the throne, he would not cut off him or his poſterity, who might ſeem competitors for it, but ſhew them kindneſs, and that their families might have the entail of their friendſhip delivered down to them. David conſents to the covenant, and with a ſolemn oath they each confirm the inviolable band between them. At parting, Jonathan

calls on God to be between them for ever, keeping them faithful to their vows, or as the avenger if they failed. For Jonathan loved David as his own ſoul, therefore his anxious ſollicitude appeared ſo urgent. *Note*, (1.) It is a great mercy to have the love of thoſe who have the evident bleſſing of God upon them. (2.) Fervent love ſeems often importunate, and is jealous of every ſhadow that might breed a ſeparation.

3. Before they part, if the interview on the third day ſhould be dangerous, Jonathan propoſes a method that would convey the intelligence to him, whilſt he lay hid in the field, *v.* 19—22. that ſo he might retire undiſcovered, and ſave himſelf if danger was before him.

24. ¶ So [m] David hid himſelf in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king ſat him down to eat meat. 25. And the king ſat upon his ſeat, as at other times, *even* upon a ſeat by the wall: and Jonathan aroſe, and Abner ſat by Saul's ſide, and David's place was empty. 26. Nevertheleſs, Saul ſpake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, [n] he *is* not clean; ſurely he *is* not clean. 27. And it came to paſs on the morrow, *which was* the ſecond *day* of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul ſaid unto Jonathan his ſon, [o] Wherefore cometh not [p] the ſon of Jeſſe to meat, neither yeſterday nor to day? 28. And Jonathan anſwered Saul, David earneſtly aſked *leave* of me, *to go* to Beth-lehem: 29. And he ſaid, Let me go, I pray thee, for our family hath a ſacrifice in the city, and my brother, he hath commanded me *to be there*; and now if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away I pray thee, and ſee my brethren: Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table. 30. Then Saul's anger was kindled againſt Jonathan, and he ſaid unto him, Thou ſon † of the perverſe rebellious *woman*, do not I know that thou haſt choſen the ſon of Jeſſe to thine own confuſion, and unto the confuſion of thy mother's nakedneſs? 31. For as long as the ſon of Jeſſe liveth upon the ground, thou ſhalt not be eſtabliſhed, nor thy kingdom: wherefore now ſend and fetch him unto me, for he ‡ ſhall ſurely die. 32. And Jonathan anſwered Saul his father, and ſaid unto him, [q] Wherefore ſhall he be ſlain? what hath he done? 33. And Saul caſt a javelin at him to ſmite him; whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to ſlay David. 34. So Jonathan aroſe from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the ſecond day of the month: for he was grieved for David, becauſe his father had done him ſhame.

[m] Ver. 5.
[n] Lev. xi. 24, &c.
[o] Chap. xix. 9, 15.
[p] Ibid. xxv. 10.
† Heb. Of perverſe rebellion.
‡ Heb. Is the ſon of Death.
[q] Chap. xix. 4, 5. Prov. xxxi. 9.

v. 24—34. As was expected, we have here,

1. Saul enquiring for David. His ſeat was vacant, but the firſt day Saul imputed it to ſome ceremonial uncleanneſs, and therefore repreſſed his enquiries. When the ſecond day's feaſt came, and David did not appear, he can no longer contain; but aſks in diſpleaſure for the ſon of Jeſſe. *Note*, They who come to the Lord's table with rancour in their heart, may be aſſured their offerings are an abomination.

2. Jonathan makes his excuſe; that it was not through want of reſpect to the king, or without leave he was abſent; but a family-ſacrifice, and his elder brother's preſſing invitation had made him deſirous to pay this duty to his relations, and he had aſked of him, and obtained permiſſion to go.

3. Saul's rage can no longer be contained, he publicly abuſes Jonathan with opprobrious names as a baſtard or traitor; reproaches him as a fool, for his regard to his rival, declares his determined purpoſe to deſtroy David, and bids him fetch him inſtantly from Beth-lehem. Jonathan cannot forbear a vindication of his friend, and Saul now mad with him for ſuch an expoſtulation, darts his javelin at him, to kill him. With indignation at ſuch treatment, he riſes from the table, and paſſes the day faſting, through vexation; grieved for himſelf to be ſo vilified and ill uſed, but more grieved for the danger of his friend, whoſe ruin now he ſaw reſolved upon. *Note*, (1.) Foul language is always a ſign of a bad cauſe. (2.) Every angry man is a murderer in heart, and wants nothing but provocation and impunity to make him ſo in deed. (3.) It is a bitter grief to ſee thoſe who are near and dear to us, act vilely and wickedly. (4.) A generous ſpirit can ſooner bear to be inſulted himſelf, than hear his friend abuſed. (5.) Vexation and anguiſh of mind deſtroy the appetite, and make us forget to eat our bread.

35. ¶ And it came to paſs in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field, [r] at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. 36. And he ſaid unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I ſhoot. *And* as the lad ran, he ſhot an arrow † beyond him. 37. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had ſhot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and ſaid, *Is* not the arrow beyond thee? 38. And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make ſpeed, haſte, ſtay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his maſter. 39. But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. 40. And Jonathan gave his ‡ artillery unto his lad, and ſaid unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city. 41. ¶ *And* as ſoon as the lad was gone, David aroſe out of *a place* toward the ſouth, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himſelf three times: and they kiſſed one another, and wept one with another, until David || exceeded. 42. And Jonathan ſaid to David, [s] Go in peace, § foraſmuch as we have ſworn both of us in the name of the LORD, ſaying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my ſeed and thy ſeed for ever. And he aroſe and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

[r] Ver. 19.
† Heb. To paſs over him.
‡ Heb. Inſtruments.
|| Heb. Made it great.
[s] Num. vi. 26. Phil. iv. 7.
§ Or the Lord be witneſs of that which, &c.

v. 35—42. On the third morning, according to appointment, with his lad he walked into the field where David was hid, and ſhot the arrow that carried the fatal tidings. David well underſtood the ſignal, *beyond you*; and concludes the deſperateneſs of his ſituation. Jonathan ſeeing none near, diſmiſſes his lad, and ſeeks one moment's converſation ere they part; perhaps to meet no more; nor did they ever again, but once by ſtealth in a wood, *chap.* xxiii. 16. The ſcene was inexpreſſibly tender; how could it be otherwiſe between ſuch affectionate friends! David, with deepeſt gratitude, acknowledges his obligations to him; then claſp'd in affectionate embraces, diſtreſs unutterable ſtops for a time the power of utterance; whilſt floods of tears ran down their manly cheeks, and beſpeak the bitter anguiſh of their hearts. David exceeded, not becauſe his affection was moſt violent, for tenderer heart than Jonathan's nature never formed, but becauſe his ſituation was moſt afflictive; baniſhed from his friends, his family, his all; treated as an outlaw, each ſtep in danger, and each breath in jeopardy; cut off from the ſanctuary of God, and dragging on, at beſt, in exile, the miſerable remains of a precarious life. But Jonathan ſeeks to conſole and encourage him; reminds him of the covenant betwixt them; and ſince part they muſt, with ſad reluctance, and many a wiſhful look, no doubt, behind them, David departs to ſecure himſelf, and Jonathan carries back his melancholy heart to Gibeah. *Note*, It ſhould be a comfort to us in every trial, that they are ſhort; and if our ſouls are intereſted in the everlaſting covenant eſtabliſhed with the friend of ſinners, we know we ſhall meet him to part no more, where every tear will be wiped from our eyes.

CHAP. XXI.

David having now taken leave, both of Saul's court and camp, and bid farewel to his beloved Jonathan, is henceforward treated as an outlaw, and proclaimed a traitor. Driven by danger and diſtreſs, we have him here in his flight, 1. *Impoſing upon Abimelech the prieſt, to get from him victuals and arms,* ver. 1—9. 2. *Impoſing upon Achiſh, king of Gath, by feigning himſelf mad,* ver. 10—15. *Juſtly are troubles called temptations, for many are by them drawn into ſin.*

1. THEN came David to Nob, to Ahimelech the prieſt: and [a] Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and ſaid unto him, [b] Why *art* thou alone, and no man with thee? 2. And David ſaid unto Ahimelech the prieſt, [c] The king hath commanded me a buſineſs, and hath ſaid unto me, Let no man know any thing of the buſineſs whereabout I ſend thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed *my* ſervants to ſuch and ſuch a place. 3. Now therefore what is under thine hand? Give *me* five *loaves of* bread in mine hand, or what there is preſent. 4. And the prieſt anſwered David, and ſaid, *There is* no common bread under mine hand, but there is [d] hallowed bread; [e] if the young men have kept themſelves at leaſt from women. 5. And David anſwered the prieſt, and ſaid unto him, Of a truth women *have been* kept from us about theſe three days, ſince I came out, and [f] the veſſels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* in a manner common, † yea, though it were ſanctified this day in the veſſel. 6. So the prieſt gave him hallowed *bread*; for there was no bread there, but [g] the ſhew bread that was taken from before the LORD, [h] to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away. 7. Now a certain man of the

[a] Chap. xvi. 4.
[b] Mat. xii. 3.
[c] 1 Kings viii. 46.
[d] Exod. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 5, 9. Mat. xii. 4.
[e] Exod. xix. 15.
[f] 2 Cor. iv. 7. 1 Theſ. iv. 4, 5.
† Or eſpecially as there is other bread this day ſanctified, &c.
[g] Exod. xxv. 30.
[h] Lev. xxiv. 8.

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the ſervants of Saul *was* there that day detained [i] before the LORD; and his name *was* [k] Doeg an Edomite, ‡ the chiefeſt of the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul. 8. ¶ And David ſaid unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand ſpear or ſword? for I have neither brought my ſword nor my weapons with me, becauſe the king's buſineſs required haſte. 9. And the prieſt ſaid, The ſword of Goliath the Philiſtine, whom thou ſleweſt in the valley of Elah, behold, it *is here* wrapt in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take *it*: for *there is* no other ſave that here. And David ſaid, *There is* none like that, give it me.

[i] Iſa. i. 15. Mat. xv. 8. Tit. i. 16.
[k] Pſal. lii. Title.
‡ Heb. The mightieſt among. Pſal. lxxii. 1.

v. 1—9. David is now flying for his life; and in his way being deſtitute of both arms and victuals, he calls at Nob, where the ark lay, in hopes of a ſupply: probably truſting the well-known piety of his character would enſure to him a kind reception from the prieſts of God. But when a man is oppreſſed and diſgraced, he muſt expect to be treated coldly, even by many profeſſed friends.

1. Ahimelech is ſurprized to ſee him alone, and queſtions him about it; ſuſpecting from what was well known, that ſome quarrel had occaſioned his journey; and fearing that he came to take refuge, and ſeek concealment there. *Note*, High places are ſlippery ones: the levee that is crowded to-day, will be deſerted to-morrow, if the king's ſmiles turn into frowns.

2. David diſtreſſed, and from the apparent fears of Ahimelech, little expecting relief if he told the truth, is tempted to give a lying anſwer. The conſequences of which, he lived to lament, as the occaſion of the murder of many innocent perſons; ſo dangerous is every deviation from the truth. He pretends to be on a buſineſs of importance, which required ſecrecy; that he had appointed his ſervants to meet him, and deſires him to give him a ſupply of proviſions for himſelf and them. *Note*, (1.) Let no man be too ſecure, or ſelf-confident; he knows not what temptations are before him, or how weak he is to reſiſt. (2.) We muſt not haſtily conclude a man hath no grace, becauſe we ſee him overtaken with ſin.

3. Ahimelech ſeems ſatisfied with his anſwer; but appears unable to ſupply his wants, except with the ſhew-bread, of which in general it was not lawful for any but the prieſts to eat; though he intimates, that he apprehended, in ſuch an extraordinary caſe, it might be diſpenſed with, under the circumſtance mentioned *ver.* 4. David aſſures him they have been three days from their wives, and clean from all ceremonial impurity, and therefore as the bread was removed from the table, it was in a manner common, and their urgent caſe pleaded a diſpenſation. On this, Ahimelech complies. *Note*, God will have mercy, and not ſacrifice. Circumſtances of neceſſity lawfully claim a diſpenſation for neglecting ceremonial obſervances.

4. David wanted a ſword as well as bread, pretending the haſte of the king's buſineſs, but in truth his own danger which hurried him away unarmed, therefore he deſires Ahimelech to furniſh him with one; but in a prieſt's houſe, no ſuch was found: only he tells him the ſword of Goliath, wrapped up behind the ephod, was there. In David's eye, there is none like it; it appeared happily ominous to be poſſeſſed of that, and a confirmation of his faith, that all his enemies ſhould be made like Goliath to fall before him: thus armed therefore he departs. *Note*, God often comforts his people in their diſtreſſes with ſuch providential incidents, as are ſuited to ſupport their faith.

5. Unhappily one of Saul's ſervants, Doeg, an Edomite, a proſelyte, or one who had ſojourned in Edom, was preſent at this interview; detained before the Lord, on account of ſome vow, or ceremonial impurity; or as an act of religion worſhipping there, whoſe evil report we ſhall quickly hear. *Note*, The devil hath often his ſpies in the houſe of God, who come pretending to worſhip, but in truth to malign, and be miſchievous.

10. ¶ And David aroſe, and [l] fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to [m] Achiſh the king of Gath. 11. And [n] the ſervants of Achiſh ſaid unto him, *Is* not this David the king of the land? did they not ſing one to another of him in dances, ſaying, [o] Saul hath ſlain his thouſands, and David his ten thouſands? 12. And David laid up theſe words in his heart, and [p] was ſore afraid of Achiſh the king of Gath: 13. And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himſelf mad in their hands, and † ſcrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his ſpittle fall down upon his beard. 14. Then ſaid Achiſh unto his ſervants, Lo, you ſee the man is ‡ mad: wherefore *then* have ye brought him to me? 15. Have I need of mad-men, that ye have brought this *fellow* to play the mad-man in my preſence? ſhall this *fellow* come into mine houſe?

[l] 1 Kings xix. 3.
[m] Pſal. xxxiv. Title.
[n] Ibid. lvi. Title.
[o] Chap. xviii. 7. & xxix. 5. Ecclus xlvii. 6.
[p] Gen. xxvi. 7. Pſal. xxxiv. 4. Prov. xxix. 25.
† Or made marks.
‡ Or playeth the fool.

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v. 10—15. No longer in ſafety in the land of Iſrael, David's deſperate circumſtances make him reſolve to throw himſelf into the arms of his mortal enemies, the Philiſtines.

1. He fled to Achiſh, king of Gath, who ſeems to have had a friendſhip for him, and from whom he might hope for protection, as perſecuted now by Saul, with whom the Philiſtines were at war. *Note*, Deſperate diſeaſes call for deſperate remedies.

2. The ſervants of Achiſh are offended at the reception given him, which Achiſh might think politic; but they remembering the former miſchief done them by his hands, and having learned he was expected hereafter to be Iſrael's king, could not but think they cheriſhed an enemy in their boſom.

3. David heard the whiſpers of his enemies, and juſtly apprehenſive of ſome fatal blow in ſecret from them, endeavours to avert it by a ſtratagem, which ſucceeded. He feigned himſelf mad, and acted as a driveller; nor was it at all improbable, that his ill uſage might have had this effect on him. *Note*, (1.) Oppreſſion will ſometimes really make a wiſe man mad. (2.) Though diſſimulation cannot be juſtified, ſelf-preſervation may perhaps plead his excuſe.

4. Achiſh either believing it real, or willing to protect David, by humouring the device, appears diſpleaſed at the madman's preſence; bids his ſervants turn him out of his houſe, as unfit for any employment there, and this gives him an opportunity to eſcape from his enemies. *Note*, In every trial, God can open a way for our eſcape; and can make even our enemies inſtruments of our deliverance.

CHAP. XXII.

David driven from Achiſh, 1. *Eſcapes to the cave of Adullam, whither his relations and others reſort to him,* ver. 1—2. 2. *He removes his parents to Mizpeh,* ver. 3—4. 3. *Has the prophet Gad for his counſellor,* ver. 5. 4. *Saul complains of his ſervants and Jonathan,* ver. 6—8. 5. *Doeg informs him of Ahimelech's kindneſs to David,* ver. 9—10. 6. *Ahimelech and eighty-five prieſts are ſlain for this,* ver. 11—19. 7. *Abiathar alone eſcapes to David,* ver. 20—23.

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1. DAvid therefore departed thence, and eſcaped to [a] the cave Adullam: and when his brethren, and all his father's houſe heard *it*, they went down thither to him. 2. And every one *that was* [b] in diſtreſs, and every one that *was* † in debt, and every one *that was* ‡ diſcontented, gathered themſelves unto him, and [c] he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men. 3. ¶ And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he ſaid unto the king of Moab, [d] Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, *and be* with you, till I know what God will do for me. 4. And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold. 5. ¶ And [e] the prophet Gad ſaid unto David, Abide not in the hold, [f] depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the foreſt of Hareth.

[a] Pſal. cxlii. Title. Heb. xi. 38.
[b] Judg. xi. 3. Mat. xi. 28.
† A creditor, Mat. xviii. 27.
‡ Heb. Bitter of Soul. Pſal. xxxviii. 8. & lv. 8.
[c] Heb. ii. 10.
[d] Gen. xlvii. 11. Exod. xx. 12. 1 Tim. v. 4.
[e] 2 Sam. xxiv. 11.
[f] Deut. viii. 2.

v. 1—5. Since innocence could be no longer his ſecurity, David ſeeks it by his ſword. Having pitched on a fortreſs ſtrong by nature, he reſolves to maintain himſelf there.

1. Here his brethren came to him; having perhaps become obnoxious to Saul by their relation to him; or willing to ſhare his lot, in confidence of his future advancement. And as he wanted an armed force, not to act againſt his king, but defend himſelf from the malice of his perſecutor, he entertained men of deſperate fortunes, who reſorted to him; and thoſe malecontents who were diſpleaſed with Saul's adminiſtration, to the number of four hundred, and he became their captain. *Note*, (1.) They who take part in the afflictions of the people of God, ſhall ſhare with them in their kingdom of glory. (2.) The Lord Jeſus refuſes none; let the deſperate ſinner, that knows not where to flee; let the miſerable debtor, obnoxious to the arreſts of Divine Juſtice; let the diſcontented, who are weary of the dominion of ſin and Satan, come to him, he will be a captain unto them, for he receiveth ſuch.

2. Having a guard for his own perſon, David is ſollicitous to remove his parents to a place of ſafety, as Saul would now probably wreak his vengeance on them and theirs. With the permiſſion of the king of Moab, he brings them to Mizpeh, in Moab, and leaves them there, till he ſhould know what God would do with him; how long, or in what manner he would exerciſe his faith and patience, before he fulfilled his promiſes. *Note*, (1.) A good man cannot but be a dutiful child, and earneſt to ſecure the repoſe of his aged parents. (2.) Whilſt we have the fulleſt aſſurance of God's protection, we muſt be waiting upon him in the way of means, and patiently expect his ſalvation.

3. Gad the prophet, who had joined him in his exile, perhaps

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haps ſent of Samuel to be with him to adviſe him, perſuades him to go into the land of Judah; which being his own tribe, he might expect more friends; and by appearing publickly, would ſhew his own innocence, and confidence in God. David conſents, and takes up his abode in the foreſt of Hareth.

6. ¶ When Saul heard that David was diſcovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah, under a tree in Ramah, having his ſpear in his hand, and all his ſervants *were* ſtanding about him) 7. Then Saul ſaid unto his ſervants that ſtood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites, Will [g] the Son of Jeſſe give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thouſands, and captains of hundreds: 8. That all of you have conſpired againſt me, and *there is* none that ſheweth me that [h] my ſon hath made a league with the ſon of Jeſſe, and *there is* none of you that is ſorry for me, or ſheweth unto me, that my ſon hath ſtirred up my ſervant againſt me, to lie in wait, as at this day? 9. ¶ Then [i] anſwered Doeg the Edomite, (which was ſet over the ſervants of Saul) and ſaid; I ſaw the ſon of Jeſſe coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the ſon of Ahitub. 10. And [k] he enquired of the LORD for him: and gave him victuals, and [l] gave him the ſword of Goliath the Philiſtine. 11. [m] Then the king ſent to call Ahimelech the prieſt the ſon of Ahitub, and all his father's houſe, the prieſts that *were* in Nob: and they came all of them to the king. 12. And Saul ſaid, Hear now, thou ſon of Ahitub: and he anſwered, † Here I *am*, my lord. 13. And Saul ſaid unto him, Why have ye conſpired againſt me, thou and the ſon of Jeſſe; in that thou haſt given him bread, and a ſword, and haſt enquired of God for him, that [n] he ſhould riſe againſt me to lie in wait, as at this day? 14. Then Ahimelech anſwered the king, and ſaid, And who *is ſo* faithful among all thy ſervants, as David, which is the king's ſon in law, and [o] goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine houſe? 15. Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute *any* thing unto his ſervant, *nor* to all the houſe of my father: for thy ſervant knew nothing of all this, leſs or more. 16. And the king ſaid, ‡ Thou ſhalt ſurely die, Ahimelech, thou, and [p] all thy father's houſe. 17. ¶ And the king ſaid unto the ‖ footmen that ſtood about him, [q] Turn, and ſlay the prieſts of the LORD, becauſe their hand alſo *is* with David, and becauſe they knew when he fled, and did not ſhew it to me. But [r] the ſervants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the prieſts of the LORD. 18. And the king ſaid to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon the prieſts. And [s] Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the prieſts, and ſlew on that day fourſcore and five perſons that did wear a linen ephod. 19. And Nob, the city of the prieſts, ſmote he with the edge of the ſword, [t] both men and women, children and ſucklings, and oxen, and aſſes, and ſheep, with the edge of the ſword.

[g] Chap. xx. 27.
[h] Ibid. xviii. 3.
[i] Ezek. xxii. 9.
[k] Ver. 13. Pſal. lii. 2, 4.
[l] Chap. xxi. 6, 9.
[m] Rom. iii. 15.
† Heb. Behold me.
[n] Pſal. cxix. 69. Prov. xix. 5, 9.
[o] Chap. xxi. 2.
‡ Heb. Dying, thou ſhalt die. Prov. xxviii. 15. Mat. ii. 16.
[p] Chap. ii. 30.
‖ Heb. Runners.
[q] 1 Kings xxi. 10, 15.
[r] Exod. i. 17.
[s] Pſal. lii. 1, 5. Acts iv. 28.
[t] Chap. xv. 3.

v. 6—19. No ſooner is David diſcovered, and reported to be raiſing men; and probably, as reports ſeldom fail of ſwelling as they go, his deſign conſtrued into an intention to dethrone Saul, than his invenomed ſpirit breathes forth fury.

1. With his ſpear in his hand, and his guards around him, he burſts forth into a paſſionate upbraiding of his ſervants, as if they were privy to the ſuppoſed treaſon againſt him, and aiders and abetters of David. Knowing the friendſhip ſubſiſting between Jonathan and David, he concludes they were in conſpiracy, and with careſſes, ſeeks to draw the ſuppoſed ſecret from them. He pleads what he had done, and could do for them, to make them his friends, and they could expect nothing as Benjamites from the ſon of Jeſſe; he accuſes them of want of concern for his ſafety, and charges them with his ſuſpicions, as if he had known them to be undoubted facts. *Note*, (1.) It is but too common to have the faithful repreſented as ſeditious, and accuſed as meditating the worſt deſigns. (2.) Jealouſy is ever tormented with its own ſuſpicions.

2. As every man no doubt had full conviction of the innocence of theſe faithful friends, none dared accuſe them. But Doeg the Edomite, to give Saul all the ſatisfaction he could, and to curry favour with the king, informs him of what happened at Nob where he was; of David's coming thither, and Ahimelech's kindneſs to him. Though he ſuppreſſed the circumſtances which would ſhew Ahimelech's innocence, and by his repreſentation, ſeemed to make him an accomplice with David. *Note*, There is an invidious way of repreſenting the truth, which by ſuppreſſing ſome circumſtances, renders the report more malignant than a groſs lie.

3. Ahimelech is inſtantly ſummoned to appear, to anſwer the charge laid againſt him, as guilty of treaſon, in aiding and abetting the king's enemies. He appears at the firſt ſummons, and his brethren with him. The king with inſolence arraigns him; whilſt he reſpectfully anſwers, and pleads his innocence of every traiterous deſign: entirely ignorant of the cauſe of David's journey, he received him with the reſpect due to the king's ſon, and did him every ſervice he required, as preſuming it was the king's buſineſs, in which he was employed. Being a man highly honoured, and uſually ſent on affairs of importance, he conſulted God for him, as he had done often before: and therefore the king ought not to impute his well-meant duty into a crime; it being impoſſible for him, unacquainted as he was with David's circumſtances, to have acted otherwiſe. A clearer defence could not well be made; but how unavailing when he hath to do with an inflamed, partial, and prejudiced judge! *Note*, Innocence is far from being a protection, when power is in the hand of the oppreſſors.

4. The king is deaf to his plea; reſolves his death as a traitor, as if he had conſpired with David againſt him; and not ſatisfied with the blood of one innocent man, he inhumanly bids his ſervants fall on all the *prieſts of the Lord*, as if he would wreak his anger againſt God, by murdering his miniſters. But his ſervants ſhocked at the cruel command, a violation not only of juſtice, but of humanity, and reverencing the ſacred character of the prieſts, refuſe, though at the peril of their lives, to obey him. But fixed is the dire reſolve; Doeg, the accuſer, will not fail to be the executioner: him he commands, and he obeys. Eighty-five who wore an ephod, were murdered on the ſpot; and not glutted with ſo much innocent blood, he ſends him with a party to Nob, and ſlays every creature which breathed with the edge of the ſword; and thus the prophecy againſt Eli's houſe is dreadfully accompliſhed. Who can without horror read ſuch a maſſacre! What is man, when left to the power of the devil? more ſavage than the monſters of the wilderneſs. *Note*, (1.) A wicked tyrannical king will not want inſtruments to execute his cruel decrees. (2.) We muſt not haſtily find fault with God's providence, in permitting ſuch ſcenes of impiety and bloodſhed; the myſtery will by and by be explained, and God be found juſt and righteous in all his judgments.

20. ¶ And one of the ſons of Ahimelech, the ſon of Ahitub, named Abiathar, eſcaped and fled after David. 21. And Abiathar ſhewed David, that Saul had ſlain the LORD's prieſts. 22. And David ſaid unto Abiathar, I knew *it* that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would ſurely tell Saul: [u] I have occaſioned *the death* of all the perſons of thy father's houſe. 23. Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that ſeeketh my life, ſeeketh thy † life: but with me thou *ſhalt be* in ſafeguard.

[u] Pſal. xlii. 2.
† Heb. Soul.

v. 20—23. Tidings of what paſſed at court, had reached Nob before the bloody Doeg arrived thither. Abiathar, therefore, the only ſurviving ſon of Ahimelech, thought it high time to conſult his ſafety, and flies to David, who receives him very affectionately, and aſſures him of his protection; but is exceedingly grieved at the ſad tidings Abiathar brings, eſpecially reflecting how inſtrumental, though undeſignedly, he had been to the death of theſe innocent men. Doeg's preſence there had given him ſuſpicions of ſome miſchief; though the iſſue much exceeded his fears. *Note*, It is a matter of real ſorrow, even innocently to have been the occaſion of other's ſufferings; and how much more, if our own conſciences reproach us with guilt in the matter.

CHAP. XXIII.

We have here, 1. *David reſcuing the city of Keilah out of the hands of the Philiſtines,* ver. 1—6. 2. *His danger from Saul's deſign to ſurprize him, and the people's treachery, which by Divine direction he eſcapes,* ver. 7—13. 3. *Jonathan's viſit to him in a wood,* ver. 14—18. 4. *The information which the Ziphites brought Saul of David's haunts, and Saul's purſuit after him,* ver. 19—25. 5. *David's narrow eſcape out of his hands,* ver. 26—29. Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all.

1. THEN they told David, ſaying, Behold, the Philiſtines fight againſt Keilah, and they rob the threſhing-floors. 2. Therefore [a] David enquired of the LORD, ſaying, Shall I go and ſmite theſe Philiſtines? And the LORD ſaid unto David, Go, and ſmite the Philiſtines, and ſave Keilah. 3. And David's men ſaid unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much

[a] Judg. i. 1. Ezra viii. 21.

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much more then if we come to Keilah againſt the armies of the Philiſtines? 4. Then David enquired of the LORD [b] yet again: and the LORD anſwered him, and ſaid, Ariſe, go down to Keilah: for I will deliver the Philiſtines into thine hand. 5. So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philiſtines, and brought away their cattle, and ſmote them with a great ſlaughter: ſo David ſaved the inhabitants of Keilah. 6. And it came to paſs [c] when Abiathar, the ſon of Ahimelech, fled to David to Keilah, *that* he came down *with* [d] an ephod in his hand.

[b] Judg. vi. 39.
[c] Chap. xxii. 20.
[d] Exod. xxviii. 6, 41.

v. 1—6. Though David is driven from the country as a traitor, we find him diſcharging the part of a bold and loyal ſubject againſt his country's enemies.

1. Keilah, a city on the border of the Philiſtines being beſieged, tidings are brought him of it, and he reſolves, with God's permiſſion, to attempt its relief. Dangerous as his ſituation was, he nobly prefers the public ſafety to his own. But firſt he would enquire of the Lord, which he did, either by the prophet Gad, or by Abiathar, who about this time joined him, when he was near Keilah, ſay ſome, or after he had raiſed the ſiege as others. The anſwer was agreeable to his wiſhes, and God promiſes him victory. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not reſent the injuries we have received, ſo as to withdraw our help, when the diſtreſs of our country calls for it. (2.) We ſhall ſpeed well, when we take God's counſel and bleſſing along with us.

2. His men ſeem in no wiſe inclined to the expedition; they object they were ſcarcely ſecure where they were, and how much greater would be their danger if they expoſed themſelves, where they had as much to fear from the ſword of Saul, as the army of the Philiſtines. *Note*, The diſcouragement we meet with from our friends, is often more diſheartning than the avowed oppoſition of our enemies.

3. Once more David enquires of God for the ſatisfaction of his little band; and having received an expreſs command to go, and promiſe of ſucceſs, they are content to follow him, and accordingly they fall upon their enemy, give them a total overthrow, and not only relieve Keilah, but make an incurſion into the country of the Philiſtines, and return laden with ſpoils. *Note*, They who go out under a Divine call, will return triumphant over all their enemies.

7. ¶ And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah: and Saul ſaid, God hath [e] delivered him into mine hand; for [f] he is ſhut in by entring into a town that hath gates and bars. 8. And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to beſiege David and his men. 9. ¶ And David knew that Saul ſecretly practiſed miſchief againſt him; and he ſaid to Abiathar the prieſt, [g] bring hither the ephod. 10. Then ſaid David, O LORD God of Iſrael, thy ſervant hath † certainly heard that Saul ſeeketh to come to Keilah to deſtroy the city [h] for my ſake. 11. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down as thy ſervant hath heard? O LORD God of Iſrael, I beſeech thee, tell thy ſervant. And [i] the LORD ſaid, He will come down. 12. Then ſaid David, Will the men of Keilah ‡ deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? and the LORD ſaid, They will deliver *thee* up. 13. ¶ Then David and his men, *which were* about ſix hundred, aroſe and departed out of Keilah, and went whitherſoever they could go: and it was told Saul that David was eſcaped from Keilah: and he forbare to go forth.

[e] Exod. xv. 9.
[f] Ibid. xiv. 3.
[g] Num. xxvii. 21. Chap. xxx. 7.
† Heb. Hearing, hath heard.
[h] Chap. xxii. 19. Eſth. iii. 6. Pſal. xliv. 22.
[i] Mat. vii. 7.
‡ Heb. Shut up. 1 Chron. xiv. 10.

v. 7—13. How often do we place our ſafety in that which moſt endangers it! David in a fortified city might hope to be ſecure, but here his peril is greater than in the deſart.

1. Saul hears of him, and though he no doubt well knew the generous action which had brought David thither, he contrives his deſtruction; and fooliſhly as wickedly concludes that it was God's doing, to give him this advantage againſt his rival, by ſhutting him up, where, if his army ſurrounded the city, it was impracticable for him to eſcape. He pretends war againſt the Philiſtines, but in fact deſigns the armament againſt David, and ſummons all Iſrael to attend him, to go down to Keilah. *Note*, (1.) Wicked men often cloak with fair pretexts the fouleſt deſigns. (2.) When providence ſeems to favour a bad cauſe, thoſe who are engaged in it, are fooliſhly ready to conclude God is on their ſide.

2. David had friends at court, who took care to warn him of ſome miſchief deſigned him. He therefore inſtantly has recourſe to God, and makes uſe of that ephod which the Lord had ſo graciouſly ſent him. He humbly begs God to direct him. He aſks whether Saul would come, and the Keilites betray or defend him? And God kindly informs him of Saul's intentions, and that if he ſtayed in Keilah, they would deliver him up. God knows the thoughts and intentions of men, and not only foreſees what will happen, but what would have happened, if he had not interpoſed to prevent it. *Note*, (1.) They who ſeem our firmeſt friends when danger is diſtant, will often, when it threatens them near, deſert us to ſecure themſelves. (2.) God knoweth how to deliver his people out of temptation, and to diſappoint the ſecret purpoſes of their enemies.

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3. David hereupon leaves Keilah: his little army being now increaſed to ſix hundred men, and Saul having heard his eſcape, deſiſts from this enterprize, to follow other methods of deſtroying him. *Note*, All the diſappointments of God will not alter the mind that is bent upon miſchief.

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14. ¶ And David abode in the wilderneſs in ſtrong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderneſs of Ziph: and [k] Saul ſought him every day, but [l] God delivered him not into his hand. 15. And David ſaw that Saul was come out to ſeek his life: and David *was* in the wilderneſs of Ziph in a wood. 16. And Jonathan Saul's ſon aroſe, and went to David into the wood, and [m] ſtrengthened his hand in God. 17. And he ſaid unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father ſhall not find thee, and thou ſhalt be king over Iſrael, and I ſhall be next unto thee; and that alſo [n] Saul my father knoweth. 18. And [o] they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his houſe.

[k] Chap. xxvi. 20. Heb. xi. 38.
[l] Pſal. xxxiv. 6. & xcvii. 10.
[m] Iſa. xxxv. 34.
[n] Chap. xxiv. 20. Acts vii. 51.
[o] Chap. xviii. 3. & xx. 16.

v. 14—18. Being diſappointed of his ſcheme on Keilah, Saul ſets himſelf in reſtleſs malice to the purſuit of David, who, without reſiſtance, ſought only by flight and concealment to eſcape his fury.

1. David ſecures himſelf in places hard of acceſs, in a wilderneſs, a wood, a mountain, ſhifting his abode that it might be more difficult to find him: attempting neither to ſtir up rebellion, nor oppoſe force by force, but leaving his caſe entirely in God's hands, and waiting his leiſure.

2. God continues to protect him, and to diſappoint all Saul's indefatigable endeavours to diſcover and deſtroy him. Vain is might or cunning againſt the Lord: though all the powers of hell, and all the malice of earth join with the corruption within, to make a prey of the redeemed ſinner, yet none can pluck him out of the Saviour's arms.

3. Jonathan, his faithful friend, by appointment meets him once in a wood, during this purſuit, and greatly encourages his confidence in God. Though the interview muſt have been fatal if diſcovered, yet love is ſtronger than death, and will break through all fears for the enjoyment of their company who are dear to us. David might juſtly fear whilſt thus purſued, but Jonathan bids him be of good courage, God would preſerve him from his father, the kingdom would infallibly be his own, and Saul himſelf, tho' thus fighting againſt God, was convinced of it; he gladly reſigns to him, content to be next him, and happy to ſee his friend ſit on the throne, that by hereditary right, would have deſcended to himſelf. Here they renew their covenant, and part; not according to Jonathan's fond wiſhes, to meet again in peace, but (ſo providence ordained) to ſee each other in the fleſh no more. *Note*, (1.) The words of a pious friend are a reviving cordial to a fainting heart. (2.) Where true love is, even kingdoms are not too great to part with. (3.) Renewed engagements are a ſtrengthening to the bands of friendſhip; and the friend of Jeſus is glad of every opportunity to repeat his vows of fidelity to him.

19. ¶ [p] Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, ſaying, Doth not David hide himſelf with us in ſtrong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* on † the ſouth of Jeſhimon? 20. Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the deſire of thy ſoul to come down, and ‡ our part ſhall be to deliver him into the king's hand. 21. And Saul ſaid, Bleſſed *be* ye of the LORD; for [q] ye have compaſſion on me. 22. Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and ſee his place where his ‖ haunt is, *and* who hath ſeen him there: for it is told me, *that* he dealeth very ſubtilly. 23. See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himſelf, and come ye again to me, with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it ſhall come to paſs, if he be in the land, that I will ſearch him out throughout all the thouſands of Judah. 24. And they aroſe, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men *were* in the wilderneſs of Maon, in the plain on the ſouth of Jeſhimon. 25. Saul alſo and his men went to ſeek *him*; and they told David: wherefore he came down § into a rock, and abode in the wilderneſs of Maon:

[p] Pſal. liv. 3.
† Heb. The right hand.
‡ Heb. It becometh us.
[q] Chap. xxii. 8.
‖ Heb. Foot. Job v. 14. Iſa. viii. 9, 10.
§ Or from the rock.

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on: and when Saul heard *that*, he purſued after David in the wilderneſs of Maon. 26. And Saul went on this ſide of the mountain, and David and his men on that ſide of the mountain: and [r] David made haſte to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men [s] compaſſed David and his men round about to take them. 27. ¶ But [t] there came a meſſenger unto Saul, ſaying, Haſte thee, and come; for the Philiſtines have † invaded the land. 28. Wherefore Saul returned from purſuing after David, and went againſt the Philiſtines: therefore they called that place ‡ Sela-Hammahle-koth. 29. ¶ And David went up from thence, and dwelt in ſtrong holds at En-gedi.

[r] Pſal. xxxi. 22.
[s] Pſal. cxviii. 11, 12.
[t] Pſal. xlvi. 1. Luke iv. 29, 30. Rev. xii. 16.
† Heb. Spread themſelves upon, &c.
‡ i. e. The rock of diviſions.

v. 19—29. In his own tribe, David hoped for protection, but alas! a man's foes are often thoſe of his own houſhold.

1. The Ziphites, either afraid of Saul's cruelty if they concealed their knowledge of David's haunts, or to ingratiate themſelves with him by ſo acceptable a piece of intelligence, inform the king where he was, invite him to come, and promiſe him to deliver up David into his hand.

2. Saul embraces the welcome offer, bleſſing God and them for their regard to him, whilſt none about him ſeem to compaſſionate his troubles. To make his prey the ſurer, he bids them get diſtinct information, and he would go with them, and ſeize him. *Note*, (1.) They are truly miſerable men, whoſe pride, ambition, malice, and envy prey upon them; and ſuffer them not to enjoy the bleſſings they poſſeſs. (2.) God mocks at men's impotent attempts, and when they ſeem ſureſt to ſucceed, he baffles and confounds them with their own devices.

3. The delay of Saul gave David time to eſcape; he received intelligence of the plot, and retired to the wilderneſs of Maon; ſo that when the Ziphites led down Saul's army, he was fled. However, Saul purſues him, and was ſo near overtaking him, that whilſt his troops aſcended a mountain on one ſide, David and his men fled on the other. Juſt at that critical juncture, news is brought Saul from court, that the Philiſtines had invaded the country; probably they had heard of Saul's abſence, and had fallen upon Benjamin, where Saul's eſtate lay: this makes him ſtay the purſuit, and return to make head againſt the invaders, which gives David an opportunity to eſcape to the ſtrong holds at En-gedi; and the place, in memory of this deliverance, was called Sela-Hammahle-koth, the Rock of Diviſion. *Note*, (1.) God has various ways of delivering his people; even the Philiſtines ſhall ſometimes be made inſtruments of his mercy to them. (2.) They who have fled to the mountain of refuge Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall find ſuch a ſtrong rock of diviſion between them and danger, that none ſhall be able to hurt them.

CHAP. XXIV.

We have here, 1. *The malice of Saul in ſeeking David's life, and David's generoſity in ſparing his, when in his power*, ver. 1—8. 2. *How pathetically he reaſoned with Saul upon this*, ver. 9—15. 3. *The good impreſſion this made upon Saul for the preſent*, ver. 16—22.

1. AND it came to paſs [a] when Saul was returned from following the Philiſtines, that [b] it was told him, ſaying, Behold David *is* in the wilderneſs of En-gedi. 2. Then Saul took three thouſand choſen men out of all Iſrael, and [c] went to ſeek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. 3. And he came to the ſheep-cotes by the way, where *was* a cave, and Saul went in [d] to cover his feet: and [e] David and his men remained in the ſides of the cave. 4. And the men of David ſaid unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD ſaid unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayſt do to him as it ſhall ſeem good unto thee. Then David aroſe, and cut off the ſkirt of Saul's robe privily. 5. And it came to paſs afterwards, that [f] David's heart ſmote him, becauſe he had cut off Saul's ſkirt. 6. And he ſaid unto his men, [g] The LORD forbid that I ſhould do this thing unto my maſter the LORD's anointed, to ſtretch forth mine hand againſt him, ſeeing he is the anointed of the LORD. 7. So David † ſtayed his ſervants with theſe words, and ſuffered them not to riſe againſt Saul: but Saul aroſe up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.

[a] Chap. xxiii. 28.
[b] Ezek. xxii. 9. Hoſ. vii. 3.
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[c] Pſal. xxxviii. 12.
[d] Judg. iii. 24.
[e] Pſal. lvii. Title. & cxlii. Title.
[f] 2 Sam. xxiv. 10.
[g] Chap. xxvi. 10. Mat. v. 44. Rom. xii. 17.
† Heb. Cut off. Chap. xxv. 33.

v. 1—7. No ſooner hath Saul checked the Philiſtines, than he becomes more ſollicitous to deſtroy David, than improve his victory over the nation's enemies: he therefore returns to the purſuit, and as it would be inconvenient to take all his army in ſo rocky and mountainous a country; with three thouſand picked men, he climbs the precipices of En-gedi. And here we have,

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1. The danger into which Saul is brought. In the heat of the day, fatigued probably, with the toil of mounting theſe craggy ſteeps, he retires into a cave *to cover his feet*, wrapping himſelf up in his garments, for a little repoſe. In this cave lay David and his men concealed; perhaps a party of them only: or if they were all there, it need not appear ſtrange, as caves by nature or art have been not uncommon, where a much greater number might be hid; and as it was all dark within, Saul diſcovered nothing of them. *Note*, When we lie down on our beds, we know not what dangers compaſs us about; how ought we then ever to commend our ſouls to God, ere we cloſe our eyes in ſleep, that if we never wake again, it may be well with us!

2. The deliverance he obtains through David's generoſity, and pious regard to God. His men urge him to take the advantage which Divine Providence had given him, and plead the promiſe God had made him: but David better underſtood theſe than his ſervants, and therefore ſtarts back from the propoſal with abhorrence. His loyalty to his king, and his duty to God, forbid the deed: nor would he ſuffer them to do Saul the leaſt hurt, but only himſelf ſilently, during his ſleep, cut off the ſkirt of his robe; and even for this his heart ſmote him, leaſt it might ſeem putting an indignity upon his ſovereign. *Note*, (1.) A tender conſcience will ſtart, not only at evident crimes, but at the appearance of evil. (2.) We may not take all the advantages, even againſt our enemies, God's providence gives us, but rather ſeek to overcome them with patience and kindneſs. (3.) Nothing can ever excuſe or juſtify embruing our hands in the blood of our ſovereign, though he were never ſo tyrannical, unjuſt, or bloody a perſecutor. (4.) When temptation comes in never ſo pleaſing a form, we muſt turn from it, as from the face of a ſerpent.

8. David alſo aroſe afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, ſaying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David ſtooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himſelf. 9. ¶ And David ſaid to Saul, [h] Wherefore heareſt thou men's words, ſaying, Behold, David ſeeketh thy hurt? 10. Behold, this day thine eyes have ſeen, how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave, and *ſome* bad *me* kill thee, but *mine eye* ſpared thee, and I ſaid, I will not put forth mine hand againſt my lord, for he *is* the LORD's anointed. 11. Moreover, [i] my father, ſee, yea, ſee the ſkirt of thy robe in mine hand: for in that I cut off the ſkirt of thy robe, and killed thee not; know thou and ſee, that [k] *there is* neither evil nor tranſgreſſion in mine hand, and I have not ſinned againſt thee; yet [l] thou hunteſt my ſoul to take it. 12. [m] The LORD judge between me and thee, and [n] the LORD avenge me of thee: but [o] mine hand ſhall not be upon thee. 13. As ſaith the proverb of the ancients, [p] Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand ſhall not be upon thee. 14. After whom is the king of Iſrael come out? after whom doſt thou purſue? [q] after a dead dog, after a flea. 15. The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and ſee, and [r] plead my cauſe, and deliver me out of thine hand.

[h] Pſal. ci. 5. Prov. xvi. 28. & xvii. 9.
[i] Prov. xv. 1.
[k] Pſal. xxxv. 7. Prov. i. 11. John xv. 25.
[l] Ver. 2. Chap. xxvi. 20.
[m] Gen. xvi. 5.
[n] Pſal. xciv. 1. Rom. xii. 19. Rev. vi. 10.
[o] Chap. xxvi. 9.
[p] Pſal. vii. 16. & ix. 16. Prov. v. 22.
[q] Chap. xxvi. 20. 2 Sam. ix. 8.
[r] Pſal. xxxv. 1. & xliii. 1. Mic. vii. 9.

v. 8—15. Saul, when his nap was over, unſuſpicious of what had paſſed, ariſes and departs; David quickly follows him, and ere he was gone far, cries after him with the moſt honourable title, My lord the king; and bows before him with the deepeſt reſpect. Surpriſed, no doubt, greatly at the voice, he turns; more ſurpriſed at the perſon, and moſt with the diſcourſe which was addreſſed to him by his pious ſon and loyal ſubject.

1. He wiſely and politely lays the blame of Saul's conduct on his courtiers rather than himſelf; and many ſuch as Doeg, no doubt there were, that envied David's preferment. The courts of princes abound with ſycophants: it is difficult to ſee with their own eyes; and the beſt friends of their country, repreſented through this medium, are often made to appear, and are treated, as her ſworn enemies.

2. He produces the ſtrongeſt evidence of his innocence, in that day's occurrence: ſo far from ſeeking Saul's life, when urged to ſlay him when lying at his mercy, the ſkirt he held up proclaimed how tender he was of his life; he reverenced him as God's anointed, he reſpected him as his king; and he adds the endearing name of father, as a reaſon both of rejecting ſo wicked a propoſal, and to awaken the tenderneſs of a father's bowels towards a ſon ſo dutiful, and a ſervant ſo faithful. *Note*, No provocation can vindicate regicide.

3. He ſolemnly proteſts it never was his intention, and never would be his deſire to avenge himſelf: he referred the matter wholly to God, and obſerves, according to an ancient proverb,

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Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked; as a man's heart is, ſo are his actions: had he harboured any ill deſign, it muſt then have undoubtedly appeared; therefore Saul might be aſſured of his innocence and loyalty. *Note*, (1.) *As the ſaying is*, conveys many a good admonition; the words of the wiſe deſerve to be long remembred, and often quoted. (2.) The only ſafe concluſion of a man's temper is certainly from his ways. An evil tree beareth not good fruit.

4. He expoſtulates with him not only how unbecoming a good man it was to purſue the innocent, but how unbecoming a great king to perſecute one ſo much his inferior, a ſhepherd, an exile, leaping as a flea from hill to hill for ſafety; and as worthleſs and unable to make reſiſtance as a dead dog. *Note*, Yielding pacifies wrath: to humble ourſelves before others, is the beſt way to keep them from trampling upon us, if they have any nobleneſs of ſpirit remaining.

Laſtly, he reſts his cauſe in the hands of the great judge and avenger, and truſts he will plead for him now, and ſtand by him, if the king ſtill refuſes to be convinced by ſuch undeniable evidence of his innocency. *Note*, It is the comfort of the oppreſſed that they have a tribunal to appeal to, where juſtice ſhall be done them. The laſt day at leaſt will be our vindication from every malignant accuſation.

16. ¶ And it came to paſs, [s] when David had made an end of ſpeaking theſe words unto Saul, that Saul ſaid, *Is* this thy voice, [t] my ſon David? and Saul lift up his voice and wept. 17. And he ſaid to David, [u] Thou *art* more righteous than I: for thou haſt rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. 18. And thou haſt ſhewed this day, how that thou haſt dealt well with me: foraſmuch as when the LORD had † delivered me into thine hand, thou killedſt me not. 19. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good, for that thou haſt done unto me this day. 20. And now behold, [x] I know well that thou ſhalt ſurely be king, and that the kingdom of Iſrael ſhall be eſtabliſhed in thine hand. 21. Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my ſeed after me, and that thou wilt not deſtroy my name out of my father's houſe. 22. And [y] David ſware unto Saul; and Saul went home: but [z] David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

[s] Prov. xv. 1.
[t] Chap. xviii. 27.
[u] Chap. xxvi. 21. Pſal. xxxvii. 6.
† Heb. Shut me up.
[x] Chap. xxiii. 17.
[y] 2 Sam. xxi. 7, &c.
[z] Mat. x. 16. John ii. 24.

v. 16—22. Such a conduct, and ſo pathetic an expoſtulation, quite diſarmed Saul's malice; for what ſtony heart could but relent before ſuch evidence?

1. He burſts into tears, of no feigned remorſe, overcome with the kindneſs of his perſecuted and innocent ſon. *Note*, Many a ſinner is brought to his tears, and haſty reſolutions againſt his ſins, whoſe heart is unchanged, and who will notwithſtanding weep in eternal darkneſs.

2. He acknowledges David's uprightneſs, admires his uncommon behaviour to him, ſo unlike what he in ſuch circumſtances would have done, and prays that God would reward him for ſuch unparalleled generoſity. *Note*, (1.) There may be a real confeſſion of ſin, when there is no true repentance for it. (2.) Nothing ſo confounds a carnal world, as the greatneſs of a chriſtian's ſoul, in his love towards his enemies. (3.) The leaſt we can do for thoſe who are kind to us, is to pray for them.

3. He profeſſes his conviction of the kingdom's deſcending to him. David's behaviour confirms the well-known anointing of Samuel: perhaps too, Samuel's ſkirt, which was rent in Saul's hand, might now be remembred by him, when his own ſkirt was cut off, and the threatning then pronounced be brought to his mind. *Note*, God's word will be fulfilled in its ſeaſon, and even his enemies ſhall be forced to own him faithful.

4. So convinced is Saul now, that oppoſition is vain; that he requires of David an oath, not to extirpate his family when he came to the throne; which David ſolemnly makes, and religiouſly obſerved, maintaining Mephiboſheth, and revenging the murder of Iſhboſheth. The ſons of Rizpah, ſlain at the requeſt of the Gibeonites, ſeem to have been illegitimate; and as it was done by divine appointment, that exculpates David.

5. The ſolemn oath being given, they part in peace; Saul to his houſe, till his wonted enmity revived again, and David to his ſtrong hold, little caring to truſt his ſafety on ſo precarious a foundation as Saul's momentary relenting. *Note*, (1.) It is prudent to guard againſt a known enemy. (2.) Fits of partial repentance never laſt long.

CHAP. XXV.

Though Saul gives him a breathing time, David's troubles continue, 1. *In Samuel's death*, ver. 1. 2. *In Nabal's churliſhneſs*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *David's requeſt to him*, ver. 4—9. 4. *His churliſh anſwer*, ver. 10—12. 5. *David's reſentment*, ver. 13, 21, 22. 6. *Abigail's care to prevent any miſchief enſuing*, ver. 14—20. 7. *Her addreſs to David to pacify him*, ver. 23—31. 8. *David's favourable reception of her*, ver. 32—35. 9. *The death of Nabal*, ver. 36—38. 10. *Abigail's marriage to David*, ver. 39—44.

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1. AND [a] Samuel died, and all the Iſraelites were gathered together, and [b] lamented him, and buried him in his houſe at Ramah. And David aroſe, and went down to the wilderneſs of Paran.

[a] Chap. xxviii. 3. Ecclus xlvi. 13, 20.
[b] Gen. i. 11. Prov. x. 7.

v. 1. The beſt of men are dying worms. Samuel departs in peace: he had lived highly reſpected, and dies univerſally lamented. His laſt days he had ſpent far from a buſy world, in the pleaſing employment of preſiding in the ſchool of the prophets at Naioth, where he was at leiſure to look forward to that reſt, to which he was going, and wait his joyful diſmiſſion. He was buried in Ramah, in his own houſe or garden, and all Iſrael mourned his loſs; a loſs the more ſenſibly felt in the preſent diſtracted condition of their country, under Saul's outrageous government. David hereupon retires to Paran, that he might be more out of the way of Saul. *Note*, (1.) In age it becomes us particularly to look forward, and as we grow nearer our journey's end, to prepare for our great change. (2.) The death of a great and faithful miniſter will draw forth tears of real grief from all who know the invaluable bleſſing they have loſt, and who ſenſibly feel the want of his admonition, preaching, and prayers.

2. And *there was* a man in Maon, [c] whoſe poſſeſſions *were* in Carmel, and the man *was* very great, and he had three thouſand ſheep, and a thouſand goats: and he was ſhearing his ſheep in Carmel. 3. Now the name of the man *was* † Nabal, and the name of his wife ‡ Abigail: and ſhe *was* a woman of good underſtanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man *was* churliſh, and evil in his doings, and he *was* of the houſe of Caleb. 4. ¶ And David heard in the wilderneſs, that [d] Nabal did ſhear his ſheep. 5. And David ſent out ten young men, and David ſaid unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and ‖ greet him in my name: 6. And thus ſhall ye ſay to him that liveth *in proſperity*, Peace *be* both to thee, and [e] peace *be* to thine houſe, and peace *be* unto all that thou haſt. 7. And now I have heard that thou haſt ſhearers: now thy ſhepherds which were with us, [f] we hurt them not, [g] neither was there ought miſſing unto them all the while they were in Carmel. 8. Aſk thy young men, and they will ſhew thee: wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: (for [h] we come in a good day) give, I pray thee, whatſoever cometh to thine hand unto thy ſervants, and to thy ſon David. 9. And when David's young men came, they ſpake to Nabal according to all thoſe words in the name of David, and ceaſed. 10. ¶ And Nabal anſwered David's ſervants, and ſaid, [i] Who *is* David? and who *is* the ſon of Jeſſe? There be many ſervants now adays, [k] that break away every man from his maſter. 11. Shall I then take [l] my bread, and my water, and my fleſh that I have killed for my ſhearers, and [m] give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?

[c] Pſal. xvii. 14. & lxxiii. 2, 3.
† i. e. A fool. Ver 25.
‡ i. e. Her father's joy.
[d] Gen. xxxviii. 13.
‖ Heb. Aſk him in my name of peace.
[e] Luke x. 5.
[f] 1 Pet. iii. 8.
[g] Ver. 15, 21.
[h] Deut. xii. 18. Neh. viii. 10. Eſth. ix. 19.
[i] Exod. v. 2. Chap. xxii. 9. Pſal. lxxiii. 7, 8. & cxxiii. 3, 4.
[k] Chap. xxii. 2.
[l] Deut. viii. 17. Job xxxi. 25.
[m] Ecclus. xi. 1. Gal. vi. 10.

v. 2—11. We have here,

1. An account of Nabal, his family, and circumſtances: His name ſignifies a fool, and his conduct too much verified its propriety: he was ſprung from a noble ſtock, the diſtinguiſhed Caleb; but like many an other, became the reproach of his anceſtors. A man indeed of vaſt wealth, which made him great in the eyes of men, but of a mean and little ſpirit; and, as mean ſpirits uſually are, inſolent, churliſh, and overbearing. His wife was of a character the reverſe of his; her name Abigail, *her father's joy*, a woman of excellent underſtanding, generous in her temper, and as much adorned with the accompliſhments of her perſon, as the beauties of her mind. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt gifts of this world, are often poſſeſſed by thoſe who have neither wiſdom nor grace to improve them. (2.) Many a wife, like Abigail, for the great eſtate, is doomed, by inhuman parents, to bear the yoke of ſuch a Nabal. But how little happineſs can be expected from ſuch an union!

2. David being in diſtreſs, makes application to Nabal for relief. Hearing when he kept his ſhearing feaſt, he ſends a very humble and reſpectful meſſage to him, wiſhing him all peace and proſperity, begs the favour of him to give him ought that came to hand, if of the ſuperfluities of the banquet, and intimates the care he and his men had taken of Nabal's ſervants

in the wilderneſs, where not only no violence was offered them, but as the ſhepherds acknowledged, they were a protection and guard to them from danger day and night. *Note*, (1.) It becomes the poor to uſe entreaties. It is better to beg than ſteal. (2.) Whilſt we feaſt, we ſhould remember thoſe who famiſh, and break our bread to the hungry. (3.) One good turn deſerves another: though we cannot claim it as our right, yet we may expect it as the debt of gratitude.

3. Nabal's anſwer is as rude and unmannerly, as David's meſſage was reſpectful and ſubmiſſive. Not content with a ſurly refuſal, he adds inſolent abuſe; as many a covetous man, like him, ſtill drives the poor beggar from his door, and by calling him vagrant, ſeeks to excuſe himſelf from relieving him. He ſpeaks with diſdain of the ſon of Jeſſe, whoſe praiſe the daughters of the land had ſo loudly proclaimed, as a poor inconſiderable fellow, whom nobody of credit knew; treats him and his companions as runagates and vagabonds, and refuſes them a draught of water, or a morſel of bread: they were his own, and he ſhould not ſpare a crumb. *Note*, (1.) A foul tongue is always a ſign of a wicked heart. (2.) The beſt of men have been treated with the moſt ſcurrilous invectives, and illiberal reproach: let us not count it ſtrange, if we meet with the ſame. (3.) It is greatly to be feared, that they who appear ſo very tenacious of their own, have uſed the ſame hard hand in getting as ſaving.

12. So David's young men [n] turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all thoſe ſayings. 13. And David ſaid unto his men, [o] Gird you on every man his ſword. And they girded on every man his ſword, and David alſo girded on his ſword: and there went up after David about four hundred men, and two hundred abode by the ſtuff. 14. ¶ But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, ſaying, Behold, David ſent meſſengers out of the wilderneſs to ſalute our maſter; and he † railed on them. 15. But the men *were* very good unto us, and [p] we were not hurt, neither miſſed we any thing as long as we were converſant with them, when we were in the fields. 16. They were [q] a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them, keeping the ſheep. 17. Now therefore know and conſider what thou wilt do: for evil is determined againſt our maſter, and againſt all his houſhold: for he *is ſuch* [r] a ſon of Belial, that *a man* cannot ſpeak to him.

[n] Luke xiv. 21.
[o] Joſh. ix. 14. Chap. xxiii. 10.
† Heb. Flew upon them.
[p] Ver. 7, 21. Phil. ii. 15.
[q] Job i. 10.
[r] Deut. xiii. 13.

v. 12—17. David's ſervants ſaw it in vain to expoſtulate, and were too well taught to return railing for railing, but returned, and let David know the ill uſage and affront put upon him; whereupon,

1. David in great wrath girds on his ſword, aſſembles his troops, and ſwears raſhly, and too paſſionately, *ver.* 21, 22, to leave no man of Nabal's family alive by morning light. They march four hundred ſtrong immediately, and now death and ruin hang over Nabal's head. *Note*, (1.) When we meet with unkindneſs from thoſe, of whom we had reaſon to expect other treatment, it is apt to exaſperate us more, than the greateſt injuries we receive from others. (2.) Violent paſſions are deadly dangerous, and deeply ſinful. (3.) The beſt of men, when taken off their guard, have given ſad proofs of the power of remaining corruption in them. Let it teach us to watch and pray, that we fall not into temptation.

2. One of Nabal's ſervants, juſtly apprehenſive of the conſequences, ſteps aſide to acquaint his miſtreſs; informs her of the meſſage ſent by David, and the railings of his maſter; the obligations they were under to David and his men, and the care they took of them in the wilderneſs; and begs her to conſider what to do; for from ſomething which might have dropped from the meſſengers as they retired, or the greatneſs of the provocation, he concludes David would revenge ſuch inſolent abuſe; and he applied to her, for ſhe knew, as well as himſelf, Nabal's temper, that to ſpeak to him would be uſeleſs, and but provoke him more. *Note*, He is a bad maſter indeed, of whom his ſervants give ſuch a character.

18. ¶ Then Abigail [s] made haſte, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five ſheep ready dreſſed, and five meaſures of parched *corn*, and an hundred cluſters of raiſins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid *them* on aſſes. 19. And ſhe ſaid unto her ſervants, [t] Go on before me, behold, I come after you: but ſhe told not her huſband Nabal. 20. And it was *ſo, as* ſhe rode on the aſs, that ſhe came down by the covert of the hill, and behold, David and his men came down againſt her, and ſhe met them. 21. (Now David had ſaid, [u] Surely in vain have I kept all that this *fellow* hath in the wilderneſs, ſo that nothing was miſſed of all that *pertained* unto him: and [x] he hath requited me evil for good. 22. [y] So and more alſo do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that *pertain* to him, by the morning light, [z] any that piſſeth againſt the wall.) 23. And when Abigail ſaw David, ſhe haſted, and [a] lighted off the aſs, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herſelf to the ground, 24. And fell at his feet, and ſaid, Upon me, my lord, *upon* me *let this* iniquity *be*, and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, ſpeak in thine † audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. 25. Let not my lord, I pray thee, ‡ regard this man of Belial, *even* Nabal: for as his name *is*, ſo *is* he; [b] Nabal *is* his name, and folly *is* with him: but I thine handmaid ſaw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didſt ſend. 26. Now therefore, my lord, [c] *as* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, ſeeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming § to *ſhed* blood, and from [d] avenging thyſelf with thine own hand: now let thine enemies, and they that ſeek evil to my lord, [e] be as Nabal. 27. And now this ‖ bleſſing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that † follow my lord. 28. I pray thee, forgive the treſpaſs of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord [f] a ſure houſe: becauſe my lord [g] fighteth the battles of the LORD, and [h] evil hath not been found in thee *all* thy days. 29. Yet a man is riſen to purſue thee, and to ſeek thy ſoul: but [i] the ſoul of my lord ſhall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD thy God; and the ſouls of thine enemies, them ſhall [k] he ſling out, *as out* of the middle of a ſling. 30. And it ſhall come to paſs, when the LORD ſhall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath ſpoken concerning thee, and ſhall have appointed thee ruler over Iſrael; 31. That this ſhall be no ‡ grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou haſt ſhed blood cauſeleſs, or that my lord hath avenged himſelf: but when the LORD ſhall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

[s] Mat. v. 25. Prov. xviii. 16. & xxi. 14.
[t] Prov. xxxi. 27.
[u] Job xxx. 8.
[x] Prov. xvii. 13.
[y] Chap. iii. 17.
[z] 1 Kings xiv. 10. & xxi. 21. 2 Kings ix. 8.
[a] Joſh. xv. 18. 2 Kings iv. 27.
† Heb. Ears.
‡ Heb. Lay it to heart.
[b] Ver. 3.
[c] 2 Kings ii. 2.
§ Heb. with bloods.
[d] Rom. xii. 19.
[e] Ver. 25. Pſ. lxxxiii. 13.
‖ Or preſent. Gen. xxxiii. 11. 2 Kings v. 15.
† Heb. Go at my lord's feet. Judg. iv. 10.
[f] 2 Sam. vii. 16.
[g] Chap. xviii. 17.
[h] Chap. xxiv. 17.
[i] Chap. ii. 9. Pſ. lxvi. 9. Mat. x. 30.
[k] Jer. x. 18.
‡ Heb. Staggering, or ſtumbling. Rom. xiv. 21.

v. 18—31. Abigail no ſooner hears the ſtory, than ſhe haſtes, unknown to her huſband, to prevent the danger ſhe foreſaw.

1. She took a good ſupply of proviſions, much more than David had deſired, and ſent them before, to pave the way for her apology; for a gift pacifieth anger.

2. She followed herſelf, and by a behaviour ſo admirably ſubmiſſive, and a ſpeech ſo exquiſitely ordered to diſarm his reſentment, ſtays him on his march, and reſcues her family. No ſooner does he appear, than ſhe alights, bows to the duſt before him, addreſſes him with the greateſt reſpect and reverence, calls him My Lord, and begs permiſſion to ſpeak in his audience. She deſires to take the fault of her huſband's ill conduct on herſelf; excuſes him, by laying it to the weakneſs of his underſtanding, rather than the wickedneſs of his heart; expreſſes her concern that ſhe ſaw not the meſſengers, who would then have met with a better reception; imputes it to God's mercy, that he had been withholden from ſhedding blood, and avenging himſelf, which ſhe expreſſes her confidence himſelf would rejoice in; wiſhes all his enemies as unable to hurt him, as her weak and fooliſh huſband; begs his ſervants acceptance of her preſent, as if ſhe eſteemed it not worthy his own; honourably mentions his gallant conduct under the Lord's guidance, and his innocence under the perſecutions he had ſuffered; expreſſes her confidence, that his life would be ever precious to God, his malicious enemy diſappointed and deſtroyed, and his kingdom confirmed and eſtabliſhed according to the divine promiſe: begs him to forgive the trouble ſhe had given him; is confident he will never hereafter repent his lenity in granting her requeſt; and concludes with a humble deſire of his remembrance, when he comes to ſit on the throne of Iſrael. Such rhetoric, and ſuch a ſpeaker, could not fail of ſucceſs. *Note*, (1.) A wife who regards her huſband, would gladly remove any blame from him, by transferring it to herſelf. (2.) Every faithful ſoul is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord; and therefore, even in death, he cannot die; but becauſe his Lord lives, he liveth alſo. (3.) What we do in a paſſion, will afterwards be a grief to us. When we reflect, and ſtay our anger, we conſult our own peace. (4.) It is always a greater ſatisfaction to forgive an offence, than to revenge it.

32. ¶ And David ſaid to Abigail, Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael, which ſent thee this day to meet me: 33. And [l] bleſſed *be* thy advice, and bleſſed *be* thou, which haſt kept me this day from coming to *ſhed* blood, and from avenging myſelf with mine own hand.

[l] Pſ. cxli. 5. Prov. xxv. 12. & xxviii. 23.

34. For in very deed, *as* the LORD God of Iſrael liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadſt haſted and come to meet me, ſurely, [m] there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any that piſſeth againſt the wall. 35. So David received of her hand that which ſhe had brought him, and ſaid unto her, Go up in peace to thine houſe; ſee, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy perſon.

m Ver. 22.

v. 32—35. David's anger quickly ſubſides before ſo powerful an apology. He bleſſes God for ſending her to ſtay him from the vengeance he meditated, and thanks her heartily for her kind interpoſition; ſenſible that he was on the brink of a grievous ſin, and ſhould, unleſs reſtrained, have accompliſhed his raſh and bloody vow.* He receives her preſent, diſmiſſes her in peace, and profeſſes his gracious acceptance of her coming, and her apology. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe deſerve our warmeſt thanks, who keep us from ſin. (2.) That ſin on reflection ſhocks us, which in the heat of paſſion was overlooked. (3.) The nearer we are to ſin, and the more heinous the crime, the greater is the mercy of God in reſcuing us from it. (4.) A raſh and ſinful oath is better broken than kept. (5.) They who come trembling to the offended, find often greater favour from them than they could expect.

* *The literal tranſlation of the Hebrew phraſe for* every male, v. 34. *hath here a very peculiar inelegance and indelicacy; and it were well, if in other places, as well as here, this phraſe were more agreeably expreſſed.*

36. ¶ And Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he held a feaſt in his houſe, [n] like the feaſt of a king, and Nabal's heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* [o] very drunken: [p] wherefore ſhe told him nothing, leſs or more, until the morning light. 37. But it came to paſs in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him theſe things, that his heart [q] died within him, and he became *as* a ſtone. 38. And it came to paſs about ten days *after*, that the LORD ſmote Nabal, that he died. 39. ¶ And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he ſaid, [r] Bleſſed *be* the LORD that hath pleaded the cauſe of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his ſervant from evil: for [s] the LORD hath returned the wickedneſs of Nabal upon his own head. And David ſent and communed with Abigail, [t] to take her to him to wife. 40. And when the ſervants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they ſpake unto her, ſaying, David ſent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife. 41. And ſhe aroſe, and bowed herſelf on *her* face to the earth, and ſaid, Behold, [u] *let* thine handmaid *be* a ſervant to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my lord. 42. And Abigail haſted, and aroſe, and rode upon an aſs, and five damſels of hers that went † after her: and ſhe went after the meſſengers of David, and became his wife. 43. David alſo took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and [x] they were alſo both of them his wives. 44. ¶ But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the ſon of Laiſh, which *was* of Gallim.

n Luke xvi. 19, &c.
o Rom. xiii. 13.
p Mat. vii. 6.
q Deut. xxviii. 28. Job xv. 21.
r Pſ. lviii. 10. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18.
s 1 Kings ii. 44. Eſth. vii. 10. Pſ. lii. 7. Jam. ii. 13.
t Prov. xxxi. 10.
u Ruth ii. 10. Prov. xv. 33.
† Heb. At her feet.
x Mat. xix. 5, 8.

v. 36—44. 1. Abigail at her return finds Nabal carouſing with his men, and dead drunk; therefore ſhe prudently ſays nothing; for to ſpeak to a drunken man, is to caſt pearls before ſwine. But in the morning, when he had ſlept out the fumes of wine, ſhe let him know the danger his churliſh behaviour had brought upon him. *Note*, (1.) Many a fooliſh ſinner, like Nabal, is loſt in feaſting and jollity, inſenſible to the wrath of God which hangs over his head. (2.) A drunken man makes himſelf not only a fool, but a beaſt, incapable either of profiting by advice or correction.

2. The effect of the news on Nabal. His heart ſunk like a ſtone, terrified at the thoughts of the danger he had eſcaped, and dying with the fright. The ſhock ſeized his ſpirits, he drooped about ten days, when God ſmote him with his death-ſtroke, and unlamented he went to his grave. *Note*, The ſinner's riotous joys will ſoon be turned into the ſorrows of eternal death.

3. David on hearing it thanks God, not that Nabal was dead, but that he was kept from avenging himſelf on him, and that God had vindicated his juſtice upon ſuch a ſinner. *Note*, (1.) God will avenge his ſervants, and that ſpeedily. (2.) It is matter of unſpeakable thankfulneſs, to be kept from avenging ourſelves.

4. David now remembering the excellencies of Abigail, offers to make her his wife. She receives the meſſage with great humility, and acknowledges herſelf unworthy the honour; yet, glad to be in his family, though employed in the meaneſt offices in it, ſhe ſets out with her retinue, and David is happy in ſo valuable a woman, who to a churl behaved ſo kindly, and would much more to a man who knew how to value her worth. David had alſo another wife, according to the evil cuſtoms of thoſe days, Ahinoam, a Jezreeliteſs. His former wife, Michal, Saul had wickedly robbed him of, and married to Phalti the ſon of Laiſh, which is given as the reaſon of his marrying again. *Note*, (1.) Every believer counts himſelf happy to take Chriſt with his croſs, knowing, that though now for a while he muſt ſuffer with him, yet ſhortly he ſhall reign with him. (2.) Poligamy, though countenanced by good men, is yet a bad thing, and contrary to our Saviour's expreſs precept, and the original inſtitution of marriage.

CHAP. XXVI.

David's troubles from Saul here begin again; his repentance laſted not long. 1. *The Ziphites inform him where David was*, ver. 1. *and thereupon he marches out in queſt of him*, ver. 2, 3. 2. *David gains intelligence of his motions*, ver. 4. *and takes a view of his camp*, ver. 5. 3. *He and one of his men venture into it in the night, and find him and all his guards aſleep*, ver. 6, 7. 4. *David ſpares his life, but carries off his ſpear and cruſe of water*, ver. 8—12. 5. *He produces them to Saul, as a further witneſs that he did not deſign him any ill, and reaſons with him upon it*, ver. 13—20 6. *Saul hereby convinced of his error, once more gives over the perſecution*, ver. 21—25.

1. AND [a] the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, ſaying, Doth not David hide himſelf in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeſhimon? 2. [b] Then Saul aroſe, and went down to the wilderneſs of Ziph, having three thouſand choſen men of Iſrael with him, [c] to ſeek David in the wilderneſs of Ziph. 3. And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* before Jeſhimon by the way: but David abode in the wilderneſs, and he ſaw that Saul came after him into the wilderneſs. 4. [d] David therefore ſent out ſpies, and underſtood that Saul was come in very deed. 5. ¶ And David aroſe, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the ſon of Ner, the captain of his hoſt: and Saul lay † in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

a Chap. xxiii. 21. Pſ. liv. title.
b Pſ. cxl. 9.
c Chap. xxiv. 17. Pſ. xv. 4.
d Pſ. cxii. 5. Mat. x. 16.
† Or, in the midſt of his carriages. Chap. xvii. 20.

v. 1—5. Good impreſſions are quickly worn out, where the heart is not truly turned to God.

1. Saul returns to the purſuit of David, ſtill retaining the old rancour, and perhaps inſtigated by the Ziphites, who, from their former ill behaviour to David, might be apprehenſive of ſuffering for it, ſhould he ever come to the throne. *Note*, (1.) One ſin uſually involves the ſoul in another, ſo connected is the chain of evil. (2.) A little inſtigation will revive the old grudge, where the reconciliation is not ſincere.

2. David gets information of Saul's motions, and, as before, truſts not to his ſword, but to concealment, for his ſafety. So unwilling was he, under every provocation, to appear in arms againſt his ſovereign. Being apprized by his ſpies where Saul had pitched his camp, he went out unobſerved to reconnoitre the ſituation. *Note*, A good general will, as often as poſſible, truſt to no information, but make uſe of his own eyes to obſerve the enemy's poſition.

6. Then anſwered David, and ſaid to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abiſhai the ſon of [e] Zeruiah, brother to Joab, ſaying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abiſhai ſaid, I will go down with thee. 7. [f] So David and Abiſhai came to the people [g] by night, and behold, Saul lay ſleeping within the trench, and his ſpear ſtuck in the ground at his bolſter: but Abner and the people lay round about him. 8. Then ſaid Abiſhai to David, God hath † delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me ſmite him, I pray thee, with the ſpear, even to the earth at once, and I will not *ſmite* him the ſecond time. 9. And David ſaid to Abiſhai, Deſtroy him not: for [h] who can ſtretch forth his hand againſt the LORD's anointed, and be guiltleſs? 10. David ſaid furthermore, *As* the LORD liveth, [i] the LORD ſhall ſmite him, or [k] his day ſhall come to die, or [l] he ſhall deſcend into battle, and periſh. 11. The LORD forbid that I ſhould ſtretch forth mine hand againſt the LORD's anointed: but I pray thee, take thou now the ſpear that *is* at his bolſter, and the cruſe of water, and let us go. 12. [m] So David took the ſpear and the cruſe of water from Saul's bolſter, and they gat them away, and no man ſaw *it*, nor knew *it*, neither awaked:

e 1 Chron. ii. 16.
f Judg. vii. 11. Chap. xiv. 6.
g 1 Theſ. v. 2, 3.
† Heb. Shut up.
h Chap. xxiv. 7. 2 Sam. i. 16.
i Chap. xxv. 38.
k Job vii. 1. & xiv. 5. Pſ. xxxvii. 2, 10.
l Deut. xxxii. 35. Chap. xxxi. 6.
m Chap. xxiv. 4.

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awaked: for they *were* all aſleep, becauſe [n] a deep ſleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

[n] Pſ. lxxvi. 5. Rom. xi. 8.

v. 6—12. David having obſerved the camp, reſolves on a dangerous enterprize; though, it is to be preſumed, he had ſome divine admonition for this ſtep, which would otherwiſe appear raſh and unwarrantable.

1. He goes down to Saul's camp in the night with Abiſhai, who offered to be his companion, Ahimelech declining the danger, or Abiſhai being moſt forward to go. A deep ſleep from God had ſeized the hoſt: Saul lay in the midſt of the camp, which was compaſſed with an entrenchment; or in his chariot, as the word alſo ſignifies, with his ſpear ready at his bolſter, and a cruſe of water, and his army aſleep around him, to the very centinels. So ſoon can God diſarm the mighty, and leave them a prey to the feeble.

2. Abiſhai is eager to improve the advantage ſo remarkable a providence gave them, concludes that God deſigned Saul's deſtruction, and offers at a ſtroke to diſpatch him.

3. David refuſes the offer, and withholds his hands. He uſes the ſame argument as before, the ſacred office with which he was inveſted, and the allegiance therefore due to him. He doubted not but God would avenge his quarrel by ſome ſudden judgment, or he would fall in battle, or die a natural death; and he is content to wait the Lord's leiſure, rather preferring ſuffering in the fleſh for a while, than by ſuch a blow to bring guilt on his conſcience. *Note*, They who know the evil of ſin, think a crown too dearly purchaſed by the leaſt tranſgreſſion.

4. Though he will not hurt him, he takes away the evidences of his power to have done ſo, his ſpear and cruſe, and thus in ſafety they retire. *Note*, They are ſecure in the midſt of danger, from whom God gives a charge to the angel of death to withhold his hand.

13. ¶ Then David went over to the other ſide, and ſtood on the top of an hill afar off, (a great ſpace *being* between them:) 14. And David cried to the people, and to Abner the ſon of Ner, ſaying, Anſwereſt thou not, Abner? Then Abner anſwered and ſaid, Who *art* thou *that* crieſt to the king? 15. And David ſaid to Abner, *Art* not thou a valiant man? and who *is* like to thee in Iſrael? wherefore then haſt thou not kept thy lord the king? † for there came one of the people in to deſtroy the king thy lord. 16. This thing *is* not good that thou haſt done: *as* the LORD liveth, ye *are* ‡ worthy to die, becauſe ye have not kept your maſter the LORD's anointed: and now ſee where the king's ſpear *is*, and the cruſe of water that *was* at his bolſter. 17. And Saul knew David's voice, and ſaid, *Is* this thy voice, my ſon David? And David ſaid, *It is* my voice, my lord, O king. 18. And he ſaid, Wherefore doth my lord thus purſue after his ſervant? for [o] what have I done? or what evil *is* in mine hand? 19. Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his ſervant: [p] If the LORD have ſtirred thee up againſt me, let him § accept an offering: but if *they be* the children of men, [q] curſed *be* they before the LORD; for they have driven me out this day from ‖ abiding in the inheritance of the LORD, ſaying, [r] Go ſerve other gods. 20. Now therefore let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD: for [s] the king of Iſrael is come out to ſeek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

† Or, where there came in, &c.
‡ Heb. The ſons of death.
[o] Chap. xxiv. 11.
[p] 1 Sam. xvi. 11.
§ Heb. Smell a meat offering. Gen. viii. 21.
[q] Prov. vi. 16, 19. Gal. v, 12.
‖ Heb. Cleaving to. Pſ. xli., 1, 2. & lxxxiv. 2.
[r] Pſ. cxx. 5.
[s] Chap. xxiv. 14.

v. 13—20. When David had got out of danger, on the oppoſite hill, from whence he could be heard, though not hurt,

1. He rouſes Abner from ſleep with a loud call, and rallies him for his negligence, in not being more watchful over his ſovereign's ſafety. Producing the ſpear and cruiſe, he declares him, and all the guards, by martial law deſerving death, for ſuffering the king to be thus expoſed, leaving them to judge who was moſt the king's friend, they who ſlept and left him in danger, or he who watched over his ſafety, and reſtrained the arm of one of the people, which was ready to deſtroy him. *Note*, They whom we treat as our greateſt enemies, ſometimes prove themſelves our beſt friends.

2. Saul knowing the voice, and obſerving the danger he had eſcaped, is again overcome with his ſon's generoſity; and David takes occaſion once more, with theſe evidences of innocence in his hands, to expoſtulate with him on the injuſtice of his perſecutions, and on the miſeries which he ſuffered by it. He was a faithful ſervant, and it was Saul's loſs thus to force him from him. He was a true worſhipper of God; but by his neceſſities driven for refuge among idolaters, was in great danger, without eſpecial ſupports from God, of apoſtatizing from his worſhip; he could appeal to Saul himſelf for inconteſtible proofs of his innocence. It was below the dignity of the king of Iſrael to hunt a poor fugitive, that, like a frighted partridge, ſought only his ſafety by flight, and was no more to be feared than the moſt contemptible animal, even a flea: he begs therefore the king would deſiſt from thirſting after his blood, which, if ſhed, the Lord would avenge. If he had offended God in ought, and by him Saul was ſtirred up to chaſtiſe him, he would ſeek, by offering and ſacrifice, reconciliation: or if an evil ſpirit moved him, let them join in prayer and ſacrifice for its removal: but if wicked and malicious enemies were the inſtigators, he imprecates the juſt vengeance of God upon their guilty heads. *Note*, (1.) They are our worſt enemies, that expoſe us to the temptation of falling from God, by driving us from his worſhip and people. (2.) Innocent blood ſhall never be ſhed without a ſevere reckoning. (3.) Reconciliation with God deſerves our firſt concern; that obtained, other troubles will abate. (4.) Though the curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not fall, yet woe to thoſe againſt whom God's people bring their juſt complaints.

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21. ¶ Then ſaid Saul, [t] I have ſinned: return, my ſon David, for [u] I will no more do thee harm, becauſe my ſoul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. 22. And David anſwered and ſaid, Behold the king's ſpear, and let one of the young men come over and fetch it. 23. [x] The LORD render to every man his righteouſneſs and his faithfulneſs: for the LORD delivered thee into *my* hand to-day, but I would not ſtretch forth mine hand againſt the LORD's anointed. 24. And behold, as thy life was much ſet by this day in mine eyes, ſo let my life be much ſet by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation. 25. Then Saul ſaid to David, Bleſſed *be* thou, my ſon David: thou ſhalt both do great *things*, and alſo ſhalt ſtill prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

[t] Chap. xxiv. 17.
[u] Chap. xxvii. 4.
[x] Neh. xiii. 14. Pſ. vii. 8. Iſa. iii. 10, 11.

v. 21—25. We have here,

1. Saul melted down under David's remonſtrance. He ſees now how precious his life was in David's ſight, and therefore how ſinful againſt God to perſecute the innocent, as well as fooliſh to drive ſo faithful a ſervant from him. He owns the aggravation of his ſin, that he hath erred exceedingly; invites him to return to court, and ſolemnly promiſes never more to attempt his harm. *Note*, Sin is the greateſt folly, and will appear ſo at laſt.

2. David enforces the conviction of his innocence; deſires the king to ſend for his ſpear and cruiſe; prays to God to deal with him according to his uprightneſs before him; aſſures Saul his hand would never be againſt him, as that day's experience would teſtify; the anointing oil would be his ſacred guard, and refers himſelf to God for the ſame protection, preſervation,, and deliverance, as that day he had ſhewn to Saul. *Note*, (1.) God is a righteous judge, and his diſpenſations all prove him to be ſo. (2.) They who ſhew mercy, may hope to find mercy.

3. Saul is quite overcome, bleſſes his ſon, acknowledges, before his army, his righteous dealing, and predicts his greatneſs and prevalence over all his enemies. *Note*, God will at laſt make his enemies bow at the feet of his perſecuted people, and know that he hath loved them. *Rev.* iii. 9.

4. Saul and David part to meet no more: Saul returns to Gibeah, David to his faſtneſſes, unwilling to truſt promiſes which had been ſo often broken. *Note*, It is folly to truſt thoſe who have once deceived us.

C H A P. XXVII.

David here, 1. *Provides for the ſafety of himſelf and family in Gath,* ver. 1—7. 2. *Fights Iſrael's battles againſt the Canaanites,* ver. 8, 9. 3. *Impoſes upon Achiſh concerning his expedition,* ver. 10—12.

1. AND David ſaid in his heart, [a] I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of Saul: *there is* nothing better for me than that I ſhould ſpeedily eſcape into the land of the Philiſtines, and Saul ſhall deſpair of me, to ſeek me any more in any coaſt of Iſrael: ſo ſhall I eſcape out of his hand. 2. And [b] David aroſe, and he paſſed over with the ſix hundred men that *were* with him, unto Achiſh, the ſon of Maoch, king of Gath. 3. And David dwelt with Achiſh at Gath, he and his men, every man with his houſhold, *even* David, with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreeliteſs, and Abigail the Carmeliteſs, Nabal's wife. 4. And it was told Saul, that David was fled to Gath: and he ſought no more again for him. 5. ¶ And David ſaid unto Achiſh, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, [c] let them give me a place

[a] Mat. xiv. 31. 2 Cor. vii. 5.
[b] Chap. xxi. 10.
[c] Num. xxv. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 8.

place in ſome town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why ſhould thy ſervant dwell in the royal city with thee? 6. Then Achiſh gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day. 7. And † the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philiſtines, was ‡ a full year and four months.

† Heb. The number of days.
‡ Heb. Days, i. e. a year of days, or days even four months.

v. 1—7. Though there was an apparent reconciliation now wrought between them, David knew too well Saul's temper, to hope it would be of long continuance. We have here,

1. His fearfulneſs and unbelief. God's promiſes, and his own paſt experience, cannot prevent melancholy apprehenſions of his danger, and he is ready to deſpair, after all his deliverances, and fears he ſhall yet fall by the hand of Saul. *Note*, Many a poor trembling heart is exerciſed like David, and, from the ſenſe of his numerous corruptions, is ready to give up all hope, and diſhonour God's faithfulneſs.

2. His reſolution hereupon, to fly into the land of the Philiſtines, hoping, that then Saul would deſiſt from any further purſuit. A dangerous courſe; but in dangerous circumſtances ſomething muſt be hazarded.

3. He met with a kind reception from Achiſh. Probably David had firſt acquainted him with his diſtreſs, and obtained his protection; and he can ſooner rely on the word of a Philiſtine, than the oath of Saul. His ſix hundred men accompanied him with their houſholds, and dwelt at firſt with Achiſh at Gath; but finding many inconveniencies there, he deſires, and Achiſh conſents to give him Ziklag for his abode. Being in the royal city expoſed him to envy, and the courtiers of Achiſh probably diſliked the friendſhip their king ſhewed him. Beſides, here the public exerciſe of his religion was more offenſive, and his men in greater danger of being corrupted. On every account therefore the motion was prudent, and the iſſue proved it ſo; for hither his friends could more eaſily reſort to him, and by the preſent grant, the city became ever after annexed to the crown of Judah, as it had been in their lot before, though not occupied by that tribe. Here he abode, not *a year and four months*, but *days*, *even four months*, Saul being within that time ſlain, and David ſucceeding to the throne. *Note*, (1.) It is our duty to withdraw from temptation. (2.) We ſhall never loſe by what we give up for the ſake of God and our ſouls.

4. Saul deſiſted now from any farther purſuit, which it ſeems he again intended, if he had not been gone out of his reach. *Note*, It is not for want of will, but power, that the evil of many a wicked man is kept within bounds.

8. ¶ And David and his men went up and invaded the Geſhurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for thoſe *nations were* of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goeſt to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt. 9. And David [c] ſmote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the ſheep, and the oxen, and the aſſes, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achiſh. 10. And Achiſh ſaid, Whither have ye made a road to-day? And David ſaid, [d] Againſt the ſouth of Judah, and againſt the ſouth of the Jerahmeelites, and againſt the ſouth of the Kenites. 11. And David ſaved neither man or woman alive, to bring *tidings* to Gath, ſaying, leſt they ſhould tell on us, ſaying, So did David, and ſo *will be* his manner, all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philiſtines. 12. And Achiſh believed David, ſaying, he hath made † his people Iſrael utterly to abhor him; therefore he ſhall be my ſervant for ever.

[c] Deut. vii. 2.
[d] Acts xxiii. 6.
† Heb. Himſelf ſtinking to ſtink to his, &c.

v. 8—12. Wherever David is, he cannot long be inactive.

1. He meditates and executes an inroad on the Geſhurites and Gezrites, ſome of the remainder of the Amorites, and the Amalekites, who probably were incorporated among them, when they fled from Saul. As theſe were devoted nations, he leaves none alive: and beſide, there was another reaſon, that they might not carry tidings to Achiſh, from whom he intended to conceal what he had done, leſt it ſhould alarm the jealouſy of the Philiſtines.

2. Achiſh, on his return, enquires of his expedition, and David very ſinfully, to conceal the truth, prevaricates; pretending to have made an inroad on the ſouth of Judah, which was in a ſenſe true, as theſe people lay ſouthward; but David, it is to be feared, intended to be otherwiſe underſtood, as if he had fallen on his own countrymen, in which ſenſe Achiſh apprehended him, and concluded from thence his fidelity to him, and that his countrymen would be ſo exaſperated againſt him, that now David would be his ſervant for ever. *Note*, (1.) Equivocation is as bad as a direct lie. (2.) Let the ſins of great and good men be looked upon not as an exculpation for our imitation of them, but as an admonition to avoid them.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Preparations are here making for that war, which will put an end to the life and reign of Saul, and ſo make way for David to the throne. 1. *The Philiſtines are the aggreſſors, and Achiſh their king makes David his confident*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Saul appears in deſpair*, ver. 3—6. 3. *His application to a witch, to bring up Samuel*, ver. 7—14. 3. *His diſcourſe with the apparition*, ver. 15—19. 4. *The damp it ſtruck upon him*, ver. 21—25.

1. AND it came to paſs in thoſe days, that [a] the Philiſtines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Iſrael: and Achiſh ſaid unto David, † Know thou aſſuredly, that thou ſhalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men. 2. And David ſaid unto Achiſh, [b] Surely thou ſhalt know what thy ſervant can do. And Achiſh ſaid to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever. 3. Now [c] Samuel was dead, and all Iſrael had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city: and [d] Saul had put away thoſe that had familiar ſpirits, and the wizards, out of the land. 4. ¶ And the Philiſtines gathered themſelves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Iſrael together, and they pitched in Gilboa. 5. And when Saul ſaw the hoſt of the Philiſtines, [e] he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. 6. And when Saul [f] enquired of the LORD, the LORD anſwered him not, neither [g] by dreams, nor [h] by Urim, nor [i] by prophets.

About 1055.
[a] Deut. xxviii. 25.
† Heb. Knowing know thou.
[b] Chap. xxvii. 10.
[c] Chap. xxv. 1.
[d] Exod. xxii. 18. Lev. xix. 31.
[e] Job xv. 21. Iſa. lvii. 20.
[f] 1 Chron. x. 14. Prov. i. 28. Jam. iv. 3.
[g] Num. xii. 6.
[h] Exod. xxviii. 29.
[i] Num. xii. 6. Lam ii. 9.

v. 1—6. We have here,

1. The diſtreſs David is reduced to, in a war between the Philiſtines and Iſrael. Taking advantage of Saul's bad government, and David's preſence with them, to whom their former defeats had been owing, they gather their armies, and Achiſh, as he juſtly might, inſiſts on David's going with him to battle. David dared not refuſe, though he no doubt reſolved not to fight againſt God's people: he therefore gives an ambiguous anſwer, which Achiſh interprets of his fidelity and valour, and promiſes to make him captain of his guards for life, if he acquitted himſelf well. Hereupon the Philiſtines march, and David with them, into the heart of Canaan, and encamp at Shunem, without oppoſition.

2. Saul, with his forces collected at Gilboa, appears greatly terrified at his danger, and now, no doubt, heartily wiſhes for David back again, whoſe preſence in the oppoſite army gives ſuch weight to his foes. The remembrance of his paſt guilt adds terrors to his preſent danger, whilſt the ſenſe of his preſent danger awakens his conſcience to a deeper ſenſibility of his paſt wickedneſs. To accumulate his miſeries, no anſwer from God is given; he is vouchſafed no divine viſion in a dream; has no Urim to conſult, ſince the prieſt is fled with it to David; nor prophet to adviſe or direct him. At laſt, he is reſolved to have recourſe to the devil for advice; but his own former edicts againſt ſorcerers make it difficult to find one, as he had, in pretended zeal for God, or at Samuel's inſtigation, put to death all ſuch abominable workers of iniquity throughout the land of Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) They who refuſe to ſeek God whilſt he may be found, will cry in vain, when he refuſes to anſwer. (2.) The troubles of the wicked are doubly aggravated by the terrors of an evil conſcience. (3.) The ſins men once profeſs to be moſt zealous againſt, when they have thrown off the cloak of religion, to them they will readily abandon themſelves.

7. ¶ Then ſaid Saul unto his ſervants, [k] Seek me a woman that hath a familiar ſpirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his ſervants ſaid to him, Behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar ſpirit at Endor. 8. And Saul diſguiſed himſelf, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman [l] by night; and he ſaid, I pray thee divine unto me by the familiar ſpirit, and bring me *him* up, whom I ſhall name unto thee. 9. And the woman ſaid unto him, Behold, thou knoweſt what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off thoſe that have familiar ſpirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layeſt thou a ſnare for my life, to cauſe me to die? 10. And Saul [m] ſware to her by the LORD, ſaying, *As* the LORD liveth, there ſhall no puniſhment happen to thee for this thing. 11. Then ſaid the woman, Whom ſhall I bring up unto thee? And he ſaid, Bring me up Samuel. 12. And when the woman ſaw [n] Samuel, ſhe cried with a loud voice: And the woman ſpake to Saul, ſaying,

[k] Lev. xix. 31. Deut. xviii. 11, 12. Iſa. viii. 19.
[l] John iii. 19, 20.
[m] Exod. xxii. 18.
[n] Iſa. lvii. 2. 2 Cor. xi. 14. Rev. ii. 24.

ſaying, Why haſt thou deceived me? for thou *art* Saul.
13. And the king ſaid unto her, Be not afraid: for
what ſaweſt thou? And the woman ſaid unto Saul, I
ſaw [o] gods aſcending out of the earth. 14. And he ſaid
unto her, What form is he of? And ſhe ſaid, An old
man cometh up, and [p] he *is* covered with a mantle. And
Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he ſtooped with
his face to the ground, and bowed himſelf.

[o] Exod. xxxii. 4.
[p] Chap. xv. 27.
[q] Ezek. xiv. 4. 2 Theſ. ii. 9, &c.

v. 7—14. Loſt to all ſenſe of God and goodneſs, Saul determines, ſince he is refuſed direction from heaven, to aſk it from hell. *Flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos, Acheronta movebo.*

1. He enquires out a woman that hath a familiar ſpirit, and being directed to one at Endor, he diſguiſes himſelf, aſhamed to be known employed on ſuch an errand, and, with two ſervants only, by night goes to conſult her; ſhewing therein his own folly, as well as contempt of God, to have recourſe to that which ſo lately he had condemned as abominable. *Note*, (1.) Works of darkneſs hate the light; but what darkneſs can hide from the piercing eye of God? (2.) Many who have caſt off the fear of God, are yet aſhamed to appear ſo bad as they are before men.

2. Saul being arrived, acquaints her with his buſineſs; and when ſhe expreſſed her fear of Saul, from his former edict, unmoved with the cutting memorial, he daringly with an oath promiſes her impunity, and bids her proceed, and bring up Samuel from the dead. *Note*, (1.) The fear of human laws is on moſt minds a much ſtronger tie, than the apprehenſion of the wrath of God. (2.) They who ſwear, will lie. Saul's oath could little ſecure her from the puniſhment of her ſin. (3.) The miniſters of God, who when alive were neglected or deſpiſed, after death are many times ſought for, and wiſhed again to return; but they who hear them not now, can expect no meſſage of peace from them hereafter.

3. Samuel, or his reſemblance rather, appears. We hear nothing of her charms or incantations: theſe depths of Satan are better concealed, leſt wicked men in other times, as no doubt they would, ſhould practiſe the ſame diabolical arts. There have been many diſputes, whether Samuel really appeared, or whether it were a mere juggle of the woman, and Saul in his condition was unable to detect the cheat; or whether the devil perſonated the prophet. The more generally received opinion, that which ſtands moſt free from objection, and is moſt agreeable to the ſtory, is the laſt. It is incredible, that the devil ſhould have any power over the ſouls of the righteous; nor can we conceive God would, to countenance ſuch an abomination, ſuffer the holy prophet to appear. The ſoul which was in heaven, could not come up out of the earth; nor the glorified ſpirit be troubled, as this apparition complains: much leſs could Samuel ſay, Saul ſhould be with him to-morrow, whoſe impenitent end gives no hopes of his happineſs. That it was not a mere juggle, the whole circumſtances of the ſtory ſeem to ſhew, and muſt be ſuppoſed in the very notion of a perſon's having a familiar ſpirit, and the conſciouſneſs of her being liable to death for ſuch diabolical communion. But that Satan ſhould be ſuffered to act thus as a ſpirit of deluſion, to hurry Saul to his ruin, is very credible, and a moſt juſt judgment of God upon him.

4. The woman now diſcovers Saul, though diſguiſed, informed, it ſhould ſeem, by her familiar, and appears terrified. He bids her fear not, but proceed, and let him know what ſhe ſaw, which ſhe deſcribes as gods, or a ſpirit, riſing from the earth. When he enquires his form and mein, ſhe tells him it was an old man, covered with a mantle, ſuch as princes and judges wore. Concluding from the woman's deſcription that it was really Samuel, (for he himſelf does not appear to have ſeen any thing, whether the incantations were in another room, or that he dared not look Samuel in the face,) he bowed to the earth, either as a token of reverence to the ſuppoſed prophet, or to hear the whiſper which familiar ſpirits are ſaid to give out of the duſt. *Note*, It is juſt in God to give thoſe up to ſtrong deluſions, to believe a lie, who have no pleaſure in the truth, but have pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.

15. ¶ And Samuel ſaid to Saul, [r] Why haſt thou diſ-
quieted me to bring me up? And Saul anſwered, [s] I
am ſore diſtreſſed, for the Philiſtines make war againſt
me, and God is departed from me, and anſwereth me no
more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I
have called thee, that thou mayeſt make known unto
me what I ſhall do. 16. Then [t] ſaid Samuel, Wherefore
then doſt thou aſk of me, ſeeing the LORD is departed
from thee, and is become thine enemy? 17. And the
LORD hath done † to him, [u] as he ſpake by ‡ me:
for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine
hand, and given it to thy neighbour, *even* to David:
18. Becauſe thou obeyedſt not the voice of the LORD,
[x] nor executedſt his fierce wrath upon Amalek, [y] there-
fore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.
19. Moreover, the LORD will alſo deliver Iſrael
with thee, into the hand of the Philiſtines: and to-mor-
row *ſhalt* thou and thy ſons *be* with me: the LORD
alſo ſhall deliver the hoſt of Iſrael into the hand of the
Philiſtines.

[r] Iſa. lvii. 2.
[s] Prov. v. 11, 12. Iſa. iii. 11.
[t] Ecclus xlvi. 20. 2 Cor. xi. 14.
† Or, for himſelf. Prov. xvi. 4. Rom. xi. 36.
[u] Chap. xv. 28. John viii. 44.
‡ Heb. Mine hand.
[x] Chap. xv. 9.
[y] 1 Kings xx. 42. Jer. xlviii. 10.

v. 15—19. We have here,

1. Saul's bitter diſtreſs. The apparition demands the cauſe of his troubling his repoſe by ſuch magical incantations, to beget in Saul a confidence in the power of this charmer. Saul ſpreads his terrible caſe before him: the Philiſtines war againſt him, and he is unable to make head againſt their armies; and, worſe than this, God hath forſaken him, will give him no direction, nor afford him any anſwer; therefore, reduced to deſpair, he is driven to this method of enquiring of him what he ſhould do. Was ever ſuch folly and madneſs? Would Samuel direct him whom God had forſaken? Or was it conceivable, that when no living prophet would adviſe him, he ſhould find help from the dead? *Note*, (1.) The ſinner has only himſelf to blame for all the miſeries to which he is reduced. (2.) It is too late to knock, when the door of mercy is ſhut.

2. The anſwer he receives is fearful, and betrays the lips it flows from, tending evidently to drive him to deſpair. The devil, perſonating the prophet, appears angry at being diſturbed; declares the vanity of his attempt in thus ſeeking relief; for ſince God is departed from him, all is loſt; reminds him of his anointing David in his ſtead; and aſſures him the word then brought from God is ready to be accompliſhed, (ſo eaſily can Satan make uſe of the ſcriptures, when they anſwer his deſigns); upbraids him with his diſobedience in the caſe of the Amalekites; foretels the rout of his army by the Philiſtines on the morrow; and denounces his own death and his ſons in the battle. Not a word of comfort appears throughout; no intimation of mercy, or admonition to repent; but every proſpect is terminated with black deſpair. *Note*, The livelieſt image of hell upon earth, is a ſinner given up to deſpair.

20. Then Saul † fell ſtraightway all along on the earth,
and was ſore afraid becauſe of the words of Samuel,
and there was no ſtrength in him: for he had eaten no
bread all the day, nor all the night. 21. ¶ And the wo-
man came unto Saul, and ſaw that he was ſore troubled,
and ſaid unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed
thy voice, and [z] I have put my life in my hand, and have
hearkned unto thy words which thou ſpakeſt unto me.
22. Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou alſo unto
the voice of thine handmaid, and let me ſet a morſel of
bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayeſt have
ſtrength when thou goeſt on thy way. 23. But he re-
fuſed, and ſaid, [a] I will not eat. But his ſervants, to-
gether with the woman, compelled him, and he heark-
ned unto their voice: ſo he aroſe from the earth, and
ſat upon the bed. 24. And the woman had a fat calf
in the houſe, and ſhe haſted and killed it, and took
flour, and kneaded *it*, and did bake unleavened bread
thereof. 25. And ſhe brought *it* before Saul, and before
his ſervants, and they did eat: then they roſe up, and
went away that night.

† Heb. Made haſte and fell with the fulneſs of his ſtature. Chap. xxv. 37. Job. xx. 5.
[z] Judg. xii. 3. Job xiii. 14.
[a] Prov. xxv. 20.

v. 20—25. Shocked with the dreadful tidings, the dejected king ſinks ſpiritleſs to the earth; his ſoul is in the agonies of death with fear; and his body, weakened with faſting, having that day taken no food, is unable to riſe without help, and ready to expire on the ſpot. On this, the woman, hearing him fall, or perceiving the apparition was gone, during whoſe ſtay ſhe had left him alone with it, haſtens in, and is terribly frighted, not ſo much for the king's danger as her own, ſhould he die there; and therefore with great ſollicitude importunes him to take ſome refreſhment, that he might have ſtrength to return to the camp. At firſt he obſtinately rejected her offer, as if chuſing rather to die by hunger, than the ſword of the Philiſtines; but his ſervants earneſtly ſeconding her entreaties, they compel him by their perſuaſion to conſent. He ariſes therefore from the earth, and the woman inſtantly preparing ſome proviſion, he and his ſervants eat. Being thus refreſhed, they haſten back to the camp before the morning light, that they might not be diſcovered. *Note*, (1.) They who depart from God, leave their own mercies. A miſerable life, and a more miſerable death, is their wretched portion. (2.) When a man is given up to deſpair, he ruſheth on his own deſtruction, as *the horſe ruſheth into the battle*. (3.) Let every man who reads Saul's end, tremble at the thought of grieving the holy Spirit of God, leſt he be thus forſaken, and left to the wickedneſs and deſpair of his own heart.

CHAP. XXIX.

We left David much embarrassed; God here extricates him from his difficulties. 1. *He marches with the Philistines,* ver. 1, 2. *Is excepted against by the lords of the Philistines,* ver. 3—5. *and,* 3. *Happily dismissed,* ver. 6—11.

1. NOW the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which *is* in Jezreel. 2. And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but [a] David and his men passed on in the rereward with Achish. 3. Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here?* And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me [b] these days, or these years, and [c] I have found no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day? 4. And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him, and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, [d] Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, [e] lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? *should it* not *be* with the heads of these men? 5. *Is* not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, [f] Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

v. 1—5. David was now in the army of the Philistines, posted with Achish in the rear, greatly distressed how to act, being in equal difficulties and danger, whether to desert his friend Achish, who had protected him, or draw his sword against God's people. But God knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.

1. The Philistine lords, on the review of their forces, observe David and his men; and the remembrance of his former deeds awaken their jealousy, that he would turn against them in the battle, and reconcile himself to Saul by so acceptable a service, as falling on their rear, whilst their front was engaged. *Note,* Just suspicions deserve consideration.

2. They come to Achish in a body, and present a remonstrance against permitting these Hebrews to go farther with them. Achish urges the experience he had of David's fidelity, and suggests the quarrel between Saul and him, as what would make him firm in their interests: but they insist on his immediate dismission, as a fellow in no wise to be trusted; and Achish is forced to comply. *Note,* That which is meant for our disgrace, proves often in the issue to be our mercy.

6. ¶ Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and [g] thy going out, and thy coming in with me in the host, *is* good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee, since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless, † the lords favour thee not. 7. Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou ‡ displease not the lords of the Philistines. 8. ¶ And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been § with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king? 9. And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. 10. Wherefore now rise up early in the morning, with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart. 11. [h] So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return unto the land of the Philistines, and the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

v. 6—11. Achish being but one against many, though reluctantly, is constrained to consent.

1. He sends for David, and, to soften the disgrace which seems to be put on him, and to make apology for his dismission, professes the confidence he reposed in him; solemnly declares his unexceptionable conduct; but the lords of the Philistines favour him not, have taken up suspicions, and, as he would not displease them, he begs him to retire in peace to Ziklag. *Note,* (1.) When we bring an unkind message, we should seek not to make it more unkind by the delivery. (2.) It is a good sign to have even the Philistines witnesses for our uprightness.

2. David receives, no doubt, with joy the news, but thinks it prudent to dissemble, pretends zeal to fight for Achish against his enemies, and seems to resent the suspicions cast upon him. *Note,* Compliments paid to the great, are often lies in disguise; and many a man chuses rather thus to dissemble before God, than appear unmannerly.

3. Achish is sorry that his lords are peremptory; repeats his high opinion of David's deserts, even as *an angel of the Lord;* yet urges his instant obedience before the morning broke, lest the Philistines by his delay should be confirmed in their suspicions, and perhaps be induced to fall upon him. David therefore with his men hastens home, and we shall see in the next chapter how much he was wanted, and how providential his return.

CHAP. XXX.

We have here, 1. *The desolate condition in which David found Ziklag on his return; his and the people's distress thereupon,* ver. 1—6. 2. *What course he took to recover what he had lost. He enquired of God,* ver. 7, 8. *pursued the enemy,* ver. 9, 10. *gained intelligence from a straggler,* ver. 11—15. *attacked and routed them,* ver. 16, 17. *and recovered all that they had carried off,* ver. 18—20. 3. *What method he observed in the distribution of the spoil,* ver. 21—31.

1. AND it came to pass when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that [a] the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burnt it with fire: 2. And had taken the women captives, that *were* therein: [b] they slew not any, either great or small, but carried *them* away, and went on their way. 3. ¶ So David and his men came to the city, and behold [c] *it was* burnt with fire, and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters were taken captives. 4. Then David, and the people that *were* with him, lift up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5. And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. 6. And David was greatly distressed; for [d] the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons, and for his daughters: but [e] David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

v. 1—6. Little thought David and his men, whilst they were marching in the camp of the Philistines, what ravages were committed at home by their enemies.

1. The Amalekites in their absence, having probably intelligence of it, fall upon the defenceless city, plunder and burn it, reserving all the persons alive; not out of pity, it is to be feared, but covetousness, as their slavery would profit them more than their death, but in truth withheld secretly by God. *Note,* God can make the sins of men subserve his designs of mercy.

2. Great was the distress and consternation of David and his men at this unexpected calamity. Three days they had spent in marching home, and when they hoped to rest their weary limbs, lo! their houses are burnt, and their families gone, uncertain whether captives or murdered, and David's wives among the rest. *Note,* (1.) We know not, when we go from home, what scenes of mourning may meet us on our return. (2.) The more we promise ourselves comfort in the creature, the bitterer will be our disappointment.

3. Whilst tears would flow, they wept, and wearied themselves with sorrow; and when these fountains were dry, in distress and despair the men turned their complaints on David, and threatned to stone him as the author of their calamity, by leading them from their home. Thus was his faith severely exercised, and sorrow added to sorrow. *Note,* (1.) Suffering is apt to make us impatient; and though we dare not fly in the face of God, we are ready to lay hands on those who have been, though innocently, instruments of bringing us into the trouble. (2.) Great saints become so by great sufferings. Grace, like the palm-tree, *crescit sub pondere,* grows under trials.

4. David, under all his afflictions, encouraged himself in God. Though he shared deeper than any man in the general loss, and in this unreasonable anger of theirs bore a grief peculiarly his own, he thought yet upon God, his power, love, and faithfulness, and still hoped in his mercy. This was his support in the time of his trouble; nor was he disappointed of his hope; for no man ever trusted God, and was ashamed. *Note,* (1.) Our circumstances can never be so bad, nor our case so deplorable, but there is ground for faith in the promises of God. (2.) To encourage our souls in him, is the surest way to escape from our troubles.

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[a] Chap. xxviii. 1.
[b] Chap. xxvii. 7.
[c] Dan. vi. 4, 5. Phil. ii. 15.
[d] 1 Chron. xii. 19.
[e] Chap. xiv. 21.
[f] Chap. xviii. 7. & xxi. 11.
[g] Num. xxvii. 17.
† Heb. Thou art not good in the eyes of the lords.
‡ Heb. Do not evil in the eyes of, &c.
§ Heb. Before thy face.
[h] Gen. xxii. 14. Chap. xxx. 1, &c. Pſ. xxxvii. 23. & xlvi. 1.

[a] Chap. xxvii. 8, 9.
[b] Job xxxviii. 11.
[c] Pſ. xxxiv. 19. & xlii. 7.
[d] Exod. xvii. 4. John viii. 59.
[e] Pſ. lvi. 3. & lxii. 8. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Rom. iv. 18, &c.

7. And David ſaid unto Abiathar the prieſt, Ahimelech's ſon, I pray thee bring me hither the ephod: and Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David. 8. And David [f] enquired at the LORD, ſaying, Shall I purſue after this troop? ſhall I overtake them? And he anſwered him, Purſue; for thou ſhalt ſurely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*. 9. So David went, he and the ſix hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Beſor, where thoſe that were left behind, ſtayed. 10. But David purſued, he and four hundred men; (for two hundred abode behind, which were ſo faint, that they could not go over the brook Beſor). 11. ¶ And [g] they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat, and they made him drink water. 12. And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two cluſters *of raiſins*: and when he had eaten, [h] his ſpirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water three days and three nights. 13. And David ſaid unto him, To whom *belongeſt* thou? and whence *art* thou? And he ſaid, I am a young man of Egypt, ſervant to an Amalekite, and my maſter left me, [i] becauſe three days agone I fell ſick. 14. We made an invaſion *upon* the ſouth of the Cherethites, and upon the *coaſt* which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the ſouth of Caleb, and we burnt Ziklag with fire. 15. And David ſaid to him, Canſt thou bring me down to this company? And he ſaid, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my maſter, and I will bring thee down to this company. 16. ¶ And when he had brought him down, behold, *they were* ſpread abroad upon all the earth, [k] eating, and drinking, and dancing, becauſe of all the great ſpoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philiſtines, and out of the land of Judah. 17. And David ſmote them from the twilight, even unto the evening of the next day: and there eſcaped not a man of them, ſave four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled. 18. And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David reſcued his two wives. 19. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither ſmall nor great, neither ſons nor daughters, neither ſpoil nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: David recovered all. 20. And David took all the flocks, and the herds, *which* they drave before thoſe *other* cattle, and ſaid, [m] This *is* David's ſpoil.

[f] Chap. xxiii. 2, 4. Pſ. l. 15.
[g] Pſ. cxl. 2.
[h] Judg. xv. 19.
[i] Prov. xii. 10.
[k] Luke xii. 19, 20. & xxi. 34, 35. 1 Theſ. v. 3.
[l] Job xx. 5. Dan. v. 6. Acts xii. 22, 23.
[m] Iſa. liii. 12.

v. 7—20. David, having encouraged himſelf in God, addreſſes himſelf to him for direction.

1. He orders Abiathar to bring the ephod, and enquire whether he ſhould go down after theſe ſpoilers, and whether he ſhould overtake them, and receives a command to go, and an aſſurance of ſucceſs. Had he conſulted God before his expedition with the Philiſtines, perhaps all his trouble might have been prevented. It is good to be made wiſe by paſt overſights.

2. Encouraged by this anſwer from God, he immediately purſues with his ſix hundred men, who, though fatigued with their march, and more with their trouble, follow hard after the track of theſe ſpoilers. Two hundred at the brook Beſor were quite faint and diſabled; theſe therefore he is compelled to leave there to recover themſelves, whilſt he continues the purſuit with the remainder, truſting not on the arm of fleſh, but on the promiſe of God. *Note,* (1.) Diſcouraging providences will but exalt the faith of the determined ſoul. (2.) They who ſtill preſs forward, will infallibly ſeize the prize. (3.) The Son of David conſiders our infirmities, and pities our weakneſs.

3. God brings him a guide: a wretched Egyptian lies in their way, ſunk under the complicated preſſures of ſickneſs and want, ſpeechleſs, and ready to expire. The men bring him to David, and compaſſion moves him to relieve ſo miſerable an object. The refreſhment they gave him ſoon brought him to his ſenſes, and enabled him to give an account of himſelf, and who he belonged to. He was an Egyptian, ſervant to an Amalekite, as indeed his treatment ſhewed. Being overtaken with ſickneſs, got in his hard ſervice, his inhuman maſter had deſerted him, and left him barbarouſly to periſh for want. He gives him an account of their expedition, their ravages on the ſouth of Judah, and their capture of Ziklag; and, at David's requeſt, having by an oath bound him not to deliver him up to his dreaded maſter, offers to bring him down to the place where theſe plunderers were. *Note,* (1.) Great events often depend on very unexpected incidents. (2.) No man ſo mean and deſpicable, as to be beneath our notice: we know not how much good or evil the weakeſt inſtruments may do us. (3.) He is a cruel and an Amalekite maſter, that, when his poor ſervants are ſick, diſmiſſes them haſtily, and leaves them to ſhift for themſelves, when they are ſo diſabled and helpleſs. (4.) Nothing is ever loſt by compaſſion: charity uſually brings its own reward.

4. The Amalekites are ſurprized in the midſt of their feaſt. Triumphing in their ſucceſs, and concluding themſelves ſafe from all fear of being purſued, military order was neglected; all were buſy in eating, drinking, and dancing, ſpending the evening in mirth and jollity, when David and his men ſuddenly fall upon them, and without reſiſtance put them to the ſword. The purſuit continued till the evening of the next day, and not a man eſcaped, but four hundred young men, who owed their preſervation to the ſwiftneſs of the camels, or dromedaries, on which they rode. All the ſpoil of their camp fell into the victors hands: they recovered not only all they had loſt, particularly David's wives are mentioned, as the deareſt and neareſt to his heart, but alſo the flocks and herds of the Amalekites, which in triumph were driven home before them, as David's ſpoil. *Note,* (1.) Security is the deſtruction of the ſinner. (2.) Death unſeen is hovering over many a ſoul, that to dance and ſong devotes the day, and little thinks, in the midſt of pleaſure's throng, how near he ſtands on the brink of never-ending pain. (3.) In proſperity they will be careſſed and honoured, who in diſtreſs, like David, were inſulted. (4.) The Son of David hath recovered out of the hands of ſin and Satan all that poor ſinners had loſt, and enriched his faithful people with better ſpoils than theſe flocks and herds, even with treaſures which robbers can never ſteal, and manſions of glory, that are incorruptible, undefiled, and never fade away.

21. ¶ And David came to the two hundred men, which were ſo faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made alſo to abide at the brook Beſor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David came near to the people, he ſaluted them. 22. Then anſwered all the wicked men, and *men* of Belial, of thoſe that went with David, and ſaid, [n] Becauſe they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the ſpoil that we have recovered, ſave to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart. 23. Then ſaid David, Ye ſhall not do ſo, my brethren, with that which [o] the LORD hath given us, who hath preſerved us, and delivered the company that came againſt us, into our hand. 24. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, [p] ſo *ſhall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the ſtuff: they ſhall part alike. 25. And it was *ſo* from that day forward that he made it a ſtatute and an ordinance for Iſrael unto this day. 26. ¶ And when David came to Ziklag, [q] he ſent of the ſpoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to his friends, (ſaying, Behold [r] a † preſent for you of the ſpoil of the enemies of the LORD). 27. To *them* which *were* in Beth-el, and to *them* which *were* in South-Ramoth, and to *them* which *were* in Jattir, 28. And to *them* which *were* in Aroer, and to *them* which *were* in Siphmoth, and to *them* which *were* in Eſhtemoa, 29. And to *them* which *were* in Rachal, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Kenites, 30. And to *them* which *were* in Hormah, and to *them* which *were* in Chor-aſhan, and to *them* which *were* in Athach, 31. And to *them* which *were* in Hebron, and to all the places where David himſelf and his men were wont to haunt.

[n] Prov. xix. 28. 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.
[o] Pſ. cxv. 1.
[p] Gen. xiv. 23. Num. xxxi. 27. Joſh. xxii. 8. 2 Mac. viii. 28.
[q] 1 Chron. xii. 1. Pſ. xxxv. 22. Prov. xviii. 16.
[r] Pſ. lxviii. 18.
† Heb. Bleſſing.

v. 21—31. We have here David returning triumphant, and laden with ſpoil.

1. His wearied troops, who were left at the brook Bezor with their baggage, come to meet him, and congratulate his victory, and David receives them with great kindneſs and affection. *Note,* They who are willing, but weak, muſt not be upbraided with, but comforted under, their infirmities.

2. The ſame wicked men, who had talked ſo mutinouſly againſt their leader, now ſhew the ſame inhumanity and uncharitableneſs to their brethren; would greedily rob them, not only of part of the ſpoils, but of all that was their own, except their wives and children, which, left thus ſtripped and deſtitute, would be but a burden to them. *Note,* (1.) The covetous heart is hardened againſt the ſufferings of the needy. (2.) Being in the beſt company, and under the beſt inſtructions, makes no change on the hearts of the men of Belial.

3. David rejects ſo unreaſonable a propoſal. It was highly ungrateful to God, whoſe hand alone had given them the victory. It was moſt injurious to their brethren, who not by

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choice, but neceſſity, were left behind, and then alſo employed in the needful ſervice of guarding the baggage. David therefore commands an equal diſtribution to be made between them all, and ordained it for a perpetual ſtatute in Iſrael, that they who tarried by the ſtuff, ſhould ſhare with thoſe who went into the battle; and hereunto they accquieſced, overcome by his perſuaſion, and overawed by his authority. *Note,* Reſolute firmneſs is needful in a commander to reſtrain factious ſpirits.

4. David generouſly diſtributes his own ſhare of the ſpoil among his friends in Judah, in gratitude for the favour and protection they ſhewed him during his haunts among them; in compenſation of the damage they might have ſuſtained by this irruption of the Amalekites; and in policy, to engage them more readily to eſpouſe his cauſe, when the day ſhould come, that the throne of Iſrael would be vacant. *Note,* (1.) Every gracious ſoul muſt be generous: He that gives a new heart, gives a liberal hand. (2.) They who have ſhewn us kindneſs, deſerve a recompence whenever God puts it in our power. (3.) A well-timed preſent is the beſt letter of recommendation. (4.) They who are diſpoſed to receive the Son of David for their king, will be enriched by his munificence, not merely with the gifts of grace in time, but with the riches of glory in eternity.

CHAP. XXXI.

Here is, 1. *Saul's army routed,* ver. 1. 2. *His three ſons ſlain,* ver. 2. 3. *Himſelf wounded,* ver. 3. *Slain by his own hand,* ver. 4. *His armour-bearer,* ver. 5. *and all his men,* ver. 6. 4. *His country poſſeſſed by the Philiſtines,* ver. 7. *His camp plundered, his dead body deſerted,* ver. 8. *His fall triumphed in,* ver. 9. *His body publicly expoſed,* ver. 10. *and with difficulty reſcued by the men of Jabeſh-gilead,* ver. 11—13. *Thus fell the man that was rejected of God.*

1. NOW [a] the Philiſtines fought againſt Iſrael: and the men of Iſrael fled from before the Philiſtines, and fell down † ſlain in mount Gilboa. 2. And the Philiſtines followed hard upon Saul, and upon his ſons; and the Philiſtines ſlew [b] Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchiſhua, Saul's ſons. 3. And the battle went ſore againſt Saul, and [c] the archers hit him, and he was ſore wounded of the archers. 4. [d] Then ſaid Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy ſword, and thruſt me through therewith, leſt theſe uncircumciſed come and thruſt me through, and ‡ abuſe me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was ſore afraid: therefore Saul took a ſword, and [e] fell upon it. 5. And when his armour-bearer ſaw that Saul was dead, he fell likewiſe upon his ſword, and died with him. 6. So [f] Saul died, and his three ſons, and his armour-bearer, and [g] all his men that ſame day together. 7. ¶ And when the men of Iſrael that *were* on the other ſide of the valley, and *they* that *were* on the other ſide Jordan, ſaw that the men of Iſrael fled, and that Saul and his ſons were dead, they forſook the cities, and fled; and the Philiſtines came and dwelt in them.

[a] 1 Chron. x. 1.
† Heb. Thruſt through.
[b] Eccleſ. ix. 1, 2.
[c] Amos ii. 14.
[d] Judg. ix. 54.
‡ Or, mock me.
[e] Chap. xxvi. 10.
[f] 1 Chron. x. 6.
[g] Chap. xii. 25. Hoſ. xiii. 10, 11.

v. 1—7. At laſt Saul's day is come, when his evil is had in remembrance before God, and his judgment overtakes him.

1. The Philiſtines bravely fall upon the Iſraelites, who, on the firſt ſhock, are broken, and take to flight. Multitudes fall under the devouring ſword, and the moſt valiant, who refuſe to fly, expoſe themſelves only to more certain ruin. Among theſe, it ſeems, were the brave ſons of Saul, and the amiable Jonathan at their head, who ſeeing the battle preſs hard on them, and their father in danger, ſeek to ſtay by their bravery the fury of the conquerors: but being unable to ſuſtain the ſhock, they fall nobly in the bed of honour. A heavy judgment on Saul's houſe, but which made David's way to the throne much eaſier, theſe competitors being removed. *Note,* The righteous here are involved in ruin with the wicked, but the day of final recompenſe ſhall vindicate all God's diſpenſations.

2. Saul himſelf at laſt is overtaken, and wounded with an arrow, ſhot perhaps at a venture, but directed by God to this mark. Unable to fight or fly, yet too proud to bear the thoughts of captivity, or dreading to fall by the ſword of a Philiſtine, who might torture or inſult him, he bids his armour-bearer diſpatch him; but reſpect for his maſter, as the Lord's anointed, or fear leſt he might be called to account for it, withheld him; ſo that Saul, reſolved to die, put the point of his own ſword to his breaſt, and fell upon it, cloſing a wicked, miſerable life, with a more wicked and miſerable death. *Note,* (1.) It is pride makes a man a ſelf-murderer. (2.) They make a dreadful exchange, who think to eſcape the miſeries of life, by plunging into the horrors of eternal death.

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3. His armour-bearer ſeeing his king fall, would not ſurvive him; and though he refuſed to ſlay Saul, raſhly murders himſelf. If this, as hath been conjectured, was Doeg, we ſee the juſt judgment of God upon him; the ſword that was bathed in the blood of the prieſts at Nob, now was ſheathed in his own heart.

4. The Philiſtines on this victory ſeized the cities near the field of battle, which the terrified inhabitants had deſerted, and dwelt in them, till diſpoſſeſſed by David; and thus ſmarted the land for their choice of their king, and their evil ways during his reign, according to the threatning denounced by Samuel, *Ye ſhall be conſumed, both you and your king.*

8. And it came to paſs on the morrow, when the Philiſtines came to ſtrip the ſlain, that they found Saul and his three ſons fallen in mount Gilboa. 9. And they cut off his head, and ſtripped off his armour, and ſent into the land of the Philiſtines round about, [h] to publiſh *it* in the houſe of their idols, and among the people. 10. And [i] they put his armour in the houſe of Aſhtaroth: and [k] they faſtned his body to the wall of Beth-ſhan. 11. ¶ And [l] when the inhabitants of Jabeſh-gilead heard of that which the Philiſtines had done to Saul: 12. All the valiant men aroſe, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his ſons from the wall of Beth-ſhan, and came to Jabeſh, and [m] burnt them there. 13. And they took their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Jabeſh, and [n] faſted ſeven days.

[h] 2 Sam. i. 20.
[i] Chap. xxi. 9.
[k] 2 Sam. xxi. 12.
[l] Chap. xi. 1—11.
[m] Jer. xxxiv. 5. Amos vi. 10.
[n] Gen. l. 10.

v. 8—13. That day the purſuit laſted, and Hebrew blood dyed the clods of the valley. On the morrow they return to ſtrip the ſlain, and to their joy find their enemy Saul a breathleſs corpſe, and his ſons fallen with him. Hereupon we have,

1. The inſult offered to the dead body of Saul. They cut off his head, which (*See* 1 *Chron.* x. 10.) they ſtuck up as a trophy of their victory in the houſe of their god Dagon, and placed his armour in the temple of Aſhtaroth, and took the trunk, and the bodies of his ſons, and ignominiouſly faſtened them with nails to the wall of Beth-ſhan, or hung them on gibbets upon the wall. Thus the inſult Saul by ſelf-murder wiſhed to avoid, overtook him.

2. They proclaimed their victory through the land, and ſet apart a day of ſolemn thankſgiving to praiſe their idols, to whom they aſcribed their ſucceſs. *Note,* Blind idolaters often ſhew more gratitude to, and dependance upon, ſtocks and ſtones, than they who pretend to worſhip the true God, expreſs to the living Jehovah; therefore in the day of judgment theſe ſhall riſe up to condemn them.

3. The men of Jabeſh-gilead, fired at the inſult ſhewn the royal corpſe, as well as mindful of their particular obligations to Saul, boldly adventure to croſs Jordan, and by night take down, unperceived, the bodies from the wall of Beth-ſhan; and carrying them home, with great ſolemnity burn either the fleſh which began to putrify, or ſweet odours over them; then take up the bones and aſhes, and bury them under an oak, and keep a ſeven days mournful faſt, every day until evening, for the death of their ſovereign, and the deſolations of their country. Thus cloſes this firſt book, where Iſrael's ſun ſets in blood, and darkneſs and deſpair ſeem to cover the land: but we ſhall find the morning break upon us in the opening of the next volume, and the bright ſun of David, the glorious type of Jeſus, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ariſing to chear the deſolate valleys of Judah, and ſhining forth in his meridian ſplendor, whilſt all their enemies are led captive at his chariot wheels.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the SECOND BOOK of
SAMUEL.

This Book is the hiſtory of the reign of king David. We had in the foregoing Book an account of his deſignation to the government and his ſtruggles with Saul, which ended at length in the death of his perſecutor: This opens with his acceſſion to the throne, and is entirely taken up with the affairs of the government during the forty years he reigned. It gives us an account of his triumphs and his troubles. 1. *His triumphs over the houſe of Saul,* chap. i—iv. *Over the Jebuſites and Philiſtines,* chap. v. *In the bringing up of the ark,* chap. vi, *and* vii. *Over the neighbouring nations that oppoſed him,* chap. viii—x. *And ſo far the hiſtory is agreeable to what we might expect from David's character, and the choice made of him. But this bright cloud has a dark ſide.* 2. *We have his troubles, the cauſe of them, his ſin in the matter of Uriah,* chap. xi, *and* xii. *The troubles themſelves from the ſin of Amnon,* chap. xiii. *The rebellion of Abſalom,* chap. xiv—xix. *and of Sheba,* chap. xx. *And the plague in Iſrael for his numbring the people,* chap. xxiv. *beſides the famine for the Gibeonites,* chap. xxi. *His ſong we have,* chap. xxii, *and his words and worthies,* chap. xxiii. *Many things in this hiſtory are very inſtructive; but the hero, who is the ſubject of it, though in many inſtances he appears great, and good, and the favourite of heaven, yet it muſt be confeſſed his honour ſhines brighter in his Pſalms than in his Annals.*

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CHAP. I.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Tidings brought David of the death of Saul and Jonathan,* ver. 1—10. 2. *David's ſorrowful reſentment of theſe tidings,* ver. 11—12. 3. *Juſtice done upon the meſſenger who had helped to ſlay Saul,* ver. 13—16. 4. *An elegy which David penned upon this occaſion,* ver. 17—27.

1. NOW it came to paſs after the death of Saul, when David was returned from [a] the ſlaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag: 2. It came even to paſs on the third day, that behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul, [b] with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and *ſo* it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeiſance. 3. And David ſaid unto him, From whence cameſt thou? And he ſaid unto him, Out of the camp of Iſrael am I eſcaped. 4. And David ſaid unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee tell me. And he anſwered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people alſo are fallen and dead, and Saul and Jonathan his ſon are dead alſo. 5. And David ſaid unto the young man that told him, [c] How knoweſt thou that Saul and Jonathan his ſon be dead? 6. And the young man that told him, ſaid, † As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his ſpear: and lo, the chariots and horſemen followed hard after him. 7. And when he looked behind him, he ſaw me, and called unto me: and I anſwered, Here *am* I. 8. And he ſaid unto me, Who *art* thou? and I anſwered him, I *am* an Amalekite. 9. He ſaid unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and ſlay me: for ‡ anguiſh is come upon me, becauſe my life *is* yet whole in me. 10. So [c] I ſtood upon him, and ſlew him, becauſe I was ſure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

[a] 1 Sam. xxx. 17. Pſ. xxvii. 14.

[b] Joſh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12.

[c] Prov. xxv. 2.

† Heb. I meeting, I met. Pſ. l. 22.

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‡ Or, My coat of mail hindereth me, that my life.

[c] Luke xix. 22.

v. 1—10. David had now ſet himſelf to repair the deſolations of Ziklag, and this was the third day after his return. When lo! a man arrives, whoſe rent cloaths, and the earth upon his head, declare him the meſſenger of evil. On David's enquiry whence he came, we have,

1. His relation of the rout of Iſrael before the Philiſtines, with great ſlaughter in the purſuit; and, among the reſt, Saul and Jonathan are fallen, and himſelf, with difficulty, eſcaped to bring the news.

2. David enquires particularly about the death of Saul and Jonathan, for whom he was moſt concerned; and the meſſenger gives a very explicit account of Saul, waving to ſpeak of Jonathan, becauſe he knew David's affection to him, and his deſign was to recommend himſelf, by being the firſt to bring him notice of the death of his enemy. Among the fugitives (being a ſlave probably to ſome Iſraelite) he happened to paſs by the ſpot

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where Saul was attempting to run himſelf through; but whether his heart failed, or through the loſs of blood exhauſted, or unable to pierce his coat of mail, he called to him, enquired his country, and when he found he was not a Philiſtine, begged him to diſpatch him immediately, as in anguiſh through his wounds, or the apprehenſion of falling into the hands of the Philiſtines; with his requeſt he complied, drew his ſword and thruſt him through, it being impoſſible he ſhould live, as he muſt have fallen in the purſuit, or would have given himſelf another thruſt. The generality of commentators conceive this was a made ſtory, purely to recommend himſelf, as he thought, to David, and that though he was a ſpectator, he boaſted of that as meritorious, in which he had no hand; but the whole of what he reports may be reconciled very well with the account given before. However, the fact he reported of Saul's death was unqueſtionably true, as he produces the crown which was on his head, and the bracelet from his arm, and preſents them to David, as now his ſucceſſor in the kingdom. *Note*, (1.) Anguiſh often comes on departing ſinners, and ſome foretaſtes of eternal torments ſeize them on this ſide the grave. (2.) Men now ſometimes think to fly to death, as a relief; but in that miſerable world whither they go, they ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them. (3.) The eminence we enjoy, like the crown on Saul's head, makes us but the fairer mark for the arrow of envy. (4.) He who refuſed to execute judgment on the Amalekites, and flew on their forbidden ſpoil, himſelf probably loſes his life, and is deprived of the richeſt enſigns of royalty, by the hand of an Amalekite. So juſt doth God appear in his judgments.

11. Then David took hold on his clothes, and [f] rent them, and likewiſe all the men that *were* with him. 12. And they mourned and wept, and faſted until even, [g] for Saul and for Jonathan his ſon, and [h] for the people of the LORD, and for the houſe of Iſrael; becauſe they were fallen by the ſword. 13. ¶ And David ſaid unto the young man that told him, Whence *art* thou? And he anſwered, I *am* the ſon of a ſtranger, an Amalekite. 14. And David ſaid unto him, [i] How waſt thou not afraid to ſtretch forth thine hand, to deſtroy the LORD's anointed? 15. And David called one of the young men, and ſaid, Go near, *and* fall upon him. And he ſmote him that he died. 16. And David ſaid unto him, [k] Thy blood *be* upon thy head: [l] for thy mouth hath teſtified againſt thee, ſaying, I have ſlain the LORD's anointed.

[f] Chap. iii. 31.
[g] Pſ. xxxiii. 13, 14. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18.
[h] Amos vi. 6. 1 Cor. xii. 26.
[i] 1 Sam. xxiv. 6. & xxxi. 4. Pſ. cv. 15.
[k] 1 Sam. xxvi. 9.
[l] Job xv. 6. Prov. vi. 2.

v. 11—16. Far other than the Amelekite expected, was David's reception of theſe tidings.

1. In the agony of ſorrow he rent his cloaths, and all that were with him followed his example; the day is ſpent in bitter mourning, and they obſerve a ſolemn faſt until evening. He mourned for Jonathan his friend, but there was hope in his death; he mourned more bitterly for Saul his enemy, where none appeared, and eſpecially over the deſolations of Iſrael, fallen by the ſword of the Philiſtines. *Note*, (1.) His country's ſufferings are a grief to the true patriot's heart. (2.) The loſs of ſuch whom we hope to meet again in glory, is much more tolerable than of thoſe concerning whom we have no hope. (3.) As a good man loves his enemy whilſt alive, he is ſo far from rejoicing at his fall, that he weeps over his grave.

2. He commands immediate execution on the meſſenger; he hoped to have met the beſt preferment, but he ſuffers the juſt reward of his deeds; not only as a devoted Amalekite, but as daring to ſtretch forth his hand againſt the ſacred majeſty of Iſrael's king. Thus would David expreſs his own deteſtation of regicide, teſtify the ſincerity of his grief, and recommend himſelf to the regard of the people.

17. ¶ And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his ſon: 18. (Alſo [m] he bad them teach the children of Judah *the uſe of* the bow: behold, *it is* written [n] in the book of Jaſher) 19. [o] The beauty of Iſrael is ſlain upon thy high places: [p] how are the mighty fallen! 20. [q] Tell *it* not in Gath, publiſh *it* not in the ſtreets of Aſkelon: [r] leſt the daughters of the Philiſtines rejoice, leſt the daughters of the uncircumciſed triumph. 21. Ye mountains of Gilboa, [s] *let there be* no dew, neither *let there be* rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the ſhield of the mighty is vilely caſt away, the ſhield of Saul, *as though he had* not *been* anointed with oil. 22. From the blood of the ſlain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and [t] the ſword of Saul returned not empty. 23. Saul and Jonathan *were* lovely and pleaſant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were ſwifter than eagles, they were ſtronger than lions. 24. Ye daughters of Iſrael, weep over Saul, [u] who clothed you in ſcarlet, with *other* delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. 25. [x] How are the mighty fallen in the midſt of the battle! O Jonathan, *thou waſt* ſlain in thine high places. 26. I am diſtreſſed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me: [y] thy love to me was wonderful, paſſing the love of women. 27. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war periſhed!

[m] 1 Sam. xxxi. 3.
[n] Joſh. x. 13.
[o] Deut. iv. 7, 8.
[p] 1 Mac. ix. 21.
[q] Mic. i. 10.
[r] Judg. xvi. 23.
[s] Job iii. 3, 4. Jer. xx. 14.
[t] 1 Sam. xiv. 47.
[u] Pſ. lxviii. 12.
[x] Lam. v. 16.
[y] 1 Sam. xviii. 1.

v. 17—27. In ſong diſtinguiſhed, as in battle great, Iſrael's ſweet ſinger tunes to mournful notes his harp; and whilſt he weeps over the mighty fallen, in elegiac ſtrains of plaintive woe, calls forth the ſympathetic tear. We have,

1. The elegy. Whatever was great, noble, and amiable in Saul is dwelt upon; and Jonathan's lovely name mentioned with tender diſtreſs. In their lives they were in love united, in death nothing could divide them. Shocked that in Gath ſuch tidings ſhould be told, and that uncircumciſed Philiſtines ſhould triumph over the mighty fallen, he beautifully bids fame be ſilent, and, poetically to deſcribe his ſenſe of the calamity, wiſhes the unhappy mountains of Gilboa for ever in barrenneſs, to bewail the blood that was ſhed upon them. The daughters of Iſrael, whom Saul had arrayed in ſcarlet and gold, the ſpoils of conquered enemies, he calls to mourn with him; and cloſes with the warm remembrance of Jonathan's uncommon love, and a fine apoſtrophe, the third time repeated, over the loſs Iſrael ſuſtained in theſe mighty heroes fallen, and the weapons of war periſhed. *Note*, (1.) Death ſhould wipe out the remembrance of paſt injuries of thoſe who are gone; let us ſpeak nothing, except in their commendation. (2.) There is a friendſhip ſome great ſouls are capable of, that exceeds all other paſſions. (3.) The triumphing of the wicked, over the cauſe of God, is grievous to the faithful.

2. The misfortune David lamented he ſought to prevent, by enjoining the children of Judah the uſe of the bow, in which the Philiſtines ſeem now to have excelled them, *fas eſt & ab hoſte doceri*. And this his ordinance was inſerted in the book of Jaſher, for future generations. This book ſeems to have been a public regiſter, wherein every memorable affair was faithfully recorded.

CHAP. II.

Saul being dead, David, 1. By direction from God goes up to Hebron, and is there anointed king, ver. 1—4. *2. He thanks the men of Jabeſh-gilead for burying Saul*, ver. 5—7. *3. Iſhboſheth, the ſon of Saul, is ſet up in oppoſition to him*, ver. 8—11. *4. A warm encounter happens between David's party, and Iſhboſheth's, in which, (1.) Twelve of each ſide engage hand to hand, and are all ſlain*, ver. 12—16. *(2.) Iſhboſheth's party is beaten*, ver. 17. *(3.) Aſahel, on David's ſide, is ſlain by Abner*, 18—23. *(4.) Joab, at Abner's requeſt, ſounds a retreat*, ver. 24—28. *(5) Abner makes the beſt of his way*, ver. 29. *and the loſs on both ſides is computed*, ver. 30—32.

1. AND it came to paſs, after this, that David [a] enquired of the LORD, ſaying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD ſaid unto him, Go up. And David ſaid, Whither ſhall I go up? And he ſaid, Unto Hebron. 2. So David went up thither, and [b] his two wives alſo, Ahinoam the Jezreeliteſs, and Abigal Nabal's wife the Carmelite. 3. And [c] his men that *were* with him, did David bring up, every man with his houſhold, and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. 4. And the men of Judah came, and there [d] they anointed David king over the houſe of Judah: and they told David, ſaying, *That* [e] the men of Jabeſh-gilead *were they* that buried Saul. 5. ¶ And David ſent meſſengers unto the men of Jabeſh-gilead, and ſaid unto them, [f] Bleſſed *be* ye of the LORD, that ye have ſhewed this kindneſs unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried him. 6. And now [g] the LORD ſhew kindneſs and truth unto you: and I alſo will requite you this kindneſs, becauſe ye have done this thing. 7. Therefore now let your hands be ſtrengthned, and be ye † valiant: for your maſter Saul is dead, and alſo the houſe of Judah have anointed me king over them.

[a] 1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 4, 9. & xxx. 7, 8. Ezek. xxxvi. 37.
[b] Luke xxii. 28. 2 Tim. ii. 12.
[c] 1 Chron. xii. 1.
[d] 1 Mac. ii. 57.
[e] 1 Sam. xxxi. 13.
[f] Gen. xxiv. 31. Ruth i. 8. & ii. 20.
[g] Mat. v. 7.
† Heb. Sons of valour.

v. 1—7. David's army had been much reinforced, as appears 1 *Chron.* xii. yet he doth not immediately ſeize the throne, or march to compel allegiance to himſelf, though their anointed ſovereign; but,

1. Enquires of God whether it is his will he ſhould go up into Judah, where, as his own tribe, he hoped to be moſt readily

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readily received, and to what place? God anſwers him, Go; and directs him to Hebron, which ſeems to have been then the metropolis. It was a city of refuge, and chiefly inhabited by the prieſts. *Note*, They who wait upon God for direction, will be led in the right way to the kingdom.

2. David immediately obeys, and takes his wives along with him, and his men of war and their houſholds; they had been his companions in tribulation, it is but right and honourable to take them to ſhare in his advancement. *Note*, They who follow Chriſt under the croſs, ſhall reign with him in the day of his appearing and glory.

3. He meets with a very welcome reception. The men of Judah recognized the divine deſignation, and anointed him their king; not obtruding him upon the other tribes, but expecting, according to the divine determination, they would quickly follow ſo good an example. Thus, ſtep by ſtep, he advances to the throne of Iſrael. *Note*, They who would have Chriſt to reign over them, muſt chuſe him for their king; not but that it is of grace they are inclined, and made thus a willing people.

4. On enquiry probably after Saul's corpſe and Jonathan's, for which he purpoſed an honourable interment, he is informed of the generous behaviour of the men of Jabeſh-gilead. As a token how kindly he took this noble action of theirs, he ſends them a hearty commendation, prays the Lord to bleſs them for their kindneſs, and aſſures them he will take occaſion to requite them. Though Saul is dead, who defended them, David will be their friend, who is anointed in his ſtead; therefore they need not fear any thing from the Philiſtines, who might reſent their deed; he bids them be ſtrong and valiant, and as he hoped they would receive him as their king, they might depend upon his protection. *Note*, (1.) A kindneſs ſhewn to our friends is an obligation conferred on ourſelves. (2.) It is not enough to beſtow our good wiſhes, but we muſt recompenſe, as we are able, thoſe who have well deſerved. (3.) To have thoſe for our friends, whoſe fidelity to others hath been tried, is a valuable acquiſition.

8. ¶ But Abner the ſon of Ner, captain of Saul's hoſt, took † Iſh-boſheth the ſon of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim. 9. And he made him king over Gilead, and over the Aſhurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Iſrael. 10. Iſh-boſheth Saul's ſon *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Iſrael, and reigned two years: but the houſe of Judah followed David. 11. (And the ‡ time that David was king in Hebron over the houſe of Judah, was ſeven years and ſix months.) 12. ¶ And Abner the ſon of Ner, and the ſervants of Iſh-boſheth the ſon of Saul, [h] went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. 13. And Joab the ſon of Zeruiah, and the ſervants of David went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they ſat down, the one on the one ſide of the pool, and the other on the other ſide of the pool. 14. And Abner ſaid to Joab, Let the young men now ariſe, and [i] play before us: and Joab ſaid, Let them ariſe. 15. Then there aroſe and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which *pertained* to Iſh-boſheth the ſon of Saul, and twelve of the ſervants of David. 16. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and *thruſt* his ſword into his fellow's ſide: ſo they fell down together: wherefore that place was called ‖ Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon. 17. And there was a very ſore battle that day: and Abner was beaten, and the men of Iſrael, before the ſervants of David.

† i. e. A man of ſhame, Called Eſhbaal, 2 Chron. viii. 33.

‡ Heb. Number of days.

Chap. v. 5. 1 Kings ii. 11.

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[h] Ver. 17. Prov. xxv. 8.

[i] Prov. xiv. 9.

‖ i. e. The Field of Rocks, or Strong men.

v. 8—17. The ambition of Abner, who was general to Saul, and zeal for his family, prevails upon him to ſet up Iſh-boſheth, the only ſurviving legitimate ſon of Saul, as king; and whilſt David, in dependance upon God's promiſes, remained quiet at Hebron, Abner, by his aſſiduity, gained over the land of Gilead beyond Jordan firſt, and then all the tribes but Judah, to acknowledge Iſh-boſheth. And thus began that competition, which, after two years peace and five of war, terminated in the death of Iſh-boſheth, and the entire ſubmiſſion of all the tribes to David. *Note*, Before we come to the throne our faith will be tried, and we muſt expect war in the gates.

1. Abner begins the war, which, as it ſeems, David would never have entered into, though his right to the crown was ſo evident, unleſs he had been obliged; ſo deſirous was he rather to preſerve the lives of thoſe who ſhould be his future ſubjects, than treat them now as rebels againſt his crown. The tribes of Iſrael collect their army in Mahanaim, and march to Gibeon; Joab, David's general, meets them there. *Note*, If when we ſpeak for peace others make themſelves ready for battle, then we muſt of neceſſity defend ourſelves.

2. Abner ſeeing Joab, probably, backward to engage, David being unwilling to ſhed Iſraelitiſh blood, challenges him to produce twelve men of Judah, againſt twelve of his Iſraelites, and play before them, that is, fight ſo many duels; for, to a fierce warrior, blood and wounds are ſport and paſtime. Joab, like too many, had entertained thoſe falſe notions of honour, that he dared not refuſe the challenge; the men are ſelected, matched, enter the liſts, and engage: each inſtantly ſeizes his fellow, plunges his ſword into the other's ſide, and all of them fall together; ſo laviſh are generals often of the lives of their brave ſoldiers, to gratify their caprice. The place, from this occurrence, is called, *The Field of Rocks*, from the brave men, hardy and firm as a rock, who fell there. *Note*, (1.) They buy honour dear that purchaſe it at the expence of their brother's blood. (2.) Falſe notions of honour are among the accurſed wiles Satan employs for the deſtruction both of men's bodies and ſouls.

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3. The general battle hereupon enſues, and Abner and his forces are routed. They who ſtir up ſtrife thus, often meddle to their hurt, and 'tis juſt in God to puniſh the aggreſſor, and cover thoſe with ſhame who ſeek to advance themſelves upon their neighbour's ruin.

18. ¶ And there were [k] three ſons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abiſhai, and Aſahel: and Aſahel *was* [l] *as* light of foot as † a wild roe. 19. And Aſahel purſued after Abner, and in going he turned not to the right hand, nor to the left [m] from following Abner. 20. Then Abner looked behind him, and ſaid, *Art* thou Aſahel? And he anſwered, I *am*. 21. And Abner ſaid to him, Turn thee aſide to thy right hand, or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his ‡ armour. But Aſahel would not turn aſide from following of him. 22. And Abner ſaid again to Aſahel, Turn thee aſide from following me: wherefore ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground? how then ſhould I hold up my face to Joab thy brother? 23. Howbeit, he refuſed to turn aſide: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the ſpear ſmote him [n] under the fifth *rib*, that the ſpear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the ſame place: and it came to paſs, *that* as many as came to the place where Aſahel fell down and died, ſtood ſtill. 24. Joab alſo and Abiſhai purſued after Abner: and the ſun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah that *lieth* before Giah, by the way of the wilderneſs of Gibeon.

[k] 1 Chron. ii. 16.

[l] Ibid. xii. 8.

† Heb. One of the roes that is in the fields.

Eccleſ. ix. 1. Amos ii. 14.

[m] Eccleſ. vi. 10.

‡ Or, Spoil

[n] Chap. iii. 27. & iv. 6. & xx. 10.

v. 18—24. Abner's forces being routed, he himſelf is forced to fly for his life, but is cloſe purſued by Joab's brother Aſahel, whoſe ſwiftneſs was as the mountain roe; having ſingled him out, he ſticks cloſe to him, ambitious to make him his priſoner, and hoping thus to end the war, of which Abner was the chief ſupport. It was nobly aimed, but he was an unequal match, and therefore purſued only his ruin. *Note*, They who aim too high, ſtand on a precipice which makes their fall the deeper. Abner ſaw the young man's ambition, and kindly admoniſhes him of his danger, deſiring him to ſeize ſome other prey, which he was equal to; but, fired with ambition, he continues the purſuit, and perhaps imputes to timidity the friendly caution. Once more he begs him not to put him on the unwilling neceſſity of hurting him; for how ſhould he then look his brother in the face, whom, though an enemy, he reſpected, or probably apprehended that he might need his favour if David ſucceeded, as his conſcience now miſgave. The remonſtrance was vain, Aſahel perſiſts, and rues his folly. Abner, as he advanced, by a back thruſt ſmote him under the fifth rib, a mortal blow, and he fell dead to the earth. This gave Abner ſome breathing; the people who came to the place where Aſahel lay, halted till Joab and Abiſhai came up, who urged on the purſuit, and had well nigh overtaken him again, when night gave the vanquiſhed time to rally. *Note*, (1.) The qualifications we are proud of are commonly our ruin. (2.) When we are moſt eager in the purſuit of our worldly ſchemes, and ſeem ready to graſp the prize of happineſs, death, like Abner's ſpear, ſtops our career, and lays our big-ſwoln hopes and honour in the duſt.

25. ¶ And the children of Benjamin gathered themſelves together after Abner, and became one troop, and ſtood on the top of an hill. 26. Then Abner called to Joab and ſaid, Shall the ſword devour for ever? knoweſt thou not that [o] it will be bitterneſs in the latter end? how long ſhall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from [p] following their brethren? 27. And Joab ſaid, *As* God liveth, [q] unleſs thou hadſt ſpoken, ſurely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother. 28. So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people ſtood ſtill, and purſued after Iſrael no more,

[o] Judg. xxi. 2.

[p] Acts vii. 26.

[q] Ver. 14.

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[r] Chap. iii. 8.

[r] neither fought they any more. 29. And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and paſſed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim. 30. And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's ſervants nineteen men, and Aſahel. 31. But the ſervants of David had ſmitten of Benjamin and of Abner's men, *ſo that* three hundred and threeſcore men died. 32. ¶ And they took up Aſahel, and buried him in the ſepulchre of his father, which *was* in Beth-lehem: and Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

v. 25—32. The routed troops making a ſtand on the hill, perhaps being joined by ſome freſh forces from Benjamin,

1. Abner begs of Joab to ſtay the purſuit. He who made a ſport of the ſword in the morning, now dreads its devouring edge, and fain would have it return to the ſcabbard again; he pleads with Joab the near relation between the people, they were brethren, and if brother imbrued his hands in brother's blood, whoever gained the day the remembrance would be bitter. Sound reaſoning, but juſt a day too late; had he thus argued with himſelf before, the ſword had not been drawn. But we can ſee that right when the caſe is our own, which pride and prejudice prevented us from diſcerning when our neighbour's intereſt was at ſtake.

2. Joab nobly agrees to the requeſt; no doubt his orders were to be ſparing of blood, and therefore he lays the blame of what had been ſhed on Abner's obſtinacy, but for whoſe challenge they might have retired in the morning in peace. A retreat is now ſounded, and Abner ſuffered to depart to Mahanaim, whilſt Joab returns to his king at Hebron, with the loſs of but nineteen men, beſides Aſahel; nor was the loſs of Iſrael and Benjamin great. A former ſeverity, *Judges* xx. 44. had made the conquerors more tender of their brethren; and it was well known that David wiſhed as little blood might be ſhed as poſſible. Aſahel receives all military honours, and is buried in the ſepulchre of his fathers, the reſt on the field of battle. Thus terminates the firſt rencounter in favour of David, as a prelude to his greater future ſucceſſes. *Note,* (1.) 'Tis vain to ſtruggle againſt the Divine decree. (2.) Though the clods of the valley are made more honourable to ſome than others, and they are diſtinguiſhed in the grave, yet when they come again from thence, nobility will meet no diſtinction, and only the good be great in a reſurrection day.

CHAP. III.

Here is, 1. *The gradual advance of David's intereſt,* ver. 1. 2. *The building up of his family,* ver. 2—5. 3. *Abner's quarrel with Iſh-boſheth, and his treaty with David,* ver. 6—12. 4. *The preliminaries ſettled,* ver. 13—16. 5. *Abner's attempt to bring Iſrael over to David,* ver. 17—21. 6. *The treacherous murder of Abner, by Joab,* ver. 22—27. 7. *David's great concern for his death,* ver. 28—29.

[a] Gen. iii. 15. Gal. v. 17. Eph. vi. 12.
[b] Job viii. 7. Prov. iv. 18. Dan. ii. 34.
[c] Eſth. vi. 13.
[d] Pſ. cxxvii. 5.
† i. e. The peace of his father. Chap. xv. 14. So Gen. iv. 1.
[e] Prov. xxi. 30. Iſa viii. 9, 10.

1. NOW there was [a] long war between the houſe of Saul, and the houſe of David: but [b] David waxed ſtronger and ſtronger, and [c] the houſe of Saul waxed weaker and weaker. 2. ¶ And unto David were [d] ſons born in Hebron: and his firſt-born was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreeliteſs: 3. And his ſecond, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite: and the third, † Abſalom, the ſon of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geſhur: 4. And the fourth, Adonijah, the ſon of Haggith: and the fifth, Shephatiah, the ſon of Abital: 5. And the ſixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife: theſe were born to David in Hebron. 6. ¶ And it came to paſs while there was war between the houſe of Saul, and the houſe of David, that Abner [e] made himſelf ſtrong for the houſe of Saul.

v. 1—6. Abner was the life of the cauſe of Iſh-boſheth, and one defeat ended not the war. It was protracted ſeveral years; and though no more pitched battles were fought, yet David's houſe ſtrengthened daily by the acquiſition of new territories, and the deſertion of thoſe who were willing to caſt their weight into the deſcending ſcale. At laſt the houſe of Saul, daily weakened, began to be reduced to the utmoſt extremities. *Note,* The war between grace and corruption is long, to exerciſe the faith and patience of the ſaints, but the iſſue is ſure; and every day, like the houſe of Saul, corruption is weakening and grace ſtrengthening, till in death the ſhout of victory ſhall be heard, and ſin ſhall fall to riſe no more for ever. Beſides his ſucceſs in the war, David is bleſt with a conſiderable increaſe of his family, which ſtrengthened his cauſe; ſix ſons were born to him in Hebron, from ſo many wives. Polygamy had long received ſanction from prevailing cuſtom, but it is in itſelf evil; and no cuſtom or authority can conſecrate a bad practice. And could David indeed have foreſeen how his children would have proved, it would have abated the joy of their birth; for three of them at leaſt lived to give him many a bitter pang. So often do we find our ſcourges in that wherein we promiſed ourſelves the greateſt comfort.

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[f] Chap. xxi. 10.
[g] Chap. xvi. 21.
[h] Mark vi. 10.
[i] Deut. xxiii. 18. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. Chap. ix. 8. & xvi. 9.
[k] Ruth i. 17.
[l] Judg. xx. 1.

7. And Saul had a concubine, whoſe name *was* [f] Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and *Iſh-boſheth* ſaid to Abner, [g] Wherefore haſt thou gone in unto my father's concubine? 8. Then was Abner [h] very wroth for the words of Iſh-boſheth, and ſaid, *Am* I [i] a dog's head, which againſt Judah do ſhew kindneſs this day unto the houſe of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargeſt me to day with a fault concerning this woman? 9. [k] So do God to Abner, and more alſo, except as the LORD hath ſworn to David, even ſo I do to him: 10. To tranſlate the kingdom from the houſe of Saul, and to ſet up the throne of David over Iſrael, and over Judah, [l] from Dan even to Beerſheba. 11. And he could not anſwer Abner a word again, becauſe he feared him. 12. ¶ And Abner ſent meſſengers to David on his behalf, ſaying, Whoſe *is* the land? ſaying *alſo,* Make thy league with me, and behold, my hand *ſhall be* with thee, to bring about all Iſrael unto thee. 13. ¶ And he ſaid, Well, I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou ſhalt not ſee my face, except thou firſt bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comeſt to ſee my face. 14. And David ſent meſſengers to Iſh-boſheth Saul's ſon, ſaying, [m] Deliver *me* my wife Michal, which I eſpouſed to me for an hundred foreſkins of the Philiſtines. 15. And Iſh-boſheth ſent, and took her from *her* huſband, *even* from † Phaltiel the ſon of Laiſh. 16. And her huſband went with her ‡ along weeping behind her to Bahurim: then ſaid Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned. 17. ¶ And Abner had communication with the elders of Iſrael, ſaying, Ye ſought for David in times paſt *to be* king over you. 18. Now then do *it,* for [n] the LORD hath ſpoken of David, ſaying, By the hand of my ſervant David I will ſave my people Iſrael out of the hand of the Philiſtines, and out of the hand of all their enemies. 19. And Abner alſo ſpake in the ears of [o] Benjamin: and Abner went alſo to ſpeak in the ears of David in Hebron, all that ſeemed good to Iſrael, and that ſeemed good to the whole houſe of Benjamin. 20. So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him: and David made Abner, and the men that *were* with him, a feaſt. 21. And Abner ſaid unto David, I will ariſe and go, and will gather all Iſrael unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayſt reign over all that thine heart deſireth. And David ſent Abner away, and he went in peace.

[m] 1 Sam. xviii. 25, 27.
† Called Phalti, 1 Sam. xxv. 44.
‡ Heb. Going and weeping.
[n] Rev. iii. 9.
[o] 1 Sam. x. 20, 21.

v. 7—21. How precarious are worldly friendſhips, where one croſs word breeds diviſion and enmity.

1. Abner quarrels with Iſh-boſheth. Iſh-boſheth accuſes him of debauching a concubine of his father's, and probably was jealous of ſome ambitious deſign therein. Abner highly reſents the accuſation; whether guilty or not of the charge it does not appear; if innocent, the more provoked; if really culpable, yet conceiving his deſerts at Iſh-boſheth's hands merited better than to be thus upbraided; therefore, in great anger, he reproaches him with his ingratitude in this contemptible treatment of him, as if he were a dog; though he owed his crown to his bravery and zeal, and ſwears to be revenged, by transferring the kingdom to David, whom he acknowledges God deſigned for the throne: and therefore he acted againſt his own conſcience and better knowledge in his oppoſition to him. Iſh-boſheth knew Abner's influence, and was ſilent; for he feared the conſequence of his revolt, and wanted the ſpirit of a king either to war for himſelf abroad, or maintain reſpect and authority at home. *Note,* (1.) The ſins of wicked men are made ſubſervient to bring about God's determined purpoſes. (2.) Many fight againſt the convictions of their conſcience. (3.) Pride cannot bear rebuke, eſpecially from thoſe on whom obligations have been conferred. (4.) There is little dependance to be placed on thoſe whoſe zeal for our ſervice is at bottom but the gratification of their own ambition. (5.) A weak king will be a ſlave to his own ſervants.

2. Abner is as good as his word. He immediately ſends meſſengers to make his peace with David, and acknowledges his

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right to the kingdom : probably he was ſick of a ſinking cauſe, and reſolved to ſecure himſelf in time. David readily enters into the treaty ; but engages as a preliminary, to have his wife Michal reſtored ; either he ſtill retained affection for her, or he did it in policy to engage Saul's friends to his party. Abner puts him on making application to Iſh-boſheth, which ſucceeds, and Abner conducts her to David, much to the grief of Phaltiel her huſband, who followed her a conſiderable way in tears. *Note*, (1.) They who act only with a view to their own advantage, are yet made ſometimes uſeful inſtruments to ſerve the cauſe of God. (2.) Separation between huſband and wife ſhould be carefully avoided ; and if unhappy differences, or neceſſity of circumſtances, produce a temporary abſence, the firſt occaſion ſhould be embraced to heal the breach, and come together again in love and peace.

3. Abner, in purſuit of his agreement, ſecretly communes with the elders of Iſrael and the men of Benjamin, and now appears a zealous advocate for David, reminds them of what he had already done for his country, their own preference of him formerly, and the election of God, which ought to determine their choice. *Note*, (1.) When we have led others into a wrong courſe, 'tis our duty to labour to undeceive them. (2.) The ſame reaſons and arguments which we after acknowledge to be clear and obvious, have no weight with us, as long as pride and prejudice blind the eyes.

4. Abner having ſucceeded in his application, goes publickly to David to Hebron, with twenty men, perhaps a deputation from the tribes ; reports the conſent of the people, vaunts not a little his power and influence, and promiſes, as if it was *his* work, to make David king. David wiſely overlooks Abner's vanity, confirms their former treaty, nobly entertains him and his attendants, and diſmiſſes them in peace. *Note*, We may receive much good from the kind offices of a bad man.

22. ¶ And behold, the ſervants of David and Joab came from *purſuing* a troop, and brought in a great ſpoil with them : (but Abner *was* not with David in Hebron, for he had ſent him away, and he was gone in peace.) 23. When Joab, and all the hoſt that *was* with him, were come, they told Joab, ſaying, Abner the ſon of Ner came to the King, and he hath ſent him away, and he is gone in peace. 24. Then Joab came to the king, and ſaid, What haſt thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee, why *is* it *that* thou haſt ſent him away, and he is † quite gone? 25. Thou knoweſt Abner the ſon of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doſt. 26. And when Joab was come out from David, he ſent meſſengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah ; but David knew *it* not. 27. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him [p] aſide in the gate, to ſpeak with him ‡ quietly : and ſmote him there [q] under the fifth *rib*, that he died, for the blood of Aſahel his brother. 28. ¶ And afterwards when David heard it, he ſaid, [r] I and my kingdom *are* guiltleſs before the LORD for ever, from the ‖ blood of Abner the ſon of Ner : 29. [s] Let it reſt on the head of Joab, and on all his father's houſe, and let there not fail from the houſe of Joab one [t] that hath an iſſue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a ſtaff, or that falleth on a ſword, or that lacketh bread. 30. So Joab and Abiſhai his brother ſlew Abner, becauſe [u] he had ſlain their brother Aſahel at Gibeon in the battle. 31. ¶ And David [x] ſaid to Joab, and to all the people that *were* with him, Rent your clothes, and gird you with ſackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David *himſelf* followed the bier. 32. And they buried Abner in Hebron : and the king lift up his voice, and [y] wept at the grave of Abner ; and all the people wept. 33. And the king lamented over Abner, and ſaid, Died Abner as a fool dieth? 34. Thy hands *were* not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters : as a man falleth before § wicked men, *ſo* felleſt thou. And all the people wept again over him. 35. And when all the people came to cauſe David to eat meat, while it was yet day, David ſware, ſaying, So do God to me, and more alſo, if I taſte bread, or ought elſe, [z] till the ſun be down. 36. And all the people took notice *of it*, and it pleaſed them : as whatſoever the king did, pleaſed all the people. 37. For all the people, and all Iſrael underſtood that day, that it was not of the king to ſlay Abner the ſon of Ner. 38. And the king ſaid unto his ſervants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Iſrael? 39. And I *am* this day weak, though anointed king, and theſe men the ſons of Zeruiah *be* [a] too hard for me : [b] the LORD ſhall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedneſs.

† Heb. Going gone.
p 1 Kings ii. 5.
‡ Heb. Peaceably. Deut. xxvii. 24. Jer. xli. 6.
q Chap. ii. 23.
r Deut. xxi. 7.
‖ Heb. Bloods. Gen. iv. 10.
s Judg. ix. 24.
t Lev. xv. 2.
u Chap. ii. 23.
x Gen. ix. 6. Exod. xxi. 12. Prov. xxv. 5.
y Job xxxi. 29. Prov. xxiv. 17.
§ Heb. Children of iniquity.
z 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Chap. i. 12.
a 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. Prov. xxi. 3.
b 1 Kings ii. 34. Pſ. lxii. 12.

v. 22—39. Joab and the army were now in the field, probably againſt the Philiſtines, when Abner came to commune with David at Hebron : but no ſooner was he returned from the expedition, than he is informed of what had paſſed, at which he is greatly enraged.

1. He inſolently expoſtulates with David on what he had done, and not only dares find fault with his conduct, but charges him with folly, to be impoſed upon thus by an enemy. The paſſion Joab appeared in, made it vain to reply, or David perhaps thought it prudent to ſmother his diſpleaſure ; or Joab left him in ſuch haſte, that he gave him no time for an anſwer. *Note*, They who have done us great ſervices, are too apt to think they have a right to be overbearing.

2. He diſpatched meſſengers immediately in David's name, unknown to him, to fetch Abner back again, under pretence of farther conference ; and taking him aſide when he came, as if to talk with him on the affair, he ſmote him ſecretly under the fifth rib ; inſtigated by revenge, and probably jealous, leſt Abner ſhould rival him in David's favour ; a baſe and cowardly aſſaſſination ! in open defiance of juſtice, and reflecting the greateſt diſhonour on his ſovereign. Abiſhai, Joab's brother, was privy to the deſign, and ſtood involved with him in the guilt of it.

3. David appears exceedingly ſhocked at the deed, and teſtifies every mark of unfeigned grief. He ſolemnly profeſſes his own innocence of the blood that was ſhed ; and though unable, through the great power which Joab and his brother had in the army, to execute them as their king, he, as a prophet, entails a curſe on their family, that ſhould deſcend in diſeaſes and calamities upon their children's children. He commands a ſolemn mourning, and bids Joab teſtify ſome remorſe for his crime : himſelf follows the bier, lamenting that ſo great a man was fallen, who might have lived to ſerve the cauſe of Iſrael ; he weeps at the grave, and bewails the unhappy fall of an innocent man, who died not as one who was a fool, a criminal under ſentence of public juſtice, but betrayed under the cloak of friendſhip, and villainouſly murdered by wicked men ; and the people joined with him, and until even a ſolemn faſt is kept, in token of their ſorrow not only for ſo great a prince, but alſo for the innocent blood wherewith the land was defiled. *Note*, (1.) The death of a great man, though a bad man, may be a real loſs to the public. (2.) Though innocent blood may long paſs unpuniſhed, yet it will cry, and vengeance, though ſlow, is ſure. (3.) The tribute of a tear is due to the memory of the deceaſed ; eſpecially of thoſe who die not as fools, as wicked men, but fall in the cauſe of God and truth.

4. The King's concern pleaſed the people. He fully exculpated himſelf from all conſent to the murder ; and in this, as in his general conduct, engaged daily the affection and regard of his ſubjects. *Note*, He is a king indeed that reigns in the hearts as well as over the perſons of his ſubjects.

5. David bitterly complains of his want of power to execute judgment on the offenders ; in the infant unſettled ſtate of his kingdom, it appeared to be dangerous to put ſuch great men to death ; but this ſeems to be David's weakneſs : if inſtead of turning them over to God's ſecret judgments, he had cauſed Joab and Abiſhai, as they deſerved, to be executed as criminals, his kingdom had not been the leſs ſecure. However, the ſword at laſt found out Joab, and Solomon, according to David's dying charge, executed upon him the ſentence he deſerved. *Note*, (1.) Kings are placed in difficult ſituations, where to ſpare or puniſh is attended with equal danger. (2.) Long impunity makes the ſinner confident ; but the ſword of God's juſtice ſhall ſmite him ſecretly, and he ſhall not go down to the grave in peace.

CHAP. IV.

Iſh-boſheth's death quickly follows Abner's, 1. *His ſervants ſlay him, and bring his head to David*, ver. 1—8. 2. *David, inſtead of rewarding them, puts them to death for it*, ver. 9—12.

1. AND when Saul's ſon heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands [a] were feeble, and all the Iſraelites were troubled. 2. And Saul's ſon had two men *that were* captains of bands : the name of the one *was* Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the ſons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin : (for [b] Beeroth alſo was reckoned to Benjamin ; 3. And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were ſojourners there until this day.) 4. And Jonathan, Saul's ſon, had a ſon [c] *that was* lame of *his* feet, *and* was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurſe took him up and fled : and it came

a Iſa. xiii. 7.
b Joſh. xviii. 25.
c Chap. ix. 3.

came to paſs as ſhe made haſte to flee, that he fell and became lame; and his name *was* † Mephiboſheth. 5. And the ſons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the houſe of Iſh-boſheth, who lay on a bed at noon. 6. And they came thither into the midſt of the houſe, [d] *as though* they would have fetched wheat; and they ſmote him under the fifth *rib*; and Rechab and Baanah his brother eſcaped. 7. For when they came into the houſe, [e] he lay on his bed in his bed-chamber, and they ſmote him and ſlew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night. 8. And they brought the head of Iſh-boſheth unto David unto Hebron, and ſaid to the king, Behold, the head of Iſh-boſheth the ſon of Saul, thine enemy, [f] which ſought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his ſeed.

† Called Merib-baal, 1 Chron. viii. 34.
[d] Pſ. xii. 2.
[e] Mat. xxiv. 50.
[f] Prov. xxix. 10. Mat. ii. 20.

v. 1—8. Abner, the ſtay of Saul's family, being dead, Iſh-boſheth's affairs ſunk the faſter; and no other of Saul's houſe remained who could pretend to the crown, but a child of Jonathan's, who was lamed by a fall received when his nurſe fled with him on the Philiſtine's victory, fearing leaſt they would utterly cut off her maſter's houſe; and thus was, both by his age and misfortune, unfit to retrieve their ruined circumſtances. *Note*, (1.) The perils of tender infancy are great; to have eſcaped them unhurt is a ſingular mercy. (2.) When God will accompliſh his deſigns, every obſtacle in the way will be removed.

In this deſperate ſituation of Iſh-boſheth, inſtead of endeavouring to ſupport or comfort him,

1. Two of his ſervants conſpire his death; brothers not only in blood but iniquity; Benjamites, who, with their fellow-citizens, had deſerted Beeroth and fled to Gittaim, on the death of Saul, for fear of the Philiſtines. Pretending buſineſs in ſome of the magazines, which lay near the king's apartments, they took the opportunity, on his lying down at mid-day to repoſe himſelf during the heat, to break into his chamber, and murder him. *Note*, (1.) The higher a man's ſtation the more dangerous. (2.) Ere we cloſe our eyes let us ever think of our ſouls, as thoſe who know not whether they ever ſhall awake again. (3.) A ſinking cauſe is oftener haſtened to ruin by the treachery of pretended friends, than the attacks of avowed enemies.

2. The murderers fly, and take the head of Iſh-boſheth, as thinking it the moſt acceptable preſent they can bring to David; and pretending zeal not only for his ſervice, but for avenging God's quarrel againſt the houſe of Saul, would cloak their treachery and regicide under the pretext of religion. *Note*, Religion hath often been made a cloak for ambition; but God will ſtrip the hypocrite, and cover him with confuſion.

9. ¶ And David anſwered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the ſons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and ſaid unto them, *As* the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my ſoul out of all adverſity, 10. [g] When one told me, ſaying, Behold, Saul is dead (thinking to have brought good tidings) I took hold of him, and ſlew him in Ziklag, [h] † who *thought* that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: 11. How much more, when wicked men have ſlain a righteous perſon, in his own houſe, upon his bed? [i] ſhall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth? 12. And David commanded his young men, and [k] they ſlew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and [l] hanged *them* up over the pool in Hebron: but they took the head of Iſh-boſheth, and buried *it* in the ſepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

[g] Chap. i. 10, 15.
[h] 1 Tim. vi. 10. Jude xi.
† Or, Which was the reward I gave him, &c.
[i] Gen. ix. 5. Pſ. ix. 12.
[k] Mat. vii. 2.
[l] Deut. xxi. 23.

v. 9—12. How greatly were theſe murderers diſappointed! They expected the higheſt honour, and meet with their juſt deſert, a halter. May ſuch rebellious deeds be thus ever recompenſed!

1. David paſſes ſentence upon them on their own evidence. They muſt have heard his former judgment on the Amalekite; and how much more guilty were they, who ſlew a righteous man, who had never injured them: and though he oppoſed David, he might do it in the perſuaſion of a better title to the crown. His blood cried for judgment from David as the chief magiſtrate, and the treachery of the aſſaſſination made the crime more unpardonable; therefore he ſolemnly ſwears they ſhall die, and commands immediate execution of the ſentence. *Note*, (1.) Charity will put the beſt conſtructions on the conduct even of thoſe who oppoſe us unjuſtly, and rather impute it to ignorance than deſign. (2.) They who bear the ſword of magiſtracy, muſt not bear it in vain.

2. Rechab and Baanah, the conſpirators, are immediately executed, and their hands and feet hung up, *in terrorem*, to deter others from ſuch rebellious deeds, as well as to expreſs David's abhorrence of ſuch practices, who wiſhed not to wade to a throne in blood, much leſs by baſe aſſaſſination. Iſh-boſheth's head is honourably buried with Abner in Hebron; and thus ended the dominion of the houſe of Saul. *Note*, Sooner or later every enemy muſt fall before the Son of David, and his cauſe prove triumphant over all the powers of earth and hell.

CHAP. V.

Every competitor being removed, 1. *David is anointed king by all the tribes*, ver. 1—5. 2. *He makes himſelf maſter of the ſtrong-hold of Zion*, ver. 6—10. 3. *Builds himſelf a houſe, and ſtrengthens himſelf in his kingdom*, ver. 11, 12. 4. *Children are yet born to him*, ver. 13—16. 5. *Obtains two victories over the Philiſtines*, ver. 17—25.

1. [a] THEN came all the tribes of Iſrael to David unto Hebron, and ſpake, ſaying, Behold, [b] we *are* thy bone and thy fleſh. 2. Alſo in time paſt, when Saul was king over us, thou waſt he [c] that leddeſt out, and broughteſt in Iſrael: and [d] the LORD ſaid to thee, [e] Thou ſhalt feed my people Iſrael, and thou ſhalt be a captain over Iſrael. 3. So all the elders of Iſrael came to the king to Hebron, and [f] king David made a league with them in Hebron [g] before the LORD: and [h] they anointed David king over Iſrael. 4. ¶ David *was* thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned [i] forty years. 5. In Hebron he reigned over Judah ſeven years and ſix months: and in Jeruſalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Iſrael and Judah.

[a] 1 Chron. xi. 1.
[b] Deut. xvii. 15. Eph. v. 30.
[c] 1 Sam. xviii. 5, 13.
[d] Ibid. xvi. 12.
[e] Pſ. lxxviii. 71. Iſa. xl. 11. John x. 11.
[f] 2 Kings xi. 17.
[g] Judg. xi. 11.
[h] Chap. ii. 4. Pſal. ii. 6.
[i] 1 Chron. xxix. 27.

v. 1—5. We have here,

1. The general ſubmiſſion of all the tribes to David; a longer account of which will be given, 1 *Chron.* xii. 23—40. They addreſs him with great affection, as being their brother in blood, all ſons of Jacob, and from whom therefore they might expect clemency and protection; they mention the former ſervices he had done them, as an obligation they ever remembered, embrace the Divine deſignation, and, ſince God hath ſaid he ſhall rule, ſalute him king. This had been their duty to have done before, but better late than never.

2. David accepts the tender of their allegiance, the heads of the tribes are ſummoned, and in a ſolemn convention of the ſtates, he engages to protect them as their captain, and adminiſter juſtice to them according to God's law; and they anoint him the third time their king, and promiſe all dutiful ſubjection to his government. *Note*, The duty of kings and ſubjects is reciprocal, and the one as much bound to rule with equity and clemency, as the other to obey with chearfulneſs and fidelity.

3. David began his reign in the prime of life, juſt at thirty, and God bleſt him with long life; he reigned forty years and ſix months; ſeven years and a half in Hebron, and thirty in Jeruſalem; the conqueſt of which he made in the firſt year of his reign over Iſrael.

6. ¶ And the king and his men went to [k] Jeruſalem, unto [l] the Jebuſites, the inhabitants of the land: which ſpake unto David, ſaying, Except thou take away [m] the blind and the lame, thou ſhalt not come in hither: thinking David cannot come in hither. 7. Nevertheleſs, David took the ſtrong hold of Zion: the ſame *is* the city of David. 8. And David ſaid on that day, Whoſoever getteth up to the gutter, and ſmiteth the Jebuſites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's ſoul, [n] *he ſhall be chief and captain*: † wherefore they ſaid, The blind and the lame ſhall not come into the houſe. 9. So David dwelt in the fort, and called it, The city of David; and David built round about, from Millo and inward. 10. And David ‡ went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hoſts *was* with him.

[k] Pſal. lxxvi. 2. Heb. vii. 1.
[l] Judg. i. 8. & xix. 11.
[m] Jer. xxxvii. 10.
[n] 1 Chron. xi. 6.
† Or, because they had ſaid even the blind and the lame, he ſhall not, &c.
‡ Heb. Went going and growing.

v. 6—10. David having now united the people under one head, reſolves to improve this acceſſion of ſtrength by the ſiege of Jeruſalem, which though in part poſſeſſed, *Judg.* i. 8. the fortreſs continued in the hand of the Jebuſites, and was counted impregnable.

1. The Jebuſites treat David's attempt with great deriſion; probably they manned the walls with blind and lame perſons, as if they were ſufficient to defend them againſt any force he could bring, which ſeems a more natural ſenſe than to interpret this of their images, or any taliſmanic ſtatues, placed as guardians

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of the fort. *Note*, They who are moſt confident, do not always beſt ſucceed; their ſecurity is their ruin.

2. David makes an aſſault, and to encourage his men, proffers to make him captain of his army who ſhould firſt enter, either by the breach, or through the ditch, or, as ſome conjecture, ſome ſubterraneous cavity, and commands to throw the blind and the lame there, who dared affront him, and ſaid, He ſhall not come into the houſe or fortreſs; or if it be underſtood of the idols, it refers to his command to caſt them down from their pedeſtals, to ſhew the vain confidence of thoſe who truſted that they could keep him out. *Note*, The dependance of the guilty ſinner, is no better than truſting on the blind and the lame.

3. Having taken the city, he made it his royal reſidence, enlarged and fortified it conſiderably from Millo, as the fortreſs is ſuppoſed to be called. Here the majeſty of his kingdom began to appear, and the proſperity which from God attends him, made him great and reſpectable. *Note*, (1.) They are great indeed, who have God with them continually. (2.) When Jeſus ſhall have finiſhed his conqueſt of the ſtrong-holds of a ſinner's heart, and the corruptions of it, thoſe blind and lame, are caſt out, then ſhall the glory of his kingdom appear, and he ſhall reign over them in the new Jeruſalem for ever and ever.

11. ¶ And [o] Hyram king of Tire, ſent meſſengers to David, and cedar-trees, and carpenters, and maſons: and [p] they built David an houſe. 12. And David perceived that the LORD had eſtabliſhed him king over Iſrael, and that he had exalted his kingdom [q] for his people Iſrael's ſake. 13. ¶ And David [r] took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jeruſalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet ſons and daughters born to David. 14. And theſe be the names of thoſe that were born unto him in Jeruſalem; Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, 15. Ibhar alſo, and Eliſhua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, 16. And Eliſhama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.

[o] 1 Chron. xiv. 1.
[p] Iſa. lx. 10.
[q] Rom. xiii. 4.
[r] Deut. xvii. 17.

v. 11—16. Hyram king of Tire ſends to congratulate David on his acceſſion to the throne of Iſrael; and hereupon,

1. David, with his leave, hires Tyrian architects, more converſant than the Jews in theſe works of elegance, to build him a palace at Jeruſalem, ſuitable to the grandeur of his kingdom. *Note*, It is right that thoſe whom God is pleaſed to make great, ſhould appear ſuch.

2. David, with thankfulneſs perceived the eſtabliſhment of his kingdom, every competitor removed, beloved by his ſubjects, courted by his neighbours, and feared by his enemies; and this he aſcribes to God's love to his people, whom he regards, not as given to be his ſlaves, but as entruſted with him to be made happy under his wiſe and prudent adminiſtration. Happy the nation that hath ſuch a king!

3. Many wives and concubines increaſed his family, and ſeemed to ſtrengthen his kingdom, though it is to be feared they hurt his heart. Having once ſuffered his eye to wander on various objects, his neighbour's wife was not ſafe at laſt: ſo dangerous is the firſt ſtep from the path of duty; we know not then where we ſhall ſtop.

17. ¶ [s] But when the Philiſtines heard that they had anointed David king over Iſrael, [t] all the Philiſtines came up to ſeek David; and David heard *of it*, and went down to the hold. 18. The Philiſtines alſo came and ſpread themſelves [u] in the valley of Rephaim. 19. And David [x] enquired of the LORD, ſaying, [y] Shall I go up to the Philiſtines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD ſaid unto David, Go up: for I will doubtleſs deliver the Philiſtines into thine hand. 20. And David came to Baal-perazim, and David ſmote them there, and ſaid, [z] The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place, † Baal-perazim. 21. And there they left their images, and David and his men [a] burnt them.

[s] 1 Chron. xiv. 8.
[t] Pſal. ii. 1, 2.
[u] Iſa. xvii. 5.
[x] Numb. xxvii. 21. Pſal. lxxiii. 28.
[y] Prov. iii. 6.
[z] Pſal. xliv. 3.
† i. e. Maſter of diviſions. Iſa. xxviii. 21.
[a] Deut. vii. 25.

v. 17—21. The Philiſtines alarmed with David's ſucceſs, the union of the kingdoms under him, and the friendſhip of Hyram, thought it high time to fall upon him, before he was thoroughly ſettled in his throne, leaſt afterwards they ſhould attempt it too late. They invade Iſrael with a numerous army, and pitch near Jeruſalem, in the valley of Rephaim. David is ready to receive them, and goes down to the hold, ſome fortreſs which was below Jeruſalem, where was probably the general rendezvous of his army. Before he goes forth, however, he enquires of God, and is ſent with aſſurance of ſucceſs. Confidently therefore he attacks and defeats their army, ſeizes their gods, whom they had brought into the field as their protectors, and, according to the Divine command, caſts them into the fire. From this ſignal victory, the place is called Baal-perazim, *The Maſter of Breaches*; God having broken forth as a reſiſtleſs torrent upon his enemies, and thrown them down before him ſlain. *Note*, (1.) Though the enemies of God's people think to cruſh them with their numerous forces, they aſſemble only to their own confuſion. (2.) When we enquire of God upon our knees, we may expect an anſwer of peace, and go forth with confidence to oppoſe our ſpiritual enemies, aſſured that God will bruiſe ſin and Satan ſhortly under our feet. (3.) They who put their truſt in creature-ſupports, will find them as vain as the images of the Philiſtines.

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22. ¶ And the Philiſtines came yet up again, and ſpread themſelves in the valley of Rephaim. 23. And when David enquired of the LORD, he ſaid, Thou ſhalt not go up: *but* fetch a compaſs behind them, and come upon them over againſt the mulberry-trees. 24. And let it be when thou heareſt [b] the ſound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou ſhalt beſtir thyſelf: for then [c] ſhall the LORD go out before thee, to ſmite the hoſt of the Philiſtines. 25. And David did ſo, as the LORD had commanded him; and ſmote the Philiſtines from Geba, until thou come to Gazer.

1047.
[b] Lev. xxvi. 36. 2 Kings vii. 6. See Acts ii. 2.
[c] Phil. ii. 12, 13.

v. 22—25. One repulſe abates not their courage, but rather kindles their deſire of revenge. They dare a ſecond time renew their invaſions, and encamp on the very ſpot where they had been before routed: ſo fooliſhly and wilfully do ſinners ruſh on their own deſtruction. David again has recourſe to God for direction; and, as before he was ordered to march and meet them with the drawn ſword, now he muſt fetch a compaſs behind them, and God will fight for him; ſo that he ſhall have nothing to do, but purſue their flying hoſts. A ruſhing noiſe, as of wind in the tops of the mulberry-trees, is to be the ſignal for him to fall on; he obeys, and the Philiſtines are ſmitten and purſued to their borders, as far as Gazer. *Note*, (1.) When we wait God's motions, our warfare muſt proſper. (2.) The repeated efforts of corruption and temptation, though grievous for the preſent, weaken the root of ſin, and ſtrengthen the graces in the hearts of believers. (3.) On a ſound like a ruſhing mighty wind, the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon the Apoſtles, and then Satan's kingdom fell before the ſword of the Spirit, the word of God in their mouths.

CHAP. VI.

David having ſubdued the enemies of Iſrael, now reſcues the ark, the glory of Iſrael, from the obſcurity in which it had lain, ver. 1, 2. 1. *The firſt attempt failed.* (1.) *They were guilty of an error in carrying it in a cart,* ver. 3—5. (2.) *They were puniſhed for that error by the ſudden death of Uzzah,* ver. 6, 7. *which put a ſtop to their proceedings,* ver. 8—11. 2. *The great joy with which it was at laſt done,* ver. 12—15. *And,* [1.] *The eaſineſs that was between David and his people,* ver. 17—19. [2.] *The uneaſineſs that was between him and his wife upon that occaſion,* ver. 16, 20—23.

1. [a] AGain, David gathered together all *the* choſen *men* of Iſrael, thirty thouſand. 2. And David aroſe, and went with all the people that *were* with him, from [b] Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, † whoſe name is called by the name of the LORD of hoſts, [c] that dwelleth *between* the cherubims. 3. And they ſet the ark of God [d] upon a new cart, and brought it out of the houſe of Abinadab that *was* in ‡ Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio the ſons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. 4. And they brought it out of the houſe of Abinadab which *was* at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. 5. And David, and all the houſe of Iſrael, [e] played before the LORD on all manner of *inſtruments made of* fir-wood, even on harps, and on pſalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

[a] 1 Chron. xiii. 1.
About 1044.
[b] Joſh. xv. 9. 1 Sam. vii. 1.
† Or at which the name, the name of the Lord of hoſts was called upon. Lev. xxiv. 11.
[c] Pſal. lxxx. 1.
[d] Num. vii. 9. 1 Sam. vi. 7. Mat. xxviii. 20.
‡ Or the hill. 1 Sam. vii. 1.
[e] Pſal. lxviii. as ſome ſuppoſe.

v. 1—5. Long had the ark lain neglected in the houſe of Abinadab; we find but once mention of conſulting God before it during all Saul's reign; but David knew the value of that ſacred treaſure, and therefore prepares to remove it to a place more ſuited for its reception.

1. He ſpeaks highly of the ark, from its relation to God, whoſe preſence made it glorious, and who was pleaſed to dwell between the cherubims. *Note*, (1.) It is God's preſence in all ordinances that makes them glorious. (2.) They who have high thoughts of God, will therefore reverence all his holy inſtitutions.

Before Chriſt 1044.

2. He makes great preparations to attend it with a magnificent retinue, in ſolemn pomp and holy joy. Thirty thouſand men, the flower of his army, to guard it, or the prime nobility, elders, and great men, out of all the tribes, and inſtruments of muſic of all kinds, himſelf leading the ſacred band; and counting himſelf honoured, though a king, in this employment of praiſe, and humble attendance before the God of Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt kings need think it no diſparagement to their dignity, to join with the meaneſt Iſraelite before that God, who regardeth not the perſons of the rich more than the poor. (2.) Sacred Pſalmody always revives, whenever God revives a ſpirit of religion.

3. They committed a great error in the method they took to remove the ark; becauſe a cart had brought it home from Philiſtia, they therefore concluded it might bring it ſafely up from Kirjath-jearim, called alſo Baale, *v.* 2. though God had expreſsly commanded the contrary, *Numb.* vii. 9. *Note*, Authority and bad precedents, weigh often more than the expreſs word of God.

6. And when they came to Nachon's threſhing-floor, [f] Uzzah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it, for the oxen † ſhook *it*. 7. And the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Uzzah, and God ſmote him there for *his* ‡ error, and [g] there he died by the ark of God. 8. And [h] David was diſpleaſed, becauſe the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place, ‖ Perez-uzzah to this day. 9. And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and ſaid, [i] How ſhall the ark of the LORD come to me? 10. So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aſide into the houſe of Obed-edom the Gittite. 11. And the ark of the LORD continued in the houſe of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD [k] bleſſed Obed-edom, and all his houſhold.

[f] Num. iv. 15.
† Or ſtumbled.
‡ Or raſhneſs.
[g] Lev. x. 3. Pſal. l. 16.
[h] Job iv. 17.
‖ i. e. The breach of Uzzah.
[i] Job xxv. 6. Pſal. cxix. 120.
[k] Mat. vi. 33. 2 Cor. ii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6, &c.

v. 6—11. Uzzah and Ahio, the ſons of Abinadab, are entruſted with the care of the cart, to drive the oxen which drew it; but an awful providence ſtopped their journey, and turned their mirth into mourning. We have here,

1. Uzzah's raſhneſs and puniſhment. It was contrary to an expreſs command, to carry the ark in a cart; it was enjoined, that none but prieſts might touch it: and if Uzzah were a Levite (which is uncertain) and a Kohathite, yet might he not ſee the ark, much leſs handle it, but only carry the poles on which it was fixed. But perhaps Uzzah's long familiarity with the ark had leſſened his ſacred reverence for it, and therefore when the oxen ſhook it, either they ſtumbled, or the cart was in danger of overturning, Uzzah ſtretched forth his hand to ſupport it, and God immediately ſmote him, that he died. *Note*, (1.) A good intention will not excuſe a wrong thing. (2.) By our raſhneſs and intemperate zeal, we are apt to give many a wrong touch to the ark of God, and it is of the Lord's mercies we are not conſumed. (3.) In matters of God's worſhip, we muſt carefully adhere to his revealed will, leaſt by human contrivances we die by the ark's ſide.

2. David is both terrified and diſpleaſed with the ſtroke on Uzzah. *Diſpleaſed* at this interruption of the ſolemnity, ready it ſhould ſeem to entertain hard thoughts of God, as if his judgments were too ſevere, and counting it an ill omen, which his enemies might improve to his diſadvantage. *Terrified* withal, leaſt God ſhould break forth on him alſo, as conſcious that he could not abide it, if the Lord were ſtrict to mark what was amiſs in him. He reſolves therefore to proceed no farther, but carries the ark to the houſe of Obed-edom, a Levite, that was near; and calls the name of the place, in remembrance of this mournful event, Perez-uzzah, the breach of Uzzah. *Note*, (1.) We are too apt, under providential afflictions, to entertain diſpleaſure againſt God's diſpenſations, rather than againſt the ſins in ourſelves that provoke them. (2.) Every ſtroke upon others for their ſin, ſhould be a warning to us to repent of our own. (3.) If the breach between the broken law of a holy God, and a ſinful ſoul, be not healed by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, an everlaſting monument will remain upon the ſinner of God's inexorable juſtice.

3. Obed-edom was no loſer by his bleſſed viſitant. He welcomed the ark to his houſe, notwithſtanding the terrible judgments which had overtaken thoſe who irreverently treated it. He knew by avoiding their ſin, he need not fear their puniſhment; and God rewarded him in a remarkable bleſſing on himſelf and houſhold, ſo that in the three months the ark continued with him, every thing proſpered. *Note*, (1.) None ever loſt by fidelity to God. Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come. (2.) It is a bleſſing to dwell under a good man's roof, for all who are about him are the better for him. (3.) All our proſperity muſt be aſcribed to God, and when he adds to all a thankful heart, then we are bleſſed indeed!

12. ¶ [l] And it was told king David, ſaying, The LORD hath bleſſed the houſe of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, becauſe of the ark of God. [m] So David went and brought up the ark of God from the houſe of Obed-edom, into the city of David, with gladneſs. 13. And it was *ſo*, that when they that [n] bare the ark of the LORD, had gone ſix paces, he ſacrificed oxen and fatlings. 14. And David danced before the LORD with all *his* might, and David *was* [o] girded with a linen ephod. 15. So David, and all the houſe of Iſrael, brought up the ark of the LORD [p] with ſhouting, and with the ſound of the trumpet. 16. And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and ſaw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and [q] ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart. 17. ¶ And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and ſet it in his place, in the midſt of the tabernacle that David had † pitched for it: and David offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings before the LORD. 18. And as ſoon as David had made an end of offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, he [r] bleſſed the people in the name of the LORD of hoſts. 19. And [s] he dealt among all the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Iſrael, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece *of fleſh*, and a flagon *of wine*: ſo all the people departed every one to his houſe.

[l] 1 Chron. xv. 25.
Before Chriſt 1044.
[m] Pſal. cxxxii. 1, &c.
[n] Ver. 3. Num. vii. 9.
[o] 1 Sam. ii. 18.
[p] Pſal. lxxxi. 1, &c. & xcviii. 6.
[q] 1 Cor. ii. 14. Jude x.
† Heb. Stretched.
1 Cor. xv. 1.
[r] 1 Kings viii. 15. 1 Chron. xvi. 2.
[s] Eſth. ix. 22.

v. 12—19. The bleſſing of the ark on Obed-edom, and his houſe, ſoon reached the ears of David, and now his fears are removed, and his deſires return to have the ark with him at Jeruſalem. Hereupon once more he attempts to remove it, and through the Divine bleſſing ſucceeds. *Note*, Though we are ſore lett and hindred in our race, we muſt not deſpair; ſucceſs ſhall at laſt crown our labours.

1. David ſaw and rectified his former miſtake: the Levites, according to Divine preſcription, are appointed to carry the ark, and when they had gone ſix paces, David cauſed oxen and fatlings to be offered, as an atonement for former errors, and in thankfulneſs for preſent help. *Note*, (1.) When God by his corrections hath led us to repentance, we need not doubt but we ſhall inherit a bleſſing. (2.) The blood of the one great ſacrifice muſt be regarded in all our undertakings, as the alone foundation for our dependance on God's favour and regard.

2. David in all humility, with every demonſtration of joy, preceded the ark. He laid his royal robes aſide, and, in an ephod, like that the miniſters of the ſanctuary wore, with exultation leaped and praiſed God with all his might: his heart was engaged in the bleſſed ſervice, and his body ſpoke the tranſport of his ſoul.

3. The people joined their king in the lively expreſſions of their joy: with ſhouts of triumph, and the trumpet's chearful voice, they brought up the ark to the tabernacle David had provided for it, according to the former uſage; and there before it David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, expreſſive of his gratitude and thankfulneſs for the ſucceſs he had met with. Michal, Saul's daughter, was the only diſguſted ſpirit among them. She could not bear to ſee her huſband thus, as ſhe apprehended, demean himſelf, and her rebuke we ſhall quickly hear.

4. David diſmiſſed the people. He bleſſed them in the name of God, prayed for them and over them, that they might thus ever delight in God and his ways; and gave each of them a cake, and a good ſlice of meat, probably part of the ſacrifices, which were always eaten as a ſacred feaſt, and a flagon of wine. And thus the people returned to their houſes, highly ſatisfied with the generous treatment. *Note*, (1.) All God's people are called to feaſt on the one great ſacrifice, and to eat that bread, and drink of that cup, which the Saviour, the Son of David, hath provided for us. (2.) A generous and munificent ſpirit naturally engages our regard. (3.) When we have the bleſſing of the King of kings upon us, then may we well depart in peace.

20. ¶ Then David returned to bleſs [t] his houſhold: and Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and ſaid, [u] How glorious was the king of Iſrael to day, who uncovered himſelf to day in the eyes of the hand-maids of his ſervants, [x] as one of the vain fellows ſhameleſly uncovereth himſelf! 21. And David ſaid unto Michal, [y] *It was* before the LORD, [z] which choſe me before thy father, and before all his houſe, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Iſrael: therefore will I play before the LORD. 22. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and [a] will be baſe in mine own ſight: and of the maid-ſervants which thou haſt ſpoken of, of them ſhall I be had in honour.

[t] Gen. xviii. 19. Joſh. xxiv. 15. Pſal. ci. 2.
[u] Eccleſ. vii. 16. Iſa. lix. 15. margin.
[x] Pſal. i. 1.
[y] Ver. 16.
[z] 1 Sam. xiii. 14.
[a] Gen. xxxii. 10 Job xl. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 Pet. v. 6.

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23. Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child until the day of her death.

v. 20—23. Having happily finiſhed his public ſervice, David returns joyful to bleſs his houſhold, and to finiſh the day with prayer and praiſe at home. No man is too great to be chaplain in his own family.

But here his joy meets with ſome allay from the pride and fretfulneſs of his wife Michal. Clouds will thus obſcure the brighteſt day, and Kings ſometimes feel the uneaſineſs of domeſtic jars.

1. Michal, Saul's daughter, who had beheld the proceſſion, *v.* 16. deſpiſed David for ſo demeaning himſelf, and therefore goes out to meet him with an ironical commendation, expreſſive of her contempt of his behaviour; and inſinuates, as if his dreſs and geſtures were immodeſt as well as fooliſh, becauſe he had exchanged his royal mantle for an ephod, and danced amidſt his ſubjects before the ark of God. *Note,* (1.) The exerciſes of religion often provoke the contempt of carnal minds: having no ſenſes exerciſed to reliſh holy joys, they deſpiſe them. (2.) It is no new thing for the enemies of God's people, to charge them with lewdneſs, and to reproach their aſſemblies as indecent. (3.) Ridicule, not reaſon, is the weapon chiefly employed by the enemies of truth.

2. David vindicates himſelf from her reproaches, and ſeeks withal to humble her pride. *It was before the Lord* he danced, in honour to him, and with a ſingle eye and intention to his glory: it was the tribute of gratitude he owed to that gracious God, who had preferred him before her ungodly father: therefore he would again expreſs his thankfulneſs, and if this were to be vile, would be viler ſtill, nor feared the reproach of which ſhe was ſo liberal. His humiliation before God, would engage the reſpect of thoſe hand-maidens ſhe deſpiſed, and cauſe him to be had in honour by the pious poor, whoſe regard he moſt valued. *Note,* (1.) We muſt not be laughed out of a religious profeſſion, or be aſhamed of it; but the more we are oppoſed, or inſulted, the more reſolutely perſevere. (2.) If God knows our hearts to be upright before him, the cenſures of others may well lie light upon us. (3.) We can never ſufficiently humble ourſelves before a holy God; there the greateſt king is no better than ſinful duſt and aſhes. (4.) The regard of good men, tho' few or deſpiſed, is more to be valued than the diſregard of the multitude of the great and irreligious is to be feared.

3. Michal ſuffers for her inſolence. God afflicted her with barrenneſs, and brought upon her real reproach for the undeſerved diſreſpect ſhe had ſhewn to her huſband, and her contempt of the ark of God.

CHAP. VII.

About 1043.

Still the ark is David's care, as well as his joy. In this chapter, 1. *He conſults with Nathan about building a houſe for it,* ver. 1, 2. *Nathan approves his purpoſe,* ver. 3. 2. *God ſends him a gracious meſſage, accepts his purpoſe, countermands the performance, but promiſes an entail of bleſſings upon his family,* ver. 4—17. 3. *David pours out his heart in prayer and praiſe to God for it,* ver. 18—29.

1. AND it came to paſs, [a] when the king ſat in his houſe, and the LORD had gven him reſt round about from all his enemies; 2. That the king ſaid unto Nathan the prophet, [b] See now, I dwell in an houſe of cedar, [c] but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. 3. And Nathan ſaid to the king, [d] Go, do all that *is* in thine heart: for the LORD *is* with thee.

[a] 1 Chron. xvii. 2.
[b] Hag. i. 4.
[c] Acts vii. 46.
[d] 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

v. 1—3. David is now at reſt from all his enemies, enjoying in peace that kingdom he ſo worthily deſerved; yet is not his comfort compleat, whilſt the ark of God dwells under curtains Therefore,

1. He purpoſes to build a houſe, meet for its reception. He could not look upon his own houſe of cedar, without a ſecret reproach. He reſolves therefore to improve the calm he enjoyed in ſo grateful a ſervice to the God who had done ſuch great things for him. *Note,* A gracious ſoul is ever ſeeking to teſtify its gratitude, and happy to be employed for the glory of God.

2. David conſults with Nathan the prophet about the matter, and as the piety of the deſign was evident, Nathan heſitates not to encourage him to proceed in the good purpoſes which were in his heart; but as they conſulted not God in the matter, his will appeared different, though the good intention was accepted. *Note,* (1.) We ought to ſtrengthen their hands, who have it at heart to build up the church of Chriſt. (2.) If the Lord is with us, then the deſires of our heart will be to pleaſe him.

4. ¶ And it came to paſs that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, ſaying, 5. Go and tell my ſervant David, Thus ſaith the LORD, [e] Shalt thou build me an houſe for me to dwell in? 6. Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* houſe, [f] ſince the time that I brought up the children of Iſrael out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent, and in a tabernacle. 7. In all *the places* wherein I have walked with all the children of Iſrael, ſpake I a word with any of the † tribes of Iſrael, whom I commanded [g] to feed my people Iſrael, ſaying, Why build ye not me an houſe of cedar? 8. Now therefore, ſo ſhalt thou ſay unto my ſervant David, Thus ſaith the LORD of hoſts, [h] I took thee from the ſheep-cote, ‡ from following the ſheep, to be ruler over my people, over Iſrael. 9. And [i] I was with thee whitherſoever thou wenteſt, and [k] have cut off all thine enemies out of thy ſight, and [l] have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth. 10. (Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Iſrael, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more: [m] neither ſhall the children of wickedneſs afflict them any more, as beforetime. 11. And as ſince the time that [n] I commanded judges *to be* over my people Iſrael, and have cauſed thee to reſt from all thine enemies. Alſo the LORD telleth thee, that [o] he will make thee an houſe. 12. ¶ And [p] when thy days be fulfilled, and thou ſhalt ſleep with thy fathers, [q] I will ſet up thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall proceed out of thy bowels, and [r] I will eſtabliſh his kingdom. 13. [s] He ſhall build an houſe for my name, and [t] I will eſtabliſh the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14. I will be his father, and [u] he ſhall be my ſon: [x] if he commit iniquity, [y] I will chaſten him with the rod of men, and with the ſtripes of the children of men: 15. But [z] my mercy ſhall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16. And thine houſe, and [a] thy kingdom, ſhall be eſtabliſhed [b] for ever before thee: thy throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever. 17. [c] According to all theſe words, and according to all this viſion, ſo did Nathan ſpeak unto David.

[e] 1 Chron. xvii. 4. 1 Pet. iv. 10.

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[f] 1 Kings viii. 16.
† Heb. Sceptres, i. e. Rulers or Judges. 1 Chron. xvii. 6.
[g] Chap. v. 2.
[h] 1 Sam. xvi 11. Pſal. lxxviii. 70.
‡ Heb. From after.
[i] Chap. viii. 6, 14.
[k] Pſal. lxxxix. 23.
[l] Chap. v. 10. Pſal. cxiii. 7, 8.
[m] Ibid. lxxxix. 22.
[n] Judg. ii. 16.
[o] Exod. i. 21. Pſal. cxxvii. 1.
[p] 1 Kings viii. 20. Acts xiii. 36.
[q] Acts xiii. 23. Rom. i. 3.
[r] Iſa. ix. 6, 7. Dan. vii. 25.
[s] Mat. xvi. 18.
[t] Luke i. 32.
[u] Heb. i. 5.
[x] Pſal. lxxxix. 31—34.
[y] Heb. xii. 6.
[z] Acts xiii. 34.
[a] Pſal. lxxxix. 28, 34, &c. Dan. ii. 44.
[b] John xii. 34.
[c] Jer. xxiii 28.

v. 4—17. David's heart was big with his deſign, but God's time was not yet come; therefore the ſame night, before any preparations had been made, God appeared to Nathan, and ſends him to David with a meſſage concerning it.

1. He enjoins him to deſiſt from his purpoſe. God had hitherto, ſince he delivered his people from Egypt, abode in a tent, moving from place to place, and never yet ſpoke to any of the tribes, or as the word ſignifies, *ſceptres,* or rulers in Iſrael, to build him a houſe of cedar, chuſing rather thus to walk in the midſt of them; and till farther orders David may not change the manner of his abode. *Note,* The church of Chriſt, like the ark, is in this world moving from place to place. In heaven alone, it may hope to find a ſure abode, and an abiding reſt.

2. God reminds him of his gracious dealings towards him, in raiſing him from his low eſtate of a poor ſhepherd, to be a great king, famed for conqueſt and valour; not as upbraiding him therewith, but as an aſſurance of his regard, though he accepted not the offer of an houſe which he intended him. *Note,* (1.) A well-meant deſign, though it be unſucceſsful, is in God's ſight equally acceptable. (2.) A great name is valuable, when it is acquired under the Divine bleſſing, and as the gift of God.

3. Under his government, he promiſes to give reſt to his people. Though ſettled in Canaan, their enemies had often afflicted them before the times of the judges, and in the intervals between theſe divinely appointed Saviours; but now they ſhall be more ſecurely fixed, and the children of wickedneſs, their idolatrous neighbours, be ſuffered to afflict them no longer; and this was a great ſatisfaction to a king like David, to whom God's people were ſo dear.

4. His own houſe ſhould be eſtabliſhed, to reign over this favoured people. His ſeed ſhould ſit upon his throne, when he was gathered to his fathers; and the crown deſcend to a long poſterity: his ſon and immediate ſucceſſor ſhould accompliſh the work he had planned, and build a houſe for God; and ſuch tender regard would he ſhew him, as a father doth to his deareſt child; never, though froward, diſinheriting him, but correcting him in meaſure, and preſerving ſtill his loving-kindneſs towards him. Theſe promiſes immediately and primarily regarded Solomon, in whom they were in many reſpects fulfilled; but they had a further view, and were compleatly accompliſhed in that ſon of David, whoſe kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and who ſhall ſit upon the throne of David for ever; to whom, in the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſenſe, Jehovah ſaith, I will be to him a father, and he ſhall be to me a ſon, whoſe church is the glorious houſe, where God delights to dwell; and though no iniquity was found in him, to deſerve the ſtripes of men, yet

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was he chaſtened and afflicted of God, for his people's ſins, which were laid upon him. And the ſame is true of all the ſpiritual ſeed of Chriſt; though corrected for their infirmities, God's covenant of everlaſting love ſtands firm with them; God will not caſt them off in diſpleaſure, but will reſtore and eſtabliſh them in the kingdom of his grace, till they come to the kingdom of his glory, to reign with him for ever and ever. Bleſſed ſurely are the people who are in ſuch a caſe!

18. ¶ Then went king David in, and ſat before the LORD, and he ſaid, [d] Who *am* I, O LORD God? and what *is* my houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto? 19. And [e] this was yet a ſmall thing in thy ſight, O LORD God: but [f] thou haſt ſpoken alſo of thy ſervant's houſe for a great while to come, and [g] *is* this the † manner of man, O LORD God? 20. And what can David ſay more unto thee? for [h] thou LORD God, knoweſt thy ſervant. 21. [i] For thy word's ſake, and [k] according to thine own heart haſt thou done all theſe great things, to make thy ſervant know *them.* 22. Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for [l] *there is* none like thee, neither *is there any* God beſide thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23. And [m] what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people, *even* like Iſrael, whom God went to redeem for a people to himſelf, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people [n] which thou redeemedſt to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and their gods? 24. For thou haſt confirmed to thyſelf thy people Iſrael *to be* a people unto thee for ever: and [o] thou, LORD, art become their God. 25. And now, O LORD God, the word that thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy ſervant, and concerning his houſe, [p] eſtabliſh *it* for ever, and do as thou haſt ſaid. 26. And [q] let thy name be magnified for ever, ſaying, The LORD of hoſts *is* the God over Iſrael: and let the houſe of thy ſervant David be eſtabliſhed before thee. 27. For thou, O LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael, haſt ‡ revealed to thy ſervant, ſaying, I will build thee an houſe: therefore hath thy ſervant [r] found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. 28. And now, O LORD God, thou *art* that God, and [s] thy words be true, and thou haſt promiſed this goodneſs unto thy ſervant. 29. Therefore now let it pleaſe thee to bleſs the houſe of thy ſervant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O LORD God, haſt ſpoken *it*, and with thy bleſſing let the houſe of thy ſervant be bleſſed for ever.

[d] Gen. xxxii. 10. Judg. vi. 15. 1 Sam. xviii. 18. Pſal. cxliv. 3. Eph. iii. 8.
[e] Ver. 8, 9.
[f] 1 Kings iii. 13. Eph. iii. 20.
[g] Iſa. lv. 8.
† Heb. Law.
[h] 1 Sam. xvi 7.
[i] Deut. ix. 5.
[k] Mat. xi. 26. Eph. i. 11.
[l] Exod. xiv. 11. Deut. iii. 24. Pſal. lxxxix. 6—8. Iſa. xlv. 5, 22.
[m] Deut. iv. 7. & xxxiii. 29. Pſal. cxlix. 20. Amos iii. 2.
[n] Exod. iii. 8. Tit. ii. 14.
[o] Gen. xvii. 7. Pſal. xlviii. 14.
[p] Ezek. xxxi. 37.
[q] Mat. vi. 9. John xii. 28.
‡ Heb. Opened the ears of. 1 Sam. ix. 15.
[r] Pſal. x. 17.
[s] John vii. 17.

v. 18—29. Overcome with this gracious meſſage from the Lord, though his purpoſes were prevented, theſe great and precious promiſes awaken the livelieſt returns of thankfulneſs. He immediately repairs to the tabernacle, and there pours forth his prayers and praiſes before his covenant God.

1. Abaſed in the duſt, he confeſſes his own vileneſs and unworthineſs of theſe diſtinguiſhed favours; ſpeaking with deep humility of himſelf, though ſo diſtinguiſhed in gifts and graces; and of his family, though ſo nobly deſcended. *Note*, They whom God honours, will have the lowlieſt opinion of themſelves.

2. He acknowledges with thankfulneſs and admiration, what God had done for him. It was to him alone he was indebted for all that advancement he was arrived at, and God now had added ſtill the promiſe of many days to come. He is overwhelmed with ſuch goodneſs, ſo unlike the manner of men, who do not thus profuſely laviſh their gifts on their inferiors, and thoſe who have nothing to recommend them. Yet thus hath God done; exceeding even his utmoſt wiſhes, and leaving David nothing more to aſk. *Note*, (1.) God beſtows on his people not only more than they deſerve, but more than they can deſire. (2.) Men are niggards of their gifts, eſpecially to thoſe who have offended them: but God bleſſes them that were his enemies; firſt reconciles them to himſelf, then covers them with mercies and loving kindneſs, and more than all, gives them ſtill greater bleſſings in promiſe, even than thoſe they at preſent enjoy. (3.) God's covenant of grace contains all a ſinner needs; when we plead that before God, and lay hold by faith on Jeſus, in whom this covenant ſtandeth faſt, then all things are ours.

3. He aſcribes the whole to God's ſovereign grace; who for his word's ſake, according to his promiſe by Samuel, or for the ſake of his incarnate Son, the Word made fleſh, thus graciouſly reſpected him, and had alſo made him know theſe mercies yet in ſtore. *Note*, (1.) All the bleſſings of God's covenant are ſovereign and free. *Free*, as without deſert; and *ſovereign*, beſtowed according to the counſel of his own will. (2.) To know and be aſſured of our intereſt in the bleſſings of the covenant, is a diſtinguiſhed mercy.

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4. He extols the glorious God, whoſe mercy was ſo great towards him. There is none like unto him, no God beſide him; none that can do as he doth, in works of power and grace towards his favoured people.

5. The people of God, from their relation to him, appear alſo great and diſtinguiſhed in his eyes. God, or, as the original is, Gods went to redeem them, not Moſes and Aaron, though they as magiſtrates may be called Elohim, but the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; to ſave them from the nations, and their Gods, to be a peculiar people to Jehovah, their covenant God, and this not for a ſeaſon, but for ever and ever. *Note*, More glorious is our ſpiritual redemption from idolatrous affections and ſervitude to ſin, more peculiar our conſecration to him through the blood of Jeſus, than theirs by the blood of bulls and goats: and our relation to God, without a figure, literally immutable and eternal, ſecured to us in that everlaſting covenant ordered in all things and ſure.

6. He concludes with his humble ſupplications for the fulfilment of the promiſes wherein God had cauſed him to put his truſt. Since it had pleaſed him to reveal his great goodneſs to his ſervant, David can aſk nothing greater, nothing better. Let the word be eſtabliſhed; and this he confidently expects from the truth and faithfulneſs of God, and is thence encouraged in his heart to pray, becauſe God hath promiſed. Let God therefore be magnified, his great and glorious name be exalted in mercy, and according as he hath ſaid, Let David's houſe be built and bleſſed, and his throne continue for ever. *Note*, (1.) We may boldly aſk, when we have God's promiſes to encourage us. (2.) Let us not ſtagger at the greatneſs of the promiſe, but pray in faith, nothing doubting. (3.) Whenever we find in our heart to pray, God will not fail to hear and anſwer us. (4.) This is the conſtant deſire of the faithful ſoul, that God may be glorified; and as this is eſpecially the caſe when the kingdom of his dear Son is enlarged, therefore he prays, thy kingdom come. (5.) All repetition of our prayers is not vain repetition, but rather is often the livelieſt expreſſion of faith and importunity.

CHAP. VIII.

Here is an account, 1. *Of David's victories.* (1.) *Over the Philiſtines*, ver. 1. (2.) *Over the Moabites*, ver. 2. (3.) *Over the king of Zobah*, ver. 3, 4. (4.) *Over the Syrians*, ver. 5—8, 13. (5.) *Over the Edomites*, ver. 14. 2. *Of the preſents that were brought him, and the wealth he got from the nations he ſubdued, which he dedicated to God*, ver. 9—12. 3. *Of his court, the adminiſtration of his government*, ver. 15. *and his chief officers*, ver. 16—18.

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1. AND [a] after this it came to paſs, that David ſmote the Philiſtines, and ſubdued them: and David took † Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philiſtines. 2. And [b] he ſmote Moab, and meaſured them with a line, caſting them down to the ground: even with two lines meaſured he, to put to death; and with one full line to keep alive: and *ſo* the Moabites became David's ſervants, *and* brought gifts. 3. David ſmote alſo Hadadezer the ſon of Rehob, king of [c] Zobah, as he went to recover [d] his border at the river Euphrates. 4. And David took from him a thouſand *chariots*, and [e] ſeven hundred horſemen, and twenty thouſand footmen: and David [f] houghed all the chariot-*horſes*, but [g] reſerved of them *for* an hundred chariots. 5. And when the Syrians of Damaſcus came to [h] ſuccour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David [i] ſlew of the Syrians two and twenty thouſand men. 6. Then David put garriſons in Syria of Damaſcus: and the Syrians became ſervants to David, *and* brought gifts: and [k] the LORD preſerved David whitherſoever he went. 7. And David took the ſhields of gold that were on the ſervants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jeruſalem. 8. And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much braſs.

[a] 1 Chron. xviii. 1.
† i. e. The bridle of Ammah, or the Hill. Chap. ii. 24.
[b] Num. xxiv. 17. Pſal. lx. 8.
[c] Ibid. Title.
[d] Gen. xv. 18.
[e] 1 Chron. xviii. 4.
[f] Joſh. xi. 6.
[g] Pſal. xx. 7. & xxxiii. 16, 17.
[h] Iſa. viii. 9.
[i] Job ix. 13. Iſa. xxxi. 3.
[k] Pſal. xx. 8. Prov. xxi. 31.

v. 1—8. David being appointed of God to ſave his people, and to perfect the conqueſt of the country God had promiſed them, begins to enlarge their territory by various conqueſts.

1. Over the Philiſtines; whoſe capital, Gath, is here called Metheg-ammah. Ammah, probably becauſe built on a hill; and Metheg, which ſignifies a bridle, becauſe it ſerved to keep the whole country in ſubjection, which was now entirely ſubdued. *Note*, Though corruption ſtruggles long, the power of the Son of David ſhall keep it now in ſubjection, and by and by he ſhall utterly root it out.

2. The Moabites next felt his conquering ſword, and now

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the prophecy of Balaam began to receive its accompliſhments, *Numb.* xxiv. 17. their army was routed, and their men of war (or perhaps all the men of the country) divided into three parts, laid flat on the ground, and by a line, meaſured out for death: two lines were ſlain, and one whole line more than a third, it ſhould ſeem, kept alive, to dreſs and till the land, and to bring tribute and gifts. Thus Moab for a long while became ſervants to Iſrael.

3. The Syrians ſhared the ſame fate. Firſt, thoſe of Zobah, under Hadadezer their king, who oppoſed David in his expedition towards the Euphrates, to which God had promiſed this empire ſhould extend, *Gen.* xv. 13. but received a total overthrow, with the loſs of a thouſand chariots, ſeven hundred ſquadrons of horſe (See 1 *Chron.* xviii. 4.) which with the chariot horſes were houghed or hamſtrung, except a reſerve for one hundred chariots, and twenty thouſand foot. When thoſe of Damaſcus eſpouſed his quarrel, they brought upon themſelves the ſame deſtruction: two and twenty thouſand were ſlain, their country brought into ſubjection, and their cities plundered. Particular notice is taken of the golden ſhields of Hadadezer, and of the vaſt quantities of braſs David brought from Betah and Berothai. *Note*, (1.) The enemies of God's church may aſſociate themſelves, but they ſhall be broken to pieces. (2.) Better to be relied on than ſhields of gold, is God the ſhield and the defence of every ſpiritual Iſraelite.

4. God bleſſed David wherever he went, made him ſucceſsful, preſerved his life in battle, and crowned him with victory. *Note*, In the midſt of danger, they are ſafe whom God protects. Every bullet has its billet.

9. ¶ [l] When Toi king of Hamath heard that David
had ſmitten all the hoſt of Hadadezer, 10. Then
Toi ſent Joram his ſon unto king David to ſalute him,
and to bleſs him, becauſe he had fought againſt Hadadezer,
and ſmitten him (for Hadadezer † had wars with
Toi) and *Joram* brought with him veſſels of ſilver, and
veſſels of gold, and veſſels of braſs; 11. Which alſo
king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the
ſilver and gold that he had [m] dedicated of all nations
which he ſubdued: 12. Of Syria, and of Moab, and
of the children of Ammon, and of the Philiſtines, and
of Amalek, and of the ſpoil of Hadadezer ſon of Rehob,
king of Zobah. 13. And David gat *him* a
name when he returned from [n] ſmiting of the Syrians
in the valley of ſalt, *being* eighteen thouſand *men*. 14.
¶ And he put garriſons in Edom; throughout all Edom
put he garriſons, and [o] all they of Edom became
David's ſervants: and the LORD preſerved David
whitherſoever he went.

[l] 1 Chron. xviii. 9.

† Heb. Was a man of wars of Toi.

[m] Mic. iv. 13.

[n] Pſal. lx. Title.

[o] Gen. xxvii. 37. Pſal. xviii. 44.

v. 9—14. The fame of David's victories ſpread abroad:

1. The king of Hamath ſends his ſon as ambaſſador, to congratulate him on his ſucceſs againſt Hadadezer, with ſumptuous preſents, as a grateful acknowledgment for his deliverance from ſo great an enemy. Theſe preſents, veſſels of gold and ſilver, David dedicates to God, with all the ſpoils of the conquered nations, in order that his ſucceſſor, ordained to build God's temple, might find abundant proviſion made for the glorious work.

2. He enlarges his kingdom by the conqueſt of Edom, and puts garriſons in all their cities. One remarkable victory he obtains over the Syrians, with whom they were confederates, in the valley of Salt killing eighteen thouſand men; in which action his generalſhip, as well as perſonal valour, got him a great name: and all this was owing to God's preſervation and bleſſing, which David, in *Pſalm* lx. penned on this occaſion, thankfully acknowledges. *Note*, (1.) Whatever is great or good in us, let God alone have the praiſe of it. (2.) Theſe conqueſts typify the greater ones of David's Son and Lord. He muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, ſubdued the power of ſin, and deſtroyed death and hell; when having reſcued his people from all their enemies round about, he ſhall make them princes and kings in glory, where they ſhall reign with him.

15. And David reigned over all Iſrael, and David
executed judgment and juſtice unto all his people.
16. And Joab the ſon of Zeruiah *was* over the hoſt;
and Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Ahilud *was* † recorder; 17.
And Zadok the ſon of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the ſon
of Abiathar, *were* [p] the prieſts; and Seraiah *was* the
ſcribe; 18. And Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada *was over*
both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's
ſons were [p] chief rulers.

† Or, remembrancer or writer of Chronicles.

[p] Mark xiii. 34. Rev. i. 6.

v. 15—18. We have here,

1. David diſpenſing to his ſubjects the bleſſings of an upright government, as well as ſubduing their foes before them. All Iſrael felt and owned his gentle ſway; the meaneſt have acceſs to him, and juſtice without partiality is diſpenſed by him: well may it be ſaid, Happy art thou, O Iſrael! *Note*, We cannot enough be thankful for the bleſſing of a mild government, and an uncorrupt adminiſtration of juſtice.

Before Christ 1040.

2. David's great officers are mentioned. Joab was generaliſſimo; Jehoſhaphat, recorder, to minute the daily occurrences, and keep the annals of the empire; or to record the caſes which were brought before the king for deciſion. Zadok and Ahimelech, prieſts of diſtinction, and chiefly conſulted by David, under Abiathar the high-prieſt: Seraiah was ſcribe, or ſecretary of ſtate; and Benaiah was captain of the king's life-guards, the Cherethites and Pelethites; who were ſuppoſed by ſome to be Philiſtines, as ſome kings employ foreign mercenaries, others have thought them the deſcendants of two families in Iſrael, but the moſt probable conjecture ſeems to be, that they were thoſe worthies who came to David, whilſt he was in the country of the Philiſtines, and who got thoſe names from their abode there. David's ſons alſo were all advanced at court, and placed in employments ſuited to their high rank, and thus all about him ſhared in his glory and advancement. *Note*, They who cleave to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, will find him not unmindful of them when he cometh to his kingdom.

CHAP. IX.

David ſhews kindneſs to Jonathan's ſeed for his ſake. 1. *He enquires after the remains of the houſe of Saul, and diſcovers Mephiboſheth*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He receives him kindly*, ver. 5—8. *And*, 3. *Provides for him and his*, ver. 9—13.

1. AND David ſaid, Is there yet any that is left
of [a] the houſe of Saul, that I might ſhew him
kindneſs [b] for Jonathan's ſake? 2. And † *there was* of
the houſe of Saul a ſervant whoſe name *was* Ziba:
and when they had called him unto David, the king ſaid
unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he ſaid, Thy ſervant
is he. 3. And the king ſaid, *Is* there not yet any of
the houſe of Saul, that I may ſhew [c] the kindneſs of
God unto him? And Ziba ſaid unto the king, Jonathan
hath yet a ſon [d] *which is* lame on *his* feet. 4. And the
king ſaid unto him, Where *is* he? And Ziba ſaid unto
the king, Behold, he *is* in the houſe of Machir, the ſon
of Ammiel, in Lo-debar. 5. ¶ Then king David ſent,
and fet him out of the houſe of [e] Machir, the ſon of
Ammiel, from Lo-debar. 6. Now when Mephiboſheth
the ſon of Jonathan the ſon of Saul, was come
unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence.
And David ſaid, Mephiboſheth. And he anſwered,
Behold thy ſervant. 7. And David ſaid unto him,
[f] Fear not: for I will ſurely ſhew thee kindneſs, for
Jonathan thy father's ſake, and will reſtore thee all the
land of Saul thy father, and thou ſhalt eat bread at my
table continually. 8. And he bowed himſelf, and ſaid,
What *is* thy ſervant, that thou ſhould'ſt look upon ſuch
[g] a dead dog as I *am*?

[a] Mat. v. 44. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

[b] Chap. i. 26. Prov. xxvii. 10.

† Or, the houſe of Saul had a ſervant.

[c] 1 Sam. xx. 14, 15. Luke vi. 36.

[d] Chap. iv. 4.

[e] Ibid. xvii. 27. Ruth i. 8. Mat. v. 7. 2 Tim. i. 17, 18.

[f] Gen. l. 21.

[g] 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. Luke xiv. 11.

v. 1—8. When reſpite from war, and reſt from the multiplicity of his engagements, during the firſt year of his government, gave David opportunity of reflection; he remembered the covenant between Jonathan and himſelf, and ſet himſelf to fulfil it.

1. He enquires if any remained of Saul's houſe, to whom, for Jonathan's ſake, he might ſhew kindneſs. Saul had been his bitter enemy, but he had forgiven and forgotten it: his deſcendants might rather have feared to be cut off, than to be preferred; but he had ſworn to Saul to ſpare them, and for his old friend's ſake, Jonathan, he would do more for them; ſhew them kindneſs and favour; *the kindneſs of God* for his ſake, and great like that himſelf ſhews. *Note*, (1.) We muſt be not only ready to do good, when applied to, but ſeek for occaſions, and enquire out the propereſt objects. (2.) It is not enough to forgive thoſe who hate us, but we muſt ſhew kindneſs to them or their families in their diſtreſſes; this is God-like. (3.) No advancement, or change of circumſtances, ſhould make us forget our old friends; they and theirs have a title to our notice, and, according to our power, to our aſſiſtance. (4.) That is the acceptable charity, and no other, which is done with an eye to God's glory, and flows from a ſenſe of God's love to us.

2. Ziba, an old ſervant of Saul, who was at that time at Jeruſalem, is ſent for, and introduced to David; and on his enquiry, informs him of a ſon of Jonathan's, who was lame, *Chap.* iv. 4. and had been privately brought up at Lo-debar, probably among his mother's relations. Him therefore David without delay ſends for to court. *Note*, A good old ſervant is a very valuable poſſeſſion to his maſter.

3. Mephiboſheth comes at his command, and with deep reſpect, approaches the king, falling on his face before him; perhaps not without ſome apprehenſions of danger. David ſoon raiſes him up, bids him not fear, but be aſſured of his favour and kindneſs, and as a preſent inſtance of it, aſſigns him all his father and grandfather's eſtates, which on David's acceſſion to the kingdom, in right of his wife he had claimed, or were conſidered as crown-lands, or as forfeited by Iſhboſheth's rebellion. And he adds moreover the ſingular favour of inviting him a conſtant gueſt to his table, where in honour and affluence he might ſpend his days. Mephiboſheth, quite overcome with David's kindneſs, is at a loſs for expreſſion to teſtify his gratitude; and, in the deepeſt acknowledgments of his own unworthineſs, exalts the generoſity of his benefactor. *Note*, (1.) Reſpect from an inferior, is not only decent, but duty. (2.) Honour ſits beſt on thoſe who have a humble opinion of themſelves.

9. ¶ Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's ſervant, and ſaid unto him, I have given unto thy maſter's ſon [h] all that pertained to Saul, and to all his houſe. 10. Thou therefore and thy ſons and thy ſervants ſhall till the land for him, and thou ſhalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy maſter's ſon may have food to eat: but Mephiboſheth, thy maſter's ſon, ſhall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen ſons, and twenty ſervants. 11. Then ſaid Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his ſervant, [i] ſo ſhall thy ſervant do. As for Mephiboſheth, *ſaid the king*, he ſhall eat at my table, as one of the king's ſons. 12. And Mephiboſheth had a young ſon, whoſe name *was* [k] Micha: and [l] all that dwelt in the houſe of Ziba, *were* ſervants unto Mephiboſheth. 13. So Mephiboſheth dwelt in Jeruſalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

[h] 1 Sam. ix. 1.
[i] Chap. xix. 26, 27.
[k] 1 Chron. viii. 34.
[l] Pſal. xli. 9.

v. 9—13. Ziba, who had informed David of Mephiboſheth, is well recompenſed for his trouble. He is made head ſteward to the family: with his ſons and ſervants he is left to occupy the eſtate; and the revenue thence accruing, is to be paid in to Mephiboſheth, for the maintenance of his family as a prince: for though himſelf was daily honoured with a place at the king's table, he had a ſon named Micha, and probably a wife alive, who ſettled with him at Jeruſalem. The lameneſs of Mephiboſheth is again mentioned as an inſtance of the peculiar favour ſhewn him: though a cripple might be an unſeemly ſight at a king's table, love for his father hid all blemiſhes. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe whom the Lord Jeſus Chriſt chuſes, he loves with all their infirmities. (2.) Our forfeited inheritance in him is reſtored to us; and though utterly undeſerving the leaſt of his regard, he kindly condeſcends to invite us to his table below, and will make us ſit down with him in his kingdom above.

CHAP. X.

1. *David ſends a friendly embaſſy to Hanun king of the Ammonites,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *He, upon a baſe ſurmiſe, abuſes David's ambaſſadors,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *David reſents it,* ver. 5. *the Ammonites prepare for war againſt him,* ver. 6. 4. *David carries the war into their own country,* ver. 7—12. 5. *The Ammonites, and the Syrians their allies, are totally routed,* ver. 13, 14. 6. *The forces of the Syrians, which rallied again, are a ſecond time defeated,* ver. 15—19.

1. [a] AND it came to paſs after this, that [b] the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 2. Then ſaid David, [c] I will ſhew kindneſs unto Hanun, the ſon of Nahaſh, as his father ſhewed kindneſs unto me. And David ſent to comfort him by the hand of his ſervants, for his father. And David's ſervants came into the land of the children of Ammon. 3. And the princes of the children of Ammon ſaid unto Hanun their lord, † Thinkeſt thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath ſent comforters unto thee? [d] Hath not David *rather* ſent his ſervants unto thee, to ſearch the city, and to ſpy it out, and to overthrow *it?* 4. Wherefore Hanun took David's ſervants, and ſhaved off the one half of their [e] beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, [f] *even* to their buttocks, and ſent them away. 5. When they told *it* unto David, he ſent to meet them, becauſe the men were greatly aſhamed: and the king ſaid, [g] Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

[a] 1 Chron. xix. 1.
[b] 1 Sam. xi. 1.
[c] 1 Sam. xxii. 4.
† Heb. In thine eyes doth David, &c.
[d] 1 Cor. xiii. 7.
[e] Lev. xix. 27.
[f] Iſa. xx. 4.
[g] Pſal. xxxvii. 6, 7.

v. 1—5. When David ſits on the throne of his kingdom, no former favours ſhewn him ſhall want a recompenſe.

1. He ſends compliments of condolence to Hanun, the ſon of Nahaſh, king of the Ammonites, on his father's death, as mindful of the kindneſſes that during his ſtate of exile Nahaſh had ſhewn him; not out of love to Iſrael indeed, but out of enmity to Saul: however, at that time they were to David very obliging, and he intended now to make an equal return. *Note*, (1.) We are not to ſcrutinize the motives on which good is done us; if we are relieved, we are bound to bleſs the friendly hand. (2.) It is kind to mourn with the afflicted, and by partaking to alleviate their ſorrows.

2. The ambaſſadors meet with a very ill reception. Hanun might himſelf have treated them with dignity as they deſerved, but his ſuſpicious courtiers ſuggeſt they came on a baſe deſign, as ſpies: and Hanun, as kings are too often governed by their ſervants, hearkened to their inſinuations, uſed them moſt infamouſly, in violation of the law of nations, and ſent them back with marks of the higheſt inſult and contempt; with half their beards ſhaved, and half their long garments cut off in the middle, ſo that their nakedneſs appeared. *Note*, (1.) There are never wanting in courts, flatterers who ſeek to inſtil poiſon, inſtead of wholſome council, into the ears of kings. (2.) A baſe mind is ever moſt ſuſpicious. (3.) They who will be ambaſſadors for the Son of David, muſt ſometimes expect the like inſult and ill uſage, and have their meſſages of peace conſtrued to the vileſt meaning.

3. David's concern was as great for his ambaſſadors, as his reſentment for the inſolence againſt himſelf, as affronted in their perſons. He ſends therefore to meet them; and as they could not appear with reſpect in any company, till their beards were grown, it being then the univerſal cuſtom to wear them long, he appoints them a retirement at Jericho. *Note*, (1.) Patience will wear off many reproaches; and time, the great revealer of truth, reſcue the injured from the cruel and unjuſt aſperſions of their defamers. (2.) It hath been the lot of many an innocent man under calumny, to be driven into obſcurity, whoſe righteouſneſs will by and by ſhine as the light.

6. ¶ And when the children of Ammon ſaw that they [h] ſtank before David, the children of Ammon ſent and [i] hired the Syrians of Bethrehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thouſand footmen and of king Maacah a thouſand men, and of Iſh-tob twelve thouſand men. 7. And when David heard of *it*, he ſent Joab, and all the hoſt of [k] the mighty men. 8. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in aray at the entring in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Iſh-tob, and Maacah *were* by themſelves in the field. 9. When Joab ſaw that the front of the battle was againſt him before and behind, he choſe of all the choice *men* of Iſrael, and put *them* in aray againſt the Syrians. 10. And the reſt of the people he delivered into the hand of Abiſhai his brother, that he might put *them* in aray againſt the children of Ammon. 11. And he ſaid, if the Syrians be too ſtrong for me, then [l] thou ſhalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too ſtrong for thee, then I will come and help thee. 12. [m] Be of good courage, and let us play the men [n] for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which ſeemeth him good. 13. And Joab drew nigh, and the people that *were* with him, unto the battle againſt the Syrians: and they fled before him. 14. And when the children of Ammon ſaw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they alſo before Abiſhai, and entred into the city: ſo Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jeruſalem.

[h] Gen. xxxiv. 30. Exod. v. 21. 1 Sam. xiii. 4.
[i] Iſa. viii. 9.
[k] Ibid. xiii. 3.
[l] Neh. iv. 20. Luke xxii. 32. Rom. xv. 1.
[m] 1 Cor. xvi. 15.
[n] Neh. iv. 14.

v. 6—14. Such an inſult could not paſs without condign puniſhment. Therefore,

1. The Ammonites expecting to feel David's reſentment, prepare for war; and fearing themſelves an unequal match, they ſtrengthen their army, by hiring a numerous body of auxiliaries from the neighbouring princes of Bethrehob, Zoba, Maacah, and Iſh-tob, to the amount of thirty-three thouſand men: the whole was divided into two bodies; the auxiliaries were drawn up without, and the Ammonites under the walls, probably of their capital. *Note*, The number of their forces will be little ſupport to thoſe who fight againſt God.

2. David's army penetrates into their country, and ſets the battle in array. To make a double front againſt the two bodies of the Ammonites and their confederates, Joab divides his forces into two diviſions: the ſtrongeſt himſelf led againſt the Syrians, where the greateſt reſiſtance was expected; the other he put under the conduct of Abiſhai, to fall upon the Ammonites, and prevent them from taking him in the rear. *Note*, (1.) It is not unweildy ſtrength, but a wiſe diſpoſition and application of our forces, that in battle uſually prevails. (2.) They who provoke the Son of David by their wickedneſs and

Before Chriſt 1037.

obſtinacy, to fight againſt them with the ſword of his mouth, will find infinite wiſdom united with everlaſting ſtrength, and who then can be able to ſtand?

3. Joab encourages his brother and the officers at the council of war, bravely to play their parts. Their enemies were numerous, and advantageouſly poſted, and they muſt divide their forces to make head againſt them: if either therefore were worſted, the other muſt make a detachment to ſupport him. But the battle was the Lord's, and whilſt in dependance on him they fought for their people and the cities of their God, they might confidently expect the victory. *Note*, (1.) Great dangers call for greater fortitude. (2.) In our ſpiritual warfare, if our brother fall, we muſt be ready to help him up. (3.) The love of God and our country make the braveſt ſoldiers. Foreign mercenaries are an unequal match for ſuch patriots. (4.) Dependance upon God in the uſe of the means, is the ſure way to be crowned with ſucceſs.

4. The iſſue anſwered their hopes. The auxiliary Syrians being quickly routed, the Ammonites took refuge within their walls, and left the field of battle to the conquerors. The ſeaſon not permitting a farther progreſs of his arms, Joab returned to Jeruſalem in triumph, and there made preparations to puſh his conqueſts at the returning ſpring. *Note*, War is a grievous trade: it is a mercy that inclement ſeaſons prevent the conſtant exerciſe of it, and force the combatants to unwilling reſt.

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15. ¶ And when the Syrians ſaw that they were ſmitten before Iſrael, [o] they gathered themſelves together. 16. And Hadarezer ſent, and brought out the Syrians that *were* beyond the river: and they came to Helam; and [p] Shobach the captain of the hoſt of Hadarezer *went* before them. 17. And when it was told David, he gathered all Iſrael together, and paſſed over Jordan, and came to Helam: and the Syrians ſet themſelves in aray againſt David, and fought with him. 18. And the Syrians fled before Iſrael, and David ſlew [q] *the men of* ſeven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and [r] forty thouſand horſemen, and ſmote Shobach the captain of their hoſt, who died there. 19. And when all the kings *that were* ſervants to Hadarezer ſaw that they were ſmitten before Iſrael, they made peace with Iſrael, and ſerved them. So the Syrians [s] feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

[o] Mic. iv. 11—13.
[p] 1 Chron. xix. 16.
[q] Ibid. 18.
[r] Pſal. xxxiii. 16.
[s] Ibid. xlviii. 4. Rev. xiv. 10.

v. 15—19. We have here,

1. A ſecond attempt of the Syrians, more fatal to them than the former. Their routed forces rallied, ſhame for their defeat ſharpened their courage; and to ſtrengthen them, Hadarezer their king ſummons his confederates and tributaries to appear from beyond the Euphrates, and a vaſt army aſſembles at Helam. Thither David in perſon leads his army to meet them, and gives them a total overthrow. Seven hundred chariots, with ſeven thouſand men who fought in them, are deſtroyed and ſlain, (See 1 *Chron.* xix. 17.) and forty thouſand horſe and foot fall by the ſword, with their famous Captain Shobach, the generaliſſimo of their united forces. *Note*, though the vanquiſhed powers of hell and corruption rally and return to the charge again, they will only the more exalt the triumphs of Jeſus our king, and make the believers crown of victory more glorious.

2. In conſequence of this victory, the Syrians deſerting the children of Ammon, ſought only to make their own peace with David; and the neighbouring princes who were tributary to Hadarezer, ſince he was no longer able to protect them, changed their maſter, and ſubmitted to the victorious king of Iſrael, and thus was fulfilled the promiſe made to Abraham, *Gen.* xv. 18. *Note*, It is wiſe to make peace and alliance with thoſe, whoſe righteous cauſe God eſpouſes.

CHAP. XI.

We have here a foul fall of David recorded, as a warning to others. Many, no doubt, have been emboldened to ſin, and hardened in it, by this ſtory, and to them it is a ſavour of death unto death; *but many have by it been awakened to a holy jealouſy over themſelves, and conſtant watchfulneſs againſt ſin, and to them it is* a ſavour of life unto life. 1. *David commits adultery with Bath-ſheba, the wife of Uriah,* ver. 1—5. 2. *He contrives to father the child upon him,* ver. 6—13. 3. *When that project fails, he plots his death by the ſword of the Ammonites, and effects it,* ver. 14—25. 4. *He marries Bath-ſheba,* ver. 26, 27. *Let him that readeth, underſtand what the beſt of men are, when God leaves them to themſelves.*

About 1036.

1. AND it came to paſs, † *that* after the year was expired, [a] at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that David ſent Joab and his ſervants with him, and all Iſrael; and they deſtroyed the children of Ammon, and beſieged Rabbah: but [b] David tarried at Jeruſalem. 2. ¶ And it came to paſs [c] in an evening-tide, that David aroſe from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's houſe: and from the roof he [d] ſaw a woman [e] waſhing herſelf, and the woman *was* very beautiful to look upon. 3. And David [f] ſent and enquired after the woman: and *one* ſaid, *Is* not this Bath-ſheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of [g] Uriah the Hittite? 4. And David ſent meſſengers, and [h] took her, and ſhe came in unto him, and he lay with her, ‡ (for ſhe was purified from her uncleanneſs) and ſhe returned unto her houſe. 5. And the woman conceived, and ſent and told David, and ſaid, [i] I *am* with child.

† Heb. At the return of the year. 1 Chron. xx. 1.
[a] 1 Kings xx. 22, 26. Eccleſ. iii. 8.

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[b] Deut. xxxii. 15.
[c] Chap. iv. 5. Prov. xix. 15.
[d] Gen. iii. 2. & vi. 2. Job xxxi. 1. Pſal. cxix. 37.
[e] Lev. xv. 19.
[f] Mat. v. 28. James i. 14.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 39.
[h] Job xxxi. 9—11. Prov. xxxi. 3.
‡ Or, and when ſhe was purified, &c. ſhe returned.
[i] Deut. xxii. 22. Prov. vi. 34.

v. 1—5. Dark and diſmal are the contents of this chapter. David's ſun ſuffers a dreadful eclipſe; and in the midſt of his victories abroad, he is worſe than vanquiſhed at home, fallen a ſlave under brutiſh luſts and paſſions.

1. In purſuit of the former victory, Joab preſſes hard on the deſerted Ammonites, (David being returned in triumph to Jeruſalem) and having ſubdued their country, inveſts their capital. *Note*, When our enemies are falling, we muſt purſue the blow.

2. David in the mean time is ſeduced into the grievous crimes of adultery and murder. Whilſt other kings are heading their forces in the field, he was indulging himſelf ingloriouſly in eaſe at home; whilſt they endured the hardſhip of a camp, he roſe from his downy bed, idly to ſaunter on the roof, and enjoy the evening's breeze: there his wandring eye rolled around; and, as ſloth had prepared the fuel, a ſpark of luſt entered, that kindled it into a flame. A beautiful woman in her garden retired, or in her chamber overlooked by the king's palace, waſhed herſelf, from her natural ceremonial impurity, and thus innocently became a ſnare to the unguarded monarch. At the ſight, unhallowed deſires kindle in his boſom; he turns not away from the inflaming object, but urged by lawleſs appetite, contrives how to enjoy her. He enquires her name and condition, and not deterred by her belonging to another man, invites her to his houſe, and tempts her to his bed; to which, with too eaſy compliance, ſhe conſents. See now the deadly gloom that covers this great character! For one moment's baſe indulgence, he is as much loſt to all ſenſe of ſhame, honour, and the fear of God, as the moſt abandoned atheiſt. Lord what is man! Every circumſtance ſerved to aggravate his crime: a king that ſhould have puniſhed with death the adulterer, one who wanted not numerous wives of his own; an aged man, in whom theſe youthful luſts were doubly brutiſh; the perſon injured, his friend and ſervant, now fighting for him in the field; and an accompliſhed woman, before innocent and reſpectable, prevailed upon perhaps, not more by the glare of his crown, than the fame of his piety, as though that could not be criminal which David propoſed. *Note*, (1.) On this ſide the grave, no man is ſecure from preſumptuous ſins. (2.) The luſts of the fleſh are the moſt beſetting evils, and the laſt to be ſubdued. (3.) They who make proviſion for the fleſh, by ſloth and ſenſuality, are prepared for every temptation. (4.) When we are out of the way of duty, we can no longer expect Divine protection. (5.) If the eye be ſuffered to wander, the heart will not be long reſtrained from ſin. (6.) Every indulgence given to carnal appetite, leaves us more unable to reſiſt its cravings, and hurries body and ſoul headlong into perdition, (7.) When once the heart is given up to lewdneſs, then men can ſacrifice honour, intereſt, friends, yea God himſelf, to the idol of their hateful paſſions.

6. ¶ And David ſent to Joab, *ſaying*, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab ſent Uriah to David. 7. And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* † how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war proſpered. 8. And David ſaid to Uriah, [k] Go down to thy houſe, and waſh thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's houſe, and there followed him a meſs *of meat* from the king. 9. But Uriah ſlept at the door of the king's houſe, with all the ſervants of his lord, and went not down to his houſe. 10. And when they had told David, ſaying, Uriah went not down unto his houſe, David ſaid unto Uriah, Cameſt thou not from *thy* journey? why *then* didſt thou not go down unto thine houſe? 11. And Uriah ſaid unto David, The ark, and Iſrael, and Judah abide in tents, and [l] my lord Joab, and the ſervants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; ſhall I then go into mine houſe, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? *As* thou liveſt, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, I will not do this thing. 12. And David ſaid to Uriah, Tarry here to day alſo, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah

† Heb. The peace of, &c.
[k] Job. xx. 12. Pſal. xliv. 21.
[l] Mat. x. 24, 25.

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riah abode in Jeruſalem, that day and the morrow. 13. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him, and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the ſervants of his lord, but went not down to his houſe.

v. 6—13. We have here,

1. The fruit of this illicit commerce. David had ſent her home, and all ſeemed to be huſhed up, but God will bring to light theſe hidden works of darkneſs. Bathſheba conceived; and juſtly apprehenſive of the danger ſhe ſtood in from an enraged huſband, acquaints the king, who no doubt had not ſtuck to promiſe her an infamous protection. *Note*, Promiſes of ſecreſy and impunity, are the great emboldeners to impurity.

2. David is alarmed for his own character, as well as Bathſheba's honour and ſafety, and contrives to ſave both by ſending for Uriah, concluding he would readily go home to his wife, and then the child would be regarded as his. He bids Joab ſend him, under pretext of enquiring how the ſiege advanced, receives him graciouſly, entertains him, and ſends him down to his houſe, to refreſh himſelf after his journey. And now David probably ſlept quieter than he had done before, and ſaid in his fooliſh heart, I ſhall have peace, the darkneſs ſhall cover me. Thus often do men deceive themſelves, till their abominable ſin be found out.

3. Uriah went not home, but lay down in the guard-chamber. David no doubt made enquiry about him, and was greatly diſappointed to find his plot not ſucceed. Another day he makes a viler attempt upon him; he calls him, expreſſes his wonder at his not going home, and hears the generous warrior expreſs that noble reſolution, *ver.* 11. which ſhould have awakened up every remaining ſentiment of gratitude and ſhame in his perfidious boſom. But David had loſt ſhame when he forſook God, and therefore ſeeks to effect that by making him drunk, which he could not obtain from him when he was ſober: but God's over-ruling providence defeated his purpoſe; and Uriah, though inflamed with wine and mirth, forgets not his oath, perſeveres in his noble ſentiments, and lies down again with David's ſervants at the palace-gate. *Note*, (1.) One ſin ſeldom comes alone, but uſually requires others to conceal it. (2.) The greateſt cruelty we can do our neighbour, is to lead him into ſin; the loſs of his wife's affection, and the attempt to father on him a ſpurious brood, were not ſo great injuries to Uriah, as to bring the guilt of drunkenneſs on his conſcience. (3.) When ſin hath hardened the heart, the ſtrongeſt warnings and notices are diſregarded.

14. ¶ And it came to paſs in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and ſent *it* by the hand of Uriah. 15. And [m] he wrote in the letter, ſaying, [n] Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the † hotteſt battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be ſmitten and die. 16. And it came to paſs, when Joab obſerved the city, that [o] he aſſigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*. 17. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell *ſome* of the people of the ſervants of David, and Uriah the Hittite died alſo. 18. ¶ Then Joab ſent, and told David all the things concerning the war: 19. And charged the meſſenger, ſaying, When thou haſt made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king, 20. And if ſo be that the king's wrath ariſe, and he ſay unto thee, Wherefore approached ye ſo nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would ſhoot from the wall? 21. Who ſmote [p] Abimelech the ſon of Jerubbeſheth? did not a woman caſt a piece of a milſtone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? Then ſay thou, Thy ſervant Uriah the Hittite is dead alſo. 22. ¶ So the meſſenger went, and came and ſhewed David all that Joab had ſent him for. 23. And the meſſenger ſaid unto David, Surely the men prevailed againſt us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entring of the gate. 24. And the ſhooters ſhot from off the wall upon thy ſervants, and *ſome* of the king's ſervants be dead, and thy ſervant Uriah the Hittite is dead alſo. 25. Then David ſaid unto the meſſenger, Thus ſhalt thou ſay unto Joab, Let not this thing ‡ diſpleaſe thee: for the ſword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more ſtrong againſt the city, and [q] overthrow it; and encourage thou him. 26. ¶ And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her huſband was dead, ſhe mourned for her huſband. 27. And when the mourning was paſt, David ſent, and fet her to his houſe, and ſhe became his wife, and bare him a ſon: but the thing that David had done diſpleaſed the LORD.

[m] 1 Kings xxi. 8.
[n] Pſal. xix. 13.
† Heb. Strong.
Chap. xii. 9. Jer. x. 23.
[o] 1 Sam. xxii. 17. Acts v. 29.
[p] Judg. ix. 53.
‡ Heb. Be evil in thine eyes.
[q] Chap. xii. 26.

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v. 14—27. When once the devil hath entangled us, we know not whither he will lead us. David little intended the murder of Uriah, when firſt he caſt his eyes upon his wife; but the way of wickedneſs is ſteep, and when nothing but this he thinks can conceal his ſhame, he heſitates not at the crime.

1. Uriah is himſelf made the meſſenger of his execution. He ſeems to have entertained no ſuſpicion of what had paſſed, and leſs of what was meditating againſt him; whilſt David, covered with crimes and dark deſigns, plots his ruin, and in ſuch a way, as might moſt effectually remove him without ſuſpicion of his being acceſſary to his death. With deliberate malice therefore he dictates the fatal letter, takes advantage of Uriah's known courage, to place him in the poſt of danger, and with baſeſt ingratitude thus repays his fidelity: many muſt neceſſarily be involved in his fall; but now David is laviſh of the blood of his ſubjects, and dares to tempt, nay command Joab to be an accomplice in the crime; bringing guilt upon his cauſe, giving the Ammonites courage, and endangering thereby the loſs of his army, and perhaps of his crown withal: well may it be ſaid, that they who are given up to their luſts, are led captive by the devil at his will. *Note*, (1.) Sin blinds the eyes, then hardens the heart. (2.) Deliberate malice and murder is the ſummit of human wickedneſs. (3.) Many dare do what they dare not own. Such atheiſts are ſinners that no fear of God reſtrains them, if they can but conceal their ſhame from the eyes of men.

2. Joab failed not to execute the king's orders; perhaps pleaſed to find his king no longer able to reproach him with innocent blood, as involved in the ſame guilt, or, it may be, concluding that Uriah was guilty of ſome crime, for which David thus choſe to puniſh him, rather than by a public execution. He ſets him therefore on an aſſault, where the greateſt oppoſition was expected, and not ſupporting him properly, he fell with other brave ſoldiers, advancing to the breach. *Note*, (1.) It is a pleaſure to the ſinful world, to find thoſe in any particular like themſelves, who are high in a religious profeſſion, and nothing tends more to harden them in their iniquities. (2.) Obedience to the king's orders are not always a ſufficient warrant of excuſe.

3. An expreſs brings David the welcome tidings of Uriah's death; and Joab bids him cloſe his narrative of their loſs in the attack with this article, as what would prevent all upbraiding. The meſſenger makes an exact report, and carefully inſerts the laſt particular; as what, from Joab's manner of ordering him, he might well ſuſpect the king deſired to hear. *Note*, God often leaves ſinners to run to the end of their line, and proſper in their iniquities, but the time of recompenſe is at hand.

4. David is perfectly ſatisfied with the relation; counts nothing of the loſs of ſo many brave men, and bids Joab not be diſheartned, but carry on the ſiege with vigour, and encourage himſelf and the army to continue their approaches.

5. Without delay, he acquaints Bath-ſheba with the death of her huſband, and after the ſhorteſt mourning, probably not more than ſeven days, (See 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 7.) ſhe becomes his wife: thus all the matter ſeemed huſhed up, and the child, tho' ſomewhat before the time, would not come ſo much out of ſeaſon, but that it might paſs without ſuſpicion of evil; but there was an eye, from which theſe vain coverings could not conceal his guilt and ſhame. God marked his dark and winding way; and, with juſt indignation, regards the various ſteps of this infamous procedure, from the firſt riſing of concupiſcence till the ſword was bathed in Uriah's blood, and his adulterous wife was taken to his bed. *Note*, (1.) Let men promiſe themſelves what ſecreſy they will, there is an eye from which no darkneſs, or ſhadow of death, can hide the works of iniquity. (2.) The ſins of God's people have a peculiar aggravation in his ſight; and though his eternal deſignation cannot be made void, he will make them feel that ſeverity of correction, which will bring them to bitter anguiſh over the iniquities which provoked it.

CHAP. XII.

The foregoing chapter gave us the account of David's ſin, this of his repentance; though he fell, he was not utterly apoſtate, or rejected. Here is, 1. *His conviction, by a parable that obliged him to condemn himſelf,* ver. 1—6. *on which Nathan charges him with the ſin,* ver. 7—9. *and pronounceth ſentence upon him,* ver. 10—12. 2. *His repentance, and remiſſion, with a proviſo,* ver. 13, 14. 3. *The ſickneſs and death of the child, and his behaviour during that time,* ver. 15—23. 4. *The birth of Solomon, and God's gracious meſſage concerning him,* ver. 24, 25. 5. *The taking of Rabbah,* ver. 26—31.

1. AND [a] the LORD ſent Nathan unto David: and [b] he came unto him, and ſaid unto him, [c] There were

[a] Chap. vii. 14, 15. Pſal. lxxxix. 35. Iſa. lvii. 17, 18.
[b] Pſal. li. Title.
[c] Chap. xvi. 5, &c. 1 Kings xx. 39, &c. Iſa. v. 1, &c.

were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2. The rich *man* had exceeding [d] many flocks and herds: 3. But the poor *man* had nothing ſave one little ewe-lamb, which he had bought and nouriſhed up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay on his own boſom, and [e] was unto him as a daughter. 4. And [f] there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he ſpared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dreſs for the way-faring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dreſſed it for the man that was come to him. 5. And David's anger was greatly kindled againſt the man, and he ſaid to Nathan, *As* the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this *thing* ſhall † ſurely die. 6. And he ſhall reſtore the lamb [g] four-fold, becauſe he did this thing, and becauſe he had no pity. 7. ¶ And Nathan ſaid to David, [h] Thou *art* the man. Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, I [i] anointed thee king over Iſrael, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul: 8. And I gave thee thy maſter's houſe, and thy maſter's wives into thy boſom, and gave thee the houſe of Iſrael and of Judah; and [k] if *that had been* too little, I would moreover have given unto thee ſuch and ſuch things. 9. Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed [l] the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his ſight? [m] thou haſt killed Uriah the Hittite with the ſword, and haſt taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and haſt ſlain him with the ſword of the children of Ammon. 10. Now therefore [n] the ſword ſhall never depart from thine houſe; becauſe thou haſt deſpiſed me, and haſt taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. 11. Thus ſaith the LORD, Behold, I will raiſe up evil againſt thee out of thine own houſe, and [o] I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he ſhall lie with thy wives in the ſight of this ſun. 12. For thou didſt *it* ſecretly: but [p] I will do this thing before all Iſrael, and before the ſun. 13. And David ſaid unto Nathan, [q] I have ſinned againſt the LORD. And Nathan ſaid unto David, [r] The LORD alſo hath put away thy ſin; thou ſhalt not die. 14. Howbeit, becauſe by this deed thou haſt given great occaſion to the enemies of the LORD [s] to blaſpheme, the child alſo *that is* born unto thee, ſhall ſurely die.

d Chap. v. 13.
e Prov. v. 19.
f Job i. 7.
† Heb. Is a child of death. Gen. xx. 3. & xxviii. 24.
g Exod. xxii. 1. Prov. vi. 31.
h Mat. xiv. 4.
i 1 Sam. xvi. 13.
k Iſa. v. 4.
l Exod. xx. 13, 14.
m Chap. xi. 14. Pſ. li. 14.
n Rev. xiii. 10.
o Deut. xxviii. 30.
p Chap. xvi. 22.
q 1 Sam. xv. 24. Pſ. li. 4. Acts ii. 37. 2 Cor. xi. 32.
r Pſ. xxxii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. Iſa. xxxviii. 17. Lam. iii. 32, 33. Mic. vii. 18. Zech. iii. 4.
s Ezek. xxxvi. 20, 23. Mat. xviii. 7. Rom. ii. 24.

v. 1—14. If God were not to reſtore us in our vile and ſinful departures from him, every iniquity would iſſue in apoſtacy; but he hateth putting away, therefore he delivers our ſouls, when we ſeem appointed unto death.

Nine long months, or more, had David now exchanged communion with his gracious God, for indulgence of his baſe deſires; and though, no doubt, pangs of remorſe ſometimes ſtung his ſpirit, no evidences of his repentance yet appeared, and he ſeemed in peace to enjoy the fruits of his iniquity. But now,

1. God ſends Nathan the prophet to awaken him from his lethargy. David had not caſt off probably the form of religion, though ſo degenerated from the power of it, but ſtill retained and honoured the prophets and prieſts of the Lord, and continued a profeſſion of godlineſs. Nathan inſtantly obeys the command, and whilſt prepared to reprove him ſharply, yet introduces his meſſage in ſuch a way, as to inſinuate deeper into David's conſcience, and leave him ſelf-condemned. *Note*, A reproof wiſely adminiſtered, is doubly effectual.

2. Nathan appears a poor man's advocate to the king againſt a rich oppreſſor, and, under this fictitious character, repreſents the circumſtances of David's guilt, and draws from him his own condemnation. He repreſents the caſe as lately happening between two men, (David and Uriah), the one rich in flocks and herds, (for David had many wives); the other poſſeſſing but one ewe lamb, (Bathſheba), which lay in his boſom, and was treated with the greateſt tenderneſs: a traveller coming to the rich man, (Satan, who goeth to and fro in the earth to tempt, or his own inordinate concupiſcence, that craved indulgence), he ſpared his own flocks and herds, (his own wives, which he might have gone in to), and robbed the poor man of his lamb (even Uriah's wife), to dreſs for the traveller, (his own corrupt luſt and appetite). So tender a ſtory awakened David's anger; and, little ſuſpecting how nearly he was concerned, he ſwears the offender ſhall die for his inhumanity, as well as his oppreſſion. *Note*, (1.) Every wife hath a title to her huſband's ſingular and endeared affection. (2.) Multiplying wives never cures concupiſcence, but inflames it. He who is not ſatisfied with one, will never be ſatisfied with more. (3.) They are often ſevereſt in their cenſures on others, who are themſelves moſt deſerving of that ſeverity. (4.) They who pronounce ſentence in anger, will, it is to be feared, exceed the boundaries of juſtice as well as mercy.

3. Nathan unmaſks his battery againſt David's conſcience, and plainly charges him home with the guilt he had condemned. *Thou art the man*; thou haſt not only robbed the poor man of his lamb, but of his life too. In the name of the God of Iſrael, that ſacred name before which he uſed to tremble, Nathan upbraids him with his deep ingratitude: God had delivered him from Saul, had given him a kingdom, and his maſter's wives into his boſom; filled his houſe with riches, and would have done for him more, if that had not ſufficed him. Moſt ungrateful therefore were theſe returns. He boldly charges his crimes upon him; high contempt of God, and the greateſt baſeneſs and cruelty to man. He had deſpiſed God's government by the moſt open violation of his commands; had murdered Uriah, with the deepeſt treachery, by the ſword of the uncircumciſed, after plunging him into the guilt of drunkenneſs, and had taken his wife, firſt to the bed of adultery, and then, to conſecrate his villainy, had covered with an honourable name ſo foul a deed, and married her whom he had debauched. Therefore he denounces the ſentence of terrible but moſt juſt judgment againſt him. The ſword he had ſo wickedly uſed, ſhould ſmite his own houſe, and never depart from it; beginning in the ſlaughter of his ſons Amnon and Abſolom, and, after long wars, compleating the ruin of his kingdom, and at laſt of his poſterity. The adultery he had committed ſecretly, ſhould be viſited upon him in his own wives, proſtituted in the ſight of the ſun; and this evil, for its greater aggravation, ſhould ariſe out of his own houſe; a houſe he would live to ſee defiled with murder, inceſt, rebellion, and full of miſery and wretchedneſs. *Note*, (1.) We muſt deal plainly and freely with the ſinner's conſcience. (2.) The root of all ſin is unbelief of the divine threatnings, making men count light of the divine law. (3.) The poiſoned chalice returns juſtly to the lips of him that mingled it. (4.) They muſt pay dear for their luſts, who dare indulge them, either in preſent puniſhment, or ſhortly in eternal torment.

4. David, thunderſtruck with the application, confounded with guilt, and ſelf-condemned, confeſſes the charge, owns the heinouſneſs of his guilt againſt God, and is ready to ſink under deſpair on the black review. But God, though correcting him, will not give him over unto death. He revives his failing heart with hope; *Thou ſhalt not die*, as a murderer and adulterer deſerves; thy ſin is put away, is forgiven, ſo far as relates to eternal puniſhment. But let him not think all was over; no, dire marks of God's diſpleaſure he ſhould receive, becauſe God will vindicate his honour, which was by this wicked conduct blaſphemed among the people; and, as a preſent ſtriking inſtance of God's anger, he denounces the death of the new-born babe: though he ſhall not die in his ſin, he ſhall not enjoy the fruit of it. *Note*, (1.) The only way to avoid the judgments we have provoked, is by returning to God, through Jeſus Chriſt, with humble acknowledgment of our guilt. (2.) They ſhall not die eternally, whoſe iniquity God in his dear Son hath put away and forgiven. (3.) Nothing cauſes more reproach on God and his cauſe, than theſe ſcandalous falls of profeſſors. (4.) God will make thoſe ſins bitter to his people, in which they fooliſhly and wickedly ſought enjoyment, and by dire experience cauſe them to feel how evil and bitter a thing it is to tranſgreſs againſt him.

15. ¶ And Nathan departed unto his houſe: and the LORD ſtruck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very ſick. 16. David therefore [t] beſought God for the child, and David † faſted, and went in, and [u] lay all night upon the earth. 17. And the elders of his houſe aroſe *and went* to him, to raiſe him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18. And it came to paſs on the ſeventh day, that the child died; and the ſervants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they ſaid, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we ſpake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himſelf, if we tell him that the child is dead? 19. But when David ſaw that his ſervants whiſpered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David ſaid unto his ſervants, Is the child dead? And they ſaid, He is dead. 20. Then David aroſe from the earth, and waſhed, and anointed *himſelf*, and changed his apparel, and came into the houſe of the LORD, and [x] worſhipped: then he came to his own houſe, and when he required, they ſet bread before him, and he did eat. 21. Then ſaid his ſervants unto him, What thing *is* this that thou haſt done? thou didſt faſt and weep for the child *while it was* alive, but when the child was dead, thou didſt riſe and eat bread. 22. And he ſaid, While the child was yet alive, I faſted

t Iſa. xxvi. 16. Jer. xviii. 8. & l. 4. Zech. xii. 10, 11.
† Heb. Faſted a faſt.
u 1 Pet. v. 6.
x Job i. 21. & ii. 10.

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y Iſa. xxxviii. 1, &c. Jonah iii. 9.
z 1 Kings i. 13.
a Mat. i. 6.
b 1 Chron. xxii. 9.
‡ i. e. peaceable. Iſa. ix. 6.
§ i. e. Beloved of the Lord. Mat. iii. 17.

I faſted and wept: for I ſaid, [y] Who can tell *whether* God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? 23. But now he is dead, wherefore ſhould I faſt? Can I bring him back again? I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me. 24. ¶ And David [z] comforted Bath-ſheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and [a] ſhe bare a ſon, and [b] he called his name ‡ Solomon; and the LORD loved him. 25. And he ſent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name § Jedidiah, becauſe of the LORD.

v. 15—25. Nathan, having delivered his meſſage, leaves David to ruminate over it, and to expect the threatened afflictions.

1. The child was inſtantly ſmitten with a diſeaſe no phyſicians could cure. David beheld with bitter anguiſh its ſickneſs, and every groan of the babe pierced his heart with the remembrance of his ſin. He fell down before the Lord in prayer, and faſted, and paſſed the night on the ground, diſconſolate, and bitter in ſoul, beſeeching God for the child, if he might yet be ſpared. In vain the elders of his houſe attempt to comfort him; his anguiſh made him loathe his food, and in the duſt he poured forth his penitential tears. *Note*, When a ſoul is brought to an awakened ſenſe of ſin, and outward afflictions at the ſame time lie heavy upon it, the bitterneſs of ſuch a wounded ſpirit none can conceive, that have not taſted it. Then the pains of hell overtook him, and the ſorrows of death came about him.

2. The ſeventh day from his birth, and the next probably from his ſeizure, the child died. David's ſervants, who had been witneſſes of his deep concern, were afraid to tell him: to them he ſeemed before to lie half dead on the earth through ſorrow; they were therefore apprehenſive, that ſuch a ſtroke might quite overwhelm him. David obſerved their whiſpers, and gueſſed at the cauſe. He aſked, and was informed of the death of his child. Calmly he then aroſe, his countenance compoſed from ſorrow, in ſilent ſubmiſſion to the holy will of God; he waſhed, anointed, changed his mournful garments, went to the tabernacle to worſhip, acknowledging God's juſtice, and humbling his ſoul before him; then returned, and called for meat, and was no more ſad. His ſervants wondered at this change of his behaviour, till he informed them of the cauſe. While there was life, he hoped prayer might prevail, and God might yet graciouſly hear and ſpare the child; but when the child was dead, to mourn was fruitleſs, and prayer in vain. Submiſſion now was the path of duty, and his conſolation, the hope of meeting the dear babe in a better world. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt our dear relatives are within the reach of prayer, we are permitted to be importunate: when death determines God's decree, it becomes us humbly to be reſigned to the good will of God. (2.) The death of others ſhould remind us of our own. (3.) A pious parent may with comfort part from the infant, ſnatched from the womb almoſt to the grave; for as it hath known no actual ſin, we may comfortably hope through Chriſt it ſhall know no ſorrow; for the promiſe is to us and to our children. (4.) It is pleaſing to look to that bleſſed time, when we ſhall meet again thoſe our dear friends, who have fallen aſleep in Chriſt before us, and whom he ſhall bring with him in a reſurrection day.

3. David, by faith reſtored again to the joys of God's ſalvation, comforted the companion of his ſin, now the wife of his boſom. God had forgiven them; and though he took one ſon, he gave them another. Bathſheba again conceived, and Solomon is born. His name was given him, as being the ſeal of God's peace with his parents, and as the type of the Eternal Prince of Peace. God's favour was towards him, and Nathan is ſent to ſignify it by a new name, Jedidiah, *the beloved of the Lord*. *Note*, (1.) Submiſſion to God's afflictions is the way to obtain the reſtoration of our loſt comforts. (2.) Every child of grace, though ſprung like Solomon from evil doers, through divine mercy obtains a new nature, as well as a new name, and is a *Jedidiah, the beloved of the Lord*.

c Chap. xi. 25.
d Pſ. cxxvii. a.
† Heb. My name be called upon it.
e Prov. xiii. 22.
‡ Heb. Very great.
§§§ Or, to ſaws, &c.

26. ¶ And [c] Joab fought againſt Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and [d] took the royal city. 27. And Joab ſent meſſengers to David, and ſaid, I have fought againſt Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters. 28. Now therefore, gather the reſt of the people together, and encamp againſt the city, and take it: leſt I take the city, and † it be called after my name. 29. And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought againſt it, and took it. 30. And he took their king's crown from off his head, (the weight whereof *was* [e] a talent of gold, with the precious ſtones) and it was *ſet* on David's head: and he brought forth the ſpoil of the city ‡ in great abundance. 31. And he brought forth the people that *were* therein, and put *them* § under ſaws, and § under harrows of iron, and § under axes of iron, and made them paſs || through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jeruſalem.

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|| Or, with their king.

v. 26—31. The conqueſt of Rabbah and the Ammonites is here inſerted, to compleat the narrative, interrupted with the account of David's ſin and repentance, and ſeems to have happened ſoon after the death of Uriah.

1. Joab having cut off the ſupplies of water from the beſieged, and ſeeing them reduced to extremities, ſends to inform his prince, that he may come in perſon and compleat the conqueſt, that ſo the honour may be his, which ſhewed a noble ſpirit in Joab, who could thus prefer his ſovereign's glory to his own.

2. David with his forces arrives in the camp; they give a general aſſault, and carry the city. The king is made priſoner, his crown taken from his head, and transferred to the conqueror. Vaſt it was, and precious with gold and jewels, a talent in weight, or, as ſome have thought, becauſe of the weight being inſupportable, a talent of gold in value; or perhaps a Syriac talent, which was but a fourth of the Hebrew, and ſomewhat above three and twenty pounds. Abundance of other rich ſpoil was taken, and the people, as the text intimates, treated with the greateſt ſeverity, of which we have inſtances before, *Judg*. iii. 6, 7. and, no doubt, a juſt retaliation to a cruel nation; though ſome have ſuggeſted, that David's hardened ſtate of mind at this time made him cruel, and cauſed him to inflict theſe tortures on the vanquiſhed. A learned man hath given us another ſenſe, however, which the words may bear, and will greatly ſoften the apparent ſeverity. That *David put them* not under ſaws, but *to ſaws*, to cut wood and ſtone; and to *iron mines* to dig; and to *axes of iron*, to fell timber, *after he had made them paſs with their king*, as captives before him. *Note*, Woe to the ſoul that the ſpiritual David, the Lord Jeſus, ſeizes in anger, and torments for his ſins: worſe than theſe tortures will be his lot in that burning furnace, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

CHAP. XIII.

Nathan's prophecy here begins to have a terrible accompliſhment. 1. *Amnon, aſſiſted in his plot by Jonadab, raviſhes Tamar*, ver. 1—20. 2. *Abſalom murders Amnon for it*, ver. 21—30.

a 1 Kings xxi. 4.
b Mic. vii. 5.
c Jer. iv. 22.
d Iſa. iii. 9.
e Pſ. l. 18, 19. Prov. xix. 27.
f Gen. xviii. 6. Prov. xxxi. 13.
g Gen. xxxix. 12. Prov. vii. 13.
† Heb. Humble me.
h Lev. xviii. 9. & xx. 17. Job. xxxi. 11.
i Prov. vii. 7.

1. AND it came to paſs after this, that Abſalom the ſon of David had a fair ſiſter, whoſe name *was* Tamar, and Amnon the ſon of David loved her. 2. And Amnon was ſo vexed, that [a] he fell ſick for his ſiſter Tamar; for ſhe *was* a virgin: and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her. 3. But Amnon had [b] a friend, whoſe name *was* Jonadab, the ſon of Shimeah, David's brother: and Jonadab *was* [c] a very ſubtil man. 4. And he ſaid unto him, Why *art* thou, *being* the king's ſon, lean from day to day; wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon ſaid unto him, [d] I love Tamar, my brother Abſalom's ſiſter. 5. And Jonadab ſaid unto him, [e] Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyſelf ſick: and when thy father cometh to ſee thee, ſay unto him, I pray thee let my ſiſter Tamar come, and give me meat, and dreſs the meat in my ſight, that I may ſee *it*, and eat *it* at her hand. 6. ¶ So Amnon lay down, and made himſelf ſick: and when the king was come to ſee him, Amnon ſaid unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my ſiſter come and make me a couple of cakes in my ſight, that I may eat at her hand. 7. Then David ſent home to Tamar, ſaying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's houſe, and dreſs him meat. 8. So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's houſe; (and he was laid down) and [f] ſhe took flour, and kneaded *it*, and made cakes in his ſight, and did bake the cakes. 9. And ſhe took a pan, and poured *them* out before him, but he refuſed to eat. And Amnon ſaid, Have out all men from me: and they went out every man from him. 10. And Amnon ſaid unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which ſhe had made, and brought *them* into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11. And when ſhe had brought *them* unto him to eat, [g] he took hold of her, and ſaid unto her, Come lie with me, my ſiſter. 12. And ſhe anſwered him, Nay, my brother, do not † force me: [h] for no ſuch thing ought to be done in Iſrael; do not thou [i] this folly. 13. And I, whither ſhall I cauſe my

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my ſhame to go? And as for thee, thou ſhalt be as one
of the fools in Iſrael: now therefore, I pray thee, ſpeak
unto the king; for [k] he will not withhold me from thee.
14. Howbeit, [l] he would not hearken unto her voice:
but being ſtronger than ſhe, forced her, and [m] lay with
her. 15. ¶ Then Amnon hated her ‡ exceedingly, ſo
that the hatred wherewith he hated her, *was* greater
than the love wherewith he had loved her: and Amnon
ſaid unto her, Ariſe, be gone. 16. And ſhe ſaid unto
him, *There is* no cauſe; this evil in ſending me away,
is greater than the other that thou didſt unto me: but
he would not hearken unto her. 17. Then he called
his ſervant that miniſtred unto him, and ſaid, Put now
this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her.
18. And [n] *ſhe had* a garment of divers colours upon her:
for with ſuch robes were the kings daughters *that were*
virgins apparelled. Then his ſervant brought her out,
and bolted the door after her. 19. ¶ And Tamar [o] put
aſhes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours
that *was* on her, and [p] laid her hand on her head,
and went on crying. 20. And Abſalom her brother
ſaid unto her, Hath § Amnon thy brother been with
thee? but hold now thy peace, my ſiſter: he *is* thy
brother, regard not this thing. So Tamar remained
deſolate in her brother Abſalom's houſe.

[k] Lev. xviii. 11.
[l] Prov. xviii. 2. Eccleſ. xii. 14.
[m] Chap. xii. 10.
‡ Heb. with great hatred greatly. Jer. vi. 15. Ezek. xxiii. 17.
[n] Gen. xxxvii. 3. Pſ. xlv. 14.
[o] Joſh. vii. 6.
[p] Jer. ii. 37.
§ Heb. Amnon ſpoke out of contempt.

v. 1—20. The bad example of David's ſins ſeems to have been much more imitated by his ſons, than the repentance and piety towards God, which he had teſtified.

1. Amnon, David's eldeſt ſon, falls in love with his beautiful ſiſter Tamar, born of the ſame mother with Abſalom. Tho' ſhocking and unnatural the deſire, he indulged it; and, as there was no hope of his ever ſeducing her, he fell ſick with vexation. *Note*, (1.) Near relatives ſhould be cautious, that the love of fraternal affection degenerates not into the raging of lawleſs luſt. (2.) Sin brings its curſe along with it, and the body often ſuffers for the indulgence of vile affections.

2. Amnon's friend Jonadab, his couſin-german, obſerved the ſtrange alteration in his countenance, and perceived there was ſome ſecret uneaſineſs which preyed upon him. He therefore enquires into the cauſe, why he, a king's ſon, and heir apparent, who wanted nothing that power or wealth could give, ſhould be lean from day to day, pine amidſt the pleaſures of a court, unable to reliſh any of the joys round him. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt are not the happieſt. The palace hath often miſeries and diſcontent unknown in a cottage. (2.) The ſons of wickedneſs may well be wretched; but why ſhould the children of the heavenly king, and heirs of glory, thus go mourning all the day long? It is highly unſeemly and diſhonourable to their profeſſion.

3. Amnon dares reveal his guilty paſſion; no doubt they had been companions before in iniquity, and this emboldened him. The cauſe of his leanneſs is love for his ſiſter; for with this honourable name he cloathes his infamous paſſion. The crafty Jonadab, far from rebuking his wickedneſs as a true friend, puts him in a way to gratify his luſt, *v.* 5. and thus brings him to his ruin. The advice is quickly followed. Amnon, who had long looked ill, now pretends to be unable to riſe or eat: the king his father tenderly viſits him, to enquire if he could do any thing for him, and entertains not the leaſt ſuſpicion, when he requeſts his ſiſter Tamar to make him a cake, as if his ſtomach loathed other food. Tamar is ſent for, and willingly obeys. Unſuſpicious of danger, and ready to nurſe her ſick brother, as well as to ſhew her duty to her honoured father, ſhe kneads the cakes before Amnon, and thinks it not beneath her dignity to tend him. *Note*, (1.) A wicked man's friendſhip is a great curſe, as tending to lead us to ſin, and flatter us to our ruin. (2.) They who harbour no ill deſigns themſelves, are moſt unſuſpicious of others. (3.) No office is beneath us, which charity calls us to. (4.) Though a great lady may not be called to exerciſe herſelf in ſervile employments, yet it is a valuable accompliſhment to know how their family concerns ought to be done.

4. The deceit having ſucceeded, Amnon contrives to execute his wicked purpoſe. He diſmiſſes his attendants, and begs his ſiſter to bring the cakes into his chamber. There, where no eye ſaw him, he ſeizes her as his prey, and entices her to conſent to his infamous deſign. *Note*, (1.) It is dangerous for thoſe who have youth and beauty to be alone with their tempter. (2.) Deeds of darkneſs ſeek the covert; but where ſhall the workers of iniquity hide themſelves from the eye of God?

5. Shocked at the propoſal, and ſtruggling to get free from his embraces, ſhe remonſtrates againſt his deſign. He had called her ſiſter; ſhe calls him brother: the very mention of their relation were enough to ſilence the propoſal. She intreats him not to uſe violence, for conſent ſhe could not; repreſents the great wickedneſs of ſuch an attempt; the ſhame with which ſhe muſt be covered, and the everlaſting reproach wherewith his name would be branded. But that ſhe might not drive him to deſpair, ſhe ſuggeſts, that if he aſked her of her father in an honourable way, he might not deny his requeſt. Not that ſhe wiſhed, orthought this would be the caſe; but if ſhe now could amuſe him by hope, ſhe might eaſily ſecure herſelf from any future danger. *Note*, (1.) It is great folly indeed, for a momentary gratification, to ruſh into everlaſting miſery. (2.) If to be put to ſhame among men is ſo confounding, how much more, when before God and angels, and the aſſembled world, the ſinner's abominable deeds ſhall be brought to light?

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6. No intreaties prevail, and reſiſtance is vain. His brutal rage urges him to perpetrate the horrid deed, and Tamar is undone. *Note*, Where luſt reigns, men are inſenſible of fear or ſhame, and deaf to all the remonſtrances of reaſon and religion.

7. No ſooner was his lawleſs paſſion ſatiated with enjoyment, than his loathing was greater than his love. He cannot bear her in his preſence; he hates the very ſight of her, and bids her be gone. In vain ſhe upbraids him with his cruelty, and expoſtulates on the barbarity and diſgrace to which he expoſed her. He adds inſult to his hatred; bids his ſervants drag her out of doors in all her diſorder and confuſion, and bolt the door, to prevent her return. There is ſomething ſo inhuman and ſhocking in the whole tranſaction, that we cannot read it without horror and indignation. *Note*, The pleaſures of luſt often here turn into loathing of the perſon which miniſtred to them; and in hell it will be a part of the ſinner's torment, to hear the bitter upbraidings of the deluded, and to be condemned to dwell, where every object excites his hatred, and aggravates his pangs.

8. Unhappy Tamar, miſerable without guilt, rends her princely garments, puts aſhes on her head, and with bitter weeping retires to her brother Abſalom's houſe. Her diſtreſs beſpoke her ſituation, and Abſalom, from her being with Amnon, knowing his villainy, gueſſes what Tamar dares not tell. He bids her hold her peace: to ſpeak of her diſgrace, would only be her own ſhame; and Amnon being her brother, it would reflect diſhonour on the whole family; and by ſuch ſilence he intended, I preſume, to lull Amnon into ſecurity, the more eaſily to take by and by the revenge he meditated. Thus Tamar abode deſolate in her brother's houſe. *Note*, (1.) A woman's virtue once loſt, nothing can reſtore it; the mark is indelible. (2.) How cruel, for a moment's pleaſure, to expoſe a beautiful and accompliſhed woman, who might have lived to be the ornament of her ſex and family, to a life of contempt, wretchedneſs, and ſolitude, or worſe, abandoned licentiouſneſs!

21. ¶ But when king David heard of all theſe things
[q] he was very wroth. 22. And Abſalom ſpake unto his
brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for [r] Abſalom
hated Amnon, becauſe he had forced his ſiſter Tamar.
23. ¶ And it came to paſs after two full years, that
Abſalom [s] had ſheep-ſhearers in Baal-hazor, which *is*
beſide Ephraim: and Abſalom invited all the king's
ſons. 24. And Abſalom came to the king, and ſaid,
Behold now thy ſervant hath ſheep-ſhearers, [t] let the
king, I beſeech thee, and his ſervants, go with thy
ſervant. 25. And the king ſaid to Abſalom, Nay,
my ſon, let us not all now go, leſt we be chargeable
unto thee. And he preſſed him: howbeit he would
not go, but bleſſed him. 26. Then ſaid Abſalom, If
not, I pray thee, [u] let my brother Amnon go with us.
And the king ſaid unto him, Why ſhould he go with
thee? 27. But Abſalom preſſed him, that he let Amnon
and all the king's ſons go with him. 28. ¶ Now
Abſalom had [x] commanded his ſervants, ſaying, Mark
ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and
when I ſay unto you, Smite Amnon, [y] then kill him,
fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous,
and be † valiant. 29. And the ſervants of Abſalom did
unto Amnon as Abſalom had commanded: then all the
king's ſons aroſe, and every man ‡ gat him upon his
mule, and fled.

[q] Chap. xii. 10.
[r] Lev. xix. 17. Mat. xviii. 15. 1 John iii. 15.
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[s] Gen. xxxviii. 12. 1 Sam. xxv. 2. 2 Kings iii. 4.
[t] Pſ. xli. 2.
[u] Pſ. lv. 21. Prov. xxvi. 24.
[x] Exod. i. 17. 1 Sam. xxii. 17. Acts v. 29.
[y] Ver. 14. Jam. ii. 11.
† Heb. Sons of valour.
‡ Heb. rode.

v. 21—29, Such a tranſaction as this could not be concealed.

1. David hears of it, and very wroth he was; but inſtead of puniſhing this rape and inceſt with death, as it deſerved, he ſpared his ſon; but God will not; vengeance ſhall overtake him. *Note*, Over-indulgent parents, by their ſinful lenity, make a ſevere ſcourge for themſelves.

2. Abſalom, though ſilent, entertains deep-rooted vengeance in his boſom. He ſaw probably, that to ſeek for juſtice were vain; or he deſired the malicious gratification of being his own avenger. Two long years he waited opportunity, whilſt the civility of his carriage, and his taking no notice of the rape, had

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had now removed all ſuſpicion of the bloody revenge he meditated in his heart. But now the day approaches for the accompliſhment of his dark deſign, a feſtal day, when, on ſhearing his ſheep, he invited the king and his family to grace his entertainment at Baal-hazor; and when his father, fearing it would be too expenſive and burdenſome to him if they all went, excuſed himſelf, thanked him for his kindneſs, and gave him his paternal benediction, he preſſes him at leaſt to ſend his brethren, and Amnon in particular, as the moſt honourable. David with reluctance, at his importunity, complies; and Amnon, unſuſpicious of the plot, goes with his brethren to the feaſt. *Note*, (1.) The longer hatred is ſmothered, the fiercer it burns; and when it finds the moment for revenge, the deeper it ſtrikes. (2.) Many are over-generous in their invitations, and conſider not the expence of their entertainments, till the preſſures of poverty make them ſmart for their extravagance.

3. The feſtal board is ſpread, the glaſs goes round, and Amnon, fluſhed with wine, little ſuſpects the ſword which hangs over him. The ſignal is given, which had before been concerted between Abſalom and his ſervants; they ſuddenly ruſh into the room, and lay Amnon dead at their feet. Such were their maſter's guilty commands, and they judge this ſufficient to authoriſe them; whilſt he, who, as next heir to the crown, would be able to protect them, encourages them not to ſtartle at the bloody work, but courageouſly execute his orders. Hereupon all the king's ſons fled, fearing leaſt the ſame fate ſhould overtake them. *Note*, (1.) To die drunk is very terrible. (2.) The fear of man is uſually ſtronger than the fear of God; and many dare not diſpute the commands of a maſter, though at the hazard of their eternal damnation. (3.) It was juſt in God to permit the death of Amnon, though wicked in Abſalom to aſſaſſinate him. When ſinners execute God's deſigns, they mean no ſuch thing; and, whilſt inſtruments of his vengeance, fill up the meaſure of their own iniquities.

30. ¶ And it came to paſs, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, ſaying, Abſalom hath ſlain all the king's ſons, and there is not one of them left. 31. Then the king aroſe, and [z] tare his garments, and [a] lay on the earth; and all his ſervants ſtood by [b] with their clothes rent. 32. And Jonadab the ſon of Shimeah, David's brother, anſwered and ſaid, Let not my lord ſuppoſe *that* they have ſlain all the young men the king's ſons; for Amnon only is dead: [c] for by the appointment of [d] Abſalom this hath been determined, from the day that he forced his ſiſter Tamar. 33. Now therefore, let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's ſons are dead: for Amnon only is dead. 34. But Abſalom [e] fled. And the young man that kept the watch, lift up his eyes, and looked, and behold, there came much people by the way of the hill-ſide behind him. 35. And Jonadab ſaid unto the king, Behold, the king's ſons come: as thy ſervant ſaid, ſo it is. 36. And it came to paſs, as ſoon as he had made an end of ſpeaking, that behold, the king's ſons came, and lift up their voice and wept: and the king alſo, and all his ſervants wept † very ſore. 37. ¶ But Abſalom fled, and went to [f] Talmai, the ſon of Ammihud, king of Geſhur: and *David* mourned for his ſon every day. 38. So Abſalom fled, and went to Geſhur, and was there three years. 39. And *the ſoul of* king David longed to go forth unto Abſalom: for [g] he was comforted concerning Amnon, ſeeing he was dead.

[z] Chap. xii. 10.
[a] Chap. xii. 16.
[b] Rom. xii. 15.
[c] Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.
[d] Pſ. vii. 14.
[e] Am. ii. 14.
† Heb. with a great weeping greatly.
[f] Chap. iii. 3.
[g] Chap. xii. 23.

v. 30—39. Bad news flies apace, and never loſes in the relation.

1. David is alarmed with the death of all his ſons; ſuch were the firſt flying reports; and, ready to fear the worſt, in remembrance of his paſt doings, and the threatenings againſt his family, he rends his cloaths, and falls proſtrate on the earth in an agony of grief, whilſt his ſervants, with their cloaths rent, ſtood round him. *Note*, It becomes us to ſympathize with the afflicted.

2. Jonadab, who ſuſpected the truth from reflecting on former circumſtances, though it can hardly be thought privy to the deſign, ſuggeſts, that Amnon only is dead, in revenge for his rape of Tamar; and the event verified his concluſion, for the king's ſons now appeared in ſight from the watch-tower, and haſte to his preſence. There with tears they report the ſad cataſtrophe; and though it was ſome alleviation that they were not all ſlain, yet Amnon's death awakened the king's bitter ſorrow. *Note*, (1.) In all our calamities we have to thank God they are no worſe. (2.) The loſs of a ſon, and a wicked ſon too, is a deep wound in a godly parent's heart.

3. Abſalom fled immediately from juſtice, and ſought an aſylum with his grandfather Talmai, where three years he lived an exile. *Note*, One raſh action often makes the whole life miſerable.

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4. As time wore off the grief for the dead Amnon, the love of the living Abſalom revived. His ſin was overlooked, and his return ardently longed for; though how to reſtore him, in oppoſition to honour and juſtice, David knew not. The next chapter will inform us how it was brought about. *Note*, (1.) It is a mercy time blunts the edge of ſorrow, elſe all our days would be embittered with mourning. (2.) The greateſt provocations cannot extinguiſh parental affection.

CHAP. XIV.

Abſalom's return is here brought about by a contrivance of Joab. 1. *He ſoborns a widow of Tekoah to make a feigned complaint, and draw from the king a promiſe of pardon for her ſon, who had ſlain his brother*, ver. 1—20. 2. *This applied to Abſalom's caſe, on which he is brought back, but forbidden the court*, ver. 21—24. 3. *His perfect reconciliation at laſt, with an account of his perſon and family*, ver. 25—33.

1. NOW Joab the ſon of Zeruiah perceived that [a] the king's heart was towards Abſalom. 2. And Joab ſent to Tekoah, and fetcht thence [b] a wiſe woman, and ſaid unto her, I pray thee, feign thyſelf to be a mourner, and put on now mourning-apparel, and [c] anoint not thyſelf with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead: 3. And come to the king, and ſpeak on this manner unto him: [d] So Joab put the words in her mouth. 4. ¶ And when the woman of Tekoah ſpake to the king, ſhe fell on her face to the ground, and did obeiſance, and ſaid, Help, O king. 5. And [e] the king ſaid unto her, What aileth thee? And ſhe anſwered, I *am* indeed a widow woman, and mine huſband is dead. 6. And thy handmaid had two ſons, and they two [f] ſtrove together in the field, and *there was* none to part them, but the one ſmote the other, and ſlew him. 7. And behold, the whole family is riſen againſt thine handmaid, and they ſaid, [g] Deliver him that ſmote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he ſlew, and we will deſtroy the heir alſo: and [h] ſo they ſhall quench my coal which is left, and [i] ſhall not leave to my huſband *neither* name nor remainder upon the earth. 8. And the king ſaid unto the woman, Go to thine houſe, and [k] I will give charge concerning thee. 9. And the woman of Tekoah ſaid unto the king, My lord, O king, [l] the iniquity *be* on me, and on my father's houſe: and [m] the king and his throne *be* guiltleſs. 10. And the king ſaid, Whoſoever ſaith *ought* unto thee, bring him to me, and he ſhall not touch thee any more. 11. Then ſaid ſhe, I pray thee, let the king remember the LORD thy God, † that thou wouldeſt not ſuffer the revengers of blood to deſtroy any more, leſt they deſtroy my ſon. And he ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, [n] there ſhall not one hair of thy ſon fall to the earth. 12. Then the woman ſaid, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, ſpeak *one* word unto my lord the king. And he ſaid, Say on. 13. And the woman ſaid, Wherefore then haſt thou thought ſuch a thing againſt the people of God? for the king doth ſpeak this thing, as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his baniſhed. 14. For we muſt needs die, and *are* as water ſpilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: ‡ neither doth God [o] reſpect any perſon, yet doth he [p] deviſe means, that his baniſhed be not expelled from him. 15. Now therefore that I am come to ſpeak of this thing unto my lord the king; *it is* becauſe the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid ſaid, I will now ſpeak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the requeſt of his handmaid. 16. For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man *that would* deſtroy me and my ſon together out of the inheritance of God: 17. Then thine handmaid ſaid, The word of my lord the king ſhall now be § comfortable: [q] for as an angel of God, ſo *is* my lord the king, to diſcern good and bad: therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee. 18. Then the king anſwered and ſaid unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I ſhall aſk thee. And the woman ſaid, Let my lord the king

[a] Chap. xiii. 49. Chap. xviii. 33.
[b] Gen. iii. 1. Chap. xiii. 3.
[c] Ruth iii. 3.
[d] Ver. 19.
[e] Job xxix. 12, &c.
[f] Chap. xiii. 28.
[g] Numb. xxxv. 19. Deut. xix. 12.
[h] Gen. xxvii. 46.
[i] Deut. xxv. 6. Ruth iv. 5, 10.
[k] Prov. xviii. 13.
[l] Gen. xxvii. 13. Mat. xxvii. 25.
[m] 1 Kings ii. 44, 45.
† Heb. that the revengers of blood do not multiply to deſtroy.
[n] 1 Sam. xiv. 45. Acts xxvii. 34.
‡ Heb. Or, Becauſe God hath not taken away his life, he hath alſo deviſed means, &c. Mat. xviii. 32, 33.
[o] Job xxxiv. 19.
[p] Num. xxxv. 15.
§ Heb. for reſt.
[q] Ver. 20. Chap. xix. 27.

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now ſpeak. 19. And the king ſaid, *Is not* the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman anſwered and ſaid, *As* thy ſoul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath ſpoken: for thy ſervant Joab he bade me, and he put all theſe words in the mouth of thine handmaid. 20. To fetch about this form of ſpeech hath thy ſervant Joab done this thing: and my lord *is* wiſe, according to the wiſdom of an angel of God, to know all *things* that *are* in the earth.

v. 1—20. Joab obſerved the inclinations of the king, and concludes he cannot do him a more acceptable ſervice, than to bring about that event which David himſelf dared not propoſe; whilſt nothing could more ingratiate him with Abſalom, who, as heir apparent to the throne, would not fail to remember the obligation, and reward ſuch an act of kindneſs; and nothing would more eſtabliſh his reputation alſo among the people, who greatly admired Abſalom.

1. The method he takes is by ſuborning a wiſe woman of Tekoah, a place at ſome diſtance from the court, to bring a feigned caſe before the king, which might intereſt his compaſſion for her, and engage him to pardon a murderer. She therefore dreſſes herſelf as a mourner, appears before the king, and begs an audience of her afflicting ſtory. Her huſband died, and left two ſons: by an unhappy quarrel one was killed; the other was now proſecuted by her family, more from a view to the inheritance when the heir was dead, than from the love of juſtice; and without the royal clemency, ſhe muſt be a childleſs mother, as well as a diſconſolate widow: ſhe muſt ſee the laſt coal of her houſe extinguiſhed; her only ſon periſh before her eyes, the comfort of her widowhood, and the prop of her ſinking family.

2. The contrivance ſucceeds; the king melts at the relation; and, not aware of the deſign, promiſes to enquire into the circumſtances, and, if they were ſo, he would protect her ſon. Having gained ſo far, ſhe preſſes an immediate decree in her favour, and offers to bear any puniſhment, if ſhe had not truly repreſented the caſe; or, as the ſenſe will bear, inſinuates, though offering to bear the blame herſelf; that, ſhould he be ſlain in the mean time, the king and his throne would be involved in guilt. David confirms his promiſe to ſtop further proceedings, with an aſſurance of protection. She, as a tender ſollicitous mother, is earneſt to obtain the fulleſt ſecurity; humbly reminds him of the compaſſions of God, which he would thus imitate; and intimates her deſire, that he would iſſue a proclamation in her favour, or perhaps, meaning he ſhould confirm his promiſe by an oath. David, to give her the fulleſt ſatisfaction, ſwears her ſon ſhall not die. *Note*, (1.) The rigour of the law deſerves ſometimes to be ſoftened by the interpoſition of the royal clemency. (2.) No argument ſo powerful to excite our pity and compaſſion to others, as the mercy we ourſelves have found from God. (3.) Every believing ſinner, tho' virtually a murderer, even of the Son of God, hath yet the oath of the Moſt High to comfort him, in the aſſurance that the avenging ſword of divine juſtice ſhall not come nigh him.

3. Judgment being thus given in the caſe, ſhe takes off the maſk, and with great deference begs pardon for the liberty of applying this decree to the king's own caſe; where, though the circumſtances in many inſtances indeed were not parallel, the king was ſo diſpoſed to comply, as not ſtrictly to ſcrutinize the diſparity. She intimates, the king's ſeverity againſt his ſon was diſpleaſing to the people of God, and contradictory to his own deciſions in her caſe. She names not Abſalom, but with a periphraſis expreſſive of his unhappy ſtate, and ſuited to awaken the tendereſt feelings of a father, calls him *his baniſhed*, and inſinuates, that after ſuch an exile, where he had ſufficiently ſuffered, it was time to bring him home. She pleads our preſent mortal ſtate: ſhould David die, the ſucceſſion might now be diſputed. Amnon muſt have died ſhortly, if he had not met that untimely end; and Abſalom, without the ſword of juſtice, muſt follow him. She urges God's mercy towards ſinners, who *doth not take away their life*, (as it may be better rendered, than by the common verſion, *doth not reſpect any perſon*,) but is patient to bear with them, and graciouſly contrives the means to bring them to repentance, that baniſhed ſinners may return to him. He delights not in their eternal exile from his preſence and favour: how much more then ſhould the king's mercy extend to his own ſon, nor ſuffer him to live expelled from the worſhip, word, and ordinances of God, amidſt the uncircumciſed. She ſuggeſts, that concern for the king's ſafety emboldened her addreſs, as the people's love for Abſalom might now or hereafter be dangerous to the king and his houſe; mentions her confidence of the king's compaſſion in her caſe, and which would more abundantly extend to his own; and concludes with a fine compliment on David's wiſdom and uprightneſs, profeſſing the ſtrongeſt aſſurance, that God would continue ever to direct and proſper him in all his ways. *Note*, (1.) God's patience towards ſinners is truly aſtoniſhing! How unwilling is he they ſhould periſh! (2.) He hath deviſed a method of reſtoring them, wherein his juſtice is magnified as well as his mercy, thro' the blood of atonement. (3.) If ſinners now die in exile, it is becauſe they refuſe to return. (4.) Confidence in a man lays an obligation on him to ſerve us; how much more confidence in God, whoſe promiſes then become an everlaſting ſecurity to us.

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4. David ſuſpected the contrivance was Joab's, and enjoins the woman to confeſs the truth, which ſhe ingenuouſly does, with a compliment on the king's penetration; not taking the merit to herſelf, but acknowledging the author of the apologue. *Note*, Truth will never ſhame its author.

21. ¶ And the king ſaid unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Abſalom again. 22. And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himſelf, and † thanked the king: and Joab ſaid, To-day thy ſervant knoweth that I have found grace in thy ſight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the requeſt of his ſervant. 23. So Joab aroſe and went to Geſhur, and brought Abſalom to Jeruſalem. 24. And the king ſaid, Let him turn to his own houſe, and let him not ſee my face. So Abſalom returned to his own houſe, and ſaw not the king's face. 25. ¶ But in all Iſrael ‡ there was none to be ſo much praiſed as Abſalom, for his beauty: [r] from the ſole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemiſh in him. 26. And when he polled his head (for it was at every year's end that he polled *it*: becauſe *the hair* was heavy on him, therefore he polled it) [s] he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred ſhekels after the king's weight. 27. And unto Abſalom there were born [t] three ſons and one daughter, whoſe name *was* Tamar: ſhe was a woman of a fair countenance.

† Heb. Bleſſed.

‡ Heb. As Abſalom there was not a beautiful man to be greatly praiſed. Prov. xii. 22. Mat. xxiii. 27.

[r] Iſa. i. 6.

[s] Chap. xviii. 9.

[t] Chap. xviii. 18. Job xviii. 19. Jer. xxii. 30.

v. 21—27. Joab was preſent, trembling probably for the iſſue, and is delighted to find the ſcheme ſucceed, and much more to hear the king's command to go and be the meſſenger of Abſalom's reſtoration.

1. According to his orders he haſtes to Abſalom, having thanked the king for his kind acceptance of his petition, and receiving it as a token of his favour towards himſelf. Abſalom returns hereupon; but, not to countenance ſo great a criminal, to leave ſome mark of diſpleaſure upon him, and to bring him to humiliation by ſuch a mortifying denial, he is not ſuffered to appear at court, but is ordered to his own houſe. *Note*, (1.) It is through the merit of our great Advocate, ſinners find grace in the ſight of God. (2.) They who are forgiven their ſin, continue frequently to ſuffer under it for their deeper abaſement.

2. On his return, his perſonal accompliſhments and family are taken notice of. He was the handſomeſt man in Iſrael, which might account for the regard of the people, and the affection of his father; for beauty hath a ſtrange attraction, and prejudices us greatly in favour of the poſſeſſor; though too often the ſyren's face covers the ſerpent's venom, as was the caſe with Abſalom. The moſt valuable beauties are the internal accompliſhments of grace. His hair was remarkably fine, and vaſt in quantity; it grew ſo faſt, that he polled it yearly, and the weight was two hundred ſhekels, above ſix pounds, which might well be, if, as Joſephus ſays, it was powdered with gold-duſt, or if only wet with oil, and thickened with powder. He little thought this ornament, on which he prided himſelf, would ſhortly prove his ruin. His family alſo was increaſed with three ſons, and one fair daughter, whom he named after his beloved ſiſter; but his ſons ſeem to have died young, *See chap.* xviii. 18. and therefore their names are not recorded.

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28. ¶ So Abſalom dwelt two full years in Jeruſalem, and ſaw not the king's face. 29. Therefore Abſalom ſent for Joab, to have ſent him to the king, but he would not come to him: and when he ſent again the ſecond time, he would not come. 30. Therefore he ſaid unto his ſervants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and [u] ſet it on fire: And Abſalom's ſervants ſet the field on fire. 31. Then Joab aroſe and came to Abſalom unto *his* houſe, and ſaid, unto him, Wherefore have thy ſervants ſet my field on fire? 32. And Abſalom anſwered Joab, Behold, I ſent unto thee, ſaying, Come hither, that I may ſend thee to the king, to ſay, Wherefore am I come from Geſhur? *it had been* good for me *to have been* there ſtill: now therefore let me ſee the king's face; and [x] if there be *any* iniquity in me, let him kill me. 33. So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Abſalom, he came to the king and bowed himſelf

[u] Chap. xiii. 29.

[x] Gen. iii. 12. 1 Sam. xv. 13. Job xxxi. 33. Prov. xxviii. 13. Mat. xxv. 44.

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himſelf on his face to the ground before the king: and
the king [y] kiſſed Abſalom.

[y] Luke xv. 20.

v. 28—33. Abſalom, though reſtored to Jeruſalem, is impatient of the reſtraint laid upon him. He cannot bear to live in this ſtate of diſgrace; his unhumbled heart counts his ſufferings injurious, though ſo much leſs than he deſerved; and he reſolves, by fair means or foul, once more to be reinſtated at court. For this purpoſe, after two years waiting,

1. He ſollicits Joab to be his friend again, who, by his repeated refuſals, ſeems to have taken ſome juſt diſguſt at his behaviour, or feared to offend the king by farther ſollicitation. But when intreaty was vain, Abſalom reſolves to try another experiment, and bids his ſervants to ſet Joab's field of corn on fire. Joab, incenſed, comes to know the reaſon, and Abſalom thus anſwers his end.

2. Abſalom ſeeks not to excuſe the injury, but, with utter unthankfulneſs for the kindneſs ſhewn him, inſolently demands, that he may be reſtored to his former dignity at court; declaring it had been preferable to have continued at Geſhur, rather than live thus; and, as if innocent, he offers to die, if there was iniquity found in him, being ſure enough that no ſuch ſentence would paſs upon him. He pretends to long to ſee his father's face, as if it were intolerable to live under his diſpleaſure; but no ſooner is he cheriſhed in his father's boſom, than he meditates a deſign on his throne and his life. *Note*, (1.) Unhumbled minds will never ceaſe to vindicate themſelves. (2.) Fair ſpeeches often cloak foul deſigns.

3. Joab is prevailed upon to intercede with David, and he at laſt conſents to receive him. Abſalom is introduced; the king with paternal tenderneſs ſeals with a kiſs his reconciliation; and believing his ſon's profeſſions real, reinſtates him in all his former honours. *Note*, (1.) A parent's fondneſs often makes him blind to his children's ill deſigns: he fain would hope the beſt, even againſt hope. (2.) How much tenderer will be the reception of the returning prodigal from his heavenly Father, when by the Spirit his everlaſting pardon ſhall be ſealed!

CHAP. XV.

David's lenity now proves his ſcourge. In this chapter, 1. *Abſalom inſinuates himſelf into the people's affection*, ver. 1—6. 2. *He openly avows his pretenſions to the crown*, ver. 7—12. 3. *David hearing this, flies from Jeruſalem*, ver. 13—18. *In his flight we are told*, (1.) *What paſſed between him and Ittai*, ver. 19—22. (2.) *The concern of the country for him*, ver. 23. (3.) *His conference with Zadock*, ver. 24—29. (4.) *His tears and prayers upon this occaſion*, ver. 30, 31. (5.) *Matters concerted by him with Huſhai*, ver. 32—37.

About 1024. 1. AND it came to paſs after this, that Abſalom
[a] prepared him chariots, and horſes, and fifty men
to run before him. 2. And Abſalom [b] roſe up early,
and ſtood beſide the way of the gate: and it was *ſo*, that
when any man that had a controverſy came to the king
for judgment, then Abſalom called unto him, and ſaid,
Of what city *art* thou? And he ſaid, Thy ſervant *is* of
one of the tribes of Iſrael. 3. And Abſalom ſaid unto
him, See, [c] thy matters *are* good and right, but [d] *there is*
no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee. 4. Abſalom
ſaid moreover, [e] O that I were made judge in the land,
that every man which hath any ſuit or cauſe might come
unto me, and [f] I would do him juſtice. 5. And it was
ſo, that when any man came nigh *to him* to do him obeiſance, [g] he put forth his hand, and took him, and kiſſed
him. 6. And on this manner did Abſalom to all Iſrael
that came to the king for judgment: ſo Abſalom [h] ſtole
the hearts of the men of Iſrael.

About 1023.

[a] 1 Kings i. 5. Prov. xi. 2. & xvi. 18.
[b] Prov. iv. 16. Mat. xxvii. 1.
[c] Pſ. xii. 2.
[d] 2 Pet. ii. 10.
[e] Exod. iv. 10, 13. Jud. ix. 29.
[f] Prov. xxvii. 2.
[g] Pſ. x. 9, 10.
[h] Prov. xi. 9.

v. 1—6. No ſooner is Abſalom reſtored to favour, than we find him plotting to dethrone his father, and ſeeking, for that purpoſe, to alienate from him the love of his ſubjects, and attach them to himſelf. For this purpoſe,

1. He prepares a grand equipage and retinue. His chariots, his horſemen, and fifty footmen to clear the way, were magnificence Iſrael had not ſeen before, and which dazzled vain minds, as ſome great thing. Probably David himſelf was proud of the figure his ſon made, and, by connivance, encouraged his ambitious views. *Note*, (1.) Parents who indulge their children in pomp and pride, know not the injury they do them and themſelves. (2.) The vanity of making a figure in the world, is the rock on which more young perſons ſplit, than on any other.

2. He pretends great zeal for Iſrael's good; is ſeen conſtant and early at the gate, as if longing to have buſineſs diſpatched; and kindly inquires into every man's cauſe, as if ſollicitous to do them juſtice. On a ſlight hearing, where one party only preſented his caſe, he flattered him with certain ſucceſs in his cauſe, if there were but any one deputed to hear him; but inſinuates the negligent adminiſtration of juſtice, and how much the land ſuffered for want of an active and upright magiſtrate; intimating how happy it would be for the people, if he were judge, when every man might expect ſpeedy redreſs, and equitable deciſions. Such pretenſions eaſily ſunk down into unthinking minds, and flattered them with halcyon days under his adminiſtration: and his familiarity and condeſcenſion to the loweſt of the people, ſoon won their hearts; for he ſhook them by the hand, embraced them as if a friend or a brother, and ſtuck not to ſtoop, however low, in order to climb into the throne. *Note*, (1.) Zeal for the public good, and redreſs of grievances, are often the duſt thrown into the eyes of the populace, to conceal the projects of ambition. (2.) The beſt of kings, and the moſt upright adminiſtration, muſt never expect to eſcape the malignant aſperſions of a diſcontented faction. (3.) They who are moſt eager to get into the ſeat of judgment, are often leaſt qualified for the truſt: the deſerving know the difficulty, and modeſtly decline it. (4.) They who court popularity by low condeſcenſions, are no ſooner in power, than they throw off the maſk, and play the tyrant over a deluded people.

Before Chriſt 1023.

7. ¶ And it came to paſs [i] after forty years, that Abſalom ſaid unto the king, I pray thee let me go and
[k] pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in
Hebron. 8. For thy ſervant vowed a vow while I
abode at Geſhur in Syria, ſaying, If the LORD ſhall
bring me again indeed to Jeruſalem, then [l] I will ſerve the
LORD. 9. And the king ſaid unto him, Go in peace.
So he aroſe and went to Hebron. 10. ¶ But Abſalom
[m] ſent ſpies throughout all the tribes of Iſrael, ſaying,
As ſoon as ye hear the ſound of the trumpet, then ye
ſhall ſay, Abſalom [n] reigneth in Hebron. 11. And
with Abſalom went two hundred men out of Jeruſalem, *that were* [o] called, and they went [p] in their ſimplicity, and they knew not any thing. 12. And Abſalom
ſent for [q] Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counſellor,
from his city, *even* from Giloh, while he offered ſacrifices: and the conſpiracy was ſtrong; for [r] the people
increaſed continually with Abſalom.

[i] 1 Sam. xvi. 13.
[k] Mat. ii. 8.
[l] Jer. ix. 3, 5.
[m] Chap. xiii. 28. & xiv. 30.
[n] Chap. xix. 10. Job. xx. 5.
[o] 1 Sam. ix. 13.
[p] Prov. xiv. 15. Mat. x. 16.
[q] Pſ. xli. 9. & lv. 13. Mic. vii 5.
[r] Pſ. iii. 1.

v. 7—12. The conſpiracy being ripe for action, Abſalom ſeeks an occaſion to declare himſelf; the text ſays, after forty years, not of David's reign, but from the time the kingly government commenced; or, as ſome conjecture it ſhould be read, after four years, according to the Syriac and Arabic verſions, from his reconciliation to his father.

1. He pitches upon Hebron, as the rendezvous, the place of his birth, and once the metropolis of Judah, where David reigned ſeven years: thither he begs leave of his father to go, under pretence of fulfilling a vow made during his exile; and David, without ſuſpicion of a plot, ſends him away with his benediction, pleaſed perhaps to ſee his ſon ſo religiouſly inclined, and reſolved, according to his vow, to ſerve the Lord. *Note*, (1.) It is a great comfort to godly parents, when their perverſe children promiſe reformation, and they would fain perſuade themſelves, what they wiſh to believe, that it is ſincere. (2.) There are few unnatural parents, but many rebellious ſons: affection deſcends oftener than it returns. (3.) Pretexts of religion have, ſince the days of Abſalom, opened the door for rebellion.

2. To cover his deſign, and to gain credit to his cauſe, he invites two hundred from Jeruſalem with him, the chief men probably in the city, who were not at all privy to his intentions, yet whoſe preſence would make it ſuppoſed they were of his party. *Note*, When religion is made the tool of ambitious men, many an honeſt citizen, and pious miniſter, hath been led to lend his countenance to that, which, if he ſaw the black intentions which lurk under the cloak of hypocriſy, his very ſoul would abhor.

3. Abſalom contrives to make a general riſing of the country in his favour, by means of conſpirators diſperſed throughout all the tribes, who, on the ſignal given by ſound of trumpet, ſhould proclaim him king. This ſudden news would not only draw in thoſe who were in the ſecret, but many who might conclude David was dead, or Abſalom proclaimed by his conſent; but who, once engaged, would not be able to retreat. *Note*, (1.) Worldly cunning, and diabolical wiſdom, they ſhall not want, who have Satan at their elbow. (2.) We muſt not be raſhly credulous, leſt we diſcover too late our folly.

4. Ahithophel was his chief counſellor, a man of deep politics, who on diſguſt had retired from court, incenſed, it may be, at David's adultery with Bathſheba, whoſe grandfather he is ſuppoſed to be, *See chap.* xi. 3. xxiii. 34. and glad to embrace an opportunity to revenge ſuch diſhonour. Him Abſalom ſent for during the ſacrifice; the fire of ambition in his heart burning fiercer than the coals on the altar.

5. The conſpiracy grew ſtrong by continual acceſſion. Thoſe,

to whom he had ſpoken ſo fair in the gates, readily joined his ſtandard, and gave him their intereſt, and the populace ſwam with the ſtream. *Note*, The giddy multitude are eaſily led; but numbers are no proof of a good cauſe.

13. ¶ And there came a meſſenger to David, ſaying, The hearts of the men of Iſrael are after Abſalom. 14. And David ſaid unto all his ſervants that *were* with him at Jeruſalem, Ariſe, and let us [s] flee; for we ſhall not *elſe* eſcape from Abſalom: make ſpeed to depart, leſt he overtake us ſuddenly, and bring evil upon us, and ſmite the city with the edge of the ſword. 15. And the king's ſervants ſaid unto the king, [t] Behold, thy ſervants *are ready to do* whatſoever my lord the king ſhall appoint. 16. And the king went forth, and all his houſhold after him: and the king left [u] ten women, *which were* concubines, to keep the houſe. 17. And [x] the king went forth, and all the people † after him, and tarried in a place that was far off. 18. And all his ſervants paſſed on beſide him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, ſix hundred men, [y] which came after him from Gath, paſſed on before the king. 19. ¶ Then ſaid the king to Ittai, the Gittite, Wherefore goeſt thou alſo with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou *art* a ſtranger, and alſo an exile. 20. Whereas thou cameſt *but* yeſterday, ſhould I this day make thee ‡ go up and down with us? ſeeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: [z] mercy and truth *be* with thee. 21. And Ittai anſwered the king, and ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* my lord the king liveth, ſurely [a] in what place my lord the king ſhall be, whether in death or life, even there alſo will thy ſervant be. 22. And David ſaid to Ittai, Go and paſs over. And Ittai the Gittite paſſed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that *were* with him. 23. And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people paſſed over: the king alſo himſelf paſſed over [b] the brook Kidron, and all the people paſſed over, towards the way of [c] the wilderneſs.

v. 13—23. Soon are tidings brought of this unnatural rebellion; and as fear exaggerates danger, the hearts of all the men of Iſrael are ſaid to be with Abſalom.

1. David, exceedingly terrified, thinks of nothing but flight. His courage either forſakes him, or, ſeeing God's hand in the conſpiracy, he is afraid to reſiſt, and, however wicked the inſtrument, ſubmits to it as a divine judgment upon him; or, as his forces were unequal to the conſpirators, he endeavours to gain time, leſt if they beſieged him in Jeruſalem, his caſe ſhould appear deſperate, and all the people give him up as loſt. *Note*, (1.) Our ſevereſt ſtrokes come from hands we leaſt ſuſpected. (2.) Fear of God's anger in our ſufferings, is the cauſe of deepeſt dejection under them.

2. He leaves Jeruſalem to his rebel ſon, and with his few faithful adherents on foot paſſes over the brook Kidron, the place afterwards more diſtinguiſhed by the Son of David, when he went the ſame way to the garden, the ſcene of his agony. His wives and houſholds attended him, ten of his concubines excepted, whom he imprudently left behind, to keep the palace, God ſo over-ruling it, to fulfil his threatnings. The Cherethites and Pelethites ſtuck to him, with the Gittites under the command of Ittai, either a corps of Philiſtine proſelytes from Gath, or a body of Iſraelites, ſo called from their joining him whilſt he made his abode there. Theſe, with as many of the people as choſe to ſhare his lot, compoſed his little army. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us to humble ourſelves under the afflicting hand of God. (2.) In times of ſuffering, a large family is a great incumbrance; domeſtic comforts and croſſes thus balance each other. (3.) Greater fidelity is often found in ſtrangers, than in our kinsfolk and countrymen. (4.) They who follow Chriſt, muſt be volunteers, and firmly cleave to his cauſe when it appears moſt in danger.

3. David, more kindly ſollicitous for Ittai and his men, than concerned to ſecure ſuch an help in his diſtreſſed ſituation, nobly preſſes him to return, and not think of ſharing his deſperate affairs; wiſhing him the beſt of bleſſings, and diſmiſſing him as a friend, whoſe kindneſs he had experienced, and thankfully acknowledged. But Ittai bravely adheres to him, cannot bear the thought of leaving him in his diſtreſs, reſolved in life or death to ſhare his lot, and never to deſert him. *Note*, (1.) A generous heart is unwilling to involve others in his ſufferings. (2.) A faithful friend no ſituation can affect; nay, the more diſtreſſing our caſe, the more ſuch an one delights to approve his fidelity. (3.) Neither the trials of life, nor any torments of death, can ſeparate the believing ſoul from its attachment to Jeſus.

4. The people, as he paſſed towards Jordan, tenderly ſympathized in his ſufferings, to ſee ſo good a king ſunk ſo low, ſo good a father dethroned by an unnatural child. *Note*, There is not a greater object of compaſſion, than a father ſuffering under the wickedneſs of a rebellious ſon.

24. ¶ And lo, Zadok alſo, and all the Levites *were* with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God, and they ſet down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done paſſing out of the city. 25. And the king ſaid unto Zadok, [d] Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and ſhew me *both* it, and [e] his habitation. 26. But if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee: behold *here am* I, [f] Let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him. 27. The king ſaid alſo unto Zadok the prieſt, [g] *Art not* thou a ſeer? return into the city in peace, and your two ſons with you, Ahimaaz thy ſon, and Jonathan the ſon of Abiathar. 28. See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderneſs, until there come word from you to certify me. 29. Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jeruſalem, and [h] they tarried there. 30. ¶ And David went up by the aſcent of mount Olivet, and [i] wept as he went up, and [k] had his head covered, and he went [l] bare-foot; and all the people that *was* with him covered every man his head, and they went up, [m] weeping as they went up.

v. 24—30. The prieſts and Levites follow the king with the ark, as men of conſcience, and not to be ſhaken in their loyalty under the deepeſt ſufferings. But David will not permit them to go with him: he had ſought a reſt for the ark, and he will not have it again wander in the wilderneſs.

1. He bids Zadok carry it back: at leaſt Abſalom will ſpare this ſacred treaſure. If the Lord be pleaſed to ſhow him favour in his reſtoration, then, according to the longings of his heart, he ſhall enjoy the comfort of the ark again: if not, with holy ſubmiſſion to his righteous will, he humbly acquieſces, acknowledging his deſerts, and the goodneſs as well as juſtice of God, whoſe ways are all mercy and truth. *Note*, (1.) Abſence from God's ordinances is the grief of the gracious heart, and his ſoul longs ſore to appear before God in the aſſembly of his ſaints. (2.) Reſignation to God's will in ſuffering, ſhews real humiliation under ſin. (3.) They who truſt on God, may aſſuredly conclude, that, whatever be the iſſue, all ſhall be well.

2. He expreſſes his confidence in Zadok and his brethren, that they will take care of his intereſt, and do him more eſſential ſervice at Jeruſalem than in the wilderneſs. Zadok being a ſeer, a man of penetration and diſcernment, might by his ſons ſend him intelligence how affairs went on, and how it would be moſt adviſeable for him to proceed; and we ſhall quickly ſee the prudence of this determination.

3. David began his melancholy march with an act of deep humiliation. As he went up the aſcent of the mount of Olives, his capital in view, from whence ſo miſerably he was driven, in token of the bittereſt mourning, he covered his head and his feet, weeping as he aſcended the hill, not more over his unhappy circumſtances, than over his ungrateful ſon, but moſt of all in the remembrance of the ſins that had provoked God thus ſeverely to afflict him. His ſervants felt his ſorrows, and cloſed the mournful proceſſion with groans and tears. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us under afflictions to mourn more for our ſins than our ſufferings. (2.) Children's vile conduct is the bitter grief of their aged parents. (3.) It is our duty to weep with thoſe that weep.

31. ¶ And *one* told David, ſaying, Ahithophel *is* among the conſpirators with Abſalom. And David ſaid, O LORD, I pray thee, [n] turn the counſel of Ahithophel into fooliſhneſs. 32. ¶ And it came to paſs, that *when* David was come to the top *of the mount*, where [o] he worſhipped God, behold, Huſhai the Archite came to meet him, with his coat rent, and earth upon his head: 33. Unto whom David ſaid, If thou paſſeſt on with me, then thou ſhalt be a burden unto me. 34. But if thou [p] return to the city, and ſay unto Abſalom, I will be thy ſervant, O king, *as* I *have been* thy father's ſervant hitherto, ſo *will* I now alſo *be* thy ſervant: then [q] mayeſt thou for me defeat the counſel of Ahithophel. 35. And *haſt thou* not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the prieſts? therefore it ſhall be, *that* what thing ſoever thou ſhalt hear out of the king's houſe, thou ſhalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the prieſts. 36. Behold, *they have* there with them [r] their two ſons,

[s] Pſ. iii. title.
[t] Exod. xxiii. 2. John vi. 68.
[u] Chap. xii. 11. & xvi 22.
[x] Eccleſ. x. 7.
† Heb. At his feet.
[y] Mat. viii. 10. & xv. 28.
‡ Heb. Wander in going.
[z] 2 Tim. i. 16.
[a] Ruth i. 16, 17. Prov. xvii. 17. & xviii. 24. Rom. viii 39.
[b] John xviii. 1.
[c] Rev. xii. 14.
[d] 1 Sam. iv. 4. Pſ. iii. 3.
[e] Chap. vi. 17. Iſa. xxxviii. 22.
[f] 1 Sam. iii. 18. Pſ. xxxix. 9. Acts xxi. 14.
[g] 1 Sam. ix. 9.
[h] Chap. xvii. 17.
[i] Luke xix. 41.
[k] Chap. xix. 4. Jer. xiv. 3, 4.
[l] Iſa. xx. 2, 4.
[m] Rom. xii. 15.
[n] Chap. xvi. 23. & xvii. 14. Job xii. 17.
[o] Pſ. l. 15.
[p] Mat. iv. 7.
[q] Chap. xvii. 14.
[r] Chap. xvii. 17.

Before Chriſt 1023.

ſon, Ahimaaz Zadok's *ſon*, and Jonathan Abiathar's *ſon*: and by them ye ſhall ſend unto me every thing that ye can hear. 37. So Huſhai David's [a] friend came into the city, and Abſalom came into Jeruſalem.

[a] Prov. xvii. 17.

v. 31—37. On his march farther particulars arrive of the conſpirators.

1. Athithophel is among them; whoſe craft and politics were more dangerous than all the other forces of Abſalom. David therefore oppoſes his prayers againſt Ahithophel's counſels, and begs God to make fooliſh the wiſdom of the wiſe. *Note*, (1.) Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, God can quickly turn it into fooliſhneſs. (2.) We may ſafely pray for the confuſion of their devices that mean to deſtroy the cauſe of God and truth.

2. David ſeeks to countermine the wiſdom of Ahithophel by the prudence of Huſhai. God, in anſwer to his prayers, ſends him a friend; Huſhai met him on the top of the hill, with expreſſive ſigns of ſympathetic ſorrow, willing to join his ſuffering king: but David has more uſeful employment for him at Jeruſalem; by pretending to ſerve Abſalom he might defeat the advice of Ahithophel, and getting into the ſecrets of the cabinet, by Zadok's ſons inform David of them. The diſſimulation of Huſhai, and the advice of David, in this caſe, will hardly admit of excuſe. *Note*, (1.) They who themſelves are perfidious and baſe, can expect no better than to be betrayed. (2.) It is a point of deep wiſdom to guard againſt the dangers we foreſee.

CHAP. XVI.

In this chapter, 1. *David is cheated by Ziba*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He is curſed by Shimei.* 3. *He bears it with patience*, ver. 5—14. 4. *Abſalom enters Jeruſalem*, ver. 14. 5. *He is cheated by Huſhai*, ver. 15—19. 6. *He follows Ahithophel's advice, and goes in unto his father's concubines*, ver. 20—23.

1. AND when David was a little paſt the top *of the hill*, behold [a] Ziba the ſervant of Mephiboſheth met him with a couple of aſſes ſaddled, and upon them [b] two hundred *loaves* of bread, and an hundred bunches of raiſins, and an hundred of ſummer-fruits, and a bottle of wine. 2. And the king ſaid unto Ziba, What meaneſt thou by theſe? And Ziba ſaid, [c] The aſſes *be* for the king's houſhold to ride on, and the bread and ſummer-fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine, that ſuch as be faint in the wilderneſs may drink. 3. And the king ſaid, And where *is* thy maſter's ſon? And Ziba ſaid unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jeruſalem: for [d] he ſaid, To-day ſhall the houſe of Iſrael reſtore me the kingdom of my father. 4. Then ſaid the king to Ziba, Behold, [e] thine *are* all that *pertained* unto Mephiboſheth. And Ziba ſaid, † I humbly beſeech thee *that* I may find grace in thy ſight, my lord, O king.

[a] Chap. ix. 9, 10.
[b] Prov. xviii. 16. & xxix. 5.
[c] Chap. xix. 25, 26, 27.
[d] Pſ. xv. 3. Prov. i. 19. & xvi. 28. & xxi. 28.
[e] Exod. xxiii. 8. Deut. xix. 15. Prov. xviii. 13.
† Heb. I do obeiſance. Chap. xiv. 22.

v. 1—4. David is now haſting on his journey, when he is met with refreſhment by Ziba, whom he had entruſted as ſteward for Mephiboſheth; an acceptable preſent indeed, but brought with a very ill deſign. On his enquiry after his maſter, this lying villain raiſes a ſcandalous report upon him, as if he now aſpired at the crown; and having incenſed David too haſtily againſt Mephiboſheth, as well as conciliated his favour by this gift, he gains his end, and hath a grant made to him of the whole eſtate that pertained to his maſter; at which, highly pleaſed, he departs, with profeſſion of deep acknowledgments for the favour. *Note*, (1.) Many, like Ziba, affect to be very generous of what is not their own. (2.) A ſervant's lying tongue is the frequent cauſe of ſad diſcord in families. (3.) The preſents of a knave are to be regarded as ſnares. (4.) An ill-intended deſign God can over-rule, to anſwer a good purpoſe. (5.) Raſh judgment opens a door for after-ſhame and repentance. (6.) To turn a deaf ear to ſlander is always wiſe, and to hear at leaſt both parties before we condemn.

5. ¶ And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the houſe of Saul, whoſe name *was* Shimei the ſon of Gera: [f] he came forth, and curſed ſtill as he came. 6. And he caſt ſtones at David, and at all the ſervants of king David: and all the people, and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand, and on his left. 7. And thus ſaid Shimei when [g] he curſed, Come out, come out, thou † bloody man, and thou man of Belial. 8. The LORD hath [h] returned upon thee all the blood of the houſe of Saul, in whoſe ſtead thou haſt reigned, and [i] the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Abſalom thy ſon: and behold thou *art taken* in thy miſchief, becauſe thou *art* a bloody man. 9. ¶ Then ſaid Abiſhai the ſon of Zeruiah unto the king, Why ſhould [k] this dead dog curſe my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. 10. And the king ſaid, [l] What have I to do with you, ye ſons of Zeruiah? ſo let him curſe, becauſe [m] the LORD hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David. [n] Who ſhall then ſay, Wherefore haſt thou done ſo? 11. And David ſaid to Abiſhai, and to all his ſervants, Behold, my ſon, which came forth of my bowels, ſeeketh my ‡ life: how much more now *may* this Benjamite *do it?* let him alone, and let him curſe: for the LORD hath bidden him. 12. It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that [o] the LORD will requite me good for his curſing this day. 13. And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hills ſide over-againſt him, and curſed as he went, and threw ſtones at him, and ‖ caſt duſt. 14. And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came weary, and refreſhed themſelves there.

[f] 1 Kings xviii. 9. Pſ. lxix. 26. Mat. v. 12. John xvi. 23.
[g] Exod. xxii. 28.
† Heb. Man of bloods. Chap. iii. 37. & iv. 11, 12. Pſ. v. 6.
[h] Judg. ix. 24.
[i] Pſ. iii. 2.

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[k] Chap. ix. 8.
[l] Luke ix. 55. Jam. i. 20.
[m] Iſa. x. 5. John xviii. 11.
[n] Job i. 21. Pſ. xxxix. 9. Lam. iii. 39.
‡ Heb. Eyes; i. e. my tears. Pſ. lvi. 8.
[o] Deut. xxiii. 5. Rom. viii. 28.
‖ Heb. Duſted him with duſt. Jer. iii. v.

v. 5—14. When a man is ſinking, he may expect to be inſulted.

1. Shimei, a relation of Saul, takes advantage of David's ſituation to pour out his invenomed malice on him in outragious abuſe, on an oppoſite hill, near Bahurim, from whence he might be heard: he follows him with curſes, and threw ſtones at him, and duſt, as if he was a miſcreant that deſerved not to live; exults in his miſery, confident that his ſon would dethrone him; brands him with every opprobrious name, as a man of miſchief, wickedneſs and murder, and conſtrues his preſent ſuffering a judgment from God for the blood of the houſe of Saul, wholly innocent as he was of it. *Note*, (1.) Though impotent malice rage, and ſhew its will to hurt us, 'tis a mercy power is wanting. (2.) God's corrections are often miſconſtrued into judgments, and when their enemy ſuffers, wicked men would fain bring in God as patronizing their cauſe. (3.) If we do ill we may expect to hear of it, well aggravated in the report of an enemy. (4.) Innocence is no protection from a lying tongue. (5.) The curſes of the wicked return upon their own heads.

2. David's reſignation is as exemplary as Shimei's inſolence is outragious. Far from deſiring to avenge himſelf, he ſtays the ſpirit of Abiſhai, unable with patience to bear ſuch reproach, and forbids him to hurt Shimei. He received it as a reproof from God; though the charge was untrue in part, he knew enough to humble him, and to reproach himſelf for: nor could he wonder at his enemy's virulence, when his own ſon thirſted for his blood; patiently therefore he commits his cauſe to God, and humbly waits that he may turn theſe curſes into a bleſſing. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not avenge ourſelves, nor return evil for evil, even under the bittereſt provocations. (2.) Though the charge laid againſt us be falſe, we may know enough to condemn ourſelves for, which ſhould make us patient under it. (3.) To ſee God's hand in every trial is the way to be reconciled to bear it. (4.) Patience, under reproaches, will not fail of its recompenſe; God will make our righteouſneſs as the light.

3. At Bahurim David halted to refreſh his men, fatigued with the march, and more weary with grief of heart. And here, for a moment, we leave him to breath, whilſt we return to obſerve the motions of his rebel ſon.

15. ¶ And Abſalom and all the people, the men of Iſrael, came to Jeruſalem, and Ahithophel with him. 16. And it came to paſs when Huſhai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Abſalom, that Huſhai ſaid unto Abſalom, God ſave the king, God ſave the king. 17. And Abſalom ſaid to Huſhai, *Is* this thy kindneſs to thy friend? why wenteſt thou not with thy friend? 18. And Huſhai ſaid unto Abſalom, Nay, but whom [p] the LORD and this people, and all the men of Iſrael chooſe, his will I be, and with him will I abide. 19. And again, whom ſhould I ſerve? *ſhould I* not *ſerve* in the preſence of his ſon? as I have ſerved in thy father's preſence, ſo will I be in thy preſence. 20. ¶ Then ſaid Abſalom to Ahithophel, Give counſel among you what we ſhall do. 21. And Ahithophel ſaid unto Abſalom, [q] Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the houſe, and all Iſrael ſhall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father, then ſhall the hands of all that *are* with thee be ſtrong. 22. So they ſpread Abſalom a tent upon [r] the top of the houſe, and Abſalom [s] went in unto his father's concubines, [t] in the ſight of all Iſrael.

[p] 1 Sam. xvi. 13.
[q] Lev. xx. 11. 1 Cor. v. 1.
[r] Chap xi. 2.
[s] Chap. xii. 11, 12. Job xxxi. 9, 10.
[t] Iſa. iii. 9.

23. And

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23. And the counſel of Ahithophel which he counſelled in thoſe days, *was* as if a man had enquired at the † oracle of God: ſo *was* all the counſel of Ahithophel, both with David and with Abſalom.

† Heb. Word.

v. 15—23. Abſalom and his forces haſte to Jeruſalem, juſt deſerted by the exile king; ſo graciouſly does God time his providences for our reſcue: and now ſanguine, in poſſeſſion of the royal city, a numerous army, and ſuch wiſe counſellors, concludes no doubt the day is his own and David undone. But the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort.

1. We have here the interview of Huſhai with Abſalom; with deep diſſimulation he is the firſt to welcome his arrival, and ſalute him king in Zion. Abſalom, pleaſingly ſurprized to meet him, enquires how he came to ſtay; and creduloufly falls into the ſnare, which Huſhai's profeſſion of loyalty ſpreads for him, ſuppoſing his father's friends ſaw his caſe deſperate, and that all courted now the riſing ſun. *Note*, (1.) The proud are the eaſy prey of every flatterer. (2.) Though it is no excuſe for evil, that we mean well, yet God may permit that deceit to ſucceed, and his purpoſes to be ſerved thereby, whilſt he moſt juſtly condemns the author.

2. A counſel is held on the proper method of procedure, and Ahithophel, as preſident, propoſes a deed ſhocking and infamous, yet highly politic, as it muſt tend to make the breach between Abſalom and David irreparable, and thereby confirm all thoſe who cleaved to his cauſe, in the aſſurance that there could be no reconciliation. Ahithophel's wiſdom is hereupon noted; ſo highly was he famed, that his advice was eſteemed as oracular by David as well as Abſalom; which accounts for the ready compliance which it at preſent met with. *Note*, (1.) Great wiſe men are uſually great wicked men. (2.) They who conſult only their ambition, never think of the crimes they commit in order to advance the cauſe they eſpouſe.

3. Abſalom inſtantly puts the advice in practice, and exceeds it; he not only goes in to his father's concubines, but publickly, in the eyes of all Iſrael; a tent is ſpread in open view, on the top of the houſe, and there, as void of ſhame as conſcience, he avows the inceſtuous deed. Thus was the threatning, *chap.* xii. 11. fulfilled; and though horrid the crime, yet it was a juſt retaliation for David's paſt adultery. *Note*, God puniſhes men often in kind, that they may be made to ſee and confeſs his righteous judgments.

CHAP. XVII.

1. *Abſalom calls a council of war, in which Ahithophel adviſes him to diſpatch*, ver. 1—4. *Huſhai to deliberation*, ver. 5—13. *Huſhai's counſel is agreed to*, ver. 14. *for vexation Ahithophel hangs himſelf*, ver. 23. 2. *Secret intelligence is ſent to David*, ver. 15—21. 3. *David marches to the other ſide Jordan*, ver. 22—24. *his camp is victualled by ſome of his friends in that country*, ver. 27—29. 4. *Abſalom and his forces march after him*, ver. 25, 26.

1. MOreover, Ahithophel ſaid unto Abſalom, Let me now chooſe out twelve thouſand men, and I will ariſe and purſue after David [a] this night. 2. And I will come upon him [b] while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that *are* with him ſhall flee, and [c] I will ſmite the king only. 3. And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the man whom thou ſeekeſt, *is* as if all returned: *ſo* [d] all the people ſhall be in peace. 4. And the ſaying [e] pleaſed Abſalom well, and all the elders of Iſrael. 5. Then ſaid Abſalom, Call now Huſhai the Archite alſo, and let us hear likewiſe what he ſaith. 6. And when Huſhai was come to Abſalom, Abſalom ſpake unto him, ſaying, Ahithophel hath ſpoken after this manner: ſhall we do *after* his ſaying? If not, ſpeak thou. 7. And Huſhai ſaid unto Abſalom, The counſel that Ahithophel hath given [f] *is* not good at this time. 8. For (ſaid Huſhai) thou knoweſt thy father and his men, that they *be* mighty men, and they † *be* chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father *is* a man of war, and will not lodge with the people. 9. Behold, he is hid now [g] in ſome pit, or in ſome *other* place: and it will come to paſs, [h] when ſome of them be overthrown at the firſt, that whoſoever heareth it, will ſay, there is a ſlaughter among the people that follow Abſalom. 10. And he alſo *that is* valiant, whoſe heart *is* as the heart of a lion, ſhall utterly melt: for all Iſrael knoweth that [i] thy father *is* a mighty man, and *they* which *be* with him *are* valiant men. 11. Therefore I counſel, that all Iſrael be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beerſheba, [k] as the ſand that *is* by the ſea for multitude, and that ‡ thou go to battle in thine own perſon. 12. So ſhall we come upon him in ſome place where he ſhall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him, and of all the men that *are* with him, there ſhall not be left ſo much as one. 13. Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then ſhall all Iſrael [l] bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one ſmall ſtone found there. 14. And Abſalom and all the men of Iſrael ſaid, The counſel of Huſhai the Archite *is* better than the counſel of Ahithophel: for [m] the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counſel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Abſalom.

[a] Prov. iv. 16. Rom. iii. 15.

[b] Deut. xxv. 18. Chap. xvi. 14. Mat. iv. 2, &c.

[c] Zech. xiii. 7. Mat. xxi. 38. John xi. 50.

[d] Iſa. lvii. 20.

[e] 1 Sam. xxiii. 21. Eſth. v. 14. Rom. i. 32.

[f] Prov. xxxi. 8, 9.

† Heb. Bitter of ſoul. Judg. xviii. 25.

[g] 1 Sam. xiii. 1. & xxiii.

[h] Joſh. vii. 5.

[i] Deut. xxxii. 30.

[k] Joſh. xi. 4.

‡ Heb. Thy face, or preſence go. Pſ. ix. 16.

[l] See 1 Kings xx. 10. Obad. iii.

[m] Chap. xv. 31. Pſal. xxxiii. 10, 11. & lxxxii. 1. & cxi. 7, 8. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

v. 1—14. Abſalom, in triumph, being entered into his father's deſerted palace, ſuch changes do theſe ſublunary kingdoms undergo, conſults next how to finiſh what ſeemed ſo happily begun. A counſel is ſummoned the ſame day, after the above-mentioned abomination was over, and David's ruin being reſolved, the queſtion is how to accompliſh it.

1. Ahithophel ſpeaks according to his place, and with his wonted ſagacity, and wiſer and wickeder counſel could not be given. He is for an immediate purſuit, falling upon the fugitives, weary and diſpirited, and making an eaſy conqueſt; he offers himſelf to be the leader, and aſks only twelve thouſand men to execute his deſign, nor doubts but with one ſtroke to put an end to the conteſt, by ſmiting the king and letting the people go, who would then peaceably ſubmit to Abſalom's government. Thus the man (ſo he calls him, neither king nor father) whom he ſought would be removed, and his throne eſtabliſhed without a rival. The ſcheme is ſo feaſible and deſireable, that this bloody ſon is delighted with it, and, aſtoniſhing to tell! not one of the elders of Iſrael expreſs their diſapprobation, but adviſe, according to Ahithophel's counſel, its immediate execution. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of kings, and beſt of fathers, may be unhappy enough to find rebellious ſubjects, and unnatural children. (2.) They who are once involved in ſin, are driven deeper and deeper, till the moſt horrid crimes become neceſſary, as it were, to enſure their own ſafety. (3). Delays are dangerous in every cauſe, whilſt expedition uſually enſures ſucceſs.

2. Before this advice is put in execution, Abſalom moves to call for Huſhai, and hear his opinion, or rather, have his concurrence in the matter; thus God, by the ſecret working of his providence, in the critical moment wards off the imminent danger, and, as it ſeems, inevitable ruin. Huſhai appears, and Abſalom bids him ſpeak his opinion on Ahithophel's advice, which, with great appearance of argument and zeal for the cauſe, he gives; he opens with the admiſſion of Ahithophel's wiſdom; but though in general he muſt pay ſubmiſſion and deference to his ſagacity, he at preſent is obliged to differ from him, and that on the following plauſible reaſons; David was not ſo eaſily to be ſmitten as Ahithophel ſeemed to ſuggeſt; he was well known to be a mighty man, and when, if not now, would he exert himſelf. Nor were his forces ſo few or deſpicable as were repreſented; they were a conſiderable body, and all men of approved valour, not to be daunted at danger, and much more enured to war than their raw undiſciplined troops; and in their preſent ſituation fired with reſentment, nay, armed with deſpair, would fight like bears robbed of their whelps: nor was it at all probable that David would be ſurpriſed; provident againſt danger, he, with ſome choſen body acquainted with every cave and hold, was ſafe from ſurprize, and ready to ſally out as from an ambuſh. Such an attack might make even Ahithophel's lion-like heart to fail, at leaſt his ſmall body of troops to flee, and the conſequence of ſuch a repulſe might be fatal to the cauſe; for ſhould it be noiſed that Abſalom's forces were routed, the people would be diſpirited and in danger of deſerting him. His advice therefore is to gather all the forces from Dan to Beerſheba, and put himſelf at the head of them; with ſuch an army, and under ſuch a leader, nothing could be hazarded. If David and his men were in the field, thick as the drops of dew they would light upon him, and not a man could eſcape; or if he took refuge in a walled city, ſuch an hoſt would in an inſtant ſcale the walls, or even with ropes draw the battlements into the ditch, or the adjoining river, as eaſily as a log of wood. Thus Abſalom's pride was flattered, and his ſucceſs enſured, not without a ſecret reflection on Ahithophel's raſhneſs; the advice eaſily took, God having infatuated their minds, and Abſalom and his council gave it for Huſhai, impolitic and improbable as his ſuggeſtions were. *Note*, (1.) They take counſel in vain who aim the ruin of God's church and people. (2.) God hath ſecret ways of diverting the fatal blows, aimed by our ſpiritual enemies at our helpleſs ſouls.

15. ¶ Then [n] ſaid Huſhai unto Zadok, and to Abiathar the prieſts, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counſel

[n] Chap. xv. 35.

Abſalom and the elders of Iſrael; and thus and thus have I counſelled. 16. Now therefore ſend quickly, and tell David, ſaying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderneſs, but ſpeedily paſs over; leſt the king be ſwallowed up, and all the people that *are* with him. 17. Now [o] Jonathan and Ahimaaz ſtayed by En-rogel, (for they might not be ſeen to come into the city) and a wench went and told them: and they went and told king David. 18. Nevertheleſs a lad ſaw them, and told Abſalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's houſe in Bahurim, which had a well in his court, whither they went down. 19. And [p] the woman took and ſpread a covering over the well's mouth, and ſpread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known. 20. And when Abſalom's ſervants came to the woman to the houſe, they ſaid, Where *is* Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman ſaid unto them, [q] They be gone over the brook of water. And when they had ſought and could not find *them*, they returned to Jeruſalem. 21. And it came to paſs after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and ſaid unto David, Ariſe, and paſs quickly over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counſelled againſt you.

[o] Chap. xv. 29.

[p] Joſh. ii. 4. &c. Pſal. xxxvii. 5.

[q] Exod. i. 19.

v. 15—21. Huſhai is no ſooner diſmiſſed from the council-board, than, fearful leaſt his advice ſhould not be followed, or, that they would change their reſolution, he is in haſte to let the king know his danger, that he might eſcape without delay; yet how to do it was difficult, the avenues being every where carefully guarded, and none came in or out without notice. Zadok and Abiathar therefore procure a young woman to go, as for water, to the well of En-rogel, near which their ſons lay concealed, not daring to come into the city, and thence they are diſpatched to haſten the king over Jordan inſtantly; ſecret as the meſſage was delivered, they are diſcovered, information is conveyed to Abſalom, and immediate purſuit made after them. Hard preſſed, they are ready to be taken, when God, who is a refuge in every time of trial, providentially interpoſes; a woman at Bahurim, at whoſe houſe they ſought concealment, hid them in a well that was dry, and ſpreading a cloth, with ſome parched corn over it, the place is not ſearched, and with a lie ſhe deceives the purſuers, who now haſten on, and give the ſons of Zadok and Abiathar an opportunity to deliver their meſſage. *Note*, (1.) The weakeſt inſtruments in God's hand can anſwer the greateſt purpoſes. (2.) A lie to ſerve a good cauſe, ceaſes not therefore to be a bad thing.

22. Then David aroſe, and all the people that *were* with him, and they paſſed over Jordan: by the morning light [r] there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan. 23. ¶ And when Ahithophel † ſaw that his counſel was not followed, he ſaddled *his* aſs, and aroſe, and gat him home to his houſe, [s] to his city, and ‡ put his houſhold in order, and [t] hanged himſelf, and died, and was buried in the ſepulchre of his father. 24. Then David came to Mahanaim: and Abſalom paſſed over Jordan, he and all the men of Iſrael with him. 25. ¶ And Abſalom made Amaſa captain of the hoſt inſtead of Joab: which Amaſa *was* a man's ſon whoſe name *was* Ithra [u] an Iſraelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahaſh, ſiſter to Zeruiah, Joab's mother. 26. So Iſrael and Abſalom pitched in the land of Gilead. 27. And it came to paſs when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the ſon of Nahaſh of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and [x] Machir the ſon of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, 28. Brought beds, and baſons, and earthen veſſels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched *corn*, and beans, and lentiles, and parched *pulſe*, 29. And honey, and butter, and ſheep, and cheeſe of kine [y] for David, and for the people that *were* with him, to eat: for they ſaid, The people *is* hungry, and weary, and thirſty, in the wilderneſs.

[r] John xvii. 12.

† i. e. A brother of folly.

[s] Chap. xv. 12.

‡ Heb. Gave charge concerning his houſe. 2 Kings xx. 1.

[t] Job xxxi. 3. Prov. xi. 5, &c. Mat. xxvii. 5.

[u] 1 Chron. ii. 17.

[x] Chap. ix. 4. Prov. xi. 25. Mat. v. 7.

[y] Pſ. xxxiv. 8, 10.

v. 22—29. 1. No ſooner does David underſtand the imminence of his danger, than he inſtantly puts his troops in motion, and after a forced march that night, by day-break he paſſes Jordan without the loſs of a man, and continuing on his rout to Mahanaim, in the tribe of Gad, there reſolves to make a ſtand and collect his forces. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt we depend on divine protection, we muſt uſe all diligence to ſave ourſelves. (2.) Not one ſhall be loſt in the paſſage at death of thoſe ſpiritual followers, whom the Son of David leads as the captain of their ſalvation.

2. Ahithophel brings himſelf to a miſerable end. Unable to ſupport this mortification of his pride, that another's advice ſhould be preferred before his, or foreſeeing now the opportunity was loſt, that Abſalom would ruin himſelf, and conſequently that he would be firſt expoſed to the king's reſentment, he reſolves to prevent the ignominious death he feared; with deliberation therefore he prepares for ſelf-murder, ſettles his family, and then hangs himſelf. *Note*, (1.) Diſappointed pride often produces ſelf-murder. (2.) They who fly into the arms of death to avoid preſent ſhame, will find a terrible diſappointment, when everlaſting ſhame ſhall cover them.

3. Abſalom, having aſſembled his forces, purſues his father into the land of Gilead. Amaſa is appointed captain of the hoſt, a couſin-german of Joab's, and a nephew of David, being ſon of his ſiſter Abigail, the daughter of Nahaſh, another name for Jeſſe, or his wife, 1 *Chron.* xi. 16. See the miſeries of a civil war, where neareſt relatives, eſpouſing different parties, ſeek to ſhed each other's blood.

4. David, whilſt he halts at Mahanaim, meets with great kindneſs from ſome faithful friends, who were able to aſſiſt him. Shobi a younger ſon, whom David might have advanced in Hanun's ſtead at Rabbah, when he ſubdued the Ammonites; and Machir, whoſe kindneſs to Mephiboſheth was before obſerved, and Barzillai of Rogelim, theſe all liberally contributed to the ſupplying David and his men with beds, utenſils, and the neceſſaries which they wanted, after their fatiguing march, having in their pricipitate flight left all behind. *Note*, (1.) We meet often with greater kindneſs from ſtrangers than our own relations. (2.) The beſt uſe we can make of our affluence, is the employment of it in the ſupport of the ſuffering cauſe of the Son of David.

CHAP. XVIII.

Here is, 1. *David's preparations to engage the rebels*, ver. 1—5. 2. *The total defeat of Abſalom's party*, ver. 6—8. 3. *Abſalom's death and burial*, ver. 9—18. 4. *Tidings of it brought to David*, ver. 19—32. 5. *His bitter lamentation of Abſalom*, ver. 33.

1. AND David numbered the people that *were* with him, and ſet captains of thouſands, and captains of hundreds over them. 2. And David ſent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abiſhai the ſon of Zeruiah Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite: and the king ſaid unto the people, [a] I will ſurely go forth with you myſelf alſo. 3. But the people anſwered, Thou ſhalt not go forth: for if we flee away, [b] they will not care for us: neither if half of us die, will they care for us; but now *thou art* † worth ten thouſand of us: therefore now *it is* better that thou ſuccour us out of the city. 4. And the king ſaid unto them, What ſeemeth you beſt, I will do. And the king ſtood by the gate-ſide, and all the people came out by hundreds, and by thouſands. 5. And the king commanded Joab, and Abiſhai, and Ittai, ſaying, [c] *Deal* gently for my ſake with the young man, *even* with Abſalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Abſalom. 6. ¶ So the people went out into the field againſt Iſrael: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; 7. Where the people of Iſrael were ſlain before the ſervants of David, and [d] there was there a great ſlaughter that day of twenty thouſand *men*. 8. For the battle was there ſcattered over the face of all the country: and the wood ‡ devoured more people that day, than the ſword devoured.

[a] Pſ. iii. 6.

[b] Chap. xvii. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 31.

† Heb. As ten thouſand.

[c] Deut. xxi. 21. Pſ. ciii. 13. Luke xxiii. 34.

[d] Prov. xi. 21. & xxiv. 21, 22.

‡ Heb. Multiplied to devour. Joſh. x. 14. Judg. v. 20. Pſ. lxxvii. 17.

v. 1—8. Abſalom having croſſed Jordan, in purſuit of his father, David is neceſſitated to prepare for the battle; his troops indeed ſeem to be much inferior to his ſon's, but then their valour, and the excellent officers who led them on, make up what they want in numbers.

1. David reſolves to ſet himſelf at the head of his troops, and ſhare the danger with them, but is with-held at the earneſt requeſt of the people. His life was the life of the cauſe; at him Abſalom's forces would chiefly aim, and they counted him worth ten thouſand of them, therefore preſs him to ſtay in the city and ſuccour them, if need were, from thence. *Note*, (1.) Great men and wiſe men ought not to diſdain the advice of their inferiors. (2.) Faithful ſubjects are jealous over the life of their king, and ready to lay down theirs chearfully in his cauſe.

2. He gives the generals charge to deal gently with Abſalom, whom he calls the young man, fooliſh, and raſh, and therefore to be pitied and ſpared; ſo tender was he of that unnatural ſon, who

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who not content with his kingdom, ſought alſo his life. But there is ſomething in a parent's heart that no undutifulneſs can obliterate; and how much more in our great father of mercies, whoſe bowels yearn over his children, yet living in rebellion againſt him, and his compaſſions are more effectual than David's, for they ſecure the life of our ſouls.

3. As David, in his charge, expreſſed a confidence of the battle's ending in his favour, the iſſue correſponds thereunto. Though the conteſt is bloody, yet victory declares againſt the rebels, and the battle being near the wood of Ephraim, ſo called not becauſe in that tribe, but probably from the ſlaughter of the Ephraimites there made, *Judg.* xii. 4—6. as it was full of bogs and thickets, the routed army, taking refuge there, were the more eaſily put to the ſword, or, as ſome ſuggeſt, devoured of wild beaſts, ſo that twenty thouſand men of Abſalom's party fell. A juſt execution for ſuch a wicked and unprovoked rebellion. May every rebel receive thus the reward of his deeds!

9. ¶ And Abſalom met the ſervants of David; and Abſalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and [e] his head caught hold of the oak, and [f] he was taken up between the heaven and the earth, and the mule that *was* under him went away. 10. And a certain man ſaw *it*, and told Joab, and ſaid, Behold, I ſaw Abſalom hanged in an oak. 11. And Joab ſaid unto the man that told him, And behold, thou ſaweſt *him*, and why didſt thou not ſmite him there to the ground, and I would have given thee ten *ſhekels* of ſilver, and a girdle? 12. And the man ſaid unto Joab, Though I ſhould receive a thouſand *ſhekels* of ſilver in mine hand, *yet* would I not put forth mine hand againſt the king's ſon: for in our hearing the king charged thee, and Abiſhai, and Ittai, ſaying, Beware that none *touch* the young man Abſalom. 13. Otherwiſe, [g] I ſhould have wrought falſhood againſt mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyſelf wouldſt have ſet thyſelf againſt *me*. 14. Then ſaid Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and [h] thruſt them through the heart of Abſalom [i] while he *was* yet alive in the † midſt of the oak. 15. And ten young men that bare Joab's armour, compaſſed about and ſmote Abſalom, and ſlew him. 16. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from purſuing after Iſrael: for Joab held back the people. 17. And they took Abſalom, and [k] caſt him into a great pit in the wood, and [l] laid a very great heap of ſtones upon him: and all Iſrael fled every one to his tent. 18. ¶ Now Abſalom in his lifetime had taken and [m] reared up for himſelf a pillar, which *is* in the king's dale: for he ſaid, [n] I have no ſon to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called unto this day, Abſalom's place.

[e] Chap. xiv. 26. & xvii. 23. Prov. xxx. 17. Jer. xlviii. 44.
[f] Num. xvi. 29, 30.
[g] Exod. xx. 13.
[h] Judg. v. 31. Pſ. xlv. 5.
[i] Ver. 5.
† Heb. Heart.
[k] Deut. xxi. 21, &c. Jer. xxii. 18, 19.
[l] Joſh. vii. 26. & x. 27.
[m] Pſ. xlix. 11.
[n] Chap. xiv. 27. Job xviii. 17.

v. 9—18. We have here Abſalom among the fugitives, no longer exulting in confidence of ſucceſs, but ſeeking by flight to eſcape the devouring ſword; but divine vengeance ſuffereth him not to live; for though David's ſervants, whom he met, offered not to moleſt him, and his ſwift beaſt would quickly carry him out of danger; yet,

1. He is arreſted in his flight by the thick boughs of an oak, under which he furiouſly drove, and his flying locks either caught hold of the branches, or rather his neck was jammed in between them, and though not dead, yet ſo ſtunned as to be unable to diſengage himſelf, whilſt his mule, on full ſpeed, left him thus hanging. *Note*, (1.) They who fly from God's arm only ruſh into the toil. (2.) If his hair was his halter, we ſee that what was his pride proved at laſt his ſhame. (3.) Let diſobedient children look to this rebellious ſon, and tremble at God's vengeance.

2. Joab is informed of the accident, and chides the meſſenger for not immediately diſpatching Abſalom; for which he would have nobly rewarded him, *ver.* 11. but the man pleads the king's commandment, which, for a thouſand ſhekels, he would not tranſgreſs; nay he knew it were as much as his life were worth, and dares tell Joab he himſelf would then have been the firſt to execute him as a traitor. Joab does not controvert the man's aſſertion, but in haſte to be gone enquires the place, and takes his attendants with him; there, beholding the fair mark expoſed, with three darts he ſtrikes him through his heart, as he was yet alive, though hung; and to make ſure work, his ten attendants pierce him with many a mortal wound, and leave him dead on the ſpot. *Note*, Many find fault with others for not doing that, which had they done, they would have been the firſt to condemn them.

3. The arch rebel being diſpatched, a retreat is ſounded, as the reſt would return to their allegiance; and enough blood had been ſpilt, ſo that there needed no priſoners to be executed. *Note*, In rebellion ſeverity muſt be tempered with clemency; every ſubject that bleeds is a loſs to the ſtate itſelf.

4. Abſalom's body is caſt into a pit, and covered with a heap of ſtones, diſgraced even in the duſt, and thus terminates his aſpiring courſe in the deepeſt ignominy. He had erected near Jeruſalem a noble ſepulchral monument, to perpetuate his memory, his ſons, it ſeems, being now dead, *chap.* xiv. 27. This, we are told, is to this day a noble piece of ruins, but a monument of his ſhame and folly, and which bears the marks of univerſal deteſtation; for every perſon, Turk or Jew, who paſſes by it, conſtantly caſts a ſtone at it, in abhorrence of this rebellion, and pronounces withal a ſolemn curſe on all diſobedient children. *Note*, (1.) To be ſollicitous about a tomb for our bodies, whilſt we are living in neglect of our ſouls, is the height of folly. (2.) To perpetuate the remembrance of a great wicked name, is only to perpetuate infamy. (3.) Of all characters, a diſobedient child is among the moſt abhorred.

19. ¶ Then ſaid Ahimaaz the ſon of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath † avenged him of his enemies. 20. And Joab ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt not ‡ bear tidings this day, but thou ſhalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou ſhalt bear no tidings, becauſe the king's ſon is dead. 21. Then ſaid Joab to Cuſhi, Go tell the king what thou haſt ſeen. And Cuſhi bowed himſelf unto Joab, and ran. 22. Then ſaid Ahimaaz the ſon of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howſoever, let me, I pray thee, alſo run after Cuſhi. And Joab ſaid, Wherefore wilt thou run, my ſon, ſeeing that thou haſt no tidings ready? 23. But howſoever (*ſaid he*) let me run. And he ſaid unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and over-ran Cuſhi. 24. And David ſat [o] between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lift up his eyes, and looked, and behold, a man running alone. 25. And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king ſaid, If he *be* alone, *there is* tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. 26. And the watchman ſaw another man running, and the watchman called unto the porter, and ſaid, Behold, *another* man running alone. And the king ſaid, He alſo bringeth tidings. 27. And the watchman ſaid, ‖ Methinketh the running of the foremoſt is like the running of Ahimaaz the ſon of Zadok. And the king ſaid, He *is* a good man, and cometh with good tidings. 28. And Ahimaaz called, and ſaid unto the king, § All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and ſaid, Bleſſed *be* the LORD thy God, [p] which hath delivered up the men that lift up their hand againſt my lord the king. 29. And the king ſaid, † Is the young man Abſalom ſafe? And Ahimaaz anſwered, When Joab ſent the king's ſervant, and *me* thy ſervant, I ſaw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*. 30. And the king ſaid *unto him*, Turn aſide, *and* ſtand here. And he turned aſide and ſtood ſtill. 31. And behold Cuſhi came, and Cuſhi ſaid, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that roſe up againſt thee. 32. And the king ſaid unto Cuſhi, Is the young man Abſalom ſafe? And Cuſhi anſwered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that riſe againſt thee to do *thee* hurt, be as that young man *is*. 33. ¶ And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he ſaid, [q] O my ſon, Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon Abſalom: would God I had died for thee, O Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon.

† Heb. Judged him from the hand of, &c. Pſ. ix. 4.
‡ Heb. Be a man of tidings.
[o] 1 Sam. iv. 13.
‖ Heb. I ſee the running.
§ Heb. Peace.
[p] Pſ. xliv. 3. & cxv. 1.
† Heb. Hath he peace, the young man.
[q] Prov. x. 1. & xvii. 25.

v. 19—33. David, with anxious ſollicitude in the gate, waits to receive the tidings which muſt determine his crown, and perhaps his life, yet at the ſame time diſtreſſed for fear leaſt his ſon ſhould fall, dreads even to hear of victory.

1. Joab prepares to diſpatch an expreſs, and Ahimaaz, the ſon of Zadok, is eager for the office; but Joab, who knew how unacceptable the tidings of Abſalom's death would be, diſſuades him from being the meſſenger, and diſpatches Cuſhi, or the Ethiopean, ſo called as being a proſelyte of that country in Joab's ſervice, or from his ſwarthy complexion. Ahimaaz perceiving Cuſhi ſlow of foot, and taking the worſt, though the neareſt way, and being much the better runner, though a prieſt, is eager to carry the tidings of their ſucceſs, and perhaps ſollicitous to prepare David, by degrees, for the terrible blow that would follow on Cuſhi's arrival. Though Joab is very unwilling, his importunity prevails, he runs after Cuſhi, and taking a plainer road, though a little about, gets the ſtart of

him. *Note*, Sudden diſcoveries are dangerous, the ſtring wound up by degrees is prevented from breaking.

2. The watchman from the gate diſcovers the runners, Ahimaaz firſt, and afterward Cuſhi, and the king concludes they come with tidings, which, with a trembling heart, he prepares to hear; the foremoſt being diſcovered to be the ſon of Zadok, David concludes the tidings are good, becauſe ſo good a man brought them, and no ſooner is he within hearing, than he cries with triumph, All is well, the day our own; and when he is come into the king's preſence, falls down before him, with lowly obeiſance, bleſſes God for the ſucceſs of his majeſty's arms, and reports the victory to be compleat over the rebels. The king, ſollicitous for Abſalom, inſtantly enquires if he be ſafe; to this he carefully gives no direct anſwer, but refers him to Cuſhi, who was coming, that could give a better account of the cauſe of the tumult which at his departing he obſerved. *Note*, (1.) The goſpel is good tidings of a better victory: how welcome then to us ſhould the feet of the meſſengers of it be! (2.) Every ſucceſs ſhould be aſcribed wholly to the Lord.

3. Cuſhi comes with the ſhout of triumph; but David is more eager to enquire of Abſalom than to be informed of the battle, and now the dreadful news comes out. Cuſhi loyally wiſhes all the king's enemies as unable to hurt him as this young man, which tacitly implies his fall, though the circumſtances of it he waves. *Note*, When we muſt carry meſſages of evil, they cannot be too tenderly delivered.

4. David, in an agony of grief, forgets the joys of victory, and his grateful acknowledgments to God. One object ſwallows up all other concerns; his dead Abſalom alone engroſſes his heart, and abandoning himſelf to deſpair and ſorrow, he burſts into a flood of tears, cries out in the moſt inconſolable anguiſh on his departed ſon, and longs to have died in his ſtead. Such was his fondneſs for this unnatural ſon, or perhaps his apprehenſion of his death in ſo terrible a ſtate of guilt and rebellion, aggravated the bitterneſs of his loſs. *Note*, (1.) Inconſolable ſorrow is a great ſin againſt God. (2.) The loſs of a darling child is apt to ſhake the conſtancy even of truly godly parents. (3.) The death of an impenitent child is a moſt heart-breaking affliction.

CHAP. XIX.

We have here, 1. *David reſtrained from his ſorrow by the perſuaſion of Joab*, ver. 1—8. 2. *His return to his kingdom from his preſent baniſhment*, ver. 9—15. 3. *Shimei's treaſon pardoned*, ver. 16—23. 4. *Mephiboſheth's failure excuſed*, ver. 24—30. 5. *Barzillai's kindneſs recompenſed to his ſon*, ver. 31—40. 6. *The men of Iſrael's quarrel with the men of Judah for not calling them to the king's reſtoration*, ver. 41—43.

1. AND it was told Joab, Behold the king weepeth and mourneth for Abſalom. 2. And the † victory that day was *turned* into [a] mourning unto all the people: for the people heard ſay that day, how the king was grieved for his ſon. 3. And the people gat them by ſtealth that day into the city, as people being aſhamed ſteal away when they flee in battle. 4. But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, [b] O my ſon Abſalom, O Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon. 5. And Joab came into the houſe to the king, and ſaid, Thou haſt ſhamed this day the faces of all thy ſervants, which this day have ſaved thy life, and the lives of thy ſons, and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines: 6. In that thou loveſt thine enemies, and hateſt thy friends; for thou haſt declared this day, ‡ that thou regardeſt neither princes, nor ſervants: for this day I perceive, that if Abſalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then [c] it had pleaſed thee well. 7. Now therefore ariſe, go forth, and ſpeak ‖ comfortably unto thy ſervants: for I ſwear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night; and [d] that will be worſe unto thee than all the evil that befel thee from thy youth until now. 8. Then the king aroſe, and ſat in the gate: And they told unto all the people, ſaying, Behold, the king doth ſit in the gate: and all the people came before the king: for Iſrael had fled every man to his tent.

† Heb. Salvation. Pſ. iii. 8.
[a] Prov. xvi. 15. & xix. 12. Neh. viii. 9.
[b] Chap. xviii. 33.
‡ Heb. That princes and ſervants are nothing to thee.
[c] Prov. xiv. 28. Gal. vi. 1.
‖ Heb. To the heart.
[d] Prov. xiv. 28.

v. 1—8. Deep was the gloom that obſcured this day of victory.

1. The king's unutterable diſtreſs was noiſed in the camp, and damped the joy of the returning conquerors; with his face covered he refuſes to ſee his generals, and with the moſt paſſionate exclamations bewailing his ſon, ſeems inſenſible to every other emotion, but inconſolable grief. Diſcouraged with ſuch a reception, the ſoldiers, inſtead of a triumphant entry, ſteal into the city as if from a defeat, and ſeem ready to deſert a cauſe where they met ſo ill a reception for having hazarded their lives. *Note*, They who are exalted above others, ſhould, in their deepeſt afflictions, put on a good countenance, leaſt they communicate their deſpondence, and ruin thereby their affairs.

2. Joab, vexed at the king's indiſcreet behaviour, with real zeal for his cauſe, though with an unbecoming diſreſpect, goes in to expoſtulate with him on the wrongneſs and danger of his conduct; he remonſtrates how ungrateful it was to ſhew ſuch neglect of thoſe who, at the hazard of their own, had ſaved his life and the lives of all his family, which Abſalom would have murdered; that it appeared as if he had ſo loved the traitor, as to hate his beſt friends for his ſake, and could have been pleaſed if they had all periſhed ſo Abſalom had lived. He therefore urges him to appear in public inſtantly, and ſpeak comfortably to the people, thanking them for their fidelity, and congratulating their victory; with a ſolemn oath declaring, if he did not, that every ſoldier would deſert him, himſelf give him up, and a worſe rebellion ariſe than had juſt been quaſhed. *Note*, If by our own folly we bring ourſelves into danger, we ſhall juſtly be upbraided with it.

3. David is convinced of the neceſſity of ſubmitting to the advice, and reſtraining his anguiſh, waſhes, anoints, and ſits in public, to the great joy of his army, who approach his throne, and congratulate him on the ſucceſs of his arms. *Note*, Good counſel, though bluntly given, ſhould be thankfully received.

9. ¶ And all [e] the people were at ſtrife throughout all the tribes of Iſrael, ſaying, The king ſaved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philiſtines, and now he is fled out of the land for Abſalom. 10. And Abſalom whom [f] we anointed over us is dead in battle: now therefore why † ſpeak ye not a word of bringing the king back? 11. ¶ And king David ſent to Zadok and to Abiathar the prieſts, ſaying, [g] Speak unto the elders of Judah, ſaying, [h] Why are ye the laſt to bring the king back to his houſe? (ſeeing the ſpeech of all Iſrael is come to the king, *even* to his houſe.) 12. Ye *are* my brethren, [i] ye *are* my bones and my fleſh: wherefore then are ye the laſt to bring back the king? 13. And ſay ye to Amaſa, [k] *Art* thou not of my bone, and of my fleſh? God do ſo to me, and more alſo, if thou be not captain of the hoſt before me continually [l] in the room of Joab. 14. And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, [m] even as *the heart of* one man, ſo that they ſent *this word* unto the king, Return thou and all thy ſervants. 15. So the king returned, and came to Jordan: and Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

[e] Rom. vi. 21.
[f] Hoſ. viii. 4.
† Heb. Are ye ſilent.
[g] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[h] Mat. v. 16.
[i] Eph. v. 30.
[k] Chap. xvii. 25.
[l] Chap. iii. 39. & xviii. 14. Ver. 5, 6.
[m] Judg. xx. 1.

v. 9—15. David, with a victorious army at his beck, had no more to do than to march and ſeize the capital, and execute condign puniſhment on all who had appeared in arms againſt him; but as he choſe to rule by love, not force, he waited to return amidſt the congratulations of his ſubjects, rather than amidſt the ſhouts of his warriors.

1. The tribes of Iſrael, before in rebellion, now caſt the blame of their ill conduct one upon another, and mutually upbraid each other that they are not more eager in returning to their allegiance, and in bringing back their king. His former high deſerts are now remembered, and their folly in truſting to Abſalom evidenced by the event; therefore, though there were perhaps ſome rebellious ſpirits averſe to it, his reſtoration is reſolved, and notice given him of their reſolution. *Note*, (1.) When we have done ill, we cannot too ſoon ſeek to amend it. (2.) We naturally deſire to exculpate ourſelves, by caſting the blame on our neighbour.

2. Judah, which might be expected the firſt, is laſt in their application, fearing perhaps, as deepeſt involved in guilt, they ſhould ſuffer for it. But David, to ſilence their fears and engage them in his cauſe, ſends to Zadok and Abiathar a very kind meſſage, for them to report to the elders, that he looked upon himſelf as their brother, and hoped for a like affection from them, and that it was highly unbecoming them to be the laſt; and to Amaſa he ſends a particularly gracious meſſage, with the promiſe not only of pardon but the beſt preferment, even to be his captain in Joab's room, whoſe haughtineſs was no longer to be born. Such a kind meſſage, or Amaſa's influence, who exerted himſelf on this occaſion, gained the unanimous ſuffrage, and meſſengers are inſtantly diſpatched, with an invitation to him to return, whilſt in a body the elders and people come to Gilgal to welcome him. *Note*, (1). The miniſters

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niſters of Chriſt ſhould be preachers of loyalty. (2.) When we are backward to a good work, we need being ſtirred up. (3.) Chriſt chuſes to reign over a willing people, and when he bows our hearts expects we ſhould invite him to come and make his abode with us. (4.) No argument ſo effectual to gain the ſinner's heart, as the love of his Lord. He is become our bone and our fleſh.

16. ¶ And [n] Shimei the ſon of Gera, a Benjamite, which *was* of Bahurim, [o] haſted and came down with the men of Judah, to meet king David. 17. And *there were* a thouſand men of Benjamin with him, and [p] Ziba the ſervant of the houſe of Saul, and his fifteen ſons and his twenty ſervants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king. 18. And there went over a ferry-boat to carry over the king's houſhold, and to do † what he thought good: And Shimei the ſon of Gera fell down before the king as he was come over Jordan; 19. And ſaid unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy ſervant did [q] perverſly the day that my lord the king went out of Jeruſalem, that the king ſhould take it to his heart. 20. For thy ſervant doth know that I have ſinned: therefore behold, [r] I am come the firſt this day of all the houſe of Joſeph, to go down to meet my lord the king. 21. But Abiſhai the ſon of Zeruiah anſwered and ſaid, [s] Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, becauſe he curſed the LORD's anointed? 22. And David ſaid, [t] What have I to do with you, ye ſons of Zeruiah, that ye ſhould this day be ‡ adverſaries unto me? ſhall there any man be put to death this day in Iſrael? for do not I know, that I *am* this day king over Iſrael? 23. Therefore the king ſaid unto Shimei, [u] Thou ſhalt not die: And the king ſware unto him.

[n] Chap. xvi. 5.
[o] Job ii. 4. Mat. v. 25.
[p] Chap. xvi. 1. Ver. 26.
† Heb. Good in his eyes.
[q] Chap. xvi. 5.
[r] Pſ. lxxviii. 34—37.
[s] Exod. xxi. 17. & xxii. 28.
[t] Chap. xvi. 10.
‡ Heb. Satan. Mat. xvi. 23.
[u] 1 Kings ii. 9.

v. 16—23. David, now happily returning to be reinſtated in his throne, paſſes the Jordan. There, the firſt to welcome his return, he meets two men, whoſe provocations were moſt likely to endanger their excluſion from the act of indemnity.

1. Ziba appears with a great retinue, whoſe lying tongue would now be ſoon detected, and therefore he would engage the king's favour before-hand.

2. Shimei comes with a band of Benjamites, among the men of Judah, and falls down on his face before the king, as ſoon as he lands, imploring his pardon, and confeſſing the vileneſs of his conduct, and his repentance of it; as a teſtimony of which, he is come the firſt of the houſe of Iſrael, and with his men, either his ſoldiers or his tenants, to profeſs his allegiance, and thereby to ſet others an example, whilſt the king's clemency extended to him would remove the fears of thoſe who might be diſcouraged from returning to their duty. Abiſhai, fired with indignation at his traiterous conduct, moves for immediate execution; but David wiſely rejects the motion with diſpleaſure, as if the advice of an adverſary: that day of triumph, when his kingdom was eſtabliſhed, muſt not be ſtained with blood; his royal clemency inclined him to pardon, and his intereſt engaged him to it. Acts of ſeverity might have exaſperated thoſe whoſe very fear would drive them into a new rebellion; therefore, with an oath, the king confirms Shimei's pardon. *Note*, (1.) Clemency is one of the nobleſt qualities of a prince. (2.) When rebel ſinners appear at the feet of Divine Mercy, though Satan ſtand to accuſe them, there ſhall be no condemnation.

24. ¶ And Mephiboſheth the ſon of Saul came down to meet the king: and [x] had neither dreſſed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor waſhed his clothes, from the day the king departed, until the day he came *again* in peace. 25. And it came to paſs when he was come to Jeruſalem to meet the king, that the king ſaid unto him, Wherefore wenteſt not thou with me, Mephiboſheth? 26. And he anſwered, My lord, O king, my ſervant deceived me; for thy ſervant ſaid, I will ſaddle me an aſs, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king, becauſe thy ſervant *is* lame. 27. And [y] he hath ſlandered thy ſervant unto my lord the king; but [z] my lord the king *is* as an angel of God: do therefore *what is* good in thine eyes. 28. For all *of* my father's houſe were but dead men before my lord the king: yet [a] didſt thou ſet thy ſervant among them that did eat at thine own table: [b] what right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king? 29. And the king ſaid unto him, Why ſpeakeſt thou any more of thy matters? I have ſaid, [c] Thou and Ziba divide the land. 30. And Mephiboſheth ſaid unto the king, Yea, let him take all, foraſmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own houſe.

[x] Rom. xii. 15. Heb. xiii. 3.
[y] Chap. xvi. 3. Pſ. xv. 3.
[z] Chap. xiv. 17, 20.
[a] Chap. ix. 13.
[b] Gen. xxxii. 10. Luke xvii. 10.
[c] Deut. xix. 19. Pſal. lxxxii. 2. & ci. 5.

v. 24—30. David now enters Jeruſalem in triumph, and there Mephiboſheth comes to congratulate him, who, during the king's exile, had ſpent his time in mourning, neglecting his perſon, and neither trimming nor dreſſing himſelf for ſo long a time. David, who, from Ziba's miſrepreſentation, ſuſpected Mephiboſheth not only of great ingratitude but of baſe deſigns, is ſurpriſed, in anſwer to his enquiry, why he had not followed him, to find how blameleſs he was, and how vilely he had been impoſed upon; yet Mephiboſheth is ſo ſenſible of David's goodneſs, in his paſt favours towards him, and ſo rejoiced in his preſent return, that he preſumes not to controvert the royal grant to Ziba, but refers the matter wholly to the king's wiſdom. David hereupon ſettles the eſtate on the former footing; not puniſhing Ziba as he deſerved, becauſe that was a day of mercy, or in return for the real ſervice done him, though with ſo wicked a purpoſe; and thus Mephiboſheth is again reinſtated in his inheritance. *Note*, (1.) In times of public diſtreſs we are called to weeping and mourning. (2.) Wicked ſervants do their maſters unutterable injuries. (3.) A good man ſits looſe to his own intereſt, compared with the intereſts of God's church and people.

31. ¶ And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. 32. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, *even* fourſcore years old, and [d] he had provided the king of ſuſtenance while he lay at Mahanaim: for he *was* a very great man. 33. And the king ſaid unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and [e] I will feed thee with me in Jeruſalem. 34. And Barzillai ſaid unto the king, † How [f] long have I to live, that I ſhould go up with the king unto Jeruſalem? 35. [g] I *am* this day fourſcore years old: *and* [h] can I diſcern between good and evil? can thy ſervant taſte what I eat, or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of ſinging-men and ſinging-women? wherefore then ſhould thy ſervant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? 36. Thy ſervant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and [i] why ſhould the king recompenſe it me with ſuch a reward? 37. Let thy ſervant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, *and be buried* by the grave of my father, and of my mother: but behold thy ſervant Chimham, let him go over with my lord the king, and [k] do to him what ſhall ſeem good unto thee. 38. And the king anſwered, Chimham ſhall go over with me, and I will do to him that which ſhall ſeem good unto thee: and whatſoever thou ſhalt ‡ require of me, *that* will I do for thee. 39. And all the people went over Jordan: and when the king was come over, the king kiſſed Barzillai, and bleſſed him; and he returned unto his own place.

[d] Chap. xvii. 27.
[e] Luke xxii. 28, 30.
† Heb. How many are the days of the years of my life?
[f] Pſ. xxxix. 5.
[g] Pſ. xc. 10, 12.
[h] Eccleſ. xii. 1.
[i] Mat. xxv. 37.
[k] 1 Kings ii. 7.
‡ Heb. Chooſe. Jer. xli. 17.

v. 31—39. The aged and good Barzillai, after all the kindneſſes ſhewed to the king at Mahanaim, comes to pay his laſt reſpects to him, and accompany him as far as Jordan in his return.

1. David had been greatly indebted to him during his exile; for being a man of vaſt eſtate, and generous as he was great, he had liberally miniſtered to the wants of the king and his ſervants, during their encampment at Mahanaim. *Note*, Riches are then truly bleſſings when poſſeſſed by men of generous minds, and liberally miniſtered to the ſupport of oppreſſed innocence, and the deſerving indigent.

2. David, ſenſible of his kindneſs, reſolves now to make him ample amends, invites him with him to Jeruſalem, with the kindeſt aſſurances that he ſhould want no comfort which his palace could afford, and be a conſtant and welcome gueſt at his table. *Note*, A grateful heart is happy to have it in his power to recompenſe his kind friends.

3. Barzillai profeſſes the deepeſt acknowledgments for the king's generous offer; a recompenſe ſo far exceeding his poor ſervices: but, ſinking now under age and infirmities, begs the king to excuſe his not accepting the kind invitation; he ſhould be but a uſeleſs burden on the king; the time for reliſhing the delights of a court with him was paſt; at fourſcore, dainties had loſt their flavour, and the ſongs of melody were no longer enchanting: it became him now not to ſet out in life, but prepare for death, and to be gathered to the ſepulchre of his fathers. But not to ſlight the king's favours, if he chuſes that his ſon Chimham ſhall attend his majeſty to court, he will commend him to his regard. *Note*, (1.) Noble minds count all they do to ſerve their friends but little. (2.) In the day

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when the ſon of David ſhall appear in his kingdom, his ſaints will be filled with wonder at the ſurpaſſing recompenſe beſtowed on their worthleſs ſervices. (3.) It is time for the aged to have done with courts, and the delights of ſenſe; they who are ſo near the grave, have but one proper buſineſs, to retire and provide for it. (4.) The concerts of a court, and the elegancies of a king's table, may be perfectly conſiſtent with the trueſt piety of heart.

4. David embraces the propoſal gladly, and aſſures his aged friend, that he can aſk nothing he will not do for him; and with a kiſs of affection diſmiſſes him with his bleſſing, thanking him for paſt kindneſs, and praying that God would be with him. On which the good Barzillai returns to his happy retirement at Rogelim.

40. Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and alſo half the people of Iſrael. 41. ¶ And behold, all the men of Iſrael came to the king, and ſaid unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah, ſtolen thee away, and have brought the king and his houſhold, and all David's men with him over Jordan? 42. And all the men of Judah anſwered the men of Iſrael, Becauſe the king *is* near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's *coſt?* or hath he given us any gift? 43. And the men of Iſrael anſwered the men of Judah, and ſaid, We have ten parts in the king, and we have alſo more *right* in David than ye: why then did ye † deſpiſe us that our advice ſhould not be firſt had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were ‡ fiercer than the words of the men of Iſrael.

† Heb. Diſeſteem, or ſet us at nought. Judg. xii. 1. Prov. xiii. 10.
‡ Heb. Harder. Acts xv. 39.

v. 40—43. David now is peacefully advancing to take poſſeſſion of his kingdom, when an unexpected incident interrupts and damps his comfort.

1. The men of Judah and part of the men of Iſrael were advanced to Gilgal, when the reſt of the tribes met them returning, and think themſelves ſlighted; and jealous withal, that they intended to ingroſs the king's favour, they angrily objected to their conduct. *Note*, Only from pride cometh contention.

2. The men of Judah reply with warmth to the charge, that as the king was near of kin to them, and his home in their tribe, they were eſpecially bound to conduct him: and far from the inſinuation of ſelf-ſeeking, they had neither eaten at the king's coſt, nor received any preſent from him. *Note*, True patriots deteſt a mercenary ſpirit.

3. The men of Iſrael reply to this vindication, that they had ten parts in the king, Simeon being reckoned with Judah; and as being more numerous, had more right to be conſulted, and looked upon it as a deſigned contempt thus to be neglected. The men of Judah exaſperated, reply, and one high word brought on another; but the men of Judah were fierceſt, and the end of their hot diſpute proved a new rebellion. *Note*, (1.) Even when we are in the right, we ſhould rather yield than contend. (2.) Leave off meddling betimes, leaſt miſchief enſue. (3.) They who are in a paſſion, are ſure to ſpeak wrong, even though they have truth on their ſide.

CHAP. XX.

How ſoon do the clouds return after the rain! No ſooner is one of David's troubles over, but another ariſes. 1. *Before he reaches Jeruſalem, a new rebellion is raiſed by Sheba*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *When he comes thither, he condemns his concubines to perpetual impriſonment*, ver. 3. 3. *Amaſa is ſent to raiſe an army, but is too ſlow in his motions*, ver. 4—6. 4. *Joab barbarouſly murders him*, ver. 7—13. 5. *Sheba's rebellion is cruſhed*, ver. 14—21. *A ſhort account is given of David's great officers*, ver. 23—26.

1. AND there happened to be there [a] a man of Belial, whoſe name *was* Sheba the ſon of Bichri, a Benjamite, and [b] he blew a trumpet, and ſaid, [c] We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the ſon of Jeſſe: every man to his tents, O Iſrael. 2. So [d] every man of Iſrael went up from after David, *and* followed Sheba the ſon of Bichri: but [e] the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jeruſalem. 3. ¶ And David came to his houſe at Jeruſalem, and the king took [f] the ten women *his* concubines, whom he had left to keep the houſe, and put them in † ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them: ſo they were ſhut up unto the day of their death, ‡ living in widowhood.

[a] Deut. xiii. 13.
[b] Chap. xii. 10. Pſal. xxxiv. 19.
[c] 1 Kings xii. 16.
[d] Chap. xix. 41. Prov. xvii. 14.
[e] John vi. 66, 68.
[f] Chap. xvi. 22.
† Heb. A houſe of ward. Gen. xl. 3.
‡ Heb. In widowhood of life.

v. 1—3. When men's ſpirits are exaſperated in popular tumults, ſome crafty and ambitious head fails not to improve the circumſtances for his own advancement.

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1. Sheba the ſon of Bichri, a Benjamite, a man of Belial, thinking he might now ſtep into the throne, widens the breach into rebellion. Since Judah ſeemed to engroſs the king, he adviſes the men of Iſrael to renounce the ten parts they claimed, and to have no part in David. The trumpet is blown, and Sheba now is their leader. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not promiſe ourſelves long peace here below. Whilſt the old enmity reigns in the heart of the ſinner, new ſtorms will ariſe. (2.) Fooliſh quarrels have dangerous conſequences. (3.) We are apt to be ſwinging to extremes; thoſe who ſeemed the moſt zealous friends, turn the bittereſt enemies.

2. David proceeds to Jeruſalem, and his firſt care is to ſhut up his concubines, whom Abſalom hath defiled: as a puniſhment for their eaſy compliance, and as by their unhappy caſe unfit for the royal bed, they are condemned to perpetual privacy and widowhood. *Note*, Obſcure retirement is the fitteſt place for thoſe who have made themſelves publicly ſcandalous.

4. ¶ Then ſaid the king to [g] Amaſa, Aſſemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here preſent. 5. So Amaſa went to aſſemble *the men of* Judah; but he tarried longer than the ſet time which he had appointed him. 6. And David ſaid to Abiſhai, Now ſhall Sheba the ſon of Bichri do us more harm than *did* Abſalom: take thou thy lord's ſervants and purſue after him, leſt he get him fenced cities, and eſcape us. 7. And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jeruſalem, to purſue after Sheba the ſon of Bichri. 8. When they *were* at the great ſtone which *is* in Gibeon, Amaſa went before them: and Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle *with* a ſword faſtened upon his loins in the ſheath thereof, and as he went forth, it fell out. 9. And Joab ſaid to Amaſa, *Art* thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amaſa by the beard with the right hand [h] to kiſs him. 10. But Amaſa took no heed to the ſword that *was* in Joab's hand: ſo he ſmote him therewith [i] in the fifth *rib*, and ſhed out his bowels to the ground, and † ſtruck him not again, and he died: ſo Joab and Abiſhai his brother purſued after Sheba the ſon of Bichri. 11. And one of Joab's men ſtood by him, and ſaid, [k] He that favoureth Joab, and he that *is* for David, *let him go* after Joab. 12. And Amaſa wallowed in blood in the midſt of the highway: and when the man ſaw that all the people ſtood ſtill, he removed Amaſa out of the highway into the field, and caſt a cloth upon him, when he ſaw that every one that came by him, ſtood ſtill. 13. When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to purſue after Sheba the ſon of Bichri.

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[g] Chap. xix. 13. Pſal. cxviii. 9.
[h] Mat. xxvi. 49.
[i] Chap. ii. 23.
† Heb. Doubled not his ſtroke.
[k] Deut. xx. 5.

v. 4—13. David is in haſte to cruſh this rebellion in the bud, and therefore diſpatches Amaſa, advanced now in Joab's ſtead, to raiſe the men of Judah, and purſue after Sheba.

1. Amaſa is either tardy in his proceedings, or the people unwilling to follow the general, who had been ſo lately in rebellion, or perhaps the three days were not ſufficient to collect the needful forces. David expreſſes his great uneaſineſs hereupon, leaſt this ſhould be a worſe affair than the former; and therefore reſolved to diſgrace Joab for what he did to Abſalom, he diſpatches Abiſhai with the guards, in order to give the rebel no time to ſtrengthen himſelf; and Joab, though without a commiſſion, accompanies his brother. *Note*, (1.) Delays are dangerous. (2.) They who depend upon the favour of kings, ſtand daily in jeopardy of diſgrace; but they who truſt on the King of kings, ſhall know no ſhame.

2. At Gibeon, the rendezvous, Amaſa meets the forces under Abiſhai, and there Joab plots againſt and murders him. As he approached Amaſa, by way of civility, he contrived to hang his ſword ſo as to fall out of its ſcabbard, as it were accidentally, juſt as he ſtooped to ſalute him; and taking him by the beard with his right hand, Amaſa heeded not the ſword he had taken up in his left, till too late he felt it in his body. Thus fell the brave general at the head of his troops, baſely aſſaſſinated out of jealouſy and pride, by the bloody ſon of Zeruiah, hardened in murders, contemning all laws human and divine; and ſo his revenge was gratified, hazarding the ſafety of king and country. *Note*, (1.) Impunity hardens and emboldens the ſinner. (2.) They who are too great for human laws, though they eſcape puniſhment below, will find an avenging God.

3. Joab now takes the command of the forces, and leads them againſt Sheba; hoping, no doubt, the ſucceſs of the enterprize would make ſome atonement for his crime, and get

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him off with impunity. He appoints a man to ſtand by the corpſe, and bid the people follow Joab; and when they ſtopped at the place, he removed the body, and covered it with a cloth, and then all the people followed Joab, their old and ſucceſsful general, and probably promiſed themſelves better ſpeed under his guidance, than under Amaſa, the general of the late rebellion, and unſucceſsful withal. *Note*, Blood may be covered, but it hath a voice that will cry againſt the murderer, though it be never ſo concealed.

14. ¶ And he went through all the tribes of Iſrael unto Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the Berites, and they were gathered together, and went alſo after him. 15. And they came and beſieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they caſt up a bank againſt the city, and it ſtood in the trench: and all the people that *were* with Joab † battered the wall, to throw it down. 16. ¶ Then cried [l] a wiſe woman out of the city, Hear, hear, ſay, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither that I may ſpeak with thee. 17. And when he was come near unto her, the woman ſaid, *Art* thou Joab? And he anſwered, I *am he*. Then ſhe ſaid unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he anſwered, I do hear. 18. Then ſhe ſpake, ſaying, They ‡ were wont to ſpeak in old time, ſaying, They ſhall ſurely aſk *counſel* at Abel: and ſo they ended *the matter*. 19. ‖ *I am one of them that are* peaceable *and* faithful in Iſrael: thou ſeekeſt to deſtroy a city, and a mother in Iſrael: [m] why wilt thou ſwallow up the inheritance of the LORD? 20. And Joab anſwered and ſaid, Far be it, far be it from me, that I ſhould ſwallow up or deſtroy. 21. The matter *is* not ſo: but a man of mount Ephraim (Sheba the ſon of Bichri by name) hath lift up his hand againſt the king, *even* againſt David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman ſaid unto Joab, Behold, his head ſhall be thrown to thee over the wall. 22. Then the woman went unto all the people [n] in her wiſdom, and they cut off the head of Sheba the ſon of Bichri, and caſt *it* out to Joab: and he blew a trumpet, and they § retired from the city, every man to his tent: and Joab returned to Jeruſalem unto the king.

† Heb. Marred, to throw down.
[l] Eccleſ. ix. 14, 18.
‡ Or, They ſpake in the beginning of the ſiege, ſaying, they will aſk peace of Abel, and ſo make an end. Deut. xx. 10.
‖ She perſonifies the city.
[m] Gen. xviii. 23.
[n] Eccleſ. ix. 18.
§ Heb. Were ſcattered.

v. 14—22. The men of Iſrael ſeem to have quickly repented of their choice of Sheba, and to have deſerted him. His own countrymen of Beeroth, in Benjamin, cleaved to him, and after having in vain attempted to raiſe the country in his favour, he is forced to take refuge in a fortified city, called Abel-Beth-maacah, in the north, whither Joab and Abiſhai quickly follow him.

1. Joab beſieges the city, fills the ditch, batters the wall, and is ready to give a general aſſault. *Note*, (1.) One wicked man often involves many in his ruin. (2.) Every ſtrong-hold of ſin in the heart, whither our traitor luſts retire, muſt be thus battered down by Almighty grace.

2. A wiſe woman ſaves the city from ruin by her interpoſition. (1.) She aſks from the wall, and obtains a perſonal conference with Joab. (2.) She expoſtulates with him upon the evil of deſtroying a city ſo famed for wiſdom, ſo great and populous, a mother in Iſrael, that deſired nothing but peace, and was a part of the Lord's inheritance that ſhould be preſerved unhurt; and as *ver.* 18. may be rendered, ye ſhall ſurely aſk *peace* at Abel, propoſe it, and ſo the matter had been ended, but this Joab had neglected. (3.) Joab declares his intentions were as peaceable as her's, that he abhorred the thoughts of deſtroying them, but they muſt blame their own obſtinacy in ſupporting Sheba; deliver him up, and the ſiege ſhall be raiſed. (4.) This ſhe promiſes to do, and for that purpoſe aſſembles the elders of the city; they embrace the propoſal, and Sheba's head is cut off, and caſt over the wall to Joab, who immediately raiſes the ſiege, and returns to Jeruſalem. *Note*, (1.) Women's wits are often keeneſt. (2.) They who are peaceable in the land, ſurely ought not to be diſturbed. (3.) Sin is the traitor; whilſt that is wilfully harboured, peace with God is impoſſible. (4.) God hath no pleaſure in our deſtruction; if we by faith yield up our rebel luſts to him, he will ſave us from the ruin we ſhould otherwiſe provoke.

23. ¶ Now [o] Joab *was* over all the hoſt of Iſrael: and Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites, and over the Pelethites: 24. And [p] Adoram *was* over the tribute: and Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Ahilud *was* recorder: 25. And Sheva *was* ſcribe: and Zadok and Abiathar *were* prieſts: 26. And Ira alſo the Jarite was a chief ruler about David.

[o] Chap. viii. 16.
[p] 1 Kings iv. 6. & xii. 18.

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v. 23—26. We have here an account of David's officers. Joab, who had by cruſhing this rebellion done ſo ſeaſonable a ſervice, and was ſo beloved by the ſoldiers, is too great to be diſplaced from his uſurped office, or to be puniſhed as he deſerved for his crimes now, though judgment at laſt overtook him. The other officers are the ſame as before, *chap.* viii. 16. only Adoram was over the tribute, which was levied from the conquered nations, or raiſed for the ſupport of the ſtate at home.

CHAP. XXI.

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We have here, 1. *The Gibeonites revenged,* (1.) *By a famine in the land,* ver. 1. 2. *By the putting of ſeven of Saul's poſterity to death,* ver. 2—9. *and the care that was taken of their dead bodies, and of the bones of Saul,* ver. 10—14. (2.) *The giants of the Philiſtines ſlain in ſeveral battles,* ver. 15—22.

1. THEN [a] there was a famine in the days of David, three years, year after year; and David † [b] enquired of the LORD. And the LORD anſwered, *It is* for Saul, and for *his* bloody houſe, [c] becauſe he ſlew the Gibeonites. 2. And the king called the Gibeonites, and ſaid unto them, (now the Gibeonites *were* not of the children of Iſrael, but of the remnant of the Amorites, and [d] the children of Iſrael had ſworn unto them: and Saul ſought to ſlay them, [e] in his zeal to the children of Iſrael and Judah.) 3. Wherefore David ſaid unto the Gibeonites, What ſhall I do for you? and wherewith ſhall I make the atonement, that ye may bleſs the inheritance of the LORD? 4. And the Gibeonites ſaid unto him, We will have [f] no ſilver nor gold of Saul, nor of his houſe, neither for us ſhalt thou kill any man in Iſrael. And he ſaid, What you ſhall ſay, *that* will I do for you. 5. And they anſwered the king, The man that conſumed us, and [g] that deviſed againſt us, *that* we ſhould be deſtroyed from remaining in any of the coaſts of Iſrael: 6. [h] Let ſeven men of his ſons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, [i] *whom* the LORD did chooſe. And the king ſaid, I will give *them*. 7. But the king ſpared Mephiboſheth the ſon of Jonathan, the ſon of Saul, becauſe of [k] the LORD's oath that *was* between them, between David and Jonathan the ſon of Saul. 8. But the king took [l] the two ſons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom ſhe bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephiboſheth, and the five ſons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom ſhe ‡ brought up for Adriel the ſon of Barzillai the Meholathite. 9. And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and [m] they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell *all* ſeven together, and were put to death in the days of harveſt, in the firſt *days*, in the beginning of barley-harveſt.

[a] Lev. xxvi. 19, 20.
† Heb. Sought the face of, &c. Num. xxvii. 21.
[b] Pſal. l. 15.
[c] Gen. iv. 10. Rev. vi. 10.
[d] Joſh. ix. 15.
[e] Rom. x. 2.
[f] Num. xxxv. 31—33. Eſth. ix. 16.
[g] Eſth. ix. 24. Prov. iii. 29. Mat. vii. 2.
[h] Eſth. ix. 10.
[i] 1 Sam. x. 24.
[k] Ibid. xviii. 3. & xx. 8. & xxiv. 21.
[l] Exod. xx. 5.
‡ Heb. Bare to Adriel.
[m] Prov. xxi. 3.

v. 1—9. The time of this famine is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been in the beginning of David's reign; but others, with greater probability, conjecture it happened towards the end of it, and that it ſtands in its order here.

1. The cauſe of this famine was the ſin of Saul. In pretended zeal for Iſrael, he wanted to root out the Gibeonites, who had fraudulently obtained peace of Joſhua: *See Joſh.* ix. Three years the famine had been, before David enquired of the Lord. At laſt, the continuance of it awakens his ſollicitude to examine into the cauſe, and God informs him, *ver.* 1. *Note*, (1.) Sin ſoon makes a fruitful land barren. (2.) God's judgments ſhould bring us to our knees, that we may find why he contendeth with us. (3.) Old ſins are not forgotten of God: though not immediately viſited, the time of recompenſe will come.

2. The methods taken to make the Gibeonites ſatisfaction, and to turn away wrath from the land. David, probably by Divine direction, referred the matter to the injured party, ready to do whatever they required, that they might bleſs the inheritance of the Lord. They aſked no money in ſatisfaction for damages, nor required other blood for the blood which was ſhed, than that of Saul's houſe, who had oppreſſed them. If ſeven of his ſons be given as a ſacrifice to juſtice, not to private revenge, they will hang them up before the Lord, that his wrath againſt the land may ceaſe. *Note*, (1.) Though the poor oppreſſed may be without power to relieve themſelves, God will plead their injured cauſe. (2.) Satisfaction muſt be made them before we can hope for a bleſſing from God. (3.) The ſin of parents often entails miſery on their poſterity. (4.) No execution muſt be purſued under the ſpirit of private revenge; for then though the ſentence be juſt on the offender, it would be murder in the proſecutor.

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3. David complies with their requeſt, and gives them two ſons, which Saul had by a concubine, Rizpah, and five grandſons, the children of Merab; whom after her death, Michal brought up for Adriel, her ſiſter's huſband, ſparing Mephiboſheth the ſon of Jonathan, for his ſake. Theſe the Gibeonites hanged together, in Gibeah of Saul, the place where he uſed to reſide, to expiate the blood he and his bloody houſe had ſhed. They fell together in the beginning of the harveſt, that the Lord might be intreated for the fruits of the earth, and remove the famine from the land. *Note*, (1.) They who maliciouſly deſign the ruin of others, often bring themſelves and families into the pit they have digged. (2.) A murderer, tho' of the blood royal, ought not to be ſpared. (3.) Severe executions for the public good, are ſometimes a needful ſeverity.

10. ¶ And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took ſackcloth, and ſpread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harveſt, [s] until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and ſuffered neither the birds of the air to reſt on them by day, nor the beaſts of the field by night. 11. And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul had done. 12. And David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his ſon, from the men of Jabeſh-gilead, [t] which had ſtolen them from the ſtreet of Bethſhan, where the Philiſtines had hanged them, when the Philiſtines had ſlain Saul in Gilboa. 13. And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his ſon; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. 14. And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his ſon buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the ſepulchre of Kiſh his father: and they performed all that the king commanded; and [u] after that God was intreated for the land.

[s] Deut. xxi. 23.
[t] 1 Sam. xxxi. 10, 12.
[u] Joſh. vii. 26. Chap. xxiv. 25. Jonah i. 15.

v. 10—14. The bodies, contrary to the precept, *Deut.* xxi. 23. were left hanging on the tree. The caſe was extraordinary, and as it was a national crime, thus to violate the ſolemn oath made to the Gibeonites, it was no doubt, by Divine command enjoined for the expiation of it, till the long withheld rain ſhould be ſent.

1. Rizpah in this bitter affliction, with anguiſh ſuch as tender mothers feel, ſpreads a tent of ſackcloth on the rock, near the place, to keep the bodies from being devoured by birds or beaſts, till the rain fell, and the bodies might be taken down and buried. *Note*, (1.) None know what ſorrows are in ſtore for them. (2.) To indulge our anguiſh, by taking pains to revive the memory of our loſs, is fooliſhly and uſeleſsly to turn ſelf-tormentors.

2. Rizpah's uncommon tenderneſs is told David, and far from being diſpleaſed at the deed, no ſooner doth God, by the gift of rain, manifeſt the removal of his judgment, than David honourably inters their bones, with thoſe of Saul and Jonathan, which he fetched from under the oak in Jabeſh-gilead, where they had been obſcurely buried, and laid them together in the ſepulchre of Kiſh their anceſtor. *Note*, Thus was the ſon of God crucified for ſins not his own, ſuffering for the curſe which lay upon our ſinful ſouls; and having by an ignominious death expiated our guilt, the wrath of God was appeaſed, and he was taken down from the tree.

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15. ¶ Moreover the Philiſtines had yet war again with Iſrael, and David went down, and his ſervants with him, and fought againſt the Philiſtines; and David waxed faint. 16. And Iſhbi-benob, which *was* of the ſons of † the giant, (the weight of whoſe ‡ ſpear *weighed* three hundred *ſhekels* of braſs in weight) he being girded with a new *ſword*, thought to have ſlain David. 17. But Abiſhai the ſon of Zeruiah [x] ſuccoured him, and ſmote the Philiſtine, and killed him. Then the men of David ſware unto him, ſaying, [y] Thou ſhalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the ‖ light of Iſrael. 18. And it came to paſs after this, that there was again a battle with the Philiſtines at [z] Gob; then Sibbechai the Huſhathite ſlew Saph, which *was* of the ſons of the giant. 19. And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philiſtines, where Elhanan the ſon of Jaare-oregim a Bethlehemite, ſlew *the brother of* Goliath the Gittite, the ſtaff of whoſe ſpear *was* like a weaver's beam. 20. And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of *great* ſtature, that had on every hand ſix fingers, and on every foot ſix toes, four and twenty in number; and he alſo was born to the giant. 21. And when he [a] defied Iſrael, Jonathan the ſon of Shimea the brother of David ſlew him. 22. Theſe four were born to † the giant in Gath, and [b] fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his ſervants.

† Or Rapha.
‡ Heb. Staff.
[x] Gen. xxii. 14. Pſal. xlvi. 1.
[y] Chap. xviii. 3.
‖ Heb. Lamp, or candle. 1 Kings xi. 36. Pſal. cxxxii. 17.
[z] 1 Kings xx. 4, &c.
[a] 1 Sam. xvii. 10.
† Or Rapha.

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[b] Eccleſ. ix. 11. Jer. ix. 23. 1 Cor. i. 27. Rom. viii. 31.

v. 15—22. The Philiſtines, though ſubdued for a ſeaſon, yet now towards the latter end of David's reign attempt to ſhake off their yoke, and recover their liberty; emboldened in the attempt by thoſe giants, whoſe fall is here recorded.

1. David, though old, would himſelf lead his troops to battle; being ſingled out by Iſhbi-benob the giant, and not now, as in the days of youth and vigour, able to weild the ſhield and ſpear, he is in imminent danger of being ſlain, when Abiſhai bravely ſuccours him, and enables him to ſlay the giant, or ſmote him himſelf; the text will bear either ſenſe. Struck with the danger their king had eſcaped, the great officers and people about David reſolve he ſhall no more expoſe a life ſo valuable, leaſt, by any accident, this light of Iſrael ſhould be quenched. *Note*, (1.) Age creeps upon us ſo ſilently, that we do not perceive it, till experience proves us unequal to our former undertakings. (2.) The enemies of God's people, confident of their power, think nothing can reſiſt them; but they learn, to their coſt, that it is in vain to fight againſt God. (3.) When we are ready to faint in our ſpiritual conflicts, Jeſus, our captain, is near to ſuccour us, and through his help, we ſhall come off conquerors.

2. Three other battles ſoon followed. The Philiſtines making a deſperate puſh to recover their loſſes, but in each they are defeated, and the mighty warriors who led them ſlain. Saph, by Sibbechai; the brother of Goliath, by Elhanan; and the laſt prodigy of a man, with ſix fingers on each hand, and ſix toes on each foot, and whoſe inſolence was as great as his ſtrength, by Jonathan, David's nephew: thus the race of the ſons of Anak was rooted out, by David and his ſervants. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt we are in this world, we muſt expect continual conflicts with the enemies of our ſouls. (2.) The giantlike corruptions of our heart ſhall fall before the victorious grace of Jeſus; and at laſt in death theſe ſons of Anak will be for ever deſtroyed.

CHAP. XXII.

This chapter is a pſalm of praiſe, which we find afterwards inſerted among David's pſalms, N°. 18. with ſome little variation. Here is, 1. *The title of the pſalm,* ver. 1. 2. *The pſalm itſelf: In which* (1.) *He gives glory to God.* (2.) *He takes comfort in him, and finds matter for both.* 1. *In the experiences he had had of God's former mercies.* 2. *In the expectations he had of his future favours.*

1. AND David ſpake unto the LORD the words of [a] this ſong, in the day *that* [b] the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul.

[a] Exod. xv. 1.
[b] Pſal. xxxix. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 18.

v. 1. Concerning the time when this pſalm was compoſed, commentators differ; ſome think it was in the decline of life, when all his paſt mercies, from firſt to laſt, awakened up his gratitude, and tuned his harp to praiſe: others, that it was compoſed by him early in life, on his firſt deliverances from Saul, and ſung on experience of every freſh deliverance from his other enemies, which may account for the variations of it, from *Pſal.* xviii. The matter of it is exultation in the confidence of God's protection, and praiſe for the mercies he had already received. Saul had hated and perſecuted him, and numerous enemies beſet him, but out of all their hands the Lord had delivered him. *Note*, (1.) They whom God calls to his kingdom, muſt expect the world's enmity and oppoſition. (2.) The deliverance of God's people from the power of their enemies, is promiſed as the object of their faith, and will be fulfilled as matter for their praiſe. (3.) Praiſe is a welcome tribute, and as acceptable to God, as it is comfortable to ourſelves.

2. And he ſaid, [c] The LORD *is* [d] my rock and my fortreſs, and [e] my deliverer, 3. The God of my rock, [f] in him will I truſt: *he is* [g] my ſhield, and [h] the horn of my ſalvation, my high tower, and my refuge, [i] my ſaviour; thou ſaveſt me from violence. 4. I will call on the LORD, *who is* worthy to be praiſed: [k] ſo ſhall I be ſaved from mine enemies. 5. When the † waves of death compaſſed me: the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. 6. [l] The ‡ ſorrows of hell compaſſed me about: [m] the ſnares of death prevented me. 7. In my diſtreſs [n] I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God, and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and [o] my cry *did enter* into his ears. 8. Then [p] the earth ſhook and trembled: [q] the foundations of heaven moved and ſhook becauſe he was wroth. 9. There went up a ſmoke out of his noſtrils, and [r] fire out of his mouth devoured:

[c] Pſal. xviii. 2, &c.
[d] Deut. xxxii. 4. Iſa. xxxii. 2.
[e] Pſal. iii. 8.
[f] Prov. xviii. 10.
[g] Gen. xv. 1.
[h] Luke i. 69.
[i] Mat. i. 21.
[k] Rom. x. 13.
† Or pangs.
[l] Pſal. cxvi. 3.
‡ Or cords.
[m] 1 Sam. xviii. 18.
[n] Acts xii. 5.
[o] Jonah ii. 2.
[p] Judg. v. 4. Acts iv. 31.
[q] Job xxvi. 11.
[r] Hebr. xii. 29.

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coals were kindled by it. 10. [s] He bowed the heavens alſo and came down: and darkneſs *was* under his feet. 11. And he rode upon [t] a cherub, and did fly: and he was ſeen upon the wings of the wind. 12. And [u] he made darkneſs pavilions round about him, dark waters, *and* thick clouds of the ſkies. 13. Through the brightneſs before him were coals of fire kindled. 14. The LORD [x] thundred from heaven, and the moſt High uttered his voice. 15. And he ſent out arrows, and ſcattered them; lightning, and diſcomfited them. 16. And the channels of the ſea appeared, the foundations of the world were diſcovered, at [y] the rebuking of the LORD, at the blaſt of the breath of his ‖ noſtrils. 17. [z] He ſent from above, he took me: he drew me out of [a] many waters. 18. He delivered me from my ſtrong enemy, *and* from them that hated me: for they were too ſtrong for me. 19. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my ſtay: 20. He brought me [b] forth alſo into a large place, he delivered me, becauſe he delighted in me. 21. The LORD rewarded me [c] according to my righteouſneſs: according to the cleanneſs of my hands hath he recompenſed me. 22. For [d] I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. 23. For [e] all his judgments *were* before me: and [f] *as for* his ſtatutes, I did not depart from them. 24. [g] I was alſo upright before him, and have kept myſelf from mine iniquity. 25. Therefore the LORD hath recompenſed me according to my righteouſneſs: according to my cleanneſs in his eye-ſight. 26. [h] With the merciful thou wilt ſhew thyſelf merciful, *and* with the upright man thou wilt ſhew thyſelf upright. 27. [i] With the pure thou wilt ſhew thyſelf pure, and [k] with the froward thou wilt ſhew thyſelf unſavory. 28. And [l] the afflicted people thou wilt ſave: but [m] thine eyes *are* upon the haughty, *that* thou mayſt bring *them* down. 29. For [n] thou *art* my lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkneſs. 30. For [o] by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall. 31. *As for* God, [p] his way *is* perfect; [q] the word of the LORD *is* tried: he *is* a buckler to all them that truſt in him. 32. For [r] who *is* God, ſave the LORD? and who *is* a rock, ſave our God? 33. God *is* my ſtrength *and* power: and he maketh my way perfect. 34. [s] He maketh my feet like hind's *feet*: and [t] ſetteth me upon my high places. 35. [u] He teacheth my hands to war; ſo that a bow of ſteel is broken by mine arms. 36. Thou haſt alſo given me [x] the ſhield of thy ſalvation: and thy gentleneſs hath § made me great. 37. Thou haſt enlarged my ſteps under me: ſo that my feet did not ſlip. 38. I have purſued mine enemies, and deſtroyed them: and turned not again until I had conſumed them. 39. And I have conſumed them, and wounded them, that they could not ariſe: yea, [y] they are fallen under my feet. 40. For thou haſt girded me with ſtrength to battle: them that roſe up againſt me, haſt thou ſubdued under me. 41. Thou haſt alſo given me [z] the necks of mine enemies, that I might deſtroy them that hate me. 42. They looked, but *there was* none to ſave: [a] *even* unto the LORD, but he anſwered them not. 43. [b] Then did I beat them as ſmall as the duſt of the earth, I did ſtamp them as the mire of the ſtreet, *and* did ſpread them abroad. 44. Thou alſo haſt delivered me from the ſtrivings of my people, thou haſt kept me *to be* [c] head of the heathen: a people *which* I knew not, ſhall ſerve me. 45. Strangers ſhall † ſubmit themſelves unto me, as ſoon as they hear, they ſhall be obedient to me. 46. Strangers ſhall fade away, and they ſhall be afraid out of their cloſe places. 47. The LORD liveth, and bleſſed *be* my rock: and exalted be the God of the rock of my ſalvation. 48. [d] It *is* God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me. 49. And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou alſo haſt lifted me up on high above them that roſe up againſt me: thou haſt delivered me from the violent man. 50. Therefore [e] I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will ſing praiſes unto thy name. 51. *He is* the tower of ſalvation for his king: and ſheweth mercy to [f] his anointed, unto David, and to [g] his ſeed for evermore.

[s] Pſal. cxliv. 5. Iſa. lxiv. 1.
[t] Gen. iii. 24.
[u] Pſal. xcvii. 2.
[x] Pſal. xxix. 3.
[y] Pſal. ix. 5.
‖ Or anger. Pſal. lxxiv. 1.
[z] Judg. v. 20. Pſal. ciii. 21. Heb. i. 14.
[a] Pſal. lxix. 2. Rev. xvii. 15.
[b] Pſal. cxviii. 5.
[c] Ibid. vii. 8.
[d] Ibid. cxix. 10, 11.
[e] Ibid. 120.
[f] Luke i. 6.
[g] 2 Kings xx. 3. Pſal. cxix. 7.
[h] Matt. v. 7.
[i] Ibid. 8.
[k] Lev. xxvi. 18, 21. Pſal. cxxv. 5.
[l] Ibid. xii. 5.
[m] Ibid. ci. 5. Prov. xxi. 4. Iſa. ii. 11.
[n] Pſal. cxix. 105. Prov. vi. 23.
[o] Phil. iv. 13.
[p] Deut. xxxii. 4.
[q] Pſal. xii. 6. & xix. 7.
[r] Deut. xxxii. 39.
[s] Hab. iii. 19.
[t] Deut. xxxii. 13. Iſa. xxxiii. 16.
[u] Pſal. cxliv. 1.
[x] Ibid. lxxxiv. 11. Eph. vi. 16.
§ Heb. Multiplied me.
[y] Mal. iv. 3.
[z] Gen. xlix. 8. Joſh. x. 24.
[a] 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. Prov. i. 28. Micah iii. 4.
[b] Dan. ii. 35. Mal. iv. 1.
[c] Pſal. ii. 8. Dan. vii. 14.
† Heb. Lie, i. e. Yield feigned obedience. Acts viii. 13. 18.
[d] Pſal. xciv. 1.
[e] Rom. xv. 9.
[f] Pſal. ii. 2.
[g] Jer. xxx. 9. Rom. i. 3.

v. 2—51. The Pſalmiſt opens this euchariſtic ſong,

1. With exulting profeſſions of confidence in God, *v.* 1—4. and with a variety of epithets deſcribes the glory and all-ſufficiency of God; the ſafety and ſecurity of thoſe who truſt in him, and the encouragement every faithful ſoul hath to call upon him, from the experience himſelf had, that he is a God who heareth prayer. He is a rock, ſtrong to defend and ſupport thoſe who cleave to him; a fortreſs, againſt which no power can prevail; a deliverer from every enemy; a ſhield, to ward off every fiery dart; a horn of ſalvation, to puſh our foes till they be conſumed; a high tower, where we are ſafe from evil; a refuge, where no avenging ſword can reach us; a Saviour, from whoſe arms none can pluck us; a lamp to guide, and a buckler to defend us: ſuch a God is no where to be found. He is one, and there is no other; his promiſes never fail, his power never abates, and his love never changes.

2. This God deſerves David's praiſes; and experience of his mercies awakens his thankfulneſs, *v.* 50. [1.] *In perils he had delivered him*, *v.* 3, 4, 5, 7, 18, &c. Though the dangers were great and threatning, *v.* 5, 6, 40, 41, 49, &c. and ſuch as he was utterly unable to cope with, *v.* 18. for he was at death's door; ſaw the ſhadows of night ſpreading over him, and was juſt ready to ſink under the floods of thoſe ungodly men's perſecutions, *v.* 5. yet when he cried importunately, *v.* 7. God heard, and wonderfully interpoſed; with haſte, *v.* 11. and in terrible majeſty arrayed, *v.* 8, 9, &c. like in its effects to the former immediate interpoſition of God, in the times of Samuel and Deborah, he drew him out of the deep waters of affliction, *v.* 17. and delivered him, becauſe he had a delight in him. *Note*, (1.) God's people are often reduced to the deepeſt diſtreſſes, in order to awaken their importunity, and to magnify God's power and love in their deliverances. (2.) The more we are beſet with trials, the more earneſtly let us call upon God. (3.) Thoſe whom God moſt delights in, have often the ſevereſt exerciſes of their faith and patience. (4.) Perſeverence in prayer will aſſuredly be crowned with deliverance from the power of evil. [2.] *To honour he had advanced him.* Though by profeſſion a ſhepherd, yet raiſed to be a mighty warrior, ſtrong to attack, ſwift to purſue, *v.* 34, 35, &c. his enemies were an unequal match; ſince God girded him with ſtrength, victories, ſpeedy as compleat, crowned his arms, *v.* 38, &c. and none was able to withſtand him, or dared to aſſiſt thoſe, whom he attacked. In conſequence of which ſucceſſes, he had reached the ſummit of glory, *v.* 34. obtained not only the kingdom of Iſrael, but greatly enlarged their border, *v.* 30, 37, &c. by ſubduing the neighbouring ſtates; the fame of his victories had brought the remoter nations to court his favour, and make their ſubmiſſions to him, *v.* 44, 45, &c. *Note*, (1.) Whatever ſtrength, ſucceſs, or honour we are bleſſed with, let God have the glory of it. (2.) They who here below were moſt deſpicable, and counted the off-ſcouring of all things, when God ſhall bring them to his kingdom, ſhall appear great indeed, anointed to be kings unto God for ever and ever.

3. David's own integrity and ſimplicity before God, gave him great conſolation on the review, *v.* 21—25. Though ſome dark ſpots had brightened his fair character, yet in every matter, except that of Uriah, he had approved himſelf a man after God's own heart, attentive to his word, *v.* 23. averſe to the ways of ſin, *v.* 22. and, ſave in one unhappy fall, *keeping himſelf from his own iniquity*; and though it was of God's grace that he was enabled thus to walk, yet he regards the mercies he had received as a recompenſe, not indeed of debt, but of promiſe. *Note*, (1.) Every man hath his own iniquity, not only his general apoſtate nature, but his particularly beſetting ſin, which needs peculiar watchfulneſs. (2.) The teſtimony of a good conſcience is a bleſſed ground of rejoicing. (3.) Though we can deſerve nothing at God's hand, yet as he hath promiſed to reward his own Spirit's work in our heart, we may confidently expect the recompenſe, yet not as of debt but of grace.

4. He encourages others and himſelf, from his own paſt experience, to truſt ſtill in God, for his mercy endureth for ever. The merciful man, who like David ſpared his enemy, the upright, and the pure in heart, though for a ſeaſon an afflicted people, yet God will ſave them, ſhew them the mercy they have ſhewn, and, as faithful to his promiſes, manifeſt to them his uprightneſs. But the proud, and thoſe who walk in the frowardneſs of their heart, vengeance will overtake them to the uttermoſt, *v.* 26, 28. Paſt mercies encourage David to hope for future ſucceſs: nations farther and wider ſhall bow down to him; and not only God's mercy follow him all his days, but his ſeed for evermore; particularly that Meſſiah, the glorious hope of Iſrael, who ſhould deſcend from him; who was then, and is for ever, the hope and joy of all God's faithful people.

CHAP. XXIII.

We have here an account, 1. *Of ſome of the laſt words of David,* ver. 1—7. 2. *Of the great men that were employed under him, the firſt three,* ver. 8—17. *Two of the next three,* ver. 18—23. *And then the thirty,* ver. 24—39.

NOW

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1. NOW theſe *be* [a] the laſt words of David: David the ſon of Jeſſe ſaid, and the man *who was* raiſed up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the ſweet pſalmiſt of Iſrael, ſaid, 2. [b] The ſpirit of the LORD ſpake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue. 3. The God of Iſrael ſaid, [c] the Rock of Iſrael ſpake to me, † He that ruleth over men *muſt be* juſt, [d] ruling in the fear of God: 4. And *he ſhall be* [e] as the light of the morning, *when* the ſun riſeth, *even* a morning without clouds; [f] *as* the tender graſs *ſpringing* out of the earth by clear ſhining after rain. 5. Although my houſe *be* not ſo with God; yet [g] he hath made with me an everlaſting covenant, ordered in all *things* and [h] ſure: for *this is* all my ſalvation, and [i] all *my* deſire, although he make *it* not to grow. 6. ¶ But *the ſons* of Belial [k] *ſhall be* all of them as thorns thruſt away, becauſe they cannot be taken with hands. 7. But the man *that* ſhall touch them, muſt be fenced with iron, and the ſtaff of a ſpear, and they ſhall be utterly burnt with fire in the *ſame* place.

[a] Gen. xlix. 1, 33. Deut. xxxiii. 1; &c. Joſh. xxiii. 2, &c. 2 Pet. i. 13.
[b] Ibid. 21.
[c] 1 Cor. x. 4.
† Or, there ſhall be a righteous ruler over men. Deut. i. 16. Pſal. lxxii. 2. Iſa. xi. 4, 5. & xxxii. 1.
[d] Iſa. xi. 2, 3.
[e] John i. 9.
[f] Pſal. lxxii. 6. Prov. xix. 12. Hoſ. vi. 3.
[g] Chap. vii. 15, 16. Iſa. ix. 6, 7.
[h] Mat. xvi. 18. Rom. iv. 16.
[i] 1 Cor. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 8.
[k] Iſa. xxvii. 4. Luke xix. 27.

v. 1—7. David is now haſting to the grave; and, as is fabled of the dying ſwan, takes his farewell of the world with a ſong of triumph. *Note*, Dying chriſtians are bound to bear teſtimony to the mercy they have taſted, and to commend with their parting breath, theſe good ways of the Lord wherein they have walked.

1. The ſpeaker deſcribes himſelf; or they may be the words of the hiſtorian: He begins with the meanneſs of his original, the ſon of Jeſſe. Humility is the ornament of greatneſs. He was now exalted very high, through Divine favour, to be king of Iſrael; and yet among his chief honours, places his being Iſrael's ſweet Pſalmiſt, the compoſer of their hymns, the director of their choir, the inventor of their muſic, and thereby their aſſiſtant in that moſt pleaſing part of worſhip. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt honour is to be made ſerviceable to the church of God, and the edification of his redeemed. (2.) Pſalmody is a needful, and a delightful part of worſhip. (3.) They who would after death join the ſongs of angels, muſt have their ſouls harmonized for the ſervice here below.

2. The inſpiration by which theſe words, as well as his other pſalms and ſongs of praiſe were dictated, is mentioned. David was an eminent prophet, and ſpake as the ſpirit gave him utterance. When we read his writings, we muſt look up for the ſame inſpiring Spirit to open our underſtandings, and to guide us into all truth.

3. The words themſelves; and they have a temporal and ſpiritual reſpect: (1.) Temporally, they reſpect Solomon and his poſterity, conveying to them direction, comfort, and warning. The God of Iſrael, their covenant God and rock of their ſalvation, ſpeaks; let every ear attend. Kings muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God, making his law their guide, adminiſtring juſtice with impartiality, and ſtrenuous to inculcate the fear of God: ſuch a ruler is the light and glory of the people, chearing them as the beams of the morning, when the ſun without a cloud ariſes to diſpel the ſhadows of the night; and his government flouriſhing and proſperous as the graſs watered with vernal ſhowers, and quickened by the returning ſun. And although David's houſe hath not been ſo flouriſhing hitherto, nor hath God made it thus to grow, but rather laid it waſte by the death of one ſon, and rebellion of another; yet he is comforted with the confidence that God had made with him an everlaſting covenant, wherein he had provided for the fulfilment of his promiſe to his lateſt poſterity; on this his own and family's ſafety depended, and on it all his deſires were fixed. But the ſons of Belial, the mutinous and rebellious ſpirits that oppoſed his government, though ſharp as thorns, and not to be ſubdued but by ſword and ſpear, ſhould be deſtroyed; and, like thorns fit only for the fuel, ſhould be burnt up, and have left neither root nor branch. (2.) Spiritually, they are applicable to the Meſſiah, and contain a glorious prophecy, highly ſuited in a dying hour to refreſh the faith of David, rejoicing to ſee his day. He is the righteous king, on whoſe ſhoulders the government reſts, and whoſe rule is according to the moſt perfect will of the Rock of Iſrael, doing always the things which pleaſe him. He, as the Son of righteouſneſs, ariſing with healing in his wings, ſhines with refreſhing beams of light and love on his choſen, and no ſpot or cloud obſcures his glory. And though in his humiliation, he ſeemed as a root out of a dry ground withered; and we did eſteem him ſtricken and afflicted of God, yet with him did God eſtabliſh his covenant, and with us in him: ſo that however low, diſtreſſed, or deſperate our ſituation appears, like David's troubled houſe, yet in this covenant of grace, through Jeſus, we may well comfort ourſelves; for it is *everlaſting*, contrived from eternity of God's good pleaſure, and enduring to eternity, by God's unchangeable purpoſe; *ordered in all things*, ſo as moſt glorioufly to diſplay the wiſdom, holineſs, and love of God, to exalt the grace and all-ſufficiency of the Redeemer, and to confirm the faith, and ſecure the obedience of every believer: *and ſure*, becauſe not depending on any conditions to be performed by us, nor to be forfeited by our infirmities, or the prevalence of temptation, but ſecured to all the ſeed, by the immaculate righteouſneſs of our ſurety, and the inviolable promiſe of the unchangeable God. *This is all my ſalvation*, will every believer ſay, becauſe no other hope ſupports his guilty ſoul, and *all his deſire*, becauſe compared with this, every thing beſide appears to him dung and loſs. But whilſt the children of grace triumph in the God of their ſalvation, a dreadful doom awaits the ſons of wickedneſs. The rod of iron ſhall bruiſe them as a potter's veſſel; and as thorns before the devouring fire, they ſhall burn, and none ſhall quench them.

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8. ¶ Theſe *be* the names of the mighty men whom David had; The Tachmonite that ſat in the ſeat, chief among the captains (the ſame *was* Adino the Eznite) *he lift up his ſpear* againſt eight hundred, whom he ſlew at one time. 9. And [l] after him *was* Eleazar the ſon of Dodo the Ahohite, *one* of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philiſtines *that* were there gathered together to battle, and [m] the men of Iſrael were gone away. 10. [n] He aroſe, and ſmote the Philiſtines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the ſword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people [o] returned after him only to ſpoil. 11. And after him *was* Shammah the ſon of Agee the Hararite, and the Philiſtines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and [p] the people fled from the Philiſtines. 12. But he ſtood in the midſt of the ground and defended it, and ſlew the Philiſtines: And [q] the LORD wrought a great victory. 13. And three of the thirty chief went down and came to David in the harveſt-time, [r] unto the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philiſtines pitched in the valley of Rephaim. 14. And David *was* then in an hold, and the garriſon of the Philiſtines *was* then in Beth-lehem. 15. And David longed, and ſaid, Oh that one would give me drink of [s] the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which *is* by the gate! 16. And the three mighty men [t] brake through the hoſt of the Philiſtines, and [u] drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: neverthleſs he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD. 17. And he ſaid, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I ſhould do this: [x] *Is not this* the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. Theſe things did theſe three mighty men. 18. And Abiſhai the brother of Joab, the ſon of Zeruiah, was chief among three; and he lift up his ſpear againſt [y] three hundred, *and* ſlew *them*, and had the name among three. 19. Was he not moſt honourable of three? Therefore he was their captain: howbeit, [z] he attained not unto the *firſt* three. 20. And Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, the ſon of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, † who had done many acts, [a] he ſlew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down alſo and ſlew a lion in the midſt of a pit in time of ſnow. 21. And he ſlew an Egyptian, ‡ a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a ſpear in his hand; but he went down to him with a ſtaff, and plucked the ſpear out of the Egyptian's hand, and [b] ſlew him with his own ſpear. 22. Theſe *things* did Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men. 23. He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the *firſt* three: and David ſet him over his ‖ guard. 24. [c] Aſahel [d] the brother *of Joab was* one of the thirty; Elhanan the ſon of Dodo of Beth-lehem, 25. Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, 26. Helez the Paltite, Ira the ſon of Ikkeſh the Tekoite, 27. Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Huſhathite, 28. Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, 29. Heleb the ſon of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the ſon of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, 30. Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaaſh, 31. Abialbon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, 32. Eliahba the Shaalbonite; of the ſons of Jaſhen, Jonathan, 33. Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the ſon of Sharar the Hararite, 34. Eliphelet the ſon of Ahaſbai, the ſon of the Maachathite, Eliam the ſon of Ahithophel the

[l] 1 Chron. xi. 12, &c.
[m] Mark xiv. 50.
[n] Iſa. lxiii. 3, 5.
[o] Pſal. lxviii. 18. Iſa. xxxiii. 23. & liii. 12.
[p] 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.
[q] Pſal. iii. 8. Prov. xxi. 31.
[r] 1 Sam. xxii. 1.
[s] John iv. 10, 14.
[t] Mat. xi. 22.
[u] Iſa. xii. 3.
[x] Pſal. lxxii. 14.
[y] Rom. viii. 31.
[z] Mat. xiii. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.
† Heb. Great in deeds. Luke xxiv. 19.
[a] Exod. xv. 15.
‡ Heb. A man of countenance
[b] 1 Sam. xvii. 51.
‖ Or council.
[c] 1 Chron. xi. 26, &c.
[d] Chap. ii. 18, &c.

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the Gilonite, 35. Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, 36. Igal the ſon of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, 37. Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the ſon of Zeruiah, 38. Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite, 39. [e] Uriah the Hittite: thirty and ſeven in all.

[e] Chap. xii. 9. 1 Kings xv. 5.

v. 8—39. We have here a catalogue of David's worthies: men deſerving to live in the annals of fame. Public virtue and and generous actions a grateful poſterity ſhould long remember. They are divided into three claſſes:

1. In the firſt claſs, and the moſt honourable, ſtood Jaſhabeam the Tachmonite (See 1 *Chron.* xi.) called alſo Adino the Eznite. More names than one being common, and the place of his birth, or education, might gain him theſe ſeveral appellations. He performed an aſtoniſhing exploit, having ſlain three hundred men with his own hand at once. Eleazar was next him, who, in a pitched battle with the Philiſtines, whom he had defied, though the troops under his command fled, alone withſtood them, and made ſuch havock, that his hand with graſping it ſo long and vehemently, clave to his ſword, and the Lord gave him the victory; ſo that his men returned after him only to ſpoil. *Note,* (1.) In our ſpiritual warfare, though forſaken of every help, we muſt not quit our ground, but boldly ſtand dependant on God. (2.) When we do ſo, God will ſtrengthen us; and we, as bound, muſt give him the glory. (3.) They who are cowards to fight for Chriſt in danger, are ready enough to follow him when it is only to ſpoil. Shammah was the laſt of the three firſt worthies, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf by oppoſing an irruption of the Philiſtines, and routing them with a great ſlaughter. Eleazar in another part of the field (See 1 *Chron.* xi. 13.) ſeems to have at the ſame time diſtinguiſhed himſelf. Another great exploit alſo in concert they performed: when David was in the cave of Adullam, where they joined him, in the ſultry days of harveſt, he expreſſed his longing for a cooling draught of the water of Beth-lehem, where the Philiſtines had then a garriſon. They no ſooner heard his wiſh, than, unknown to him, they ſet off; and though oppoſed by the Philiſtines, broke through the hoſt, drew the water, and returned with it to David; who, ſtruck with their zeal to ſerve him, thought the water too dear a purchaſe, bought at the peril of their lives, and with holy ſelf-denial poured it out as a libation before the Lord. *Note,* (1.) We ſhould check the fooliſh and unreaſonable longings of our appetite. (2.) To ſerve an earthly king in his mere humour, ſhall men thus hazard their lives? To ſerve the king of heaven in his moſt reaſonable ſervice, ſhall we decline any duties becauſe they are difficult? (3.) There is a living water that flows from Jeſus, who was born at Beth-lehem, which our ſouls do well to long for; and to obtain which, no danger ſhould be feared, or toil avoided.

2. The ſecond claſs compriſed Abiſhai, Benaiah and Aſahel. The firſt at once ſlew three hundred men, yet reached not to the glory of the firſt three: even of the ſtars in glory, one ſtar differeth from another. Benaiah ſtood next famed, for the ſlaughter of two men of Moab, ſtrong and fierce as lions; for his bold attack on a lion, in a pit of ſnow, when moſt fierce with cold and hunger; and for his dexterity, as well as valour, againſt a vaſt Egyptian, whom, with only a ſtaff, he diſarmed and ſlew: and for theſe deeds of martial prowefs, David advanced him to the command of his life-guards. Aſahel, Joab's brother, was the third, over the thirty next mentioned.

3. The laſt claſs conſiſted of thirty; whoſe deeds, though not particularly recorded, yet gained them a diſtinguiſhed honour. Their names and places of abode only are mentioned. Among them we find a ſon of Ahitophel, a faithful ſon of a rebel father. Happy it is, when children ſee and ſhun their father's ill examples. And Uriah, whoſe bravery and worthy deſerts aggravated the baſeneſs of his murder. Joab is not mentioned: either he was generaliſſimo, and above them; or a brand of oblivion is put on the memory of ſo bad a man. *Note,* Every true believer is one of theſe worthies, fighting under the banners of Jeſus, ſtrong in the Lord and the power of his might, victorious over the powers of ſin and Satan; and written great, not in the annals of time indeed, but in the annals of eternity, in the book of life of the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world. Lord, may my name be found written there!

About 1017.

CHAP. XXIV.

We have here, 1. *David's ſin in numbering the people,* ver. 1—9. 2. *His conviction, and repentance for it,* ver. 10. 3. *The judgment inflicted upon him,* ver. 11—15. 4. *The judgment ſtayed,* ver. 15—17. 5. *An altar erected in token of God's reconciliation to him,* ver. 18—25.

1. AND [a] again the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Iſrael, and † he moved David againſt them, to ſay, Go number Iſrael and Judah. 2. For the king ſaid to Joab the captain of the hoſt, which *was* with him, [b] Go now through all the tribes of Iſrael, from Dan even to Beer-ſheba, and number ye the people, [c] that I may know the number of the people. 3. And Joab ſaid unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people (how many ſoever they be) an hundred-fold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may ſee *it:* but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing? 4. Notwithſtanding, the king's word prevailed againſt Joab, and againſt the captains of the hoſt: and Joab and the captains of the hoſt went out from the preſence of the king, to number the people of Iſrael. 5. ¶ And they paſſed over Jordan, and pitched in Aroer, on the right ſide of the city that *lieth* in the midſt of the river of Gad, and toward Jazer. 6. Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtim-hodſhi; and they came to Dan-jaan, and about to Zidon. 7. And came to the ſtrong-hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the ſouth of Judah, *even* to Beer-ſheba. 8. So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jeruſalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. 9. And Joab gave up the ſum of the number of the people unto the king: and [d] there were in Iſrael eight hundred thouſand valiant men that drew the ſword; and the men of Judah *were* five hundred thouſand men.

[a] Chap. xxi. 1.
† i. e. He permitted Satan to do it. See 1 Kings xxii. 22. 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Acts iv. 28.

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[b] Joſh. ix. 14.
[c] Deut. viii. 13, 14. Hab. ii. 4.
[d] 1 Chron. xxi. 5.

v. 1—9. Sin and puniſhment are as inſeparable as the body and the ſhadow. Iſrael's iniquities and rebellions provoked God, and he permitted Satan to ſtir up David againſt them.

1. David now at reſt from war, after ſuch a ſeries of ſucceſſes, is too much elated with the greatneſs of his kingdom; and in the pride of his heart is curious to know the number of his warriors, as if the arm of fleſh inſtead of the arm of God had gotten him the victory. *Note,* He that ſearches the heart, knows the pride of it, and that is an abomination in his ſight.

2. Joab, with the captains, humbly diſſuades the king from his deſign; and whilſt he loyally wiſhes they might increaſe an hundred fold, yet fain would divert him from a proceeding, uſeleſs, burdenſome to the people, and which might be, as it proved, of dangerous conſequences. *Note,* When inferiors behold the errors into which their ſuperiors are hurrying, humbly to remonſtrate, is to act the part of a faithful friend.

3. David's commands are peremptory; and Joab and the captains, though againſt their better judgment, obey. It becomes ſubjects and ſervants to obey not only the reaſonable commands of their maſters or magiſtrates, but, rather than rebel, to ſubmit to thoſe that are oppreſſive or unreaſonable. Nine months the ſurvey laſted, employing much time, trouble, and expence; and at laſt the return is made, eight hundred thouſand fighting men in Iſrael, and five hundred thouſand men in Judah, beſides the tribes of Levi and Benjamin, which Joab numbered not. The difference of numbers in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 5. may be reconciled, by ſuppoſing that David's regular army came not into this account, which conſiſting of twenty-four thouſand in monthly waiting, amounted to two hundred and eighty-eight thouſand; to which if twelve thouſand officers be added, the ſums will correſpond: and the men of Judah are there counted thirty thouſand leſs than here, the thirty companies of one thouſand men each, mentioned in the preceding chapter, not being there taken into the account.

10. ¶ And David's heart [e] ſmote him, after that he had numbred the people: and David ſaid unto the LORD, [f] I have ſinned greatly in that I have done: and now I beſeech thee, O LORD, [g] take away the iniquity of thy ſervant; for I have done very fooliſhly. 11. For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's ſeer, ſaying, 12. Go and ſay unto David, Thus ſaith the LORD, [h] I offer thee three *things;* chooſe thee one of them, that I may *do it* unto thee. 13. So Gad came to David, and told him, and ſaid unto him, Shall ſeven years of famine come unto thee and thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they purſue thee? or that there be three days peſtilence in thy land? now adviſe, and ſee what anſwer I ſhall return to him that ſent me. 14. And David ſaid unto Gad, I am in a great ſtrait: [i] let us fall now into the hand of the LORD, (for [k] his mercies *are* great) and [l] let me not fall into the hand of man. 15. So the LORD ſent a peſtilence upon Iſrael, from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan

[e] 1 Sam. xxiv. 5.
[f] 1 Chron. xxi. 8. Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 9.
[g] Mic. vii. 8, 9.
[h] Rev. iii. 19.
[i] Heb. xii. 5, 8.
[k] Pſal. ciii. 13.
[l] Prov. xii. 10. Zeck. i. 15.

even to Beer-ſheba, [m] ſeventy thouſand men. 16. And when the angel ſtretched out his hand upon Jeruſalem to deſtroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and ſaid to the angel that deſtroyed the people, [n] It is enough: ſtay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threſhing-place of Araunah the Jebuſite. 17. And David ſpake unto the LORD when he ſaw the angel that ſmote the people, and ſaid, [o] Lo, I have ſinned, and I have done wickedly: but theſe ſheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be againſt me, and againſt my father's houſe.

[m] Iſa. xxxvii.
[n] Pſal. lxxviii. 38. Hab. iii. 2.
[o] Ezek. xvi. 63.

v. 10—17. During nine months David waited for the gratification of his pride; and now he no ſooner receives the return, than conviction of his ſin daſhes the ſweet draught he was lifting to his lips. So often are the pleaſures of ſin turned into the poiſon of aſps.

1. His heart ſmites him: reflecting in the evening on what he had done, the good Spirit opens his eyes to a ſenſe of his guilt, and awakens his conſcience to a ſenſibility of his danger. Inſtantly his penitent confeſſions ſpeak his contrite ſpirit, and he begs earneſtly the forgiveneſs of his great ſin and folly. *Note*, (1.) Though we have played the fool, and ſinned exceedingly, yet if our heart ſmite us, and we are brought to our tears and our knees, there is yet hope. (2.) A ſenſe of guilt upon the conſcience, will put an edge on the importunity of our prayers, and the groanings which cannot be uttered, God can hear. (3.) It is the greateſt folly for a momentary pleaſure, to incur never-ending pain.

2. When David aroſe in the morning, expecting from the bitter night he had paſt to meet no glad tidings, Gad the ſeer is ſent to him with his ſentence: Three things are propoſed to his choice; famine, peſtilence, or war. He ſhall rue his folly, and the people ſuffer for their ſins. *Note*, (1.) God often ſeverely chaſtiſes thoſe he never means to deſtroy. (2.) All his judgments are juſt; and thoſe who walk in pride he is able to abaſe, by ſmiting their idol, or laying their honour in the duſt.

3. David is in a dreadful ſtrait: yet ſince it muſt be ſo, he chuſes rather to fall into the hands of God than of man; and to ſtand on a level with the meaneſt ſubject, as the mark of the devouring peſtilence: knowing the greatneſs of the mercies of God, he caſts himſelf upon them, hoping the ſtroke in his hand would be lightened, or the time of ſuffering ſhortened. *Note*, Thoſe mercies which we muſt for ever deſpair of obtaining from men, whom we have ſo highly offended, we may hope, (though ſo much more aggravated our guilt) to find with God, *for he is God and not man.*

4. Inſtant as the choice is made, the ſword is drawn; and Iſrael's land (ſo changed is the ſcene!) inſtead of peace and joy, reſounds with the ſhrieks of the mourners, and the groans of the dying. Seventy thouſand fell before the deſtroying angel; ſuch dreadful havock can theſe glorious ſpirits make, when ſent to execute God's judgments. The time was ſhort, but the ſlaughter was prodigious. Some think it continued till the third day; others, that it was the ſame day, at the time of the evening-ſacrifice, when the angel with the drawn ſword appeared, viſibly in the air over Jeruſalem, as ready to ſmite that city of David. Then God repented of his fierce anger; he looked upon their deſolations, and remembred the ark of his covenant; therefore he bids the angel ſheathe the ſword, it is enough. *Note*, (1.) God mingles mercy ſtill with judgment, elſe would the ſons of Jacob be utterly conſumed. (2.) Whilſt we tremble at his viſitations, let us fear to provoke them by our ſins.

5. David's eyes were now opened, to behold this mighty angel, as he ſtood with the ſword of vengeance yet unſheathed, by or over the threſhing-floor of Araunah, which was on mount Moriah, the place whither Abraham went, according to the Jewiſh tradition, to offer up his ſon. There David fell down before the angel, and directing his prayer to God, confeſſed his guilt, and opened his boſom, to receive the ſtroke he had provoked, begging that he might bleed, as the author of the judgment; and that his people, whom as a good ſhepherd he loved, might eſcape, tho' at the expenſe of his own blood. His prayer is accepted, and himſelf alſo ſpared. *Note*, (1.) Thus the ſon of David not only offered, but actually laid down his life for his ſheep. (2.) Real penitents cannot bear others ſhould ſmart for their ſins; and care not what themſelves ſuffer, ſo they may go free.

18. ¶ And Gad came that day to David, and ſaid unto him, [p] Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD, in the threſhing-floor of Araunah the Jebuſite. 19. And David, according to the ſaying of Gad, went up, as the LORD commanded. 20. And Araunah looked, and ſaw the king and his ſervants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out and bowed himſelf before the king on his face upon the ground. 21. And Araunah ſaid, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his ſervant? And David ſaid, To buy the threſhing-floor of thee to build an altar unto the LORD, that [q] the plague may be ſtayed from the people. 22. And Araunah ſaid unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what *ſeemeth* good unto him: behold, *here be* oxen for burnt-ſacrifice, and threſhing inſtruments, and *other* inſtruments of the oxen for wood. 23. All theſe things did Araunah, † *as* a king, give unto the king: and Araunah ſaid unto the king, [r] The LORD thy God [s] accept thee. 24. And the king ſaid unto Araunah, Nay; but I will ſurely buy *it* of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD my God, of that which doth coſt me nothing. So David bought the threſhing-floor and the oxen, for [t] fifty ſhekels of ſilver. 25. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace offerings: [u] ſo the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was ſtayed from Iſrael.

[p] Gen. xxii. 14. Pſal. xlvi. 1.
[q] Num. xvi. 48.
† Heb. The king.
[r] Rom. xv. 30. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. Jam. v. 16.
[s] Pſal. xx. 3.
[t] 1 Chron. xxi. 25.
[u] Chap. xxi. 14.

v. 18—25. Gad, the meſſenger of the judgment. is ſent again to David, as the miniſter of reconciliation.

1. He enjoins him to erect an altar for ſacrifice in the threſhing-floor of Araunah, in token that God now had accepted him in mercy; and that by the blood of atonement, he might ſeal his pardon, and receive the tribute of his thankfulneſs. *Note*, (1.) But for the blood of Jeſus, the deſtroying angel would utterly conſume this guilty world. (2.) The ſacrifice of praiſe is the bounden duty of the pardoned ſinner.

2. David haſtes to the threſhing-floor, and being met by Araunah, declares his deſire to purchaſe the threſhing-floor, in order to build an altar, that the plague might be ſtayed. Araunah, with the munificence of a king, offers to make him a preſent of it, with hearty prayer for God's bleſſing on his deſign: or Araunah the king, as it is in the original, being, as ſome conjecture, of the ſeed royal of the Jebuſites, perhaps heir to the former king, and now become a proſelyte. But David cannot think of ſerving God with that which coſt him nothing, or taking any advantage of ſuch a generous ſpirit, when he was in ſo little need of the obligation; therefore inſiſts on purchaſing the place, and the oxen for ſacrifice, at their full value, fifty ſhekels of ſilver for the floor and the oxen, and afterwards ſix hundred ſhekels of gold, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 25. for the adjacent lands, on which the temple was afterwards built. *Note*, (1.) A noble generoſity makes a man appear great as a king. (2.) Needleſs obligations are to be avoided. (3.) They who deſire to ſerve God without expence, have little of David's ſpirit.

3. The purchaſe being agreed, and the altar built, David ſacrifices burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and God declares his acceptance, perhaps by fire from heaven conſuming them; and the ſin of the land being pardoned, the plague is ſtayed. *Note*, Chriſt the living altar, and the acceptable ſacrifice, having once offered himſelf for a propitiation, we may rejoice in the returning favour of a reconciled God, and fear no more danger or death.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the FIRST BOOK of
KINGS.

Theſe Annals are called the Books of Kings, becauſe they treat of the affairs of the kingdoms of Judah and Iſrael. They are ſuppoſed to be compiled by Ezra, during the captivity in Babylon. The frequent quotations from them in the New Teſtament, vouch for their Divine Authority. They contain the beſt leſſons for government, and the trueſt politics; and prove that godlineſs among a people is their great ſecurity, and apoſtacy from God uſually their ruin. There is in theſe books ſpecial regard had to the houſe and lineage of David, from which Chriſt came. Some of his ſons trod in his ſteps, others did not. The number of the good and bad is pretty near equal, but the reigns of the good were generally long, and thoſe of the bad ſhort. The conſideration of which will make the ſtate of Iſrael not altogether ſo bad in this period as at firſt it ſeems. In this firſt book we have, 1. *The death of David,* chap. i. *and* ii. 2. *The glorious reign of Solomon, and his building the temple,* chap. iii. x. *but his ſun ſets under a cloud,* chap. xi. 3. *The diviſion of the kingdoms in Rehoboam, and his reign and Jeroboam's,* chap. xii---xiv. 4. *The reigns of Abijah and Aſa over Judah, Baaſa and Omri over Iſrael,* chap. xv. *and* xvi. 5. *Elijah's miracles,* chap. xvii, xviii, xix. 6. *Ahab's ſucceſs againſt Benhadad, his wickedneſs and fall,* chap. xx---xxii. *And in all this hiſtory it appears, that kings, though gods to us, are men to God, mortal and accountable.*

Before Chriſt 1015.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter, 1. *David declines in his health,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Adonijah aſpires to the kingdom,* ver. 5—10. 3. *Nathan and Bathſheba ſecure the ſucceſſion to Solomon,* ver. 11—31. 4. *Solomon is anointed, at which the people rejoice,* ver. 32—40. 5. *This puts a ſtop to Adonijah's uſurpation,* ver. 41—49. 6. *Solomon diſmiſſes him upon his good behaviour,* 50—53.

[a] Pſal xc. 10. Phil. i. 21.

1. NOW king David [a] was old, *and* ſtricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he got no heat. 2. Wherefore his ſervants ſaid unto him, Let there be ſought for my lord the king, a young virgin, and let her ſtand before the king, and let her cheriſh him, and let her lie in thy boſom, [b] that my lord the king may get heat. 3. So they ſought for a fair damſel throughout all the coaſts of Iſrael, and found Abiſhag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. 4. And the damſel *was* very fair, and cheriſhed the king, and miniſtred to him: but the king [c] knew her not.

[b] Eccleſ. iv. 11.
[c] 1 Cor. vii. 1.

v. 1—4. David is now ſinking under years and infirmities. His frozen blood is ready to ſtagnate as it flows, and cloaths no longer are capable of recovering the vital warmth. His phyſicians therefore preſcribe to him a virgin, in the bloom of youth and beauty, that her preſence might be agreeable, and that lying in his boſom, ſhe might cheriſh him. Probably he married her, *See chap.* xi. 22. though his enfeebled ſtate prevented all conjugal knowledge of her as a wife. *Note,* (1.) They who come to old age, muſt expect the burden of infirmities that attend it. (2.) Though the candle of life eſcape the furious blaſts of diſeaſe or accident, it muſt ſhortly burn out of itſelf. (3.) The view of approaching old age and death ſhould enliven our diligence to work for God, whilſt life and ſtrength are with us.

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5. ¶ Then [d] Adonijah the ſon of Haggith [e] exalted himſelf, ſaying, [f] I will be king; and [g] he prepared him chariots and horſemen, and fifty men to run before him. 6. And [h] his father had not diſpleaſed him at any time, in ſaying, Why haſt thou done ſo? and [i] he alſo *was* a very goodly *man*; and *his mother* bare him after Abſalom. 7. And [k] he conferred with Joab the ſon of Zeruiah, and with [l] Abiathar the prieſt: and they following Adonijah, helped *him*. 8. But Zadok the prieſt, and Benaiah the ſon of Johoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and [m] Shimei, and Rei, and [n] the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah. 9. And Adonijah [o] ſlew ſheep, and oxen, and fat cattle, by the ſtone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's ſons, and all the men of Judah the king's ſervants. 10. But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother he called not.

[d] 2 Sam. iii. 4.
[e] Luke xiv. 11.
[f] Deut. xvii. 15. 1 Chron. xxii. 9.
[g] 2 Sam. xv. 1.
[h] 1 Sam. iii. 13. Prov. xiii. 24. & xxiii. 13.
[i] 2 Sam. xiv. 25. Prov. xxxi. 30.
[k] Pſal. li. 2.
[l] Chap. ii. 35.
[m] Ibid. iv. 18.
[n] 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.
[o] Num. xxiii. 1. Prov. xv. 8. Iſa. i. 11, 12.

v. 5—10. David's troubles laſt almoſt to his laſt gaſp. One ſon is dead by fratricide, another ſlain in rebellion againſt him, and now a third following his example.

1. Adonijah, even whilſt his father lives, aſpires to the throne. He was the ſon of Haggith, and next in birth to Abſalom; ſo that Chileab the ſecond, as is ſuppoſed, being dead, he, as eldeſt, conſidered himſelf as preſumptive heir to the crown; though the deſignation of Solomon, by the expreſs command of God, and the intention of his father, was well known. He was

a comely

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a comely perſon, and, like Abſalom, had been too much indulged by his father; and now David again ſmarts for his fooliſh fondneſs. Deſpiſing his old and infirm parent and king, he thinks Iſrael wants a more active governor, and he will be the man. *Note*, (1.) An indulged ſon uſually proves a ſpoiled child. (2.) The ambition of reigning lead's men to trample on the ordinances of God and man. (3.) To deſpiſe our aged parents for their infirmities, ſhews an ungrateful and wicked ſpirit.

2. The means he uſed to accompliſh his deſigns were nearly the ſame which his brother Abſalom had taught him. He made a great figure, to engage the people's admiration, with his equipages, horſemen, and running footmen; ſecured the general and high-prieſt in his party; and, when his intereſt ſeemed ſtrengthened by ſuch an acceſſion, he began to take off the maſk, and at a ſolemn feaſt, or perhaps a ſacrifice, at Enrogel near Jeruſalem, to which his friends were invited, and, among them, all the king's ſons, who ſeem to have conſented to his deſign, they ſalute him king, and he receives their congratulations on his advancement. Solomon was not invited, nor Zadok, Benaiah, Nathan, or the mighty men. Their known fidelity to David, and adherence to the ſucceſſor of God's appointment, made it in vain to tamper with them, or invite them to this ſeditious aſſembly. *Note*, (1.) They who make their belly their god, will ſide with any party that will but entertain them in eating and drinking. (2.) When the ſucceſs of a wicked enterprize ſeems moſt ſecured, the greater confuſion and diſappointment doth God bring on its projectors by blaſting it.

11. ¶ Wherefore Nathan ſpake unto Bath-ſheba the mother of Solomon, ſaying, Haſt thou not heard that Adonijah the ſon of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not? 12. Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, [p] give thee counſel, that thou mayeſt ſave thine own life, and the life of thy ſon Solomon. 13. Go, and get thee unto king David, and ſay unto him, Didſt not thou, my lord, O king, [q] ſwear unto thine handmaid, ſaying, Aſſuredly Solomon thy ſon ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? 14. Behold, while thou yet talkeſt there with the king, I will alſo come in after thee, and † confirm thy words. 15. ¶ And Bath-ſheba went in unto the king, into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abiſhag the Shunamite miniſtred unto the king. 16. And Bath-ſheba bowed, and did obeiſance unto the king: and the king ſaid, What wouldeſt thou? 17. And ſhe ſaid unto him, My lord, [r] thou ſwareſt by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *ſaying*, [s] Aſſuredly, Solomon thy ſon ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my throne. 18. And now behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knoweſt *it* not: 19. And he hath ſlain oxen and fat cattle, and ſheep in abundance, and hath called all the ſons of the king, and Abiathar the prieſt, and Joab the captain of the hoſt; but Solomon thy ſervant hath he not called. 20. And thou, my lord, O king, [t] the eyes of all Iſrael *are* upon thee, that thou ſhouldſt tell them who ſhall ſit on the throne of my lord the king after him. 21. Otherwiſe it ſhall come to paſs, when my lord the king ſhall † ſleep with his fathers, that I and my ſon Solomon ſhall be counted ‡ offenders. 22. ¶ And lo, while ſhe yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet alſo came in. 23. And they told the king, ſaying, Behold, Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himſelf before the king with his face to the ground. 24. And Nathan ſaid, My lord, O king, haſt thou ſaid, Adonijah ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my throne? 25. For he is gone down this day, and hath ſlain oxen, and fat cattle, and ſheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's ſons, and the captains of the hoſt, and Abiathar the prieſt; and behold, they eat and drink before him, and ſay, § God ſave king Adonijah. 26. But me, *even* me thy ſervant, and Zadok the prieſt, and Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and thy ſervant Solomon hath he not called. 27. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou haſt not ſhewed *it* unto thy ſervant, who ſhould ſit on the throne of my lord the king after him? 28. ¶ Then king David anſwered and ſaid, Call me Bath-ſheba: and ſhe came into the king's preſence, and ſtood before the king. 29. And the king ſware, and ſaid, [u] *As* the LORD liveth, [x] that hath redeemed my ſoul out of all diſtreſs, 30. Even as I ſware unto thee by the LORD God of Iſrael, ſaying, Aſſuredly Solomon thy ſon ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my throne in my ſtead; even ſo will I certainly do this day. 31. Then Bath-ſheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and ſaid, [y] Let my lord king David live for ever.

[p] Prov. xvii. 2.
[q] 2 Sam. xii. 24.
† Heb. Fill up. Ver. 24.
[r] Pſ. xv. 4.
[s] 1 Chron. xxii. 9.
[t] 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.
† Heb. Lie down. Deut. xxxi. 16. Iſa. lvii. 2.
‡ Heb. Sinners.
§ Heb. Let king Adonijah live. 1 Sam. x. 24.
[u] Judg. viii. 19. 2 Sam. xii. 5. Chap. xvii. 1.
[x] Gen. xlviii. 16. Pſal. xxxiv. 19, 22.
[y] Neh. ii. 3. Dan. vi. 21.

v. 11—31. An attempt ſo dangerous to them, if it ſucceeded, alarmed Nathan the prophet and Bath-ſheba.

1. Nathan hears of the aſſembly of Adonijah, and carries the news to the queen, that ſhe might impart it to the king, who knew nothing of theſe proceedings, ſo contrary to his will, and the appointment of God. No time was to be loſt, as her life and her ſon's were in danger, ſince Adonijah, to ſecure his throne, would be ſure to diſpatch his rival, and thoſe who cleaved to him. Nathan engages to ſecond her petition by dropping in as it were undeſignedly, juſt at the time when ſhe had ſpoken to the king of his oath to her, in behalf of Solomon for his ſucceſſor. *Note*, (1.) In times of danger, every prudent means is to be uſed for our own ſecurity. (2.) They who know God's will, ſhould be zealouſly affected to comply with it.

2. Bath-ſheba without delay goes to the king into his chamber, where Abiſhag miniſtered to him, as he lay decrepit on his bed, and approaching with all reſpect, in anſwer to the king's enquiry of her deſire, reminds him of his oath to her, to leave his crown to Solomon; informs him of the ambitious project of Adonijah, of which ſhe knew he was unacquainted; the avowed diſlike expreſſed to Solomon, whom he had not invited to his feaſt; the danger ſhe and her ſon ſhould be expoſed to, who would be regarded as traitors, if David did not immediately interpoſe, to confirm the ſucceſſion according to his promiſe; and expreſſes her confidence, that as the eyes of all Iſrael were upon him, ſuch deference would be paid to his public proclamation, that none would dare diſpute his appointment. *Note*, (1.) Kings are often kept in ignorance of matters that moſt nearly relate to their kingdom and intereſt. A faithful friend in a palace is rare. (2.) He who uſurps a throne, will ſtick at no cruelty to fix himſelf ſafe in it.

3. Nathan, who probably went with Bath-ſheba, and waited without till ſhe had done ſpeaking, is introduced to the king, and having made his due obeiſance, as one ſurprized at the late event, expreſſes his aſtoniſhment, by a pointed interrogation, if this deed of Adonijah's was with the king's privity or conſent, which Nathan conceives impoſſible, conſidering both David's oath, and God's deſignation of Solomon, as well as his never mentioning it to ſo faithful a ſervant as himſelf. Therefore he intimates the daring inſolence of Adonijah, even in David's life-time, thus to uſurp the throne; and the neceſſity of immediately placing Solomon thereon, who, with himſelf, Zadok, and Benaiah, had not been invited to Adonijah's feaſt, becauſe their well-known fidelity to the king would not ſuffer them to be companions with traitors. *Note*, (1.) When the enemies of God's people are ſo alert and vigorous, ſhall their friends be leſs active and vigilant? (2.) They who, though well-meaning, are weak through infirmity, ſhould be ſtirred up and encouraged for the duty to which they are called.

4. Bath-ſheba having retired when Nathan came, David bids her return, and with an oath confirms his former ſolemn appointment of Solomon for his ſucceſſor; and that day his reign ſhould begin, as ſure as the Lord lived, who had redeemed his ſoul out of all diſtreſs; the remembrance of which mercy would engage him to adhere to the divine appointment of his ſucceſſor. Bath-ſheba, perfectly ſatisfied in the king's declaration, expreſſes her thankfulneſs, and with low obeiſance adds, May the king live for ever. Though ſhe ſollicited the ſucceſſion for her ſon, the king's life and happineſs had her warmeſt wiſhes. *Note*, (1.) Our oaths ſhould ever be remembered, and bind our conſciences to fulfil them. (2.) A grateful heart never forgets the divine mercies, or miſſes an opportunity to make thankful mention of them. (3.) Good children deſire not, for the ſake of their eſtates, the death of their aged parents, but wiſh they may live long and happily to enjoy them.

32. ¶ And king David ſaid, Call me Zadok the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. 33. The king alſo ſaid unto them, Take with you the ſervants of your lord, and [z] cauſe Solomon my ſon to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. 34. And let Zadok the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet, [a] anoint him there king over Iſrael: and [b] blow ye with the trumpet, and ſay, [c] God ſave king Solomon. 35. Then ye ſhall come up after him, that he may come and ſit upon my throne; for he ſhall be king in my ſtead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Iſrael, and over Judah. 36. And Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada anſwered the king, and ſaid, Amen: the

[z] Gen. xli. 41, 43. Eſth. vi. 8.
[a] Pſ. xlv. 7. Acts x. 38. 1 John ii. 27.
[b] Pſ. xcviii. 6.
[c] Mark xi. 9, 10.

[d] the LORD God of my lord the king ſay ſo *too.* 37. As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even ſo be he with Solomon, and make his throne [e] greater than the throne of my lord king David. 38. So Zadok the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and cauſed Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. 39. And Zadok the prieſt took an horn of [f] oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon: and they blew the trumpet, and all the people ſaid, God ſave king Solomon. 40. [g] And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and [h] rejoiced with great joy, ſo that [i] the earth rent with the ſound of them.

v. 32—40. David having expreſſed his ſolemn reſolution, takes care it ſhall be immediately executed.

1. He calls for Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and the great officers civil and military; commands the guards to be drawn out to grace the ſolemnity; his own mule with the regal trappings to be prepared for Solomon; and out of the ſanctuary an horn of oil to be taken for his conſecration, which was to be performed at Gihon, a place perhaps of public concourſe. There, by ſound of trumpet, and joyful acclamations, they ſhould proclaim his acceſſion to the throne; wiſh him long life and proſperity; and bringing him amidſt the ſhouts of the people, place him upon the royal throne, as king; either as aſſociated with his father, or as his viceroy under him, and to be his ſucceſſor. *Note,* (1.) That which is right to be done, ſhould be diſpatched. What thine hand findeth to do, do quickly. (2.) The King of Peace, whom Solomon repreſented, was anointed not with the oil of the ſanctuary, but with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows, and appointed and qualified for the adminiſtration of that kingdom which is an everlaſting kingdom, by the Spirit, which the Father gave not by meaſure unto him.

2. Benaiah, in the name of all the king's faithful ſervants, cries Amen, to the reſolution, highly ſatisfied in the choice, and praying God to give his bleſſing thereon; wiſhing loyally the divine benediction on the king elect, and that his throne might be greater than even David's; a wiſh, in which David himſelf heartily concurred. *Note,* That is likely to proſper, that is begun with prayer for the divine bleſſing, and performed in dependance on his providence.

3. The king's commands are inſtantly executed. Nathan and Zadok, the prieſt and prophet, perform the ceremony of the king's conſecration, and the people, with muſick and loyal acclamations, ſhout after them, God ſave king Solomon. *Note,* (1.) They are kings indeed, who reign in the affections of their ſubjects. (2.) When the believer ſhall aſcend to his throne of glory, it ſhall be amidſt the joyful acclamations of angels, and with the trump of God.

41. ¶ And Adonijah, and all the gueſts that *were* with him, heard *it* [k] as they had made an end of eating: and when Joab heard the ſound of the trumpet, he ſaid, Wherefore *is* this noiſe of the city being in an uproar? 42. And while he yet ſpake, behold, Jonathan the ſon of Abiathar the prieſt came, and Adonijah ſaid unto him, Come in, for thou *art* a valiant man, and bringeſt good tidings. 43. And Jonathan anſwered and ſaid, to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king. 44. And the king hath ſent with him Zadok the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have cauſed him to ride upon the king's mule. 45. And Zadok the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet, have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, ſo that the city rang again: this *is* the noiſe that ye have heard. 46. And alſo Solomon ſitteth on the throne of the kingdom. 47. And moreover, the king's ſervants came to bleſs our lord king David, ſaying, God make the name of Solomon [l] better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne: and the king [m] bowed himſelf upon the bed. 48. And alſo thus ſaid the king, [n] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael, which hath given *one* to ſit on my throne this day, mine eyes even ſeeing *it.* 49. And all the gueſts that *were* with Adonijah, [o] were afraid, and roſe up, and went every man his way. 50. ¶ And Adonijah feared becauſe of Solomon, and aroſe, and went and [p] caught hold of the horns of the altar. 51. And it was told Solomon, ſaying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon; for lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, ſaying, Let king Solomon ſwear unto me to-day, that he will not ſlay his ſervant with the ſword. 52. And Solomon ſaid, If he will ſhew himſelf a worthy man, there ſhall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedneſs ſhall be found in him, [q] he ſhall die. 53. So king Solomon ſent, and they brought him down from the altar; and he came and bowed himſelf to king Solomon: and Solomon ſaid unto him, [r] Go to thine houſe.

v. 41—53. When ſin ſpreads the table of riotous feaſting, the end of that mirth will be heavineſs.

1. Tidings are brought to Adonijah and his gueſts, in the midſt of their entertainment, of what had paſſed in Jeruſalem. At firſt he promiſes himſelf, becauſe the meſſenger Jonathan was a valiant man, that he brought good news for his party; but he is quickly undeceived. They who do ill, muſt not expect meſſages of peace. Jonathan, who had been preſent at what had paſſed, relates the coronation of Solomon, the perſons employed in it, *v.* 44. the zeal of the king's ſervants for him, the univerſal ſatisfaction of the people, and eſpecially David's own great joy and thankfulneſs in ſeeing his ſon on his throne, and his hearty conſent and approbation of the loyal wiſhes of his ſervants, that Solomon's throne might be greater than his own. *Note,* The greateſt ſatisfaction an aged Chriſtian knows, is to ſee the peace of God's Iſrael eſtabliſhed, and his own children happily ſettled, and walking in the fear of God.

2. Adonijah and his company are thunderſtruck with the news: every man inſtantly ſhifts for himſelf, afraid to be caught in ſo treaſonable an aſſembly; and Adonijah, that juſt now ſat as a king, flies to the horns of the altar to ſecure his life, which was forfeited by his treaſon. *Note,* (1.) There is yet hope for the ſinner, even after his deepeſt provocation, if he flies to Jeſus Chriſt for refuge, who is the true altar, on the horns of which that atoning blood is ſprinkled, which cleanſeth from all ſin. (2.) Traitors are generally cowards, from the conſciouſneſs of a bad cauſe.

3. He humbly ſues to Solomon, as his king, for pardon, which he as graciouſly grants; and requiring an oath for his ſecurity, Solomon aſſures him, if he approves himſelf for the future a loyal ſubject, his paſt attempt ſhall not be his death; but if he ſhould be found turbulent or ſeditious, then he muſt no longer expect the clemency he had abuſed. *Note,* (1.) They who cry earneſtly to the Prince of Peace for pardon, may hope to find an anſwer of peace. (2.) We are, by our loyalty to our king, to prove the reality of our ſubjection to him. If we ſtill retain the love of ſin in our hearts, or indulge it in our practice, it is not ſaying Lord, Lord, will ſecure us from eternal death.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The charge David gives to Solomon upon his death-bed,* (1.) *To ſerve God,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *How to act to Joab, Barzillai, and Shimei,* ver. 5—9. 2. *His death, burial, and the years of his reign,* ver. 10, 11. 3. *The beginning of Solomon's reign,* ver. 12. (1.) *Adonijah is put to death for his aſpiring pretenſions,* ver. 13—25. (2.) *Abiathar depoſed from the high-prieſthood,* ver. 26, 27. (3.) *Joab executed for his late treaſon and former murders,* ver. 28—35. (4.) *Shimei, for curſing David, is confined to Jeruſalem,* ver. 36—38. *then ſlain for leaving it,* ver. 39—46.

1. NOW the Days of David drew nigh, [a] that he ſhould die; and [b] he charged Solomon his ſon, ſaying, 2. I go the way of all the earth, be thou ſtrong therefore, and [c] ſhew thyſelf a man. 3. And [d] keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his ſtatutes and his commandments, and his judgments and his teſtimonies, as it is written in the law of Moſes, that thou mayeſt proſper in all that thou doſt, and whitherſoever thou turneſt thyſelf: 4. That [e] the LORD may continue his word which he ſpake concerning me, ſaying, If thy children [f] take heed to their way, [g] to walk before me in truth, [h] with all their heart and with all their ſoul, [i] there ſhall not fail thee (ſaid he) a man on the throne of Iſrael. 5. Moreover, thou knoweſt alſo what Joab the ſon of Zeruiah did [k] to me, *and* what he did to the two captains of the hoſts of Iſrael, [l] unto Abner the ſon of Ner, and [m] unto Amaſa the ſon of Jether, whom he ſlew, and ſhed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his ſhoes that *were* on his feet. 6. [n] Do therefore according to thy wiſdom, and [o] let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace. 7. But [p] ſhew kindneſs unto the ſons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of thoſe that eat at thy table: for

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[d] Gen. i. 3. Pſ. xxxiii. 9.

[e] Pſ. lxxii. 8. Dan. vii. 14.

[f] Exod. xxx. 23—25. Pſ. lxxxix. 20.

[g] Cant. iii. 11.

[h] Pſ. xcvii. 1. Rev. xi. 17.

[i] Mat. xxi. 10.

[k] Prov. xiv. 13. Luke xvii. 26. Phil. iii. 19.

[l] Ver. 37.

[m] Gen. xlvii. 31.

[n] Pſ. lxxii. 18. Prov. xvii. 6.

[o] Job xx. 5. Dan. v. 4, 5, 6. Acts xii. 23.

[p] Exod. xxi. 14. Chap. ii. 30.

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[q] Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17.

[r] John v. 14.

[a] Heb. ix. 27.

[b] Gen. xlix. 1, &c. Deut. xxxiii. 1, &c. Joſh. xxiii. 1, &c. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.

[c] Joſh. i. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

[d] Deut. xvii. 18.

[e] 2 Sam. vii. 25.

[f] Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. iv. 16.

[g] Luke i. 6.

[h] Deut. vi. 5.

[i] 2 Sam. vii. 11.

[k] 2 Sam. xviii. 5, 14. & xix. 6.

[l] 2 Sam. iii. 27.

[m] 2 Sam. xx. 10.

[n] Prov. xx. 26.

[o] Iſa. lxv. 20. Eccleſ. viii. 11—13.

[p] 2 Sam. xvii. 27, 28. Prov. xxvii. 10.

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ſo they came to me when I fled becauſe of Abſalom thy brother. 8. And behold, *thou haſt* with thee Shimei the ſon of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, [q] which curſed me with a † grievous curſe, in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and [r] I ſware to him by the LORD, ſaying, I will not put thee to death with the ſword. 9. Now therefore [s] hold him not guiltleſs: for thou *art* a wiſe man, and knoweſt what thou oughteſt to do unto him; but [t] his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood. 10. So David [u] ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. 11. And the days that David reigned over Iſrael, [x] *were* forty years: ſeven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jeruſalem.

[q] 2 Sam. xvi. 5.
† Heb. Strong.
[r] 2 Sam. xix. 23.
[s] Exod. xx. 7. & xxii. 28.
[t] Ver. 6.
[u] Pſ. xvi. 9. Acts xiii. 36. Rev. xiv. 13.
[x] 1 Chron. xxix. 26, 27.

v. 1—11. David, the great, the good, now feels the approaches of death, and improves the moment which remains in inſtructions to his ſon.

1. He prefaces his charge to him with the mortality of his condition; and, whilſt he mentions his own death, reminds him that it was the way of all fleſh. Kings muſt die, and after death is judgment, where they muſt anſwer for their adminiſtration before the King of kings.

2. He urges him to a ſtrict adherence to God and his bleſſed ſervice, and not to be diſcouraged by any difficulties, but approve himſelf a man of God, faithful and true, and then he might be aſſured of proſperity, and the continuance of the Divine bleſſing upon himſelf and his poſterity, according to the promiſe God had made him. *Note*, (1.) They who would be faithful to God, have need of courage; and a king, who would be a man of God, needs a tenfold portion of ſtrength and grace. (2.) If we are obedient to God's commands, we may confidently expect the fulfilment of his promiſes. (3.) The beſt advice dying parents can give their children, and the ſureſt to promote their happineſs, is to charge them to walk in God's ways, the end of which will be peace and joy.

3. He gives him particular directions concerning Joab, Barzillai's ſons, and Shimei. Joab, though too big for David to puniſh, is referred to Solomon's wiſdom and juſtice. His treacherous murders, and his inſolence, ought not to be forgotten; and though his head was hoary, the blood which ſtained it forbad it ſhould go down to the grave in peace. Shimei's crime alſo, though during David's life, for his oath's ſake, paſſed by, muſt not be forgotten. His very grievous curſe ſhewed what ſpirit he was of, and his turbulent ſpirit would not fail to provoke the judgment he had once eſcaped. The death he had deſerved therefore would overtake him, and his gray locks muſt be no protection from his guilt. *Note*, (1.) Though long impunity may make the ſinner vainly think the bitterneſs of death is paſt, yet the day of recompence is at hand. (2.) The cry of blood, tho' long ſtifled, after many years ſtrangely breaks out at laſt.—Barzillai's kindneſs is never to be forgotten, and his ſon muſt ſtudy to make his children an ample return, and place them among his beſt friends at his table. *Note*, A grateful heart never forgets old kindneſſes: even the children of our friends, for their ſakes, will ſhare our regard.

4. When he had finiſhed his charge, David cloſed his eyes, and ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the city where he dwelt, after a reign of forty years, the odd ſix months not being reckoned. He died, according to Biſhop Uſher, A. M. 2990, and before Chriſt's birth 1014. *Note*, (1.) The ſweeteſt ſleep of a good man is the ſleep of death, where all his troubles are for ever forgotten. (2.) Kings who build their palaces, ſhould not forget their tombs; a ſmall ſpace muſt ſhortly contain all their greatneſs.

12. ¶ Then [y] ſat Solomon upon the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was eſtabliſhed greatly. 13. ¶ And Adonijah the ſon of Haggith came to Bath-ſheba the mother of Solomon, and ſhe ſaid, [z] Comeſt thou peaceably? And he ſaid, Peaceably. 14. He ſaid moreover, I have ſomewhat to ſay unto thee. And ſhe ſaid, Say on. 15. And he ſaid, Thou knoweſt that [a] the kingdom was mine, and *that* all Iſrael ſet their faces on me, that I ſhould reign: howbeit, [b] the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for [c] it was his from the LORD. 16. And now I aſk one petition of thee, † deny me not. And ſhe ſaid unto him, Say on. 17. And he ſaid, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king (for he will not ſay thee nay) that he give me Abiſhag the Shunammite to wife. 18. And Bath-ſheba ſaid, [d] Well, I will ſpeak for thee unto the king. 19. ¶ Bath-ſheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to ſpeak unto him for Adonijah: and the king roſe up to meet her, and [e] bowed himſelf unto her, and ſat down on his throne, and cauſed a ſeat to be ſet for the king's mother; and [f] ſhe ſat on his right hand. 20. Then ſhe ſaid, I deſire one ſmall petition of thee, *I pray thee* ſay me not nay. And the king ſaid unto her, Aſk on, my mother, for I will not ſay thee nay. 21. And ſhe ſaid, [g] Let Abiſhag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife. 22. And king Solomon anſwered, and ſaid unto his mother, And why doſt thou aſk Abiſhag the Shunammite for Adonijah? [h] aſk for him the kingdom alſo; (for he *is* mine elder brother) even for him, and [i] for Abiathar the prieſt, and for Joab the ſon of Zeruiah. 23. Then king Solomon ſware by the LORD, ſaying, God do ſo to me, and more alſo, if Adonijah have not ſpoken this word againſt his own life. 24. Now therefore, *as* the LORD liveth, which hath eſtabliſhed me, and ſet me on the throne of David my father, and [k] who hath made me an houſe, as he promiſed, Adonijah ſhall be [m] put to death this day. 25. And king Solomon ſent by the hand of Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and he fell upon him that he died.

[y] 2 Chron. i. 1.
[z] 1 Sam. xvi. 4.
[a] Chap. i. 5.
[b] Prov. xxi. 30. Dan. ii. 21.
[c] Pſ. xii. 2. & lv. 21.
† Heb. Refuſe not my face.
[d] Prov. xiv. 15.
[e] Exod. xx. 12. Prov. xxiii. 22.

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[f] Pſ. xlv. 9. Mat. xii. 49.
[g] 2 Sam. iii. 7. Chap. i. 2.
[h] 2 Sam. iii. 7 & xvi. 21.
[i] Chap. i. 7.
[k] Pſ. cxxvii. 1.
[l] 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.
[m] Prov. xxi. 30.

v. 12—25. David being dead, Solomon is ſettled upon his throne, and finds general ſubmiſſion from his ſubjects; but his rival brother brings on himſelf ruin.

1. Adonijah, ſtill entertaining his ambitious views, endeavours to obtain Abiſhag for his wife, hoping from his father's bed to ſtep more eaſily into his throne; but the difficulty was, how to obtain her from Solomon, at whoſe diſpoſal alone ſhe was. He reſolves therefore to make Bath-ſheba his friend, who is ſurpriſed at his viſit, and at firſt afraid, leſt it was with ſome revengeful deſign. He aſſures her he was in peace and friendſhip; has a ſmall requeſt to make; which, to engage her compaſſion and aſſiſtance, he prefaces with his late diſappointment: The kingdom he thought he had a right to by heirſhip, and, as he flattered himſelf, by the general ſuffrage of the people; but ſince the Lord determined otherwiſe, he ſubmitted to neceſſity; it would however be ſome alleviation of his loſs, if he could obtain Abiſhag his father's concubine, which he, as well as Bath-ſheba, might ſuppoſe not unlawful, when it was known the marriage with his father had never been conſummated. Bath-ſheba conſents to be his advocate with her ſon. *Note*, (1.) They who mean no ill themſelves, are unſuſpicious of others. (2.) Dangerous deſigns have often fair pretences.

2. Bathſheba is as good as her word, goes to the king, and is received with all the honour due from a dutiful ſon, and to the king's mother, and eaſily gets a promiſe of conſent to her requeſt, preſuming it to be, as ſhe ſaid, a ſmall thing, and reaſonable to be granted. But how aſtoniſhed is he to hear nothing leſs required for his rival brother, than his father's concubine, and, as he ſharply inſinuates in his reply, except the kingdom itſelf, a greater requeſt could not be made. Far therefore from complying, he juſtly thinks this not within the reach of his promiſe, and ſuch an overt act of treaſon, concerted, as perhaps he had been informed, with Joab and Abiathar, that he ſolemnly reſolves Adonijah ſhall ſuffer for it, and Benaiah is charged to ſee the death-warrant executed upon him. *Note*, (1.) They who have the ear of princes, ſhould well weigh their requeſts, leſt they abuſe their influence to the injury of their benefactor. (2.) A general promiſe, though exceptions may not have been inſerted, ought to be conſtrued as extending only to things neither ſinful nor unreaſonable. (3.) They who cannot be eaſy when they are well, meddle to their harm. (4.) Ambition hath brought many a head to the block.

26. ¶ And unto Abiathar the prieſt ſaid the king, [n] Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields, for thou *art* worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, becauſe thou bareſt the ark of the LORD God before David my father, and becauſe [o] thou haſt been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted. 27. So Solomon thruſt out Abiathar from being prieſt unto the LORD, that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, [p] which he ſpake concerning the houſe of Eli in Shiloh. 28. ¶ Then tidings came to Joab, (for [q] Joab had turned after Adonijah, [r] though he turned not after Abſalom) and Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on [s] the horns of the altar. 29. And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and behold *he is* by the altar: then Solomon ſent Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, ſaying, Go fall upon him. 30. And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the king, Come forth. And he ſaid, Nay, but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, ſaying, Thus ſaid Joab, and thus he anſwered me. 31. And the

[n] Chap. i. 53.
[o] 1 Sam. xxii. 20. Mat. x. 42.
[p] 1 Sam. ii. 33. Numb. xxiii. 19. Mat. v. 18. Luke i. 20.
[q] Chap. i. 7.
[r] Ezek. xxxiii. 12.
[s] Chap. i. 50.

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the king ſaid unto him, Do as he hath ſaid, and [t] fall upon him, and bury him; [u] that thou mayeſt take away the innocent blood which Joab ſhed, from me, and from the houſe of my father. 32. And [x] the LORD ſhall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and ſlew them with the ſword, my father David not knowing *thereof, to wit*, Abner the ſon of Ner, captain of the hoſt of Iſrael, and Amaſa the ſon of Jether, captain of the hoſt of Judah. 33. Their blood ſhall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his ſeed for ever: but [y] upon David, and upon his ſeed, and upon his houſe, and upon his throne, ſhall there be peace for ever from the LORD. 34. So Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and ſlew him; and he was buried in his own houſe in the wilderneſs.

t Exod. xxi. 14. u Gen. ix. 6. Deut. xix. 12, 13. x Gen. iv. 11. Judg. ix. 24. Ver. 44. Pſ. vii. 16. y Prov. xxv. 5. Iſa. ix. 6, 7. Luke ii. 14. Phil. iv. 9.

v. 26—34. Abiathar and Joab had both been aſſiſting to Adonijah's firſt attempt, and ſeem, *v.* 22. to have been privy to this; they therefore are next to be puniſhed. *Note*, Let no ſinner, little or great, think to eſcape in the day of recompenſe.

1. Abiathar is degraded, though deſerving death, for his treaſon and oppoſition to the declared will of that God, at whoſe altar he ſerved; yet, in conſideration of his holy office, and the ſufferings he had endured for David's ſake, Solomon changes his ſentence into baniſhment to his own eſtate at Anathoth, removing him from his office, and forbidding him the court. Thus at laſt was the threatning againſt the houſe of Eli fulfilled, and the prieſthood tranſlated from his family into the line of Eleazar. *Note*, (1.) God's word will be fulfilled in its ſeaſon, though ſometimes he bears long. (2.) Rebellion in a prieſt, who ſhould teach loyalty, is doubly culpable. (3.) Kindneſs ſhewn to God's ſuffering ſaints ſhall ſurely be recompenſed.

2. Joab is executed. Juſtly expecting his lot would fall next, he ſeeks to ſave his life by flying to the horns of the altar. Thither Benaiah is ordered to follow him, and becauſe Joab refuſed to depart thence, is at firſt afraid to ſlay him there, and returns to Solomon; but he knew, from *Exod.* xxi. 14. that they were never deſigned to afford an aſylum to a murderer, and therefore bids him put him to death, as the juſt puniſhment for his complicated crimes, which brought not only his hoary head with ignominy to the grave, but entailed a curſe alſo on his poſterity: whilſt ſuch an exemplary piece of juſtice Solomon well concludes would be the removal of the guilt of blood from his own houſe, which, if unpuniſhed, would cry againſt the negligent ſword of the magiſtrate; and the removal of ſo turbulent a ſpirit as Joab's, would conduce alſo to the peace of the kingdom. Thus fell Joab, according to David's orders, and was buried at his country ſeat, which lay in the wilderneſs. *Note*, (1.) Nothing can appeaſe the cries of innocent blood, but the blood of the murderer. (2.) Wicked men entail a curſe on their poſterity. (3.) A negligent magiſtrate will bear the ſin of the blood he is not careful to avenge. (4.) Though human laws cannot be ſatisfied with any thing leſs than blood for blood, yet if the greateſt ſinner, if even a murderer, fly to the horns of the true altar, to the atoning blood of the bleeding lamb of God, he ſhall never be dragged thence.

35. ¶ And the king [z] put Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada in his room over the hoſt; and [a] Zadok the prieſt did the king put in the room of Abiathar. 36. ¶ And the king ſent and called for Shimei, and ſaid unto him, Build thee an houſe in Jeruſalem, and [b] dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither. 37. For it ſhall be *that* on the day thou goeſt out, and paſſeſt over [c] the brook Kidron, thou ſhalt know for certain, that thou ſhalt ſurely die: [d] thy blood ſhall be upon thine own head. 38. And Shimei ſaid unto the king, The ſaying *is* good; as my lord the king hath ſaid, ſo will thy ſervant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jeruſalem many days. 39. And it came to paſs at the end of three years, that two of the ſervants of Shimei ran away unto Achiſh ſon of Maachah king of Gath: and they told Shimei, ſaying, Behold, thy ſervants *be* in Gath. 40. And Shimei aroſe and ſaddled his aſs, and [e] went to Gath to Achiſh to ſeek his ſervants: and Shimei went and brought his ſervants from Gath. 41. And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jeruſalem to Gath, and was come again. 42. And the king ſent and called for Shimei, and ſaid unto him, Did I not make thee to [f] ſwear by the LORD, and proteſted unto thee, ſaying, Know for a certain, *that* on the day thou goeſt out, and walkeſt abroad any whither, that thou ſhalt ſurely die? and thou ſaidſt unto me, The word *that* I have heard *is* good. 43. Why then haſt thou not kept [g] the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have charged thee with? 44. The king ſaid moreover to Shimei, [h] Thou knoweſt all the wickedneſs which thine heart is privy to, that thou didſt [i] to David my father: therefore [k] the LORD ſhall return thy wickedneſs upon thine own head; 45. And king Solomon *ſhall be* [l] bleſſed, and the throne of David ſhall be eſtabliſhed before the LORD for ever. 46. So the king commanded Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, [m] which went out and fell upon him, that he died: and [n] the kingdom was eſtabliſhed in the hand of Solomon.

z Num. xxv. 11, 13. a 1 Sam. ii. 35. Ver. 27. b Prov. xx. 3. c 2 Sam. xv. 23. d Joſh. ii. 19. 1012. e Prov. xv. 27. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 10. f Pſ. xv. 4.

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g Eccleſ. viii. 2. Ezek. xvii. 19. h John viii. 9. Rom. ii. 15. i 2 Sam. xvi. 5. k Ver. 23. Prov. v. 22. l Num. xxv. 11. Pſ. cvi. 30. m Luke xix. 27. n Prov. xxix. 4.

v. 35—46. Abiathar being depoſed, and Joab executed, Zadok is advanced to the prieſthood, and Benaiah to the poſt of captain-general. Shimei yet remained alive; but his day is coming.

1. Solomon cites Shimei to appear before him, and though he deſerved, and probably expected, to ſhare Joab's fate, the king puts him on his good behaviour, confines him to Jeruſalem, and forbids him on pain of death to depart. Whilſt under his eye, he cannot do that miſchief that he might have plotted in the country. Shimei acknowledges, that the condition is much better than he had reaſon to hope for, thanks the king for his lenity and goodneſs, and ſolemnly ſwears to conform to his injunctions. *Note*, (1.) The ſoul that periſhes will be made to own, he ſinned againſt his own mercies. (2.) They who wilfully diſobey the commands of the heavenly king, can expect only to meet with the juſt reward of their deeds.

2. Three years Shimei ſubmitted to his confinement, and might have lived long and happily at Jeruſalem; but God had decreed he ſhould not come to the ſepulchre of his fathers in peace. Two fugitive ſervants having taken refuge at Gath, truſting probably upon his reſtraint from following them; urged by covetouſneſs, and ſupported with hopes of ſecreſy or impunity, Shimei goes after them, and brings them back to Jeruſalem. But information is laid before the king, Shimei is cited to appear, convicted, and condemned, not only for his diſobedience to the king, but for his perjury before God, and his former crime againſt David. He knew the wickedneſs of his heart, and might have read in his preſent ſentence the righteous judgment of God; and whilſt his impotent curſes now return on his own head, Solomon humbly concludes the bleſſing of God will be upon himſelf, and the throne of David be eſtabliſhed. Benaiah executes the ſentence, and Shimei is ſlain. Thus all Solomon's enemies being removed, his kingdom was the more confirmed. *Note*, (1.) Perjury is a crime for which the avenging God will viſit. (2.) The heart is privy to much more wickedneſs than ever appeared without. (3.) God knoweth the ſecrets of the heart, and will call men to account for their ſecret ſins. (4.) The execution of the wicked is the eſtabliſhment of the king's throne. (5.) When the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall ariſe to judgment, he will remember the hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt himſelf, his cauſe, and people, and their own tongues ſhall fall on them to their eternal ruin.

CHAP. III.

Though Solomon's reign began with blood, he is deſigned to be a prince of peace. We have here, 1. *His marriage to Pharaoh's daughter*, ver. 1. 2. *A view of his religion*, ver. 2—4. 3. *His prayer to God for wiſdom, and the anſwer to it*, ver. 5—15. 4. *His deciſion between two harlots*, ver. 16—28.

1. AND Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and [a] took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, [b] until he had made an end of building his own houſe, and the houſe of the LORD, and [c] the wall of Jeruſalem round about. 2. Only the people ſacrificed in high places, [d] becauſe there was no houſe built unto the name of the LORD, until thoſe days. 3. And [e] Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the ſtatutes of David his father: only he ſacrificed and burnt incenſe in high places. 4. And the king went to Gibeon to ſacrifice there; [g] for that *was* the great high place: [h] a thouſand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

a Chap. vii. 8. b Chap. vii. 1. c Chap. ix. 15. d Deut. xii. 5. e 2 Sam. xii. 24. 1 John iv. 19. f Chap. ii. 3. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. g 1 Chron. xvi. 39. h Luke vii. 47.

v. 1—4. Solomon being now eſtabliſhed in his kingdom, ſeeks to confirm it by an alliance with the moſt potent of the neighbouring princes.

1. He takes the daughter of Pharaoh to wife, who is generally ſuppoſed to have been a proſelyte, as it was only towards the latter end of his reign that his taking ſtrange wives is cenſured; and we find none of the idols of Egypt among the gods

of his wives. *Note*, The Lord Jeſus hath thus eſpouſed his church, once an alien, but drawn by the cords of his love, and converted unto him, a glorious church, more beautifully arrayed in divine grace, than the daughter of Pharaoh in cloth of gold, and garments of needle-work.

2. The manner of ſacrificing in thoſe days was in the high places. Gibeon, where the old tabernacle ſtood, was moſt frequented; thither Solomon repaired, and at one time offered a thouſand ſacrifices. He counted no expence too great, which was deſigned for the honour of God. Some have cenſured this practice as evil in Solomon; but the intimation given, that as yet God's houſe was not built, ſeems to plead its lawfulneſs, and the appearance of God to him in Gibeon, proves the acceptance of his offerings.

3. A bleſſed teſtimony is borne to the uprightneſs of his heart and ways before God. He loved the Lord, delighted in his worſhip, and obſerved his ſtatutes, walking as his father had done before him, in holy obedience to the revealed will of God. *Note*, (1.) It is a bleſſed thing to ſee children walking in the ſteps of their pious parents. (2.) The greateſt character man can poſſeſs, is to have God bear teſtimony to the unfeigned faith and love that is in him.

5. ¶ [i] In Gibeon the LORD appeared unto Solomon
[k] in a dream [l] by night: and God ſaid, [m] Aſk what I ſhall
give thee. 6. And Solomon ſaid, Thou haſt ſhewed
unto thy ſervant David my father great mercy, according
as he [n] walked before thee in truth and in righteouſneſs,
and in uprightneſs of heart with thee, and [o] thou
haſt kept for him this great kindneſs, that thou haſt
given him a ſon to ſit on his throne, as *it is* this day.
7. And now, O LORD my God, [p] thou haſt made thy
ſervant king inſtead of David my father, and [q] I *am but*
a little child: I know not *how* to go out, or come in.
8. And thy ſervant *is* in the midſt of thy people [r] which
thou haſt choſen, [s] a great people that cannot be numbred
nor counted for multitude. 9. [t] Give therefore thy
ſervant [u] an † underſtanding heart, [x] to judge thy people,
[y] that I may diſcern between good and bad: for [z] who is
able to judge this thy ſo great a people? 10. And the
ſpeech pleaſed the LORD, that Solomon had aſked
this thing. 11. And God ſaid unto him, Becauſe thou
haſt aſked this thing, and haſt not aſked for thyſelf
long life, neither haſt aſked riches for thyſelf, nor haſt
aſked the life of thine enemies, but haſt aſked for thyſelf
underſtanding to diſcern judgment; 12. Behold,
[a] I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given
thee [b] a wiſe and an underſtanding heart, [c] ſo that there
was none like thee before thee, neither after thee ſhall
any ariſe like unto thee. 13. And [d] I have alſo given thee
that which thou haſt not aſked, both riches and honour:
ſo that there ſhall not be any among the kings like
unto thee all thy days. 14. And if thou wilt walk in
my ways, to keep my ſtatutes and my commandments,
[e] as thy father David did walk, [f] then I will lengthen thy
days. 15. And Solomon [g] awoke, and behold *it was*
a dream: and he came to Jeruſalem, and ſtood before
the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and [h] offered up
burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made
a feaſt to all his ſervants.

i Exod. xx. 24. 1 Chron. xvi. 39.
k Gen. xxviii. 12. Num. xii. 6. Job xxxiii. 14, 15.
l Pſ. xvii. 3.
m Mat. vii. 7. John xvi. 23.
n 2 Kings xx. 3. Pſ. xv. 2.
o 2 Sam. vii. 12.
p Dan. ii. 21.
q Mat. v. 3. & xviii. 3, 4.
r Deut. vii. 7, 8.
s Gen. xvi. 10.
t Jam. i. 5. & iii. 17.
u Prov. iii. 13—15. & xvi. 16.
† Heb. Hearing.
x Pſ. lxxii. 1, 2.
y Heb. v. 14.
z 2 Cor. ii. 16. & iii. 5.
a Mat. vii. 7. 1 John v. 15.
b Prov. i. 2, &c.
c Chap. iv. 29. Eccleſ. i. 16. Col. ii. 3.
d Mat. vi. 33. Eph. iii. 20.
e Phil. iii. 17. Heb. xiii. 7.
f Pſ. xci. 16. Prov. iii. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
g Jer. xxxi. 26.
h Pſ. cxvi. 12—14.

v. 5—15. Solomon having waited upon God, he mercifully viſits him in return.

1. The ſame night after he had ſpent his day with him, in a viſion, by a ſupernatural dream, God reveals himſelf to him, and makes him a gracious offer of whatever he ſhould requeſt. *Note*, (1.) They who wait upon God in prayer and praiſe, will find him ſpeedy in his returns of benediction. (2.) When the outward ſenſes are locked up in ſleep, the ſouls of God's people are ſtill capable of divine manifeſtations, and may, and ſometimes do, receive gracious communications from him. (3.) God ſtill ſays to every praying believer, What is thy requeſt, and it ſhall be given thee.

2. Solomon's pious choice is recorded. Though aſleep to the eyes of men, yet awake to God, he pours out his grateful acknowledgments, and puts up his fervent prayer. *Note*, That which engages us moſt when we are awake, even in ſleep will ſtill be our employment. Many a fervent prayer the ſpirit hath breathed, when the body hath been wrapped in ſlumbers. He mentions with deep gratitude God's mercy to his father David whilſt alive, and now after his death, in bringing himſelf his ſon to the throne. His father's piety he ſpeaks of honourably, as what he wiſhed to imitate; his own inſufficiency for the high ſtation in which God had placed him, he humbly confeſſes, being but a child in his own eyes in wiſdom and underſtanding, and his vaſt kingdom requiring the deepeſt judgment to govern it aright; therefore he requeſts an underſtanding heart, that he might be enabled to adminiſter impartial juſtice, and to reign in uprightneſs to God's glory, and for his people's good. *Note*, (1.) A good child will remember his father's excellencies to imitate them, and draw a veil over his ſins. (2.) The wiſeſt men are moſt ſenſible of their own ignorance. (3.) They who feel moſt the weight and difficulty of their office, will be beſt enabled to fulfil it, becauſe they will be looking for ſtrength and wiſdom from above. (4.) An underſtanding heart is the gift of God.

3. God favourably accepted his requeſt. He was pleaſed with the wiſdom of his choice, in preferring ſpiritual bleſſings beyond temporal, the glory of God before his own advantage; therefore he not only beſtows the wiſdom he aſked, but superadds riches and honour; and promiſes farther, long life to enjoy them, on condition he approved himſelf faithful. *Note*, (1.) When we ſeek God's kingdom in the firſt place, he hath promiſed to add all other things unto us. (2.) Riches and honours are then truly bleſſings, when God beſtows the wiſdom and grace to improve them aright. (3.) If any man lack ſpiritual wiſdom, let him aſk of God, who giveth liberally, beyond all we can aſk or think.

4. Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream; yet not as theſe uſually are, empty and vain, but followed with the real communication of the wiſdom then promiſed him. On his return therefore to Jeruſalem, he offers a great and grateful ſacrifice, and rejoices before the ark of the covenant, with all his ſervants, who partook in his joy, and ſhared in his entertainment.

16. ¶ Then came there two women *that were* [i] harlots,
unto the king, and ſtood before him. 17. And the
one woman ſaid, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in
one houſe, and I was delivered of a child, with her in the
houſe. 18. And it came to paſs the third day after that
I was delivered, that this woman was delivered alſo: and
we *were* together; *there was* no ſtranger with us in the
houſe, ſave we two in the houſe. 19. And this woman's
child died in the night; becauſe ſhe overlaid it. 20.
And ſhe aroſe at midnight, and took my ſon from beſide
me, while thine handmaid ſlept, and laid it in her
boſom, and laid her dead child in my boſom. 21. And
when I roſe in the morning [k] to give my child ſuck, behold
it was dead: but when I had conſidered it in the
morning, behold, it was not my ſon which I did bear.
22. And the other woman ſaid, Nay; but the living *is* my
ſon, and the dead *is* thy ſon: and this ſaid, No; but the
dead *is* thy ſon, and the living *is* my ſon. Thus they
ſpake before the king. 23. Then ſaid the king, The
one ſaith, This *is* my ſon that liveth, and thy ſon *is* the
dead: and the other ſaith, Nay: but thy ſon *is* the dead,
and my ſon *is* the living. 24. And the king ſaid,
Bring me a ſword. And they brought a ſword before
the king. 25. And the king ſaid, [l] Divide the living
child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the
other. 26. Then ſpake the woman whoſe the living
child *was*, unto the king (for [m] her bowels † yerned upon
her ſon) and ſhe ſaid, O my lord, give her the living
child, and in no wiſe ſlay it: but the other ſaid, Let it
be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide *it*. 27. Then the
king anſwered, and ſaid, Give her the living child, and
in no wiſe ſlay it; ſhe *is* the mother thereof. 28. And
all Iſrael heard of the judgment which the king had
judged, and [n] they feared the king: for they ſaw that
[o] the wiſdom of God *was* in him, to do judgment.

i Deut. xxiii. 17. Joſh. ii. 1.
k Gen. xxi. 7. 1 Sam. i. 23. Lam. iv. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 1, 3.
l Prov. xxv. 3.
m Iſa. xlix. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20.
† Heb. were hot.
n Eccleſ. vii. 19.
o Iſa. xi. 3.

v. 16—28. Soon the ſurpaſſing wiſdom of Solomon begins to appear; a ſingular inſtance of which is here recorded, as happening, ſome think, on the very day of his return to Jeruſalem.

1. A very difficult caſe comes before him for his deciſion. Two women, ſuppoſed to be harlots, living in one houſe together, were each of them alone delivered of a ſon, within three days of each other. One of them having overlaid her child in the night, whilſt the other ſlept, laid her dead ſon in the place of the living one. This occaſioned, the next morning, a fierce diſpute about the living child, each claiming it as their own; and it ſeems the matter had been carried to ſome inferior court, and is referred to the king's deciſion, before whom the plaintiff opens her caſe, and the defendant as ſolemnly denies the allegation. The queſtion then was, how to diſcover the truth, where there could be no evidence but the parties, and theſe ſwore directly contrary to each other. *Note*, (1.) The perils of helpleſs infancy are ſo many, that it is wondrous how we eſcape them. (2.) The tendereſt nurſe may ſometimes, by accidents, be unhappy, where ſhe is without blame. (3.) Many a harlot, it is to be feared now, would rather contend for the dead child, than the living; ſo loſt are proſtitutes uſually to natural

affection. (4.) They who ſit on the ſeat of judgment, need deep penetration to ſever truth from falſhood.

2. A very wiſe determination is made on the trial. Solomon calls for a ſword, and, ſince the diſputants ſeemed ſo eager in their claims, bids the living child be divided between them: a verdict that appeared ſtrangely inhuman, and a ſport of their miſery; but the event ſhewed how judicious. The real mother, whoſe bowels yearned for her ſon, cannot bear to ſee the glittering ſword, ſtays the executioner's arms, and eagerly quits her claim, rather than her ſon ſhould bleed; whilſt the pretended mother, by acquieſcing in the judgment, evidenced her fraud by her inhumanity. The caſe now was plain, and Solomon wiſely decrees the living child to the tender and affectionate parent. *Note*, An inhuman mother is a monſter! and if but to conſent to divide a diſputed child was ſhocking, how much more dreadful is many a harlot's abandoned practice, that by abortion ſeeks to deſtroy the fruit of her womb, or murder the babe, when born, to conceal her ſhame.

3. The wiſdom of the deciſion ſtruck the hearers with reverence and awe, and the fame of it ſpread abroad; ſo that none dared do an unjuſt thing, however difficult to detect; for they ſaw the God of wiſdom had given their king ſuch penetration, that nothing could be concealed from his piercing eye. *Note*, (1.) They who have the greateſt natural talents, muſt remember to whom they are indebted for them. (2.) Fear of detection and puniſhment from man, is a greater reſtraint upon evil doers, than all the terrors of God's threatned wrath.

CHAP. IV.

We have here, 1. *The magnificence of Solomon's court*, (1.) *His miniſters of ſtate*, ver. 1—6. (2.) *The purveyors of his houſehold*, ver. 7—19. (3.) *Their office*, ver. 27, 28. (4.) *The proviſion for his table*, ver. 22, 23. 2. *The extent of his dominion*, ver. 21—24. 3. *The number and peace of his ſubjects*, ver. 20—25. 4. *His ſtables*, ver. 26. 5. *His great reputation for wiſdom and learning*, ver. 29—34.

1. SO king Solomon was [a] king over all Iſrael. 2. And theſe *were* [b] the princes which he had, Azariah the ſon of Zadok the † prieſt: 3. Elihoreph and Ahiah, the ſons of Shiſha, ‡ ſcribes: [c] Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Ahilud, the § recorder. 4. And Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada *was* over the hoſt: and Zadok and Abiathar *were* the prieſts. 5. And Azariah the ſon of Nathan *was* over the officers: and Zabud the ſon of Nathan, *was* principal officer, *and* the king's friend. 6. And Ahiſhar *was* over the houſhold: and Adoniram the ſon of Abda *was* over the ‖ tribute. 7. ¶ And Solomon had twelve officers over all Iſrael, which provided victuals for the king and his houſhold: each man his month in a year made proviſion. 8. And theſe *are* their names: † The ſon of Hur in mount Ephraim. 9. ‡ The ſon of Dekar, in Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Beth-ſhemeſh, and Elon-beth-hanan. 10. The ſon of Heſed, in Aruboth: to him *pertained* Sochoh, and all the land of Hepher. 11. The ſon of Abinadad, in all the region of Dor, which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife. 12. Baana the ſon of Ahilud, *to him pertained* Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-ſhean, which *is* by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Beth-ſhean to Abel-meholah, *even* unto *the place that is* beyond Jokneam. 13. The ſon of Geber, in Ramoth-gilead: to him *pertained* the towns of Jair the ſon of Manaſſeh, which *are* in Gilead: to him *alſo pertained* the region of Argob, which *is* in Baſhan, threeſcore great cities with walls, and braſen bars. 14. Ahinadab the ſon of Iddo *had* Mahanaim. 15. Ahimaaz *was* in Naphtali; he alſo took Baſmath the daughter of Solomon to wife. 16. Baanah the ſon of Huſhai *was* in Aſher and in Aloth. 17. Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Paruah, in Iſſachar. 18. Shimei the ſon of Elah, in Benjamin. 19. Geber the ſon of Uri *was* in the country of Gilead, *in* the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Baſhan; and § *he was* the only officer which *was* in the land.

[a] 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[b] Exod. xviii. 21.
† Or, chief officer.
‡ Or, ſecretaries.
[c] 2 Sam. xx. 24.
§ Or, remembrancer.
‖ Or, levy. Chap. v. 14.
† Or, Ben-hur.
‡ Or, Ben-decker, &c.
§ Heb. There was one officer in the land.

v. 1—19. In greatneſs as wiſdom diſtinguiſhed, Solomon's magnificence begins to appear. His kingdom now was firmly eſtabliſhed, and his court and houſhold are here deſcribed.

1. His chief officers. They are, for the moſt part, ſuch as his father had appointed, or their children. Solomon was ſo well ſatiſfied in their abilities and integrity, that he deſired no better ſervants. Zadok had now the precedence of Abiathar, who had been degraded, yet perhaps not totally excluded from the prieſt's office. *Note*, Old ſervants in a family, if proved faithful, are valuable poſſeſſions, and not to be parted with.

2. His purveyors: twelve, diſperſed through the land, each in his month to ſupply the king's court and family; by which regulation no part was burdened, and plenty of all things provided. Geber, the laſt of thoſe mentioned, who was in the country of Sihon and Og, is ſaid to be the only officer in the land, becauſe his ſon and Ahinadab were ſubordinate to him; or, as it may be rendered, *there was one officer in the land*. The Jews interpret it of the officer, who, in the intercalated month, provided, and was not limited to any place. *Note*, (1.) They who are great, may appear great. He who allotted men their ſtations, allows they ſhould live according to them. (2.) Wiſe management, and good œconomy, is needful even for kings: the greateſt revenues without it are eaſily ſquandered.

20. ¶ Judah and Iſrael [d] *were* many, as the ſand, which *is* by the ſea in multitude, [e] eating and drinking, and making merry. 21. And Solomon [f] reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philiſtines, and unto the border of Egypt: [g] they brought preſents, and ſerved Solomon all the days of his life. 22. ¶ And Solomon's † proviſion for one day was thirty meaſures of [h] fine flour, and threeſcore meaſures of meal, 23. Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the paſtures, and an hundred ſheep, beſides harts and roe-bucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl. 24. For he had dominion over all *the region* on this ſide the river, from Tiphſah even to Azzah, [i] over all the kings on this ſide the river: and he had peace on all ſides round about him. 25. And Judah and Iſrael [k] dwelt ſafely, every man [l] under his vine, and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-ſheba, all the days of Solomon. 26. ¶ And Solomon had [m] forty thouſand ſtalls of horſes for his chariots, and twelve thouſand horſemen. 27. And thoſe officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing. 28. Barley alſo and ſtraw for the horſes, and dromedaries, brought they unto the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.

[d] Pſ. lxxii. 8. Prov. xiv. 28.
[e] Eccleſ. ix. 7.
[f] Dan. iv. 17. Rev. xi. 15.
[g] Pſ. lxxii. 10. Iſa. xlix. 7.
† Heb. Bread.
[h] Rom. xiv. 17.
[i] Pſ. lxxii. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[k] Iſa. lx. 18. Jer. xxiii. 6.
[l] Mic. iv. 4. Zech. iii. 10.
[m] Deut. xvii. 16.

v. 20—28. Happy art thou, O Iſrael, may we ſay, under ſuch a king, and bleſſed with ſuch proſperity.

1. Solomon's kingdom was prodigiouſly extenſive: not only Iſrael ſubmitted to his gentle ſway, but the nations, which his father had conquered by arms, from Egypt to Euphrates, chearfully ſerved the ſon, and brought him preſents in token of their ſubjection; nor thought of ſtruggling under an adminiſtration ſo wiſe and equitable. *Note*, More extenſive is the dominion of the Prince of Peace, even from pole to pole; and they who know the bleſſings of his government, count their ſervice perfect freedom.

2. The people of Iſrael and Judah were immenſely numerous, and lived in affluence. Their families grew like flocks, according to the promiſe, *Gen.* xxii. 17. Safe and ſecure from all their enemies, they ſat every man under his vine and his fig-tree, their property ſecure, their plenty abundant, and their hearts filled with joy and gladneſs, in the enjoyment of the bleſſings God had beſtowed upon them. *Note*, More numerous far are God's ſpiritual Iſrael, more ſecure their portion, more ſubſtantially abiding their joys; *their kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

3. Vaſt was the daily proviſion for Solomon's table, ſufficient to ſerve, at two pounds of bread each, beſides meat, no leſs than 29,160 men. Our greater Solomon ſupplies a more numerous family with daily bread, and this not that bread which periſheth, but which endureth to everlaſting life.

4. His chariots, horſes, and horſemen, were ſuch as became his other magnificence, and theſe all amply and regularly ſupplied by the ſame purveyors as furniſhed his table.

29. ¶ And [n] God gave Solomon wiſdom and underſtanding, exceeding much, and [o] largeneſs of heart, even as the ſand that *is* on the ſea-ſhore. 30. And Solomon's wiſdom excelled the wiſdom of all the children of [p] the eaſt country, and all the wiſdom of Egypt. 31. For [q] he was wiſer than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and [r] Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the ſons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. 32. And he ſpake three thouſand [s] proverbs: and his [t] ſongs were a thouſand and five. 33. And he ſpake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall: he ſpake alſo of beaſts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes. 34. And there came of [u] all people to hear the wiſdom of Solomon,

[n] Chap. iii. 12. Ecclus xlvii. 14, 17.
[o] 2 Cor. vi. 11—13.
[p] Dan. iv. 7. & v. 11, 12.
[q] Col. ii. 3.
[r] 1 Chron. xxv. 5.
[s] Prov. i. 1.
[t] Cant. i. 1.
[u] Chap. x. 1. Mat. xii. 42.

Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wiſdom.

v. 29—34. Vaſt were his dominions, prodigious his revenues, but greater than both were his treaſures of wiſdom.

1. God gave him an underſtanding deep as the great abyſs of waters, and large as the ſand on the ſhore, capacious, diſtinct, and comprehenſive. Chaldea and Egypt afforded none equal or like him, and the wiſeſt of his cotemporaries acknowledged his ſuperiority. *Note*, (1.) Every good gift cometh from above. God teacheth man knowledge. (2.) Uncommon abilities are a greater obligation to uſe them with uncommon diligence to the glory of the giver.

2. His productions were a proof of the wiſdom he poſſeſſed. As a ſage, he ſpake three thouſand proverbs, wiſe ſayings, and obſervations, for moral conduct. As a poet, his compoſitions were numerous as exquiſite, amounting to a thouſand and five. As a philoſopher, he dived into the ſecrets of nature, deſcribed all herbs, birds, beaſts, with their nature, uſe, and qualities. *Note*, (1.) That is valuable wiſdom which communicates its diſcoveries for general uſefulneſs. (2.) A poetic genius is a bleſſing, when, like Solomon's, our ſongs ſpeak of the beauties of our Immanuel.

3. The fame of ſuch wiſdom could not but ſpread abroad, and, curious to hear, or deſirous to learn, people from all regions flocked to his court; and diſtant kings ſent their embaſſadors, by perſonal converſe to bring them ſpecimens of his ſuperlative underſtanding. *Note*, They who would be wiſe to ſalvation, muſt go to Jeſus to learn, and they will find a greater than Solomon is here.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter we have an account of the preparations Solomon made for the temple and his other buildings. 1. *Hiram congratulates Solomon's acceſſion to the throne*, ver. 1. 2. *He ſignifies to him his deſign to build the temple, and deſires him to furniſh him with workmen*, ver. 2—6. 3. *Hiram agrees to do it*, ver. 7—9. 4. *Solomon's work is accordingly well done, and Hiram's workmen well paid*, ver. 10—18.

1. AND Hiram king of Tyre ſent his ſervants unto Solomon (for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father) for [a] Hiram was ever a lover of David. 2. And [b] Solomon ſent to Hiram, ſaying, 3. Thou knoweſt how that David my father could not build an houſe unto the name of the LORD his God, [c] for the wars which were about him on every ſide, until [d] the LORD put them under the ſoles of his feet. 4. But [e] now the LORD my God hath given me reſt on every ſide, *ſo that there is* † neither adverſary nor evil occurrent. 5. And behold I purpoſe to build an houſe unto the name of the LORD my God, [f] as the LORD ſpake unto David my father, ſaying, Thy ſon, whom I will ſet upon thy throne in thy room, he ſhall build an houſe unto my name. 6. Now therefore command thou, that they hew me cedar-trees out of Lebanon, and my ſervants ſhall be with thy ſervants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy ſervants, according to all that thou ſhalt appoint: for thou knoweſt that *there is* not among us any that can ſkill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians. 7. ¶ And it came to paſs, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and ſaid, [g] Bleſſed *be* the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wiſe ſon over this great people. 8. And Hiram ſent to Solomon, ſaying, I have conſidered the things which thou ſenteſt unto me for: *and* I will do all thy deſire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. 9. My ſervants ſhall bring *them* down from Lebanon unto the ſea: and I will convey them by ſea in flotes, unto the place that thou ſhalt appoint me, and will cauſe them to be diſcharged there, and thou ſhalt receive *them*: and thou ſhalt accompliſh my deſire, in giving food for my houſhold.

[a] 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Chron. xiv. 1.
[b] 2 Chron. ii. 3.
[c] 1 Chron. xxii. 8. & xxviii. 3.
[d] Eph. i. 22.
[e] Acts ix. 31.
† Heb. No Satan.
[f] 2 Sam. vii. 13.
[g] Dan. iii. 28.

v. 1—9. Hiram king of Tyre had ever been a friend to David, and therefore no ſooner hears of his death, than he ſends ambaſſadors to condole with Solomon, and to congratulate him on his acceſſion. *Note*, (1.) Condolance with the afflicted is kind. (2.) A faithful friend loves the children for the ſake of the father.

1. Solomon takes occaſion from Hiram's civility to cement the union between them; and being now about to build the temple, he ſends to beg his Tyrian workmen to prepare the materials. Hiram knew it had been his father's deſign, but frequent wars prevented him; now Solomon is in peace, he reſolves to proſecute the work, for which David had provided, and according to the divine promiſe concerning him, *v.* 5. He offers therefore to pay handſomely for the aſſiſtance, the Tyrians being the moſt ingenious artiſts, and to ſend his own ſervants to aſſiſt Hiram's, in the felling and preparing the timber at Lebanon. *Note*, (1.) When we are at reſt from outward trials, we ſhould give greater diligence to build up the ſpiritual temple within. (2.) We may put our hands comfortably to that work, in which we have the Divine promiſe to encourage us. (3.) They have often moſt of this world's ingenuity, who have no knowledge of Iſrael's God. (4.) God can employ thoſe in building his church, who have themſelves no part nor lot in it.

2. Hiram readily conſents to the propoſal, rejoiced to find his friend David had left ſo wiſe a ſon behind him, and bleſſing God for the mercy. He ſtipulates to fell the timber, and tranſport it by floats to the neareſt port, which was Joppa, 2 *Chron.* ii. 16. and deſires to be repaid in corn, of which the Tyrians were deſtitute, and in which Canaan abounded. *Note*, (1.) In every bargain let the conditions be clear, and diſputes will be prevented. (2.) Every country hath its ſtaple commodity, by exchange of which, intercourſe is maintained with its neighbours. It is our happineſs, that with the corn of Canaan we poſſeſs alſo the ſhipping of Tyre.

10. So Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir-trees, *according to* all his deſire. 11. And Solomon [h] gave Hiram twenty thouſand meaſures of wheat *for* food to his houſhold, and twenty meaſures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year. 12. And the LORD gave Solomon wiſdom, [i] as he promiſed him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they two made a league together. 13. ¶ And king Solomon raiſed a † levy out of all Iſrael; and the levy was thirty thouſand men. 14. And he ſent them to Lebanon, ten thouſand a month by courſes: a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at home: and [k] Adoniram *was* over the levy. 15. And Solomon had threeſcore and ten thouſand that bare burdens, and fourſcore thouſand hewers in the mountains: 16. Beſides the chief of Solomon's officers which *were* over the work, three thouſand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work. 17. And the king commanded, and they brought [l] great ſtones, coſtly ſtones, *and* hewed ſtones, to lay the foundation of the houſe. 18. And Solomon's builders, and [m] Hiram's builders did hew *them*, and the ſtone-ſquarers: ſo they prepared timber and ſtones to build the houſe.

[h] 1 Tim. v. 18.
[i] Chap. iii. 12.
† Heb. Tribute of men. Chap. ix. 21.
[k] Chap. iv. 6.
[l] 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. xxi. 19.
[m] Iſa. lx. 10.

v. 10—18. The bargain being made, each party ſet about the fulfilment of it.

1. Hiram felled the cedar and fir in Lebanon, and Solomon ſent him yearly the promiſed ſupply of corn and oil. *Note*, Fair reckonings make firm friendſhips.

2. Solomon's wiſdom is again obſerved on this occaſion, both in the preparations he made for this great work, and his prudent cultivation of Hiram's friendſhip, which was of ſo great uſe to him; and it ſubſiſted all their days. *Note*, True friends only part in death.

3. Solomon, to haſten the work, ſent a number of labourers with Hiram's ſervants. Thirty thouſand Iſraelites were employed, ten thouſand of which wrought alternately every three months, and were then relieved. Three thouſand three hundred overſeers, with Adoniram at their head, directed the work; and a hundred and fifty thouſand ſlaves conſtantly laboured in hewing and carrying the ſtones and timber. *Note*, (1.) Where the heart is ſet upon the work of building up God's church, we ſhall do it with our might. (2.) In Chriſt's ſervice all have their ſeveral allotments; and it is not ſo much what place we fill, as what fidelity we ſhew, which he will regard and reward.

4. The ſtones being prepared, the foundation is laid: they were rich and coſtly, to ſupport the glorious ſuperſtructure. *Note*, Chriſt is this precious foundation; built upon him, every believer's ſoul exceeds even Solomon's temple in all his glory, as being the everlaſting habitation of God through the Spirit.

CHAP. VI.

The temple was one of the wonders of the world, and, taking in its ſpiritual ſignificancy, one of the glories of the church. Here is, 1. *The time when it was built*, ver. 1. 2. *The dimenſions of it*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *The ſeveral parts of it*, ver. 4—36. 4. *The ſilence*

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ſilence with which it was built, ver. 7. 5. *God's gracious meſſage*, ver. 11—13. 6. *The time it took to finiſh it*, ver. 37, 38.

1. AND it came to paſs in the four hundred and fourſcore year after the children of Iſrael were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Iſrael, in the month of Zif, which *is* the ſecond month, that [a] he began to build the houſe of the LORD. 2. And the houſe which king Solomon built for the LORD, [b] the length thereof *was* threeſcore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty *cubits*, and the height thereof thirty cubits. 3. And [c] the porch before the temple of the houſe, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof, according to the breadth of the houſe; *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof, before the houſe. 4. And for the houſe he made [d] windows of † narrow lights. 5. ¶ And againſt the wall of the houſe he built ‡ chambers round about, *againſt* the walls of the houſe round about, *both* of the temple, and of the oracle: and he made chambers round about. 6. The nethermoſt chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* ſix cubits broad, and the third *was* ſeven cubits broad: for without *in the wall* of the houſe he made narrowed reſts round about, that *the beams* ſhould not be faſtned in the walls of the houſe. 7. And the houſe, when it was in building, [e] was built of ſtone, made ready before it was brought thither: [f] ſo that there was neither hammer, nor ax, *nor* any tool of iron heard in the houſe while it was building. 8. The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right ſide of the houſe: and they went up with winding ſtairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third. 9. So he built the houſe, and finiſhed it; and covered the houſe with [g] beams and boards of cedar. 10. And *then* he built chambers againſt all the houſe, five cubits high: and they reſted on the houſe with timber of cedar.

[a] 2 Chron. iii. 1.
[b] See Ezek. xli.
[c] Acts iii. 11.
[d] Ezek. xli. 16.
† Or, Broad within and narrow without.
‡ Heb. Floors.
[e] Chap. v. 18. Prov. xxiv. 27. 1 Pet. ii. 5.
[f] Eph. iv. 31.
About 1004.
[g] Cant. i. 17.

v. 1—10. Long had the Lord taken up his abode within the curtains of the tabernacle, now a glorious building riſes to his honour, planned by himſelf, and dedicated to his ſervice.

1. The time when it was begun. In the fourth year of Solomon, when the materials were prepared, and four hundred and eighty years after their coming from Egypt, allowing forty to Moſes, ſeventeen to Joſhua, two hundred and ninety-nine to the Judges, forty to Eli, forty to Samuel and Saul, forty to David, and four to Solomon.

2. The ſilence obſerved in the building. No iron tool was heard; the materials were exactly fitted before they were brought to the ſpot, and nothing remained but to cement them together. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe whom God honours as lively ſtones in his temple, he ſquares and faſhions for their place. (2.) They who build the ſpiritual temple ſhould be men of peace; clamour and fierce diſpute disjoint the ſtones inſtead of cementing them.

3. The dimenſions were juſt double the tabernacle in length and breadth, and treble in heighth; the windows narrow without and wide within; and chambers built round it, for the prieſts who were in waiting, three ſtories each, increaſing a cubit in width the higher they roſe, ſo much of the thickneſs of the wall being abated, for the beams to reſt on without entering the ſide walls. *Note*, (1.) When we look at others faults, we cannot be too indulgent, nor when on our own too ſevere. (2.) The more enlarged our hearts are in divine graces, the nearer we ſhall riſe to heaven.

11. ¶ And [g] the word of the LORD came to Solomon, ſaying, 12. *Concerning* this houſe which thou art in building, [h] if thou wilt walk in my ſtatutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them: then will I perform my word with thee, [i] which I ſpake unto David thy father. 13. And [k] I will dwell among the children of Iſrael, and will not forſake my people Iſrael. 14. So Solomon built the houſe, and finiſhed it.

[g] Chap. ix. 2.
[h] Chap. ii. 4. & ix. 4.
[i] 2 Sam. vii. 13.
[k] Exod. xxv. 8.

v. 11—14. 1. God ſends a gracious meſſage to encourage Solomon in the work, and to ſignify his pleaſure in it; aſſuring him that if he continued faithful, then he would ſecure to himſelf and his kingdom, the perpetuity of his bleſſings. *Note*, (1.) Heart obedience to God's law is more valuable than the moſt expenſive donations to his church. (2.) They who go forth with a deſire to God's glory, may confidently expect ſome tokens of his approbation.

2. Solomon finiſhes the work. Animated with this meſſage, he grudged neither the trouble nor expence, and ſaw at laſt the top ſtone laid with ſhouting. *Note*, Wherever God, by his grace, begins the ſpiritual building in the heart, he will not ceaſe miniſtring ſupplies of his grace, till the top ſtone be laid in glory.

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15. And he built the walls of the houſe within with boards of cedar, † both the floor of the houſe, and the walls of the cieling: *and* he covered *them* on the inſide with wood, and covered the floor of the houſe with planks of fir. 16. And he built twenty cubits on the ſides of the houſe, both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar: he even built *them* for it within, *even* for the oracle, *even* for the ‡ moſt holy *place*. 17. And the houſe, that *is*, the temple before it, was forty cubits *long*. 18. And the cedar of the houſe within *was* carved with || knops, and open flowers: all *was* cedar, there was no ſtone ſeen. 19. And the oracle he prepared in the houſe within, to ſet there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 20. And the oracle in the fore-part *was* twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with pure gold, and *ſo* covered the altar *which was of* cedar. 21. So Solomon overlaid the houſe within with pure gold: and he made a partition, by the chains of gold before the oracle, and he overlaid it with gold. 22. And the whole houſe he overlaid with gold, until he had finiſhed all the houſe: alſo [l] the whole altar that *was* by the oracle, he overlaid with gold. 23. ¶ And within the oracle he made two cherubims *of* § olive-tree, *each* ten cubits high. 24. And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermoſt part of the one wing, unto the uttermoſt part of the other, *were* ten cubits. 25. And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubims *were* of one meaſure, and one ſize. 26. The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and ſo *was it* of the other cherub. 27. And he ſet the cherubims within the inner houſe; and [m] they ſtretched forth the wings of the cherubims, ſo that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall: and their wings touched one another in the midſt of the houſe. 28. And he overlaid the cherubims with gold. 29. And he carved all the walls of the houſe round about with carved figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and † open flowers, within and without. 30. And the floor of the houſe he overlaid with gold within and without. 31. ¶ And for the entring of the oracle he made doors *of* olive-tree: the lintel and ſide-poſts *were* ‡ a fifth part *of the wall*. 32. The || two doors alſo *were* of olive-tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold, and ſpread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm-trees. 33. So alſo made he for the door of the temple, poſts *of* olive-tree, a fourth part *of the wall*. 34. And the two doors *were of* fir-tree; [n] the two leaves of the one door *were* folding, and the two leaves of the other door *were* folding. 35. And he carved *thereon* cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers: and covered *them* with gold, fitted upon the carved work. 36. ¶ And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed ſtones, and a row of cedar-beams. 37. ¶ In the fourth year was the foundation of the houſe of the LORD laid, in the month Zif. 38. And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul (which *is* the eighth month) was the houſe [o] finiſhed throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the faſhion of it: So was he ſeven years in building it.

† Heb. From the floor of the houſe to the walls, &c. So Ver. 16.
‡ Heb. Holy of holies. Exod. xxvi. 33. Num. xviii. 10.
|| Or, gourds, 2 Kings iv. 39.
[l] Exod. xxx. 1.
§ Heb. Trees of oil. Exod. xxv. 18.
[m] Ibid. 20.
† Heb. Openings of flowers. Ver. 18, 32.
‡ Heb. Five ſquare. Ver. 33.
|| Heb. Leaves of doors.
[n] Ezek. xli. 23.
[o] *Zech.* iv. 7, 9. Luke xiv. 28.

v. 15—38. The length of the temple was ſixty cubits; the oracle, or ſpeaking-place, whence God delivered his anſwers, was twenty cubits, *ver.* 16. and the holy place before it forty; theſe were ſeparated by a partition, *ver.* 21. with folding doors in it, *ver.* 31. The whole was cieled with cedar wood finely carved, and entirely even to the floors, over-laid with plates of gold. In the moſt holy place, beſide the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-ſeat, with the golden cherubims of Moſes, were two others of vaſt ſize, of olive-wood overlaid with gold, whoſe wings reached from wall to wall, and touched each other in the midſt over the mercy-ſeat. Without the temple was the court of the prieſts, where ſtood the brazen altar and the laver, ſeparated from the court of the people by a low wall, who, though they might not come into it, could ſee all the ſervice there performing, and hear what was ſaid. Seven years and ſix months the temple took in building, and conſidering the vaſt ſize, and various work, great diligence muſt have been uſed. This temple was typical; 1. Of the body of Jeſus, in which the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt, and by whom alone our ſervices come before God with acceptance. 2. Of the chriſtian, who, by the power of divine grace prepared and ſanctified, becomes an habitation for God, and more gloriouſly adorned with faith and holineſs than this temple with wrought gold. 3. Of the goſpel church, in which every conſecrated ſoul daily miniſters as a prieſt before God, where cherubic ſpirits wait on the heirs of ſalvation, and God manifeſts his preſence and power in a manner thoſe who are without know not of. 4. Of heaven, the eternal temple, where the ſervice will be uninterrupted, the glory infinitely ſurpaſſing, the worſhippers innumerable, and no vail any longer concealing from us the brighteſt beams of our divine Shechinah.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) *Solomon's buildings for his own uſe,* ver. 1—12. (2.) *His furniture for the temple,* 1. *Two pillars,* ver. 13—22. 2. *A molten ſea,* ver. 23—26. 3. *Ten baſes of braſs,* ver. 27—37. *and ten lavers upon them,* ver. 38, 39. 4. *All the other utenſils of the temple,* ver. 40—50. 5. *The things that his father had dedicated,* ver. 57.

a Eccleſ. ii. 4, 5.

† i. e. After the finiſhing of the temple. Chap. ix. 10.

b Chap. vi. 38. Mat. vi. 33.

‡ Or, Spaces and pillars were ſquare in proſpect.

c Chap. x. 18. Iſa. ix. 7.

|| Heb. From floor to floor.

d Chap. iii. 1.

e Chap. v. 17.

f Eph. ii. 20, 21.

1. BUT Solomon was building [a] his own houſe † thirteen years, and [b] he finiſhed all his houſe. 2. ¶ He built alſo the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon; the length whereof *was* a hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. 3. And *it was* covered with cedar above upon the beams, that *lay* on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row. 4. And *there were* windows in three rows, and light *was* againſt light *in* three ranks. 5. And all the ‡ doors and poſts *were* ſquare, with the windows: and light *was* againſt light in three ranks. 6. ¶ And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch *was* before them: and the *other* pillars and the thick beam *were* before them. 7. ¶ Then he made a porch for [c] the throne, where he might judge, *even* the porch of judgment: and *it was* covered with cedar || from one ſide of the floor to the other. 8. And his houſe where he dwelt, *had* another court within the porch, *which* was of the like work. Solomon made alſo an houſe for [d] Pharaoh's daughter (whom he had taken *to wife*) like unto this porch. 9. All theſe *were of* [e] coſtly ſtones, according to the meaſures of hewed ſtones, ſawed with ſaws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and *ſo* on the outſide toward the great court. 10. And the foundation *was of* coſtly ſtones, *even* great ſtones; ſtones of ten cubits, and ſtones of eight cubits. 11. And [f] above *were* coſtly ſtones (after the meaſure of hewed ſtones) and cedars. 12. And the great court round about *was* with three rows of hewed ſtones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the houſe of the LORD, and for the porch of the houſe.

v. 1—12. Having finiſhed God's houſe, he proceeds with his own. Let him that is beſt be firſt ſerved, and with the beſt, and then we may ſafely and comfortably enjoy the remainder. For his own reſidence he built a noble palace, which took him thirteen years to finiſh. The houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon, ſo called from its ſituation in a grove, or perhaps from the quantity of cedar from Lebanon employed in it, ſeems to have been a magazine of arms in one part, and a hall or portico for judgment on the other, with grand colonnades; here himſelf ſat to decide appeals, and here was placed the ivory throne, *chap.* x. 18. Beſides theſe he built a palace for Pharaoh's daughter, like his own in the exquiſiteneſs of the ſtructure and materials, of vaſt ſtones, nicely wrought with prodigious labour and expence. *Note,* (1.) They who are great may appear ſo; it is as fit a king ſhould dwell in a palace as a peaſant in a cottage. (2.) They who are occupied in building ſhould take care not to loſe in the ſtone and mortar their ſollicitude to ſecure a better houſe, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

g 2 Chron. ii. 14.

h Exod. xxxi. 3. & xxxvi. 1.

13. ¶ And king Solomon ſent and fet [g] Hiram out of Tyre. 14. He *was* a widow's ſon of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in braſs: and [h] he was filled with wiſdom and underſtanding, and cunning to work all works in braſs; and he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work. 15. For he † caſt [i] two pillars of braſs of eighteen cubits high apiece: and a line of twelve cubits did compaſs either of them about. 16. And he made two chapiters *of* molten braſs, to ſet upon the tops of the pillars; the height of the one chapiter *was* five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter was five cubits: 17. *And* nets of checker work, and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; ſeven for the one chapiter, and ſeven for the other chapiter. 18. And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one net-work, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top, with pomegranates: and ſo did he for the other chapiter. 19. And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars, *were* of lily-work in the porch, four cubits. 20. And the chapiters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* alſo above, over-againſt the belly which *was* by the net-work: and the pomegranates *were* two hundred, in rows round about upon the other chapiter. 21. And he ſet up [k] the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he ſet up the right pillar, and called the name thereof ‡ Jachin: and he ſet up the left pillar, and called the name thereof || Boaz. 22. And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily-work: ſo was the work of the pillars finiſhed. 23. ¶ And he made a molten ſea, ten cubits from the one brim to the other: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits: and a line of thirty cubits did compaſs it round about. 24. And under the brim of it round about *there were* [l] knops compaſſing it, ten in a cubit, compaſſing the ſea about: the knops *were* caſt in two rows, when it was caſt. 25. [m] It ſtood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the weſt, and three looking toward the ſouth, and three looking toward the eaſt: and the ſea *was ſet* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward. 26. And it *was* an hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained two thouſand baths. 27. ¶ And he made ten baſes of braſs; four cubits was the length of one baſe, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it. 28. And the work of the baſes *was* on this *manner:* They had borders, and the borders *were* between the ledges: 29. And on the borders that *were* between the ledges, *were* lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges *there was* a baſe above: and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain additions made of thin work. 30. And every baſe had four braſen wheels, and plates of braſs: and the four corners thereof had underſetters: under the laver *were* underſetters molten, at the ſide of every addition. 31. And the mouth of it within the chapiter, and above, *was* a cubit: but the mouth thereof *was* round, *after* the work of the baſe, a cubit and an half: and alſo upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders, four-ſquare, not round. 32. And under the borders *were* four wheels: and the axle-trees of the wheels *were* § joined to the baſe, and the height of a wheel *was* a cubit and half a cubit. 33. And the work of the wheels *was* like the work of a chariot-wheel: their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their ſpokes *were* all molten. 34. And *there were* four underſetters to the four corners of one baſe: *and* the underſetters *were* of the very baſe itſelf. 35. And in the top of the baſe *was there* a round compaſs of half a cubit high: and on the top of the baſe, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof *were* of the ſame. 36. For on the plates of the † ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved [n] cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the ‡ proportion of every one, and additions round about. 37. After this *manner* he made the ten baſes: all of them had one caſting, one meaſure, *and* one ſize. 38. Then [o] made he ten lavers of braſs: one laver contained forty baths: *and* every laver was four cubits: *and* upon every one of the ten baſes, one laver. 39. And he put five baſes on the right ſide of the houſe, and five on the left ſide of the houſe: and he ſet the ſea on the right ſide of the houſe eaſtward, over againſt the ſouth. 40. ¶ And Hiram made the lavers, and the ſhovels, and the baſons: ſo Hiram made an end of doing all

† Heb. Faſhioned.

i 2 Kings xxv. 16. 2 Chron. iii. 15. Jer. lii. 21.

k Cant. [illegible] 10. Rev. iii. 12.

‡ i. e. He will eſtabliſh. 2 Sam. vii. 12. Iſa. ii. 7.

|| i. e. In it is ſtrength. Pſ. xxix. 11. & lxxiii. 26. Iſa. xxvi. 4.

l Chap. vi. 18. 2 Kings iv. 39. 2 Chron. iv. 3.

m Jer. lii. 20.

§ Heb. In the baſe.

† Heb. Hands or handles.

n Gen. iii. 24. Chap. vi. 27. Pſ. xviii. 10.

‡ Heb. Nakedneſs.

o Exod. xxx. 18. Zech. xiii. 1.

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all the work that he made king Solomon for the houſe of the LORD. 41. The two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the two pillars: and the two net-works, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars: 42. And four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, *even* two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that *were* ‖ upon the pillars: 43. And the ten baſes, and ten lavers on the baſes: 44. And one ſea, and twelve oxen under the ſea: 45. And the pots, and the ſhovels, and the baſons: and all theſe veſſels which Hiram made to king Solomon, for the houſe of the LORD, *were of* bright braſs. 46. [p] In the plain of Jordan did the king caſt them in the clay-ground, between Succoth and Zarthan. 47. And Solomon left all the veſſels *unweighed*, § becauſe they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the braſs found out.

‖ Heb. Upon the face of the pillars.

[p] 2 Chron. iv. 17.

§ Heb. For the exceeding multitude.

v. 13—47. We have here an account of the braſen veſſels made for the ſervice of the temple.

1. The workman was a Tyrian by his father's ſide, but by his mother an Iſraelite; 'tis to be hoped he followed the better parent, as children ſhould do, and cleaved to his mother's God. The clay ground near Jordan was well ſuited for a foundery, and the braſs prepared was ſo immenſe in quantity, as well as the workmen's integrity ſo tried, that it neither could nor needed be weighed out to them. *Note*, It is happy to find ſuch truſty ſervants, in days like theſe, when honeſt men are ſo ſcarce.

2. The chief work was, (1.) Two pillars vaſt and high, placed as you entered the porch of the temple, richly adorned with chapiters finely wrought; their names were Jachin, *he will eſtabliſh*, and Boaz, *ſtrength is in him*, intimating that though we are weak and feeble, and ready to faint in the worſhip and ſervice of God, yet our Divine Redeemer will eſtabliſh his work in our hearts, and help being laid on one mighty to ſave, we may confidently expect to receive out of his fulneſs. Theſe pillars alſo ſignified the ſtability of God's promiſes: whilſt they continued faithfully attendant before the porch of his temple, he would continue to bleſs, preſerve, and protect them. (2.) The molten ſea, ſo called from the vaſt quantity of water it contained; it ſtood on twelve oxen of braſs, whoſe faces looked to the four cardinal points, and their mouths ſerved as cocks to let the water out. This typified the Lord Jeſus, whoſe blood ſhed for the cleanſing his people, flows out to the four corners of the earth, and whoſoever will may come, and in this fountain opened for ſin, waſh away every ſpot of guilt and pollution. (3.) Ten braſen vaſes, moveable on wheels, ſtood, five on each ſide the court, for the conveniency of the prieſts, to waſh themſelves, the veſſels and ſacrifices. *Note*, They who appear before God muſt waſh, not only once but daily, in the Redeemer's blood, that their perſons may be accepted, and their ſacrifices a favour of a ſweet ſmell. (4.) All the neceſſary utenſils, for the ſervice of the altar, were made of braſs, ſhovels, baſons, &c. that nothing might be wanting. A concern for God's honour deſcends to the moſt minute particulars.

48. And Solomon made all the veſſels that *pertained* unto the houſe of the LORD: [q] the altar of gold, and [r] the table of gold, whereupon [s] the ſhew-bread *was*, 49. And the candleſticks of pure gold, five on the right *ſide*, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs *of* gold, 50. And the bowls, and the ſnuffers, and the baſons, and the ſpoons, and the cenſers *of* pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner houſe, the moſt holy *place*, *and* for the doors of the houſe, *to wit*, of the temple. 51. So was ended all the work which king Solomon made for the houſe of the LORD: and Solomon brought in the things which David his father [t] had dedicated; *even* the ſilver, and the gold, and the veſſels did he put among the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD.

[q] Exod. xxxvii. 26.

[r] Ibid. 11.

[s] Exod. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 6.

[t] 2 Sam. viii. 11. 2 Chron. v. 1.

v. 48—51. As all the veſſels for the court were of the fineſt braſs, all the veſſels within the temple were of pureſt gold. *Note*, Though all chriſtians are alike conſecrated to God, ſome are more excellent than others, and more highly diſtinguiſhed.

1. The veſſels of the tabernacle, except the ark, mercy-ſeat, and cherubims, were either new made, or the old new caſt, and multitudes added to them. As the temple was larger it needed more light, and ten candleſticks are made, perhaps beſide that grand one which conſiſted of the ſeven branches. Ten tables of gold alſo were placed in the holy place, beſide the table of ſhew-bread; and 'tis ſuppoſed they ſtood oppoſite to the golden candleſticks, ranged on the other ſide of the houſe. The bowls, ſnuffers, and every veſſel, were of pure gold, and the very hinges of the ſame precious materials. *Note*, When God's glory requires it, we cannot be too liberal.

2. The dedicated things of David were placed in the treaſury of the temple, for its future repairs or exigencies; Solomon dared not, like many, ſacrilegiouſly alienate to his own uſe what was deſigned for the ſervice of the ſanctuary.

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CHAP. VIII.

The building and furniture of the temple were very glorious, but the dedication of it exceeds in glory. 1. *The ark introduced into the temple*, ver. 1—9. 2. *The glory of God fills the houſe*, ver. 10, 11. 3. *Solomon's ſpeech to the aſſembly of Iſrael*, ver. 12—21. 4. *His prayer to God*, ver. 22—53. 5. *His parting benediction*, ver. 54—61. 6. *The ſacrifices he offered, and the feaſt he held*, ver. 62—66.

1. THEN [a] Solomon aſſembled the elders of Iſrael, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Iſrael, unto king Solomon, in Jeruſalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [b] out of the city of David, which *is* Zion. 2. And all the men of Iſrael aſſembled themſelves unto king Solomon, [c] at the feaſt in the month Ethanim, which *is* the ſeventh month. 3. And all the elders of Iſrael came, and the prieſts took up the ark. 4. And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and [d] the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy veſſels that *were* in the tabernacle, [e] even thoſe did the prieſts and the Levites bring up. 5. And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Iſrael, that were aſſembled unto him, were with him before the ark, [f] ſacrificing ſheep and oxen, [g] that could not be told nor numbred for multitude. 6. And the prieſts brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD [h] unto his place, into the oracle of the houſe to the moſt holy *place*, *even* under the wings of the cherubims. 7. For the cherubims ſpread forth *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark, and the ſtaves thereof above. 8. And [i] they drew out the ſtaves, that the ends of the ſtaves were ſeen out in the holy † *place* before the oracle, and they were not ſeen without: and there they are unto this day. 9. *There was* nothing in the ark ſave [k] the two tables of ſtone, which Moſes put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Iſrael, when they came out of the land of Egypt. 10. And it came to paſs when the prieſts were come out of the holy place, that [l] the cloud filled the houſe of the LORD, 11. So that the prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter, becauſe of the cloud: [m] for the glory of the LORD had filled the houſe of the LORD.

[a] 2 Chron. v. 2.

[b] 2 Sam. vi. 12.

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[c] Lev. xxiii. 34. Deut. xvi. 13.

[d] Exod. xxxvi. 8.

[e] Num. iv. 15.

[f] 2 Sam. vi. 13.

[g] Luke iv. 47.

[h] Exod. xxvi. 33.

[i] Num. iv. 6.

† Or, Ark.

[k] Exod. xvi. 35. Deut. x. 5. Heb. ix. 4.

[l] Exod. xl. 34. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

[m] Ezek. xvi. 10. Col. i. 19.

v. 1—11. The work being compleated, nothing remained but the ſolemn dedication of the place to the ſervice of Jehovah. For this purpoſe,

1. An aſſembly of the elders of Iſrael is convoked by the king, in the month Ethanim, to bring up the ark to the place provided for it: they met ſeven days before the feaſt of tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth, and the congregation was diſmiſſed on the twenty-third, having kept the feaſt fourteen days. It was a matter of general joy and exultation, and vaſt ſacrifices were offered on the occaſion. *Note*, (1.) When religion proſpers, it is the ſubject of general joy to God's people. (2.) When kings become nurſing fathers to the church, courtiers, whether they poſſeſs it or not, will pretend zeal for its intereſts.

2. The prieſts took up the ark, containing that precious and ineſtimable jewel of God's law, and with it the pot of manna and Aaron's rod. The Levites, their aſſiſtants, brought alſo the old tabernacle from Gibeon, with all its utenſils, and probably that alſo from the city of David, to be laid up in the treaſury of the temple, and now no more to be uſed. The ark is fixed in his place, under the wings of the cherubim, and the ſtaves drawn forward, not to be ſeen without in the holy place, for that is denied in the next clauſe, but before the oracle, from under the ſhadow of the wings of the cherubim, as a direction to the high-prieſt in the day of atonement, to go to the mercy-ſeat between them. *Note*, God will ſhortly take down our old tabernacle of the body, and lodge our ſouls, like the ark, in that houſe, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

3. No ſooner is the ark ſafely lodged between the cherubim, and the prieſts withdrawn from the moſt holy place, than the glory of God filled the houſe, either like the pillar of a cloud ſpreading thick darkneſs around, or in a blaze of light, ſo inſufferable that the prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter. Thus

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God teſtified his approbation of the work, confirmed their faith in the former manifeſtations they had read in the book of Moſes, and henceforth taking up his viſible abode between the cherubims, gave them aſſurance of his readineſs to hear and anſwer them, whenever before that temple they poured out their ſupplications. *Note*, Though our eyes behold not this viſible luſtre, yet whilſt by faith we are enabled to look to Jeſus, all our requeſts will be granted, and at laſt, with open face, we ſhall behold his brighter glory.

12. ¶ Then ſpake Solomon, [n] The LORD ſaid that he would dwell in the thick darkneſs. 13. [o] I have ſurely built thee an houſe to dwell in, a ſettled place for thee to abide in for ever. 14. And the king turned his face about, and [p] bleſſed all the congregation of Iſrael: (and all the congregation of Iſrael ſtood.) 15. And he ſaid, [q] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael, which ſpake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, ſaying, 16. Since the day that I brought forth my people Iſrael out of Egypt, I choſe no city out of all the tribes of Iſrael to build an houſe, [r] that my name might be therein; but I choſe David to be over my people Iſrael. 17. And [s] it was in the heart of David my father to build an houſe for the name of the LORD God of Iſrael. 18. And the LORD ſaid unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an houſe unto my name, [t] thou didſt well that it was in thine heart: 19. Nevertheleſs, [u] thou ſhalt not build the houſe, but thy ſon that ſhall come forth out of thy loins, he ſhall build the houſe unto my name. 20. And the LORD hath performed his word that he ſpake, and I am riſen up in the room of David my father, and ſit on the throne of Iſrael, [x] as the LORD promiſed, and have built an houſe for the name of the LORD God of Iſrael. 21. And I have ſet there a place for the ark, wherein *is* the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

[n] Lev. xvi. 2. Pſ. xviii. 11. & xcvii. 2.
[o] 2 Sam. vii. 13.
[p] Num. vi. 23, &c. Luke xiv. 50.
[q] Pſ. cxv. 18.
[r] Deut. xii. 11. Pſal. cxxxii. 13.
[s] 2 Sam. vii. 3.
[t] 2 Cor. viii. 12.
[u] 2 Sam. vii. 12.
[x] 2 Chron. xxviii. 5.

v. 12—21. The prieſts and people appearing in conſternation at the ſight, Solomon encourages them.

1. He reminds them that this is the fulfilment of God's promiſe, *Lev.* xvi. 6. and a gracious mark of his favour and approbation. The houſe now being built, the Divine inhabitant comes to take up his reſidence therein, and Solomon cannot but pray it may be for ever. *Note*, (1.) If we enter, at any time, the dark cloud of affliction or temptation, let us not be diſmayed, for there alſo God dwelleth. (2.) If we have found, at any time, God's comfortable preſence, it cannot but excite us to pray, that he may take up his abode with us continually.

2. He pronounced a ſolemn benediction on the people, who reverently ſtood up to receive it.

3. He, with thankful acknowledgments to God, recites the deſign of his building this houſe. God had promiſed to chuſe the place of his abode, and David his father had planned the fabric; but God ſtayed him from proceeding, though he graciouſly accepted his intentions, and fixed on his ſon for the glorious work. Now then the promiſe is accompliſhed, the fixed abode for God's ark provided, and the ſtructure for ever devoted to the ſervice of their covenant God. *Note*, (1.) The fulfilment of God's precious promiſes engages more the tongues of the faithful, than their own unworthy performances. (2.) A good deſire is not forgotten of God.

22. ¶ And [y] Solomon ſtood before the altar of the LORD, in the preſence of all the congregation of Iſrael, and [z] ſpread forth his hands toward heaven: 23. And he ſaid, LORD God of Iſrael, [a] *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, [b] who keepeſt covenant and mercy with thy ſervants, [c] that walk before thee with all their heart: 24. Who haſt kept with thy ſervant David my father that thou promiſedſt him: thou ſpakeſt alſo with thy mouth, and [d] haſt fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day. 25. Therefore now, LORD God of Iſrael, keep with thy ſervant David my father that thou promiſedſt him, ſaying, [e] There ſhall not fail thee a man in my ſight, to ſit on the throne of Iſrael; ſo that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me, as thou haſt walked before me: 26. And now, O God of Iſrael, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou ſpakeſt unto thy ſervant David my father. 27. But [f] will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, [g] the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much leſs this houſe that I have builded? 28. Yet have thou reſpect unto the prayer of thy ſervant, and to his ſupplication, O LORD my God, to [h] hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy ſervant prayeth before thee to-day: 29. That [i] thine eyes may be opened toward this houſe night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou haſt ſaid, [k] My name ſhall be there: that thou mayſt hearken unto the prayer which thy ſervants ſhall make [l] towards this place. 30. And hearken thou to the ſupplication of thy ſervant, and of thy people Iſrael, when they ſhall pray † towards this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and when thou heareſt, [m] forgive. 31. ¶ If any man treſpaſs againſt his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cauſe him to ſwear, and the oath come before [n] thine altar in this houſe: 32. Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy ſervants, [o] condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and juſtifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteouſneſs. 33. ¶ When thy people Iſrael be ſmitten down before the enemy, [p] becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee, and ſhall turn again to thee, and confeſs thy name, and pray, and make ſupplication unto thee in this houſe: 34. [q] Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the ſin of thy people Iſrael, and bring them again unto the land, which thou gaveſt unto their fathers. 35. ¶ [r] When heaven is ſhut up, and there is no rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; if they pray towards this place, and confeſs thy name, and turn from their ſin, [s] when thou afflicteſt them: 36. Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the ſin of thy ſervants, and of thy people Iſrael, [t] that thou teach them [u] the good way wherein they ſhould walk, and give rain upon thy land which thou haſt given to thy people for an inheritance. 37. ¶ If there be in the land famine, if there be peſtilence, blaſting, mildew, locuſt, *or* if there be caterpillar; if their enemy beſiege them in the land of their cities, whatſoever plague, whatſoever ſickneſs *there be*; 38. What prayer and ſupplication ſoever be *made* [x] by any man, *or* by all thy people Iſrael, [y] which ſhall know every man the plague of his own heart, and ſpread forth his hands towards this houſe: 39. Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whoſe heart thou knoweſt (for [z] thou, *even* thou only knoweſt the hearts of all the children of men) 40. That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gaveſt unto our fathers. 41. Moreover, concerning a [a] ſtranger that *is* not of thy people Iſrael, but [b] cometh out of a far country, [c] for thy names ſake; 42. (For [d] they ſhall hear of thy great name, and of thy ſtrong hand, and of thy ſtretched out arm) when he ſhall come and pray towards this houſe: 43. Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the ſtranger calleth to thee for: [e] that all the people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as *do* thy people Iſrael, and that they may know that this houſe which I have builded, is called by thy name. 44. ¶ If thy people go out to battle againſt their enemy, whitherſoever thou ſhalt ſend them, and ſhall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou haſt choſen, and *toward* the houſe that I have built for thy name: 45. Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their ſupplication, and [f] maintain their cauſe. 46. If they ſin againſt thee [g] (for *there is* no man that ſinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, ſo that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; 47. *Yet* [h] if they ſhall bethink themſelves, in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make ſupplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, ſaying, [i] We have ſinned, and have done perverſly, we have committed wickedneſs; 48. And *ſo* [k] return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their ſoul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gaveſt unto their fathers, the city which thou haſt choſen, and the houſe which I have built for thy name: 49. Then hear thou their prayer and their ſupplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and [l] maintain their cauſe, 50. And forgive thy

[y] 2 Chron. vi. 12.
[z] Ezra ix. 5. Pſ. lxiii. 4. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[a] Exod. xv. 11.
[b] Dan. ix. 4.
[c] Gen. xvii. 1. Exod. xx. 6.
[d] 1 Sam. vii. 12. 2 Cor. i. 10.
[e] 2 Sam. vii. 12. Luke i. 33.
[f] Pſ. cxiii. 4—6. Acts vii. 49.
[g] 2 Chron. ii. 6. Iſa. lxvi. 1. Acts xvii 24.

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[h] Dan. ix. 17, &c.
[i] Pſ. xxxiii. 18.
[k] Deut. xii. 11.
[l] Dan. vi. 10.
† Or, In this place. Ver. 29.
[m] Pſ. lxxxv. 2, 3.
[n] Mat. xxiii. 18.
[o] Deut. xxv. 1.
[p] Ibid. xxvii. 25.
[q] Lev. xxvi. 40, &c.
[r] Deut. xxviii. 23.
[s] Hoſ. v. 15.
[t] Pſ. xciv. 12. Iſa. xxvi. 9.
[u] Prov. vi. 23. Iſa. xxxv. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 21.
[x] Ezek. xxii. 30. Jam. v. 16—18.
[y] Job xl. 4. & xlii. 6. Pſ. xxxviii. 4, &c. Prov. xxx. 2. Jer. xxxi. 19. Luke xviii. 3. Rom. vii. 24.
[z] Pſ. xi. 4. Jer. xvii. 10.
[a] Ruth ii. 10, &c.
[b] Mat. ii. 1. Acts viii. 27.
[c] Joſh. ii. 9. Eſth. viii. 17.
[d] Deut. iii. 24.
[e] Pſ. lxvii. 2.
[f] Iſa. xxxvii. 21, 36.
[g] Prov. xx. 9. Eccleſ. vii. 20. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8.
[h] Lev. xxvi. 40.
[i] Luke xv. 18.
[k] Jer. xxix. 12—14.
[l] Ver. 45. Zech. i. 15.

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thy people that have ſinned againſt thee, and all their tranſgreſſions wherein they have tranſgreſſed againſt thee, and [m] give them compaſſion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compaſſion on them: 51. For they *be* thy people and thine inheritance, [n] which thou broughteſt forth out of Egypt, from the midſt of the furnace of iron: 52. That thine eyes may be open unto the ſupplication of thy ſervant, and unto the ſupplication of thy people Iſrael, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. 53. For [o] thou didſt ſeparate them from among all the people of the earth, [p] *to be* thine inheritance, as thou ſpakeſt by the hand of Moſes thy ſervant, when thou broughteſt our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD God.

[m] Ezra vii. 6. Pſal. cvi. 46.
[n] Deut. iv. 20.
[o] Exod. xix. 5. Tit. ii. 14.
[p] Deut. ix. 26, 29.

v. 22—53. We have here Solomon appearing in greater glory on his knees before the altar, than when ſeated on his ivory throne, and crowned with gold. Having comforted the people with his benediction, he lifts up his heart and hands to God in prayer, that this houſe, ſo glorioully opened, might be for ever diſtinguiſhed with God's preſence, grace, and merciful regard to thoſe who there ſhould pour out their ſupplications.

1. Solomon himſelf began the ſervice, and ſhewed the people the way to the throne of grace, where, on their behalf, he is interceſſor for the ſettling a bleſſed intercourſe between God and them. He did not think himſelf too great to bow before his Lord, nor was at a loſs how to addreſs him; but before the altar, as depending on the blood ſhed there for the ſucceſs of his petitions, he ſpread abroad his hands to heaven, and bent the ſuppliant knee. *Note,* (1.) Let great men imitate ſo noble a pattern, nor think it unbecoming them to pray with their houſholds; and if their hearts be right as Solomon's with God, though they poſſeſs not his wiſdom or gifts, they ſhall not want that ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication which will help their infirmities, and teach them how and what to pray for as they ought. (2.) Every prayer which would find acceptance with God, muſt be preſented through the blood and interceſſion of Jeſus. (3.) Fervency in prayer, whether in word or geſture, may provoke the cenſure of the careleſs or the lukewarm; but God will not deſpiſe the hands lifted up to heaven.

2. The prayer of Solomon:

[1.] He opens, with aſcribing to God the glory due unto his name, acknowledges his tranſcendant greatneſs, and his faithfulneſs in his promiſes to thoſe who walk before him in ſimplicity and truth. *Note,* (1.) To praiſe God for paſt mercies, is not only the tribute we owe him, but a comfortable encouragement to our own faith. (2.) They who deſire to ſerve God from their hearts, will find his ears ever open to their prayers.

[2.] He ſupplicates for himſelf and people the fulfilment of God's promiſes, with admiration and aſtoniſhment at the condeſcenſions of God, who, though the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, vouchſafes to viſit this ſinful earth, and to dwell with worms of the duſt, *v.* 27. he prays, that according to the promiſe made to David, his ſeed might never fail, or his throne be removed; that God would ever regard this temple, where he had ſo glorioully manifeſted his preſence; and that his prayers, and the prayers of the people there preſented unto him, or offered with their faces turned thitherward, might ever meet an anſwer of peace. *Note,* (1.) The word of promiſe is the ground of prayer. (2.) God ſtill condeſcends to dwell on earth, not indeed in temples made with hands, but in the more glorious temple of the believer's heart. (3.) Every accepted prayer muſt be through him whom the temple prefigured, even Jeſus Chriſt, and whilſt the eye of faith is turned to him, we may be aſſured God will hear and anſwer us. (4.) Forgiveneſs of ſin is the conſtant prayer of the enlightened mind, and among the moſt invaluable bleſſings it ſeeks from God.

[3.] He inſtances a variety of circumſtances, in which he begs, that God on their humble application would regard them. (1.) In caſe of an oath in any conteſted matter, that he would appear for the vindication of the righteous, and the condemnation of the perjured. *Note,* God is an avenging God, and will not at his tribunal ſuffer falſhood and wrong to paſs with Impunity. (2.) In caſe of national calamities, occaſioned by their ſins, whether the ſword of their enemies, drought, famine, peſtilence, or any other plague, on their repentance and return to God, he beſeeches they may be again reſtored to his favour, delivered from the evil, and inſtructed and led in the way of truth. *Note,* [1.] Sin is the cauſe of every calamity. [2.] There is no hope of deliverance from ſuffering, without repentance for ſin. [3.] They who through Jeſus Chriſt return humbly to God, he will return to them in mercy. [4.] Unleſs God teach and uphold us, our repentance would be ſhort, and our relapſe ſudden. (3.) When a man convinced of the plague of his own heart, *v.* 38. his natural corruption, or beſetting ſin, in ſhame and confuſion of face, applies for pardon and healing; he begs the Lord, who knoweth the heart, would hear and forgive, and by ſuch goodneſs engage the ſinner to love and fear him for ever, *v.* 40. *Note,* [1.] Of all plagues, heart-plagues are the worſt. [2.] No man who truly knows his own heart but muſt groan, being burdened, and cry, O wretched man that I am. [3.] God trieth our heart, and ſeeth much more evil in us, than ever we beheld in ourſelves. [4.] Nothing engages a ſinner's ſoul towards God, ſo much as a ſenſe of his pardoning grace. (4.) If a ſtranger, engaged by the fame of Iſrael's God, joined in ſupplication before him, Solomon intreats he may ſpeed alike with the true Iſraelites themſelves, that God may be glorified even among the moſt diſtant nations, who ſhould be thus convinced of his grace and power, and that none ſought his face in vain. (5.) When they went to battle, and in prayer lifted up their hearts to God, and their eyes to his ſanctuary, he intreats they may ſucceed, and that God would crown them with victory. *Note,* They who put their life in their hand, have eſpecial need to ſeek God's care and protection over them. (6.) In the time of their captivity, which their inquities might bring upon them, and when God in anger ſhould ſell them into their enemies hands, he intreats they may not utterly be caſt off; but on their penitent return, and their prayer towards his holy temple, that he would forgive them, incline their enemies to pity them, and reſtore them to their deſolate heritage. *Note,* [1.] When our troubles drive us to our knees, they anſwer the end for which God ſends them. [2.] God hath in his hands the hearts of all men, and can turn our bittereſt enemies into friends. (7.) He concludes with a general requeſt in favour of the people, that whatever they ſhould aſk of God might be granted them; and pleads, as an argument, the peculiar and endeared relation in which they ſtood, as ſeparated from all nations, to be a peculiar people, and for whom God had already ſhewn ſuch wonders of providence and grace. *Note,* (1.) Our relation to God, as our covenant God, is a prevailing ground of prayer. (2.) Whatever we aſk in the name of Jeſus, believing, we are ſure to receive.

54. And it was *ſo,* that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and ſupplication unto the LORD, he aroſe from before the altar of the LORD, from [q] kneeling on his knees, with his hands ſpread up to heaven. 55. And he ſtood and [r] bleſſed all the congregation of Iſrael, with a loud voice, ſaying, 56. Bleſſed *be* the LORD, that hath given reſt unto his people Iſrael, [s] according to all that he promiſed: [t] there hath not failed one word of all his good promiſe, which he promiſed by the hand of Moſes his ſervant. 57. [u] The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forſake us: 58. That [x] he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his ſtatutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers. 59. And [y] let theſe my words wherewith I have made ſupplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cauſe of his ſervant, and the cauſe of his people Iſrael at all times, as the matter ſhall require: 60. [z] That all the people of the earth may know that [a] the LORD *is* God, *and that there is* none elſe. 61. [b] Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his ſtatutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

[q] Luke xxii. 41. Eph. iii. 14.
[r] 2 Sam. vi. 18.
[s] Joſh. xxi. 45. Luke i. 68.
[t] Heb. x. 23.
[u] Gen. xxvi. 24. Deut. xxxi. 6, 8. Joſh. i. 5. 1 Chron. xxviii. 20. 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 5.
[x] Gen. ix. 27. margin. Pſal. cx. 3. Cant. i. 4. Hoſ. ii. 14. 2 Cor. v. 14.
[y] Mal. iii. 16.
[z] Ver. xliii.
[a] Deut. iv. 35, 59.
[b] 2 Kings xx. 3. Phil. iii. 12.

v. 54—61. Having finiſhed his prayer, he aroſe from his knees, and diſmiſſed the people with a gracious benediction: magnifying God for the reſt and peace they enjoyed, and the full accompliſhment of all his promiſes, *v.* 56. earneſtly wiſhing his bleſſing might be ever with them, as with their fathers, *v.* 57. eſpecially that his grace might incline their hearts to ſerve him, which could not fail to ſecure the continuance of his regard, *v.* 58. and that a continued anſwer to his prayer, *v.* 59. might be vouchſafed to them; to the end, that all the earth might, from theſe inſtances of his power and love to his people, be brought to acknowledge the glory of Iſrael's God, *v.* 60. and then concludes with a ſolemn charge to be faithful to the Lord, who would never fail them, if they forſook not him. *Note,* (1.) We ought to praiſe God for the reſt we enjoy, ſpiritual or temporal; and eſpecially for the eternal reſt the word of promiſe hath ſecured to us. (2.) God's preſence with us is the greateſt bleſſing we can enjoy in this world, and the earneſt of our inheritance in a better. (3.) When his rich grace ſweetly influences and inclines our hearts, then and only then ſhall we be enabled to run the way of God's commandments. (4.) Whilſt Jeſus our high-prieſt is our advocate, we cannot fail of the Divine benediction. (5.) Though our ſalvation is ſecured to us, not by any ſtrength of our own, but by the unchangeable counſel and free grace of God; yet doth not this, as many think, looſen the bond of obedience, but encourage to fidelity, from the conſtrainings of Divine love, and the confidence and ſupport in every time of need.

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62. ¶ And the king, and all Iſrael with him, [c] offered ſacrifice before the LORD. 63. And Solomon offered a ſacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, [d] two and twenty thouſand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thouſand ſheep: ſo the king and all the children of Iſrael, dedicated the houſe of the LORD. 64. The ſame day did the king hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the houſe of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings: becauſe the braſen altar that *was* before the LORD, *was* too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings. 65. And at that time Solomon held [e] a feaſt, and all Iſrael with him, a great congregation, from the entring in of Hamath, unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, ſeven days and ſeven days, *even* fourteen days. 66. On the eighth day he ſent the people away: and they bleſſed the king, and went unto their tents [f] joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodneſs that the LORD had done for David his ſervant, and for Iſrael his people.

[c] 2 Chron. vii. 5.
[d] Mic. vi. 7.
[e] Lev. xxiii. 34.
[f] Pſal. cvii. 1, 2. & cxxxvi., 1, &c.

v. 62—66. They who meet to pray before the Lord, ſhall rejoice in their labour.

1. Vaſt ſacrifices are offered, on which the congregation, *v.* 65. feaſted during fourteen days; and the brazen altar not being ſufficient to conſume what was devoted to the fire, the middle of the court was extraordinarily conſecrated to the ſervice. As the day of atonement muſt have intervened on the 10th day of the month, though it was a day to afflict their ſouls, it might be numbered among their joyous days. The tears of godly ſorrow, are the ſweeteſt feaſt for the ſoul.

2. On the eighth day, when the feaſt of tabernacles ended, after the former ſeven days of the feaſt of dedication, the people returned happy in the ſervice, bleſſing the king, praying for the continuance and increaſe of his proſperity and greatneſs; and thanking him for their noble entertainment, and God for all the great kindneſs ſhewn to David, in giving him ſuch a ſon, and them ſuch a monarch. *Note,* (1.) When we return from God's ordinances, it becomes us to rejoice in the God of our ſalvation. (2.) A good king is the joy of his ſubjects. (3.) When we ſhall return to our eternal home, then ſhall our joy never end; and Jeſus, our king, be the ſubject of our everlaſting praiſes.

CHAP. IX.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The anſwer which God in a viſion gave to Solomon's prayer,* ver. 1—9. 2. *The interchanging of grateful kindneſſes between Solomon and Hiram,* ver. 10—14. 3. *His workmen and buildings,* ver. 15—24. 4. *His devotion,* ver. 25. 5. *His trading navy,* ver. 26—28.

1. AND it came to paſs when Solomon had finiſhed the building of the houſe of the LORD, and the king's houſe, and all Solomon's deſire which he was pleaſed to do, 2. That the LORD † appeared to Solomon [a] the ſecond time, [b] as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. 3. And the LORD ſaid unto him, [c] I have heard thy prayer and thy ſupplication that thou haſt made before me: I have hallowed this houſe which thou haſt built, to put my name there for ever, and [d] mine eyes and mine heart ſhall be there perpetually. 4. And if thou wilt walk before me as David thy father walked, [e] in integrity of heart and in uprightneſs, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my ſtatutes and my judgments: 5. Then I will eſtabliſh the throne of thy kingdom upon Iſrael for ever: [f] as I promiſed to David thy father, ſaying, There ſhall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Iſrael. 6. *But* [g] if you ſhall at all turn from following me, you or your children, and will not keep my commandments, *and* my ſtatutes, which I have ſet before you, but go and ſerve other gods, and worſhip them: 7. [h] Then will I cut off Iſrael out of the land which I have given them; and [i] this houſe which I have hallowed for my name, will I caſt out of my ſight, and [k] Iſrael ſhall be a proverb, and a by-word among all people: 8. And at this houſe *which* is high, every one that paſſeth by it ſhall be aſtoniſhed, and [l] ſhall hiſs; and they ſhall ſay, [m] Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this houſe? 9. And they ſhall anſwer, [n] Becauſe they forſook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worſhipped them, and ſerved them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.

† Or had appeared.
[a] 2 Chron. vii. 11, 12.
[b] Chap. iii. 5.
[c] Pſal. x. 17. & lxv. 2. Dan. ix. 23.
[d] Deut. xi. 12. Chap. viii. 29.
[e] Pſal. xv. 2.
[f] 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c.
[g] 1 Sam. xii. 21. Pſal. lxxxix. 30.
[h] 2 Kings xvii. 20.
[i] Ibid. xxv. 9. Jer. vii. 14.
[k] Deut. xxviii. 37.
[l] Lam. ii. 15.
[m] Deut. xxix. 24. Jer. xxii. 28.
[n] Jer. ii. 13.

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v. 1—9. Solomon receives from God a gracious viſit, ſuch as he had been favoured with at Gibeon; probably the ſame night when the congregation was diſmiſſed, and not thirteen years afterwards, as the foregoing verſe ſeems to intimate: therefore ſome read, *v.* 2. *The Lord had appeared,* &c.

1. God declares his acceptance of his prayer, and promiſes to anſwer it. As he had manifeſted his preſence in his temple, his eye and heart ſhall be always upon it, and his ear attentive to the prayers of all that come thither for help. *Note,* God's eyes are now in every place over the righteous, and his ears open to their prayers.

2. He promiſes him, on his obedience, the eſtabliſhment of his houſe and throne, to the lateſt poſterity, *v.* 4, 5. *Note,* They who would ſecure to their children the entail of God's bleſſings, muſt leave them the examples of their fidelity.

3. He warns him of the dreadful conſequence of his and the people's, and their poſterity's departure and apoſtacy from God, *v.* 6—9. which would cauſe the deſtruction of his family, the ruin of his kingdom, the demolition of this glorious temple, the contempt of the heathen, and the mournful reflection of thoſe that remained on the ſins that brought down ſuch deſolating judgments. Thus Solomon and the people were admoniſhed not to pride themſelves on their outward privileges, or reſt on the glory of the temple, ſeeing its greateſt beauty was the holineſs of the worſhippers; and that once loſt, the fine gold would become dim, and this lofty fabric be laid in the duſt. *Note,* (1.) If our growth in grace does not correſpond with our privileges, our boaſt of the temple, and the beſt form of worſhip, will but delude and deſtroy us. (2.) Whenever we ſee or read the deſolations God hath wrought in the earth, we ſhould reflect on the dreadful evil and malignity of ſin, and take warning.

10. ¶ And it came to paſs at the end of † twenty years, [o] when Solomon had built the two houſes, the houſe of the LORD, and the king's houſe. 11. (*Now* Hiram the king of Tyre had furniſhed Solomon with cedar-trees, and fir-trees, and with gold according to all his deſire) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. 12. And Hiram came out from Tyre to ſee the cities which Solomon had given him, and they ‡ pleaſed him not. 13. And he ſaid, What cities *are* theſe which thou haſt given me, my brother? And he called them the land of ‖ Cabul unto this day. 14. And Hiram ſent to the king ſixſcore talents of gold.

† i. e. After the foundation of the temple was laid. Chap. vii. 1.
[o] 2 Chron. viii. 1.
‡ Heb. Were not right in his eyes.
‖ i. e. Diſpleaſing. Joſh. xix. 27.

v. 10—14. Solomon having now finiſhed all his building, generouſly makes an offering to Hiram of twenty cities in Galilee, or on the borders of it, *Joſh.* xix. 27. over and above the contract ſubſiſting between them, *chap.* v. not willing to be behind in generoſity with the king of Tyre, to whoſe aſſiſtance he was ſo greatly indebted. Hiram, on viewing theſe cities, which not being in the lot of any particular tribe, were yet unoccupied by Iſrael, finds them not ſuited to the genius of his mercantile Tyrians, and therefore declines accepting them, calling them Cabul, *not pleaſing*; which name they afterwards bore, or they were ſo called when this book was written. No doubt Solomon took care to gratify him with ſome other preſent, See *v.* 27. and that not the inſignificance of the offer, but the unſuitableneſs of their ſituation, occaſioned Hiram's refuſal. *Note,* (1.) A generous mind will not chuſe to lie under obligations it is in his power to repay. (2.) Various are the ſentiments of men: the richeſt ſoil hath no charms to him, who delights to plough the main; whilſt the lover of the rural ſcene, with wonder ſees the ſailor tempt the boiſterous waves, and counts the gain too dearly earned amidſt the dangers of the deep.

15. ¶ And this *is* the reaſon of [p] the levy, which king Solomon raiſed, for to build the houſe of the LORD, and his own houſe, and Millo, and the wall of Jeruſalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. 16. *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and ſlain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a preſent unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. 17. And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, 18. And Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderneſs, in the land, 19. And all the cities of ſtore that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horſemen, and that which Solomon [q] deſired to build in Jeruſalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. 20. *And* all the people [r] that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and

[p] Chap. v. 13.
[q] Eccleſ. ii. 10.
[r] Judg. i. 27, 3[illegible]

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Jebuſites, which *were* not of the children of Iſrael, 21. Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Iſrael alſo were not able utterly to deſtroy, [s] upon thoſe did Solomon levy a tribute of [t] bond-ſervice unto this day. 22. But of the children of Iſrael did Solomon make [u] no bond-men: but they *were* men of war, and his ſervants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horſemen. 23. Theſe *were* the chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work. 24. ¶ But Pharaoh's daughter came up [x] out of the city of David, [y] unto her houſe which *Solomon* had built for her: then did he build Millo. 25. ¶ And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and he burnt incenſe upon the altar that *was* before the LORD: ſo he finiſhed the houſe. 26. ¶ And [z] king Solomon made a navy of ſhips in Ezion-geber, which *is* beſide Eloth, on the ſhore of the Red ſea, in the land of Edom. 27. And Hiram ſent in the navy his ſervants, ſhip-men that had knowledge of the ſea, with the ſervants of Solomon. 28. And they came to Ophir, and fet from thence [a] gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought *it* to king Solomon.

[s] Chap. v. 13.
[t] Deut. vii. 2.
[u] Lev. xxv. 39, &c.
[x] Chap. iii. 1.
[y] Ibid. vii. 8.
[z] 2 Chron. viii. 17.
[a] Prov. iii. 14.

v. 15—28. Though Solomon had no wars to engage him, his buildings were vaſt and expenſive, and occaſioned him to levy a tribute on the people.

1. The Lord's houſe was his great concern; there his chief coſt was employed, and when this was finiſhed, his own palace, the ſtrengthening and beautifying his capital, the repairing ſome cities which were decayed, and the building others, gave opportunity of diſplaying his own taſte and magnificence, and ſtrengthening his kingdom, *v.* 19. Gezer among the reſt, till now unconquered, Pharaoh had taken from the old Canaanites, and having made a preſent of it to his daughter Solomon's wife, he repaired and fortified it. *Note*, They who make God's glory their firſt concern, may expect his bleſſing upon all the labour of their hands.

2. The old inhabitants of the land were reduced to ſervitude by him, *v.* 20, 21. proſelyted perhaps, and therefore not to be extirpated; theſe therefore he employed in the more laborious works, whilſt the Iſraelites were all diſcharged from meaner ſervices, and made officers in his court, or ſuperintendants of his works, *v.* 22. *Note*, In the court of Jeſus, our king, every ſpiritual Iſraelite ſhall be advanced to ſit among the princes.

3. Pharaoh's daughter, when her palace was finiſhed, came up to it, from the city of David.

4. Solomon, in the midſt of all his vaſt undertakings, neglected not the regular returns of worſhip, *v.* 25. he could only take comfort in the labour of his hands, when his heart continued ſtedfaſtly cleaving unto God. The altar he built, he frequented. *Note*, We muſt carefully obſerve that our worldly engagements draw not off our hearts, or indiſpoſe them for the ſervice of the bleſſed God.

5. To enrich his kingdom, and to carry on his expenſive works, by means of the port of Ezion Geber on the Red ſea, which David had conquered from the Edomites, he fitted out a fleet, manned chiefly with Tyrians, under the command of his ſervants, and trafficked to Ophir: in what part of the Indies this was ſituated is uncertain; whether Ceylon, Malacca, or perhaps nearer, on what is now called the coaſt of Coromandel, the return of the voyage was very advantageous, amounting to four hundred and twenty talents of gold, about one million, eight hundred and ninety thouſand pounds. *Note*, (1.) Nothing enriches a ſtate like traffic. (2.) Even the gold of Ophir periſhes in the uſing, but the treaſures of grace never wax old, or decay. He that is poſſeſſed of theſe, hath that fine gold which conſtitutes the true riches, *Rev.* iii. 18.

CHAP. X.

We have here, 1. *The queen of Sheba's viſit to Solomon; and her admiration of his wiſdom,* ver. 1—13. 2. *His magnificence, merchandize, and treaſures,* ver. 14—23. 3. *The rich preſents ſent him, and the purchaſe he made of horſes and chariots,* ver. 24—29.

1. AND when [a] the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the LORD, ſhe came to [b] prove him with hard queſtions. 2. And ſhe came to Jeruſalem with a very great train, with camels that bare ſpices, and very much gold, and precious ſtones: and when ſhe was come to Solomon, ſhe communed with him of all that was in her heart. 3. And Solomon told her all her † queſtions: there was not *any* thing hid from the king, which he told her not. 4. And when the queen of Sheba had ſeen all Solomon's [c] wiſdom, and the houſe that he had built, 5. And [d] the meat of his table, and [e] the ſitting of his ſervants, and the ‡ attendance of his miniſters, and [f] their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and ‖ his aſcent, by which he went up unto the houſe of the LORD: [g] there was no more ſpirit in her. 6. And ſhe ſaid to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land, of thy acts, and of thy wiſdom. 7. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had ſeen *it*: and behold, the half was not told me: thy wiſdom and proſperity [h] exceedeth the fame which I heard. 8. [i] Happy *are* thy men, happy *are* theſe thy ſervants, which ſtand continually before thee, *and* [k] that hear thy wiſdom. 9. [l] Bleſſed be the LORD thy God which delighted in thee, [m] to ſet thee on the throne of Iſrael; becauſe the LORD loved Iſrael for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and juſtice. 10. And [n] ſhe gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of [o] gold, and of ſpices very great ſtore, and precious ſtones: there came no more ſuch abundance of ſpices, as theſe which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. 11. And [p] the navy alſo of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug-trees, and precious ſtones. 12. And the king made of the almug-trees § pillars for the houſe of the LORD, and for the king's houſe, harps alſo and pſalteries for ſingers: there came no ſuch almug-trees, nor were ſeen unto this day. 13. And king Solomon [q] gave unto the queen of Sheba all her deſire, whatſoever ſhe aſked, beſides *that* which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty: ſo ſhe turned and went into her own country, ſhe and her ſervants.

[a] 2 Chron. ix. 1, &c. Mat. xii. 42.
[b] Prov. i. 5. & xiii. 20. Luke xi. 31.
† Heb. Words.
[c] Prov. viii. 14. Mat. xii. 42. Col. ii. 3.
[d] John vi. 58.
[e] Rev. iii. 21.
‡ Heb. Standing.
[f] Rev. iii. 5.
‖ Or the burnt-offerings in the houſe of, &c.
[g] Mat. vii. 28, 29.
[h] 1 Cor. ii. 9.
[i] Pſal. lxxxiv. iv.
[k] Prov. viii. 34.
[l] Chap. v. 7.
[m] Iſa. ix. 6. Luke i. 32.
[n] Pſal. lxxii. 10. 15.
[o] Mat. ii. 11.
[p] Chap. ix. 27.
§ Heb. A prop.
[q] Eph. iii. 20.

v. 1—13. The ſpreading fame of Solomon brought to his court a vaſt reſort of ſtrangers. Among the moſt diſtinguiſhed of which, we muſt reckon the queen of Sheba.

1. She came with a vaſt retinue, and the richeſt preſents, to converſe with a perſon of whom ſhe had heard ſuch wonders, to prove him by hard queſtions, to gain information in her difficulties, and eſpecially to enquire concerning the name of the Lord, who had beſtowed on Solomon ſuch uncommon wiſdom. Her country, *Mat.* xii. is ſaid to be *ſouth*, and the *utmoſt parts of the earth*, which ſeems to make it moſt probable, that it was the ſouthern part of Arabia, bordering on the ſea, whither the fleets of Solomon might have conveyed the report of his wiſdom and greatneſs. *Note*, (1.) Wiſdom can never be too dearly bought, or too far fetched. (2.) If her ſollicitude to enquire after God was ſo commendable, how will it upbraid their neglect, who, when *the greater than Solomon is here*, to teach them by his word and ſpirit, refuſe inſtruction, and will not hear the wiſdom of God.

2. Solomon entertained her with the dignity becoming her rank, communed with her of all ſhe had in her heart, anſwered every queſtion, and ſolved all her difficulties to her entire ſatisfaction. *Note*, They who have the gift of knowledge, ſhould delight in the communication of it.

3. What ſhe heard and ſaw quite aſtoniſhed her. His diſcourſes ſo deep and clear; his buildings ſo vaſt and magnificent; his table ſo richly and regularly ſupplied; his ſervants ſo exact, orderly, and numerous; his liveries ſo grand; his cup-bearers ſo ſtately; and *his aſcent by ſteps to the houſe of the Lord* ſo nobly contrived, ſo exquiſitely finiſhed; or as it may be rendered, *the burnt-offerings in the houſe of the Lord*, which as proſelyted, ſhe might now be admitted to behold: theſe were all ſuch an evidence of Solomon's tranſcendant wiſdom, that ſhe was loſt in admiration, *v.* 5.

4. When ſhe had recovered from her amazement, ſhe could not with-hold expreſſing her high ſatisfaction, and how much the event exceeded her expectation. Fame is uſually too liberal, but here had been unjuſt, *half had not been told her*. She pronounces them happy, who enjoyed the conſtant opportunity of hearing ſuch a prodigy of wiſdom; and could be tempted to wiſh her lot among his ſervants, rather than on the throne of Sheba. And concludes with bleſſing God for his diſtinguiſhed gifts and greatneſs, and for his goodneſs to Iſrael in giving them ſuch a king, *v.* 9. *Note*, (1.) To enjoy the converſe of thoſe who are wiſe in the things of God, is a moſt valuable mercy. (2.) God, as the author of all our bleſſings, deſerves the praiſe of all. (3.) When we ſhall come to the preſence of our Solomon, the Prince of Peace, we ſhall own how much the glory he hath prepared for his people exceeds all that eye hath ſeen or ear heard, or it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

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5. They parted with mutual magnificent preſents: ſhe gave him gold, and ſpices, and jewels; and he made her a like return, preſenting her beſides with every thing curious, which ſhe deſired. *Note*, (1.) Mutual tokens are the pledges of friendſhip. (2.) Though we have nothing valuable to offer to the Lord Jeſus, yet if we have the willing heart, he will ſend us away loaded with his good things, and we can aſk him nothing he will not delight to beſtow on us.

6. We have an account of Hiram's voyage, See 2 *Chron*. ix. 10. in which Solomon was partner, and the produce of it, particularly the almug-trees, probably ebony, of which that aſcent was made, the baluſtrade at leaſt of it, which the queen of Sheba ſo admired, *v*. 5. A vaſt number of muſical inſtruments alſo were made of this wood, *v*. 12. no ſuch had before been ſeen in Iſrael, nor to the day in which the hiſtory was written.

14. ¶ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year, was ſix hundred threeſcore and ſix talents of gold. 15. Beſides *that he had* of the merchant-men, and of the traffic of the ſpice-merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country. 16. ¶ And king Solomon made two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: ſix hundred *ſhekels* of gold went to one target. 17. And *he made* three hundred [r] ſhields *of* beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one ſhield: and the king put them in the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon. 18. ¶ Moreover, the king made a great [s] throne of † ivory, and overlaid it with the beſt of gold. 19. The throne had ſix ſteps, and the top of the throne *was* round behind: and *there were* ‡ ſtays on either ſide on the place of the ſeat, and two lions ſtood beſide the ſtays. 20. And twelve lions ſtood there on the one ſide and on the other upon the ſix ſteps: there was not the like made in any kingdom. 21. ¶ And all king Solomon's drinking-veſſels *were of* gold, and all the veſſels of the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon, *were of* pure gold, ‖ none *were of* ſilver; it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. 22. For the king had at ſea a navy of Tharſhiſh, with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharſhiſh, bringing gold and ſilver, ivory, and apes, and § peacocks. 23. So king Solomon [t] exceeded all the kings of the earth, for riches and for wiſdom. 24. ¶ And all the earth ſought to Solomon to hear his wiſdom, which God had put in his heart. 25. And they brought every man his preſent, veſſels of ſilver, and veſſels of gold, and garments, and armour, and ſpices, horſes, and mules, a rate year by year. 26. And [u] Solomon gathered together chariots and horſemen: and he had a thouſand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thouſand horſemen, whom he beſtowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jeruſalem. 27. And [x] the king made ſilver *to be* in Jeruſalem as ſtones, and cedars made he to be as the ſycamore-trees, that *are* in the vale, for abundance. 28. ¶ And Solomon had horſes brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. 29. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for ſix hundred *ſhekels* of ſilver, and an horſe for an hundred and fifty: and ſo for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out by their † means.

[r] Chap. xiv. 26.
[s] Pſal. ix. 7. Rev. xx. 11.
† Heb. Tooth.
‡ Heb. Hands.
‖ Or, there was no ſilver in them.
§ Or parrots.
[t] Chap. iii. 12, 13. & iv. 30.
[u] Deut. xvii. 16.
[x] Chap. iii. 9, 12, 13. Mat. vi. 33.
† Heb. Hand.

v. 14—29. Solomon went on, increaſing his wealth and magnificence.

1. The great ſources from whence he drew his immenſe revenues, were the tribute of the conquered countries, the cuſtoms paid by the merchants, the preſents which were continually made to him by the neighbouring potentates, who conſulted him; but eſpecially his vaſt traffic by land and ſea. Every three years his ſhips, in conſort with Hiram, returned from Tharſhiſh, ſuppoſed to be ſome part of the Eaſt Indies, from the commodities they imported, gold, ſilver, ivory, apes, and peacocks or parrots. His trade to Egypt alſo was moſt advantageous: probably by his alliance with Pharaoh, he obtained the ſole purchaſe of the ſtaple commodities of the country, horſes, chariots, and linen cloths, at a fixed price, which he again ſold at a vaſt profit to the nations around him, *v*. 29. The clear produce of all which in one year amounted to ſix hundred and ſixty-ſix talents, near three million of money, an immenſe ſum in thoſe days. *Note*, Traffic is the great ſource of wealth: the empire of the ſea enriches a nation more than the mines of Peru or Golconda.

2. He ſpent liberally what he received ſo abundantly. For he made two hundred large ſhields of gold, and three hundred of a leſſer ſize, for ſtate, to be carried before him: he erected a moſt magnificent throne of ivory, overlaid, or rather inlaid, with gold, ſupported by golden lions, and aſcended by ſix ſteps, on each of which a lion was placed, of pure gold; here he received ambaſſadors, and ſat in judgment. All his ſervice for his table was plate of gold, and his forces were increaſed proportionably to his grandeur: he maintained a ſtanding army of fourteen hundred chariots, and twelve thouſand horſemen; and far from oppreſſing his ſubjects to maintain ſuch ſtate and dignity, by the trade he introduced among them, ſilver is figuratively ſaid to be as plenty as ſtones, and cedars as ſycamore-trees. Thus did Solomon exceed all kings in riches and wiſdom, and his people ſhared his glory, happy and proſperous under his ſafe and gentle government. *Note*, (1.) Whatever God giveth, it is deſigned that we ſhould richly enjoy it. (2.) Solomon, on this throne of ivory, was typical of his greater Son, ſeated on the great white throne of Judgment, and pronouncing ſentence on the eternal ſtate of men and angels: See *Rev*. xx. ii. (3.) That king is truly glorious, who makes his ſubjects affluent and happy under his wiſe adminiſtration. (4.) If we ſhall be found citizens of the new Jeruſalem, and our lot be caſt among the ſubjects of Jeſus, then the very ſtreets of our city ſhall be pure gold, and the walls the richeſt jewels; ſo much will our eternal conſolations and bleſſedneſs exceed all earthly joy and felicity.

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CHAP. XI.

This chapter begins with as melancholy a but *as almoſt any we find in all the Bible: Hitherto we have read nothing of Solomon but what was great and good; but his ſun ſets under a cloud.* 1. *By multiplying ſtrange wives, he turned after ſtrange gods*, ver. 4—8. 2. *God's anger ſignified to him thereupon*, ver. 9—13. 3. *Enemies foreign and domeſtic raiſed up againſt him*, ver. 14—40. 4. *His death and burial*, ver. 41—43.

1. BUT king Solomon [a] loved [b] many ſtrange women (together with the daughter of Pharaoh) women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites: 2. Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, [c] Ye ſhall not go in to them, neither ſhall they come in unto you, *for* ſurely [d] they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto theſe in love. 3. And he had ſeven hundred wives, princeſſes, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. 4. For it came to paſs when Solomon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father. 5. For Solomon went after Aſhtoreth the goddeſs of the Zidonians, and after [e] Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6. And Solomon did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his father. 7. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemoſh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that *is* before Jeruſalem: and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. 8. And likewiſe did he for all his ſtrange wives, which burnt incenſe, and ſacrificed unto their gods.

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[a] Chap. iii. 3. Rev. ii. 4.
[b] Deut. xvii. 17.
[c] Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.
[d] Num. xxv. 2. Neh. xiii. 26.
[e] Lam. iv. 1. Jer. ii. 10—12. 1 Cor. x. 12.

v. 1—8. Lord, what is man! Is this Solomon the wiſe? Is this Jedediah, the beloved of the Lord? Is this the man of prayer, the builder of God's temple? How art thou fallen, Son of the Morning!

1. The cauſe of Solomon's ſad departure from God is here mentioned. The love of women ſtole away his heart; inſatiate luſt led him to multiply his wives and concubines; and when the women of Iſrael no longer pleaſed his vitiated taſte, or piouſly refuſed to miniſter to his guilty pleaſures, he ſought for others, leſs ſcrupulous, from the forbidden nations around him, *v*. 2. On theſe his heart doated; and as he grew old, grew fonder ſtill, and could refuſe them nothing. *Note*, (1.) No paſſion ſo dangerous to the ſoul, as the love of women. (2.) Every indulgence given to lewd deſire, only makes thoſe deſires more inſatiate.

2. The ſad effects produced by his inordinate affections. His heart was drawn aſide to idolatry; to which David in his moſt lamented days never inclined. His wives taking advantage of his fondneſs and age, ſeduced him firſt to grant them the worſhip of their own gods, and then engaged him to join with them in the abominable ſervice. To ſuch a pitch of impiety it grew at laſt, that the high place of Chemoſh confronted the very temple of God, *v*. 8. *Note*, (1.) They who give way to one wilful ſin, never know when or where they ſhall ſtop. (2.) The indulgence of fleſhly luſts makes the heart brutiſh, and ſtupifies the conſcience. (3.) Outward proſperity is a dangerous ſtate: they who fare ſumptuouſly every day, often find their

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their table a ſnare, and pampered appetite their ruin. (4.) The greateſt attainments, without continued watchfulneſs and jealouſy, may be quickly loſt; and, like Solomon, the higheſt in profeſſion of godlineſs, become the fouleſt in their falls. (5.) Solomon's ſin ſhould be our warning: a buſy devil, and a body of fleſh will never ceaſe tempting. Let us never turn into an argument to embolden us, what is left on record as an admonition, to deter us from the like ſins.

9. ¶ And the LORD was angry with Solomon, becauſe [f] his heart was turned from the LORD God of Iſrael, [g] which had appeared unto him twice. 10. And [h] had commanded him concerning this thing, that he ſhould not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. 11. Wherefore the LORD ſaid unto Solomon, Foraſmuch as this is done of thee, and thou haſt not kept my covenant and my ſtatutes which I have commanded thee, [i] I will ſurely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy ſervant. 12. Notwithſtanding, in thy days I will not do it, [k] for David thy father's ſake: *but* I will rend it out of the hand of thy ſon. 13. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom: *but* will give one tribe to thy ſon, for David my ſervant's ſake, and for Jeruſalem's ſake, which I have choſen.

f Prov. iv. 23.
g Chap. ix. 2.
h Ibid. 6, 7.
i Ver. 31. Chap. xii. 15.
k Deut. ix. 5.

v. 9—13. Juſtly provoked at ſuch baſe ingratitude and wilful diſobedience, after ſuch repeated inſtances of his kindneſs, God ſends a terrible meſſage to awaken him from his ſhameful backſliding. Since he had revolted from God, the kingdom ſhall revolt from him, that is, from his poſterity in the next reign; and though for the ſake of the promiſe made to David, he would leave him one tribe, that is Judah, with which Benjamin, as adjacent, was reckoned: the other ten tribes ſhould be given to his ſervant. In mercy God deferred the execution of his ſentence till his ſon's reign, but left him to lament the approaching deſolations, when all the glory he hoped to tranſmit to his poſterity, would be ſo eclipſed. God had given him fair warning before; he hath now only his own wickedneſs to blame. What effect this meſſage had, we are not told; yet have reaſon to hope it was, like Nathan's, the means of bringing him to repentance; and that the book of Eccleſiaſtes contains his repentance, and acknowledgment of his ſin and folly. *Note*, (1.) When God's people ſin againſt him, they may expect ſevere rebukes. (2.) Every ſin receives peculiar aggravations from the light and mercies againſt which it is committed. (3.) Though God does not diſinherit his choſen, they will tarniſh greatly the luſtre of their crown by their backſlidings. (4.) It is for Jeſus' ſake, and the covenant eſtabliſhed in him, that we are not utterly conſumed: if any man ſin, we have yet an advocate with the Father.

14. ¶ And [l] the LORD ſtirred up an adverſary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he *was* of the king's ſeed in Edom. 15. For it came to paſs [m] when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the hoſt was gone up to bury the ſlain, [n] after he had ſmitten every male in Edom: 16. (For ſix months did Joab remain there with all Iſrael, until he had cut off every male in Edom) 17. That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's ſervants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad *being* yet a little child. 18. And they aroſe out of Midian, and came to Paran, and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, which gave him an houſe, and appointed him † victuals, and gave him land. 19. And Hadad found great favour in the ſight of Pharaoh, ſo that he gave him to wife the ſiſter of his own wife, the ſiſter of Tahpenes the queen. 20. And the ſiſter of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his ſon, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's houſe: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's houſhold, among the ſons of Pharaoh. 21. And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David ſlept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the hoſt was dead, Hadad ſaid to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country. 22. Then Pharaoh ſaid unto him, But what haſt thou lacked with me, that behold, thou ſeekeſt to go to thine own country? And he anſwered, Nothing: Howbeit let me go in any wiſe. 23. ¶ And God ſtirred him up *another* adverſary, Rezon, the ſon of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah. 24. And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, [o] when David ſlew them *of Zobah*: and they went to Damaſcus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damaſcus. 25. And [p] he was an adverſary to Iſrael all the days of Solomon, beſide the miſchief that Hadad *did*: and he abhorred Iſrael, and reigned over Syria.

l 2 Sam. vii. 14.
m Ibid. viii. 14.
n Deut. xx. 13.
† Heb. Bread.
o 2 Sam. viii. 3. & x. 18.

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p Pſal. lxxxix. 32.

v. 14—25. Peace and plenty had for a time, with uninterrupted ſtreams, flowed in upon the pious Solomon: but when he exchanged his wiſdom for folly, and his piety for profaneneſs, then the current of his mercies was ſtayed, and God began to afflict him. Sin and ſuffering go uſually linked together.

God ſtirred up adverſaries againſt him, foreign and domeſtic, to avenge his quarrel, and to be a ſcourge for his ſins. *Note*, The inſtruments God uſes, often mean only their own ambition, but he directs them to fulfil his purpoſes, and makes them ſubſervient to his glory.

1. Hadad, an Edomite. He was of the ſeed royal, and had eſcaped from the general extirpation of Moab; which Joab, under David's reign, had attempted, *v.* 15, 16. Hadad was then a child, and a few of his ſervants reſcued him by flight; and with guides, or fugitives, like themſelves, from Paran, took refuge in Egypt; where, being kindly entertained by Pharaoh, he was in proceſs of time, married to his wife's ſiſter, greatly careſs'd, *v.* 20. and nobly provided for. At the beginning of Solomon's reign, he longed to return to his native country, which Pharaoh, though with great reluctance, granted; there he ſeems to have continued in ſecret, engaging the people in his favour, till now Solomon's ſin gave him an opportunity to declare himſelf; and though the miſchief he did is not mentioned, he became, it is clear, a very troubleſome neighbour, *v.* 25. *Note*, (1.) The weakeſt inſtruments in God's hands can ſoon grow ſtrong enough to be our bitter ſcourge. (2.) Like Hadad, the believer, though enjoying every thing on earth his heart can wiſh, yet ſighs for home, and ſaith, O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away to my eternal reſt, in the boſom of Jeſus.

2. Rezon was another enemy; he eſcaped from the ruins of Zobah, when Hadadezer fell by the ſword of David; and having collected as many as he could of the ſcattered forces, he became their captain; and now towards the end of Solomon's reign, when his wickedneſs made him weak, ſeizing Damaſcus, he fixed there the ſeat of his kingdom. The remembrance of his former ſufferings ſharpened his reſentment: he abhorred Solomon and Iſrael, and in concert with Hadad, continued to harraſs and diſturb them. *Note*, When God reſolves to chaſtize, he will not want a rod.

26. ¶ And [q] Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's ſervant (whoſe mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow-woman) even [r] he lift up *his* hand againſt the king. 27. And this *was* the cauſe that he lift up *his* hand againſt the king: Solomon built Millo, *and* repaired the breaches of the city of David his father. 28. And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valour: and Solomon ſeeing the young man, that [s] he was induſtrious, he made him ruler over all the † charge of the houſe of Joſeph. 29. And it came to paſs at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jeruſalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way: and he had clad himſelf with a new garment; and they two *were* alone in the field. 30. And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and [t] rent it *in* twelve pieces. 31. And he ſaid to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus ſaith the LORD the God of Iſrael, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: 32. (But he ſhall have one tribe for my ſervant David's ſake, and for Jeruſalem's ſake, the city which I have choſen out of all the tribes of Iſrael) 33. Becauſe that they have forſaken me, and have worſhipped Aſhtoreth the goddeſs of the Zidonians, Chemoſh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and [u] have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is* right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my ſtatutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father. 34. Howbeit, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David my ſervant's ſake, whom I choſe, becauſe he kept my commandments and my ſtatutes: 35. But I will take the kingdom out of his ſon's hand, and will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes. 36. And unto his ſon will I give one tribe, that David my ſervant may have a ‡ light [x] alway before me in Jeruſalem, the city which I have choſen me to put my name there. 37. And I will take thee, and thou ſhalt reign according to all that thy ſoul deſireth,

q 2 Chron. xiii. 6.
r 2 Sam. xx. 21.
s Prov. xxii. 29.
† Heb. Burden.
t 1 Sam. xv. 28. Chap. xii. 20.
u 2 Kings xxi. 22.
‡ Heb. Lamp.
x 2 Sam. xxi. 17. Pſal. cxxxii. 17. Iſa. ix. 7. Luke i. 32.

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[y] Gen. xxi. 22.
[z] 2 Sam. vii. 16.
[a] Prov. xix. 21.

eth, and ſhalt be king over Iſrael. 38. And it ſhall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my ſight, to keep my ſtatutes and my commandments, as David my ſervant did: that [y] I will be with thee, and [z] build thee a ſure houſe, as I built for David, and will give Iſrael unto thee. 39. And I will for this afflict the ſeed of David, but not for ever. 40. [a] Solomon ſought therefore to kill Jeroboam: and Jeroboam aroſe, and fled into Egypt, unto Shiſhak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

v. 26—40. We have here,

1. The worſt and laſt of Solomon's enemies, whoſe name we ſhall often find hereafter ſtamped with infamy, Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat; an Ephraimite by birth, his mother a widow, advanced by Solomon, for his diligence and induſtry, to the preſidence over the whole houſe of Joſeph: his advancement had fired his ambition, and Ahijah's prophecy raiſed his expectations to aſpire even to the crown. *Note,* (1.) Diligence is the way to advancement. (2.) Domeſtic foes are more dangerous than foreign enemies. (3). Ambition is never ſatisfied; one ſummit of honour attained preſents a greater height, to which the aſpiring wiſhes climb.

2. The appointment of Jeroboam to the crown of Iſrael. Ahijah met him on his return from court, and taking him aſide into a field for privacy, by a ſignificant ſign, intimated his meſſage, ſeizing Jeroboam's new garment, or his own, the words bearing either ſenſe, he rent it in twelve pieces, and bid him take up ten, aſſuring him from God, that the tribes of Iſrael ſhould be given him as a puniſhment on Solomon and his people, for their foul idolatry, (and a greater curſe could not be laid on them, than ſuch a king as he afterwards proved) yet he is not put into immediate poſſeſſion, but limited to Solomon's demiſe; and then alſo he muſt not aſpire to the univerſal dominion, but leave the tribe of Judah, which, with Benjamin, were continued to David's ſeed, undiſturbed, that the lamp of David, his royal houſe, be not quite extinguiſhed. On condition of his fidelity to walk in God's ways, Ahijah promiſes him the ſure poſſeſſion of the kingdom to his poſterity; but if he apoſtatized from God, he muſt be aſſured, from what he ſaw in Solomon's caſe, that he would not be unpuniſhed. *Note,* (1.) Others ſufferings ſhould warn us againſt their ſins. (2.) Amidſt all our provocations God ſtill remembers his promiſes to his people, for the ſon of David's ſake, and though he will not let us go unpuniſhed, in his wrath he ſtill remembers mercy.

3. Solomon having information of what had paſſed, by Ahijah's public declaration of it, or Jeroboam's vanity, fooliſhly and wickedly attempts to diſappoint God's word by the death of his rival; on which Jeroboam flies into Egypt, as an aſylum, to wait 'till the death of Solomon ſhould open his way to the throne. *Note,* We muſt, as ſtrangers in a ſtrange land, be content for a while to wait till death ſhall open a way for us to our kingdom in glory.

[b] 2 Chron. ix. 29.
[c] Chap. ii.

41. ¶ And the reſt of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wiſdom, *are* they not written in [b] the book of the acts of Solomon? 42. And the time that Solomon reigned in Jeruſalem, over all Iſrael, *was* forty years. 43. And Solomon [c] ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

v. 41—43. Solomon's reign now draws to an end: we have heard ſome of the moſt material of his deeds, but a greater part are loſt in oblivion, though written in a book of annals, extant when this hiſtory was compiled. Forty years he reigned; at laſt death, that pays no reſpect to crowned heads, took him from the throne to the tomb. He ſlept in his father's ſepulchre, and left his kingdom to his ſon Rehoboam, whoſe inauſpicious reign we next enter upon.

CHAP. XII.

Here is, 1. *Rehoboam's acceſſion to the throne, and Jeroboam's return out of Egypt,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The people's petition to Rehoboam for the redreſs of grievances, with his rough anſwer,* ver. 3—15. 3. *The revolt of the ten tribes thereupon, and their ſetting up of Jeroboam,* ver. 16—20. 4. *Rehoboam's attempt to reduce them, and the prohibition God gave to that attempt,* ver. 21—24. 5. *Jeroboam's eſtabliſhment of his government by idolatry,* ver. 25—33.

[a] 2 Chron. x. 1.
[b] Chap. xi. 40.
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[c] Chap. iv. 7. & v. 13.
[d] Job xxxii. 7.
[e] Eccleſ. iii. 1.
[f] Prov. xv. 1.

1. AND [a] Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Iſrael were come to Shechem to make him king. 2. And it came to paſs, when Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard *of it* ([b] for he was fled from the preſence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt) 3. That they ſent and called him: and Jeroboam, and all the congregation of Iſrael came, and ſpake unto Rehoboam, ſaying, 4. [c] Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous ſervice of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will ſerve thee. 5. And he ſaid unto them, Depart yet *for* three days, then come again to me. And the people departed. 6. And king Rehoboam conſulted with [d] the old men that ſtood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived, and ſaid, How do you adviſe, that I may anſwer this people? 7. And they ſpake unto him, ſaying, If thou wilt be [e] a ſervant unto this people this day, and wilt ſerve them, and anſwer them, [f] and ſpeak good words to them, then they will be thy ſervants for ever. 8. But he forſook the counſel of the old men, which they had given him, and conſulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which ſtood before him: 9. And he ſaid unto them, What counſel give ye, that we may anſwer this people, who have ſpoken to me, ſaying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us, lighter? 10. And the young men that were grown up with him, ſpake unto him, ſaying, Thus ſhalt thou ſpeak unto this people that ſpake unto thee, ſaying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us: thus ſhalt thou ſay unto them, My little *finger* ſhall be thicker than my father's loins. 11. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chaſtiſed you with whips, but I will chaſtiſe you with ſcorpions.

† Heb. Hardly.
[g] Prov. xii. 13. & xviii. 7.
[h] 2 Chron. xx. 25. Amos iii. 6.
[i] Chap. xi. 31.

12. ¶ So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, ſaying, Come to me again the third day. 13. And the king anſwered the people † roughly, and forſook the old mens counſel that they gave him; 14. And ſpake to them after the counſel of the young men, ſaying, My father made your yoke heavy, and [g] I will add to your yoke; my father *alſo* chaſtiſed you with whips, but I will chaſtiſe you with ſcorpions. 15. Wherefore the king hearkned not unto the people: [h] for the cauſe was from the LORD, that he might perform his ſaying, which the LORD ſpake [i] by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat.

v. 1—15. The ſucceſſion devolved on Rehoboam without diſpute, and none ſeemed to conteſt his title; but we are not moſt ſafe when moſt ſecure.

1. The people of Iſrael deſired the king to come to Shechem, in the tribe of Ephraim, as if they would there recognize his title; but in fact with a view either to redreſs their grievances, or revolt from his government, and probably already gained by Jeroboam's emiſſaries. *Note,* Many a vile deſign lurks under the moſt ſpecious appearances.

2. On Rehoboam's coming thither, they had privately ſent for Jeroboam out of Egypt, and at his inſtigation probably preſented a petition for the redreſs of their grievances, which, whether real or not, would give him a handle to perform the ſtroke he meditated. They complain not of his father's ſins, but of the heavineſs of their taxes, and beg they may be lightened; nor is it at all unlikely, that though Solomon's reign at firſt was ſo gentle, and their circumſtances ſo affluent, yet when a thouſand women had him in their power, they would, like ſo many harpies, fleece the poor people. *Note,* (1.) The beſt government will not be without factious ſpirits, ready to blow the coals of ſedition among the populace. (2.) The avarice of a kept miſtreſs is inſatiable. (3.) Moſt men are more concerned how to ſave their money than their ſouls.

3. Rehoboam's folly ruins him. Deſiring three days to anſwer their petition, he conſulted firſt the old men who had been trained up in the ſchool of wiſdom before Solomon. They prudently adviſe him to comply with the people's requeſt; either the demand was reaſonable, or at leaſt, in their preſent diſpoſition, it were politic to appear gracious, and by one conceſſion ſecure for ever their fidelity. Rehoboam reliſhed not this advice, therefore he conſults his younger companions, who, having grown up with him in his pleaſures, knew how to flatter his pride, and to adviſe thoſe harſh meaſures they ſaw moſt agreeable to his temper, as if he had nothing to fear, but might, by rigour and threatnings, over-awe the people to obedience. Advice ſo ſuited to his own diſpoſition, he failed not to purſue, and, on the third day, roughly received the deputies of the people; far from condeſcending to their requeſt, or vindicating his father's government from oppreſſion, he threatens to make their yoke heavier, and, if they refuſed to draw in it, to chaſtiſe them with greater ſeverity than his father had ever done; if they dared diſpute his will, he will make them feel his power,

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which he boaſts to be much ſuperior to Solomon's, ſo that his little finger ſhould be thicker than his father's loins. This bad advice was God's juſt judgment on him, and, in order to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Ahijah. *Note*, (1.) That government which ſubſiſts only by ſeverity, is in a tottering condition; no throne is ſure, where a king reigns not in the hearts of his ſubjects. (2.) They are our beſt friends who diſſuade us from our raſh deſigns, and they are our greateſt enemies who ſooth our folly and flatter our pride. (3.) At court, too commonly, not the profit of the kingdom, but the pleaſing the king, is the object moſt in view.

16. ¶ So when all Iſrael ſaw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people anſwered the king, ſaying, What portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in [k] the ſon of Jeſſe: [l] to your tents, O Iſrael: now ſee to thine own houſe, David. So Iſrael departed unto their tents. 17. [m] But *as for* the children of Iſrael which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. 18. Then king Rehoboam ſent [n] Adoram, who *was* over the tribute; and all Iſrael ſtoned him with ſtones, that he died: therefore king Rehoboam † made ſpeed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jeruſalem. 19. So Iſrael rebelled againſt the houſe of David unto this day. 20. And it came to paſs when all Iſrael heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they ſent and called him unto the congregation, and [o] made him king over all Iſrael: there was none that followed the houſe of David, but the tribe of Judah only. 21. ¶ [p] And when Rehoboam was come to Jeruſalem, he aſſembled all the houſe of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourſcore thouſand choſen men, which were warriors, to fight againſt the houſe of Iſrael, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon. 22. But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, ſaying, 23. Speak unto Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon king of Judah, and unto all the houſe of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, ſaying, 24. Thus ſaith the LORD, Ye ſhall not go up, nor fight againſt your brethren the children of Iſrael: return every man to his houſe, for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

[k] 1 Sam. xxii. 7.
[l] 2 Sam. xx. 1.
[m] Chap. xi. 13.
[n] Ibid. v. 14.
† Heb. Strengthened himſelf.
[o] Hoſ. viii. 4.
[p] 2 Chron. xi. 1.

v. 16—24. An anſwer ſo impolitic and ſevere juſtly exaſperated the people, and gave Jeroboam and the malecontents the very opportunity they wanted.

1. They openly revolt from Rehoboam, and renounce their allegiance to the poſterity of David, whom in contempt they called the ſon of Jeſſe; and defying Rehoboam's threatnings, bid him look to himſelf and his houſe the tribe of Judah, who cleaved unto him, which would make but a poor figure thus deſerted. *Note*, (1.) They who by oppreſſion drive the people into rebellion, muſt blame themſelves for the miſchief which enſues. (2.) They who know the great ſin of rebellion, will ſuffer much, rather than riſe to vindicate their liberty, by ſo dangerous a meaſure.

2. Rehoboam now too late perceived his folly, yet takes as wrong a method to appeaſe the ſedition, as he had done to excite it. Willing to ſoften the people, he ſends Adoram to them, the moſt odious inſtrument he could have fixed upon, as being the collector of thoſe taxes of which they ſo heavily complained. His very preſence ſo enraged the populace, that they inſtantly ſtoned him to death; at which in a fright Rehoboam flies to Jeruſalem, fearing his own perſon no longer ſafe in Shechem. *Note*, We often ſee the miſchiefs our folly occaſions, when it is too late to remedy them.

3. Rehoboam being fled, the people aſſembled and choſe Jeroboam king of Iſrael: Judah, with Benjamin only, approved their loyalty to David's ſucceſſor: thus was that diviſion made, which never after was healed. *Note*, A haſty word produces endleſs miſchief.

4. Rehoboam could not however think of quitting tamely to his rival the kingdom he had uſurped, but by his faithful friends in Judah and Benjamin, levies a moſt formidable army of one hundred and eighty thouſand men of war; and now Jeroboam ſeemed ready to be hurled from the throne he had ſcarce aſcended: but God interpoſes. By his prophet Shemaiah, he forbids them to fight againſt their brethren; the thing was his doing, in juſt judgment againſt their ſins, therefore they muſt ſubmit to it. Hereupon Rehoboam deſiſts, and the army is diſbanded. *Note*, (1.) When God's will contradicts our deſigns, we muſt ſubmit without delay. (2.) Love to our brethren ſhould make us put up with many injuries, rather than ſeek a redreſs which may be ruinous to both. (3.) If we fight againſt God, there can be no hope of ſucceſs; therefore it is wiſe to leave off meddling betimes.

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25. ¶ Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein, and went out from thence, and built Penuel. 26. And Jeroboam [q] ſaid in his heart, Now ſhall the kingdom return to the houſe of David: 27. If this people go up [r] to do ſacrifice in the houſe of the LORD at Jeruſalem, then ſhall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and [s] they ſhall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. 28. Whereupon the king [t] took counſel, and made two [u] calves *of* gold, and ſaid unto them, [x] It is too much for you to go up to Jeruſalem: behold thy gods, O Iſrael, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 29. And he ſet the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in [y] Dan. 30. And [z] this thing became a ſin: for the people went *to worſhip* before the one, *even* unto Dan. 31. And he made an houſe of high places, and made prieſts † of the loweſt of the people, [a] which were not of the ſons of Levi. 32. And Jeroboam ordained a feaſt in [b] the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, [c] like unto the feaſt that is in Judah, and [d] he offered upon the altar (ſo did he in Beth-el) ſacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Beth-el the prieſts of the high places which he had made. 33. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Beth-el, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which [e] he had deviſed of his own heart: and ordained a feaſt unto the children of Iſrael, and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incenſe.

[q] Chap. xi. 18.
[r] Deut. xii. 6.
[s] Prov. xxix. 25.
[t] Iſa. xxx. 1.
[u] Exod. xxxii. 4.
[x] Gen. iii. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 19.
[y] Judg. xviii. 30.
[z] 2 Kings xvii. 21.
† Or from the extremities of the people. Chap. xiii. 33.
[a] Numb. iii. 10. Ezek. xliv. 7.
[b] Lev. xxiii. 34.
[c] Chap. viii. 2.
[d] 2 Chron. xxvi. 18.
[e] Num. xv. 39. Mat. xv. 8.

v. 25—33. Jeroboam's concern is now to ſecure and ſtrengthen himſelf in the throne to which he was advanced; for which purpoſe,

1. He fortified and repaired Shechem, where he was elected, and rebuilt Penuel, in the tribe of Gad, as a fortreſs for the protection of his dominions on the other ſide Jordan.

2. He wickedly contrived to keep the people from returning to Rehoboam, as he feared they would do, if they went up to the temple, by erecting a new form of worſhip, in his own territories. He dared not truſt God's promiſe, *chap.* xi. 38. but rather depended on his own craft; and having faſhioned two golden calves, in imitation of Aaron's, he placed them at the extremities of his own kingdom, the one in Dan, where Micah's images had paved a way for its reception, and the other in Bethel, near Jeruſalem, to invite the idolaters of Judah to join him; and pretending that attendance at Jeruſalem was too burdenſome, as being ſo diſtant, or unneceſſary, ſince the whole land was equally holy, he ſaid as Aaron, theſe are thy Gods, O Iſrael, the repreſentatives of the true Jehovah, who brought thee out of Egypt. Ever prone to idolatry, and ſeeking ſome ſenſible object, as the medium of their worſhip, the people readily complied, and in their zeal grudged not a journey to Dan, to the calf, though twice as far as they need have gone to the temple. Thus began the apoſtacy of Iſrael from God, which iſſued in their final ruin. *Note*, (1.) Image worſhip, however vindicated or palliated by the papiſts, is abominable idolatry. (2.) They who think to ſecure their ſafety by ſin, only haſten the ruin they would avoid.

3. To compleat his ſcheme he erected a temple at Dan, with many altars for ſacrifice, and conſtituted prieſts, not as we render it, out of the meaneſt of the people, which would have diſcredited his worſhip, but indiſcriminately out of all the people, not confining himſelf to the tribe of Levi; and as he dared thus change the prieſthood, he changed alſo the feſtivals, and kept the feaſt of tabernacles on the fifteenth of the eighth month inſtead of the ſeventh: he himſelf alſo officiated as prieſt at his altar, whether to give ſanction to his new-fangled worſhip, or to appear zealous for religion; and the king's example readily ſwayed the multitude to follow him: thus Jeroboam, the ſon of Nebat, cauſed Iſrael to ſin. *Note*, (1.) Great men's ill examples are grievouſly infectious. (2.) All pretences to religious zeal, contrary to God's revealed will, are but the depths of Satan more fatally to delude men's ſouls.

CHAP. XIII.

In this chapter, 1. *God by his prophet threatens Jeroboam's altar,* ver. 1, 2. *and gives him a ſign,* ver. 3. *which immediately comes to paſs.* ver. 5. 2. *On attempting to ſeize the prophet, the king's hand is withered, but reſtored at the prophet's prayer,* ver. 4—6. 3. *The prophet refuſes the kindneſs offered him thereupon,* ver. 7—10. 4. *An old prophet brings him back by a lie,* ver. 11—19. 5. *For his diſobedience he is threatned with death,* ver. 20, 21, 22. 6. *The*

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6. *The threatning is executed*, ver. 23, 24. *he is buried at Beth-el*, ver. 25—32. 7. *Jeroboam is hardned in his idolatry*, ver. 33, 34.

1. AND behold there came [a] a man of God out of Judah, by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam ſtood by the altar [b] to burn incenſe. 2. And [c] he cried againſt the altar in the word of the LORD, and ſaid, [d] O altar, altar, thus ſaith the LORD, Behold a child ſhall be born unto the houſe of David, [e] Joſiah by name, and upon thee ſhall he offer the prieſts of the high places that burn incenſe upon thee, and men's bones ſhall be burnt upon thee. 3. And he gave a ſign the ſame day, ſaying, This *is* the ſign which the LORD hath ſpoken: Behold, the altar ſhall be rent, and the aſhes that *are* upon it ſhall be poured out. 4. And it came to paſs when king Jeroboam heard the ſaying of the man of God, which had cried againſt the altar in Beth-el, [f] that he put forth his hand from the altar, ſaying, Lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth againſt him, [g] dried up, ſo that he could not pull it in again to him. 5. [h] The altar alſo was rent, and the aſhes poured out from the altar, according to the ſign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. 6. And the king anſwered and ſaid unto the man of God, [i] Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and [k] pray for me, that my hand may be reſtored me again. And the man of God [l] beſought the LORD, and [m] the king's hand was reſtored him again, and became as *it was* before. 7. And the king ſaid unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refreſh thyſelf, and [n] I will give thee a reward. 8. And the man of God ſaid unto the king, [o] If thou wilt give me half thine houſe, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread, nor drink water in this place: 9. For ſo it was [p] charged me by the word of the LORD, ſaying, [q] Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the ſame way that thou cameſt. 10. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

[a] 2 Kings xxiii. 17.
[b] 2 Chron. xxvi. 18.
[c] Iſa. lviii. 1.
[d] Ibid. xxix. 1. Jer. xxii. 29.
[e] 2 Kings xxiii. 15, 16.
[f] Amos vii. 10. 11. Acts xii. 1.
[g] Ibid. xiii. 11. 2 Cor. x. 6.
[h] Deut. xviii. 22. Jer. xxviii. 9. Mark xvi. 20.
[i] Exod. viii. 8.
[k] Acts viii. 24.
[l] Mat. v. 44. Rom. xii. 19.
[m] Jam. v. 16.
[n] 2 Kings v. 15. 2 Cor. xii. 14.
[o] Num. xxii. 18.
[p] Job. xxiii. 12.
[q] 1 Cor. v. 11.

v. 1—10. Jeroboam, in the heighth of his impious offering, ſeemed to glory in his ſhame; his courtiers around him joined his idolatrous ſervice, and none dare remonſtrate againſt the horrid crime: but God will not ſuffer theſe doings to paſs without a ſevere rebuke.

1. God ſends a prophet from Judah to Beth-el, and in the midſt of the crowd, near the altar where the king ſtood, he boldly delivered his meſſage, and proclaimed aloud the Divine judgment upon the altar, and its worſhippers; that it ſhould be defiled with dead men's bones, and that a king ſhould ariſe, Joſiah by name, who would offer up the idolatrous prieſts upon it; and to confirm the truth of his meſſage, he gives a ſign, *v.* 3. which immediately came to paſs, an evidence of God's preſent diſpleaſure, and an earneſt of the threatned deſtruction, which came to paſs as foretold, about three hundred and fifty years after, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 17—20. *Note*, (1.) Before God ſtrikes, he warns; he willeth not that any ſhould periſh, but rather that they ſhould come to repentance. (2.) God's prophets muſt not fear the faces of men, but openly and faithfully, even to the greateſt, declare their meſſage, however unwelcome or dangerous. (3.) No events, however contingent to us, are ſo to God; our names, abode, and ſtate, preſent and eternal, are all foreſeen, and fixed by his unalterable decree.

2. Jeroboam, enraged at what he termed ſuch inſolence, ſtretches out his hand, and commands to ſeize the prophet, when inſtantly ſtruck of God, it grew ſtiff, and withered; a warning to him, how dangerous it was to fight againſt God. *Note*, (1.) Faithful rebukes often provoke proud wrath. (2.) The preachers of God's word are the eſpecial butt of malice, but God will protect them; he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye. (3.) In the way of duty, we need fear no danger. (4.) The hearts of ſinners, like the arm of Jeroboam, are, by rejecting God's warnings, given up to judicial hardneſs and impenitence.

3. Such a ſtroke, though it turned not his heart, for the time altered his tone: for miracles cannot, unleſs Divine Grace works with them, convert men's ſouls. He begs now the prophet, whom he had threatned, to be his advocate, hoping for more ſucceſs from his prayers, than his own: not that he ſought forgiveneſs of his ſin, but deliverance from his affliction. The prophet charitably conſents to pray for him, and at his requeſt God reſtores the withered arm. *Note*, (1.) They who in their proſperity reject the warnings of God's miniſters, in their diſtreſs will have recourſe to their prayers. (2.) An impenitent heart ever betrays itſelf, in a greater concern for its ſufferings than its ſins. (3.) To pray for thoſe who deſpitefully uſe and perſecute us, is the way to obtain the promiſed beatitude, *Mat.* v. 10, 44. (4.) Mercies nor judgments make any laſting impreſſion upon the reprobate.

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4. Jeroboam now would reward the prophet for his prayers, but he is forbid to eat or drink in Beth-el, and therefore refuſes the king's invitation, and returns, as ordered, by another way, *v.* 9. *Note*, (1.) We muſt teſtify againſt the workers of iniquity, by refuſing to have any fellowſhip with them. (2.) Neither offers nor threatnings muſt prevail with us, to ſwerve a ſtep from the path of duty.

11. ¶ Now there dwelt an old [r] prophet in Beth-el, and his † ſons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el; the words which he had ſpoken unto the king, them they told alſo to their father. 12. And their father ſaid unto them, What way went he? For his ſons had ſeen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. 13. And he ſaid unto his ſons, Saddle me the aſs. So they ſaddled him the aſs, and he rode thereon. 14. And went after the man of God, and found him ſitting under an oak; and he ſaid unto him, *Art* thou the man of God that cameſt from Judah? And he ſaid, I *am*. 15. Then he ſaid unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. 16. And he ſaid, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread, nor drink water with thee in this place. 17. For it was ſaid to me by the word of the LORD, Thou ſhalt eat no bread, nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou cameſt. 18. He ſaid unto him, I *am* a prophet alſo as thou *art*, and [s] an angel ſpake unto me by the word of the LORD, ſaying, Bring him back with thee into thine houſe, that he may eat bread, and drink water. *But* he lied unto him. 19. [t] So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his houſe, and drank water. 20. ¶ And it came to paſs as they ſat at the table, that [u] the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: 21. And [x] he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, Foraſmuch as thou haſt diſobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and haſt not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, 22. But cameſt back, and haſt eaten bread, and drunk water in the place of which *the LORD* did ſay to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; [y] thy carcaſe ſhall not come unto the ſepulchre of thy fathers.

[r] Num. xxiii. 5. Chap. xviii. 20. Jer. ii. 8. Ezek. xiii. 2.
† Heb. Son.
[s] Jer. v. 12. Mat. vii. 15. 1 John iv. 1.
[t] Ver. 9. Gal. i. 8. 2 Pet. i. 19.
[u] Num. xxiii. 5. Mat. vii. 22, 23. John xi. 51.
[x] Job xii. 16. Pſal. xxxvi. 6. & lxxvii. 19.
[y] Chap. xiv. 13. 2 Chron. xxi. 20.

v. 11—22. Nothing could be more noble than the prophet's behaviour before the king, and one cannot but grieve to ſee him afterwards thus deluded and ſlain.

1. The inſtrument of his fall is called an old prophet, originally of Samaria, but now of Beth-el; whoſe dubious character makes it difficult to determine, whether he were a good or bad man. He is called a prophet; was favoured with revelations; did not attend the idolatrous worſhip; believed and confirmed the word of God againſt the altar at Beth-el; buries the prophet in his tomb; and deſires to lie by his ſide. On the other hand, his abode in Beth-el; his permitting his ſons to attend the altar; and eſpecially the baſe deceit here put upon ſo good a man, would rather induce one to think, that, like Baalam, tho' ſpeaking ſome truth, he was falſe and faithleſs. Having heard by his ſons what had paſſed, *v.* 11. he follows the prophet, and invites him to take ſome refreſhment. The prophet pleads his expreſs prohibition, but this he pretends to over-rule by a later revelation made to him, who boaſts himſelf a prophet alſo, enjoining him to bring his brother back. Deceived by this pretence, the good prophet complies, and ſuffers for it. *Note*, (1.) Falſe prophets are the moſt fatal enemies of God's people. (2.) They who ſeek to draw us aſide from God's revealed will, however plauſible their pretexts, are the emiſſaries of hell. (3.) We may be ſeduced to do evil by appearances of piety, when we ſhould not be driven into it by any fears of ſuffering.

2. The doom denounced on the diſobedient prophet. The inſtrument of his deluſion is made the meſſenger of his deſtruction. He upbraids him with his tranſgreſſion, in returning contrary to his orders, and foretells his ſudden and approaching death, before he returned to the place of his abode in Judah, *v.* 22. If we enquire into ſo ſtrange a tranſaction, we are loſt. We know only God is juſt in all his ways; the deceived and the deceiver are his; we muſt wait till a judgment-day ſhall clear up every myſterious providence, and make his righteouſneſs clear as the noon day.

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23. ¶ And it came to paſs after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he ſaddled for him the aſs, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back. 24. And when he was gone, [z] a lion met him by the way, and ſlew him: and his carcaſe *was* caſt in the way, and the aſs ſtood by it, the lion alſo ſtood by the carcaſe. 25. And behold, men paſſed by, and ſaw the carcaſe caſt in the way, and the lion ſtanding by the carcaſe: and they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt. 26. And when the prophet that brought him back from the way, heard *thereof*, he ſaid, It *is* the man of God, who was diſobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath † torn him and ſlain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he ſpake unto him. 27. And he ſpake to his ſons, ſaying, Saddle me the aſs. And they ſaddled *him*. 28. And he went and found his carcaſe caſt in the way, and the aſs and the lion ſtanding by the carcaſe: the lion had not eaten the carcaſe, nor torn the aſs. 29. And the prophet took up the carcaſe of the man of God, and laid it upon the aſs, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, [a] to mourn, and to bury him. 30. And he laid his carcaſe in his own grave, and they mourned over him, *ſaying*, Alas, my brother. 31. And it came to paſs, after he had buried him, that he ſpake to his ſons, ſaying, When I am dead, then [b] bury me in the ſepulchre wherein the man of God *is* buried, and [c] lay my bones beſide his bones. 32. For the ſaying which he cried by the word of the LORD againſt the altar in Beth-el, and [d] againſt all the houſes of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, [e] ſhall ſurely come to paſs. 33. ¶ After this thing, Jeroboam [f] returned not from his evil way, but ‡ made again of the loweſt of the people prieſts of the high places: [g] whoſoever would, he conſecrated him, and he became *one* of the prieſts of the high places. 34. And this thing became ſin unto the houſe of Jeroboam, [h] even to cut *it* off, and deſtroy it from off the face of the earth.

[z] Lev. x. 23. Chap. xx. 36. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. Dan. vi. 22.
† Heb. Broken. Lev. xxvi. 15, &c. 2 Sam. vi. 7. 2 Chron. xv. 2.
[a] Chap. xiv. 13.
[b] Pſ. xxvi. 9.
[c] 2 Kings xxiii. 18.
[d] Lev. xxvi. 30.
[e] Mat. xviii. 16. Acts xiv. 17.
[f] Ver. 26. Jer. iii. 8.
‡ Heb. returned and made. Chap. xii. 31, 32.
[g] Num. iii. 10.
[h] Chap. xii. 26. Gen. xi. 4.

v. 23—34. The meſſage, though terrible, did not drive him away till he had finiſhed his meal; and then the old prophet, for his better accommodation, lent him his beaſt to carry him: but now God's threatning overtakes him.

1. Before he had gone far from Bethel, a lion met him, and ſlew him for his ſin. It was wilful diſobedience to an evident command; and not the leaſt reaſon was there for him to believe a pretended prophet, who lived in ſo idolatrous a place without teſtifying againſt their abominations. *Note*, (1.) The wages of every ſin is death. (2.) They who are moſt diſtinguiſhed by ſacredneſs of character, or have been moſt favoured with divine manifeſtations, may juſtly fear, that as their unfaithfulneſs is more criminal and ungrateful, it ſhall meet with more evident marks of God's diſpleaſure.

2. Tidings are quickly brought of this calamity to the old prophet, by travellers who came that way, and obſerved the lion guarding the carcaſe, without tearing it, and the aſs feeding harmleſs by. He inſtantly concludes it was the man of God, and readily reflects on his diſobedience, without a word of lamentation over his own vile conduct, which had occaſioned both his ſin and death. So ready are we to ſee the mote in our brother's eye, and to be blind to the beam which is in our own. He orders his aſs immediately to be ſaddled, and, unmoleſted by the lion, who, though God's executioner to kill, was bound up from further injury to the corpſe, lays it on his beaſt, conveys it home, and with tears depoſiting the dead body in his own ſepulchre, enjoins his ſons to bury his corpſe by this good man's ſide, confirming the prophecy he had uttered againſt the cities of Samaria, ſo called by anticipation, or the writer ſpeaks of them by the name they then bore; and by the epitaph on his tomb, *See* 2 *Kings* xxiii. 17. perpetuates the remembrance of his prediction. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt ſinners are not always in this world the greateſt ſufferers. God makes his deareſt children ſmart for their good, whilſt he leaves the wicked as a fat ox in his paſture preparing for the ſlaughter. (2.) Many now claim kindred with the people of God, whoſe relation by and by will be diſowned by their Father in heaven. (3.) Many deſire in death to be joined with the faithful, who in life refuſed to follow their examples. (4.) God will never want witneſſes to his truth; he can make even a wicked Balaam, and a lying prophet, bear teſtimony for him.

3. Jeroboam perſiſted in his idolatry, unmoved by threatnings, unſhaken by judgments, uninfluenced by mercies. His altar is repaired, and his once withered hand, with hardened impiety ſtretched out again to miniſter there. He continues his unhallowed prieſthood, and, without any regard to divine inſtitutions, conſecrates any man who offered his ſervice. Thus his ſin became entailed on his family, and brought that curſe upon them, which ended in their utter extirpation. *Note*, (1.) When, after repeated warnings, corrections, and mercies, impenitence continues, it is to be feared the caſe is deſperate. (2.) Sooner or later vengeance will overtake the ſinner, and he ſhall periſh in his own deceivings.

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CHAP. XIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The ſickneſs and death of Jeroboam's ſon, as an earneſt of the ruin of his houſe, according to the prophecy of Abijah,* ver. 1—18. 2. *Jeroboam's death,* ver. 19—20. 3. *The declenſion of Rehoboam's houſe and kingdom,* ver. 21—28. 4. *The concluſion of his reign,* ver. 29—31.

1. AT that time [a] Abijah the ſon of Jeroboam fell ſick. 2. And Jeroboam ſaid to his wife, Ariſe, I pray thee, and [b] diſguiſe thyſelf, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam: and get thee to Shiloh; behold, there *is* Ahijah the prophet, [c] which told me that I ſhould *be* king over this people. 3. And [d] take with thee ten loaves and † cracknels, and a cruiſe of honey, and go to him: he ſhall tell thee what ſhall become of the child. 4. And Jeroboam's wife did ſo, and aroſe, and went to Shiloh, and came to the houſe of Ahijah: but Ahijah could not ſee, for his eyes were ſet by reaſon of his age. 5. ¶ And the LORD ſaid unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to aſk a thing of thee for her ſon, for he *is* ſick; thus and thus ſhalt thou ſay unto her, for it ſhall be when ſhe cometh in, that ſhe ſhall feign herſelf *to be* another *woman*. 6. And it was *ſo*, when Ahijah heard the ſound of her feet, as ſhe came in at the door, that he ſaid, Come in, [e] thou wife of Jeroboam, why feigneſt thou thyſelf *to be* another? for I *am* ſent to thee with [f] heavy *tidings*.

[a] Chap. xiii. 33.
[b] 1 Sam. xxviii. 8.
[c] Chap. xi. 31.
[d] 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8.
† Or cakes.
[e] Pſ. xxxiii. 10.
[f] Ver. 10, 11. Jer. xxiii. 28. Ezek. ii. 7.

v. 1—6. God now begins to puniſh the ſin of Jeroboam in the afflictions of his family.

1. His ſon Abijah falls ſick, and, ſollicitous to know the iſſue, he ſends his wife to the prophet in Shiloh, who had predicted his riſing to the throne, to enquire: but fearing leſt his wickedneſs might provoke a rebuke, inſtead of an anſwer of peace, he made her diſguiſe herſelf, that ſhe might not be known, and take a preſent of country proviſions, as if ſhe came from thence; hoping thereby undiſcovered to obtain an anſwer, as the prophet's eyes were now fixed, and dark through age. *Note*, (1.) Viſitations on our family ſhould awaken enquiry into the cauſe, whether it be not for ſome ſin entertained there. (2.) Sickneſs and death are alike the lot of young and old: let us expect and prepare for it in every age, and not thoughtleſsly put far off the evil day. (3.) It is the heighth of folly for thoſe who do ill to expect from God's miniſters an anſwer of peace.

2. The cheat was diſcovered before the deceiver arrived. God informed Ahijah of his viſitant, and, to her aſtoniſhment, he accoſts her by name before ſhe entered the room, and anſwers her enquiry, before ſhe had propoſed the queſtion, ſending her back with ſad tidings to her idolatrous huſband. *Note*, (1.) The miniſters of God muſt not be courtiers, but deliver their meſſage to the great, however diſagreeable, with boldneſs and freedom. (2.) Diſguiſes may paſs upon men, whoſe dim ſight cannot ſee through the vail; but no covering can hide the hypocrite from the eye of God. (3.) They who hope to recommend themſelves to God by their formal duties and ſervices, like Jeroboam's wife with her preſent, will find a terrible diſappointment, when, among hypocrites, their portion ſhall be allotted in the outer darkneſs.

7. Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, [g] Foraſmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee a prince over my people Iſrael, 8. And [h] rent the kingdom away from the houſe of David, and gave it thee; and *yet* thou haſt not been as my ſervant David, who kept my commandments, and [i] who followed me with all his heart, to do *that* only *which was* right in mine eyes; 9. But haſt done evil above all that were before thee; for thou haſt gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and [k] haſt caſt me behind thy back. 10. Therefore, behold, [l] I will bring evil upon the houſe of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that piſſeth againſt the wall, *and* him that is ſhut up and left in Iſrael, and [m] will take away the remnant of the houſe of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.

[g] 2 Sam. xii. 7. Pſ. lxxv. 6, 7.
[h] Chap. xi. 31.
[i] Chap. xv. 5.
[k] Pſ. l. 17. Ezek. xxiii. 35.
[l] Amos iii. 6.
[m] Chap. xv. 29. Iſa. xiv. 23.

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11. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city, [n] ſhall the dogs eat: and him that dieth in the field, ſhall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath ſpoken it. 12. Ariſe thou therefore, get thee to thine own houſe: *and* when thy feet enter into the city, the child ſhall die. 13. And all Iſrael ſhall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam ſhall come to the grave, becauſe [o] in him there is found *ſome* good thing toward the LORD God of Iſrael in the houſe of Jeroboam. 14. Moreover the LORD ſhall raiſe him up a king over Iſrael, who ſhall cut off the houſe of Jeroboam that day: but what? [p] even now. 15. For [q] the LORD ſhall ſmite Iſrael, as a reed is ſhaken in the water, and [r] he ſhall root up Iſrael out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and [s] ſhall ſcatter them beyond the river, becauſe [t] they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger. 16. And [u] he ſhall give Iſrael up, becauſe of the ſins of Jeroboam, [x] who did ſin, and [y] who made Iſrael to ſin. 17. ¶ And Jeroboam's wife aroſe, and departed, and came to [z] Tirzah: *and* when ſhe came to the threſhold of the door, the child died. 18. And they buried him, and all Iſrael mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he ſpake by the hand of his ſervant Ahijah the prophet. 19. And the reſt of the acts of Jeroboam, [a] how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael. 20. And the days which Jeroboam reigned, *were* two and twenty years: and he ſlept with his fathers, and Nadab his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

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[n] Chap. xvi. 4. Eccleſ. vi. 3. Iſa. lxvi. 24. Jer. xv. 3.
[o] Phil. iv. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 8, 9.
[p] Ezek. xii. 25.
[q] 1 Sam. xii. 25.
[r] Pſ. lii. 5.
[s] 2 Kings xvii. 6.
[t] Exod. xxxiv. 13.
[u] Iſa. xlii. 24.
[x] Chap. xii. 28. & xiii. 33, 34.
[y] Mat. xviii. 7. Rom. i. 32.
[z] Cant. vi. 4.
[a] 2 Chron. xiii. 3, &c.

v. 7—20. Jeroboam's wife is bid carry to her huſband tidings of bitter woe. The God of Iſrael, whom he had ſo diſhonoured, and whoſe people he had ſo injured, will avenge their quarrel upon him.

1. He upbraids him with his baſe ingratitude, and impious apoſtacy. God, who had ſo highly diſtinguiſhed him, might juſtly expect a return of fidelity; but lo! he had exceeded all that went before him in wickedneſs. David had ſins, great ones; but he never turned to idols. Solomon for a time was unfaithful, but repented: even Saul added not this to his iniquities. But Jeroboam had opened the flood-gates of idolatry, and not only ſinned himſelf, but involved the people in this mortal ſin. *Note*, (1.) The greater the mercies we have received, the greater the guilt of unfaithfulneſs to God. (2.) They who cauſe others to ſin, heap up the meaſure of vengeance againſt themſelves.

2. He denounces the approaching ruin on Jeroboam's houſe, *chap*, xv. 29. His family ſhould be utterly extirpated, *v.* 14. and their dead bodies lie unburied, as dung on the earth. Nor was the day diſtant, when God would raiſe up another king to the throne, who ſhould execute his vengeance: *even now* the judgment was at their door. *Note*, (1.) Sudden deſtruction often overtakes ſinners in the midſt of their career. (2.) Their carcaſes in the day of God ſhall be thus caſt out, as *an abhorring to all fleſh*, Iſa. lxvi. 24.

3. The death of the heir of his throne, who was ſick, as ſoon as ſhe reached the city, ſhould be the prelude and earneſt of the judgments which approached. In one thing he ſhall be diſtinguiſhed from his ungodly family; he ſhall go to his grave with honour; and this, becauſe in him alone ſome good thing was found towards the Lord God of Iſrael. When all the reſt apoſtatized, he ſhewed the gracious ſymptoms of a heart inclined to God, and which cleaved to his worſhip. *Note*, (1.) Every gracious deſire God implants, he will take notice of. (2.) Youthful piety is peculiarly amiable. (3.) A little grace in bad times, and in kings courts, ſhines bright. The light is heightened by the dark ſhades around it. (4.) God in mercy removes the righteous from the evil to come. (5.) The darling child is often ſnatched away for a warning to the family. (6.) The ſoul that is early ripe for glory, God gathers, like a ſweet flower, into his boſom.

4. Though the king ſhall bear the heavieſt burden, his apoſtate ſubjects, who followed his wicked ways, ſhall not be unpuniſhed. The prophet foretels their tumultuous, unſettled ſtate, torn with faction, and changing frequently their kings; till, weakened by inteſtine diviſion, they would become an eaſier prey to foreign enemies, and be carried away captive beyond the river Euphrates, or Gozen, as was the caſe, 2 *Kings* xvii. 6. *Note*, (1.) Though we may have never ſo great examples to plead for our ſin, it will not ſcreen us from puniſhment. (2.) Ruin is not far from a kingdom, when righteouſneſs is expelled, and iniquity triumphant.

5. The prophecy begins to receive an immediate accompliſhment in the death of Abijah, who, according to the word of the prophet, died as ſoon as Jeroboam's wife entered the palace at Tirzah. His amiable diſpoſitions, as well as his dignity, made him much lamented, and occaſioned, no doubt, dire forebodings of the approaching evil. *Note*, Death pays no more reſpect to palaces, than to the clay-built hut.

6. Jeroboam himſelf, after a reign of twenty-two years, finiſhed a wicked life by a miſerable death, *See* 2 *Chron.* xiii. 20. ſtruck with ſome dire diſeaſe, which brought him to his grave, and leaving his tottering crown to his unhappy ſon Nadab, who following his father's wicked ways, ſoon filled up the meaſure of the iniquity of his family. Reference is here made to a book of annals, for farther particulars of Jeroboam's reign; but theſe not being inſpired writings, like thoſe of many other nations, are loſt.

Before Chriſt 958.

21. ¶ And Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon reigned in Judah: Rehoboam *was* forty and one years old, when he began to reign, and he reigned ſeventeen years in Jeruſalem, the city which the LORD did chooſe out of all the tribes of Iſrael, to put his name there: and his mother's name *was* Naamah, an Ammoniteſs. 22. And [b] Judah did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and [c] they provoked him to jealouſy with their ſins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. 23. For [d] they alſo built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill, and under every green tree. 24. And [e] there were alſo ſodomites in the land, *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD caſt out before the children of Iſrael. 25. ¶ And it came to paſs [f] in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* Shiſhak king of Egypt came up againſt Jeruſalem: 26. And he took away the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD, and [g] the treaſures of the king's houſe, he even took away all; and he took away [h] all the ſhields of gold which Solomon had made. 27. And king Rehoboam made in their ſtead braſen ſhields, and committed *them* unto the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's houſe. 28. And it was *ſo*, when the king went into the houſe of the LORD, that the † guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber. 29. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 30. And [i] there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days. 31. And Rehoboam ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammoniteſs. And [k] Abijam his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

958.

971.

[b] 2 Chron. xi. 17.
[c] Deut. iv. 24. Pſal. lxxix. 5.
[d] Deut. xii. 2. Iſa. lvii. 5. Rom. i. 21, 24.
[e] Rom. i. 26, 27.
[f] 2 Chron. xii. 2.
[g] Prov. xxiii. 5.
[h] Chap. x. 17.
† Heb. Runners. 1 Sam. xxii. 17.
[i] Chap. xii. 24.
[k] 2 Chron. xii. 16.

v. 21—31. The hiſtories of the kingdom of Judah and Iſrael are throughout this book intermixed. Jeroboam's reign was near five years longer than Rehoboam's; but, to finiſh his hiſtory, his death is firſt recorded.

1. The account of Rehoboam contains nothing either great or good, but gives juſt ſuſpicion, that his government was as weak and wicked, as the opening of it was raſh and impolitic. He began his reign when, if ever, he might have been wiſe, at the age of forty-one, having enjoyed all the advantages of the beſt inſtruction; but he imitated his father's aged folly, rather than his early wiſdom. He reigned not half ſo long as his predeceſſors, but ſeventeen years, and theſe alſo diſturbed by perpetual wars or bickerings with his rival Jeroboam. His mother was an Ammoniteſs, a bad wife for a king of Iſrael; and her ſon partook more of the temper of Ammon, than the ſpirit of Abraham. *Note*, Ungodly connections entail miſeries often on the lateſt poſterity. He died at Jeruſalem, where he reigned, and left the crown to Abijam, a bad ſon of a bad father.

2. The account of his ſubjects is bad, very bad. Led by his ill example, or not reſtrained by his negligence, far from being ſhocked at their neighbour's idolatry, they quickly imitated them, and committed abominations even beyond their father's worſt days; provoking God to jealouſy by their images and hill altars, and forſaking the houſe of his glory; giving up their bodies to abominable and unnatural luſts, as well as their ſouls to ſpiritual adultery, *v.* 24. imitating all the profane rites, and following all the deteſtable lewdneſs of the accurſed Canaanites, whom God had caſt out before them. *Note*, (1.) They grow moſt abandoned, who fall from the profeſſion of religion they once made. (2.) When men provoke God by their ſins, he in juſt judgment gives them up to their own hearts luſts. (3.) If Canaan for ſuch things ſuffered, ſhall Iſrael eſcape? no, in no wiſe.

3. God begins his viſitations for their ſins, by giving them up to Shiſhak king of Egypt, who, in the fifth year of Rehoboam, after plundering the country, beſieged Jeruſalem, and was only to be bought off by the ſurrender of all the treaſures which David and Solomon had amaſſed; ſuch paſſing vanities are this world's riches! Among the reſt, he carried away the golden

Before Chriſt 955. golden ſhields Solomon had made, *v.* 26. and in their ſtead Rehoboam ſubſtituted others of braſs, to be carried before him when he went to the houſe of the Lord. Probably he had neglected this too often, when he might have gone there in greater ſtate, and now is forced in his affliction to go thither as he can. It is a mercy, whatever we loſe, when our loſſes drive us nearer to God.

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter we have a ſhort hiſtory, (1.) *Of two kings of Judah.* 1. *Of Abijam,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Aſa,* ver. 9—24. (2.) *Of two kings of Iſrael, Nadab the ſon of Jeroboam, and Baaſha the deſtroyer of Jeroboam's houſe,* ver. 25—34.

958. 1. NOW in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam
the ſon of Nebat, [a] reigned Abijam over Judah.
[a] 2 Chron. xiii. 1. 2. Three years reigned he in Jeruſalem : and his mother's
name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abiſhalom. 3.
And he walked in all the ſins of his father, which he had
[b] 2 Chron. xiii. 9—12. 2 Tim. iii. 5. done before him : and [b] his heart was not perfect with the
LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. 4.
[c] Chap. xi. 36. Pſal. cxxxii. 17. Nevertheleſs, [c] for David's ſake did the LORD his God
give him a lamp in Jeruſalem, to ſet up his ſon after
him, and to eſtabliſh Jeruſalem : 5. Becauſe David
did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD,
[d] Acts xiii. 22. and [d] turned not aſide from any *thing* that he commanded
[e] 2 Sam. xii. 9. him all the days of his life, [e] ſave only in the matter of
Uriah the Hittite. 6. And [f] there was war between Re-
[f] Chap. xiv. 30. hoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. 7. Now
[g] 2 Chron. xiii. 22. [g] the reſt of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are*
they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
kings of Judah ? And there was war between Abijam
955. and Jeroboam. 8. And Abijam ſlept with his fathers,
and they buried him in the city of David : and Aſa his
ſon reigned in his ſtead.

v. 1—8. Abijam's reign was evil and ſhort. Little is related of him here, except his following his father's bad example. We ſhall hear more of his wars and greatneſs, 2 *Chron.* xiii. He reigned ſcarce three years. His mother's name was Maachah, probably the daughter of Abſalom, or grand-daughter. The wars which had continued during his father's reign, he ſtill maintained with ſucceſs againſt Jeroboam, *See* 2 *Chron.* xiii. 20. but his heart was not right with God as David's, whoſe character the ſacred hiſtorian here highly honours, whilſt with juſt condemnation he brands his unhappy fall in the matter of Uriah. For his ſake, notwithſtanding the ſins of Rehoboam and Abijam, God preſerved the throne for his poſterity, and raiſed up Aſa to ſucceed his father, and copy after his pious and noble anceſtors. *Note,* (1.) Parents ill examples are ſadly pernicious to their children. (2.) It is a double reproach on thoſe who degenerate from the piety of their anceſtors. (3.) Sin ſhortens men's days, and haſtens them to an untimely end.

9. ¶ And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king
of Iſrael, reigned Aſa over Judah. 10. And forty and
one years reigned he in Jeruſalem : and his mother's
name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abiſhalom. 11.
And Aſa did *that which was* right in the eyes of the
LORD, as *did* David his father. 12. And he took
[h] Chap. xiv. 24. & xxii. 46. away [h] the ſodomites out of the land, and [i] removed all
the idols that his father had made. 13. And alſo Maa-
[i] Ezek. xx. 18. 1 Pet. i. 18. chah [k] his mother, even her he removed † from *being*
queen, becauſe [l] ſhe had made an idol in a grove ; and
[k] Deut. xxxiii. 9. Zech. xiii. 3. Aſa deſtroyed her idol, and [m] burnt *it* by the brook Ki-
dron. 14. But [n] the high places were not removed :
† Or, from the queen. [o] nevertheleſs, Aſa's heart was perfect with the LORD
[l] 2 Chron. xv. 16. all his days. 15. And [p] he brought in the things which
[m] Exod. xxxii. 20. his father had dedicated, and the things which himſelf
[n] Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. xii. 13, 14. had dedicated, into the houſe of the LORD, ſilver and
gold, and veſſels. 16. ¶ And there was war between
Aſa and Baaſha king of Iſrael all their days. 17. And
940. Baaſha king of Iſrael went up againſt Judah, and built
[o] 2 Chron. xvi. 7, 10, 12. Ramah, [q] that he might not ſuffer any to go out or come
in to Aſa king of Judah. 18. Then Aſa took all the
[p] 1 Kings vii. 51. 2 Chron. xv. 18. ſilver and the gold *that were* left in the treaſures of the
houſe of the LORD, and the treaſures of the king's
[q] Chap. xii. 27. houſe, and delivered them into the hand of his ſervants :
and king Aſa ſent them to Ben-hadad the ſon of Ta-
brimon, the ſon of Hezion king of Syria, that dwelt at
[r] Judg. ii. 2. Damaſcus, ſaying, 19. [r] *There is* a league between me
and thee, *and* between my father and thy father : be- Before Chriſt 914.
hold, I have ſent unto thee a preſent of ſilver and gold ;
[s] come and break thy league with Baaſha king of Iſrael, [s] Iſa. xxxi. 1.
that he may depart from me. 20. So Ben-hadad [t] heark- [t] 1 Tim. vi. 10.
ned unto king Aſa, and ſent the captains of the hoſts,
which he had, againſt the cities of Iſrael, and ſmote
Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinne-
roth, with all the land of Naphtali. 21. And it came
to paſs, when Baaſhah heard *thereof,* that he left off
building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah. 22. Then
king Aſa made a proclamation throughout all Judah
(none *was* exempted) and they took away the ſtones of
Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baaſha had
builded, and king Aſa built with them Geba of Benja-
min, and Mizpah. 23. The reſt of all the acts of Aſa,
and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities
which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the
Chronicles of the kings of Judah ? Nevertheleſs, [u] in the [u] 2 Chron. xvi. 12. Eccleſ. xii. 1.
time of his old age he was diſeaſed in his feet. 24. And
Aſa [x] ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fa- [x] Acts vii. 60.
thers in the city of David his father : and Jehoſhaphat
his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 914.

v. 9—24. Aſa ſucceeded to the throne of Iſrael in the twentieth year of Jeroboam, and reigned long and ſucceſsfully over Judah.

1. His piety is recorded to his honour. He copied after the illuſtrious David in all that was excellent ; was conſtantly and zealouſly attached to the worſhip of God all his days. His heart was right with God, and therefore he laboured to ſuppreſs all wickedneſs, and to reform his deluded ſubjects. The ſodomites were removed : either they were put to death, or they fled out of the land for fear. Such abominations a good prince will never ſuffer among his ſubjects. The idols which his father made, he deſtroyed ; and becauſe his grandmother Maachah was the great patroneſs of idolatry, he ſpared not to put her and her idol to public ſhame. He burnt it, and caſt the duſt into the brook Kidron, and degraded her from her dignity, removed her from court, leſt her bad example ſhould corrupt it, and that by ſuch an inſtance none might hope to be connived at. He enriched alſo God's houſe with the treaſures he had dedicated from the ſpoil of the Ethiopians, *See* 2 *Chron.* xiv. 13, 14. as well as thoſe which his father had dedicated out of the ſpoils of Jeroboam, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 21. *Note,* (1.) A good king, who would promote religion among his ſubjects, muſt begin with diſcountenancing all wickedneſs at court. (2.) Their hearts are ſaid in ſcripture to be perfect with God, not who are without faults, for Aſa was not blameleſs, but who were free from idolatry, and, in the main, upright in their walk.

2. His faults are faithfully tranſmitted. The moſt perfect man on earth cannot plead ſinleſs perfection. The high places, ſuch of them at leaſt as had been reſorted to before the temple was built, were left : either he thought them lawful, or he feared it might be dangerous to attempt rooting out what long cuſtom had conſecrated. His war with Baaſha put him on a ſinful project, to cauſe a diverſion in his favour, and recover Ramah, which Baaſha had fortified in the ſixteenth year of Aſa, and the 36th ſince the diviſion of the kingdoms, to prevent the communication of his ſubjects with Jeruſalem, who choſe ſtill to go there to worſhip. He robbed the treaſury of God's houſe of the dedicated things, and ſent them to Ben-hadad, in order to engage him to a wicked violation of his league with Baaſha. The contrivance was ſucceſsful ; Ben-hadad conſented ; and whilſt, to oppoſe his invaſion, the king of Iſrael drew off his forces, Aſa by proclamation ſummoned all his ſubjects, who went up, and brought away all the ſtones and timber of Ramah, and utterly demoliſhed the place. But God rebuked him for his ſin, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7, 8, 9. and he ſuffered for it by the continual wars in which he was involved. *Note,* Though a ſinful project ſucceed, the ſucceſs will be imbittered.

3. He ſtrengthened his kingdom by new cities which he built ; two with materials brought from Ramah, and others beſides, *v.* 23. Probably to him the more pious Iſraelites returned, and choſe their abode under his rule, rather than to dwell in the tents of ungodlineſs. But his greatneſs or goodneſs prevented not the infirmities of old age coming upon him, *v.* 23, till death, after a glorious reign of forty-one years, removed him to a better kingdom, whilſt his pious ſon Jehoſhaphat, who ſucceeded him, made his loſs in Judah leſs ſenſibly felt.

25. ¶ And Nadab the ſon of Jeroboam † began to † Heb. Reigned.
reign over Iſrael, in the ſecond year of Aſa king of
Judah, and reigned over Iſrael two years. 26. And he 954.
did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and [y] walked in the [y] Chap. xii. 30. Eph. vi. 1.
way of his father, and in his ſin wherewith he made Iſ-
rael to ſin. 27. ¶ And Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah, of

Before Chriſt 953. the houſe of Iſſachar, conſpired againſt him; and Baaſha
ſmote him at Gibbethon, which *belongeth* to the Philiſtines
[z] Chap. xvi. 15. (for Nadab and all Iſrael [z] laid ſiege to Gibbethon.) 28.
Even in the third year of Aſa king of Judah, did
953. Baaſha ſlay him, and reigned in his ſtead. 29. And it
[a] Chap. xiv. 10. came to paſs when he reigned, *that* [a] he ſmote all the
houſe of Jeroboam, he left not to Jeroboam any that
breathed, until he had deſtroyed him, according unto
the ſaying of the LORD, which he ſpake by his ſervant
Ahijah the Shilonite: 30. Becauſe of the ſins of
[b] Chap. xiv. 16. Jeroboam which he ſinned, and [b] which he made Iſrael
[c] Jer. vii. 19. ſin, [c] by his provocation wherewith he provoked the
LORD God of Iſrael to anger. 31. ¶ Now the reſt
of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* they not
written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
Iſrael? 32. And there was war between Aſa and Baaſha
king of Iſrael all their days. 33. In the third year of
Aſa king of Judah began Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah to
reign over all Iſrael in Tirzah, twenty and four years.
34. And he did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and
[d] Chap. xii. 28, 29. & xiii. 33. walked in the way of Jeroboam, and [d] in his ſin wherewith
he made Iſrael to ſin.

v. 25—33. We are here called to turn our eyes from the flouriſhing ſtate of Judah to the diſtractions of Iſrael. Nadab, the heir of his father's crimes, as well as his crown, walked in the eſtabliſhed idolatry; and God's patience with the houſe of Jeroboam being ended, he raiſed up Baaſha, to conſpire againſt him. He was probably an officer in his army, and whilſt Nadab beſieged Gibbethon, which the Philiſtines had ſeized, he ſlew him in the camp, and was proclaimed by the army king in his ſtead. His firſt care was to extirpate the family of Jeroboam, with an intention only to ſecure the kingdom to himſelf, though made herein God's inſtrument to execute the threatned judgment on that ungodly houſe. But though he removed his rivals, he took no care to depart from their ſins, and ſo inherited the ſame curſe he had executed upon them. *Note,* (1.) God's patience has its bounds: he will ſay to the ſinner, My ſpirit ſhall no longer ſtrive. (2.) The path of ſin leads down to death and hell.

CHAP. XVI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The ruin of Baaſha's family foretold by a prophet,* ver. 1—7. *and executed by Zimri,* ver. 8—14. 2. *Zimri's fall, after ſeven days reign,* ver. 15—20. 3. *The ſtruggle between Omri and Tibni, with Omri's prevalency and reign,* ver. 21—28. 4. *The beginning of the reign of Ahab,* ver. 29—33. 5. *The rebuilding of Jericho,* ver. 34.

About 931. 1. THEN the word of the LORD came to [a] Jehu
[a] 2 Chron. xix. 2. & xx. 34. the ſon of Hanani againſt Baaſha, ſaying, 2.
Foraſmuch as [b] I exalted thee out of the duſt, and made
[b] 1 Sam. ii. 8. Chap. xiv. 14. Dan. ii. 21. thee prince over my people Iſrael, and [c] thou haſt walked
in the way of Jeroboam, and haſt made my people
Iſrael to ſin, to provoke me to anger with their ſins:
[c] Chap. xv. 26. 3. Behold, I will take away the poſterity of Baaſha, and
[d] Chap. xiv. 10. & xv. 29. Pſ. l. 22. [d] the poſterity of his houſe: and will make thy houſe like
the houſe of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat. 4. Him that
dieth of Baaſha in the city, ſhall the dogs eat: and him
that dieth of his in the fields, ſhall the fowls of the air
eat. 5. Now the reſt of the acts of Baaſha, and what
[e] 2 Chron. xvi. 1. he did, and his might, [e] *are* they not written in the book
of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 6. So Baaſha
ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah, and
Elah his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 7. And alſo by the
hand of the prophet Jehu the ſon of Hanani, came the
word of the LORD againſt Baaſha, and againſt his
houſe, even for all the evil that he did in the ſight of the
LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of
[f] Hoſ. i. 4. his hands, [f] in being like the houſe of Jeroboam, and be-
930. cauſe [g] he killed him. 8. ¶ In the twenty and ſixth year
[g] 2 Kings ix. 7. of Aſa king of Judah, began Elah the ſon of Baaſha
to reign over Iſrael in Tirzah, two years. 9. And his
ſervant Zimri (captain of half *his* chariots) conſpired a-
[h] Dan. v. 4, 30. Luke xxi. 34. gainſt him, as he was in Tirzah, [h] drinking himſelf drunk
in the houſe of Arza, ſteward of *his* houſe in Tirzah.
929. 10. And Zimri went in and ſmote him, and killed him,
in the twenty and ſeventh year of Aſa king of Judah,
[i] Ver. 15. Job xx. 5. and [i] reigned in his ſtead. 11. ¶ And it came to paſs,
[k] Judg. i. 7. Chap. xv. 29. Mat. vii. 2. when he began to reign, as ſoon as he ſat on his throne,
that [k] he ſlew all the houſe of Baaſha: he left him not
one that piſſeth againſt the wall, neither of his † kinsfolks, Before Chriſt 929.
nor of his friends. 12. Thus did Zimri [l] deſtroy all the † Heb. Deliverers. Num. xxxv. 12.
houſe of Baaſha, according to the word of the LORD,
which he ſpake againſt Baaſha by Jehu the prophet.
13. [m] For all the ſins of Baaſha, and the ſins of Elah his [l] Ver. 15. Rom. iii. 15.
ſon, by which they ſinned, and by which they made Iſ-
rael to ſin, in provoking the LORD God of Iſrael to [m] Chap. xv. 29, 30. Ver. 7. Iſa. x. 6, 7.
anger [n] with their vanities. 14. Now the reſt of the acts
of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the
book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? [n] 2 Kings xvii. 15. Iſa. xli. 29. 1 Cor. x. 19, 20.

v. 1—14. Let not Baaſha expect peace in his ſin, nor hope to ſecure that kingdom to his poſterity, of which his idolatry rendered him ſo unworthy.

1. God ſends a prophet to reprove and threaten him. Greatly had God exalted him; for though his ambition plotted the conſpiracy, it was God's over-ruling providence that gave it ſucceſs. He had been raiſed to reign over God's people, who were not yet utterly abandoned by him; but inſtead of being warned by the judgments on his predeceſſors, he had made their images his own by his adherence to them; had, like them, led the people into idolatry, and ſtood chargeable with the blood of the houſe of Jeroboam, whoſe deſtruction, though juſt, reſpecting God, exculpated him not from the treaſon and murder. Therefore, the judgments of which he had been the executioner, ſhould for the like ſins return on his own houſe. *Note,* (1.) God warns before he ſtrikes. (2.) They who harden their hearts, their blood is on their own heads.

2. The ſentence pronounced is executed; not during Baaſha's reign: like Jeroboam, though in continual wars, and unſucceſsful too, yet he came to his grave by a natural death: but the iniquity is laid up for his children. His ſon Elah is ſcarce well ſettled on his throne, before one of his own officers, as Baaſhah had done, formed a conſpiracy; and whilſt the king was drunk, carouſing at the houſe of Arza his ſteward, Zimri ſlew him; and, to pave the way to the throne, cut off not only all his family, but his friends, who might attempt to avenge his murder. Thus was the prophecy of Jehu fulfilled. *Note,* (1.) A drunkard lays himſelf open to the ſtroke of death by a thouſand accidents; and how terrible thus to be hurried drunk to the tribunal of God! (2.) God's word never falls to the ground; his threatnings are no bugbears.

15. ¶ In the twenty and ſeventh year of Aſa king 929.
of Judah, did Zimri reign [o] ſeven days in Tirzah: and [o] Job xx. 5.
[p] the people *were* encamped againſt Gibbethon, which *be-* [p] Chap. xv. 27.
longed to the Philiſtines. 16. And the people *that were*
encamped heard ſay, Zimri hath conſpired, and hath alſo
ſlain the king: wherefore all Iſrael made Omri the cap- 927.
tain of the hoſt, king over Iſrael that day in the camp.
17. And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Iſ-
rael with him, and they beſieged Tirzah. 18. And it
it came to paſs when Zimri ſaw that the city was taken,
that he went into the palace of the king's houſe, and
[q] burnt the king's houſe over him with fire, and died; [q] 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.
19. For his ſins which he ſinned in doing evil in the
ſight of the LORD, [r] in walking in the way of Jero- [r] Chap. xiv. 16.
boam, and in his ſin which he did, to make Iſrael ſin.
20. Now the reſt of the acts of Zimri, and his treaſon
that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of
the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 21. ¶ [s] Then were [s] Judg. v. 8. Prov. xxviii. 2.
the people of Iſrael divided into two parts: half of the
people followed Tibni the ſon of Ginath, to make him
king; and half followed Omri. 22. But the people that
followed Omri, prevailed againſt the people that fol-
lowed Tibni the ſon of Ginath; ſo Tibni died, and
Omri reigned. 23. ¶ In the thirty and one year of 925.
Aſa king of Judah, began Omri to reign over Iſrael
twelve years: ſix years reigned he in Tirzah. 24. And
he bought the hill Samaria, of Shemer, for two talents of
ſilver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the
city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of
the hill, Samaria. 25. ¶ But Omri wrought evil in
the eyes of the LORD, and [t] did worſe than all that [t] Mic. vi. 16.
were before him. 26. For he walked in all the ways of
Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, and [u] in his ſin wherewith [u] Chap. xv. 26.
he made Iſrael to ſin, to provoke the LORD God of
Iſrael to anger with their vanities. 27. Now the reſt of
the acts of Omri, which he did, and his might that he
ſhewed, *are* they not written in the book of the chro-
nicles of the kings of Iſrael? 28. So Omri ſlept with
his fathers, and was buried in Samaria, and Ahab his ſon 918.
reigned in his ſtead.

Before Christ 918.

v. 15—28. The conſpirators executed their plot, whilſt the army was abſent beſieging Gibbethon, the ſiege of which had been raiſed on the death of Nadab, and immediately proclaimed Zimri at Tirzah. But ſhort was the continuance of his ill-gotten dignity. The army, incenſed againſt the traitor, ſet up in oppoſition Omri as king, and raiſing the ſiege of Gibbethon, marched inſtantly back to Tirzah, where we find,

1. The fall of Zimri. Though ſeven days terminated his reign, yet in them he ſhewed his diſpoſition to Jeroboam's ſins. Unable to defend himſelf againſt the forces under Omri, he rather choſe to periſh in the flames of his palace, than fall with it into the hands of his envied rival. *Note*, (1.) The end of ambitious projectors is frequently to periſh in the flames they have kindled. (2.) Envy and revenge, even in death, forſake not the wicked.

2. The civil war which enſued between Omri and Tibni. The people were divided between theſe competitors for the crown, and four years the ſtruggle laſted, when Tibni ſeems to have fallen in battle, and Omri reigned without a rival, in the thirty-firſt year of Aſa, though his firſt election was in the twenty-ſeventh, from whence the years of his reign are to be dated. *Note*, Of all viſitations on a nation, none are more terrible than civil wars.

3. Omri, far from taking warning by his predeceſſor's ſufferings, did worſe than all that went before him; and, not ſatisfied with encouraging idolatry, compelled the people to it by penal ſtatutes, *Mic.* vi. 16.

4. He removed the royal reſidence from Tirzah to Samaria, having bought the hill of Shemer, the owner, for two talents of ſilver, about ſeven hundred and fifty pounds, and erected a ſpacious city, which ever afterwards continued the metropolis of Iſrael. There, after a reign of twelve years, he died, and was buried, and left his crown to a ſon more abandoned to wickedneſs than his father. Thus, when a people forſake God, they go from worſe to worſe, till deſtruction comes upon them to the uttermoſt.

29. ¶ And in the thirty and eighth year of Aſa king of Judah, began Ahab the ſon of Omri to reign over Iſrael; and Ahab the ſon of Omri reigned over Iſrael in Samaria, twenty and two years. 30. And Ahab the ſon of Omri did evil in the ſight of the LORD, [x] above all that *were* before him. 31. And it came to paſs, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat; that he took to wife [y] Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and ſerved Baal, and worſhipped him. 32. And he reared up an altar for Baal, in the houſe of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33. And Ahab made [z] a grove; and [a] Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Iſrael to anger, than all the kings of Iſrael that were before him. 34. ¶ In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firſt-born, and ſet up the gates thereof in his youngeſt *ſon* Segub, [b] according to the word of the LORD, which he ſpake by Joſhua the ſon of Nun.

[x] Ver. 25.
[y] Gen. vi. 2. Prov. xxiii. 27. Rev. ii. 20.
[z] Jer. xvii. 2.
[a] Chap. xviii. 10, 22. & xx. 42. & xxi. 20.
[b] Joſh. vi. 26.

v. 29—34. Ahab, that monſter of iniquity, ſucceeds his father Omri in the 38th year of Aſa. We have,

1. A general account of his wicked reign, the particulars of which follow. He out-did all the worſt of his predeceſſors; even Jeroboam's ſins were light to his. He began with marrying a Zidonian wife, if poſſible, worſe than himſelf; idolatrous, proud, imperious, lewd, malicious, the adviſer and encourager of every abomination. Her gods pleaſed him better than his own; and he went probably at firſt to Tyre to worſhip; and then, that he might have his idol nearer home, he reared a magnificent temple in Samaria, ſet up an altar before the image of Baal, and planted a grove around it, to perform the ſhocking rites the day bluſhed to behold. *Note*, (1.) Of all earthly plagues that can light upon miſerable man, there is not a greater, than to be joined to a wicked and abandoned woman. (2.) The idolater grudges no expence to ſerve his abominations; and ſhall *we* be niggards at the altar of God? (3.) Deeds of lewdneſs hate the light; but what thick grove can exclude the piercing eye of God?

2. Hiel's preſumption and puniſhment is recorded. Jericho, under the curſe of Joſhua, had lain waſte more than five hundred years; but his impiety defied the anathema, and probably on purpoſe, encouraged by the king and queen, he reſolves to rebuild it: but God will make him know whoſe word ſhall ſtand. The foundation, according to the prediction, *Joſh.* vi. 26. was laid with the death of his eldeſt ſon; and when the gates were ſet up, the laſt and youngeſt of his family expired. *Note*, They who deſpiſe God's curſe, ſhall feel its weight.

Before Christ 909.

CHAP. XVII.

Elijah in theſe evil days now firſt appears, than whom, next to Moſes, a greater prophet aroſe not under the Old Teſtament. 1. *He predicts a famine in Iſrael, for want of rain,* ver. 1. 2. *God provides for him in the famine,* (1.) *By the ravens at the brook Cherith,* ver. 2—7. (2.) *By a widow at Zarephath.* 3. *He multiplies her meal and her oil,* ver. 8—16. 4. *He raiſes her dead ſon to life,* ver. 17—24.

1. AND † Elijah the Tiſhbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, ſaid unto Ahab, [a] *As* the LORD God of Iſrael liveth, before whom I ſtand, [b] there ſhall not be dew nor rain [c] theſe years, [d] but according to my word. 2. And the word of the LORD came unto him, ſaying, 3. Get thee hence, and turn thee eaſtward, and [e] hide thyſelf by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. 4. And it ſhall be, *that* thou ſhalt drink of the brook, and [f] I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there, 5. So he went, and [g] did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. 6. And [h] the ravens brought him bread and fleſh in the morning, and bread and fleſh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. 7. And it came to paſs after a while, that [i] the brook dried up, becauſe there had been no rain in the land.

About 910.
† Heb. Elijahu, i. e. My God is Jehovah.
[a] 2 Kings iii. 14.
[b] Ecclus xlviii. 3. Jam. v. 17. Rev. xi. 6.
[c] Luke iv. 25.
[d] Iſa. xliv. 26.
[e] Heb. xi. 38.
[f] Pſ. xxxvii. 3, 19. Rev. xii. 6, 14.
About 909.
[g] Prov. iii. 5.
[h] Judg. xiv. 14. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Mat. xix. 26.
[i] Pſ. xlvi. 4. John iv. 14.

v. 1—7. Elijah, the Tiſhbite, ſo called probably from the place of his nativity in Gilead, is raiſed up to warn the idolatrous king, and in theſe days of apoſtacy, with fervent zeal to teſtify againſt the wickedneſs of Iſrael. *Note*, God will have his witneſſes in the worſt times, and will endue them with proportionable gifts and graces for the difficulties they are called to ſtruggle with. We have,

1. Elijah's ſolemn denunciation on Ahab, *v.* 1. Probably he had before in vain warned him of his wickedneſs, and finding him incorrigible, declares the famine, which in zeal for God, he had prayed might come as a juſt judgment upon Iſrael, *See Jam.* v. 17. and, to affect the king with a ſenſe of the hand from whence it came, informs him, that the Lord Jehovah, the God of Iſrael, whom he had diſhonoured, the living God, whom he had rejected for dumb idols, had commiſſioned him for this meſſage; and that neither dew nor rain ſhould fall, but according to his word.

2. As he might well expect his boldneſs would offend ſuch impudent ſinners as Ahab and Jezebel, God bids him hide himſelf by the brook Cherith, and Elijah without heſitation obeys. There, during the approaching famine, God promiſes to take care for his proviſion, and by a wonderful means ſupplies him; for whilſt the brook afforded him water to drink, ravens brought him morning and evening bread and fleſh to eat. They were creatures voracious and unclean; but their touch defiled not when ſent on God's errand, and their mouth was ſealed up, when employed to feed his holy prophet. There, unknown, unnoticed, he abode, till the water of the brook failing, God opened a new ſupply. *Note*, (1.) They who dare be bold for God, may truſt him ſafely for protection. (2.) It is a bad ſign for a people, when God's prophets are driven into corners. (3.) Obſcurity becomes duty, when God calls us to it. (4.) God will take care, however precarious their apparent ſubſiſtence, his faithful miniſters ſhall not want; though often, like Elijah, he is pleaſed to feed them but from hand to mouth, to exerciſe their faith and patience. (5.) When God will work, he will never want means. (6.) They who give good advice, and live in bad practices, like theſe ravens, bring others wholeſome food, and feed on carrion themſelves. (7.) Every ſource of earthly comfort may in time run dry; but they who live upon an all-ſufficient God, will find living waters of conſolations that never fail.

8. ¶ And [k] the word of the LORD came unto him, ſaying, 9. Ariſe, [l] get thee to Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to ſuſtain thee. 10. So he aroſe, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, [m] the widow woman *was* there gathering of ſticks: and he called to her, and ſaid, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a veſſel, that I may drink. 11. And as [n] ſhe was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and ſaid, Bring me, I pray thee, a morſel of bread in thine hand. 12. And ſhe ſaid, *As* the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruiſe: and behold,

I *am*

[k] Gen. xxii. 14. Exod. xvii, 6. Judg. xv. 19. Iſa. xli. 17.
[l] Luke iv. 26. Acts xviii. 6.
[m] 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. Jam. ii. 5.
[n] Mat. x. 42.

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I *am* gathering two ſticks, [o] that I may go in, and dreſs it for me and my ſon, that we may eat it, and die. 13. And Elijah ſaid unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou haſt ſaid; but make me thereof a little cake firſt, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy ſon. 14. For thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, The barrel of meal ſhall not waſte, neither ſhall the cruiſe of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD ſendeth rain upon the earth. 15. And [p] ſhe went, and did according to the ſaying of Elijah: and ſhe, and he, and her houſe did eat *many* days. 16. *And* [q] the barrel of meal waſted not, neither did the cruiſe of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD which he ſpake by Elijah.

[o] Gen xxi. 15. Mat. xv. 28. Mark xii.
[p] 2 Chron. xx. 20. Mat. xv. 28. Mark xii. 43.
About 906.
[q] Prov. xi. 24.

v. 8—16. The brook being dry, Elijah is commanded to remove. We ſee he waited to the laſt drop without ſollicitude, and even then removes not without an order. *He that believeth will not make haſte*, but wait the Lord's leiſure.

1. Zerephath, a city of Sidon, is the place fixed for his abode. where God had provided a reception for him in the houſe of a widow, a gentile, and poor withal, and in the very country where Jezebel might ſeize him. But they who have God's warrant to go, have no queſtions to aſk.

2. Though he knew not the perſon who ſhould be his hoſteſs, he went, not doubting to find her; and lo! at the gate providence brings them together. A woman met him, one very unlikely to ſupply his wants, who appeared ready to famiſh herſelf. To her he addreſſed himſelf for a little water; and when ſhe turned to fetch it, he deſired a morſel of bread along with it. This led her to inform him of her diſtreſſed circumſtances; a handful of meal, and a little oil in a cruiſe, were all ſhe poſſeſſed; and ſhe was now come to gather a few ſticks, to dreſs it for herſelf and her ſon, as the laſt morſel they ever expected to eat. Elijah bids her do ſo, but firſt make him a cake, nor fear to want, ſince from God he aſſured her, the meal ſhould not fail, nor the oil be exhauſted, till the days of famine were over. Behold a prodigy of faith! without heſitation, though ſo difficult the command, againſt which reaſon, ſelf-love, and natural affection might raiſe ſtrong objections, ſhe ſtaggered not at the prophet's aſſurance, but did as ſhe was deſired, and truſted on the word of promiſe. *Note*, (1.) In our deepeſt diſtreſſes, God is nearer to relieve us than we are aware. (2.) God hath ever choſen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. (3.) Faith ſilences all objections; a word of promiſe is inſtead of a thouſand arguments. (4.) They who can truſt God with their all, will find themſelves no loſers by him.

3. The firſt eſſay confirmed the prophet's declaration, and the daily miracle continued for two years and upwards, during which Elijah, herſelf, and ſon, even in theſe days of dearth, had enough. It was plain fare, but no doubt they were abundantly thankful for it, and coming thus from the Lord's hand, was doubly ſweet. *Note*, (1.) The prophets and miniſters of God muſt learn of Elijah to be content with hard fare. (2.) *There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth.* Works of piety and charity bring us again our own with uſury. (3.) If our hearts be open to receive the great prophet, the greater than Elijah, we ſhall then never want any manner of thing that is good.

17. ¶ And it came to paſs after theſe things, *that* the ſon of the woman, the miſtreſs of the houſe, fell ſick, and [r] his ſickneſs was ſo ſore, that there was no breath left in him. 18. And ſhe ſaid unto Elijah, [s] What have I to do with thee, O [t] thou man of God? art thou come unto me to [u] call my ſin to remembrance, and to ſlay my ſon? 19. And he ſaid unto her, Give me thy ſon. And he took him out of her boſom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. 20. And [x] he cried unto the LORD, and ſaid, O LORD [y] my God, haſt thou alſo brought [z] evil upon the widow, with whom I ſojourn, [a] by ſlaying her ſon? 21. And [b] he ſtretched himſelf upon the child [c] three times, and cried unto the LORD, and ſaid, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's ſoul come into him again. 22. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the ſoul of the child came into him again, and [d] he revived. 23. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the houſe, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah ſaid, See, thy ſon liveth. 24. ¶ And the woman ſaid to Elijah, Now [e] by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, and *that* the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.

[r] John vi. 49, 50.
[s] Judg. xi. 12. Luke v. 8.
[t] 1 Sam. ix. 6.
[u] Pſ. xc. 8.
[x] Exod. xiv. 10. 2 Kings iv. 34.
[y] Pſ. xxii. 1, 2.
[z] Job ii. 10.
[a] Joſh. vii. 9.
[b] Acts xx. 10.
[c] Mat. xxvi. 44.
[d] Deut. xxxii. 39. Heb. xi. 35.
[e] John iii. 2. & xv. 24.

v. 17—24. When we have been moſt eminently employed for God, and have received the moſt reviving tokens of his regard, we muſt not wonder if we are called to the ſevereſt trials. Whoſe houſe could one have thought ſo ſecure from evil as this widows; yet behold its deſolations.

Before Chriſt 906.

1. She had but one ſon, and he dies. Though fed by a miracle, he was not beyond the arm of death.

2. Diſtreſs and anguiſh weigh down the afflicted widow; and though ſhe cannot but own her ſin provoked the viſitation, ſhe perverſely reflects upon Elijah, as if his prayers, which had brought the famine on the land, had for her ſin brought death into her family. *Note*, (1.) The more unexpected the ſtroke falls, the more difficult it is at firſt to be compoſed. (2.) In our troubles we are apt to quarrel with our beſt friends. (3.) We ſpeak that in haſte, which, in our cooler hours, we cannot but condemn. (4.) When God viſits our families, we ſhould humbly confeſs and acknowledge our ſins, which are the cauſe of our troubles.

3. Elijah exceedingly intereſts himſelf in her affliction, and taking the dead child from her boſom, retires to ſpread the ſad caſe before a compaſſionate God. He cries with importunity, pleads his intereſt with God, humbly reaſons with him on the poor widow's afflictions, whoſe kindneſs had been ſo great to him, and whoſe circumſtances were ſo pitiable; and ſtretching himſelf on the child, as if longing to re-kindle the vital heat in the lifeleſs clay, he fervently intreats that God who can awake the dead, to reſtore again the ſoul, which ſuppoſes its ſeparate exiſtence, to the deſerted corpſe. *Note*, (1.) If we have chriſtian hearts, we ſhall not behold the ſorrows of the afflicted without tender ſympathy, and deſire to relieve their diſtreſſes. (2.) Is Elijah ſo earneſt to reſtore a dead body, and ought not Chriſt's miniſters to be as importunate with him to quicken poor ſouls dead in treſpaſſes and ſins? (3.) It is not all our prayers and labours, but God's power alone, that can effect this ſpiritual reſurrection.

4. God hears, and graciouſly anſwers him. The child, tho' dead, revived, and with joy he brought him down to the tranſported mother. Her faith had before wavered: after all ſhe had ſeen and known, ſhe almoſt doubted whether he were a man of God; ſo apt are ſore temptations to bring us under the power of unbelief. But now ſhe is aſſured of it to demonſtration, and without doubt profeſſes her full confidence in all he had told her, whether concerning the God of Iſrael, or the prophecies yet to be fulfilled. *Note*, As the oak grows more rooted by tempeſtuous winds, ſo faith grows ſtronger after the blaſts of temptation.

CHAP. XVIII.

Elijah is commanded to emerge from his obſcurity, ver. 1. *And hereupon*, 1. *By Obadiah he acquaints Ahab of his coming*, ver. 2—16. 2. *He meets Ahab, and reproves him*, ver. 17—20. 3. *Summons a general aſſembly of Iſrael, where the famous trial between God and Baal is decided*, ver. 21—39. 4. *The prophets of Baal ſlain*, ver. 40. 5. *The return of rain at Elijah's word*, ver. 41—46.

1. AND it came to paſs [a] *after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, ſaying, Go ſhew thyſelf unto Ahab; and [b] I will ſend rain upon the earth. 2. And Elijah went to ſhew himſel unto Ahab, : and *there was* a ſore famine in [c] Samaria. 3. And Ahab called Obadiah, which *was* [d] the governor of *his* houſe: (now Obadiah [e] feared the LORD greatly: 4. For it was *ſo*, when Jezebel [f] cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) 5. And Ahab ſaid unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find graſs to ſave the horſes and mules alive, that we loſe not all the beaſts. 6. So they divided the land between them to paſs throughout it: Ahab went one way by himſelf, and Obadiah went another way by himſelf. 7 ¶ And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him, : and [g] he knew him, and [h] fell on his face, and ſaid, *Art* thou that [i] my lord Elijah? 8. And he anſwered him, I *am*: go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. 9. And he ſaid, [k] What have I ſinned, that thou wouldeſt deliver thy ſervant into the hand of Ahab to ſlay me? 10. *As* the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not ſent [l] to ſeek thee: and when they ſaid, *He is* not *there*; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. 11. And now thou ſayeſt, Go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. 12. And it ſhall come to paſs, *as ſoon as* I am gone from thee, that [m] the Spirit of the LORD ſhall carry thee whither I know not; and

[a] Luke iv. 25. Jam. v. 17.
[b] Lev. xxvi. 4. Deut. xxviii. 12.
[c] Chap. xvii. 3. Amos viii. 11.
[d] Gen. xxxix. 5.
[e] Prov. xiv. 27. & xxviii. 14. Mal. iii. 16. Acts x. 2.
[f] Rev. xvii. 6.
[g] 2 Kings i. 8.
[h] Gen. xviii. 2.
[i] 1 Tim. v. 17.
[k] Ver. 12.
[l] Chap. i. 29.
[m] 2 Kings ii. 16. Acts viii. 39.

ſo when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he ſhall ſlay me: but [n] I thy ſervant fear the LORD from my youth. 13. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel ſlew the prophets of the LORD? how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets, by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? 14. And now thou ſayeſt, Go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*: and he ſhall ſlay me. 15. And Elijah ſaid, [o] *As* the LORD of of hoſts liveth, before whom I ſtand, I will ſurely ſhew myſelf unto him to-day. 16. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

[n] Ver. 3, &c.
[o] Jer. iv. 2.

v. 1—16. When Iſrael ſeemed on the verge of ruin, God graciouſly interpoſes, and ſends his prophet back to ſave them. We have,

1. The diſtreſs to which they were reduced. Famine now ſtalked through the land, the parched ground yielded no food, and the lowing herds ſunk down at the dry brook for want of water. To ſave, if poſſible, the few beaſts that were left, Ahab with Obadiah goes on a progreſs through the land, if peradventure ſome graſs might be found. But whilſt the country groaned under drought, a worſe famine afflicted it than of bread or water, even of the word of the Lord. The cruel Jezebel, mad on her idols, and more enraged inſtead of humbled under this judgment, ſince Elijah is not found, wreaks her vengeance on his brethren, ſlaying all the prophets that yet were trained up in the antient ſchools, and cleaved to the true religion. Nor had any eſcaped, but for the piety of Obadiah, a great good man, even from his youth, in the worſt of days, and amidſt the abominations of ſuch a court. To ſcreen them from her fury, he hid one hundred in two caves, and fed them with bread and water; dangerous as the attempt might have proved to himſelf, if diſcovered, and expenſive in ſuch a ſeaſon as even this proviſion muſt have been. *Note*, (1.) A fruitful land God maketh barren, for the iniquity of thoſe who dwell therein. (2.) Judgments enrage inſtead of humbling the heart of the impenitent. (3.) The greateſt miſery a land can groan under, is the expulſion of God's prophets. (4.) The few faithful have ever been, and ever will be, more or leſs, a perſecuted people. (5.) Few great men are good men; and in a corrupted court piety is leaſt to be expected: yet God hath his choſen veſſels in the worſt times, and moſt dangerous places. Nero's houſe and Ahab's court could not exclude the calls of ſovereign grace. (6.) No danger muſt deter, nor expence be ſpared, where God's ſuffering cauſe demands our help, and claims our protection. (7.) When matters ſeem moſt deſperate, God can, and often doth, raiſe up for his ſuffering miniſters and people powerful and faithful friends.

2. God now enjoins Elijah to return to Samaria. Eagerly had Ahab ſought him through all the tribes and neighbouring people, and by an oath engaged them to ſend him back, if he were found among them. But God had hid him, and Ahab ſought in vain. Three years and ſix months the famine had laſted; but the time is come when God will give rain, and Elijah is bid ſhew himſelf to Ahab.

3. Elijah on his return meets Obadiah, now in ſearch of graſs to preſerve the cattle; and he with deepeſt reverence accoſts the prophet of the Moſt High, *v.* 7. Elijah bids him acquaint Ahab with his coming. Obadiah heſitates at the meſſage, ſuggeſting his fears leſt Elijah might be caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, as perhaps before had happened; and Ahab's rage at the diſappointment might coſt the meſſenger his life; a life that had been ſo valuably employed, and deſerved ſo well to be preſerved, *v.* 13. Elijah ſilences his fear by an oath, to aſſure him he would that day appear to Ahab; whereupon Obadiah departs to acquaint his maſter, and Ahab haſtens to meet the prophet. *Note*, (1.) Titles of diſtinction, even to God's miniſters, may be lawfully uſed. (2.) They who are the ſlaves of their paſſions, will often vent the fury of their diſappointments on their boſom-friends.

17. ¶ And it came to paſs when Ahab ſaw Elijah, that Ahab ſaid unto him, *Art* thou [p] he that troubleth Iſrael? 18. And he anſwered, [q] I have not troubled Iſrael, but [r] thou and [s] thy father's houſe, in that ye have forſaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou haſt followed Baalim. 19. Now therefore ſend, *and* gather to me all Iſrael unto mount Carmel, and [t] the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, [u] which eat at Jezebel's table. 20. So Ahab ſent unto all the children of Iſrael, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

[p] Amos vii. 10. Acts xvi. 20. & xvii. 6. & xxiv. 5.
[q] Acts xxiv. 13.
[r] 2 Sam. xii. 7. Mat. xiv. 4.
[s] Chap. xvi. 25.
[t] 2 Pet. ii. 1.
[u] Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3.

v. 17—20. We have here the interview between the wicked king and the holy prophet, where each appears in character.

1. Ahab with inſolent pride and abuſe accoſts him as the troubler of Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) It is no unuſual thing to miſrepreſent God's zealous miniſters as enemies to the ſtate. (2.) They who are the meſſengers of the beſt tidings, the impenitent brand as their troublers.

2. Elijah boldly retorts the accuſation, and bids him ſee the troubler of Iſrael in the worſhipper of Baalim. *He* deſigned their peace, even in his warnings, whilſt Ahab provoked the judgment by his ſins. To evidence this, he deſires a convention of the people to Carmel, with the prophets of Baal, and there it ſhall appear to what cauſe the want of rain is to be aſcribed. *Note*, (1.) When duty calls, we may not fear the faces of kings. (2.) They are troublers of a land, whoſe ſins provoke God's anger againſt it.

3. Ahab conſents, curious perhaps to know the iſſue of this controverſy between Elijah and the prophets of Baal; at leaſt, deſirous of rain on any terms, which he deſpaired of, but from Elijah's word.

21. And Elijah came unto all the people, and ſaid, [x] How long halt ye between two opinions? [y] if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people anſwered him not a word. 22. Then ſaid Elijah unto the people, [z] I, *even* I only remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* [a] four hundred and fifty men. 23. Let them therefore give us two bullocks, and let them chooſe one bullock for themſelves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: and I will dreſs the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: 24. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and [b] the God that anſwereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people anſwered and ſaid, It is well ſpoken. 25. And Elijah ſaid unto the prophets of Baal, Chooſe you one bullock for yourſelves, and dreſs *it* firſt: for ye *are* many: and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire *under*. 26. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dreſſed *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, ſaying, O Baal, † hear us. But [c] *there was* no voice, nor any that anſwered. And they ‡ leapt upon the altar which was made. 27. And it came to paſs at noon, that Elijah [d] mocked them, and ſaid, Cry aloud, for he *is* a god, either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he ſleepeth, and muſt be awaked. 28. And [e] they cried aloud, and [f] cut themſelves after their manner with knives and lancets, [g] till the blood guſhed out upon them. 29. And it came to paſs, when mid-day was paſt, that they propheſied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* ſacrifice; that *there was* neither voice, nor any to anſwer, [h] nor any that regarded. 30. And Elijah ſaid unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him: and he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down. 31. And Elijah [i] took twelve ſtones, according to the number of the tribes of the ſons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, ſaying, [k] Iſrael ſhall be thy name. 32. And with the ſtones he built an altar [l] in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two meaſures of ſeed. 33. And [m] he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and ſaid, Fill four barrels with water, and [n] pour *it* on the burnt-ſacrifice, and on the wood. 34. And he ſaid, Do *it* the ſecond time: And they did *it* the ſecond time. And he ſaid, Do *it* the third time: And they did *it* the third time. 35. And the water ran round about the altar, and he filled the trench alſo with water. 36. And it came to paſs at the time of the offering of the *evening* ſacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and ſaid, LORD [o] God of Abraham, Iſaac, and of Iſrael, [p] let it be known this day, that thou *art* God in Iſrael, and *that* I *am* thy ſervant, and *that* I have done all theſe things at thy word. 37. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* [q] thou haſt turned their heart back again. 38. Then [r] the fire of the LORD fell, and conſumed the burnt-ſacrifice, and the wood, and the ſtones, and the duſt, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench. 39. And when all the people ſaw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they ſaid, The LORD he *is* the God; the LORD he *is* the God. 40. And Elijah ſaid unto them, § Take the prophets of Baal,

[x] Hoſ. x. 2. Mat. vi. 24. & xii. 30. Jam. i. 8.
[y] Joſh. xxiv. 15.
[z] Chap. xix. 10, 18.
[a] Chap. xxii. 6. Jer. xxvi. 8.
[b] Lev. ix. 24. 1 Chron. xxi. 26. 2 Chron. vii. 1.
† Or, anſwer.
[c] Pſ. cxv. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 2.
‡ Or, leaped up and down at the altar.
[d] Chap. xxii. 15.
[e] Iſa. xliv. 20.
[f] Lev. xix. 28. Deut. xiv. 1.
[g] Mic. vi. 7.
[h] Jer. x. 5. 2 Tim. iii. 9.
[i] Joſh. iv. 3, 10.
[k] Gen. xxxii. 28.
[l] 1 Cor. x. 31. Col. iii. 17.
[m] Gen. xxii. 7, 9. Lev. i. 6, 7.
[n] Judg. vi. 20.
[o] Exod. iii. 6.
[p] Pſ. ix. 16. & lxxxiii. 18. John xvii. 23.
[q] 1 Theſ. i. 9.
[r] 1 Chron. xxi. 26. 2 Chron. vii. 1.
§ Or, apprehend. 2 Kings x. 25. Cant. ii. 15.

Baal, [s] let not one of them eſcape: and they took them, [s] Jer. xlviii. 10.
and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kiſhon,
and [t] ſlew them there. [t] Num. xxv. 7. Deut. xiii. 5. & xviii. 20.

v. 21—40. How great does Elijah appear, alone ſupporting the cauſe of God againſt an idolatrous king, a wicked people, and the multitude of falſe prophets!

1. With zeal he reproves their inconſtancy and infidelity, *v.* 21. As there can be but one ſelf-exiſtent, infinite, eternal Being, their halting between God and Baal proved their wavering minds, and the attempt to reconcile their incompatible ſervices evidenced their folly. *Note*, (1.) Unſettled notions in religion have a direct tendency to lead us to unſound practices. (2.) There is no reconciling Chriſt and Belial, the love of God, and the love of the world: the very attempt is a proof of an apoſtate heart.

2. As conviction ſealed up their lips, he condeſcends, (being authoriſed from God ſo to do) to make them a fair propoſal to try the merits of the cauſe. Though multitudes and authority, king, prieſts, and people, were againſt him, alone he offers to enter the liſts on God's behalf, and reſts the iſſue of the trial on an anſwer of fire from heaven, to conſume the ſacrifice he propoſed. Let him be acknowledged the true God, whoſe power thus appeared. *Note*, God's miniſters muſt not be diſcouraged at ſeeing all the world united againſt them. If God be on their ſide, that is enough to embolden them.

3. The people approved the propoſal, and Baal's prophets either dared not reject it, leſt they ſhould appear deceivers, or hoped in the iſſue, if not to prevail in the conteſt, yet to be on a level with their adverſary, and that the ſhame of the diſappointment would then fall heavieſt upon him. *Note*, God entangleth the wiſe in their own craftineſs, and the hope of the hypocrite periſheth.

4. Elijah, becauſe they were many, gives them the preference in the trial; let them begin their ſacrifice, but put no fire under it. They prepare their bullock, lay it on the altar, and with loud calls invoke the preſence of their deity till noon. Baal probably repreſented the ſun, and from his burning rays at noon, they hoped ſome beam would kindle up the flame: but when paſt the meridian, mad with vexation, they leaped on the altar, and with knives and lancets wounding themſelves, ſought by their blood to render their deity propitious to their prayers; whilſt Elijah, with high diſdain and ridicule, mocked at their folly in theſe mad geſtures and cries, as if their god was engaged in buſineſs, on a journey, or aſleep, and needed to be awaked. Baal, deaf as his image, paid no regard to their prayers, or praiſes, or prophetic fury, and left his votaries covered with confuſion and deſpair. *Note*, (1.) The corporal ſeverities of popery are like the wounds of Baal's prophets, *not of any value* in the ſight of God, but merely to the *ſatisfying* the pride of *the fleſhly mind*, on the mortification of the body, *See Col.* xi. 23. (2.) Nothing will undeceive thoſe whom God hath given over to ſtrong deluſion: they have no ſenſe to ſay, *Is there not a lie in my right hand?*

5. It is now Elijah's turn to make the eſſay; and the calmneſs and dignity of his procedure beſpeak his confidence of ſucceſs. An antient altar was there, on which ſacrifice had been offered before the temple was built, but now either decayed by time, or thrown down by the idolatrous worſhippers of Baal. This he repairs with twelve ſtones, according to the number of the ſons of Jacob, whoſe name God had altered into Iſrael, on his prevailing prayer; and he doubted not the ſame power with God would attend his own. He calls the people to draw near, and having prepared his ſacrifice, to prevent the ſuſpicion of deluſion, he bids them pour upon it four barrels of water three ſeveral times, till the trench he had dug around the altar was filled. Then, at the time when the evening ſacrifice at Jeruſalem was offering, he drew near the altar, and with holy awe, yet humble boldneſs, addreſſes his prayer to the covenant God of their fathers, intreating him to appear for the magnifying his own great name, for the conviction of the people, and their converſion from idolatry; as well as to vindicate his prophet's injured character, and prove his divine miſſion. Inſtant the devouring fire deſcends, to the aſtoniſhment of the beholding multitude, devours the ſacrifice and wood; yea, it burns the very waters dry, and conſumes the ſtones of the altar, even to the duſt. *Note*, (1.) Great is the power of effectual prayer: if it brings not the viſible fire from heaven, it will ſtill draw down the fire of love, and enable us to offer that beſt ſacrifice, a flaming heart, to God. (2.) The converſion of God's people is among the deepeſt concerns which lies on a faithful miniſter's heart. (3.) When the fire of God's wrath fell on Jeſus, the ſinner's ſacrifice, then was the iniquity of his Iſrael pardoned, and that covenant of peace eſtabliſhed, wherein God engaged to turn back their rebellious hearts again unto himſelf.

6. Vanquiſhed by ſuch evidence, the people in adoration fall on their faces, as confounded at their idolatry and confeſſing now the only true God: but alas! the change was of ſhort continuance. *Note*, Miracles may extort confeſſions, but cannot convert the ſoul.

7. Whilſt they are in this good mood, Elijah improves the conviction for the execution of juſt vengeance on the lying prophets of Baal; and therefore, according to the law, *Deut.* xiii. 1—11. orders them inſtantly to be ſeized and executed, which Ahab dared not object to, and the people, incenſed againſt them, eagerly perform at the brook Kiſhon; hoping by their blood, who had deceived them, to obtain that rain which their idolatry had with-held. *Note*, The moſt fearful vengeance, if not in time, yet certainly in eternity, will overtake every lying prophet.

41. ¶ And Elijah ſaid unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat
and drink, for [u] *there is* a ſound of abundance of rain. [u] Joſh. vii. 6. 2 Sam. xxi. 14.
42. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink, and Elijah
[x] went up to the top of Carmel, and [y] he caſt himſelf down [x] Acts x. 9.
upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, 43. [y] Jam. v. 18.
And ſaid to his ſervant, Go up now, look toward the
ſea. And he went up, and looked, and ſaid, *There is*
nothing. And he ſaid, [z] Go again ſeven times. 44. And [z] Gen. xxxii. 26. Hab. ii. 3. Luke xviii. 1.
it came to paſs at the ſeventh time, that he ſaid, Behold, there ariſeth [a] a little cloud out of the ſea, like a
man's hand. And he ſaid, Go up, ſay unto Ahab, [a] Mat. xiii. 31, 32.
Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain ſtop
thee not. 45. And it came to paſs in the mean while,
that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and
[b] there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to [b] Jam. v. 16.
Jezreel. 46. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and [c] he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab, [c] 1 Pet. i. 13.
to the entrance of Jezreel.

v. 41—46. Execution being performed on the deceivers, and the people, to appearance, renouncing their idolatry, God returns in mercy to bleſs them.

1. Elijah foreſeeing the approaching rain, deſires Ahab to take ſome refreſhment, and haſten home. Probably the ſuſpenſe of that day's work had kept him faſting till evening. He himſelf retires to the top of the mount, in lowlieſt abaſement to pray for the mercy which he knew God would beſtow. *Note*, (1.) Secret retirement with God is eſpecially needful for thoſe who are called to much public exerciſes. (2.) The confidence that God will beſtow it, muſt not make us the leſs ſollicitous to aſk the bleſſing at his hands.

2. Whilſt Elijah prayed, his ſervant is ſent to look out and bring him tidings, whether any riſing clouds appeared from the ſea, which from the top of Carmel was full in his view. Six times he returned, and ſaw nothing. Elijah bids him go again, whilſt, perſevering in importunate prayer, he knew at laſt he ſhould prevail. A little cloud now appears, that quickly ſpread over the ſky, and portended the deſcending rain. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not faint, becauſe we do not inſtantly receive, but perſevere in prayer, and we ſhall not be diſappointed. (2.) Great events ariſe from ſmall beginnings: the work of grace in the heart at firſt is like this little cloud, begins perhaps by a caſual word dropped without deſign, but by and by overſpreads all the faculties of the body and ſoul.

3. Elijah haſtens Ahab to his chariot, leſt the rain overtake him, which now the louring clouds portended near; and tho' he deſerved the honour of a place in it, he is content, as the humbleſt ſervant of his prince, to run before it, God ſtrengthening him in his body, and giving him courage in his ſoul, for the work yet before him. *Note*, (1.) They who are moſt diſtinguiſhed of God, and with greateſt boldneſs are called to rebuke men's ſins, muſt ſhew their humility exemplary as their zeal, and pay every due reſpect to men's perſons. (2.) When God ſtrengthens us, then we ſhall run, and not be weary.

CHAP. XIX.

Elijah, who late appeared ſo triumphant, is here, 1. *Obliged to flee for his life*, ver. 1—3. 2 *God, his covenant God, meets and ſtrengthens him,* (1.) *With food*, ver. 4—8. (2.) *With his converſe and encouragement*, ver. 9—18. 3. *Eliſha is called*, ver. 19—21.

1. AND Ahab told Jezebel [a] all that Elijah had done: [a] Chap. xviii. 38, 40.
and withal, how he had ſlain all the prophets
with the ſword. 2. Then Jezebel ſent a meſſenger unto
Elijah, ſaying, [b] So let the gods do *to me*, and more alſo, [b] Exod. xv. 9. Acts xxiii. 12.
if I make not thy life as the life of one of them, [c] by to
morrow about this time. 3. And when he ſaw *that*, [d] he [c] Rom. iii. 15.
aroſe, and went for his life, and came to Beer-ſheba, [d] 2 Cor. xii. 7.
which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his ſervant there. 4.
¶ But he himſelf went a day's journey into the wilderneſs
and came and ſat down under a juniper-tree: and he requeſted for himſelf that he might die, and ſaid, It is [e] Num. xi. 15. Job iii. 3. Jonah iv. 3, 8. James iii. 2.
enough, now, O LORD, [e] take away my life: for I *am*
not

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f Gen. xxviii. 11, &c. g Hebr. xiii. 5.

not better than my fathers. 5. And [f] as he lay and ſlept under a juniper-tree, behold then, an angel touched him, and ſaid unto him, Ariſe *and* eat. 6. And he looked, and behold, [g] *there was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruſe of water at his head: and he did eat, and drink, and laid him down again. 7. And the angel of the LORD come again the ſecond time, and touched him, and ſaid, Ariſe *and* eat, becauſe the journey *is* too great for thee. 8. And he aroſe, and did eat and drink, and went [h] in the ſtrength of that meat [i] forty days and forty nights, [k] unto Horeb the mount of God.

h Deut. xxxiii. 25. Dan. i. 15. Hab. iii. 17. 2 Cor. xii. 9. i Deut. ix. 9. Mat. iv. 2. k Exod. iii. 1.

v. 1—8. Elijah entred Jezreel yeſterday as in triumph; today is driven from thence in diſgrace, and flies for his life: ſo changeable is this vain world!

1. Hardened Ahab relates to Jezebel the late tranſactions, and fails not to inform her of the death of her prophets: that though he dared not himſelf, for fear of the people, ſeize Elijah, he might incenſe her, whoſe furious paſſions would not fail to fire at the tidings. *Note*, (1.) The wickedneſs to which we inſtigate others, we are as chargeable with, as if ourſelves had committed it.

2. Jezebel enraged, denounces vengeance on Elijah, and ſwears by her gods his death by to-morrow at that time: either really intending it, and God's Providence over-ruling her, that he might have time to eſcape; or more probably ſhe threatned high, to frighten him from her court, where his preſence could not but be dreaded, from the late ſpecimen of his zeal. *Note*, (1.) Profaneneſs in a woman is doubly ſhocking. (2.) The preſence of a good man is a burdenſome reſtraint on the wicked, and they want ever to get him out of the way.

3. Elijah, who had not been intimidated by kings, prieſts, or people united, now trembles at the threats of a woman, and without waiting God's orders, ſeeks to ſave himſelf by flight; and as if he heard Jezebel's voice behind him, even at Beerſheba, though out of the territories of Ahab, cannot think himſelf ſafe, but hides himſelf a day's journey in the wilderneſs; deſerting thus his poſt, when moſt he was wanted to carry on that reformation which was begun. *Note*, (1.) The ſtrongeſt in faith, when left for a moment to themſelves, turn cowards. (2.) Good men at times may be unwilling and afraid to die. (3.) We ought never to deſert the path of duty, though it lead us through the valley of the ſhadow of death.

4. Fatigued with his journey, and impatient under his burdens, he grew weary of life, which he had fled ſo far to ſave: and though unwilling to die by the hand of Jezebel, prays to die there by the hand of the Lord. He preſumes his uſefulneſs at an end, as not better than his fathers, deſires his diſmiſſion, and thinks he has lived long enough. *Note*, (1.) Many impatiently wiſh for death that would wiſh their words unſaid, if God granted their requeſts. (2.) However dark Providences appear, we muſt not deſpair; we know not what farther work God may have to do by us. (3.) Though to deſire to be with Chriſt is laudable, to be weary of our warfare is ſinful.

5. Grieved and weary, ſleep ſtole upon his eyelids; and under a juniper-tree he lay down, careleſs whether ever he awoke again. But God, kinder to him than he deſerved, awakes him him by an angel; and there he ſees a table ſpread for his refreſhment, and a bright ſpirit his attendant. Having ſatisfied his hunger, and again compoſed himſelf to ſleep, he is again called upon to riſe and eat, becauſe the journey was great to which God called him, even to Horeb. Thither in the ſtrength of this repaſt he travels; and during forty days and nights, needed no other refreſhment. *Note*, (1.) How much is God better to his children than their frowardneſs deſerves! He ſupports them and feeds them, even in this wilderneſs; and when they are ready to deſpair, he is at hand to ſuccour and ſave them. (2.) They who are travelling to Horeb, the mount of God in glory, will find ſtrength miniſtred to them for their journey, and meat to eat which the world knoweth not of. (3.) The meaneſt child of God is more nobly attended than the kings of the earth; angelic ſpirits miniſter continually to theſe heirs of ſalvation.

l Exod. xxxiii. 22. Jer. ix. 2. Heb. xi. 38. m Num. xxv. 11. Pſal. lxix. 9. n Rom. xi. 2, 3. o Chap. xviii. 14. p Ibid. 22. Rom. xi. 3. q Ezek. i. 4.

9. ¶ And he came thither unto [l] a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, and he ſaid unto him, What doſt thou here, Elijah? 10. And he ſaid, [m] I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hoſts: for [n] the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and [o] ſlain thy prophets with the ſword; and [p] I, *even* I only am left, and they ſeek my life, to take it away. 11. And he ſaid, Go forth, and ſtand upon the mount, before the LORD. And behold, the LORD paſſed by, and [q] a great and ſtrong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD: *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake: *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake: 12. And after the earthquake a fire: *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire, a ſtill ſmall voice. 13. And it was *ſo*, when Elijah heard *it*, that [r] he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and ſtood at the entering in of the cave: and behold, *there came* a voice unto him, and ſaid, What doſt thou here, Elijah? 14. And he ſaid, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hoſts: becauſe the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and ſlain thy prophets with the ſword: and I, *even* I only am left, and they ſeek my life, to take it away. 15. And the LORD ſaid unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderneſs of Damaſcus: and when thou comeſt, [s] anoint Hazael *to be* king over Syria, 16. And [t] Jehu the ſon of Nimſhi ſhalt thou anoint *to be* king over Iſrael: and [u] Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, ſhalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room. 17. And it ſhall come to paſs, *that* him that eſcapeth [x] the ſword of Hazael, [y] ſhall Jehu ſlay: and him that eſcapeth from the ſword of Jehu, [z] ſhall Eliſha ſlay. 18. Yet [a] I have left *me* ſeven thouſand in Iſrael, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and [b] every mouth which hath not kiſſed him.

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r Exod. iii. 6. & xxxiii. 23. Iſa. vi. 2. s 2 Kings viii. 13. t Ibid. ix. 6. u Luke iv. 27. x 2 Kings x. 32. & xiii. 3. y 2 Kings ix. 24. z Iſa. xi. 4. Jer. i. 10. Hoſ. vi. 5. a Ver. 10. Rom. xi. 4. b Job xxxi. 27. Hoſ. xiii. 2.

v. 9—18. We have here Elijah lodged in a cave, at the foot of mount Sinai, or Horeb: either taking refuge there as a place of ſafety, or hoping there to meet God, where he had once ſo eminently manifeſted his glory.

1. God there appears to him, to reprove and to encourage him: What doſt thou here? is the Divine enquiry; where he was buried from uſefulneſs, and through coward fear, acted ſo unlike the zealous Elijah. *Note*, (1.) Whom God loves, he rebukes. (2.) When we ſtep out of the way of duty, we ſhould hear this voice of God addreſſing us, *What doſt thou here?* (3.) Wherever God's people are driven, no place can exclude his gracious manifeſtations.

2. He anſwers the enquiry, by intimating the cauſe of his flight. His zeal for God againſt the prophets of Baal, had exaſperated Jezebel to take away his life; and the hardned impenitence of the people, who had renounced God's covenant, deſerted his worſhip with inſult againſt his altars, and ſlain the few faithful which remained, made him deſpair of ſucceſs, whilſt he had reaſon to fear they would readily join their queen, in conſpiring his death, now left alone, without ſo much as one to ſupport or countenance him. *Note*, (1.) We are apt to be diſcouraged under want of ſucceſs, as if the ſufficiency of the power was of ourſelves, and not of God. (2.) Woe to that people, againſt whom their rejected miniſters turn accuſers of their obſtinacy. (3.) They who would be faithful to God in bad days, muſt put their lives in their hand; and as they dare ſpeak for God, be ready to die for him.

3. God bids him come forth from the cave, and he will meet him in the mount, and make his glory paſs before him. The prophet obeys, and God appears. Before him went the furious whirlwind, rending the rocks, and caſting down the mountains, the trembling earth ſhook with reverence at his approach, and the fierce devouring flames beſpoke his glorious preſence. A ſtill ſmall voice ſucceeded, and now the prophet perceives the preſent Deity. Wrapped in his mantle, his face is hid, aſhamed, afraid to look upon God, yet ſtanding in the mouth of the cave, attentive to the words of the eternal Jehovah. *Note*, (1.) Though God is terrible to his enemies as a conſuming fire, his voice is melody and love to the children of his grace; and to them he ſays, *fury is not in me*. (2.) When we appear before a holy God, ſhame may well cover our face. (3.) The law, like this tempeſt, breaks the ſtony heart of man; but it is the office of the bleſſed goſpel, in gentle accents, to ſooth the broken heart, and ſoftly, with kind words of peace and pardon, to bind up the wounded ſpirit.

4. God ſpeaks, and Elijah anſwers as before, *v.* 9—11. In reply to which, God informs him, 1. That Iſrael ſhall not go unpuniſhed, and commiſſions him to anoint Hazael king of Syria, that he might vex them without; and Jehu king of Iſrael, that he might revenge God's quarrel on Ahab's wicked houſe within; and not to leave him ſolitary, appoints him to anoint Eliſha for his ſucceſſor and companion; the ſword of whoſe mouth ſhould ſmite them deep as the ſword of Hazael and Jehu; and by him, as it appears, both theſe kings were appointed, and Jehu anointed; unleſs we ſuppoſe this was done twice: See 2 *Kings* ix. 1—3. *Note*, (1.) Though we may think God ſlack in returning his own and his ſervants quarrels, yet he will avenge them, and that ſpeedily. (2.) God will not want hands to do his work: we muſt not think the cauſe will die with us: if he ſpeak but the word, great ſhall be the company of the preachers. 2. God aſſures him he is miſtaken in his calculations, and lets him know for his comfort, that there were yet ſeven thouſand faithful men in Iſrael, who had not yet bowed the knee to Baal. *Note*, (1.) In times of the greateſt apoſtacy,

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apoſtacy, God hath yet a choſen remnant, who refuſe to conform to the wickedneſs around them. (2.) The faithful in every kingdom are but few. (3.) Whoever have a place in that diſtinguiſhed little flock, owe it to the ſovereign grace of God. (4.) Though the few choſen ſeem loſt amidſt the tares that cover them, God ſees and knows how at laſt to make the ſeparation. (5.) When he ſhall have collected his ſaints together, though few in any place or age, they will be a great multitude, whom no man can number. (6.) It becomes us to judge charitably, leaſt we exclude thoſe from heaven, whom God hath not excluded.

19. ¶ So he departed thence, and found Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat, [c] who *was* plowing with twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah paſſed by him, and caſt his mantle upon him. 20. And [d] he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and ſaid, [e] Let me, I pray thee, kiſs my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he ſaid unto him, Go back again; for what have I done to thee? 21. And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and ſlew them, and boiled their fleſh with the inſtruments of the oxen: and [f] gave unto the people, and they did eat: then he aroſe, and went after Elijah, and miniſtred unto him.

[c] Amos vii. 14.
[d] Mat. iv. 20.
[e] Mat. viii. 21. Luke ix. 61, 62.
[f] Luke v. 29.

v. 19—21. Elijah immediately proceeds to execute a part of his commiſſion, and comes to Abel-Meholah, where Eliſha dwelt. He found him in the field ploughing; and approaching him, threw the ſkirt of his mantle on him, in token of his taking him under his tuition: when inſtantly the Spirit of God ſo effectually touched his heart, that he left the oxen, and followed Elijah. He begged leave for a moment to take leave of his family; and Elijah bid him go back again, permitting that office of reſpect, or willing to try the ſteadineſs of his heart. Hereupon he returned, took leave of his friends, made a feaſt for joy, at the honour to which he was called; and chearfully leaving all behind, followed his maſter, to learn from his inſtructions, and miniſter to him as his ſervant, 2 *Kings* iii. 2. *Note*, (1.) The calls of Divine grace are like this of Eliſha. *Sovereign* without our deſire or deſert; *unexpected* when we were engaged in other purſuits; *powerful*, ſo that we could not reſiſt the mighty impulſe; *pleaſing*, making us happy in the preſent favour of God, and the hopes of future glory; *permanent*, enabling us with perſevering adherence to cleave to Jeſus our maſter, leaving all for his ſake, to live and die faithfully his, and his alone. Lord caſt thus thy ſkirt of love over my ſoul! (2.) When we are employed in honeſt induſtry in the way of our duty, we are in the way of God's bleſſing. (3.) They will moſt probably ſucceed them in zeal and uſefulneſs, who being brought up under aged and experienced miniſters, have drank in their ſpirit.

CHAP. XX.

Here is, 1. *Ben-hadad's deſcent upon Iſrael, and his inſolent demand*, ver. 1—12. 2. *The two defeats Ahab gave him*, ver. 13—30. 3. *The covenant of peace made between them*, ver. 31—34. *for which he is reproved and threatned by a prophet*, ver. 35—43.

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1. AND Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his hoſt together, and *there were* thirty and two kings with him, and horſes and chariots: and he went up and beſieged Samaria, and warred againſt it. 2. And [a] he ſent meſſengers to Ahab king of Iſrael into the city, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith Ben-hadad, 3. [b] Thy ſilver and thy gold *is* mine, thy wives alſo and thy children, *even* the goodlieſt, *are* mine. 4. And the king of Iſrael anſwered and ſaid, My lord, O king, according to thy ſaying, I *am* thine, and all that I have. 5. And the meſſengers came again, and ſaid, Thus ſpeaketh Ben-hadad, ſaying, Although I have ſent unto thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt deliver me thy ſilver and thy gold, and thy wives and thy children: 6. Yet I will ſend my ſervant unto thee, to-morrow about this time, and they ſhall ſearch thine houſe, and the houſes of thy ſervants; and it ſhall be, *that* whatſoever is † pleaſant in thine eyes, they ſhall put *it* in their hand, and take *it* away. 7. Then the king of Iſrael called all the elders of the land, and ſaid, [c] Mark, I pray you, and ſee how this *man* ſeeketh miſchief: for he ſent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my ſilver, and for my gold, and I ‡ denied him not. 8. And all the elders, and all the people ſaid unto him, Hearken not *unto him*, nor conſent. 9. Wherefore he ſaid unto the meſſengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didſt ſend for to thy ſervant at the firſt, I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the meſſengers departed, and brought him word again. 10. And Ben-hadad ſent unto him, and ſaid, [d] The gods do ſo unto me and more alſo, [e] if the duſt of Samaria ſhall ſuffice for handfuls for all the people that ‖ follow me. 11. And the king of Iſrael anſwered and ſaid, Tell *him*, [f] Let not him that girdeth on *his harneſs* boaſt himſelf, as he that putteth it off.

[a] Iſa. xxxvi. 4, &c.
[b] Exod. xv. 9.
† Heb. Deſirable.
[c] Prov. i. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 10.
‡ Heb. Kept not back from him.

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[d] Chap. xix. 2.
[e] Iſa. xxxvi. 12.
‖ Heb. Are at my feet. Exod. xi. 8. Judg. iv. 10.
[f] 1 Sam. xiv. 6. Prov. xxi. 30. Eccleſ. ix. 11.

v. 1—11. We have here,

1. Samaria beſieged by Ben-hadad king of Syria, with thirty-two tributary or confederate kings under him: and ſin had ſo weakened Iſrael's hands, that they met with no reſiſtance in their way, even to the capital. *Note*, They who provoke God to leave them, are defenceleſs indeed.

2. As ambition and covetouſneſs dictated the invaſion, ſwoln with inſolence and pride on his ſucceſs, he ſends Ahab a haughty meſſage, as his vaſſal, and bids him ſubmit and ſurrender his all without reſerve. *Note*, Succeſs makes vain minds inſolent.

3. Ahab, whoſe coward heart dared not oppoſe the haughty conqueror, and whoſe guilt forbad him to hope for help in God, tamely ſubmits to purchaſe his peace at this ignominious price.

4. Ben-hadad grown more inſolent on his ſubmiſſion, and now concluding his affairs deſperate, riſes in his demands. Not content with his treaſures, or his vaſſalage, he requires that his ſervants may ſearch his houſe, the houſes of his great men, and plunder them of every thing that is valuable, and expects his anſwer by the morrow. *Note*, (1.) There is no ſatisfying a covetous mind. (2.) Mean ſpirits delight to tyrannize over thoſe they think dare not reſiſt them.

5. Rouſed by ſo unreaſonable a demand, Ahab ſummons his counſel, and expoſes to them the conceſſions he had offered, and the freſh demands impoſed on him. They encourage him to ſtand out, and promiſe to ſupport him; on which the meſſengers are diſmiſſed with a denial, yet couched in terms that might leaſt offend; and with a propoſal to ratify the former offer.

6. Enraged at this refuſal, Ben-hadad ſwears by his gods to beat Samaria into duſt; and to bring ſuch an hoſt into the field, that there ſhall not be enough for each to take a handful. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt talkers are not the greateſt doers. (2.) The threats of pride are often impotent and vain.

7. Ahab wiſely admoniſhes him of the uncertainty of war, and that the moſt confident are not the moſt ſucceſsful. *Note*, As long as we are in the fleſh, it becometh us with fear and trembling to work out our ſalvation, when we ſhall put off the body in the grave, then we may ſhout for victory.

12. And it came to paſs, when *Ben-hadad* heard this meſſage (as he *was* drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions) that he ſaid unto his ſervants, Set *yourſelves in aray*: And they ſet *themſelves in aray* againſt the city. 13. ¶ And [g] behold there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Iſrael, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, Haſt thou ſeen [h] all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day, and [i] thou ſhalt know that I *am* the LORD. 14. And Ahab ſaid, By whom? And he ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, *Even* [k] by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he ſaid, Who ſhall order the battle? And he anſwered, Thou. 15. Then he numbred the † young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two: and after them he numbred all the people, *even* all the children of Iſrael, *being* ſeven thouſand. 16. And they went out at noon: but Ben-hadad *was* [l] drinking himſelf drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him. 17. And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out firſt, and Ben-hadad ſent out, and they told him, ſaying, There are men come out of Samaria. 18. And he ſaid, [m] Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive. 19. So theſe young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them. 20. And [n] they ſlew every one his man: and the Syrians [o] fled, and Iſrael purſued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria eſcaped on an horſe, with the horſemen. 21. And the king of Iſrael went out, and ſmote the horſes and chariots, and ſlew the Syrians with a great ſlaughter.

[g] Pſal. xlvi.
[h] Iſa. viii. 9.
[i] Ver. 28. Pſal. ix. 16.
[k] Judg. vii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.
† Or ſervants.
[l] Ver. 12. Chap. xvi. 9. Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. Dan. v. 1, 2. Luke xxi. 34.
[m] 1 Sam. ii. 3. Pſal. lxxv. 4. Prov. i. 32.
[n] Ver. 15.
[o] Pſal. xxxiii. 16.

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v. 12—21. The treaty being broken off, each ſide prepares for war.

1. Ben-hadad commands the city to be inveſted, or preparation made for an aſſault; though himſelf took no care to ſuperintend the attack, but ſat at noon day drinking himſelf drunk with the kings in his pavilion, unapprehenſive of danger, and by his ill example, rendering them as negligent and debauched as himſelf. *Note*, (1.) A drunken general will be the ruin of his army. (2.) They who are moſt ſecure, are neareſt the precipice of ruin.

2. In Ahab's diſtreſs, unworthy as he is of ſuch a mercy, yet for Iſrael's ſake, God interpoſes, and ſends his prophet, ſuppoſed to be Micaiah, with encouragement to him, and aſſurance of victory that very day, that he may be convinced God is the Lord, the true Jehovah. On his enquiry how, or by whom this deliverance ſhould be wrought, he is commanded to draw out the young men of the princes of the provinces, the ſervants of his great men, the moſt unfit for war, and he muſt lead them. Ahab obeys, numbers the young men, no more than 232, and after them 7000, probably ſuch as offered to ſecond them; a moſt unequal force againſt ſuch an enemy: but God's promiſe is better than the moſt numerous hoſt; and theſe deſpicable forces beſt ſuited to abaſe the pride of the inſolent king. *Note*, (1.) God ſhews the wicked many mercies, either to work upon them to repent, or at leaſt leave them inexcuſable. (2.) We muſt obey God in the uſe of means, however inadequate they may appear, and truſt him for the event.

3. Ahab, according to the Divine command, ſallies forth at noon, with his little force, whilſt Ben-hadad was drunk in his tent; and on news brought him of the appearance of ſome troops, deſpiſing their numbers, he commands, whether they came for peace or war, to take them priſoners: but when the Syrians advanced to ſeize them, the Iſraelites caught each his man, and ſlew them, which wrought ſuch a panic on the hoſt, that they inſtantly fled; whilſt the reſt of the forces follow now under the king, and obtain a complete victory. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who walk in pride, God is able to abaſe. (2.) The weakeſt inſtruments are effectual in God's hands.

22. ¶ And the prophet came to the king of Iſrael, and ſaid unto him, [p] Go ſtrengthen thyſelf, and mark and ſee what thou doſt: for [q] at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up againſt thee. 23. And the ſervants of the king of Syria ſaid unto him, [r] Their gods *are* gods of the hills, therefore they were ſtronger than we; [s] but let us fight againſt them in the plain, and ſurely we ſhall be ſtronger than they. 24. And do this thing, [t] Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms. 25. And number thee an army like the army that thou haſt loſt, horſe for horſe, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight againſt them in the plain, *and* ſurely we ſhall be ſtronger than they. 900. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did ſo. 26. And it came to paſs at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbred the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight againſt Iſrael. 27. And the children of Iſrael were numbred, and were all preſent, and went againſt them: and the children of Iſrael pitched before them, like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians [u] filled the country. 28. ¶ And [x] there came a man of God, and ſpake unto the king of Iſrael, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, [y] Becauſe the Syrians have ſaid, The LORD *is* God of the hills, but he *is* not God of the valleys: therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, *and* ye ſhall know that I *am* the LORD. 29. And they pitched one over againſt the other ſeven days; and *ſo* it was, that in the ſeventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Iſrael ſlew of the Syrians [z] an hundred thouſand footmen in one day. 30. But the reſt fled to Aphek, into the city; and [a] *there* a wall fell upon twenty and ſeven thouſand of the men *that were* left: and Ben-hadad fled, and came into the city, into † an inner chamber.

[p] Prov. xx. 18.
[q] Iſa. xxvi. 11.
[r] Pſal. cxxi. 1.
[s] Ibid. l. 21.
[t] Job v. 13. Prov. xxi. 30.
[u] Judg. vi. 5. Jer. xvii. 5.
[x] Ver. 13, 22.
[y] Ver. 23. Iſa. xxxvii. 29.
[z] Ver. xx. Iſa. xxvi. 11.
[a] Ibid. xxiv. 18.
† Heb. A chamber within a chamber. Chap. xxii. 25. Dan. iv. 37.

v. 22—30. Ahab triumphant, little thought the ſtorm was gathering afreſh, and promiſed himſelf no farther diſturbance. But,

1. God warns him by a prophet, of the preparations making againſt him, and bids him prepare for another campaign; for though the victory was not before got by human ſtrength, he muſt not tempt God, by neglecting to uſe his beſt endeavours. *Note*, (1.) We are apt to flatter ourſelves the danger is over, when the preſent trial is overcome, and not to be aware how reſtleſs are our ſpiritual foes, and that earth and hell will not let us be quiet long. (2.) Though God can only enable us to overcome, we muſt labour as earneſtly as if the ſucceſs depended on ourſelves.

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2. Ben-hadad is encouraged by his ſervants to raiſe another army, to retrieve his loſt honour. They ſuggeſt to him, that Iſrael's God was only mighty in the hills, but in the valley they had nothing to fear from him, according to their falſe notions of topical deities. And inſtead of the kings, they adviſe him to appoint captains, more expert and warlike, and then they were confident of ſucceſs.

3. With unequal forces the two armies take the field. The Syrians, like locuſts, covered the country; whilſt the two little bands of Iſrael, not a man of whom was loſt in the laſt encounter, appeared as few and weak as two little flocks of kids. But one advantage they had which over-balanced all, God was for them. His prophet aſſures them of victory, though they deſerved it not; yet to make the Syrians know that the God of Iſrael is every where equally omnipotent and irreſiſtable, *v.* 20. *Note*, As unequally matched does the church of God and every believer in it appear, amidſt their ſpiritual foes; but God is with them, therefore the gates of hell cannot prevail.

4. The iſſue confirms the prophet's word. Seven days they encamped near each other: on the ſeventh, after this encouragement, they dared join in the unequal conflict, and prevailed. One hundred thouſand Syrians fell that day; and when the ſhatter'd remains of the army took refuge under the walls of Aphek, a city of Aſher, in Ben-hadad's poſſeſſion, an earthquake, or whirlwind, threw down the wall upon twenty-ſeven thouſand men, and ſlew, wounded, or diſperſed them; ſo that Ben-hadad giving up all for loſt, fled to an inner chamber to hide himſelf. *Note*, They who fight againſt God, will be covered at laſt with confuſion and deſpair.

31. ¶ And his ſervants ſaid unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the houſe of Iſrael *are* merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put ſackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Iſrael; peradventure he will ſave thy life. 32. So they girded ſackcloth on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Iſrael, and ſaid, [b] Thy ſervant Ben-hadad ſaith, I pray thee, let me live. And he ſaid, *Is* he yet alive? he *is* my brother. 33. Now the men did diligently obſerve whether *any thing would come* from him, and did haſtily catch *it*: and they ſaid, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he ſaid, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he cauſed him to come up into the chariot. 34. And *Ben-hadad* ſaid unto him, The cities which my father took from thy father, I will reſtore, and thou ſhalt make ſtreets for thee in Damaſcus, as my father made in Samaria. Then *ſaid Ahab*, I will ſend thee away with this covenant. [c] So he made a covenant with him, and ſent him away. 35. ¶ And a certain man of the ſons of the prophets ſaid unto his neighbour in the word of the LORD, [d] Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refuſed to ſmite him. 36. Then he ſaid unto him, [e] Becauſe thou haſt not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as ſoon as thou art departed from me, a lion ſhall ſlay thee. And as ſoon as he was departed from him, [f] a lion found him, and ſlew him. 37. Then he found another man, and ſaid, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man ſmote him, ſo that in ſmiting he wounded *him*. 38. So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and diſguiſed himſelf with aſhes upon his face. 39. And as the king paſſed by, he cried unto the king: and he ſaid, [g] Thy ſervant went out into the midſt of the battle, and behold, a man turned aſide, and brought a man unto me, and ſaid, Keep this man: if by any means he be miſſing, then ſhall thy life be for his life, or elſe thou ſhalt pay a talent of ſilver. 40. And as thy ſervant was buſy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto him, [h] So *ſhall* thy judgment *be*, thyſelf haſt decided it. 41. And he haſted, and took the aſhes away from his face, and the king of Iſrael diſcerned him that he *was* of the prophets. 42. And he ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, Becauſe thou haſt let go out of *thy* hand, a man whom † I appointed to utter deſtruction, [i] therefore thy life ſhall go for his life, and thy people for his people. 43. And the king of Iſrael went to his houſe, heavy and [k] diſpleaſed, and came to Samaria.

[b] Chap. iii. 6. Job xl. 12.
[c] Iſa. xxvi. 10.
[d] Ibid. viii. 18.
[e] 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.
[f] Chap. xiii. 24.
[g] 1 Sam. xii. 1, &c.
[h] Job xv. 6. Luke xix. 2.
† Heb. Of my curſe.
[i] Chap. xxii. 34, 35.
[k] Ibid. 8.

v. 31—43. See the proud boaſter reduced to the loweſt ſtep of abject wretchedneſs.

1. His ſervants propoſe, as the laſt and only reſource, to ſurrender themſelves priſoners at diſcretion, and caſt themſelves on the mercy of Iſrael's king, for they had been famed for lenity. They offer to go firſt; and to excite compaſſion, ap-

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pear in ſackcloth, with halters about their necks, as thoſe who owned they deſerved to die; and with abject ſubmiſſion, as from their king, beg only for life, *v.* 32. *Note*, (1.) Iſrael's God is more famed for mercy than Iſrael's king; there is hope for the periſhing ſinner, when in duſt and aſhes he comes to ſurrender up his guilty ſoul. (2.) It is better to ſtoop and live, than periſh hardned in pride.

2. Ahab receives them unſpeakably beyond their expectations, expreſſes a joy that Ben-hadad is alive, and calls him brother; intimating his reſpect for him. At this word they eagerly catch, and return at his command to bring Ben-hadad forth. Ahab receives him with all imaginable reſpect, cauſes him to ſit with him in his chariot, and then in a fit of generoſity, offers to reſtore the cities of Syria, which Omri his father had taken, See *chap.* xvi. 27. and permits him to exerciſe every act of ſovereignty at Damaſcus, his royal reſidence, as much as Omri had done at Samaria. And having thus made peace, diſmiſſes him without ſo much as a reproof for his blaſphemy and inſolence. Our tranſlators, by inſerting Ben-hadad's name, aſcribe the conceſſions, *v.* 34. to him, but the former ſenſe is moſt agreeable to the original. *Note*, Lenity and generoſity may be ſinfully exerciſed towards ſuch, as we have reaſon to ſuſpect will abuſe them.

3. A prophet, probably Micaiah, See *chap.* xxii. 8. is ſent to rebuke this falſe clemency of Ahab: and in order to lead the king to condemn himſelf, he diſguiſes himſelf as a ſoldier, and bids a neighbour ſmite him, that he might appear bloody; but his neighbour refuſed, though the prophet told him the command was from God; and therefore is puniſhed for his diſobedience, a lion is commiſſioned to ſlay him. Another whom he met, fearing probably the conſequences of a refuſal, though unwillingly, ſmites and wounds the prophet. Thus bloody and diſguiſed, with aſhes on his head, he way-laid the king, and prefers his fictitious complaint. He had thro' careleſſneſs let a priſoner eſcape, that his captain, at the peril of his life, or on forfeiture of a talent of ſilver, had bid him guard, and he flies to the king's clemency to protect him from his officer's proſecution. But Ahab rejects his ſuit, and leaves him to the juſt puniſhment his careleſſneſs deſerved. The prophet then removes the diſguiſe, and retorts the king's ſentence upon him. For Ben-hadad's life which he had ſpared, when delivered of God into his hands, his own was forfeited, *chap.* xxii. 34. and Iſrael ſhall ſuffer for his lenity to the Syrians, 2 *Kings* x. 32. *Note*, (1.) Whatever ſeeming pleas we may have for diſobedience to God's word, none of them will be accepted as an arreſt of judgment at his bar, (2.) Out of his own mouth will the ſinner be condemned in the day of God.

4. Ahab's joy was now turned into heavineſs; he went to his houſe, vexed at his own folly, diſpleaſed at the prophet, and more enraged againſt the threatned puniſhment, than afflicted under the ſin which provoked it. *Note*, There is a ſorrow of the world which only worketh death.

CHAP. XXI.

Ahab's wickedneſs is ſtill the ſad ſubject of this hiſtory. 1. *He covets, and is ſick for Naboth's vineyard*, ver. 1—4. 2. *Naboth dies by Jezebel's plot, that the vineyard may eſcheat to Ahab*, ver. 5—14. 3. *Ahab goes to take poſſeſſion*, ver. 15, 16. 4. *Elijah denounceth God's judgments againſt him for his injuſtice*, ver. 17—24. 5. *Upon his humiliation a reprieve is granted*, ver. 25—29.

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[a] Chap. xx. 21, 29, 33. Ezra ix. 13, 14.
[b] Exod. xx. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.
[c] Lev. xxv. 23. Num. xxxvi. 7. Ezek. xlvi. 18.
[d] Chap. xx. 43.

1. AND it came to paſs [a] after theſe things, *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which *was* in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2. And Ahab ſpake unto Naboth, ſaying, [b] Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, becauſe it *is* near unto my houſe, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: *or* if it ſeem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. 3. And Naboth ſaid to Ahab, [c] The LORD forbid it me, that I ſhould give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. 4. And Ahab came into his houſe [d] heavy and diſpleaſed, becauſe of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had ſpoken to him: for he had ſaid, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers: and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

v. 1—4. Ahab now ſeemed to be quite at peace, and perhaps his late melancholy was blown over. But there is no long peace to the wicked, freſh ſin will produce freſh torment.

1. Naboth's vineyard, which lay contiguous to his palace, caught his eye, and determined him, if poſſible, to engage Naboth to part with it by ſale, or for an equivalent in ſome other place. A deſire not in itſelf unlawful, though becoming ſo by his inordinate eagerneſs. *Note*, (1.) Lawful things inordinately coveted, become a ſnare to us. (2.) Contiguity to a great man's eſtate, hath expoſed many a poor man to oppreſſion.

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2. Naboth rejected the propoſal as ſinful, eſteeming it unlawful, except in caſe of extreme poverty; See *Lev.* xxv. 23—28. to part with his family inheritance, and fearing leaſt if it ever became crown land, it would not in the year of jubilee revert to his heirs; he rather therefore hazarded the offending the the king, than the wounding his conſcience; and perhaps his being one of the ſeven thouſand who refuſed to bow to Baal, made the denial more diſpleaſing. *Note*, (1.) When we muſt offend God or man, there can be no heſitation to determine which. (2.) They who are marked as *the godly*, muſt expect the world will owe them a grudge.

3. Ahab vaſtly reſented the refuſal, grew ſullen, and would not eat through vexation. *Note*, Proud, fretful, and diſcontented ſpirits are their own tormentors. As the world is too full of the ſame diſpoſitions to give them their way, they will ſeldom want daily cauſe for vexation.

5. ¶ But [e] Jezebel his wife came to him, and ſaid unto him, Why is thy ſpirit ſo ſad, that thou eateſt no bread? 6. And he ſaid unto her, Becauſe I ſpake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and ſaid unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or elſe if it pleaſe thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he anſwered, I will not give thee my vineyard. 7. And Jezebel his wife ſaid unto him, Doſt thou now [f] govern the kingdom of Iſrael? ariſe *and* eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. 8. So ſhe [g] wrote letters in Ahab's name, and ſealed *them* with his ſeal, and ſent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that *were* in his city dwelling with Naboth. 9. And ſhe wrote in the letters, ſaying, † Proclaim [h] a faſt, and ſet Naboth on high among the people: 10. And ſet two men, [i] ſons of Belial, before him, to bear witneſs againſt him, ſaying, Thou didſt ‡ blaſpheme God and the king: and *then* carry him out, and ſtone him [k] that he may die. 11. And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, [l] did as Jezebel had ſent unto them, *and* as it was written in the letters which ſhe had ſent unto them. 12. They proclaimed a faſt, and ſet Naboth on high among the people. 13. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and ſat before him: and the men of Belial [m] witneſſed againſt him, *even* againſt Naboth, in the preſence of the people, ſaying, Naboth did blaſpheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and [n] ſtoned him with ſtones, that he died. 14. Then they ſent to Jezebel, ſaying, [o] Naboth is ſtoned, and is dead. 15. ¶ And it came to paſs when Jezebel heard that Naboth was ſtoned, and was dead, that Jezebel ſaid to Ahab, Ariſe, take poſſeſſion of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refuſed to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. 16. And it came to paſs when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab roſe up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take poſſeſſion of it.

[e] Eccleſ. vii. 26.
[f] 1 Sam. viii. 14.
[g] Eſth. iii. 12.
† Or call an aſſembly.
[h] Iſa. lviii. 4. Math. ii. 8. Luke xx. 47. John xviii. 28.
[i] Deut. xiii. 13.
‡ Heb Bleſs, So ver. 13. Job i. 5.
[k] Prov. vi. 26.
[l] Lev. xix. 15. Deut. xxvii. 19.
[m] Deut. xix. 18, 19. Prov. xix. 9.
[n] Lev. xxiv. 16. Prov. i. 19.
[o] Eccleſ. viii. 15.

v. 5—16. The very name of Jezebel portends miſchief. A worſe engine the devil can never employ for craft or cruelty, than a wicked woman.

1. Obſerving Ahab ſullen, ſhe conjectured ſome diſappointment; and having enquired the cauſe, rallies him on his weakneſs; bids him uſe his prerogative, for who dare oppoſe the king? at leaſt, leave the matter to her, and ſhe will give him Naboth's vineyard. *Note*, If the heart be ſet on wickedneſs, the devil will furniſh the means.

2. Her project is truly diabolical. Not ſatisfied to gratify her covetouſneſs by depriving him of his eſtate, ſhe deſigns to gratify her revenge by ſhedding his blood; and this too, under the ſpecious appearances of religion and juſtice. She orders them to proclaim a ſolemn faſt, (though the words *proclaim a faſt* may alſo be rendered, *convene a court*) as if dreading ſome impending calamity on the city, becauſe of ſin committed in the midſt of them: let Naboth, according to his rank, have an high place in the congregation, and during the ſolemnity, let them ſuborn two witneſſes to appear and accuſe Naboth of blaſphemy and treaſon: hereupon, without farther enquiry, they ſhould hurry him forth and ſtone him, that his life might appear forfeited to God, and his eſtate to the king. Theſe orders, to give them authority, are ſealed with the king's ſeal; whether he knew their contents or not, is uncertain, and diſpatched in haſte to the magiſtrates and elders of Jezreel. *Note*, (1.) Perjury is among the moſt deadly ſins, and moſt dangerous to ſociety; no man's life or property are ſafe againſt a lying tongue.

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3. Deteſtable and infamous as the command was, which every Iſraelite with holy indignation ſhould have rejected with abhorrence, the nobles of Jezreel ſcruple not to pay a ſervile complaiſance; and perhaps Naboth's religious principles made them glad of ſuch an opportunity to deſtroy him. The faſt is proclaimed, the accuſation is laid, and Naboth is ſtoned; and his ſons alſo, either ſecretly or publicly, made away with. *See* 2 *Kings* ix. 26. whether to this their orders extended, or to gratify their own enmity, and remove every proſecutor of ſuch an unjuſt and cruel murder. *Note*, (1.) No innocence can protect a man from the power of oppreſſors. (2.) There is a day, when the blood of innocence, and the tears of the oppreſſed, will come into remembrance; and then woe to the murderer and the oppreſſor.

4. No ſooner are theſe glad tidings arrived, than Jezebel with joy acquaints the king of Naboth's death, and bids him take poſſeſſion; whilſt he, far from expreſſing the leaſt diſſatisfaction at the horrid plot, goes down to the vineyard, amidſt his courtiers and captains, *See* 2 *Kings* ix. 25. as if it had been the moſt lawful as well as moſt welcome acquiſition. *Note*, When ſin hath hardened the heart, men glory in their wickedneſs, and are loſt to ſhame.

17. ¶ And the word of the LORD came to Elijah
the Tiſhbite, ſaying, 18. Ariſe, go down to meet
Ahab king of Iſrael, which *is* in Samaria: behold, *he is*
in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to
poſſeſs it. 19. And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto him, ſaying,
[p] 2 Sam. xii. Thus ſaith the LORD, [p] Haſt thou killed, and alſo taken
9. poſſeſſion? And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto him, ſaying,
[q] Chap. xxii. Thus ſaith the LORD, [q] In the place where dogs licked the
38. 2 Kings blood of Naboth, ſhall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.
ix. 25. Pſ. ix. 12. 20. And Ahab ſaid to Elijah, Haſt thou found me, [r] O
[r] Chap. xxii. mine enemy? And he anſwered, I have found *thee*:
8. Amos v. [s] becauſe thou haſt ſold thyſelf to work evil in the ſight
10. Gal. iv. 26. of the LORD. 21. Behold, [t] I will bring evil upon
[s] 2 Kings xvii. 17. thee, and will take away thy poſterity, and will cut off
[t] Chap. xiv. from Ahab him that piſſeth againſt the wall, and him
10. 2 Kings ix. 8. that is ſhut up, and left in Iſrael. 22. And will make
[u] Chap. xv. 29. thine houſe like the houſe of [u] Jeroboam, the ſon of Nebat,
[x] Chap. xvi. and like the houſe of [x] Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah, for
3, 11. the provocation wherewith thou haſt provoked *me* to
anger, and made Iſrael to ſin. 23. And of Jezebel
[y] 2 Kings ix. 36. alſo ſpake the LORD, ſaying, [y] The dogs ſhall eat Jezebel
† Or, ditch. by the † wall of Jezreel. 24. Him that dieth of
[z] Chap. xiv. Ahab in the city, [z] the dogs ſhall eat: and him that dieth
11. & xvi. 4. in the field, ſhall the fowls of the air eat. 25. ¶ But [a] there
[a] Chap. xvi. 33. was none like unto Ahab, which did ſell himſelf to work
[b] Gen. vi. wickedneſs in the ſight of the LORD, whom [b] Jezebel
2, 5. 2 Cor. vi. 14. his wife ſtirred up. 26. And he did very abominably
in following idols, according to all *things* as did the
Amorites, whom the LORD caſt out before the children
of Iſrael. 27. And it came to paſs when Ahab
[c] Acts xxiv. heard thoſe words, that [c] he rent his cloaths, and put ſackcloth
25. 2 Cor. vii. 10. upon his fleſh, and faſted, and lay in ſackcloth,
and went ſoftly. 28. And the word of the LORD
came to Elijah the Tiſhbite, ſaying, 29. Seeſt thou how
[d] Pſ. lxxviii. 34—38. [d] Ahab humbleth himſelf before me? becauſe he humbleth
himſelf before me, I will not bring the evil in his
[e] 2 Kings ix. 24. days: *but* [e] in his ſons days will I bring the evil upon
his houſe.

v. 17—29. Ahab had now filled up the meaſure of his iniquities. Worſe than all his predeceſſors in wickedneſs, and more infamous in his idolatries, he had willingly ſold himſelf to commit every abomination: nor is it any exculpation of his guilt, that Jezebel ſtirred him up, whom he ſhould have reſtrained, rather than have obeyed.

1. Elijah, at God's command, met him in Naboth's vineyard, and his unwelcome preſence marred the maſter's joy. Ahab's guilty conſcience told him the prophet's coming boded no good, and therefore he accoſts him with his former unhumbled pride, as the enemy of his repoſe; yet expreſſing a dread, which majeſtic goodneſs impreſſed even on ſuch a hardened heart, *v.* 20. *Note*, (1.) The miniſters of God, who cannot bear to ſee ſinners periſhing in their iniquities without warning, are therefore often counted by them as their worſt enemies. (2.) The very preſence of a godly man ſtrikes an awe upon ſinners, and they ſhun them as the ghoſt which haunts their conſcience, and as the fiend come to torment them before their time.

2. Elijah denounces on him his deſerved doom: *I have found thee*, and am come from God to paſs ſentence on thee, *v.* 20. He charges him with Naboth's murder, and his unjuſt ſeizure of his inheritance, *v.* 19. and, with a terrible commination of approaching judgments, thunders God's wrath againſt him. His wicked houſe ſhall be utterly cut off, as the houſes of Jeroboam and Baaſha, whoſe uncommon wickedneſs he had exceeded: his accurſed wife ſhall be eaten of dogs, ſo low her pride ſhall fall; and in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, (awful and juſt retaliation!) dogs, ſaith he, ſhall lick thy blood, even thine; which was fulfilled in part, *chap.* xxii. 38. and more fully, 2 *Kings* ix. 26. *Note*, (1.) Let no ſinner think to be hid; ſooner or later, terrors like an armed man ſhall ſeize him; and woe then to the ſoul, that flying now from his convictions, treaſures up wrath againſt the day of wrath. (2.) No ſubterfuges in the day of judgment will be able to evade conviction. The approver, as well as the perpetrator, ſtand equally guilty before that God who ſearcheth the heart. (3.) God's juſtice in this world ſometimes appears moſt exemplary in ſuiting the ſinner's puniſhment to his crime.

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3. Shocked at the meſſage, his ſtubborn heart for a moment trembled, and driven to his knees in terror, with ſackcloth on his loins, he wore the garb of penitence, though his unhumbled heart continued as diſtant as ever from that godly ſorrow that worketh repentance unto ſalvation never to be repented of. Yet even thus God is pleaſed to grant him a ſhort reprieve, *ver.* 29. *Note*, (1.) Partial profeſſions of penitence legal terrors often produce; but a ſenſe of pardoning love can only convert the heart. (2.) Hypocrites in outward form and expreſſions of ſorrow cannot by us oftentimes be diſtinguiſhed from real penitents; but God trieth the heart. (3.) If even a hypocrite's tears obtained a reſpite, ſhall not the tears of real penitence be much more remembered of God, and the pardon bought with the blood of Jeſus be ſealed to every ſoul who truly turns to him?

CHAP. XXII.

Ahab's reſpite was ſhort, his ruin ſure, which now in this chapter is accompliſhed. 1. *He prepares for a war againſt Syria*, ver. 1—4. 2. *At Jehoſhaphat's deſire he conſults his prophets, who promiſe him ſucceſs*, ver. 5—12. 3. *Micaiah, a true prophet, foretels his fall at Ramoth-gilead*, ver. 13—18. *And ſhews how he came to be impoſed upon by his prophets*, ver. 19—23. *For which he is abuſed by Zedekiah*, ver. 24, 25. *and impriſoned by Ahab*, ver. 26—28. 4. *In the battle Jehoſhaphat is in danger, and Ahab ſlain*, ver. 29—40. 5. *A ſhort account is given*, 1. *Of Jehoſhaphat's good reign*, ver. 41—50. 2. *Of Ahaziah's wicked reign*, ver. 51—53.

1. AND [a] they continued three years without war [a] Chap. xix.
between Syria and Iſrael. 2. And it came to 34.
paſs in the third year, that Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah 897.
came down to the king of Iſrael, 3. (And the king
of Iſrael ſaid unto his ſervants, Know ye [b] that Ramoth [b] Joſh. xx.
in Gilead *is* ours, and we *be* ſtill, *and* take it not out of 8.
the hand of the king of Syria?) 4. And he ſaid unto
Jehoſhaphat, [c] Wilt thou go with me to battle, to Ramoth-gilead? [c] 2 Chron.
And Jehoſhaphat ſaid to the king of Iſrael, xviii. 3, &c.
[d] I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, my [d] 2 Kings iii.
horſes as thy horſes. 5. And Jehoſhaphat ſaid unto the 7. Prov. xiii. 20. Eph. v.
king of Iſrael, [e] Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the 11.
LORD to-day. 6. Then the king of Iſrael [f] gathered [e] Judg. i. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii.
the prophets together, about four hundred men, 2.
and ſaid unto them, Shall I go againſt Ramoth-gilead to [f] Chap.
battle, or ſhall I forbear? And they ſaid, Go up; for xviii. 19.
[g] the LORD ſhall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. [g] Ezek. xiii.
7. And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, [h] *Is there* not here a prophet of 7. [h] 2 Kings
the LORD beſides, that we might enquire of him? iii. 11.
8. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, *There
is* yet one man, (Micaiah the ſon of Imlah) by whom
we may enquire of the LORD; but [i] I hate him, for [i] Chap. xx.
[k] he doth not propheſy good concerning me, but evil. 43. & xxi. 20. Gal. iv.
And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Let not the king ſay ſo. 9. Then 16. 2 Tim.
the king of Iſrael called an officer, and ſaid, Haſten iv. 3. [k] Chap. xx.
hither Micaiah the ſon of Imlah. 10. And the king of 42.
Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, ſat each on
his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in
the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and [l] all the prophets [l] Chap. xviii.
propheſied before them. 11. And Zedekiah the ſon of 29.
Chenaanah [m] made him horns of iron: and he ſaid, Thus [m] Jer. xxvii.
ſaith the LORD, with theſe ſhalt thou puſh the Syrians, 2.
until thou have conſumed them. 12. And all the
prophets propheſied ſo, ſaying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead,
and [n] proſper: for the LORD ſhall deliver *it* into the [n] Ver. 32—
king's hand. 13. And the meſſenger that was gone to 36.
call Micaiah, ſpake unto him, ſaying, Behold now, the
words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king [o] with [o] Hoſ. vii. 3.
one

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one mouth : let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and ſpeak *that which is* good. 14. And Micaiah ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, [p] what the LORD ſaith unto me, that will I ſpeak.

[p] 1 Cor. xi. 23.

v. 1—14. Three years of peace, like the calm which uſhers in the ſtorm, bring Ahab's reſpite to an end, and haſten on the fatal day.

1. Ramoth-gilead was now in the hands of the Syrians, which Ahab reſolves, with the aſſiſtance of his ally Jehoſhaphat, to reſcue from them ; repenting either his former lenity to Benhadad, or provoked at his perfidy, if we interpret the words, *Chap.* xx. 34. of a promiſe to reſtore the cities of Iſrael, which he afterwards refuſed to perform. *Note*, (1.) When by our neglect we loſe the opportunity God gives us, afterwards we ſtruggle but in vain to recover it. (2.) Treaties are ſlender bands to hold perfidious princes.

2. Ahab aſks, and Jehoſhaphat conſents, to accompany him in the expedition. He had made peace with Ahab, had confirmed it by marrying his ſon to Ahab's daughter, and now he has not the heart to deny him, though it brought him into a very dangerous and unſucceſsful quarrel. *Note*, The wicked are too worldly wiſe for God's children, and connections with them uſually end in their loſs and damage.

3. Though Jehoſhaphat conſents to go, he is firſt for aſking counſel of God : whereupon Ahab, who never thought of conſulting God in the matter, ſends for his court prophets, whoſe complaiſance he pretty well knew, to adviſe with. Very unanimous are their declarations ; Go, and proſper, is all the cry : nay, one of them, as imitating the ſigns of a real prophet, with horns of iron, emblems of majeſty and ſtrength, predicts ſuch ſhall be their power and ſucceſs, that the Syrians ſhall be utterly deſtroyed ; and, to engage Jehoſhaphat's credit, prefaces his declaration with the name not of Baal but Jehovah. *Note*, (1.) The falſe prophets in every age are a numerous body, and with the vaunt of God's name in their mouth, more fatally lie in wait to deceive. (2.) Unity and multitude are neither proofs of a true church, nor a good cauſe : the faithful were ever few.

4. Jehoſhaphat is little ſatisfied with theſe pretenders ; and, though unwilling to affront Ahab by ſuggeſting his real ſentiments, aſks if there was no other prophet of the Lord beſides theſe, to conſult with. Ahab mentions one more, Micaiah, a prophet indeed of God ; but he hated him for his ill-boding tongue, never propheſying good concerning him ; and it ſeems he was now in priſon, *See ver.* 26. probably for the meſſage delivered, *chap.* xx. 38. Jehoſhaphat gently reproves the wicked king, who merited a more ſevere rebuke ; and Ahab, not to diſoblige his ally, conſents Micaiah ſhall be brought, whilſt they, ſeated on thrones in their royal robes, ſurrounded with their courtiers and prophets, waited his arrival. *Note*, (1.) We muſt not believe every ſpirit, but try the ſpirits whether they are of God, and falſe prophets afford no difficult detection. (2.) They who do ill, muſt not expect to hear from God's prophets viſions of peace. (3.) There is no ſurer proof of a falſe teacher, than his propheſying ſmooth things, and ſuffering the careleſs and the hypocrite to ſleep in their ſins.

5. Ahab knew where Micaiah lay faſt bound, and therefore his officer ſoon finds him. By the way, he fails not to acquaint him with the unanimity of the other prophets, and to adviſe him to conform to them, as the king's pleaſure was well known, and his diſſent from them might bring him into ſtill greater trouble and ſuffering. But Micaiah with ſolemn indignation rejects ſuch puſillanimous and wretched counſel. He ſought not to pleaſe men ; he ſerved a greater maſter than theſe who ſat on tottering thrones ; and as he feared not their faces, whether it pleaſe or diſpleaſe, he muſt and will ſpeak as God commands. *Note*, (1.) No worldly fear or hope can intimidate the faithful miniſter : he will hazard the loſs of men's favour, rather than be falſe to their ſouls. (2.) When deluding teachers abound, we muſt be be ſingular, if we would be faithful.

15. ¶ So he came to the king, and the king ſaid unto him, Micaiah, ſhall we go againſt Ramoth-gilead to battle, or ſhall we forbear ? And he anſwered him, [q] Go, and proſper : for the LORD ſhall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. 16. And the king ſaid unto him, How many times ſhall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but *that which is* true in the name of the LORD ? 17. And he ſaid, [r] I ſaw all Iſrael ſcattered upon the hills, as ſheep that have not a ſhepherd : and the LORD ſaid, [s] Theſe have no maſter, let them return every man to his houſe in peace. 18. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would propheſy no good concerning me, but evil ? 19. And he ſaid, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD : [t] I ſaw the LORD ſitting on his throne, and all the hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him, on his right hand, and on his left. 20. And the LORD ſaid, Who ſhall † perſuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead ? And one ſaid on this manner, and another ſaid on that manner. 21. And there came forth [u] a ſpirit, and ſtood before the LORD, and ſaid, I will perſuade him. 22. And the LORD ſaid unto him, Wherewith ? And he ſaid, I will go forth, and [x] I will be a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he ſaid, Thou ſhalt perſuade him, and prevail alſo : go forth and do ſo. 23. Now therefore behold, [y] the LORD hath put a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all theſe thy prophets, and the LORD hath ſpoken evil concerning thee. 24. But Zedekiah the ſon of Chenaanah went near, and [z] ſmote Micaiah on the cheek, and ſaid, Which way went the ſpirit of the LORD from me to ſpeak unto thee ? 25. And Micaiah ſaid, Behold, thou ſhalt ſee in that day, when [a] thou ſhalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyſelf. 26. And the king of Iſrael ſaid, [b] Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Ammon the governor of the city, and to Joaſh the king's ſon : 27. And ſay, Thus ſaith the king, [c] Put this *fellow* in the priſon, and [d] feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. 28. And Micaiah ſaid, [e] If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not ſpoken by me. And he ſaid, [f] Hearken, O people, every one of you.

[q] Chap. xviii. 27. Eccleſ. xi. 9.
[r] Zech. xiii. 7.
[s] Jer. xxiii. 28.
[t] Job i. 6. Iſa. vi. 1. Dan. vii. 9. 10.

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† Or, deceive.
[u] Job i. 5.
[x] John viii. 44. 2 Theſ. ii. 11. 1 John iv. 1. Rev. xii. 11.
[y] Ezek. xiv. 9. Rom. i. 24.
[z] Jer. xx. 2. Mark xiv. 65.
[a] Chap. xx. 30. Num. xxxi. 8.
[b] Chap. xix. 10. Rev. ii. 10.
[c] 2 Chron. xxv. 16.
[d] Pſ. lxxx. 6.
[e] Deut. xviii. 22. Iſa. xliv. 26.
[f] Mic. i. 2.

v. 15—28. Micaiah now appears before the kings and courtiers, alone but not unſupported ; God was with him, therefore could he not be moved.

1. Ahab puts the ſame queſtion to him he had before put to his own prophets ; and Micaiah, who had heard their anſwer, and knew the king's mind, anſwered him in their very words, but with ſuch a tone and geſture, as evidently beſpoke contempt of his prophets, and the vanity of their prophecy. *Note*, It is folly, that deſerves to be ridiculed, to aſk advice of others, when you are determined to follow your own.

2. Ahab perceived the irony of his anſwer, and adjures him, without farther delay, to ſpeak his mind ; and this he doth freely and boldly. He ſaw the armies of Iſrael ſcattered on the hills near Ramoth-gilead, and their ſhepherd wanting ; intimating, that Ahab ſhould fall in the battle, and Iſrael be defeated. *Note*, Sinners cannot be too plainly warned of their danger.

3. Exaſperated at ſuch a declaration, which he interpreted only the prophet's malice and ill-will againſt him, he turns to the too credulous Jehoſhaphat, to divert him from attending to ſuch a prophecy. But Micaiah confirms his firſt viſion by a ſecond, wherein he deſcribes Ahab's determined ruin, and the means employed to deſtroy him, by a lying ſpirit in the mouth of his prophets, *v.* 19—23. We are not to ſuppoſe this a real conſultation, that God wanted means to accompliſh his deſigns, or was the author of a lie. No ; it is only deſigned to repreſent, after the manner of men, the fixed purpoſe of God reſpecting Ahab, and his juſt judgment in permitting the devil to deceive him. Since he will not hear God's truth, let him believe Satan's lie. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt kindneſs ſhewn in faithful rebuke to men's ſouls, is often perverſely miſinterpreted into ſelfiſh anger, or diſlike of their perſons. (2.) God ruleth over all : the greateſt are but worms of earth, and however men kick at it, his counſel muſt ſtand. (3.) No way doth the devil more fatally delude men's ſouls to their eternal ruin, than as a lying ſpirit in their mouths, who pretend a miſſion from God. (4.) God doth, without impeachment of his glory, permit Satan to tempt ſinners, and by withholding his grace from them, gives them up to be led captive by him at his will. (5.) The ſinner abandoned of God, ruſhes on his ruin, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle.

4. Zedekiah cannot bear ſuch an infamous reflection, and with inſolent effrontery, in the king's preſence, ſtrikes Micaiah over the face, and treats with contempt his prophecy, as if himſelf alone had the ſpirit, who could not contradict his own inſpirations, and therefore intimates, that Micaiah's was the lying ſpirit ; which abuſe Micaiah returns not with abuſe, but warning. His falſity ſhould be detected, when he ſhould fly to an inner chamber to hide himſelf, either through fear, if he went with Ahab, on ſeeing the battle go againſt them ; or, if he ſtayed at home, to eſcape the people incenſed at his falſe prophecy. *Note*, (1.) The bittereſt enemies of God's true prophets are the teachers of lies. Theſe, to ſupport their own credit with the people, ſeek, by every baſe ſuggeſtion and oppreſſion, to prevent the influence of the truth, leſt the ſhame of their nakedneſs ſhould appear. (2.) Confuſion will ſhortly cover the wicked, and thoſe who will not take God's warning, muſt feel his wrath.

5. Ahab ſeconds his prophet's abuſe, commits the innocent Micaiah to priſon, and bids him be hardly treated till his return in peace, which he ſpeaks of with confidence, then deſigning

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ſigning to execute him for a falſe prophet. Micaiah is very ready to reſt his life on this iſſue; and they part thus, never to meet again. *Note*, (1.) The career of perſecutors is often ſtopped ſhort. (2.) They have little reaſon to promiſe themſelves peace, who are declaring war againſt God in the perſon of his prophet.

29. So the king of Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-gilead. 30. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, [g] I will diſguiſe myſelf, and enter into the battle, but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Iſrael diſguiſed himſelf, and went into the battle. 31. But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, ſaying, Fight neither with ſmall nor great, ſave only with the king of Iſrael. 32. And it came to paſs, when the captains of the chariots ſaw Jehoſhaphat, that they ſaid, Surely it *is* the king of Iſrael. And [h] they turned aſide to fight againſt him: and Jehoſhaphat [i] cried out. 33. And it came to paſs, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it *was* not the king of Iſrael, that they turned back from purſuing him. 34. And a *certain* man drew a bow at a venture, and [k] ſmote the king of Iſrael between the † joints of the harneſs: wherefore he ſaid unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the hoſt, for I am ‡ wounded. 35. And the battle increaſed that day: and the king was ſtayed up in his chariot againſt the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midſt of the chariot. 36. And there went a proclamation throughout the hoſt, about the going down of the ſun, ſaying, [l] Every man to his city, and every man to his own country. 37. ¶ So the king died, and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria. 38. And *one* waſhed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and they waſhed his armour, [m] according unto the word of the LORD which he ſpake. 39. Now the reſt of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and [n] the ivory houſe which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 40. So Ahab ſlept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[g] Ver. 31. Pſ. xii. 2.

[h] Ver. 31. Prov. xiii. 20.

[i] Exod. xiv. 15. Chap. xvii, 20. 2 Chron. xviii. 31.

[k] Pſ. xxi. 8.

† Heb. Joints and the breaſt-plate.

‡ Or, ſick.

[l] Chap. xii. 16. & Ver. 37.

[m] Chap. xxi. 19.

[n] Amos iii. 15.

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v. 29—40. Not deterred by theſe comminations, Ahab reſolves to proceed; and Jehoſhaphat, either deluded by the multitude of the falſe prophets, or unable to reſiſt Ahab's importunity, and recede from his word, goes with him.

1. To diſappoint Micaiah's prophecy, and to dupe the too eaſy Jehoſhaphat, Ahab diſguiſes himſelf, or, for ſecurity, changed his royal robes for a coat of mail; and, whilſt he pretends to honour his brother and ally, leaves him the poſt of honour, but at the ſame time expoſed to the greateſt danger. *Note*, (1.) They who are guileleſs themſelves, are unſuſpicious of others. (2.) Wicked men, to compaſs their own ends, ſtick not to betray their beſt friend.

2. Jehoſhaphat now is expoſed to the moſt imminent peril. Benhadad had given charge to direct their chief attack wherever the king of Iſrael was poſted, and Jehoſhaphat in his royal robes is eaſily miſtaken for him, and ready to periſh. On his crying out, either for help, his troops reſcued him, or the Syrians perceived their miſtake, and left him; or perhaps this cry was the voice of prayer to God, who interpoſed to ſave him. *Note*, (1.) When we are out of the way of duty, we muſt not wonder we get into miſchief. (2.) They who cry out to God, will ever find him a very preſent help in trouble.

3. Ahab's diſguiſe affords him no protection. Though eſcaping the formed deſign on his perſon, God has a deeper plan, which muſt ſucceed. An arrow, drawn at a venture, but aimed by an unerring hand, and driven with reſiſtleſs force, pierced the armour of Ahab where only it was vulnerable, and death entered at the wound. *Note*, (1.) When our hour is come, there is no avoiding our deſtiny. (2.) Events to us purely accidental, are the effects of wiſdom, which never errs in the execution of decrees that cannot be diſappointed.

4. Though mortally wounded, Ahab kept the field, and whilſt his heart's blood flowed out into his chariot, continued to encourage his ſoldiers. But his ſtrength began to fail; the king of terrors now had ſeized him, and at evening he died. Hereupon, according to Micaiah's prophecy, a proclamation was immediately iſſued for every man to retire to his home. *Note*, It is in vain to ſtruggle againſt God's decree.

5. The fulfilment of the prophecy of Elijah is remarked, *v.* 38. When his bloody armour and chariot were waſhed, the dogs lapped the water mingled with blood. Thus ended the wicked reign of Ahab, whoſe greatneſs and buildings, particularly the ivory houſe he made, are recorded more at large in the annals of Iſrael's kings, which are periſhed. His crown, with his ſins, and the curſe entailed on him, deſcended to his ungodly ſon Ahaziah.

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41. ¶ And [o] Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Aſa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Iſrael. 42. Jehoſhaphat *was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 43. And he walked in all the way of Aſa his father, he turned not aſide from it, doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD: [p] nevertheleſs, the high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt incenſe yet in the high places. 44. And Jehoſhaphat [q] made peace with the king of Iſrael. 45. Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoſhaphat, and his might that he ſhewed, and how he warred, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 46. And [r] the remnant of the Sodomites which remained in the days of his father Aſa, he took out of the land. 47. [s] *There was* then no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king. 48. [t] Jehoſhaphat made ſhips of Tharſhiſh to go to Ophir for gold; but they went not; for the ſhips were broken at Ezion-geber. 49. Then ſaid Ahaziah the ſon of Ahab unto Jehoſhaphat, Let my ſervants go with thy ſervants in the ſhips: but Jehoſhaphat would not. 50. ¶ And Jehoſhaphat [u] ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his ſon reigned in his ſtead.* 51. ¶ Ahaziah the ſon of Ahab began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria the ſeventeenth year of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Iſrael. 52. And [x] he did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin. 53. For he ſerved Baal, and worſhipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Iſrael, according to all that his father had done.

[o] 2 Chron. xx. 31.

914.

[p] Lev. xxvi. 30. Chap. xv. 14.

[q] 2 Chron. xix. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 14.

[r] Chap. xv. 12.

[s] Gen. xxv. 23. 2 Sam. viii. 14. 2 Kings viii. 20.

[t] 2 Chron. xx. 35, 37.

[u] Chap. ii. 10.

889.

897.

[x] Chap. xv. 26.

v. 41—53. We have here,

1. The happy reign of Jehoſhaphat. During twenty-five years, he governed Judah in great proſperity, and ſtands among the moſt eminent of the race of David for piety, and fidelity in adhering to God's worſhip and ways. The exceptionable part of his character was his affinity with Ahab and Amaziah, for which he ſmarted, in the danger he was expoſed to by the one, and the unſucceſsful event of the partnerſhip in trade with the other, *v.* 48. Being warned by a prophet, he corrected this error, *v.* 49. The high places alſo were permitted to remain, thoſe at leaſt that had been in a ſort conſecrated by ancient uſe, and the ſacrifices of great and good men; though now, when the temple was erected, theſe were forbidden, and ſhould have been removed with the reſt, 2 *Chron.* xvii. 6. Edom yet continued tributary, which in the next reign revolted, *v.* 47. At laſt he paid the common tribute to nature, and left his flouriſhing kingdom to a ſon, who grievouſly degenerated from the piety of his anceſtors. *Note*, (1.) No character is found beneath the ſun perfectly ſpotleſs. *Optimus ille qui minimis urgetur.* (2.) It is a mercy when our croſſes lead us to amend our errors. (3.) The beſt parent cannot entail his piety with his eſtate.

2. Ahaziah, following the example of his abandoned predeceſſors, and given up to the guidance of his moſt infamous mother, Jezebel, begins his inauſpicious reign with wickedneſs, and quickly ends it in miſery. *Note*, Wicked parents contribute to the ruin of their children, body and ſoul.

The End of the Firſt Book of KINGS.

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* *Ver.* 50.] To reconcile the different accounts of the time of Jehoram's beginning to reign, we muſt, with Dr. Lightfoot, ſuppoſe, that he was thrice proclaimed king, twice in conjunction with his father, and the third time alone. 1. In the year before Chriſt 898, a little before his father's expedition to Ramoth-gilead, which accounts for 2 *Kings* i. 17. 2. In the year 891, two years before Jehoſhaphat's death, which explains 2 *Kings* viii. 16. 3. In the year 889, ſoon after his father's death.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the SECOND BOOK of
KINGS.

This ſecond book of Kings is a continuation of the former. That had an illuſtrious beginning in the glories of the kingdom of Iſrael, when it was entire; this has a melancholy concluſion, in the deſolations of the kingdoms of Iſrael firſt, and then of Judah, after they had been long broken into two; for a kingdom divided againſt itſelf cometh to deſtruction. But as Elijah's mighty works were very much the glory of the former book, ſo are Eliſha's the glory of this. Here is, 1. *Elijah fetching fire from heaven, and aſcending in fire to heaven,* chap. i, ii. 2. *Eliſha working many miracles, both for prince and people, Iſraelites and foreigners,* chap. iii--vii. 3. *Hazael and Jehu anointed, the former for the correction of Iſrael, the latter for the deſtruction of the houſe of Ahab, and the worſhip of Baal,* chap. viii--x. 4. *The reigns of ſeveral of the kings, both of Judah and Iſrael,* chap. xi--xvi. 5. *The captivity of the ten tribes,* chap. xvii. 6. *The good and glorious reign of Hezekiah,* chap. xviii--xx. 7. *Manaſſeh's wicked reign, and Joſiah's good one,* chap. xxi--xxiii. 8. *The deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the king of Babylon,* chap. xxiv, xxv. *This hiſtory, in the ſeveral paſſages of it, confirms that obſervation of Solomon's,* That righteouſneſs exalts a nation, but ſin is the reproach of any people.

Before Chriſt 896.

CHAP. I.

1. *Moab rebels againſt Ahaziah,* ver. 1. 2. *Ahaziah is mortally hurt by a fall,* ver. 2. 3. *The meſſengers ſent to enquire of Baal, are ſent back with an anſwer from Elijah,* ver. 2—8. 4. *The repeated deſtruction of the meſſengers ſent to ſeize the prophet,* ver. 9—12. 5. *His compliance with the third meſſenger upon his ſubmiſſion, and the delivery of this meſſage to the king himſelf,* ver. 13—16. 6. *The death of Ahaziah,* ver. 17, 18.

1. THEN [a] Moab rebelled againſt Iſrael, after the death of Ahab. 2. And Ahaziah fell down through a latteſs in his upper chamber that *was* in Samaria, and was ſick: And he ſent meſſengers, and ſaid unto them, Go, enquire of † Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, whether I ſhall recover of this diſeaſe. 3. But the angel of the LORD ſaid to Elijah the Tiſhbite, Ariſe, go up to meet the meſſengers of the king of Samaria, and ſay unto them, *Is it* not becauſe *there is* not a God in Iſrael, *that* ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? 4. Now therefore thus ſaith the LORD, Thou ſhalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die. And Elijah departed. 5. ¶ And when the meſſengers turned back unto him, he ſaid unto them, Why are ye now turned back? 6. And they ſaid unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and ſaid unto us, Go turn again unto the king that ſent you, and ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, *Is it* not becauſe *there is* not a God in Iſrael, *that* thou ſendeſt to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou ſhalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die. 7. And he ſaid unto them, What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and told you theſe words? 8. And they anſwered him, [b] *He was* an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he ſaid, It *is* Elijah the Tiſhbite.

[a] Chap. iii. 5.

† i. e. The maſter fly.

Before Chriſt 896.

[b] Mat. iii. 4.

v. 1—8. Iſrael's declenſion begins with this book in the rebellion of Moab, to which Ahaziah's wickedneſs and weakneſs tempted them. And this was followed with a ſtroke that more nearly affected him: *he fell down through a latteſs*; either thro' a window on the top of his houſe, or perhaps the rails which ſurrounded it, and received a blow, which in its effects proved mortal. *Note*, Wherever we are, we are in danger: death often takes his ſtand, where we leaſt expected to meet him.

1. In his illneſs, more ſollicitous to know whether he ſhould recover or not, than careful to prepare for all events by a timely repentance, he fooliſhly and wickedly ſends to enquire of the Philiſtine idol at Ekron, Baalzebub, the *maſter-fly*, ſo called perhaps from ſome deliverance of the country from ſwarms of flies with which they were infeſted, which they imputed to him. *Note*, (1.) It is a vain curioſity to enquire when we ſhall die; but our wiſdom, to be always ready. (2.) If once we offer worſhip to any object below the glorious, ſelf-exiſtent Jehovah, a fly is as worthy a god as any other ſubordinate created being. The difference is inconſiderable between an Arian and an Ekronite.

2. Elijah, at God's command, meets and anſwers the meſſengers. With indignation at the contempt ſhewn to Iſrael's

God, *v.* 3. he bids them return; and reads Ahaziah's certain doom, *v.* 4. *Note,* (1.) They who will not ſeek to God for mercy, may expect to hear from him in judgment. (2.) Neglect of God, or ſetting the affections on any thing on earth more than on him, is practical atheiſm.

3. The meſſage being delivered, Ahaziah ſuſpects the author, and enquiring about him, concludes from their deſcription, *v.* 8. that it is Elijah.

9. Then the king [c] ſent unto him a captain of fifty, with his fifty: and he went up to him (and behold, he ſat on the top of an hill) and he ſpake unto him, Thou [d] man of God, the king hath ſaid, Come down. 10. And Elijah anſwered and ſaid to the captain of fifty, If I *be* a man of God, [e] then let fire come down from heaven, and conſume thee and thy fifty. And [f] there came down fire from heaven, and conſumed him and his fifty. 11. [g] Again alſo he ſent unto him another captain of fifty, with his fifty: and he anſwered and ſaid unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king ſaid, Come down quickly. 12. And Elijah anſwered and ſaid unto them, If I *be* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and conſume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and conſumed him and his fifty. 13. ¶ [h] And he ſent again a captain of the third fifty, with his fifty: and the third captain of fifty went up, and came and [i] fell on his knees before Elijah, and beſought him, and ſaid unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, [k] let my life, and the life of theſe fifty thy ſervants, be precious in thy ſight. 14. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties, with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy ſight. 15. And the angel of the LORD ſaid unto Elijah, Go down with him, be not afraid of him. And he aroſe, and went down with him unto the king. 16. And he ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, Foraſmuch as thou haſt ſent meſſengers to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron (*is it* not becauſe *there is* no God in Iſrael to enquire of his word?) therefore thou ſhalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die. 17. ¶ So he died, according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had ſpoken: and [l] Jehoram reigned in his ſtead, in the ſecond year of † Jehoram the ſon of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah; becauſe he had no ſon. 18. Now the reſt of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?

[c] 1 Kings xix. 2. Mat. xiv. 8.
[d] Mat. xxvii. 29.
[e] 1 Chron. xvi. 22. Luke ix. 54, 55. Rev. xi. 5.
[f] 1 Cor. x. 6.
[g] Iſa. xxvi. 11.
[h] Jer. v. 3.
[i] Acts x, 25.
[k] Pſ. lxxii. 14.
[l] Chap. iii. 1.
† i. e. Of his firſt reign in concert with his father. See note on 1 Kings xxii. 50.

v. 9—18. Enraged at the meſſage, Ahaziah reſolves to wreak his vengeance on the prophet. Rebukes only exaſperate hardened ſinners.

1. He ſends a captain and fifty men to ſeize him, who being come to Carmel, where Elijah was, bids him with authority come down, and intimates, that though he called himſelf *a man of God*, that would not be his protection. Elijah, in zeal for God's glory, and to vindicate his miſſion, terribly convinces him of the truth of that character he deſpiſed. He looked to God, and inſtantly a blaſt of lightning ſlew the captain and his band. *Note,* (1.) They who touch God's prophets to hurt them, touch the apple of his eye. (2.) Mockers of God's people are little aware of the fire they are kindling.

2. With hardened inſolence Ahaziah renews the attempt, and finds a captain ſo madly daring as to obey his orders, and command the man of God to inſtant ſubmiſſion. But the ſame judgment overtakes him and his men, and their dead corpſes lie monuments of divine vengeance.

3. With determined obſtinacy, a third time the furious king ſends an armed band; but their captain juſtly trembling at the judgment he beheld, attempts not by force, but by entreaty, to prevail. On his bended knees he falls before the man of God, and, inſtead of ſeizing him as his priſoner, begs for his life, and the life of his attendants. *Note,* (1.) It is the height of madneſs to harden the heart againſt God's terrors. (2.) Others ſufferings ſhould be our warnings. (3.) The way to prevail with God, is humbly to bow before him.

4. Elijah, at God's command, not only ſpares his life, but accompanies him to the king, and, with a dignity and authority that confounded his perſecutors, repeats the meſſage he had ſent in the ears of the king. *Note,* God can reſtrain the wrath of man, and, when moſt expoſed, keep us, that not a hair of our head ſhall fall to the ground.

5. The event quickly verified the prediction: he died childleſs, after a ſhort reign of leſs than two years, and is ſucceeded by Jehoram, his brother in iniquity as in blood, in whom ended the wicked houſe of Ahab.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter, 1. *Elijah is tranſlated, after taking leave of his friends, and his miraculous paſſage over Jordan with Eliſha,* ver. 1—12. 2. *Eliſha appears as a prophet in his room, and divides Jordan,* ver. 13, 14. 3. *The ſons of the prophets acknowledge him ſuch,* ver. 15—18. 4. *He heals the unwholſome waters of Jericho,* ver. 19—22. 5. *He deſtroys the children of Bethel that mocked him,* ver. 23—25.

1. AND it came to paſs, when [a] the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Eliſha from Gilgal. 2. And Elijah ſaid unto Eliſha, [b] Tarry here, I pray thee: for the LORD hath ſent me to Beth-el. And Eliſha ſaid *unto him,* [c] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. 3. And the ſons of the prophets that *were* at Beth-el, came forth to Eliſha, and ſaid unto him, Knoweſt thou that the LORD will take away thy maſter from thy head to-day? And he ſaid, Yea, I know *it*, hold you your peace. 4. And Elijah ſaid unto him, Eliſha, tarry here, I pray thee: for the LORD hath ſent me to Jericho. And he ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. 5. And the ſons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho, came to Eliſha, and ſaid unto him, Knoweſt thou that the LORD will take away thy maſter from thy head to-day? And he anſwered, Yea, I know *it*, hold you your peace. 6. And Elijah ſaid unto him, [d] Tarry, I pray thee, here: for the LORD hath ſent me to Jordan. And he ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. 7. And fifty men of the ſons of the prophets went, and ſtood to view afar off: and they two ſtood by Jordan. 8. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapt *it* together, and [e] ſmote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, ſo that they two [f] went over on dry ground.

[a] Gen. v. 24.
[b] Luke xxiv. 28.
[c] 1 Sam. xxv. 26. Chap. iv. 30.
[d] Ruth i 15.
[e] Exod. xiv. 21.
[f] Joſh. iii. 17.

v. 1—8. Elijah's bright ſun is now about to ſet, or rather to riſe brighter in another world of glory.

1. God gives him notice of his intended removal, not in the ordinary courſe of nature, but by a change ſudden and glorious, that, without the pangs of death, would prepare him for his abode in that world where fleſh and blood cannot enter. *Note,* Though we may not expect Elijah's tranſlation, yet, if like him, whilſt on earth, we maintain our converſation in heaven, our paſſage thither will be as ſafe and ſure through the grave, as if we were caught up thither in the whirlwind.

2. Before he is taken away, he goes to take a farewel of the ſchool of the prophets at Beth-el, the hopes of the riſing generation; and, to try Eliſha's affection and adherence to him, propoſes to him to ſtay at Gilgal; but he reſolves never to forſake him. He knew the time was ſhort he could enjoy his company, and therefore deſired to improve every moment that remained by his holy converſation, and receive at leaſt his parting benediction. *Note,* (1.) The riſing generation is the great concern of the departing prophets, and their laſt breath they would gladly employ in encouraging, by their experience and dying teſtimony, their younger brethren to follow thoſe happy paths that lead to life and never-ending glory. (2.) We ſhould make the moſt of the converſation of thoſe men of God, that now for a moment we enjoy; leſt, when they are taken from us, we ſhould have to lament not only their loſs, but our own negligence in not profiting by them as we might have done.

3. From Beth-el Elijah paſſes to Jericho on the ſame errand. In both places his intended tranſlation is known, either by revelation, or ſome intimation given by himſelf. The ſons of the prophets acquaint Eliſha with it; he is no ſtranger to it, and bids them be ſilent; for now his thoughts were too engaged to enter on any diſcourſe, or this mournful theme was grievous to him. Elijah there renews his requeſt that he would ſtay; but nothing can divert him from his attendance. *Note,* A perſevering attachment to the Prince of the prophets will be crowned at laſt.

4. Onward they paſs to Jordan, whilſt fifty of the ſons of the prophets ſtood afar off to wait the iſſue; and Elijah's mantle, like the rod of Moſes, there opens them a paſſage through the waters. *Note,* (1.) It is very deſirable to ſee the laſt of dying Chriſtians. (2.) Through the waters of death the redeemed will find a ſafe paſſage, whilſt the wicked will be hurried down the ſtream, into the gulph of eternal perdition.

9. ¶ And it came to paſs when they were gone over, that Elijah ſaid unto Eliſha, Aſk what I ſhall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Eliſha ſaid, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy ſpirit be upon me. 10. And he ſaid, Thou haſt aſked a hard thing: *neverthele∫s*, if thou [g] ſee me *when I am* taken from thee, it ſhall be ſo unto thee; but if not, it ſhall not be *ſo*. 11. And it came to paſs as they ſtill went on and talked, that behold *there appeared* [h] a chariot of fire, and horſes of fire, and parted them both aſunder, and [i] Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12. ¶ And Eliſha ſaw *it*, and he cried, [k] My father, my father, the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof! And he ſaw him no more: And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

[g] Acts i. 10.
[h] Chap. vi. 17. Pſ. civ. 4. Heb. i. 14.
[i] Ecclus xlviii. 9. 1 Mac. ii. 58.
[k] Chap. xiii. 14.

v. 9—12. We have here,

1. Eliſha's parting requeſt to Elijah, in anſwer to his enquiry, what he ſhould do for him. He begs a double portion of his ſpirit, either twice as much as he himſelf poſſeſſed, or double what any other of the ſons of the prophets were favoured with. A hard requeſt, and much above human power to grant; but if he beheld him when caught up, Elijah bids him regard that as an aſſurance, that his requeſt was anſwered, and God would put a double portion of his ſpirit upon him. *Note*, (1.) They who are engaged in the work of the miniſtry, need beg eſpecial ſupplies of the Spirit, to enable them for their arduous taſk. (2.) We may confidently expect, that God will prepare us for the work he hath aſſigned us; and as our day is, ſo ſhall our ſtrength be. (3.) They who attend the beds of God's departing ſaints, may hope to catch a portion of their ſpirit, to be ſtrengthened by their faith, and comforted by their conſolations.

2. Suddenly, as they talked, a fiery chariot appears, and horſes of fire, probably ſome of the cherubic hoſts, employed by God in this miniſtry; and, in a moment, a whirlwind catches up Elijah into the chariot, and mounting through the ſkies, he drops his mantle and mortality together; and being changed in the twinkling of an eye, he is cloathed upon with a glorious body, fit for the place whither he is aſcending. *Note*, The ſame bright miniſters of flame, that thus caught up the favoured prophet, with like aſſiduous care attend the departing ſpirits of all the faithful, and tranſport them ſafe to the Paradiſe of God.

3. Parted from his deareſt friend, Eliſha with piercing eyes follows him to the ſkies, lamenting his own and the people's loſs. He rends his garments, and mourns over Iſrael, as if their hope and ſtrength was fled, *v.* 12. *Note*, (1.) A faithful miniſter departed, is a great loſs to the Iſrael of God. (2.) They are our fathers in the beſt ſenſe, who have begotten us in the goſpel of Chriſt. (3.) Death will ſeparate deareſt friends. (4.) When we have loſt our brethren in Jeſus, it ſhould quicken our eagerneſs to ſecure a portion with them, that we may meet again, never to part, in the eternal world.

13. He took up alſo the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and ſtood by the bank of Jordan; 14. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and [l] ſmote the waters, and ſaid, Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah? and when he alſo had ſmitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Eliſha went over. 15. And when the ſons of the prophets which *were* to view at Jericho, ſaw him, they ſaid, The ſpirit of Elijah doth reſt on Eliſha. And they came to meet him, and [m] bowed themſelves to the ground before him: 16. ¶ And they ſaid unto him, Behold now, there be with thy ſervants fifty † ſtrong men, let them go, we pray thee, and ſeek thy maſter: leſt peradventure [n] the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and caſt him upon ſome mountain, or into ſome valley. And he ſaid, Ye ſhall not ſend. 17. And when they urged him till he was aſhamed, he ſaid, Send. They ſent therefore fifty men; and they ſought three days, but found him not. 18. And when they came again to him (for he tarried at Jericho) he ſaid unto them, Did not I ſay unto you, Go not?

[l] Ver. 8.
[m] Chap. iv. 37.
† Heb. Sons of ſtrength.
[n] 1 Kings xviii. 12. Ezek. viii. 3. Acts viii. 39.

v. 13—18. Elijah is gone, but Eliſha remains. When God removes one light from his church, he can raiſe up another to ſupply his place.

1. Eliſha with delight gathers up the mantle which fell from his departed father: he loved it ſince the day it was firſt caſt over him, and not only for his ſake preſerved it, but as the earneſt of his petition being granted, received it with deepeſt thankfulneſs, and wore it as ſucceſſor in office to the great prophet, who had left it behind him. *Note*, (1.) That token given us by our departed friends, which ſtirs us up to imitate their virtues, is truly valuable. (2.) They who wear the livery of a prophet, ſhould read in their very cloaths the obligations lying on them to diſcharge with diligence their weighty office.

2. Cloathed now with Elijah's ſpirit, as well as mantle, he returns to the waters of Jordan, and there in faith invoking the Lord God of Elijah, ſmites the waters, and they divide. Where is he? he cries; *Aph-hu* follows in the original. Here he is, *even he*, as immediately anſwering to the call. *Note*, (1.) Even whilſt the prayer of faith is uttering, God will anſwer. (2.) They who walk in Elijah's ſpirit, will find with them the preſence and power of Elijah's God.

3. The ſons of the prophets, who beheld the miracle, received with deep reſpect the returning prophet, as Elijah's appointed ſucceſſor. *Note*, It is not material, whence a man came, or what hath been his education; if God endues him with eminent gifts, and eminent graces, even the ſons of prophets need think it no diſhonour to bow before him.

4. They requeſt Eliſha to make ſearch after Elijah, ſuggeſting he might be only caught away for a time; or, if his ſpirit was gone, that his body might be dropped unburied. Eliſha diſſuades them from the fruitleſs taſk, but their importunity extorts a reluctant permiſſion, leſt he ſhould ſeem not reſpectful to his maſter, or unwilling to reſign to him his office. At their return he gently reproves their folly, as a memorial to them afterwards to be more obſervant of his advice. *Note*, For others ſatisfaction, it is kind and charitable to yield ſometimes, even to what we know to be fruitleſs.

19. ¶ And the men of the city ſaid unto Eliſha, Behold, I pray thee, the ſituation of this city *is* pleaſant, as my lord ſeeth: but the water *is* nought, and the ground barren. 20. And he ſaid, Bring me a new cruſe, and put ſalt therein. And they brought *it* to him. 21. And he went forth unto the ſpring of the waters, and [o] caſt the ſalt in there, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, I have healed theſe waters; [p] there ſhall not be from thence any more death, or barren *land*. 22. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the ſaying of Eliſha which he ſpake. 23. ¶ And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth [q] little children out of the city, and [r] mocked him, and ſaid unto him, Go up, thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head. 24. And he turned back and looked on them, and [s] curſed them in the name of the LORD: and there came forth two ſhe-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. 25. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

[o] Exod. xv. 25. Chap. iv. 41. Mark ix. 50.
[p] Eccleſ. iii. 14.
[q] Prov. xxii. 15. Jer. vii. 18.
[r] Gen. xxi. 9. Gal. iv. 29. Heb. xi. 56.
[s] Pſ. lix. 13.

v. 19—25. Eliſha, being returned in the ſpirit of Elijah, multiplied miracles to confirm his divine miſſion.

1. At the requeſt of the men of Jericho, he heals their waters. They were bitter, unwholſome, and made the ſoil barren. It was either ſo in general, or perhaps the caſe of a particular ſpot only, near the ſchool of the prophets. He calls for ſome ſalt and a new cruſe; not that there was any virtue in theſe, more than in the clay which our Lord put on the eyes of the blind, but to prove their obedience. With theſe he goes to the fountain-head, caſts in the ſalt, and in the name of the Lord commands the cure, which is inſtant as his word. *Note*, (1.) Opportunity muſt not be loſt; whilſt we have a prophet among us, let us employ him. (2.) Few people think how ill they could ſpare the moſt common neceſſaries: we could much better want every other liquor, than be without wholſome water. (3.) Nothing but the ſalt of divine grace can ſweeten the bitterneſs, or heal the barrenneſs, of the corrupted heart. (4.) It is every prophet's labour to caſt in this ſalt, and that not merely into the ſtreams, for preſent reformation, but into the ſpring, in order to abiding converſion. (5.) Though the prophet ſpeaks, it is God alone that works. (6.) They who have taſted of God's healing grace, will make it manifeſt in the fruitfulneſs of their lives.

2. Another miracle of a different kind marked his return to Carmel. As he paſſed through Beth-el, where another ſchool of prophets lay, ſome children, *Nearim*, young perſons, mocked him. The idol calf had there the general ſway, and they hated thoſe who were jealous to rebuke their ſins. They cried in deriſion, Go up, follow your maſter, and let us be rid of you both; and becauſe his head was bald, derided the deformity. With a look of indignation he turned upon them, not in anger for the perſonal affront, but in holy diſpleaſure at their contempt and diſhonour of God, and by a divine impulſe from him, denounced upon them the curſe they had provoked; the executioners of which are near, two bears ruſhing from a neighbouring wood, tore to pieces forty-two of theſe inſolent mockers, and changed their ſhouts into dying groans. *Note*, (1.) It is no new thing for prophets to be abuſed, even in the ſtreets, and the children taught of their ungodly parents

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to point at and hoot them. (2.) It is a high reflection upon God, to reproach any man with his natural defects or infirmities. (3.) Wicked children ſhould read and tremble at this judgment.

3. Having viſited Carmel, Elijah's late reſidence, and where might be another ſchool of prophets, he went to Samaria, the metropolis, to teſtify againſt their idolatry, where it was moſt confirmed under the royal ſanction. *Note*, Where iniquity moſt reigns, and the largeſt field is open to labour for God, there is the zealous prophet's call.

CHAP. III.

Here is, 1. *The character of Jehoram king of Iſrael*, ver. 1—3. 2. *His war with Moab*, ver. 4—8. 3. *He and his allies reduced to great diſtreſs, conſult Eliſha, who promiſes them relief*, ver. 9—19. 4. *The glorious iſſue of this campaign*, ver. 20—25. 5. *The barbarous method the king of Moab took to oblige them to retire*, ver. 26, 27.

896. 1. NOW Jehoram the ſon of Ahab began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, the eighteenth year of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. 2. And he wrought evil in the ſight of the LORD, [a] but not like his father, and [b] like his mother; for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. 3. Nevertheleſs, [c] he cleaved unto the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, which made Iſrael to ſin; he departed not therefrom. 4. ¶ And Meſha king of Moab was a ſheep-maſter, and rendred unto the king of Iſrael an hundred thouſand lambs, and an hundred thouſand rams with the wool. 5. But it came to paſs when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab [d] rebelled againſt the king of Iſrael.

[a] 1 Kings xvi. 31, &c. & xxi. 25.
[b] 1 Kings xvi. 31. Chap. ix. 22.
[c] Chap. x. 31. Pſ. cxix. 6.
[d] Chap. i. 1.

v. 1—5. Jehoram, the laſt of Ahab's poſterity, was the beſt, yet prevented not the deſcending judgments; for though not ſo vile as his predeceſſors, he ſtill trod in their ſteps.

1. He removed the image of Baal, deterred from the worſhip by the threatned judgments, and in hopes to avert them; or, perhaps, from his complaiſance with Jehoſhaphat, whoſe aſſiſtance he needed, and with whom he was allied. But he perſevered in the worſhip of the golden calves, a ſtate-engine, which he might think it dangerous to give up. *Note*, (1.) Partial reformation often is without real converſion. (2.) To leave the ſins we no longer love, whilſt we ſtill indulge thoſe that are pleaſing or profitable, ſhews the inſincerity of pretended repentance.

2. He attempts to recover Moab, which had rebelled againſt his brother, and by which a vaſt revenue was loſt to the crown, *v.* 4.

6. ¶ And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the ſame time, and numbred all Iſrael. 7. And he went and ſent to Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, ſaying, The king of Moab hath rebelled againſt me: [e] wilt thou go with me againſt Moab to battle? And he ſaid, [f] I will go up; I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, *and* my horſes as thy horſes. 8. And he ſaid, Which way ſhall we go up? And he anſwered, The way through the wilderneſs of Edom. 895. 9. So the king of Iſrael went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom: and they fetcht a compaſs of ſeven days journey: and there was no water for the hoſt, and for the cattle † that followed them. 10. And the king of Iſrael ſaid, [g] Alas, that the LORD hath called theſe three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. 11. But Jehoſhaphat ſaid, *Is there* not here [h] a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Iſrael's ſervants anſwered and ſaid, Here *is* Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah. 12. And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, The word of the LORD is with him. So [i] the king of Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him. 13. And Eliſha ſaid unto the king of Iſrael, [k] What have I to do with thee? [l] get thee to the prophets [m] of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto him, Nay: for the LORD hath called theſe three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. 14. And Eliſha ſaid, [n] *As* the LORD of hoſts liveth, before whom I ſtand, ſurely, [o] were it not that I regard the preſence of Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, † I would not look toward thee, nor ſee thee. 15. But now bring me [p] a minſtrel. And it came to paſs when the minſtrel played, that [q] the hand of the LORD came upon him. 16. And he ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. 17. For thus ſaith the LORD, Ye ſhall not ſee wind, neither ſhall ye ſee rain; [r] yet that valley ſhall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beaſts. 18. And this is *but* a light thing in the ſight of the LORD: he will deliver the Moabites alſo into your hand. 19. And [s] ye ſhall ſmite every fenced city, and every choice city, and ſhall [t] fell every good tree, and ſtop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with ſtones.

[e] 1 Kings xxii. 4.
[f] Ibid. 32.
† Heb. At their feet. Judg. iv. 10.
[g] Prov. xix. 3.
[h] Amos iii. 7.
[i] Pſ. lxxviii. 34.
[k] Ezek. xiv. 3.
[l] Judg. x. 14.
[m] 1 Kings xviii. 19.
[n] Ibid. xvii. 1. Chap. v. 16.
[o] 2 Chron. xvii. 3. Pſ. xv. 4.
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† Heb. If I would, &c. Hebr. iv. 5.
[p] 1 Sam. x. 5.
[q] Ezek. i. 3. & iii. 22. & viii. 1.
[r] Pſ. lxxxiv. 6.
[s] 1 Sam. xv. 3.
[t] Deut. xx. 19.

v. 6—19. War being reſolved, Jehoram muſters his forces, and, to ſtrengthen himſelf the more,

1. Sollicits and obtains the aſſiſtance of Jehoſhaphat. On a council held, Jehoſhaphat adviſes to fall upon the Moabites, not by the neareſt way over Jordan, where they might be prepared, but through the wilderneſs of Edom, whoſe king, as his tributary, he took with him, in order to ſurprize them. Policy is as needful in war as power.

2. The advice was followed, but it had like to have proved fatal to their army; and no wonder, when they had not conſulted God about their way. The want of water parched them with thirſt; and Jehoram, with murmurs againſt Providence, is ready to deſpair, thro' fear of being attacked by the king of Moab in this diſpirited and weakened ſituation. *Note*, (1.) If we keep company with ſinners, we ſhall be in danger of ſmarting under their rod. (2.) They who will not conſult God to direct their way, will yet quarrel at his providence, when involved in difficulties, into which their own imprudence hath brought them.

3. Jehoſhaphat now reflects on his error, and, to amend it before it is too late, enquires after a prophet. In a camp he was little to be expected; but ſo God ordered it, who foreſaw theſe difficulties, that Eliſha ſhould attend the army; and tho' the kings knew not of him, a godly Iſraelite of their ſervants had been favoured with his company, and could give them information concerning him, *v.* 11. Hereupon, the kings immediately wait on him in his tent, to ſpread their deplorable caſe, and to beg his prayers and direction. *Note*, (1.) Afflictions drive thoſe to God, who in their proſperity neglected him. (2.) God's mercy towards us is not only beyond our deſert, but often prevents our deſires.

4. Eliſha, with juſt indignation at Jehoram's idolatry, ſends him to his father's prophets for direction: but theſe Jehoram knew were unable to help; therefore he humbles himſelf, and begs him, for the ſake at leaſt of the kings his confederates, to intercede for them. Hereunto Eliſha conſents; yet, teſtifying his high diſpleaſure againſt him, and that but for Jehoſhaphat's ſake he would not deign to look upon or anſwer him. A minſtrel is called for to ſooth his ruffled ſpirit, provoked with Jehoram's preſence, and to prepare his mind for prophetic inſpiration; and when with ſounds of heavenly melody the ſweet muſician ſung, ſtrait his enraptured ſpirit felt the preſent Deity. He bids them dig trenches, and without wind or rain God ſhould fill them with water, and their lives be not only thus preſerved, but victory ſucceed, and Moab be made deſolate by them, *v.* 18, 19. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt are not too high for rebuke. (2.) The wicked fare the better for their connections with God's people. (3.) God will not leave his people in diſtreſs, when they cry to him, tho' their own folly have brought them into it. (4.) When God gives, he gives like himſelf, more than we dare aſk or think.

20. And it came to paſs in the morning, [u] when the meat-offering was offered, that behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was [x] filled with water. 21. ¶ And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight againſt them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and ſtood in the border. 22. And they roſe up early in the morning, and the ſun ſhone upon the water, and the Moabites ſaw the water on the other ſide *as* red as blood: 23. And they ſaid, This *is* blood: the kings are ſurely ſlain, and they have ſmitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the ſpoil. 24. And when they came to the camp of Iſrael, the Iſraelites roſe up, and ſmote the Moabites, ſo that they fled before them: but † they went forward ſmiting the Moabites even in *their* country. 25. And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land caſt every man his ſtone, and filled it, and they ſtopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: ‡ only in Kir-haraſeth left they the ſtones thereof: howbeit the ſlingers went about

[u] 1 Kings xx. 28.
[x] Iſa. xxxv. 6. & xli. 17, 18.
† Heb. They ſmote even ſmiting.
‡ Or, Until he left the ſtones thereof in Kir-haraſeth.

it, and ſmote it. 26. ¶ And when the king of Moab ſaw that the battle was too ſore for him, he took with him ſeven hundred men that drew ſwords, to break through *even* unto the king of Edom: but they could not. 27. Then [y] he took his eldeſt ſon that ſhould have reigned in his ſtead, and offered him *for* a burnt-offering upon the wall: and there was great indignation againſt Iſrael: and they departed from him, and returned to *their own* land.

[y] Amos ii. 1.

v. 20—27. The event anſwers the prediction.

1. The water came in a torrent by the way of Edom, at the time of the morning ſacrifice. Probably then Eliſha prayed openly, with his face towards the temple, that they might be aſſured from whence this relief was ſent. *Note*, (1.) Every mercy we receive is owing to the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb which was ſlain. (2.) Every prayer muſt proceed on that foundation.

2. The Moabites beholding the water as the morning ſun aroſe, and perſuaded there could be no water there, preſently conclude the confederates had quarrelled, and this was the blood of the ſlain: therefore they march as to certain victory, every man who was able to bear arms having been ſummoned to oppoſe the invaſion. But how terrible their diſappointment, when tumultuouſly ruſhing on the ſpoil, the confederate army fell upon them with terrible ſlaughter, routed them, waſted their country, ruined their cities, and left only the metropolis ſtanding, and that was ſoon beſieged, and the breaches ready to be ſtormed. *Note*, (1.) Whom God will deſtroy, he often firſt infatuates. (2.) Rebellion may not hope to proſper.

3. In this extremity, the king of Moab attempts, with a ſelected band, to break through the quarters of Edom, where he expected leaſt reſiſtance, but is repulſed, *v.* 26. When rendered deſperate by his danger, by the inhuman and moſt precious ſacrifice of his eldeſt ſon, as his laſt effort, he ſeeks to appeaſe his idol god Chemoſh; or by ſuch a ſhocking ſcene on the walls, would move the compaſſion of the beſiegers; or perhaps to intimate his determined reſolution, to die with all his family, rather than yield. To ſee their king reduced to ſuch diſtreſs, rouſed the indignation of the remainder of the Moabites; and when the Iſraelites ſaw them thus made reſolute by deſpair, they raiſed the ſiege, and retired. *Note*, (1.) Deſpair ſometimes does more than the moſt determined courage. (2.) Let us bleſs God for deliverance from idolatry. Our God delights not in the blood of the ſlain, but the living ſacrifices of the heart devoted to his will.

CHAP. IV.

Eliſha retires from the camp to the college, not deſiring honour, but labouring to be uſeful. And here five miracles are wrought by him. 1. *He multiplies the poor widow's oil*, ver. 1—7. 2. *He obtains for the good Shunammite the bleſſing of a ſon in her old age*, ver. 8—17. 3. *He raiſes her child to life when it was dead*, ver. 18—37. 4. *He heals the deadly pottage*, ver. 38—41. 5. *He feeds a hundred men with twenty ſmall loaves*, ver. 42—44.

1. NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of [a] the ſons of the prophets, unto Eliſha, ſaying, Thy ſervant, my huſband, is dead, and thou knoweſt that thy ſervant did fear the LORD: and the creditor [b] is come to take unto him my two ſons to be bondmen. 2. And Eliſha ſaid unto her, [c] What ſhall I do for thee? tell me what haſt thou in the houſe? And ſhe ſaid, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the houſe, [d] ſave a pot of oil. 3. Then he ſaid, Go borrow thee [e] veſſels abroad of all thy neighbours, *even* empty veſſels, borrow not a few. 4. And when thou art come in, [f] thou ſhalt ſhut the door upon thee, and upon thy ſons, and ſhalt pour out into all thoſe veſſels, and thou ſhalt ſet aſide that which is full. 5. [g] So ſhe went from him, and ſhut the door upon her, and upon her ſons, who brought *the veſſels* to her, and [h] ſhe poured out. 6. And it came to paſs when the veſſels were [i] full, that ſhe ſaid unto her ſon, Bring me yet a veſſel. And he ſaid unto her, *There is* not a veſſel more. And [k] the oil ſtayed. 7. Then [l] ſhe came and told the man of God: and he ſaid, Go, ſell the oil, and [m] pay thy debt, and [n] live thou and thy children of the reſt.

[a] 1 Kings xx. 35.
[b] Exod. xxi. 2. Lev. xxv. 39. Mat. xviii. 25.
[c] Chap. ii. 9.
[d] Jam. ii. 5.
[e] Chap. iii. 16.
[f] Mat. vi. 6.
[g] Chap. v. 1.
[h] 1 Kings xvii. 16.
[i] Mat. xiv. 20.
[k] John vi. 12.
[l] Luke xvii. 15.
[m] Pſ. xxxvii. 21.
[n] Eph. iii. 20.

v. 1—7. Eliſha, wherever he goes, is found diſpenſing bleſſings around him.

1. A poor widow makes application to him in her diſtreſs: Her huſband, a prophet, whom Eliſha knew, a man who feared God, had died in debt, not contracted by his own extravagances, but by unforeſeen loſſes, or ruined under the perſecution of Jezebel. His cruel creditors now were urgent upon her, and her ſons are ready to be ſeized for bondmen, through her inability to anſwer their demands. *Note*, (1.) Unforeſeen providences may ruin an honeſt man, and leave him under debts he cannot pay; but he who contracts them without a probability of repaying, or by extravagance out-lives his income, is more diſhoneſt than he that robs or ſteals. (2.) When a good man is under providential afflictions, he may humbly expect as providential relief.

2. Eliſha, though ſilver and gold he had not, yet puts her in a method to pay her debts, and maintain her family. He enquires what ſhe had left; and when he finds ſhe has neither money nor goods of value, but one pot of oil only, that ſhall be a fountain of relief. He bids her borrow of her neighbours empty veſſels, and, to avoid interruption from her creditors, or not to boaſt of the miracle, ſhut her door, and, with her ſons aſſiſtance, fill every veſſel, for the oil ſhould not fail. Without heſitation ſhe complies with the prophet's injunctions, and the inexhauſted ſtream continued flowing till there were no more veſſels remaining. *Note*, (1.) An honeſt heart will part with the laſt utenſil, rather than not repay a juſt debt. (2.) When we are deſiring in faith on the word of promiſe to be found in the way of duty, God will take care we ſhall not want. (3.) Divine grace, like this fountain of oil, ceaſes not to flow, till every redeemed ſoul is filled with all the fulneſs of God.

3. The widow with joy having acquainted the prophet with the ſucceſs, he directs her to ſell this precious ſtore, firſt ſatisfy her creditors, then live on the reſidue, *v.* 7. *Note*, (1.) Before we pretend to enjoy what Providence beſtows, let every juſt debt be paid; for, till then, with what comfort can we eat the bread of injuſtice. (2.) Let the poor, the widow and the fatherleſs caſt their care on God, and he hath promiſed to care for them. (3.) A little, with God's bleſſing, will bring greater contentment, than the affluence of extravagance, and the wages of injuſtice.

8. ¶ And it fell on a day, that Eliſha paſſed to Shunem, where *was* [o] a great woman, and ſhe conſtrained him to eat bread. And *ſo* it was, *that* as oft as he paſſed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. 9. And [p] ſhe ſaid unto her huſband, Behold now, I perceive that this *is* an holy man of God, which paſſeth by us continually. 10. [q] Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall, and let us ſet for him there a bed, and a table, and a ſtool, and a candleſtick: and it ſhall be when he cometh to us, that he ſhall turn in thither. 11. And it fell on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. 12. And he ſaid to Gehazi his ſervant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, ſhe ſtood before him. 13. And he ſaid unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, [r] thou haſt been careful for us with all this care; what *is* to be done for thee? wouldſt thou be ſpoken for [s] to the king, or to the captain of the hoſt? And ſhe anſwered, I dwell among mine own people. 14. And he ſaid, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi anſwered, Verily [t] ſhe hath no child, and her huſband is old. 15. And he ſaid, Call her. And when he had called her, [u] ſhe ſtood in the door. 16. And he ſaid, About this ſeaſon, according to the time of life, thou ſhalt embrace a ſon. And ſhe ſaid, Nay, my lord, *thou* man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid. 17. And the woman [x] conceived, and bare a ſon at that ſeaſon that Eliſha had ſaid unto her, according to the time of life.

[o] Prov. xxxi. 10.
[p] 1 Pet. iii. 1.
[q] Mat. vi. 20. Rom. xii. 13. Heb. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 9.
[r] 1 Theſ. v. 12, 13.
[s] Chap. iii. 16, &c.
[t] Gen. xvii. 17.
[u] Gen. xviii. 10.
[x] Mat. x. 41.

v. 8—17. Eliſha, in his travels from Carmel to Samaria, often paſſed through Shunem; and we are told,

1. How kindly he was entertained by a good woman there. As God had bleſſed her with affluence, her hoſpitable doors were open to God's prophets; and though Eliſha modeſtly declined going thither, and took up with humbler accommodations, ſhe ſought him out, as a favour begged he would ever take her houſe in his way; and, to engage him to be more than a paſſing gueſt, ſo profitable had ſhe found his ſhort viſits, ſhe ſollicits her huſband to build him a little chamber on the wall, probably of their garden, near their houſe, the expence of which would be trivial, a prophet's chamber needing no elegance, and to appropriate this wholly for him; which being retired from noiſe, would engage him to ſpend more time with them; and to this her huſband gladly conſented. *Note*, (1.) Modeſt worth deſerves entreaty. (2.) That houſe is highly honoured that entertains a man of God. (3.) A good wife will do nothing without conſulting her huſband, and a good huſband will never give her cauſe to regret her dutiful obedience, by his delight to gratify her in every reaſonable deſire.

2. Eliſha, in gratitude for ſo hoſpitable an entertainment, is willing to make this good woman a grateful return. He ſends

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Gehazi, with profeſſions of his ſenſe of her kindneſs, to call her to him, that he might enquire what ſervice would be agreeable to her: as he had intereſt in the court and camp, and would obtain for her huſband preferment in either. She readily obeys the prophet's call, but profeſſes her content in their preſent ſituation, and wants nothing more of worldly advantage than they enjoyed. Eliſha, at a loſs what to do for her, aſks his ſervant, who might be more converſant with the family, and know more of their affairs, who ſuggeſts that a ſon would be the moſt acceptable bleſſing, ſhe being childleſs, and her huſband old. Eliſha having called her back to his chamber-door, where ſhe reſpectfully waited the prophet's pleaſure, aſſures her of what ſhe can ſcarcely believe, and fears he only jeſted that ſhe ſhall have a ſon; but the event verifies the prediction. *Note,* (1.) A grateful heart will not only acknowledge the kindneſs ſhewn it, but ſeize the firſt occaſion to return it. (2.) They who have ſufficiency and content at home, may well prefer their lot: courts and palaces are ſeldom ſo bleſt. (3.) They who imitate this Shunammite's piety, if here they receive not their reward, may ſhortly expect a portion, better than that of ſons or of daughters.

18. ¶ And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. 19. And he ſaid unto his father, My head, my head. And he ſaid to a lad, Carry him to his mother. 20. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he ſat on her knees till noon, and *then* [y] died. 21. And ſhe went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and ſhut *the door* upon him, and went out. 22. And ſhe called unto her huſband, and ſaid, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the aſſes, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. 23. And he ſaid, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? *it is* neither new moon, nor ſabbath. And ſhe ſaid, *It ſhall be* † well. 24. Then ſhe ſaddled an aſs, and ſaid to her ſervant, Drive, and go forward; ſlack not *thy* riding for me, except I bid thee. 25. So ſhe went, and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel: and it came to paſs when the man of God ſaw her afar off, that he ſaid to Gehazi his ſervant, Behold, *yonder is* that Shunammite: 26. Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and ſay unto her, *Is it* well with thee? *is it* well with thy huſband? *is it* well with the child? And ſhe anſwered, *It is* well. 27. And when ſhe came to the man of God to the hill, ſhe caught him [z] by the feet: but Gehazi came near [a] to thruſt her away. And the man of God ſaid, Let her alone, for her ſoul *is* ‡ vexed within her: and [b] the LORD hath hid *it* from me, and hath not told me. 28. Then ſhe ſaid, Did I deſire a ſon of my lord? Did I not ſay, [c] Do not deceive me? 29. Then he ſaid to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and [d] take my ſtaff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, [e] ſalute him not; and if any ſalute thee, anſwer him not again: and lay my ſtaff upon the face of the child. 30. And the mother of the child ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he aroſe, and followed her. 31. And Gehazi paſſed on before them, and laid the ſtaff upon the face of the child, [f] but *there was* neither voice nor hearing: wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, ſaying, The child *is* not awaked. 32. And when Eliſha was come into the houſe, behold, the child was dead, *and* laid upon his bed. 33. He went in therefore, and ſhut the door upon them twain, and [g] prayed unto the LORD. 34. And he went up, and [h] lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he ſtretched himſelf upon the child, and the fleſh of the child waxed warm. 35. Then he returned, and walked in the houſe to and fro, and went up, and ſtretched himſelf upon him: and the child neeſed ſeven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36. And he called Gehazi, and ſaid, Call this Shunammite. So he called her: and when ſhe was come in unto him, he ſaid, [i] Take up thy ſon. 37. Then ſhe went in, and [k] fell at his feet, and bowed herſelf to the ground, and took up her ſon, and went out.

[y] Gen. xxii. 2. Ezek. xxiv. 16.
† Heb. Peace. Ver. 36.
[z] Mat. xxviii. 9.
[a] Ibid. xv. 23.
‡ Heb. Bitter. 1 Sam. i. 10.
[b] 2 Sam. vii. 3.
[c] Ver. 16.
[d] Acts xix. 12.
[e] Luke x. 4.
[f] Mat. xvii. 19.
[g] 1 Kings xvii. 20. Jam. v. 17.
[h] Acts xx. 10.
[i] 1 Kings xvii. 23. Heb. xi. 35.
[k] Chap. ii. 15. Ver. 27.

v. 18—37. How precarious is every ſublunary bleſſing! how little dependance to be placed upon the comforts of a periſhing world. We ſee,

1. This darling boy, ſeized in the harveſt field with his father, complains, my head, my head; and is ſent home to the fond mother's boſom, and there death cloſes his eyes. *Note,* We need ſtand prepared for ſudden ſtrokes; death often ſeizes at ſhort warning.

2. With ſilent ſubmiſſion ſhe took the dear corpſe, and going to the prophet's chamber, laid it on his bed, that the death might not be known, and where it would lie unmoleſted, till her return: then ſhe haſtes to her huſband, and begs leave to go to the man of God. He wonders at her journey, as it was not one of the ſtated ſeaſons when ſhe uſed to join in worſhip with him, *v.* 23. ſhe ſaid, *Well,* let me go, or be eaſy till I return; and having his conſent, haſtes to Carmel. At a diſtance obſerving her, the prophet ſends to enquire the reaſon of her coming at this unuſual ſeaſon, and whether all at home were well? She anſwers *well*; her faith ſpeaks the language of reſignation. Then drawing near, ſhe falls at his feet, whilſt bitter anguiſh ſtops for a while her utterance. Gehazi is aſſiduous to raiſe her up, but the prophet reſtrains him: he ſaw ſome heavy grief oppreſſed her, though the Lord had not revealed to him the cauſe. At laſt, her interrupted words began to flow, and in her queſtions, *v.* 28. he perceived the cauſe of her diſtreſs. *Note,* (1.) In every affliction, the conſideration from whoſe hand it comes, ſhould ſilence every complaint. (2.) All is well, when however diſtreſſing the providence we are enabled to ſubmit to, and improve under the viſitation. (3.) If he who gives, takes away, we are called to be thankful for the length of the loan, and not to murmur that God reſumes his gift. (4.) The joys of earth ebb and flow, and when we think the cup of happineſs at our lips, diſappointment robs us of the draught; but we have a more abiding portion, which once ſecured, will never deceive us.

3. Eliſha was as ready to help as ſhe to aſk, and inſtantly diſpatches Gehazi with his ſtaff to lay on the child's face, whilſt he ſhould pray that God would reſtore him to life; but the Shunammite, earneſt that himſelf would go, will not quit him; and he conſents at her importunity, and follows his ſervant. Gehazi meets them on the road, having to no effect executed his commands; and Eliſha himſelf enters the chamber, ſhuts the door, and with earneſt cries to God, begs that the ſpirit of the child may return; then after waiting a while, with ſignificant geſtures, laying his mouth to the child's mouth, &c. in faith of the returning vital breath and heat, the fleſh began to wax warm, the channels of life to be again opened, and after ſneezing ſeven times, the child looked up, and with delight he reſtored him to the tender mother, overwhelmed with gratitude and joy, *v.* 37. *Note,* (1.) The word of God in the mouth of his ſervants, like the prophet's ſtaff, is ineffectual to quicken the dead in ſins, unleſs accompanied with the life-giving ſpirit. (2.) In the reſtoration of the ſpiritually dead, tho' the *vital principle* is infuſed at once, yet the exerciſe of the vital functions is gradually recovered. (3.) They who are ſent to awake the dead, have need to be men of prayer and patience. (4.) If a dead ſon reſtored to life is ſuch a joy to a mother's heart, how much greater comfort ought it to miniſter to ſee the bands of ſpiritual death looſed from our children?

38. ¶ And Eliſha came again to Gilgal, and *there was* a dearth in the land, and the ſons of the prophets [l] *were* ſitting before him: and he ſaid unto his ſervant, Set on the great pot, and ſeethe pottage for the ſons of the prophets. 39. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap-full, and came and ſhred *them* into the pot of pottage: for [m] they knew *them* not. 40. So they poured out for the men to eat: and it came to paſs as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and ſaid, O thou man of God, *there is* death in the pot: and they could not eat *thereof.* 41. But he ſaid, Then bring meal: and [n] he caſt *it* into the pot; and he ſaid, Pour out for the people, that they may eat: and there was no † harm in the pot. 42. ¶ And there came a man from Baal-ſhaliſha, and [o] brought the man of God bread of the firſt-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in ‡ the huſk thereof: and he ſaid, Give unto the people, that they may eat. 43. And his ſervitor ſaid, [p] What, ſhould I ſet this before an hundred men? He ſaid again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus ſaith the LORD, They ſhall eat, and ſhall leave *thereof.* 44. So he ſet *it* before them, and they did eat, and [q] left *thereof,* according to the word of the LORD.

[l] Prov. viii. 34. Luke x. 39. Acts xxii. 3.
[m] Mat. xiii. 52. 1 Tim. i. 7.
[n] Exod. xv. 25. Chap. ii. 20. John ix. 6.
† Heb. Evil thing.
[o] 1 Cor. ix. 11. Gal. vi. 6.
‡ Or his ſcrip or garment.
[p] Luke ix. 13.
[q] Mat. xiv. 20. John vi. 13.

v. 30—44. Eliſha's happy employment was in the prophetic ſchools, to inſtruct and encourage by his advice and experience thoſe who might ſucceed him in the riſing generation. Thus we find him employed at Gilgal; and by his miracles relieving their bodies, whilſt he fed their ſouls.

1. He commands his ſervant to provide a repaſt for his diſciples,

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ciples, after his inſtructions. They learned temperance in his ſchool, and now the dearth was in the land, ſubſiſtence became more difficult, and the plaineſt fare was welcome. The drought having made herbs ſcarce, the unſkilful ſervant employed to gather them in the fields, found a wild vine (thought to be the Coloquintida, bitter and ſtrongly purgative) and ſhred a quantity of the gourds into the pottage. The taſte quickly diſcovered the noxious quality of the proviſion, and ſuſpecting poiſon, they cried out to Eliſha. He calls for a handful of meal, and caſts it into the pot; the miraculous effect of which healed this bitter broth, as the ſalt the waters of Jericho. *Note*, (1.) They who preach mortification to others, muſt ſhew themſelves examples of the ſelf-denial they recommend. (2.) The delicacies of the luxurious, and the bowl of the intemperate, are more dangerous than the prophet's meſs; the one only threatned temporal death, the other brings eternal.

2. Eliſha, who before had prevented the poiſonous food from hurting, now makes a few loaves ſuffice for a full repaſt. As Iſrael was cut off from the temple, the few faithful made the prophets God's receivers, and employed their tythes for the ſupport of theſe ſchools of piety. A good man of Baal-ſhaliſha ſent his firſt-fruits of ſome ears of barley and twenty loaves, to Eliſha; poor fare indeed, but acceptable in theſe times of dearth. Theſe he commands to ſet before the people. His ſervant objects to the poſſibility of feeding an hundred men with ſuch ſcanty proviſion; but Eliſha bids him obey, and God will make it, as the event proved, enough and to ſpare. *Note*, (1.) A good man will not eat his morſel alone, but breaks his bread to the hungry. (2.) When God gives his bleſſing, a little will go far.

CHAP. V.

Two more of Eliſha's miracles are recorded in this chapter. 1. *The cleanſing of Naaman, a Syrian, from his leproſy,* ver. 1—14. 2. *The grateful acknowledgments he made to Eliſha hereupon,* ver. 15—19. 3. *The ſmiting of Gehazi, his own ſervant, with that leproſy,* v. 20—27.

1. NOW [a] Naaman captain of the hoſt of the king of Syria, *was* a great man with his maſter, and † honourable, becauſe by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was alſo a mighty man in valour, [b] *but he was* a leper. 2. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Iſrael a little maid, and ſhe waited on Naaman's wife. 3. And [c] ſhe ſaid unto her miſtreſs, Would God my lord *were* with the prophet that *is* in Samaria: for he would recover him of his leproſy. 4. And *one* went in, and told his lord, ſaying, Thus and thus ſaid the maid that *is* of the land of Iſrael. 5. And the king of Syria ſaid, Go to, go, and I will ſend a letter unto the king of Iſrael. And he departed, and [d] took ‡ with him ten talents of ſilver, and ſix thouſand *pieces* of gold, and ten changes of raiment. 6. And he brought the letter to the king of Iſrael, ſaying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have *therewith* ſent Naaman my ſervant to thee, that thou mayſt recover him of his leproſy. 7. And it came to paſs when the king of Iſrael had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and ſaid, [e] *Am* I God, [f] to kill and to make alive, that this man doth ſend unto me to recover a man of his leproſy? wherefore conſider, I pray you, and ſee how he ſeeketh a quarrel againſt me. 8. ¶ And it was *ſo*, when Eliſha the man of God had heard that the king of Iſrael had rent his clothes, that he ſent to the king, ſaying, [g] Wherefore haſt thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he ſhall know that there is a prophet in Iſrael.

[a] Luke iv. 27.
† Heb. Accepted in countenance.
[b] 2 Cor. xii. 7.
[c] Acts viii. 4.
[d] Chap. viii. 8, 9.
‡ Heb. In his hand.
[e] Gen. xxx. 2.
[f] Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6.
[g] Chap. i. 6.

v. 1—8. Eliſha's greatneſs and glory continues ſtill the ſubject of the hiſtory. It is a pleaſing epiſode, and a relief from the uniform tenor of evil that was in Iſrael and her kings.

1. Naaman, by means of a captive girl, hears of the prophet's miracles. He was a great general, ſucceſsful in war, a vaſt favourite with his maſter, but a leper. The captive girl, though a child when taken, remembered the great prophet in Samaria, and as a good ſervant, tells her miſtreſs of him, and wiſhes her maſter could ſee him, he could do more for him, than all the phyſicians of Damaſcus. *Note*, (1.) A little child taught the knowledge of Jeſus the great prophet, may be a ſucceſsful preacher; and by the mouths of babes and ſucklings God can perfect his praiſe. (2.) Every good ſervant muſt ſeek the welfare of the family they are in. (3.) Greatneſs is no protection from the ſoreſt calamities incident to human life. Diſeaſe and death find as eaſy acceſs to the palace as the cottage. (4.) Say all you can of a man's worldly felicity, ſucceſs, honour, one *but* ſpoils the whole. If he hath the uncured leproſy of ſin upon him, all beſides is but ſplendid miſery.

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2. Naaman is eager to improve the hint, though given by ſo mean a perſon, and inſtantly prepares to wait on this great prophet. Having mentioned the matter to the king of Syria, and received a ſtrong recommendation to Jehoram, preſuming his acquaintance and authority with the prophet would facilitate the application and cure. With a great retinue, and loaded with ſuitable preſents for the occaſion, he haſtens on his journey; and being arrived at Samaria, delivers the letter to the king of Iſrael. *Note*, How willing are men to try every expedient, and grudge no expence or trouble to obtain a cure of their bodily diſeaſes? Who ſhews ſuch eagerneſs to bring their diſeaſed ſouls to the great phyſician, though the cure there is infallible, and alſo *without money, and without price*.

3. Jehoram no ſooner read the letter, than he rent his cloaths, whether ſhocked at the blaſphemy he ſuppoſed it contained, enjoining him the cure of a leper, which was God's work alone, or terrified with the apprehenſion, that this was done with a deſign to quarrel with him, in order to invade his country. He had ſo little concern with God's prophets himſelf, that he had no idea of a Syrian's coming ſo far to court their aſſiſtance. *Note*, They who are conſcious of their own ill deſerts, are ready to terrify themſelves at every ſhadow, and put the worſt conſtructions on what hath not the leaſt ill deſign.

4. Eliſha heard the king's diſtreſs, and the cauſe of it, and though he had juſt reaſon to complain of being neglected, yet when the glory of Iſrael's God is concerned, unſought he proffers his ſervice, and will do for this Syrian what Iſrael's king cannot, that he may know there is a prophet in Iſrael. *Note*, Though wicked men have forfeited every mercy, yet God for his own glory will ſometimes help them beyond all they have reaſon to expect.

9. So Naaman came with his horſes, and with his chariot, and ſtood at the door of the houſe of Eliſha. 10. And Eliſha [h] ſent a meſſenger unto him, ſaying, [i] Go and waſh in Jordan ſeven times, and thy fleſh ſhall come again unto thee, and thou ſhalt be clean. 11. But Naaman was wroth, and [k] went away, and ſaid, Behold, [l] I thought, He will ſurely come out to me, and ſtand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and † ſtrike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. 12. *Are* not Abana and Pharphar, rivers of Damaſcus, better than all the waters of Iſrael? may I not waſh in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. 13. And his ſervants came near, and ſpake unto him, and ſaid, My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do ſome* great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done *it*? how much rather then, when he ſaith to thee, Waſh and be clean? 14. Then went he down, and dipped himſelf ſeven times in Jordan, according to the ſaying of the man of God: and his fleſh came again like unto the fleſh of a little child, [m] and he was clean.

[h] John iv. 50.
[i] Ibid. ix. 7.
[k] 1 Cor. ii. 14.
[l] Prov. iii. 5. Iſa. lv. 8. 1 Cor. iii. 18.
† Heb. Move up and down.
[m] 2 Chron. xx. 20.

v. 9—14. We have here,

1. Naaman, in all his pomp and ſplendor, a humble ſuitor at the prophet's door: and he receives an anſwer plain and ſatisfactory, which required only his obedience, and enſured his cure. *Note*, They who are found waiting upon God, may expect from him an anſwer of peace.

2. Naaman's pride could not bear either the reception he met with, or the preſcription ordered him; and in a rage he departs. He had promiſed himſelf deep reſpect, ſome immediate application to his diſeaſe, and prayer over him for his cure: and not to ſee the prophet, to have only a meſſage by a ſervant; and ſuch a meſſage, ſo fooliſh in his eyes, ſo uſeleſs: Were not the waters of Syria as good as Jordan; and need he have come ſo far to waſh, when he might have the nobler rivers of Abana and Pharphar at home? *Note*, (1.) A proud ſpirit interprets the leaſt ſuſpected ſlight into an heinous affront. (2.) The ſelf-righteous heart, like Naaman, wiſe in his own conceits, with pride refuſes to apply the ſimple balm of a Saviour's blood, and fancies ſomething beſide is neceſſary to his cure. (3.) They who turn away from God's methods of grace, reject their own mercies.

3. His ſervants, when his firſt rage was ſubſided, preſume, with ſubmiſſion, to reaſon with him on the caſe. If he would have ſubmitted to the moſt expenſive or moſt painful methods, which might have been preſcribed, how much more ought he to yield to one ſo cheap, and ſo eaſy? *Note*, (1.) Men in a paſſion are deaf to the plaineſt arguments; when they cool, reaſon will be heard. (2.) A good ſervant will rather hazard to diſpleaſe his maſter, than ſee him wound himſelf by his folly; but if he would ſucceed, he muſt wait the proper time, and add the reſpect and deference which may engage attention. (3.) None

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ought to be above being told of their faults; and there are none that are ſo high in grace, as not to have ſome to find in them. (4.) The plainneſs and freedom of the way of ſalvation, will render thoſe who reject it the more inexcuſable.

4. Naaman heard the wiſe advice, and convinced of the reaſonableneſs of the trial, deſcends to the river, where the experiment exceeds his expectation. His leproſy departed, and his fleſh became ſoft, fair and plump, as the fleſh of a little child. Can the waters of Jordan thus cleanſe the leprous Syrian, and ſhall not the fountain of a Saviour's blood much more cleanſe the leprous ſinner, that in faith deſcends to waſh his ſpotted ſoul in this all-purifying ſtream?

15. ¶ And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and ſtood before him: and he ſaid, Behold, now I know that [n] *there is* no God in all the earth, but in Iſrael: now therefore, I pray thee [o] take a bleſſing of thy ſervant. 16. But he ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, before whom I ſtand, [p] I will receive none. And he urged him to take *it*, but he refuſed. 17. And Naaman ſaid, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy ſervant two mules burden of earth? for thy ſervant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering, nor ſacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD. 18. In this thing the LORD pardon thy ſervant, *that* when my maſter † goeth into the houſe of Rimmon to worſhip there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myſelf in the houſe of Rimmon: when I bow down myſelf in the houſe of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy ſervant in this thing. 19. And he ſaid unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.

[n] Dan. ii. 47.
[o] Gen. xxxiii. 11. Ver. 5.
[p] Gen. xiv. 23. 1 Cor. vi. 12. & x. 32.
† Or went, &c. I bowed myſelf: When I bowed myſelf, the Lord pardon, &c.

v. 15—19. He who turned away in a rage, convinced by experience, returns with humility and gratitude to acknowledge the mercy he had received.

1. He ſolemnly confeſſes his faith in Iſrael's God, as the alone Jehovah; and renouncing all his idols, reſolves henceforth to offer ſacrifice to no other God. *Note*, we then only truly know God, when, not by mere reaſoning, but by bleſſed experience we find his ſaving power exerciſed on our hearts.

2. He preſſes the prophet to accept a preſent from him, as the token of his gratitude; but this, though indigent, and able well to employ it for his poor pupils, he ſolemnly refuſes, not as unlawful, but as inexpedient: it would be more for the honour of his God to ſhew a contempt of this world's wealth. *Note*, (1.) Nothing ſo diſhonourable in a prophet, as the appearance of a mercenary ſpirit. (2.) Where the heart is fixed on a better portion, it can ſit looſe to gold as droſs.

3. He makes a two-fold requeſt, with which the prophet complies. (1.) He begs two mules burden of earth, to build an altar to Iſrael's God, and henceforth his own. He looked on the land of Syria as polluted with idols; and now is as attached to the very earth of Iſrael, as he ſeemed before to deſpiſe it. *Note*, When the heart is turned to God, how differently do we regard every thing which relates to him? that which was our contempt or averſion, has now our warmeſt affections. (2.) He begs Eliſha's prayers for him, as it was his own; that his paſt idolatry might be pardoned: not that he might be permitted ſtill, as our tranſlation intimates, to bow in the houſe of Rimmon, in complaiſance to his maſter: the words may be rendered, *When my maſter went into the houſe of Rimmon, and leaned on my hand, and I bowed myſelf: when I bowed myſelf, the Lord pardon thy ſervant in this thing*; which intimates, that theſe acts of idolatry were paſt, and that henceforward he would do ſo no more. To ſuch a gracious appearance the prophet cannot but give his approbation, and diſmiſſes him in peace, as one accepted of God. *Note*, (1.) Paſt tranſgreſſions ſhould be ever remembered and lamented. (2.) They are to be encouraged, who give gracious ſymptoms of real converſion to God.

20. ¶ But Gehazi the ſervant of Eliſha the man of God ſaid, Behold, my maſter hath ſpared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but *as* the LORD liveth, [q] I will run after him, and take ſomewhat of him. 21. So Gehazi followed after Naaman: and when Naaman ſaw *him* running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and ſaid, *Is* all well? 22. And he ſaid, All *is* well: my maſter hath ſent me, ſaying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the ſons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of ſilver, and two changes of garments. 23. And Naaman ſaid, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of ſilver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid *them* upon two of his ſervants, and they bare *them* before him. 24. And when he came to † the tower, he took *them* from their hand, and beſtowed *them* in the houſe; and he let the men go, and they departed. 25. But he went in, and ſtood before his maſter: and Eliſha ſaid unto him, Whence *comeſt thou*, Gehazi? And he ſaid, Thy ſervant went no whither. 26. And he ſaid unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee [r]? *is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive-yards, and vine-yards, and ſheep, and oxen, and men-ſervants and maid-ſervants? 27. The leproſy therefore of Naaman ſhall cleave unto thee, and [s] unto thy ſeed for ever. And he went out from his preſence [t] a leper *as white* as ſnow.

[q] 1 Tim. vi. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 15.

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† Or ſecret place.
[r] Jer. xx. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 12. 2 Cor. xi. 12.
[s] 2 Sam. iii. 29.
[t] Num. xii. 10.

v. 20—27. Of all men in Iſrael, there was not one from whom we might expect more exemplary piety, than from the favoured Gehazi, the companion almoſt rather than ſervant of the prophet, bleſſed with his daily converſation, and beholding continually his bright example; and yet we find him as vile and hardened as the moſt idolatrous Iſraelite. *Note*, The beſt of men and miniſters cannot change even thoſe under their own roof. Nay, to their grief they behold them ſometimes more inſenſible and ſtupid than any others.

1. Gehazi's ſin was great. A lover of filthy lucre, *v.* 20. he could not ſee the gifts without hankering for them, and blaming his maſter's refuſal. A liar and robber, *v.* 22, 23. careleſs what diſhonour he brought on the prophet, or what diſguſt Naaman might take againſt God from ſuch a proceedure. Crafty and diſſembling, *v.* 24. and as if he could deceive the ſpirit of God in his maſter, ſeeking to cover one lye by a worſe. *Note*, (1.) The love of money is the root of all evil. They who reſolve to be rich, reſolve to be damned, 1 *Tim.* vi. 9. (2.) Covetouſneſs and lying are near allied. (3.) When the heart is hardened by one ſin, it is more eaſily diſpoſed to a greater. (4.) Hope of concealment and impunity is the great encouragement to do evil.

2. His puniſhment was exemplary. Eliſha ſilences his lying tongue. His ſpirit followed him to the chariot, and to the place where the robbery was depoſited, and clearly foreſaw how he deſigned to lay out theſe wages of unrighteouſneſs, *v.* 26. but ſhort enjoyment ſhall his wickedneſs afford him. The curſe of God is denounced upon him, the ſilver of Naaman is turned into his leproſy to eat up his fleſh, and the diſeaſe entailed upon his lateſt poſterity. Eliſha's doors are immediately ſhut againſt him, and he departs a leper, loathſome as incurable. *Note*, (1.) The joy of proſperous wickedneſs is ſhort-lived, tranſitory, and terminates in ſorrows bitter as endleſs. (2.) Thus ſhall God at laſt lay open men's folly, ſin, and ſhame; and ſpeechleſs before him, they ſhall be driven from his preſence, to ſuffer the juſt reward of their deeds.

CHAP. VI.

We have here, 1. *Eliſha's cauſing iron to ſwim,* ver. 1. 2. *Revealing the King of Syria's counſel to Jehoram,* ver. 8—12. 3. *Saving himſelf from his enemies,* ver. 13—23. 4. *Samaria beſieged,* ver. 24—33.

1. AND the ſons of the prophets ſaid unto Eliſha, Behold now, the place where we † dwell with thee is too ſtrait for us. 2. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make a place there, where we may dwell. And he anſwered, Go ye. 3. And one ſaid, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy ſervants. And he anſwered, I will go. 4. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. 5. But as one was felling a beam, the ‡ ax-head fell into the water: and he cried, and ſaid, Alas maſter, for it was borrowed. 6. And the man of God ſaid, Where fell it? And he ſhewed him the place. And [a] he cut down a ſtick, and caſt *it* in thither, and the iron did ſwim. 7. Therefore ſaid he, Take *it* up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

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† Heb. Sit before thy face.
‡ Heb. Iron.
[a] Exod. xv. 25. Chap. ii. 21.

v. 1—7. Under Eliſha's care, the ſchool of the prophets at Gilgal flouriſhed; and ſuch a reſort was there to attend him, that the place was too ſmall to contain them. *Note*, It is a good ſymptom both of a true prophet and a gracious people, when diligence to preach, and attention to hear, enlarges the auditory.

1. They propoſe building another ſeminary near the banks of Jordan; and with Eliſha's conſent, and under his eye, they would, without delay, begin the work. As they were poor, they muſt be their own builders; and though prophets ſons, diſdain-

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diſdained not the mean employment to which their poverty reduced them. *Note,* (1.) The greateſt of heaven's bleſſings are uſually beſtowed on thoſe who eat bread with the ſweat of their brow. (2.) A miniſter of God muſt be content, if need be to miniſter to his neceſſities by the labour of his own hands.

2. An accident happened to one of them, as they felled the timber, *v.* 5. which gave him the greater uneaſineſs, becauſe the ax was borrowed, and perhaps he was unable to repay the loſs, though ſmall. *Note,* (1.) What is kindly lent us, we ſhould be doubly careful of. (2.) They who are affluent, conceive not how great an affliction an inconſiderable loſs is to thoſe who are indigent.

3. Eliſha pitied and relieved him, at the expence of a miracle. On throwing in a piece of wood at the place where it fell, he cauſed the iron to ſwim, and reſtored it to the thankful owner. *Note,* (1.) When we can make the poor mourner rejoice by a ſmall relief, ſhall we refuſe him the joy that coſts us ſo little? (2.) The heart moſt irrecoverably ſunk to human view in the floods of ungodlineſs, and of earthly cares or pleaſures, is not beyond the power of divine grace.

[b] Prov. xxi. 30.
[c] Acts xvii. 11.
† Heb. Troubled as the ſea with winds. Iſa. lvii. 20.
[d] Eccleſ. x. 20.

8. Then the king of Syria warred againſt Iſrael, and [b] took counſel with his ſervants, ſaying, In ſuch and ſuch a place *ſhall be* my camp. 9. And the man of God ſent unto the king of Iſrael, ſaying, Beware that thou paſs not ſuch a place; for thither the Syrians are come down. 10. And the king of Iſrael [c] ſent to the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and ſaved himſelf there, not once nor twice. 11. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was † ſore troubled for this thing, and he called his ſervants and ſaid unto them, Will ye not ſhew me which of us *is* for the king of Iſrael? 12. And one of his ſervants ſaid, None, my lord O king: but Eliſha the prophet, that *is* in Iſrael, telleth the king of Iſrael the words [d] that thou ſpeakeſt in thy bed-chamber.

v. 8—12. We have here,

1. A new invaſion of Iſrael. On what occaſion is not ſaid. *Note,* The enemies of God's Iſrael will not ſuffer them long to reſt in peace.

2. Eliſha by his prophetic ſpirit, acquainted the king of Iſrael with all the ambuſcades and motions of the Syrians, by which they were conſtantly diſappointed in their deſigns. *Note,* (1.) God knows how to fruſtrate the wiſeſt counſels of the crafty againſt his church and people. (2.) When God by his prophets gives us warning, it is our wiſdom to hear and prepare for the day of evil, leaſt if we continue ſecure in our ſins, death ſhould ſurprize us, and we periſh through our folly.

3. The king of Syria ſuſpected a traitor in his council, but one of his ſervants wiſely appriſes him of the diſcoverer of his ſecrets, Eliſha's ſpirit viſited his moſt retired chamber. *Note,* There is no place hid from the ſearching eye of God; even the ſecrets of all hearts to him are naked and open.

[e] 1 Sam. xxiii. 22.
[f] Iſa. viii. 9, 10.
[g] 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.
† Or miniſter.
[h] Exod. xiv. 13.
[i] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 7. Pſal. xxxiv. 7. & lv. 18. Rom. viii. 31.
[k] Chap. ii. 11. Zech. i. 8. & vi. 1—7.
[l] Gen. xix. 11. Job v. 13, 14. Luke xxiv. 16.

13. ¶ And he ſaid, Go, and [e] ſpy where he *is,* that I may ſend and fetch him. And it was told him, ſaying, Behold, *he is* in Dothan. 14. Therefore ſent he thither horſes and chariots, and [f] a great hoſt: and they came by night, and [g] compaſſed the city about. 15. And when the † ſervant of the man of God was riſen early, and gone forth, behold, an hoſt compaſſed the city, both with horſes and chariots: and his ſervant ſaid unto him, Alas my maſter, how ſhall we do? 16. And he anſwered, [h] Fear not: for [i] they that *be* with us, *are* more than they that *be* with them. 17. And Eliſha prayed, and ſaid, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may ſee. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he ſaw: and behold, the mountain *was* [k] full of horſes, and chariots of fire round about Eliſha. 18. And when they came down to him, Eliſha prayed unto the LORD, and ſaid, [l] Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindneſs. And he ſmote them with blindneſs, according to the word of Eliſha. 19. ¶ And Eliſha ſaid unto them, This *is* not the way, neither *is* this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye ſeek. But he led them to Samaria. 20. And it came to paſs when they were come into Samaria, that Eliſha ſaid, LORD, open the eyes of theſe *men* that they may ſee. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they ſaw, and behold, *they were* in the mids of Samaria. 21. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Eliſha, when he ſaw them, My father, ſhall I ſmite *them?* ſhall I ſmite *them?* 22. And he anſwered, Thou ſhalt not ſmite *them:* wouldeſt thou ſmite thoſe whom thou haſt taken captive with thy ſword, and with thy bow? [m] ſet bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their maſter. 23. And he prepared great proviſion for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he ſent them away, and they went to their maſter. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Iſrael.

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[m] Prov. xxv. 21. Rom. xii. 20.

v. 13—23. Till Eliſha was ſecured, the king of Syria deſpairs of ſucceſs; and therefore to effect this,

1. He ſends an armed force to ſurround Dothan by night, where he underſtood the prophet was: a fooliſh attempt! Could he who revealed his deſigns againſt the king, be ignorant of this upon himſelf?

2. Eliſha's ſervant in the morning runs to his maſter in a terrible fright, to acquaint him with the danger, as if now they were all undone and loſt. *Note,* Weak believers are intimidated with the approach of danger, and becauſe they feel their own impotence, are ready to deſpair of God's power and grace.

3. Eliſha quickly ſilences his fears. One comfortable word of encouragement points him to a ſafe protector, and that his weak faith might be helped by ſight, at Eliſha's prayer, the ſervants eyes are opened, and he beheld the angelic hoſt, appearing like chariots and horſes of fire round the city. *Note,* (1.) Whoever are our foes, if God be for us, we have ſtrength and numbers on our ſide. To encourage the fearful, to ſupport the weak, and comfort the feeble-minded, is the office of every faithful miniſter. (3.) They who have the eye of faith opened, behold cherubic legions as their guard, and the King of Glory at their head, ſaying, none ſhall pluck them out of my hand. (4.) We have need pray continually for ourſelves and others, that the eyes of our minds may be daily more enlightened.

4. He that prayed for the opening the eyes of his ſervants, ſucceeds as effectually for the cloſing the eyes of his enemies. Bewilder'd in their apprehenſions, they no longer knew either the place or the prophet, but gave themſelves up to him as their guide; promiſing to conduct them to the man they ſought: and when he had brought them into Samaria, as men awakened from a dream, they beheld their danger when there was no poſſibility of their eſcape. *Note,* (1.) It is juſt in God to give thoſe up to the blindneſs of their own hearts, who chuſe not the knowledge of the truth, that they might be ſaved. (2.) How terrible will be the ſinner's diſappointment, when led captive by the devil at his will; buoyed up with fooliſh hopes of heaven, he marches confidently on, till death awakens him from his lethargy, and he is aſtoniſhed to find himſelf in hell.

5. Eliſha merciful as mighty, diſmiſſes them in peace, after the moſt hoſpitable entertainment. The king of Iſrael is eager to improve the advantage by deſtroying his enemies, but Eliſha reſtrains him. Had they been priſoners of war, they were entitled to mercy; how much more when not his arm, but God's providence had brought them into his power? rather let him conquer them again by his clemency and generoſity; and as they were now laid at his feet for mercy, entertain them nobly, and diſmiſs them peaceably. The king readily complies, and they return as much aſtoniſhed at their generous treatment, as convinced of the impoſſibility of cruſhing thoſe whom God ſo protected. Returning, they made no more attempts to ſeize the prophet; or perhaps theſe bands, when a new attack was meditated, refuſe to ſerve any more againſt the people of Iſrael. *Note,* (1.) To forgive our enemies is not only enjoined us, but to do good to thoſe who hate us. Hard the taſk, but what cannot Almighty Grace effect? (2.) They who will not be overcome with kindneſs and love, are deſperately hardened indeed.

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† About ten pounds.
‡ i. e. Half a pint.
[n] Pſal. cxxvii. 1, 2.
[o] Lev. xxvi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 53, &c. Lam. iv. 10.
[p] 1 Kings xxi. 27. Iſa. lviii. 5.
[q] 1 Kings xix. 2. Acts xxiii. 14.
[r] 1 Kings xviii. 17. Jam. v. 17.

24. ¶ And it came to paſs after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his hoſt, and went up, and beſieged Samaria. 25. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and behold, they beſieged it, until an aſſes head was *ſold* for † fourſcore *pieces* of ſilver, and ‡ the fourth part of a cab of doves dung for five *pieces* of ſilver. 26. And as the king of Iſrael was paſſing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, ſaying, Help, my lord, O king. 27. And he ſaid, [n] If the LORD do not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-preſs? 28. And the king ſaid unto her, What aileth thee? And ſhe anſwered, This woman ſaid unto me, Give thy ſon, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my ſon to morrow. 29. So [o] we boiled my ſon, and did eat him: and I ſaid unto her on the next day, Give thy ſon, that we may eat him: and ſhe hath hid her ſon. 30. ¶ And it came to paſs when the king heard the words of the woman, that [p] he rent his clothes, and he paſſed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold, *he had* ſackcloth within, upon his fleſh. 31. Then he ſaid, [q] God do ſo and more alſo to me, if the head of [r] Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat ſhall ſtand

on him this day. 32. But Eliſha [s] ſat in his houſe (and [t] the elders ſat with him) and *the king* ſent a man from before him: but ere the meſſenger came to him, [u] he ſaid to the elders, See ye how this ſon of [x] a murderer hath ſent to take away mine head? look when the meſſenger cometh ſhut the door, and hold him faſt at the door: *is* not the ſound of his maſter's feet behind him? 33. And while he yet talked with them, behold, the meſſenger came down unto him: and he ſaid, Behold, [y] this evil *is* of the LORD, [z] what ſhould I wait for the LORD any longer?

[s] Pſal. cxviii. 6.
[t] Mal. iii. 16.
[u] Ver. 12.
[x] 1 Kings xviii. 4.
[y] Amos iii. 6.
[z] Rev. xvi. 9.

v. 24—33. Soon was the grateful remembrance of the late kindneſs worn out of the memory of the king of Syria. For,

1. We find him here beſieging Samaria; and either through the unexpected attack, or the dearth which was in the land, the famine quickly rages in the city, ſo that an aſſes head ſold for nine or ten pounds; and half a pint of vetches (ſo in general interpreters underſtand what is tranſlated dove's dung) for twelve ſhillings. *Not*, (1.) War is a dreadful ſcourge. (2.) By the miſeries we hear of famine, we ſhould learn to value the plenty we enjoy.

2. A moſt melancholy caſe is brought to the king. As he went round the walls, a woman cried to him, as he ſuppoſed for relief, which he with bitterneſs declares is not in his power to give, *v.* 27. but willing to know her caſe, he aſked; and ſhe relates a ſtory, *v.* 28, 29. which we ſhudder but to read, and fulfilled the threatning, *Deut.* xxviii. 53—57. Struck with horror and grief, the king rent his clothes, and under them appeared the ſackcloth, that he wore in token of their deep diſtreſs and humiliation. *Note*, (1.) In our ſoul-diſtreſſes, if God be not our friend, vain is the help of man. (2.) None know the miſeries that await them before they die, we need pray that God would prepare us, for what he hath prepared for us. (3.) Raging hunger may overcome the ſtrongeſt natural affections.

3. Jehoram vents his rage at their diſtreſs on the innocent Eliſha, and impiouſly and profanely threatens to murder him, as if by adviſing them to hold out, by foretelling the famine, or not obtaining deliverance from it, he had been the author of their calamities. *Note*, (1.) An unhumbled heart kicks againſt the pricks, and turns that revenge on the innocent, which ſhould be employed againſt his ſinful ſelf. (2.) They who are the only ſuſpenders of Divine judgments, have often been accuſed as the cauſe of them.

4. Eliſha knew in his houſe the wicked purpoſes of the king, and juſtly complains of this ſon of a murderer to thoſe who are around him: bids them ſtay the meſſenger at the door, till his maſter, who was cloſe at his heels, ſhould enter, who abandoned to deſpair, ſeems determined to ſurrender at diſcretion, no proſpect of relief appearing. *Note*, (1.) They who work wickedneſs, muſt thank themſelves for the brand God puts upon them. (2.) God is the primary author of all our ſufferings; and it is by looking above the inſtruments to him, that we ought to learn ſubmiſſion. (3.) The greateſt ſin, and the greateſt miſery we can be given up to, is deſpair.

CHAP. VII.

1. *Eliſha foretells the relief of the city, and the death of the unbelieving lord,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *A panic ſeizes the Syrians, and their flight is diſcovered by four lepers,* ver. 3—11. 3. *The plenty that enſued, and the death of the infidel lord,* ver. 12—20.

1. THEN Eliſha ſaid, Hear ye the word of the LORD, Thus ſaith the LORD, [a] To morrow about this time *ſhall* [b] a meaſure of fine flour *be ſold* for a ſhekel, and two meaſures of barley for a ſhekel, in the gate of Samaria. 2. Then a lord [c] on whoſe hand the king leaned, anſwered the man of God, and ſaid, Behold, *if* the LORD would make windows in heaven, [d] might this thing be? And he ſaid, Behold, [e] thou ſhalt ſee *it* with thine eyes, but ſhalt not eat thereof.

[a] Pſal. xlvi. 1. Iſa. lviii. 8.
[b] Ver. 18.
[c] Chap. v. 18.
[d] Gen. xviii. 14.
[e] Ver. 20.

v. 1, 2. Deſpair now covered every face with blackneſs, and the king gives up all for loſt; but when we are moſt reduced, God will make bare his holy arm.

1. Eliſha foretells the ſuddenly approaching plenty, in conſequence of the ſiege being raiſed, *v.* 1. welcome news to famiſhed Iſraelites.

2. He denounces the doom of the unbelieving lord, that refuſed to credit his prediction, *v.* 2. He was a great courtier; on whoſe arm for ſtate his maſter now leaned; and becauſe it was impoſſible with men, he fooliſhly deems it impoſſible with God. *Note*, (1.) Great courtiers are too frequently great infidels. (2.) Unbelief is among the greateſt ſins, and moſt fatal to the ſoul.

3. ¶ And there were four leprous men [f] at the entring in of the gate: and they ſaid one to another, Why ſit we here until we die? 4. [g] If we ſay, We will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we ſhall die there: and if we ſit ſtill here, we die alſo. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the hoſt of the Syrians: if they ſave us alive, we ſhall live; and if they kill us, we ſhall but die. 5. And they roſe up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermoſt part of the camp of Syria, behold, *there was* no man there. 6. For the LORD had made the hoſt of the Syrians to [h] hear a noiſe of chariots, and a noiſe of horſes, *even* the noiſe of a great hoſt: and they ſaid one to another, Lo, the king of Iſrael hath hired againſt us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us. 7. Wherefore they aroſe and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horſes, and their aſſes, even the camp as it *was*, and [i] fled for their life. 8. And when theſe lepers came to the uttermoſt part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence ſilver and gold, and raiment, and went and [k] hid *it*; and came again, and entred into another tent, and carried thence *alſo*, and went and hid *it*. 9. Then they ſaid one to another, We do not well: [l] this day *is* a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, † ſome miſchief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's houſhold. 10. So they came, and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, ſaying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and behold, *there was* no man there, neither voice of man, but horſes tied, and aſſes tied, and the tents as they *were*. 11. And he called the porters, and they told *it* to the king's houſe within.

[f] Lev. xiii. 46.
[g] Luke xv. 17—19.
[h] 2 Sam. v. 24. Chap. xix. 7. Job xv. 21.
[i] Pſal. xlviii. 5, 6. Prov. xxviii. 1.
[k] Mat. xiii. 44.
[l] Eph. ii. 4.
† Or iniquity, or puniſhment will find us.

v. 3—11. God will be found true, and all who diſtruſt him be proved liars.

1. According to his word the ſiege is raiſed, and by his own power a dreadful panic is ſent among the hoſts of Syria. A terrible ſound of horſes and chariots is heard, and fear magnifying their danger, they conclude the Egyptians and Hittites are hired to fall on them, and that nothing but inſtant flight can ſecure their lives. They immediately quit the camp, and each man with the utmoſt precipitation runs for his life. *Note*, (1.) God's terrors can make the ſtouteſt tremble. (2.) The wicked fleeth when no man purſueth.

2. The diſcovery of the flight is made by four lepers, who carry tidings of it into the city. Famiſhing in their ſecluded hut without the gate, neither daring to enter the city, nor hoping for any relief thence; ſince die they muſt, if they abode where they were, they reſolve to go to the Syrian camp, hoping that compaſſion might engage them to relieve them: at worſt, they can but die. They immediately go, and how great their aſtoniſhment to find the camp deſerted, and all the tents and every thing in them remaining. Hunger firſt called for relief, and when that was ſatisfied, they began to load themſelves with the richeſt plunder, till by and by recollecting how unkind this was to their brethren, to neglect acquainting them with the good news, and how dangerous it might be to themſelves, if they ſhould be found to have concealed the glad tidings, merely to enrich themſelves, they haſte back to the city, and acquaint the centinel with the ſtate of the Syrian camp, *v.* 10. and inſtantly the news is carried to the king. *Note*, (1.) Every ſinner is in theſe lepers caſe; where they are if they continue, they muſt periſh. There is but one door of hope; the compaſſion of that God they have made their enemy, and happy is it, when ſelf-deſpair drives us to him. (2.) The mercies we ourſelves have experienced, we muſt publiſh for the comfort and edification of our brethren.

12. ¶ And the king aroſe in the night, and ſaid unto his [m] ſervants, I will now ſhew you what the Syrians have done to us: they know that we *be* hungry, therefore are they gone out of the camp, to hide themſelves in the field, ſaying, When they come out of the city, we ſhall catch them alive, and get into the city. 13. And one of his ſervants anſwered and ſaid, Let *ſome* take, I pray thee, five of the horſes that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they *are* as all the multitude of Iſrael that are left in it: behold, *I ſay*, they *are* even as all the multitude of the Iſraelites that are conſumed) and let us ſend and ſee. 14. They took therefore two † chariot-horſes, and the king ſent after the hoſt of the Syrians, ſaying, Go and ſee. 15. And they went after them unto Jordan, and

[m] Chap. v. 13.
† Heb. Chariots of horſes.

Before Christ 892. and lo, all the way *was* full of garments and veſſels,
which the Syrians had caſt away in their haſte: and the
meſſengers returned and told the king. 16. And the
[n] Job xxvii. 16, 17. people went out, and [n] ſpoiled the tents of the Syrians. So
[o] Ver. 1. [o] a meaſure of fine flour was *ſold* for a ſhekel, and two meaſures of barley for a ſhekel, according to the word of
the LORD. 17. ¶ And the king appointed the lord
on whoſe hand he leaned, to have the charge of the gate:
and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died,
as the man of God had ſaid, who ſpake when the king
came down to him. 18. And it came to paſs as the man
of God had ſpoken to the king, ſaying, Two meaſures
of barley for a ſhekel, and a meaſure of fine flour for a
ſhekel, ſhall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of
Samaria: 19. And that lord anſwered the man of God,
[p] Pſ. lxxviii. 19—21. and ſaid, Now behold, [p] *if* the LORD ſhould make
windows in heaven, might ſuch a thing be? And he
ſaid, Behold, thou ſhalt ſee it with thine eyes, but ſhalt
[q] Job xx. 23. not eat thereof. 20. [q] And ſo it fell out unto him, for
[r] Numb. xx. 12. Iſa. xli. 25. Jer. xvii. 6. the people [r] trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

v. 12—20. Rouzed by theſe tidings the king aroſe; and, conſcious how little reaſon he had to expect Divine interpoſition, his guilty conſcience darkened with ſuſpicion, fears that this is but a ſtratagem laid to enſnare him, *v.* 12. However, for greater certainty,

1. One of his ſervants propoſes to ſend five horſemen, the laſt of all their multitude, the reſt of the horſes being dead with hunger, or eaten through the famine. Two are immediately diſpatched, perhaps no more being found fit for ſervice: and ſoon they brought back the confirmation of the real flight, and that in their confuſion the roads were covered with their garments, or armour, which they had caſt off for greater expedition.

2. The people now flew to the camp, where, among other ſpoil, ſuch vaſt quantities of proviſion were found, that, according to the prophet's word, that very day a meaſure of fine flour was ſold in the gate for a ſhekel. *Note*, (1.) Not a tittle of God's word ſhall ever fail. O that we had but faith to truſt him! (2.) Supported by paſt experience, let us never deſpair, but patiently wait the ſalvation of God.

3. The unbelieving lord ſuffers the doom denounced upon him. He was appointed to command at the gate which led to the camp, in order to prevent tumults; but the people were ſo eager to get to the ſpoil, and ſatiſfy their hunger, that they paid no regard to authority; but each man preſſing forward, the crowd was ſo great, that whilſt he interpoſed to keep order, he was trodden to death in the gate. *Note*, (1.) The wicked favourites of kings have often fallen the victims of popular rage. (2.) God's threatnings ſhall be as aſſuredly fulfilled as his promiſes. He who hath ſaid, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved*, hath as unalterably determined, that *Whoſo believeth not, ſhall be damned.* (3.) Human greatneſs or glory is no protection from the arm of the holy God. The greateſt men are worms of duſt before him: he *treads on princes as mortar, and brings contempt on all the honourable of the earth.*

CHAP. VIII.

We have here, 1. *An account of the advice Eliſha had formerly given to his Shunammite friend, and her recovering her loſt eſtate,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Hazael, by murdering his maſter, aſcends the throne of Syria,* ver. 7—15. 3. *Jehoram's ſhort and wicked reign over Judah,* ver. 16—24. 4. *Succeeded by his ſon Ahaziah,* ver. 25—29.

About 891. 1. THEN ſpake Eliſha unto the woman ([a] whoſe ſon
[a] Chap. iv. 34. Hag. i. 11. he had reſtored to life) ſaying, Ariſe, and go
thou and thine houſhold, and ſojourn whereſoever thou
[b] Pſ. cv. 16. & cvii. 34. canſt ſojourn: for [b] the LORD hath called for a famine,
and it ſhall alſo come upon the land ſeven years. 2. And
About 885. the woman aroſe, and did after the ſaying of the man of
God: and ſhe went with her houſhold, and ſojourned in
the land of the Philiſtines ſeven years. 3. And it came
to paſs at the ſeven years end, that the woman returned
out of the land of the Philiſtines: and ſhe went forth to
[c] Prov. xxv. 19. Mic. vii. 5, 6. cry unto the king [c] for her houſe, and for her land. 4.
And the king talked with Gehazi the ſervant of the man
of God, ſaying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things
that Eliſha hath done. 5. And it came to paſs as he was
telling the king how he had reſtored a dead body to life,
that behold, the woman whoſe ſon he had reſtored to
life, cried to the king for her houſe, and for her land.
And Gehazi ſaid, My lord, O king, this *is* the woman,
and this *is* her ſon, whom Eliſha reſtored to life. 6. And Before Christ 885.
when the king aſked the woman, ſhe told him. So the
king appointed unto her a certain † officer, ſaying, Re- † Or, eunuch.
ſtore all that *was* her's, and all the fruits of the field,
ſince the day that ſhe left the land, even till now.

v. 1—6. We have here,

1. The advice of Eliſha to his kind hoſteſs at Shunem. He warned her to remove betimes to ſome neighbouring country, becauſe of the approaching famine; and Philiſtia being near, ſhe there fixed her abode. *Note*, (1.) Men's ſins provoke God's judgments, and his own unfaithful Iſrael ſhall feel the ſcourge heavier than even their idolatrous neighbours. (2.) The prudent man foreſeeth the evil and hideth himſelf.

2. As ſoon as the famine was over, ſhe haſted home, and to her grief found her land either ſeized by the officers for the crown, as forfeited for her leaving the kingdom; or the perſon entruſted with it, refuſed to give up poſſeſſion. For want of a friend with the king, which once ſhe thought ſhe ſhould never need, *See chap.* iv. 13. ſhe is conſtrained to apply to him herſelf for redreſs; and ſo providence graciouſly ordered it, that at this very inſtant he was diſcourſing with Gehazi, Eliſha's ſervant, about his miracles, and this very woman and her ſon were the ſubject, who now opportunely appear to confirm his narrative. Gehazi being ſtill Eliſha's ſervant, ſhews that this event preceded the cure of Naaman, and the ſiege of Samaria. *Note*, (1.) The world is ſo full of knavery, that it is hard finding a man in whom confidence is to be repoſed. (2.) A ſtrange coincidence of events, exactly ſuited to accompliſh our deſires, proves often to a demonſtration the finger of an over-ruling Governor. (3.) God can raiſe us up friends in our difficulties, where we leaſt expected them.

3. The king having heard from the woman herſelf the confirmation of Gehazi's report, orders an officer to put her in poſſeſſion of her eſtate, and ſee that every farthing of the profits of it, from the day ſhe left it, be faithfully accounted for. *Note*, (1.) If the ears of kings are open to the cries of the oppreſſed, how much more will the King of kings hear their prayers and help them. (2.) The glory of a government is the righteous and impartial adminiſtration of juſtice.

7. ¶ And Eliſha came to Damaſcus; and Ben-hadad About 885.
the king of Syria was ſick, and it was told him, ſaying,
The man of God is come hither. 8. And the king ſaid
unto Hazael, [d] Take a preſent in thine hand, and go meet [d] 1 Kings xiv. 3. Chap. v. 5.
the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him,
ſaying, Shall I † recover of this diſeaſe? 9. So Hazael † Heb. Live.
went to meet him, and took a preſent with him, even of
every good thing of Damaſcus, forty camels burden, and
came and ſtood before him, and ſaid, [e] Thy ſon Ben-hadad [e] Chap. vi. 21. & xiii. 14.
king of Syria hath ſent me to thee, ſaying, Shall I recover
of this diſeaſe? 13. And Eliſha ſaid unto him, Go, ſay
unto him, Thou mayeſt certainly recover: howbeit, the
LORD hath ſhewed me, that he ſhall ſurely die. 11.
And he ſettled his countenance ſtedfaſtly, until he was
aſhamed: and the man of God [f] wept. 12. And Hazael [f] Jer. ix. 1. & xiv. 17. Luke xix. 41.
ſaid, Why weepeth my lord? And he anſwered, Becauſe
[g] I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of
Iſrael: their ſtrong holds wilt thou ſet on fire, and their [g] Chap. x. 32, 33. & xiii. 7.
young men wilt thou ſlay with the ſword, and wilt daſh
their children, and rip up their women with child. 13.
And Hazael ſaid, But what, [h] *is* thy ſervant a dog, [i] that [h] Pſ. xxii. 16, 20.
he ſhould do this great thing? And Eliſha anſwered, [i] Jer. xvii. 9. Mat. xxvi. 33, 35.
The LORD hath ſhewed me that [k] thou *ſhalt be* king
over Syria. 14. So he departed from Eliſha, and came
to his maſter, who ſaid to him, What ſaid Eliſha to [k] 1 Kings xix. 15.
thee? And he anſwered, He told me *that* thou ſhouldſt
ſurely recover. 15. And it came to paſs on the morrow,
that he took a thick cloth, and dipt *it* in water, and
[l] ſpread *it* on his face, ſo that he died: and Hazael reign- [l] Jer. xlii. 1, 2. Mat. xxvi. 49.
ed in his ſtead.

v. 7—15. What brought Eliſha to Damaſcus is uncertain; what he did there, we are informed.

1. He is conſulted by Ben-hadad concerning the event of his ſickneſs. The king of Syria no ſooner was apprized of his being there, than the report of his former miracles weighed more with him than all his idol gods, and he places greater confidence in the prophet of the Lord, than in all the prieſts of Damaſcus. With great reſpect he addreſſes him, ſends his prime miniſter to be his meſſenger, and orders a magnificent preſent, as a token of his regard. *Note*, (1.) Sickneſs and death pay no compliments to crowned heads. (2.) Many on their death-beds ſend to God's miniſters, that, all their lives long, paid little or no regard to them. (3.) The ſinner that lieth ſick is uſually more ſollicitous to know, *Shall I recover?* than to enquire, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?*

Before Christ 891.

2. Eliſha anſwers his enquiry. His ſickneſs was not mortal, yet his death was determined by the hand of the meſſenger he had ſent. On him Eliſha fixes his eyes with ſuch earneſtneſs, that Hazael, quite confounded, aſks the reaſon of the tears that burſt from the prophet's eyes. With aſtoniſhment he hears the reaſon aſſigned, *v.* 12. and expreſſes his indignation at the ſuſpicions of his barbarity the prophet entertains; or his inſufficiency, as a dog, for the execution of ſuch a ſcene of deſolations. But Eliſha declares his approaching advancement, and whilſt power armed his hand, change of ſtation would beget change of temper; and what now he ſtartled at, would then no longer ſhock him. *Note*, (1.) Death often enters not by the diſeaſe we moſt feared, but on the ſide we thought ourſelves moſt ſecure. (2.) A good man cannot ſee miſery, without dropping a tear of compaſſion over it. (3.) That ſin, which at firſt ſhocked with the mention of it, by degrees men commit without horror. (4.) They who are ignorant of the deſperate wickedneſs of the fallen heart, will not believe that poſſible, which is uſually but the natural fruit of the corrupted root. (5.) Self-confidence is a ſad ſymptom of a ſure fall. They who think themſelves above the power of temptation, are the eaſieſt prey to the tempter. (6.) Honours change men's manners: few ever grew better by advancement; many, very many, have been undone by it.

3. Hazael quickly ſhows how deceitful was his heart. He begins with a lie, and after that we need wonder at nothing that follows. Concealing the fatal part of his meſſage, he aſſures the king he *would* recover: the prophet ſaid *might*; but he perverted his words, to lull the king into ſecurity, and, the very next day, ſtifled him with a wet cloth; and, having an intereſt in the army, ſucceeded him in the throne. *Note*, (1.) They are our moſt dangerous enemies, that by flattering us with life, divert us from ſerious preparation for death. (2.) The word of God is not to be blamed for the wickedneſs of men, who abuſe it to their encouragement in iniquity.

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16. ¶ And in the fifth year of Joram the ſon of Ahab king of Iſrael, Jehoſhaphat *being* then king of Judah, Jehoram the ſon of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah began † to reign. 17. Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jeruſalem. 18. And he walked in the way of the kings of Iſrael, as did the houſe of Ahab: [m] for the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the ſight of the LORD. 19. Yet the LORD would not deſtroy Judah, [n] for David his ſervant's ſake, [o] as he promiſed him to give him alway a light, *and* to his children. 20. ¶ In his days [p] Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themſelves. 21. So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him, and [q] he roſe by night, and ſmote the Edomites which compaſſed him about: and the captains of the chariots, and the people fled into their tents. 22. [r] Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then Libnah revolted at the ſame time. 23. And the reſt of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 24. And [s] Joram ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and ‡ Ahaziah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

† i. e. The ſecond time. See note on 1 Kings xxii. 50.
[m] Gen. vi. 2—5.
[n] 1 Kings xi. 12.
[o] 2 Sam. vii. 13. Tit. i. 2.
[p] 1 Kings xxii. 47.
[q] Joſh. x. 9
[r] Gen. xxvii. 40. 2 Sam. viii. 14.
[s] 2 Chron. xxi. 19.
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‡ Called alſo Jehoahaz.

v. 16—24. We have here,

1. An account of the wicked reign of Jehoram king of Judah, who, during his father's life, was aſſociated with him to govern. Utterly unlike the good Jehoſhaphat, he cleaved to the ſins of the houſe of Ahab; and having taken his daughter to wife, ſhe poiſoned his heart with her idolatries. *Note*, (1.) Good men, to their grief, have very wicked children. (2.) A wicked wife is among the greateſt of God's plagues. (3.) Nothing ſo dangerous to young men as bad connections. Much more eaſily will they imbibe the principles and practices of a wicked Ahab, than of a pious Jehoſhaphat.

2. His wickedneſs received ſevere rebukes. Though God would not, for David's ſake, and for the ſake of the Meſſiah, the light of his Iſrael, utterly cut them off, yet he began to cut them ſhort. (1.) In the revolt of the Edomites their tributaries; and though Jehoram in battle vanquiſhed them, yet he could not ſubdue them, *See Gen.* xxvii. 40. being diverted, (2.) By the revolt of Libnah, a city of Levites, in the tribe of Judah, who, rather than be compelled to idolatry, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 10, 11. reſolved to maintain their liberty. Thus on a tottering throne Jehoram ſat a few years, and then God put a period to his wicked life by a miſerable death, *See* 2 *Chron.* xxi. 19. *Note*, Tyrants, who abuſe the power with which God hath entruſted them, will often meet here the puniſhment of their cruelty and oppreſſion, and certainly hereafter an avenging God.

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25. ¶ In the twelfth year of Joram the ſon of Ahab king of Iſrael, did Ahaziah the ſon of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign. 26. [t] Two and twenty years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jeruſalem; and his mother's name *was* Athaliah [u] the daughter of Omri king of Iſrael. 27. And he walked in the way of the houſe of Ahab, and did evil in the ſight of the LORD, as *did* the houſe of Ahab: for [x] he *was* the ſon-in-law of the houſe of Ahab. 28. ¶ And he went with Joram the ſon of Ahab, to the war againſt Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-gilead, and the Syrians wounded Joram. 29. And king Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him at Ramoth, when he fought againſt Hazael king of Syria, and [y] Ahaziah the ſon of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to ſee Joram the ſon of Ahab in Jezreel, becauſe he was † ſick.

[t] 2 Chron. xxii. 2.
[u] Ver. 18.
[x] 2 Cor. vi. 14.
[y] 1 Kings xxii. 32. Chap. ix. 27.
† Heb. Wounded.

v. 25—29. Ahaziah, called alſo Jehoahaz, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 17. ſucceeded his father, and walked, like him, in the wicked ways of Ahab's family. What could elſe be expected from the ſon of Jezebel's daughter, and the example of a father ſo abandoned. At the requeſt of Joram his uncle, he went to battle with him to Ramoth-gilead, where Joram was wounded, and, having taken the place, was carried to Jezreel to be healed. Thither Ahaziah went to viſit him, and met, as we ſhall find, the death he deſerved. *Note*, (1.) When the ſinner's body is wounded, how ſollicitous is he to be healed, whilſt the more dangerous wounds of his ſoul neglected, *ſtink and are corrupt through his fooliſhneſs*. (2.) Friendſhip with the wicked is the path of death.

CHAP. IX.

We have here, 1. *Jehu anointed king, and commiſſioned to deſtroy the houſe of Ahab,* ver. 1—10. 2. *His communicating it to his captains,* ver. 11—15. 3. *His march to Jezreel,* ver. 16—20. 4. *Joram king of Iſrael ſlain by him,* ver. 20—26. 5. *Ahaziah king of Judah wounded and dies,* ver. 27—29. 6. *Jezebel's death,* ver. 30—37.

1. AND Eliſha the prophet called one of the † children of the prophets, and ſaid unto him, [a] Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. 2. And when thou comeſt thither, look out there Jehu the ſon of Jehoſhaphat, the ſon of Nimſhi, and go in, and make him ariſe up from among his brethren, and carry him to ‡ an inner chamber. 3. Then take the box of oil, and pour *it* on his head, and ſay, Thus ſaith the LORD, I have [b] anointed thee king over Iſrael: then open the door, and flee,[c] and tarry not. 4. ¶ So the young man, *even* the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. 5. And when he came, behold, the captains of the hoſt *were* ſitting; and he ſaid, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu ſaid, Unto which of all us? And he ſaid, To thee, O captain. 6. And he aroſe, and went into the houſe, and he poured the oil on his head, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, *even* over Iſrael. 7. And [d] thou ſhalt ſmite the houſe of Ahab thy maſter, [e] that I may avenge the blood of my ſervants the prophets, and the blood of all the ſervants of the LORD, [f] at the hand of Jezebel. 8. For the whole houſe of Ahab ſhall periſh, and I will cut off from Ahab him that piſſeth againſt the wall, and [g] him that is ſhut up and left in Iſrael. 9. And I will make the houſe of Ahab like the houſe of [h] Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, and like the houſe of [i] Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah. 10. And [k] the dogs ſhall eat Jezebel [l] in the portion of Jezreel, and *there ſhall be* none to bury *her*. And he opened the door, and fled.

† Heb. Sons.
[a] Chap. iv. 29.
‡ Heb. A chamber in a chamber.
[b] 1 Kings xix. 16.
[c] Mat. x. 16.
[d] 1 Kings xiv. 10. & xv. 29.
[e] Pſ. cxvi. 15. Luke xviii. 7. Rev. xviii. 20. & xix. 2.
[f] 1 Kings xviii. 4. & xxi. 10.
[g] Deut. xxxii. 36.
[h] 1 Kings xiv. 10.
[i] 1 Kings xvi. 3.
[k] 1 Kings xxi. 23. Ver. 35.
[l] Mat. vii. 2.

v. 1—10. Eliſha, according to the command of Elijah, who had delegated to him this office, had before appointed Hazael to the throne of Syria, and now ſends one to anoint Jehu to the throne of Iſrael.

1. He calls one of the young prophets to him, and giving him a box of oil, directs him to go to Ramoth-gilead, where Jehu probably commanded, and calling him aſide into an inner chamber, for ſecrecy and ſecurity, leſt the other captains ſhould diſcover the deſign, and it might endanger him, anoint him in God's name king of Iſrael, and give him the charge, *v.* 7—10.

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then flee immediately. *Note*, (1.) When we are employed in God's work, zeal and diligence are neceſſary. (2.) We muſt not expoſe ourſelves to needleſs danger; whilſt in the way of duty we ſhould be ever fearleſs. (3.) They who are ſent of God, muſt be faithful in delivering their meſſage as they have received it of the Lord, whether it be good or bad.

2. The commiſſion is executed with all diſpatch and fidelity. He comes to Ramoth-gilead, goes to the place where they were aſſembled, either at an entertainment, or in counſel; addreſſes himſelf to Jehu, and on repeating it, at his queſtion, that his buſineſs was with him, Jehu takes the prophet aſide. Hereupon he inveſts him with the regal power over God's people, and charges him to execute God's utter vengeance in the extirpation of the houſe of Ahab, the meaſure of whoſe iniquities the blood of God's prophets had filled up. His buſineſs finiſhed, he inſtantly departed, to acquaint Eliſha with what he had done. *Note*, (1.) Though God's people are unfaithful, he doth not utterly caſt them off, but ſtill remembers his covenant relation to them. (2.) They who rule, muſt remember whence all power is derived, and be humble; and for what end it is given, that they may employ it to God's glory. (3.) Perſecutors of God's people are among the moſt heinous offenders: againſt all ſuch his bow is bent, and his arrows ready on the ſtring. (4.) They who perſiſt in impenitence, will be rooted out at the laſt.

11. ¶ Then Jehu came forth to the ſervants of his lord, and *one* ſaid unto him, *Is* all well? wherefore came [m] this mad *fellow* to thee? And he ſaid unto them, Ye know the man and his communication. 12. And they ſaid, *It is* falſe, tell us now. And he ſaid, Thus and thus ſpake he to me, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Iſrael. 13. Then they haſted, and took every man his garment, and [n] put *it* under him on the top of the ſtairs, and blew with trumpets, ſaying, Jehu † is king. 14. So Jehu the ſon of Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Nimſhi conſpired againſt Joram: (Now Joram had kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Iſrael, becauſe of Hazael king of Syria: 15. But king ‡ Joram [o] was returned to be healed in Jezreel, of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu ſaid, If it be your minds, *then* let none go forth *nor* eſcape out of the city, to go to tell *it* in Jezreel.

[m] Iſa. lix. 15. Hoſ. ix. 7. Mark iii. 21. John x. 20. Acts xvii. 18. & xxvi. 24.
[n] Mat. xxi. 7.
† Heb. Reigneth.
‡ Heb. Jehoram.
[o] Chap. viii. 29.

v. 11—15. Jehu returned, no doubt, with concern upon his countenance, reſolving to wait till a favourable opportunity offered, and this was quickly given him.

1. The captains enquire of him what meſſage this mad fellow brought; ſo did theſe great men regard the holy prophets of God, whoſe lives of ſelf-denial and deadneſs to the world, appeared to them real madneſs. Jehu heſitates at firſt, and would put them off with an evaſive anſwer, as if they might eaſily gueſs what meſſage ſuch a kind of man brought, ſome religious reproof, or warning, no doubt. But they ſuſpected there was more in the matter than he ſpoke, as perhaps the confuſion and ſtruggle in which he appeared, indicated. At laſt, when he ſaw them eager to know, he told them plainly, and reſolved immediately to try, truſting on the Divine promiſe, what effect it would produce. *Note*, (1.) It is not the laſt time God's zealous ſervants have been called madmen. Thus Paul was branded, and even the bleſſed Jeſus; let none of his followers therefore marvel, if a carnal world ſtill thus judge of them. (2.) If worldly men expect from God's prophets reproof and religious converſation, let them not be diſappointed by an endeavour to ſecure their regard at the expence of ſilence, or any ſinful compliance with them.

2. They no ſooner hear, than with unanimous voice they ſalute him king, God ſo inclining their hearts; and in public, ſetting him on an eminent ſeat, with carpets or tapeſtry ſpread under him, they blew with trumpets, and tender him their allegiance. Jehu reſolves, with their advice, to prevent intelligence being carried to Joram, and inſtantly to ſurprize him in Jezreel, unprepared to make any reſiſtance. *Note*, (1.) Wicked kings are on a tottering throne. A ſpark will eaſily kindle general diſcontent into a flame. (2.) A terrible deſtruction hangs over the ſinner's head; and death, whenever it comes, will ſurprize him unprepared.

16. So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel, (for Joram lay there) and [p] Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to ſee Joram. 17. And there ſtood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he ſpied the company of Jehu as he came, and he ſaid, I ſee a company. And Joram ſaid, Take an horſeman, and ſend to meet them, and let him ſay, *Is it* peace? 18. So there went one on horſeback to meet him, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu ſaid, † What haſt thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, ſaying, The meſſenger came to them, but he cometh not again. 19. Then he ſent out a ſecond on horſeback, which came to them, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu anſwered, What haſt thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. 20. And the watchman told, ſaying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving *is* like the driving of Jehu the ſon of Nimſhi; for he driveth ‡ furiouſly. 21. And Joram ſaid, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Iſrael, and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out againſt Jehu, and met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. 22. And it came to paſs when Joram ſaw Jehu, that he ſaid, *Is it* peace, Jehu? And he anſwered, [q] What peace, ſo long as [r] the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and [s] her witchcrafts *are ſo* many? 23. And Joram turned his hands, and [t] fled, and ſaid to Ahaziah, *There is* treachery, O Ahaziah. 24. And Jehu § drew a bow with his full ſtrength, and ſmote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he ſunk down in his chariot. 25. Then ſaid *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, Take up, *and* caſt him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, [u] the LORD laid this burden upon him. 26. Surely, I have ſeen yeſterday the ‖ blood of Naboth, and the blood [x] of his ſons, ſaith the LORD, and I will requite thee in this plat, ſaith the LORD. Now therefore take *and* caſt him into the plat *of ground* according to the word of the LORD. 27. ¶ But when Ahaziah the king of Judah ſaw *this*, he fled by the way of the garden-houſe: and Jehu followed after him, and ſaid, [y] Smite him alſo in the chariot: *And they did ſo*, at the going up to Gur, which *is* by Ibleam: and he fled to Megiddo, and died there. 28. And his ſervants carried him in a chariot to Jeruſalem, and buried him in his ſepulchre with his fathers in the city of David. 29. And in the eleventh year of Joram the ſon of Ahab, † began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

[p] 2 Chron. xxii. 7.
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† Heb. What is it to thee and peace? 1 Kings xvii. 18.
‡ Heb. In madneſs. Chap. x 16.
[q] 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.
[r] Lev. xvi. 7. Rev. xvii. 1.
[s] Rev. xviii. 23.
[t] Pſ. l. 22. Amos ii. 14.
§ Heb. Filled his hand with a bow.
[u] 1 Kings xxi. 29.
‖ Heb. Bloods.
[x] Deut. xxiv. 16. 2 Chron. xxv. 4.
[y] Prov. xiii. 20. Rev. xviii. 4.
† i. e. as viceroy. A year after this, he began to reign alone. See Chap. viii. 26.

v. 16—29. As ſucceſs depended upon the ſwiftneſs of their march, we have them, chariots and horſemen, with eager haſte preſſing toward Jezreel.

1. The watchman on the tower deſcries at a diſtance the approaching company, and Joram, deſirous to know the cauſe, ſends out repeated meſſengers, whom Jehu detains. As he drew nearer, the watchman, by his furious driving, concludes it was Jehu, and the hoſt from Ramoth-gilead. *Note*, It is too late to enquire, Is it peace? when the ſword is unſheathed, and Jeſus with his hoſt appears, coming in the clouds of heaven to judge.

2. Unable through impatience to wait, or rather through divine infatuation hurried to his ruin, Joram orders his chariot, and haſtes to meet Jehu, and Ahaziah accompanies him; and where ſhould they meet but in the very ſpot of Naboth's vineyard. Joram, unſuſpicious of danger, ſeems only concerned to know, whether they came victors over the Syrians in triumph, or in flight as vanquiſhed; till Jehu's anſwer undeceived him, and the charge of his mother's idolatry and whoredoms, which he encouraged and copied, bid him deſpair of peace, and expect the ſword of an avenging God. *Note*, (1.) Providence, in many inſtances, by ſtrange events makes God's juſtice appear glorious in the eyes of men. (2.) Peace is ſtill the ſinner's cry, when ruin is at his very heels. (3.) The whoredoms that now are the ſinner's pleaſure, will ſhortly produce his everlaſting pain.

3. Too late the treachery is diſcovered, and Joram attempts to eſcape; but the arrow from Jehu's bow ſtops his flight, and, as the executioner of the divine vengeance, Jehu commands his captain to throw his dead corpſe in the vineyard of Naboth, according to the prophecy, 1 *Kings* xxi. 19. Nor muſt Ahaziah be ſpared: ſince he is found in ſuch bad company, he muſt fall with them. *Note*, (1.) When judgment overtakes the ſinner, it is then too late to fly. (2.) They who are found companions of fools, will be deſtroyed with them.

30. ¶ And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it*, and [z] ſhe † painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. 31. And as Jehu entred in at the gate, ſhe ſaid, [a] *Had* Zimri peace, who ſlew his maſter? 32. And he lift up his face to the window,

[z] Jer. iv. 30. Ezek. xxiii. 40.
† Heb. Put her eyes in painting.
[a] 1 Kings xvi. 18.

dow, and ſaid, [b] Who *is* on my ſide? who? And there looked out to him two *or* three eunuchs. 33. And he ſaid, Throw her down. So they threw her down; and *ſome* of her blood was ſprinkled on the wall, and on the horſes: [c] and he trode her under foot. 34. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and ſaid, Go, ſee now [d] this curſed *woman*, [e] and bury her: for [f] ſhe *is* a king's daughter. 35. And they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the ſkull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands. 36. Wherefore they came again, and told him: and he ſaid, [g] This *is* the word of the LORD, which he ſpake by his ſervant Elijah the Tiſhbite, ſaying, In the portion of Jezreel [h] ſhall dogs eat the fleſh of Jezebel: 37. And the carcaſe of Jezebel [i] ſhall be as dung upon the face of the field, in the portion of Jezreel, *ſo* that they ſhall not ſay, This *is* Jezebel.

[b] Pſ. xciv. 16.
[c] Mal. iv. 3.
[d] Prov. x. 7. Iſa. lxv. 15.
[e] Eccleſ. vi. 3.
[f] 1 Kings xvi. 31.
[g] 1 Kings xxi. 23.
[h] Job xxxi. 3. Acts xii. 23.
[i] Pſ. lxxxiii. 10.

v. 30—37. Long had this hateful monſter of a woman, big with miſchief, diſpenſed her baleful influence around, defying God, and tempted by long impunity to think ſhe ſhould ever reign as a queen, and ſee no ſorrow. But vengeance, though ſlow, is ſure.

1. Her pride and inſolence endured to the laſt. Unhumbled under the ſcourge now fallen upon her houſe, ſhe neither fled nor changed her countenance. Decked with paint and jewels, ſhe would ſtill act the queen, and from her window dares inſult and threaten the conquering Jehu. *Note*, (1.) When God in juſt judgment gives up the ſinner to his hardned heart, then he ruſhes on ruin as the horſe into the battle. (2.) A painted face is the devil's maſk. Like Jezebel, whom ſuch imitate, their pride will have a fall. (3.) They who would act with zeal for God, will be often inſulted and threatned; but like Jehu, they will not be intimidated.

2. Jehu mocking her impotent rage, calls out haſtily, *Who is on my ſide?* Who? and ſome eunuchs appearing at the ſummons, he bids them *throw her down*, which out of hatred of her pride, or fear of Jehu, they inſtantly complied with, and her blood beſmeared the walls of the palace, and was ſprinkled on Jehu's horſes, as he drove over her corps. *Note*, (1.) There is no ſtanding neuter between Chriſt and Belial. If we are on the Lord's ſide, we muſt appear for him. (2.) Wickedneſs and wretchedneſs are inſeparable. Though for a time the ſinner lifts his head high, it will be laid ſhortly low in the duſt, and ſtill lower in hell.

3. Having taken poſſeſſion of the palace, and refreſhed himſelf after his march, in reſpect for her royal deſcent, Jehu deſigns Jezebel a grave, forgetting the denunciation pronounced upon her, but God had fulfilled his own word. The dogs had devoured her carcaſe, and only a few ſcattered fragments remained; of which when Jehu was informed, he reflected on the word of Elijah, and admired its awful accompliſhment. She that alive was ſo imperious, cruel, and arrogant, is devoured as a carrion, and denied even a grave. *Note*, (1.) Whether we intend it or no, the word of the Lord will have its exact accompliſhment. (2.) Not only the corpſe, but the very memory of the wicked ſhall rot. (3.) Let Jezebel's fate be a warning againſt her ſins.

CHAP. X.

We have in this chapter, 1. *Jehu's execution of his commiſſion.* (1.) *Upon Ahab's ſons,* ver. 1—10. (2.) *Upon all his kindred,* ver. 11—17. 3. *Upon Ahaziah's brethren,* ver. 12—14. (4.) *Upon Ahab's idols, and their votaries,* ver. 15—28. 2. *His ſin in retaining the worſhip of the calves,* ver. 29—31. 3. *God's judgments upon him for it by Hazael, with which his reign concludes,* ver. 32—36.

1. AND Ahab had ſeventy ſons in Samaria: and Jehu wrote letters, and ſent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's *children*, ſaying, 2. Now aſſoon as this letter cometh to you, ſeeing your maſter's ſons *are* with you, and *there are* with you chariots and horſes, a fenced city alſo, and armour: 3. [a] Look even out the beſt and meeteſt of your maſter's ſons and ſet *him* on his father's throne, and fight for your maſter's houſe. 4. But they were exceedingly afraid, and ſaid, Behold, [b] two kings ſtood not before him: how then ſhall we ſtand? 5. And he that *was* over the houſe, and he that *was* over the city, the elders alſo and the bringers up *of the children* ſent to Jehu, ſaying, We *are* thy ſervants, and will do all that thou ſhalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou *that which is* good in thine eyes. 6. Then he wrote a letter the ſecond time to them, ſaying, If ye *be* † mine, and *if* ye will hearken unto my voice, [c] take ye the heads of the men your maſter's ſons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time: (now the king's ſons *being* ſeventy perſons, *were* with the great men of the city, which ‡ brought them up). 7. And it came to paſs when the letter came to them, that they took the king's ſons, and [d] ſlew ſeventy perſons, and put their heads in baſkets, and ſent *them* to Jezreel. 8. ¶ And there came a meſſenger, and told him, ſaying, They have brought the heads of the king's ſons. And he ſaid, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entring in of the gate, until the morning. 9. And it came to paſs in the morning, that he went out, and ſtood, and ſaid to all the people, Ye *be* righteous: behold, [e] I conſpired againſt my maſter, and ſlew him: but who ſlew all theſe? 10. Know now, [f] that there ſhall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD ſpake concerning the houſe of Ahab: for the LORD hath done *that* which he ſpake by his ſervant Elijah. 11. So Jehu ſlew all that remained of the houſe of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his § kinsfolks, and his prieſts, until he left him none remaining. 12. ¶ And he aroſe and departed, and came to Samaria. *And* as he *was* at the ‖ ſhearing-houſe in the way, 13. Jehu met with [g] the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and ſaid, Who *are* ye? And they anſwered, We *are* the brethren of Ahaziah, and we go down † to ſalute the children of the king, and the children of the queen. 14. And he ſaid, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and ſlew them at the pit of the ſhearing-houſe, *even* two and forty men; neither left he any of them.

[a] Deut. xvii. 15.
[b] Chap. ix. 24, 27. Luke xiv. 31.
† Heb. For me.
[c] Deut. v. 9. Joſh. vii. 24. 1 Kings xxi. 21. Jer. xlviii. 10.
‡ Heb. Made great, Iſa. i. 2.
[d] Rev. ii. 23.
[e] Chap. ix. 14.
[f] 1 Kings xxi. 19. Zech. i. 6. Tit. i. 2.
§ Or acquaintance.
‖ Heb. Houſe of ſhepherds binding ſheep.
[g] 2 Chron. xxii. 8.
† Heb. To the peace of.

v. 1—14. With fidelity Jehu proceeds in the execution of his commiſſion.

1. He ſends an officer to Samaria, where Ahab's ſons and grandſons were educated under the great men of his court, and bids them, if they dare, ſet up the nobleſt of them to diſpute the crown with him; not as adviſing the meaſure, but to intimidate them from the attempt.

2. Their coward hearts fainted; and, though they wanted nothing which could enable them to make a gallant reſiſtance, tamely ſubmit, and plead the death of the two kings, as a reaſon for their puſillanimity, though the argument was moſt abſurd, as they fell unarmed, and unable to reſiſt. *Note*, (1.) Guilt makes men cowards. (2.) When men want an excuſe to cover their ſhame, any ſhadow of argument will paſs. (3.) They who by their ſins reſiſt God, may reaſonably argue, *How ſhall we ſtand?*

3. To prove their ſubmiſſion, he orders them immediately to execute all their maſter's ſons, and ſend them by the morrow to Jezreel; and they, without heſitation at the perfidy and cruelty, inſtantly comply. They who had been Jezebel's wicked executioners upon Naboth and his ſons, now dye thoſe very hands in the blood of her children. *Note*, They who debauch mens conſciences, will find the effects of their wickedneſs often return upon their own heads.

4. Jehu in the morning appearing in the gate, where he had ordered the heads of the king's ſons to be caſt, acquits the people, and vindicates himſelf, by laying the load of guilt upon thoſe perfidious murderers, who ſo baſely betrayed their truſt, and reminds the people of God's hand in all this, as a judgment denounced on Ahab, thereby to reconcile them to his government, from which ſuch a bloody beginning might elſe have alienated them. *Note*, (1.) It is common for men to leſſen their own guilt, by compariſon with others; and to hope well of themſelves, merely becauſe others are worſe than they. (2.) God's judgments are righteous, though they who execute them act wickedly.

5. Jehu proceeded in his bloody work, and, without ſparing, ſlew all Ahab's relations, domeſtic prieſts, and great men, who had ſerved him, and probably, among them, the baſe murderers of his children. He reſolves not to do the work of the Lord deceitfully, or to keep back his ſword from blood, *Jer.* xlviii. 10. *Note*, They who have been inſtruments to wicked men in their ſins, will ſhortly ſuffer with them.

6. Ahaziah's brethren, or rather his brother's ſons, (*See* 2 *Chron*, xxii. 1.) ſhare the fate of Ahab's houſe. Unadviſed of what had paſſed, they are met going to pay their reſpects to Jezebel and Joram; and their avowed relation to them, and friendſhip for them, expoſe them to ruin.

15. ¶ And when he was departed thence, he † lighted on [h] Jehonadab the ſon of Rechab, *coming* to meet him, and he ‡ ſaluted him, and ſaid to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart *is* with thine heart? And Jehonadab anſwered,

† Heb. Found.
[h] Jer. xxxv. 6.
‡ Heb. Bleſſed.

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anſwered, || It is. If it be, [i] give *me* thy hand: and he gave *him* his hand, and he took him up to him into the chariot. 16. And he ſaid, Come with me, and ſee [k] my zeal for the LORD: So they made him ride in his chariot. 17. And when he came to Samaria, [l] he ſlew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had deſtroyed him, according to the ſaying of the LORD, which he ſpake to Elijah. 18. ¶ And Jehu gathered all the people together, and ſaid unto them, [m] Ahab ſerved Baal a little, [n] *but* Jehu ſhall ſerve him much. 19. Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his ſervants, and all his prieſts, let none be wanting: for I have a great ſacrifice *to do* to Baal; whoſoever ſhall be wanting, he ſhall not live. But Jehu did *it* in ſubtilty, to the intent that he might deſtroy the worſhippers of Baal. 20. And Jehu ſaid, § Proclaim a ſolemn aſſembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*. 21. And Jehu [o] ſent through all Iſrael, and all the worſhippers of Baal came, ſo that there was not a man left that came not: and they came into the houſe of Baal, and the houſe of Baal was full † from one end to another. 22. And he ſaid unto him that *was* over the veſtry, Bring forth veſtments for all the worſhippers of Baal. And he brought them forth [p] veſtments. 23. And Jehu went and Jehonadab the ſon of Rechab, into the houſe of Baal, and ſaid unto the worſhippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the ſervants of the LORD, but the worſhippers of Baal only. 24. And when they went in to offer ſacrifices and burnt-offerings, Jehu appointed fourſcore men without, and ſaid, *If* any of the men whom I have brought into your hands, eſcape, *he that letteth him go*, [q] his life *ſhall be* for the life of him. 25. And it came to paſs as ſoon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu ſaid to the guard, and to the captains, Go in, *and* ſlay them, [r] let none come forth. And they ſmote them with the ‡ edge of the ſword, and the guard and the captains caſt *them* out, and went to the city of the houſe of Baal. 26. And they brought forth the images out of the houſe of Baal, and burnt them. 27. And [s] they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the houſe of Baal, and made it [t] a draught-houſe unto this day. 28. Thus Jehu [u] deſtroyed Baal out of Iſrael.

|| Heb. It is, and it is.
[i] Ezra x. 19.
[k] Prov. xxvii. 2. Mat. vi. 2.
[l] Mal. iv. 1, 2.
[m] 1 Kings xvi. 31.
[n] Job xiii. 7. Rom. iii. 8.
§ Heb. Sanctify.
[o] 1 Kings xviii. 19.
† Heb. Mouth to mouth, i. e. So that they ſtood mouth to mouth. Joel iii 2. Rev. xvi. 16.
[p] Exod. xxviii. 2. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.
[q] 1 Kings xx. 39, 40.
[r] Ezek. ix. 5, 6.
‡ Heb. Mouth.
[s] Lev. xxvi. 30.
[t] Ezra vi. 11. Dan. ii. 5. & iii 29.
[u] Hoſ. ii. 17.

v. 15—28. Jehu with indefatigable diligence purſues his blow; and as he drives to Samaria,

1. He meets Jehonadab the ſon of Rechab, a man of eminent piety, coming to congratulate him on his acceſſion, and to encourage him to perfect what he had begun. Jehu with all reſpect ſalutes him, and enquires if Jehonadab as heartily eſpouſed his cauſe, as he reverenced and reſpected him. On receiving the warmeſt aſſurances of his good wiſhes, Jehu invites him into his chariot, that he may be convinced of his zeal in the Lord's cauſe; and by the preſence of ſo good a man, no doubt to gain the greater reputation to himſelf. *Note*, (1.) It is a queſtion we need often put to ourſelves and each other, *Is thine heart right?* upright and ſincere in God's ſervice. All profeſſion of zeal without that, is but hypocriſy and deſign. (2.) When good men's countenance to their cauſe is needful, great men will careſs them; but their kiſſes are uſually deceitful. (3.) Whenever there appears an outward fair profeſſion of zeal for God, a good man cannot but charitably wiſh ſucceſs, and countenance the work. Hearts muſt be left to God's ſearching. (4.) They who boaſt of their zeal, give cauſe to ſuſpect their ſincerity. (5.) Many will appear to ſerve God, as long as their own intereſt is advanced thereby, whoſe zeal quickly cools when they can no longer ſerve themſelves.

2. Having deſtroyed at Samaria all Ahab's friends and family, as he had done at Jezreel, he contrives how at a ſtroke to cut off the worſhippers of Baal from the land. The deſign was good, but the lie which paved the way was evil; profeſſing an uncommon zeal for the worſhip of Baal, which during Joram's reign, who had removed the image of Baal, might have been leſs public and ſolemn, he convokes all the prieſts and zealous worſhippers of Baal to Samaria, to partake of a great ſacrifice he intends to their God, threatning death to the man who ſhould be found wanting. This collected a vaſt concourſe, the gates of Baal's temple are open, the houſe thronged, and all the worſhippers dreſſed for the ſolemn ſervice; and now pretending zeal for the purity of the ſacrifice, leaſt any ſervants of Jehovah ſhould have mingled with them, he orders ſtrict ſearch to be made. All things being ready, guards are placed at the avenues, that not a man may eſcape: every ſoul is maſſacred in the temple, the building laid in ruins, the images burnt, and the worſhip of Baal for the time utterly exterminated. *Note*, (1.) The wiſdom of the ſerpent may be lawfully uſed in the cauſe of God, provided none of the poiſon of the ſerpent mingles therewith. (2.) The executioners of God's vengeance, more terrible than Jehu's guards, will ſhortly without mercy, execute their commiſſion on every ſervant of iniquity. (3.) God's cauſe, though long oppreſſed, will riſe victorious at the laſt; and when Jeſus ſhall have caſt the wicked into hell, then ſhall he reign over his ſaints glorioſly.

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29. ¶ [x] Howbeit, *from* the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin, Jehu departed not from after them, *to wit*, [y] the golden calves that *were* in Beth-el, and that *were* in Dan. 30. And the LORD ſaid unto Jehu, [z] Becauſe thou haſt done well in executing *that which is* right in mine eyes, *and* haſt done unto the houſe of Ahab according to all that *was* in mine heart, thy children of [a] the fourth *generation* ſhall ſit on the throne of Iſrael. 31. But Jehu † took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Iſrael with all his heart: *for* he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam, which made Iſrael to ſin. 32. ¶ In thoſe days the LORD began to ‡ cut Iſrael ſhort: and Hazael ſmote them in all the coaſts of Iſrael; 33. From Jordan || eaſtward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manaſſites, from Aroer (which *is* by the river Arnon) [b] even Gilead and Baſhan. 34. Now the reſt of the Acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 35. And Jehu ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Jehoahaz his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 36. And the § time that Jehu reigned over Iſrael in Samaria, *was* twenty and eight years.

[x] Ibid. i 4. Mark vi. 20. & xii. 34.
[y] 1 Kings xii. 28.
[z] Mat. vi. 2. & x. 42.
[a] Chap. xv. 10, 12.
† Heb. Obſerved not. Pſal. xxxix. 1. Prov. iv. 23.
‡ Heb. Cut off the ends.
860.
|| Heb. Toward the riſing of the ſun.
[b] Amos i. 3, 4.
856.
§ Heb. Days.

v. 29—36. What a pity that ſuch promiſing appearances ſhould ſtop ſhort! Many come to be *almoſt*, who are not *altogether* chriſtians.

1. God declares his approbation of Jehu's conduct in general. Though his heart was far from right, and the methods he took unjuſtifiable, yet the execution of God's judgments upon the idolaters was agreeable to God's will, and therefore a preſent reward is given him. The throne is aſſured to his poſterity, to the fourth generation. *Note*, If a hypocrite's ſervices have a temporal reward, how much more may the faithful expect, the eternal and never-fading crown of glory.

2. Jehu's end anſwered not his beginnings. He was, with with all his zeal, irreligious in temper; took no heed to walk in God's ways or worſhip; careleſs about pleaſing him, when he was ſafe fixed on the throne: and though he had put away the worſhip of Baal, he ſtill ſtuck to the calves of Jeroboam, for the ſame political reaſons as his predeceſſors. *Note*, (1.) They who are real converts, put away ſin without reſerve; not merely leaving thoſe ſins they grew tired of, or which hurted them, but thoſe that are moſt gainful and ſeemingly neceſſary. If a hoof of the calves be allowedly left behind, we may not hope to pleaſe a jealous God. (2.) Negligence in the concerns of God's ſervice is fatally ruinous. (3.) A man may be the inſtrument of much good to other men's ſouls, and yet after all loſe his own.

3. The puniſhment of his unfaithful conduct, which it is to be feared his people imitated, God ſoon made him feel in the loſs of all that part of his kingdom beyond Jordan, where the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manaſſeh lay. They eagerly ſought their ſettlement firſt, and now they are the firſt to ſuffer, maſſacred no doubt; See *chap.* viii. 12. and led captive by Hazael, king of Syria. *Note*, They who chuſe for themſelves, without conſulting God, will uſually ſmart for it.

4. Jehu's reign concludes after twenty-eight years; a longer ſpace than moſt of his predeceſſors enjoyed, yet the events of it are buried for the moſt part in oblivion. Nothing farther good and gracious appeared in him to deſerve mention, and all he did beſide may better be buried with him. They are only truly great, and their memory to be had in honour, whoſe goodneſs marks them for examples to ſucceeding generations.

CHAP. XI.

On the death of Ahaziah, 1. *Athaliah uſurped the government, and deſtroyed all the ſeed royal, except Joaſh, a child of a year old,* ver. 2, 3. 2. *At ſix years end, by the agency of Jehoiada, he is made king,* ver. 4—12. 3. *Athaliah is ſlain,* ver. 13—16. 4. *Both the civil and religious intereſts of the kingdom are well ſettled in the hands of Joaſh,* ver. 17—21.

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1. [a] AND when Athaliah [b] the mother of Ahaziah ſaw that her ſon [c] was dead, ſhe aroſe, and deſtroyed all

[a] 2 Chron. xxii. 10.
[b] Chap. viii. 26.
[c] Chap. ix. 27.

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all the ſeed † royal. 2. But Jehoſheba the daughter of king Joram, ſiſter of Ahaziah, took Joaſh the ſon of Ahaziah, and ſtole him from among the king's ſons *which were* ſlain; and they hid him, *even* him and his nurſe in the bed-chamber [d] from Athalia, ſo that he was not ſlain. 3. And he was with her hid in the houſe of the LORD, ſix years: and Athaliah [e] did reign over the land.

† Heb. Of the kingdom. Rev. xvii. 6.
[d] 1 Kings xi. 36. Prov. xxi. 30.
[e] Mal. iii. 15.

v. 1—3. Never was royal blood ſo profuſely ſpilt. Jehoram had ſlain his own brothers, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 4. The Arabians, all his ſons, except Ahaziah, 2 *Chron.* xxii. 1. Jehu his brother's children, *chap.* x. 14. and now Athaliah ſeeks to exterminate the whole race, and but for the promiſe made to David, *chap.* viii. 19. had ſucceeded. Ambition to reign, ſteeled her hard heart againſt her own offſpring; and that ſhe might have no rival to grow up to conteſt the crown, ſhe murders all her grandchildren. What devils incarnate would the human race appear, and what an aceldama, a field of blood, would the earth be, but for the reſtraining grace of God!

Joram's daughter, by another wife, who was married to the high-prieſt, ſnatched one babe of Ahaziah's children from the bloody knife; and with his nurſe, hid him in one of the bed-chambers belonging to the prieſts which attended the temple, whilſt Athaliah peaceably for ſix years poſſeſſed the bloody crown, and ſeemed fearleſs of a competitor. *Note*, (1.) The ſeed of David's ſon, like the ſeed royal here, ſometimes are ſo reduced, that their place ſeems no where found; but God in the worſt times will not ſuffer the lamp of his church utterly to be extinguiſhed. (2.) Every believer who comes to his throne, may regard himſelf like Joaſh, a brand plucked from the burning. (3.) Tho' ſinners appear ſecure in triumphant wickedneſs, their judgment lingreth not.

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4. ¶ [f] And the ſeventh year Jehoiada ſent and ſet the rulers over hundreds, with the captains, and the guard, and brought them to him into the houſe of the LORD, and [g] made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the houſe of the LORD, and ſhewed them the king's ſon. 5. And he commanded them, ſaying, This *is* the thing that ye ſhall do; [h] A third part of you that enter in on the ſabbath, ſhall even be keepers of the watch of the king's houſe: 6. [h] And a third part *ſhall be* at the gate of Sur: and [h] a third part at the gate behind the guard: ſo ſhall ye keep the watch of the houſe, that it be not broken down. 7. And two parts of all you, that go forth on the ſabbath, *even* they ſhall keep the watch of the houſe of the LORD about the king. 8. And ye ſhall compaſs the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranges, [i] let him be ſlain; and be ye with the king, as he goeth out, and as he cometh in. 9. And the captains over the hundreds did according to all *things* that Jehoiada the prieſt commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the ſabbath, with them that ſhould go out on the ſabbath, and came to Jehoiada the prieſt. 10. And to the captains over hundreds did the prieſts give king David's ſpears, and ſhields that *were* in the temple of the LORD. 11. And the guard ſtood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple, to the left corner of the temple, *along* by the altar and the temple. 12. And he brought forth the king's ſon, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him* [k] the teſtimony, and they made him king, and anointed him, and [l] they clapt their hands, and ſaid, † God ſave the king.

[f] 2 Chron. xxiii. 1, &c.
[g] Ibid. xv. 12. Ezra x. 3.
[h h h] Luke i. 8, 9.
[i] Exod. xxi. 14.
[k] Deut. xvii. 18, 19.
[l] Pſal. xlvii. 1.
† Heb. Let the king live. Pſal. lxxii. 15.

v. 4—12. When Athaliah by her idolatry and murders had now rendered herſelf juſtly odious, Jehoiada begins to prepare for the reſtoration of the rightful heir to the crown of Judah.

1. He concerts the plan of operations with his brethren the Levites, and their chief rulers; and having exacted from them an oath of ſecrecy, ſhewed them the king. The ſabbath was choſen for the execution of their deſign, when a new courſe coming in to relieve the other, would greatly ſtrengthen their hands, without giving ſuſpicion. Theſe were ordered to the ſeveral poſts, part to guard the temple from profane intruders, or to prevent the entrance of Athaliah's partiſans, part to ſurround the king for ſtate and ſecurity.

2. When all were fixed at their poſts, the king is brought forth, crowned and anointed with great ſolemnity, and the book of the law put into his hand, intimating that this muſt be the rule of his future conduct. Immediately they who were preſent, rend the air with joyful acclamations, and wiſh the king long to live; which the people now aſſembled in the court, joyfully echo back. *Note*, (1.) Kings muſt know they are not above law, but muſt be accountable to the King of kings. (2.) When Satan, the uſurper, is caſt down from the throne of the heart, and Jeſus exalted there, with exultation well may we cry, Hoſanna to the Son of David.

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13. ¶ And when Athaliah heard the noiſe of the guard, *and* of the people, ſhe came to the people into the temple of the LORD. 14. And when ſhe looked, behold, the king ſtood [m] by a pillar, as the manner *was*, and the princes, and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, [n] Treaſon, treaſon. 15. But Jehoiada the prieſt commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the hoſt, and ſaid unto them, Have her forth without the ranges; and him that followeth her [o] kill with the ſword. For the prieſt had ſaid, Let her not be ſlain in the houſe of the LORD. 16. And they laid hands on her, and ſhe went by the way by the which the horſes came into the king's houſe, and there was ſhe [p] ſlain.

[m] Chap. xxiii. 3. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31.
[n] 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. Ver. 1. Mat. vii. 5. Rom. ii. 1—3.
[o] Rev. xix. 20.
[p] Judg. i. 7. Mat. vii. 2. Rev. xviii. 6.

v. 13—16. Quickly theſe ſounds of unwelcome joy reached Athaliah's ears; and though ſhe ſeldom, it is to be feared, frequented the temple of the Lord, now ſhe haſtens thither, to enquire into the cauſe.

1. With ſurprize and conſternation ſhe beholds the infant king ſtanding ſurrounded with his guards, and receiving the homage of his people; and tranſported with fury, cries out, Treaſon. Vain cry! Who would eſpouſe her wicked cauſe, or help a bloody traitor againſt their rightful ſovereign? *Note*, (1.) When uſurpers rule, loyalty will be called rebellion. (2.) They who are moſt criminal, are often the firſt to reproach the innocent.

2. Jehoiada orders her to be ſlain, as an idolater, murderer, and uſurper, and all who ſhould offer to aſſiſt her; but to take her out, that they might not defile the temple with her blood. She is accordingly ſeized as ſhe fled to the palace, and ſlain without reſiſtance. *Note*, They who by iniquity riſe to honour, though during their power they may ſeem to be adored; no ſooner begin to fall, than they will ſee themſelves deſerted.

17. ¶ And Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, and [q] the king and the people, that they ſhould be the LORD's people; between the king alſo and [r] the people. 18. And all the people of the land [s] went into the houſe of Baal, and brake it down, his altars and his images brake they in pieces throughly, and ſlew Mattan the prieſt of Baal before the altars: and the prieſt appointed officers over the houſe of the LORD. 19. And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land, and they brought down the king from the houſe of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's houſe, and he ſat on the throne of the kings. 20. And [t] all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet; and they ſlew Athaliah with the ſword, *beſide* the king's houſe. 21. Seven years old *was* Jehoaſh when he began to reign.

[q] Deut. xvii. 16, &c. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.
[r] Rom. xiii. 3, 4.
[s] Chap. x. 27.
[t] Prov. xi. 10.

v. 17—21. The way to the throne being opened, Jehoiada, amidſt the ſucceſs of his politicks, forgets not the greater intereſts of religion.

1. A ſolemn covenant is made between God, and the king and people. The high-prieſt in God's name declaring his promiſes, and they pledging their fidelity: then followed the mutual engagement between the prince and his ſubjects: he engaged to rule according to God's word; and they in return, according to the ſame word, promiſing all dutiful allegiance. *Note*, (1.) They who firſt give themſelves to God, may comfortably hope for his bleſſing upon their undertakings. (2.) That kingdom will be truly happy, where God's word is made the rule of the monarch's government, and of the people's obedience.

2. The people encouraged by this good example, teſtify their zeal againſt Baal's hated worſhip, break down his temple, images, altars, and ſlay Mattan, the idol-prieſt, at the altar. And as Athaliah ſeems to have neglected the temple ſervice, order is there reſtored. *Note*, (1.) When religion comes in faſhion, every man will appear zealous. (2.) Order in the houſe of God is beautiful; but holineſs in the worſhippers, the greateſt ornament of the ſervice.

3. The ſtate is now comfortably ſettled, the king goes to his palace, to ſit on the throne of his anceſtors, and the people rejoice in his reſtoration; promiſing themſelves peace under the government of a prince, who had ſo good a man as Jehoiada for his guardian and inſtructor.

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CHAP. XII.

Joaſh's reign ends not as it begins (See 2 Chron. xxiv.) 1. *He did well while Jehoiada lived*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He was careful and active to repair the temple*, ver. 4—16. 3. *But made a mean compoſition with Hazael*, ver. 17, 18. *And died ingloriouſly*, ver. 19—21.

1. IN the ſeventh year of Jehu, Jehoaſh began to reign; and [a] forty years reigned he in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Zibiah of Beer-ſheba. 2. And Jehoaſh did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD all his days, wherein Jehoiada the prieſt inſtructed him. 3. [b] But the high places were not taken away: [c] the people ſtill ſacrificed and burnt incenſe in the high places.

[a] 2 Chron. xxiv. 1, &c.
[b] 1 Kings xv. 14. & xxii. 43. Chap. xiv. 4.
[c] Deut. xii. 11.

v. 1—3. Very promiſing were the beginnings of this minority. Under Jehoiada's inſtructions, Jehoaſh cleaved to the true worſhip of God, and continued ſteadfaſt as long as Jehoiada lived. Howbeit, cuſtom had ſo eſtabliſhed the high places, which were uſed for ſacrifices before the temple was built, that Jehoiada either could not, or dared not attempt this reformation. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt mercy that a child can be bleſt with, is a pious tutor; but whilſt the great are ſo ſollicitous to have their ſons educated in every human accompliſhment, how few concern themſelves about their being taught what *is right in the ſight of the Lord?* (2.) Old and evil cuſtoms are hard to be eradicated.

4. ¶ And Jehoaſh ſaid to the prieſts, [d] All the money of the † dedicated things that is brought into the houſe of the LORD, *even* [e] the money of every one that paſſeth *the account*, the money [f] that every man is ſet at, *and* all the money [g] that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the houſe of the LORD, 5. Let the prieſts take *it* to them, every man of his acquaintance, and let them repair the breaches of the houſe, whereſoever any breach ſhall be found. 6. But it was *ſo*, *that* in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoaſh, the prieſts had not repaired the breaches of the houſe. 7. Then king Jehoaſh called for Jehoiada the prieſt, and the *other* prieſts, and ſaid unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the houſe? now therefore receive no *more* money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the houſe. 8. And the prieſts conſented to receive no *more* money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the houſe. 9. But Jehoiada the prieſt took [h] a cheſt, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and ſet it beſide the altar on the right ſide, as one cometh into the houſe of the LORD: and the prieſts that kept the ‡ door, put therein all the money *that was* brought into the houſe of the LORD. 10. And it was *ſo*, when they ſaw that *there was* much money in the cheſt, that [i] the king's ſcribe, and the high prieſt came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money *that was* found in the houſe of the LORD. 11. And [k] they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the overſight of the houſe of the LORD: and they ‖ laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the houſe of the LORD. 12. And to maſons, and hewers of ſtone, and to buy timber, and hewed ſtone to repair the breaches of the houſe of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the houſe to repair *it*. 13. Howbeit, [l] there were not made for the houſe of the LORD, [m] bowls of ſilver, ſnuffers, baſons, [n] trumpets, any veſſels of gold, or veſſels of ſilver, of the money *that was* brought into the houſe of the LORD. 14. But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the houſe of the LORD. 15. Moreover, [o] they reckoned not with the men, into whoſe hand they delivered the money to be beſtowed on workmen: for they dealt § faithfully. 16. [p] The treſpaſs-money, and ſin-money was not brought into the houſe of the LORD: it was the prieſts.

[d] Chap. xxii. 4.
† Heb. Holineſſes.
[e] Exod. xxx. 13.
[f] Lev. xxvii. 2, 3.
[g] Exod. xxv. 2. & xxxv. 5. 1 Chron. xxix. 9. & Ezra vii. 16. & viii. 25.
856.
[h] Mark xii. 41.
‡ Heb. Threſhold. Pſal. lxxxiv. 10.
[i] Chap. xix. 2.
[k] Ibid. xxii. 5.
‖ Heb. Brought it forth.
[l] 2 Chron. xxiv. 14.
[m] 1 Kings vii. 50.
[n] Num. x. 2.
[o] Chap. xxii. 7.
§ Heb, In truth. Neh. vii. 2.
[p] Lev. vii. 7. Num. xviii. 9.

v. 4—16. The temple of the Lord was gone out of repair, not ſo much by natural decay, as by the violence offered it by Athaliah, and her ungodly ſons, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 7. and the prieſts it ſhould ſeem were not careful to repair it, perhaps unable, the defection of the ten tribes having greatly leſſened their proviſion.

1. The king therefore, whether for God's glory, or in gratitude for his preſervation there, ſollicitous to ſee it repaired and beautified, orders a collection to be made through the cities, and the redemption-money, *Exod.* xxx. 13. to be applied to repair the breaches. *Note*, (1.) When God's houſe goes to decay, it is a ſign the prieſts want zeal for the ſervice. (2.) They who are great, ſhould be encouragers of godlineſs, and excite to diligence, and aſſiſt with their influence the miniſters of the ſanctuary.

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2. The expedient did not anſwer; either the people were backward, or the prieſts negligent or unfaithful. In the 23d year the breaches remained, and the king juſtly reproves them for it. The prieſts therefore conſented to give up the matter into the king's hand, and Jehoiada, at his command, made a cheſt, into which the redemption-money and freewill-offerings were to be put. Thither, on proclamation made, (ſee 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 9.) the people liberally brought their contributions; and when there was much money in it, to avoid all ſuſpicion of diſhoneſty, the high-prieſt and ſecretary of ſtate counted the ſum, and laid it up in bags, till enough was collected. *Note*, (1.) They who profeſs great zeal for religion, are often backward enough to part from their money for the ſupport of it. (2.) When prieſts give ſuſpicion of their love of filthy lucre, no wonder the people with-hold their hand. (3.) Approved fidelity in the diſtribution, will encourage liberal contribution.

3. The money being ready, the preparations go forward; and ſo faithful were the overſeers, that their accounts needed no examination. What they laid out at firſt was only for uſe, not ornament; but afterwards, (ſee 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 14.) when they found enough left, they added veſſels of gold and ſilver, inſtead of thoſe Athaliah had taken away, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 7. *Note*, Church work is generally ill done, and long in hand; for to rob the church or the public is ſeldom thought criminal: but an honeſt man fears God, and therefore acts uprightly.

4. The maintenance of the prieſts was not neglected amidſt the repairs of the temple, *v.* 16. They who are to ſerve at the altar, muſt live by the altar.

17. ¶ Then [q] Hazael king of Syria [r] went up, and fought againſt Gath, and took it: and Hazael ſet his face to go up to Jeruſalem. 18. And Jehoaſh king of Judah [s] took all the hallowed things that Jehoſhaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold *that was* found in the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD, and in the king's houſe, and ſent *it* to Hazael king of Syria, and he † went away from Jeruſalem. 19. ¶ And the reſt of the acts of Joaſh, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20. And [t] his ſervants aroſe, and ‡ made a conſpiracy, and ſlew Joaſh in the houſe of Millo, which goeth down to Silla. 21. For [u] Jozachar the ſon of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the ſon of Shomer, his ſervants, ſmote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David, and Amaziah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[q] Chap. viii. 12.
840.
[r] 2 Chron. xxiv. 23.
[s] 1 Kings xv. 18. Chap. xviii. 15, 16.
† Heb. Sent up.
[t] Chap. xiv. 5.
‡ Heb. Conſpired a conſpiracy.
[u] 2 Chron. xxiv. 26.

v. 17—21. Jehoiada being dead, and Joaſh apoſtate, God viſits him with a ſevere ſcourge.

1. Hazael king of Syria, after the capture of Gath, prepares for the ſiege of Jeruſalem; and Joaſh now having deſerted God, and being juſtly deſerted by him, inſtead of returning to ſeek his favour, by robbing his temple endeavours to bribe his enemy. An impolitic contrivance, which only tempted the Syrians to a ſpeedy return, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. *Note*, They who forſake God, grow fooliſh in their imaginations, and haſten their ruin by the means they uſe to avert it.

2. His wickedneſs and cruelty exaſperated his ſubjects, and two of his ſervants conſpired againſt him, and ſlew him. Thus ingloriouſly ended that reign, ſo promiſingly begun. *Note*, Apoſtates from God, as they bring greater diſhonour upon religion than others, may expect to be viſited with God's heavy hand.

CHAP. XIII.

We have here, 1. *The reign of Jehoahaz, the ſon of Jehu, his ſin, his humiliation, his relapſe, his ſuffering, and his death*, ver. 1—9. 2. *Of Jehoaſh*, ver. 11—13. 3. *The death of Eliſha, after encouraging the king againſt the Syrians*, ver. 14—20. 4. *A miracle wrought by his bones*, ver. 20, 21. 5. *The victories of Jehoaſh*, ver. 24, 25.

1. IN the three and twentieth year of Joaſh the ſon of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the ſon of Jehu began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, *and reigned* ſeventeen years. 2. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, and followed the ſins of Jeroboam

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roboam the ſon of Nebat, which made Iſrael to ſin, he departed not therefrom. 3. ¶ And the anger of the LORD was [a] kindled againſt Iſrael, and he delivered them [b] into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the ſon of Hazael, all *their* days. 4. And Jehoahaz [c] beſought the LORD, and the LORD hearkned unto him: for [d] he ſaw the oppreſſion of Iſrael, becauſe the king of Syria oppreſſed them. 5. (And the LORD gave Iſrael [e] a ſaviour, ſo that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Iſrael dwelt in their tents as beforetime. 6. Nevertheleſs, they departed not from the ſins of the houſe of Jeroboam, who made Iſrael ſin, *but* † walked therein: and [f] there ‡ remained the grove alſo in Samaria.) 7. Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz, but fifty horſemen, and ten chariots, and ten thouſand footmen; for the king of Syria had deſtroyed them, and [g] had made them like the duſt by threſhing. 8 ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 9. And Jehoahaz ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Joaſh his ſon || reigned in his ſtead.

[a] Deut. iv. 24. Heb. xii. 29.
[b] Chap. viii. 13. Iſa. x. 5, 6.
[c] Pſal. lxxviii. 34.
842.
[d] Exod. iii. 7.
[e] Ver. 25. Chap. xiv. 25, 27.
† Heb. He walked.
[f] Deut. vii. 5.
‡ Heb. Stood.
[g] Chap. viii. 12. Amos i. 3.
839.
|| i.e. alone.

v. 1—9. Amidſt the various revolutions of Iſrael, the worſhip of the calves blackened every reign. Jehoahaz in this followed his predeceſſors, and during his ſeventeen years, neither mercies nor judgments wrought a reformation. We have here,

1. The miſerable eſtate to which Iſrael was reduced. Of all their multitude of brave warriors, ſcarce a handful remained, *v.* 7. and Jehoahaz, always unſucceſsful, expected daily the final ruin of his kingdom. *Note*, When men make themſelves wicked, God will often make them vile.

2. In his diſtreſs, Jehoahaz had recourſe to that God he had ſo diſhonoured, and found compaſſion in his merciful boſom. Though not in his own days, yet in his ſon's, God interpoſed to ſave his people from the Syrians; but their ingratitude notwithſtanding remained, till the meaſure of their ſins being full, ruin overtook them. *Note*, (1.) God will hear the prayer of diſtreſs, and they who cry to him, however vile they may have been, ſhall find there is in him, grace abounding to the chief of ſinners. (2.) They who continue to ſin againſt their mercies, provoke God to give them up to the judgments they deſerve.

10. ¶ In the thirty and ſeventh year of Joaſh king of Judah, began Jehoaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz † to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, *and reigned* ſixteen years. 11. And he did *that which was* evil [h] in the ſight of the LORD; he departed not from all the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael ſin: *but* he walked therein. 12. And the reſt of the acts of Joaſh, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought againſt Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 13. And Joaſh ſlept with his fathers, and Jeroboam ſat upon his throne: and Joaſh was buried in Samaria, with the kings of Iſrael.

841.
† i. e. In conſort with his father. See Chap. xiv. 1.
[h] Gen. xxxviii. 7.

v. 10—13. Joaſh copied after his father, and followed his calves; but for his people's ſake, God ſtrengthened him to break off the yoke of the Syrians, and to oppoſe the unprovoked invaſion of Amaziah. Little is recorded of his ſixteen years reign, becauſe little good was found in them; and great as he was in battle, death brought him to his grave, *for there is no diſcharge in this war.*

14. ¶ Now Eliſha was fallen ſick, of his ſickneſs whereof [i] he died, and Joaſh the king of Iſrael came down unto him, and wept over his face, and ſaid, [k] O my father, my father, [l] the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof. 15. And Eliſha ſaid unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. 16. And he ſaid to the king of Iſrael, ‡ Put thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand *upon it:* and [m] Eliſha put his hands upon the king's hands. 17. And he ſaid, Open the window eaſtward: and he opened *it.* Then Eliſha ſaid, Shoot: and he ſhot. And he ſaid, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou ſhalt ſmite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have conſumed *them.* 18. And he ſaid, Take the arrows: and he took *them.* And he ſaid unto the king of Iſrael, [n] Smite upon the ground: and he ſmote thrice, and ſtayed. 19. And the man of God was wroth with him, and ſaid, Thou ſhouldſt have ſmitten five or ſix times, then hadſt thou ſmitten Syria, till thou hadſt conſumed *it:* [o] whereas now thou ſhalt ſmite Syria *but* thrice.

839.
[i] Iſa. lvii. 1. Zech. i. 5.
[k] Chap. ii. 12.
[l] Ezek. xxii. 30.
‡ Make thine hand to ride.
[m] Pſal. cxliv. 1.
[n] Exod. xvii. 11. Iſa. xxviii. 21.
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[o] Ver. 25.

v. 14—19. The beſt action of Joaſh ſeems to be the concern here teſtified for the prophet; though it is to be feared he lamented more his loſs, as the ſafeguard of his crown, than as the ſupporter of the true religion.

1. Eliſha, after a long and uſeful life, draws to the grave. the beſt of men are dying worms. Joaſh in great reſpect, no ſooner hears of his ſickneſs, than he haſtes to viſit him, that he might receive his parting advice and benediction. He grieves to think of loſing him; and though he appears little affected with his preaching, yet he conſidered him as a greater guard to Iſrael, than the chariots or horſemen. *Note*, (1.) Dying beds of great miniſters are uſeful ſchools of inſtruction. (2.) The removal of the few faithful, is a great weakening to every nation's defence. (3.) Their loſs will be felt at death, who when alive were neglected.

2. Eliſha comforts him with aſſurances of ſucceſs; though he was removing, God was ſtill the ſame, and by two ſignificant ſigns, he would confirm his faith in the promiſe. He bids him ſhoot an arrow towards Syria, and when he was ready to draw the bow, Eliſha lays his hands upon the king's, in token of the power with which God would ſtrengthen him. The arrow he calls the *Lord's deliverance from Syria*, becauſe God hereby ſignified his victory over his enemies, whoſe forces, collected at Aphek, ſhould be utterly routed by him. He farther bid him ſmite with the arrows againſt the ground. Thrice the king in obedience ſmote, but either not underſtanding the meaning, or becauſe it ſeemed a ſilly action, he ſtayed; and the prophet, grieved at his folly, rebukes him for not ſmiting oftener, as every ſtroke ſignified a victory: and now only in three battles would he prevail. *Note*, (1.) When God's everlaſting arms are under us, then ſhall we be ſtrengthened againſt our ſpiritual enemies. (2.) They who improve not their advantages, have only themſelves to blame. (3.) It is a grief to a godly miniſter to ſee thoſe cold and negligent, from whom he might expect the livelieſt zeal.

20. ¶ And Eliſha died, and they buried him: and the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. 21. And it came to paſs as they were burying a man, that behold, they ſpied a band *of men*, and they caſt the man into the ſepulchre of Eliſha: and when the man † was let down, and touched the bones of Eliſha, he revived, and ſtood up on his feet. 22. ¶ But Hazael king of Syria [p] oppreſſed Iſrael all the days of Jehoahaz. 23. And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compaſſion on them, and had reſpect unto them, [q] becauſe of his covenant with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and would not deſtroy them, neither caſt he them from his preſence as yet. 24. So Hazael king of Syria died, and Ben-hadad his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 25. And Jehoaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the ſon of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war: [r] three times did Joaſh beat him, and recovered the cities of Iſrael.

838.
† Heb. Went and touched.
Ezek. xxxvii. 10. Ecclus xlviii. 14.
[p] Chap. viii. 12.
[q] Exod. xxxii. 13. Pſal. cv. 8.
[r] Ver. 18, 19.

v. 20—25. He who was great when alive, even in his grave appears with diſtinguiſhed glory. We have,

1. The miracle wrought by Eliſha's bones. A band of the Moabites making a ſudden irruption into Iſrael, were perceived by a company who were carrying a corpſe to the grave. In haſte to eſcape, they threw it into a ſepulchre at hand, which happened to be Eliſha's; and no ſooner had the dead body touched the prophet's bones, than it revived. *Note*, (1.) If the bones of a prophet have ſuch power to raiſe the dead, how much more ſhall the grave of Jeſus open to us the gates of life and immortality? (2.) When dying believers lay their bodies in the duſt, it is in ſure and certain hope of a glorious reſurrection.

2. God in compaſſion to Iſrael, and for his promiſe ſake to Abraham, enabled Joaſh, according to the prophet's words, three times to vanquiſh the Syrians, and recover the cities of Iſrael from them. *Note*, God waits long, and is gracious, if by any means his goodneſs might lead ſinners to repentance.

CHAP. XIV.

We have here, 1. *The good beginning of Amaziah's reign,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The execution of his father's murderers,* ver. 5, 6. 3. *His victory over the Edomites,* ver. 7. 4. *His war with Joaſh, and his defeat in that war,* ver. 8—14. 5. *His fall by a con-*

a conſpiracy, ver. 17—20. 6. *The beginning of Azariah's reign*, ver. 21, 22. 7. *The reign of Joaſh*, ver. 15, 16. *And*, 8. *Of Jeroboam his ſon*, ver. 23—29.

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1. IN the ſecond year of Joaſh ſon of Jehoahaz king of Iſrael, reigned [a] Amaziah the ſon of Joaſh king of Judah. 2. He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jeruſalem. 3. And [b] he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joaſh his father did. 4. [c] Howbeit, the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did ſacrifice, and burnt incenſe on the high places. 5. ¶ And it came to paſs as ſoon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that [d] he ſlew his ſervants which had [e] ſlain the king his father. 6. But the children of the murderers he ſlew not; according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moſes, wherein the LORD commanded, ſaying, [f] The fathers ſhall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers: but every man ſhall be put to death for his own ſin. 7. He ſlew of [g] Edom in [h] the valley of ſalt, ten thouſand, and took † Selah by war, and called the name of it ‡ Joktheel, unto this day.

839.
[a] 2 Chron. xxv. 1.
[b] Chap. xii. 2.
[c] Ibid. 3.
838.
[d] Gen. ix. 6. Num. xxxv. 33.
[e] Chap. xii. 20.
[f] Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii. 4—20.
[g] Chap. viii. 22.
[h] 2 Sam. viii. 13.
† i. e. a rock.
‡ i. e. the obedience of God. 2 Chron. xxv. 10.

v. 1—7. Amaziah ſucceeded his father Joaſh in Judah, and followed his ways; began well, but ended ill.

1. He externally kept up the worſhip of God, but his heart was not right with him, as David's. The high places alſo he ſuffered to remain. *Note*, Outward formality may paſs upon men, but God requires the heart.

2. He juſtly puniſhed the conſpirators againſt his father, as ſoon as he was well fixed on the throne. Their children, however, he ſlew not, according to the law, *Deut.* xxiv. 16. *Note*, Though blood ſleeps for a while, vengeance will at laſt overtake the murderer.

3. In his war againſt Edom, which had revolted, he was ſucceſsful, vanquiſhed them in battle, and took Selah, which he called Joktheel.

826.

8. ¶ Then Amaziah ſent meſſengers to Jehoaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz, ſon of Jehu king of Iſrael, ſaying, [i] Come, let us look one another in the face. 9. And Jehoaſh the king of Iſrael ſent to Amaziah king of Judah, ſaying, [k] The thiſtle that *was* in Lebanon, ſent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy daughter to my ſon to wife: and there paſſed by a wild beaſt that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thiſtle. 10. Thou haſt indeed ſmitten Edom, and [l] thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory *of this*, and tarry at home: for [m] why ſhouldſt thou meddle to *thy* hurt, that thou ſhouldſt fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee? 11. But Amaziah [n] would not hear: therefore Jehoaſh king of Iſrael went up, and he, and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Beth-ſhemeſh, which *belongeth* to Judah. 12. And Judah was put to the worſe before Iſrael, and they fled every man to their tents. 13. And Jehoaſh king of Iſrael [o] took Amaziah king of Judah, the ſon of Jehoaſh the ſon of Ahaziah at Beth-ſhemeſh, and came to Jeruſalem, and brake down the wall of Jeruſalem, from [p] the gate of Ephraim, unto [q] the corner gate, four hundred cubits. 14. And he took all the gold and ſilver, and [r] all the veſſels *that were* found in the houſe of the LORD, and in the treaſures of the king's houſe, and hoſtages, and returned to Samaria.

[i] Prov. xvii. xiv. & xviii. 6.
[k] Judg. ix. 8.
[l] Prov. xiii. 10. Hab. ii. 4.
[m] Prov. xx. 3. Luke xiv. 31.
[n] 1 Sam. ii. 25.
[o] Prov. xvi. 18.
[p] Neh. xii. 39.
[q] Zech. xiv. 10.
[r] 1 Kings vii. 41, &c.

v. 8—14. Vain on his victory over Edom, or perhaps to revenge the ſlaughter made by the Iſraelites, whom he had diſmiſſed from his army, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 13. Amaziah,

1. Sends a challenge to Joaſh king of Iſrael to meet him in the field, little ſuſpecting the conſequence of his fooliſh bravado. *Note*, They who begin a quarrel, deſerve to ſuffer for it.

2. Joaſh treats his meſſage with great contempt, compares himſelf to a cedar, and Amaziah to a thiſtle; intimates that he would have thought any alliance with him diſgraceful, and could tread him under foot, as eaſily as a wild beaſt does the thiſtle; therefore adviſes him to repreſs the vanity of his heart on his late trivial ſucceſs, and not meddle to his harm. *Note*, (1.) They who are proud, will meet with thoſe who take a pleaſure to mortify them. (2.) Vain minds ſwell with ſucceſs, and uſually deſtroy themſelves by attempting things to which they are unequal. (3.) It is folly to deſpiſe good advice, though from an enemy.

Before Chriſt 825.

3. Amaziah was too obſtinate to be adviſed, and therefore ruſhes on his ruin, is routed, taken priſoner, led in triumph to his own capital, which the victor entered; and, after plundering the city and temple of every thing valuable, and breaking down a great part of the wall, left the place defenceleſs, and took hoſtages of Amaziah to keep him in ſubjection. Thus, whilſt Ephraim vexed Judah, and Judah Ephraim, they opened an eaſier door of conqueſt for their common foes. *Note*, The quarrels and diviſions of God's people give the greateſt advantage to their enemies.

15. ¶ [s] Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoaſh which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 16. And Jehoaſh [t] ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Iſrael, and Jeroboam his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 17. ¶ And Amaziah the ſon of Joaſh king of Judah, lived after the death of Jehoaſh ſon of Jehoahaz king of Iſrael, fifteen years. 18. And the reſt of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 19. Now [u] they made a conſpiracy againſt him in Jeruſalem: and he fled to Lachiſh, but they ſent after him to Lachiſh, and ſlew him there. 20. And they brought him [x] on horſes; and he was buried at Jeruſalem with his fathers in the city of David. 21. ¶ And all the people of Judah took † Azariah (which *was* ſixteen years old) and made him king inſtead of his father Amaziah. 22. [y] He built Elath, and reſtored it to Judah, after that the king ſlept with his fathers.

[s] Chap. xiii. 12.
[t] 2 Kings ii. 10.
[u] 2 Chron. xxv. 27.
[x] Chap. ix. 28.
810.
† Called Uzziah. 2 Chron. xxvi. 1.
[y] Chap. xvi. 6.

v. 15—22. Jehoaſh's death and burial was mentioned, *chap.* xiii. 12. after his conqueſts above recorded, it is again repeated. Amaziah, his late priſoner, ſurvived him fifteen years, whoſe ill conduct and ill ſucceſs provoked his ſubjects to conſpire againſt him. He flew to Lachiſh for refuge, but they purſued and ſlew him there. His ſon, who was a minor of ſixteen, ſucceeded him, and built Elath, a city on the Red Sea, which his father had recovered from the Edomites, annexing it to the crown of Judah. *Note*, (1.) They who govern ill, muſt blame themſelves for the diſcontent their conduct produces. (2.) Every refuge a ſinner flies to will be vain to protect him from the ſword of judgment.

23. ¶ In the fifteenth year of Amaziah, the ſon of Joaſh king of Judah, Jeroboam the ſon of Joaſh king of Iſrael began † to reign in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and one years. 24. And [z] he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD: he departed not from all the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin. 25. He reſtored [a] the coaſt of Iſrael from the entring of Hamath, unto the ſea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Iſrael, which he ſpake by the hand of his ſervant [b] Jonah the ſon of Amittai, the prophet, which *was* of Gath-hepher. 26. For [c] the LORD ſaw the affliction of Iſrael, *that it was* very bitter: for [d] *there was* not any ſhut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Iſrael. 27. And the LORD ‡ ſaid not that he would blot out the name of Iſrael from under heaven: but he ſaved them by the hand of Jeroboam the ſon of Joaſh. 28. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damaſcus, and Hamath, *which belonged* to Judah, for Iſrael, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 29. And Jeroboam ſlept with his fathers, *even* with the kings of Iſrael; and Zachariah his ſon § reigned in his ſtead.

825.
† i. e. alone.
[z] Chap. xiii. 11.
[a] Num. xxxiv. 8.
[b] Jonah i. 1.
[c] Chap. xiii. 4.
[d] Deut. xxxii. 36.
‡ Now, but ſoon after he did. See Hoſ. i. 6—9.
784.
§ i. e. After an interregnum of 11 or 12 years. Chap. xv. 8.

v. 23—29. Jeroboam, the ſon of Joaſh, reigned longer than any king of Iſrael before him; yet his character bears a brand of infamy. He followed the ſins of his predeceſſor, whoſe name he bore, and the calves were his gods; yet God, in mercy to his people,

1. Raiſed up a prophet in the room of Eliſha; Jonah, a Galilean, *See* John vii. 52. The events recorded in his prophecy are ſuppoſed to have happened in his younger days, and now he more willingly executed the ſervice of his function. *Note*, Even prophets are ſinful men: if God rejected not them for their faults, let us not be too ſevere one on another.

2. Encouraged by Jonah he warred againſt the Syrians, and recovered the country from the northern border to the plain

Before Chriſt 784.

of Jordan. Not that the cry of penitence from Iſrael engaged God's notice; no; but he heard their groaning, oppreſſed, plundered, deſolate, helpleſs; and as his decree was not yet gone forth, he gave them one ſhort reſpite more, to prove them, whether they would return to him, or to leave them inexcuſable in their impenitence.

3. Jeroboam's warlike exploits appeared farther in the recovery of Damaſcus and Hamath, which had been tributary to Judah formerly, and now became ſubject to Iſrael. Death, however, after a long and proſperous reign, laid his honour in the duſt; and he left his throne to his ſon, who loſt it quickly, according to the notice given to Jehu, *Chap.* x. 30.

Under Jeroboam and his cotemporary kings of Judah, Hoſea, Jonah, Amos, and Micah propheſied and wrote. When matters were haſting to ruin, then did God multiply the warnings of his word; and though Iſrael and Judah deſpiſed their prophets, we have reaſon to bleſs God for their writings that are preſerved for our admonition.

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter we have the hiſtory, 1. *Of two kings of Judah,* (1.) *Azariah, alias Uzziah,* ver. 1—7. (2.) *and Jotham his ſon,* ver. 32—38. 2. *Of five kings of Iſrael,* (1.) *Zechariah,* ver. 8—12. (2.) *Shallum,* ver. 13—15. (3.) *Menahem,* ver. 16—22. (4.) *Pekahiah,* ver. 23—26. (5.) *Pekah,* ver. 27—31.

810. † Either here is a corruption of numbers, 27 for 17, or this was in the 27th year of his partnerſhip with his father, and the 16th of his own reign. Chap. xiv. 21. 2 Chron. xxvi. 3. About 765. [a] Chap. xiv. 3. [b] Chap. xii. 3. & xiv. 1. [c] 2 Chron. xxvi. 19. [d] Num. xii. 10. [e] Lev. xiii. 46. [f] 2 Chron. xxvi. 23. 758.

1. IN † the twenty and ſeventh year of Jeroboam king of Iſrael, began Azariah ſon of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. 2. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jeruſalem, and his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jeruſalem. 3. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, [a] according to all that his father Amaziah had done; 4. [b] Save that the high places were not removed: the people ſacrificed and burnt incenſe ſtill on the high places. 5. ¶ And [c] the LORD ſmote the king, ſo that he was [d] a leper unto the day of his death, and [e] dwelt in a ſeveral houſe: and Jotham the king's ſon *was* over the houſe, judging the people of the land. 6. And the reſt of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah: 7. So Azariah ſlept with his fathers, and [f] they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Jotham his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

v. 1—7. Azariah, called alſo Uzziah, began young to reign, and ſat very long upon the throne of Judah; and, like his immediate anceſtors, his firſt days were his beſt. The common fault of the high places remained, and for daring to intrude into the prieſt's office, he was ſtruck with leproſy, ſecluded from ſociety till his death, and Jotham his ſon adminiſtred in his room, as viceroy, the affairs of the kingdom. *Note,* (1.) Thoſe who walk in pride God is able to abaſe. (2.) One ſtroke of diſeaſe can make the mightieſt monarch loathſome to others, and a burden to himſelf. (3.) God, when he hath pardoned the guilt of our ſins, may yet correct us long with temporal afflictions, and bring us under them even to the grave.

773. † After an interregnum of 11 years. [g] Chap. x. 31. & xiii. 2. 11. & xiv. 24. [h] 2 Chron. xxi. 20. Amos vii. 9. [i] Chap. x. 30. 772. [k] Prov. xxviii. 2.

8. ¶ In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, † did Zachariah the ſon of Jeroboam reign over Iſrael in Samaria ſix months. 9. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, [g] as his fathers had done: he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin. 10. And Shallum the ſon of Jabeſh conſpired againſt him, and ſmote him [h] before the people, and ſlew him, and reigned in his ſtead. 11. And the reſt of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael. 12. [i] This *was* the word of the LORD which he ſpake unto Jehu, ſaying, Thy ſons ſhall ſit on the throne of Iſrael unto the fourth *generation.* And ſo it came to paſs. 13. ¶ Shallum the ſon of Jabeſh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah, and he reigned a full month in Samaria. 14. For Menahem the ſon of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and ſmote Shallum the ſon of Jabeſh in Samaria, and ſlew him, and [k] reigned in his ſtead. 15. And the reſt of the acts of Shallum, and his conſpiracy which he made, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael. 16. ¶ Then Menahem ſmote Tiphſah, and all that *were* therein, and the coaſts thereof from Tirzah: becauſe they opened not *to him,* therefore he ſmote *it, and* [l] all the women therein that were with child, he ript up. 17. In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah, began Menahem the ſon of Gadi to reign over Iſrael, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria. 18. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin. 19. *And* [m] Pul the king of Aſſyria came againſt the land: and Menahem gave Pul [n] a thouſand talents of ſilver, that his hand might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand. 20. And Menahem exacted the money of Iſrael, *even* of all the mighty men of wealth of each man fifty ſhekels of ſilver, to give to the king of Aſſyria: ſo the king of Aſſyria turned back, and ſtayed not there in the land. 21. ¶ And the reſt of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael? 22. And Menahem ſlept with his fathers, and Pekahiah his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 23. ¶ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the ſon of Menahem began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, *and reigned* [o] two years. 24. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin. 25. But Pekah the ſon of Remaliah, a captain of his, conſpired againſt him, and ſmote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's houſe, with Argob, and Arieh, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room. 26. And the reſt of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael. 27. ¶ In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the ſon of Remaliah began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years. 28. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin. 29. In the days of Pekah king of Iſrael [p] came Tiglath-pileſer king of Aſſyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedeſh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and [q] carried them captive to Aſſyria. 30. And Hoſhea the ſon of Elah made a conſpiracy againſt Pekah the ſon of Remaliah, and [r] ſmote him, and ſlew him, and ‡ reigned in his ſtead, § in the twentieth year of Jotham the ſon of Uzziah. 31. And the reſt of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael.

Before Chriſt 772. [l] Chap viii. 12. Amos i. 13. 772. [m] 1 Chron. v. 26. About 771. [n] About 375,000 pounds. 761. [o] Job xx. 5. 759. [p] 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. Iſa ix. 1. [q] Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. 739. [r] Ver. 25. Mat. vii. 2. ‡ After an anarchy for nine years. Chap. xvii. 1. § i. e. In the 4th of Ahaz, which was 20 years after Jotham began to reign.

v. 8—31. Terrible was the ſtate of Iſrael in theſe laſt days. Like the convulſions of the body before its diſſolution, under judgments unhumbled, with mercies unaffected, uniformly perſevering in a courſe of idolatry; their kings mounting ſucceſſively to the throne by murder; ſhook with inteſtine commotions, ſpoiled by invading enemies, till at laſt the beſom of deſtruction ſwept the land.

1. Zachariah, the laſt of Jehu's family, began and ended in ſix months his reign, after an interregnum, as it appears, of eleven years, occaſioned probably by diſputes about the ſucceſſion.

2. Shallum, his murderer and ſucceſſor, had ſtill a ſhorter ſpace. One month ſaw his ill-gotten greatneſs ruined. Menahem revenged his treaſon and murder upon him, and ſeized the crown, of which the uſurper was diſpoſſeſſed. *Note,* Few traitors and murderers die in their beds.

3. Menahem, having climbed into the throne by blood, ſeeks to ſecure his ſeat by the moſt inhuman barbarity on thoſe who dared oppoſe him. Tiphſah, for refuſing to open its gates, is, as a terror to others, ſacked and ravaged with the moſt ſavage fury, even to ripping up the women with child. Yet, cowardly as cruel, he dared not fight the king of Aſſyria, who invaded him; but at an immenſe ſum, which he levied from his nobles, bought him off, and engaged him to ſupport his wicked government. *Note,* The more we read of this miſerably oppreſſed and diſtracted ſtate, the more thankful ſhould we be for the liberty, peace, and ſecurity we enjoy, under our own mild government.

4. Pekahiah ſucceeded his father, who died in peace, though a tyrant and uſurper. There ſeems to have been an interregnum of a year, before probably he was fixed on the throne: two years more his tottering government continued, when he fell by the conſpiracy of his general Pekah, who ſeized the throne, and reigned in his ſtead.

Before Chriſt 739.

5. Twenty years Pekah kept the crown his treaſon had ſecured; but long impunity is no final ſecurity. The king of Aſſyria, though ſo lately bribed, returned, and ſeized all Gilead, with part of Naphtali, Zebulon, and Ephraim; and thus half of the ten tribes went into captivity. Whereupon a conſpiracy was formed againſt Pekah, and Hoſhea having murdered him, as he did his predeceſſor, ventured to wear that crown that had been ſo fatal to others, and proved as deſtructive to himſelf. All theſe kings concurred in following Jeroboam's ſins, and thereby juſtified God in theſe judgments, which fell ſo heavy upon them.

758.
[s] 2 Chron. xxvii. 1.
† i. e. The perfection of the Lord. Ver. 34.

32. ¶ In the ſecond year of Pekah the ſon of Remaliah king of Iſrael, [s] began † Jotham the ſon of Uzziah king of Judah to reign. 33. Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned ſixteen years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Jeruſha, the daughter of Zadok. 34. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. 35. ¶ Howbeit, the high places were not removed: the people ſacrificed and burnt incenſe ſtill in the high places: he built the higher gate of the houſe of the LORD. 36. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 37. (In thoſe days [t] the LORD began to [u] ſend againſt Judah, Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the ſon of Remaliah). 38. And Jotham ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Ahaz his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[t] Iſa. x. 5.
[u] Chap. xvi. 5. Iſa. vii. 1.
742.

v. 32—38. Jotham, who ſucceeded his father Uzziah, copied his excellences, and avoided his ſins; only the high places remained, which the beſt of kings either could not, or cared not to remove. His repairing the gate of the Lord's houſe ſhews his reſpect to the place, and God kept him in peace, it ſeems, all his days, removing him at the age of forty-one, from the ſtorm which was gathering under the confederacy of the kings of Syria and Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) The righteous are taken away from the evil to come. (2.) When God removes a good king from a nation, or a good miniſter from his flock, they have reaſon to fear, leſt for their ſins and unprofitableneſs, the Lord hath a controverſy againſt them.

CHAP. XVI.

We have here, 1. *Ahaz's idolatry*, ver. 1—4. 2. *His hiring the king of Aſſyria to invade Syria and Iſrael*, ver. 5—9. 3. *His cauſing an altar to be built after the pattern of an heathen one he ſaw at Damaſcus*, ver. 10—16. 4. *His embezzling the furniture of the temple*, ver. 17, 18. 5. *His death*, ver. 19, 20.

742.
[a] 2 Chron. xxviii. 1.
[b] Lev. xviii. 21. Pſ. cvi. 37.
[c] Lev. xxvi. 30.
[d] Deut. xii. 2.

1. IN the ſeventeenth year of Pekah the ſon of Remaliah, [a] Ahaz the ſon of Jotham king of Judah began to reign. 2. Twenty years old *was* Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned ſixteen years in Jeruſalem, and did not *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD his God, like David his father. 3. But he walked in the way of the kings of Iſrael, yea, and [b] made his ſon to paſs through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD caſt out from before the children of Iſrael. 4. And he ſacrificed and burnt incenſe [c] in the high places, and on the hills, and [d] under every green tree.

v. 1—4. Ahaz, the ſon of pious Jotham, degenerated greatly from the ſteps of his holy anceſtors. The idolatry of Iſrael pleaſed him better than the pure worſhip of Judah; and Molech is preferred to the glorious Jehovah. He ſacrificed on the high places, which his fathers, though they left them, had never uſed; and, as if unſatisfied with leſſer abominations, made his own ſons paſs between, or through, the fires of luſtration, or perhaps burnt them in it, to the honour of his hateful idols. *Note*, (1.) They who provoke God to give them up, loſe even natural affection, and turn monſters inſtead of men. (2.) The deſperate wickedneſs of the heart of man, when left to itſelf, who can know?

742.
[g] 1 Kings xi. 36. 2 Chron. vii. 16. Iſa. vii. 4, 11.
[h] Chap. xiv. 22.
Before Chriſt 742.
[i] Chap. xv. 29.
[k] Jer. xvii. 5.
[l] Chap. xii. 18. & xviii. 16.
740.
[m] Ver. 5. Pſ. vii. 15, 16. Amos i. 5. Mat. vii. 2.

5. ¶ Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah ſon of Remaliah king of Iſrael, came up to Jeruſalem to war: and they beſieged Ahaz, [g] but could not overcome *him*. 6. At that time Rezin king of Syria [h] recovered Elath to Syria, and drave the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day. 7. So Ahaz ſent meſſengers to [i] Tiglath-pileſer king of Aſſyria, ſaying, I *am* thy ſervant, and thy ſon: come up, and [k] ſave me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Iſrael, which riſe up againſt me. 8. And Ahaz [l] took the ſilver and gold *that was* found in the houſe of the LORD, and in the treaſures of the king's houſe, and ſent *it for* a preſent to the king of Aſſyria. 9. And the king of Aſſyria hearkned unto him: for the king of Aſſyria went up againſt Damaſcus, and [m] took it, and carried *the people of* it captive to Kir, and ſlew Rezin.

v. 5—9. The ſin of Ahaz ſoon brought him into deep diſtreſs, *Iſa.* vii. 2. His country was ravaged, Elath loſt, and his capital beſieged by the confederate forces of Syria and Iſrael. Yet, far from having recourſe to God, or depending on his promiſes, *Iſa.* vii. 4—16. he rather truſted on an arm of fleſh; and, to engage the king of Aſſyria to make a diverſion in his favour, robbed the houſe of God of the dedicate treaſures, impoveriſhed his own, and profeſſed himſelf the vaſſal of an idolatrous Aſſyrian, rather than be the ſervant of the King of kings, who was ſo much better able to deliver him. The project ſucceeded: the king of Syria was ſlain, his capital taken, and his people led captive to Kir, as foretold, *Amos* i. 5. *Note*, (1.) God is the laſt reſource a ſinner will fly to. (2.) They who caſt off God's government, make themſelves quickly the worſt of ſlaves. (3.) When men by their wickedneſs involve themſelves in trouble, they will ſcarce ſtick at fraud or injuſtice, to extricate them from it.

About 739.
[n] Iſa. viii. 2. 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[o] Jer. ii. 8. Mal. ii. 7. Gal. i. 10.
[p] 2 Chron. iv. 1.
[q] Jer. ii. 11
[r] Acts v. 29. 1 Theſ. ii. 4. Jude 11.

10. ¶ And king Ahaz went to Damaſcus, to meet Tiglath-pileſer king of Aſſyria, and ſaw an altar that *was* at Damaſcus: and king Ahaz ſent to Urijah the prieſt the faſhion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanſhip thereof. 11. And [n] Urijah the prieſt built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had ſent from Damaſcus: [o] ſo Urijah the prieſt made *it*, againſt king Ahaz came from Damaſcus. 12. And when the king was come from Damaſcus, the king ſaw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon. 13. And he burnt his burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and ſprinkled the blood of his peace-offerings upon the altar. 14. And he brought alſo [p] the braſen altar which *was* before the LORD, from the fore-front of the houſe, from between the altar and the houſe of the LORD, and [q] put it on the north ſide of the altar. 15. And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the prieſt, ſaying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and the king's burnt-ſacrifice, and his meat-offering with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, and ſprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the ſacrifice: and the braſen altar ſhall be for me to enquire *by*. 16. [r] Thus did Urijah the prieſt, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.

v. 10—16. He who had enſlaved his body to Aſſyria's king' now enſlaves his ſoul to Aſſyria's idols.

1. On a viſit to the king of Aſſyria, to congratulate him on his ſucceſs, and to pay him the homage he had promiſed, he ſaw at Damaſcus, whilſt probably he joined with him in his idol ſacrifices, an altar that much pleaſed him for its beauty; and inſtantly he reſolves to copy it, ſends the model to Urijah the prieſt, and bids him prepare juſt ſuch another againſt his return.

2. Urijah, a true court-prieſt, to gratify his maſter, conſents to proſtitute his office; and Ahaz, at his return, is vaſtly pleaſed with the altar, offers on it his burnt-offerings; and though the prieſt had ſome ſhame left, and ſet it behind the braſen altar, the king will have the old altar thrown by, and will conſider what to do with it, whilſt his own is advanced into its place; and Urijah, who is too complaiſant to offend a king, baſely complies. *Note*, (1.) Of all characters, a ſycophant prieſt is the moſt deteſtable. (2.) Court air is dangerous to breathe in: they who ſet their hearts on riſing, rather than offend their great patrons, will worſhip at their altars, and comply with their evil ways.

17. ¶ And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the baſes, and removed the laver from off them, and took down the ſea from off the braſen oxen that *were* under it, and put it upon a pavement of ſtones. 18. And the covert for the ſabbath that they had built in the houſe, and the king's entry without, turned he from the houſe of the

LORD,

Before Chriſt 727. LORD, for the king of Aſſyria. 19. ¶ Now the reſt of
the acts of Ahaz, which he did, *are* they not written in
the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20.
s 2 Chron. xxviii. 27. And Ahaz ſlept with his fathers, and [s] was buried with
his fathers in the city of David, and Hezekiah his ſon
727. reigned in his ſtead.

v. 17—20. To caſt contempt on the temple and its ſervice, he continues to deface and remove the divinely-appointed veſſels. The borders of the ten baſes, curiouſly adorned, he cut off, and took off the lavers from them. The braſen ſea alſo he removed from the oxen, either to render them contemptible, or to convert ſome of the braſs to other uſes. *The covert for the ſabbath*, a rich canopy probably, under which the king ſat on the ſabbath, when he went up to the houſe of God, he removed; and, to gratify the king of Aſſyria, turned the noble aſcent Solomon had made, another way, as relinquiſhing the worſhip of the temple. But in the midſt of his days God, in mercy to his people, ſtopped his career of wickedneſs, and at thirty-ſix years of age he died, and left his crown to his moſt worthy ſucceſſor and ſon Hezekiah. *Note*, God's grace is ſovereign. Whilſt the ungodly father is left to periſh in his wickedneſs, his ſon, though brought up under his ill example, is ſnatched as a brand from the burning.

CHAP. XVII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The captivity of the ten tribes*, ver. 1—6. 2. *Remarks upon it, and the cauſes of it*, ver. 7—23. 3. *An account of the nations which ſucceeded them, and their religion*, ver. 24—41.

731. 1. IN † the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, be-
† After an interregnum of nine years. Chap. xv. 30. Hoſ. x. 3. gan Hoſhea the ſon of Elah to reign in Samaria,
over Iſrael nine years. 2. And he did *that which was*
evil in the ſight of the LORD, [a] but not as the kings
of Iſrael that were before him. 3. ¶ Againſt him came
728. up Shalmanezer king of Aſſyria, and Hoſhea became
a Chap. iii. 2. his ſervant, and gave him ‡ preſents. 4. And the king
‡ Or tribute. of Aſſyria found [b] conſpiracy in Hoſhea: for he had ſent
b Chap. xxiv. 20. meſſengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no pre-
ſent to the king of Aſſyria, as *he had done* year by year:
therefore the king of Aſſyria ſhut him up, and bound
c Exod. xxxiv. 24. him in priſon. 5. ¶ Then the king of Aſſyria [c] came
About 724. up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria,
d Chap. xviii. 10. and beſieged it three years. 6. ¶ [d] In the ninth year of
Hoſhea, the king of Aſſyria took Samaria, and [e] car-
721. ried Iſrael away into Aſſyria, and placed them in Ha-
e Lev. xxvi. 32. Hoſ. i. 6, 9. lah, and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the
cities of the Medes.

v. 1—6. Hoſhea, the laſt of Iſrael's kings, loſt with ſhame the throne he had aſcended by perfidy and murder. It was nine years ere he was fixed in the throne; or perhaps he reigned at firſt only as viceroy to the king of Aſſyria, and his reign is dated from his withdrawing himſelf from his ſervice. We have here,

1. Iſrael become tributary, as a prelude to their final deſtruction. Though their king was not ſo bad as his predeceſſors, the people continued as bad as ever; and therefore God ſold them into the hand of Shalmanezer. *Note*, (1.) God tries leſſer judgments before he ſtrikes the final blow. (2.) They who ſell themſelves to the ſervice of ſin, will find the wages of it ſhortly to be eternal ruin.

2. Utterly deſtroyed and diſperſed. Hoſhea, by the help of So, king of Ethiopia, rebelled againſt the king of Aſſyria; but he ſuffered for his falſhood: his country is ravaged, his capital beſieged, and, after three years reſiſtance, taken; himſelf made priſoner; and, effectually to prevent any future revolt, all the people of any note carried away captive, and diſperſed in the north of Aſſyria, and in the cities of Media; whilſt colonies of Aſſyrians are put in poſſeſſion of their fruitful land, under whom the remainder of this miſerable nation might be huſbandmen and vine-dreſſers, and ſerve, in other menial employments, their proud conquerors. What guilty nation ſinning againſt goſpel grace, need not tremble, that reads the cataſtrophe of God's once favoured people?

Thus ended the kingdom of Iſrael, which, from its commencement under Jeroboam, had continued two hundred and fifty-five years.

f Exod. xx. 2, 3. 7. For *ſo* it was, that the children of Iſrael had ſin-
ned againſt the LORD their God, [f] which had brought
them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand
g Lev. xviii. 3. Jer. ii. 13. of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods,
8. And [g] walked in the ſtatutes of the heathen, (whom
the LORD caſt out from before the children of Iſrael) Before Chriſt 721.
and of the kings of Iſrael [h] which they had made. 9. h Mic. vi. 16.
And the children of Iſrael † did ſecretly *thoſe* things that
were not right againſt the LORD their God, and † Heb. Covered. Ezek. viii. 12. Eph. v. 12.
they built them high places in all their cities, from the
tower of the watchmen, to the fenced city. 10. And
[i] they ſet them up images and groves in every high hill, i Lev. xxvi. 1. Ezek. ix. 9.
and under every green tree: 11. And there they burnt
incenſe in all the high places, [k] as *did* the heathen whom k Lev. xviii. 27, 28.
the LORD carried away before them; and wrought
wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger. 12. For
[l] they ſerved idols, whereof the LORD had ſaid unto l Deut. v. 8, 9.
them, Ye ſhall not do this thing. 13. Yet the LORD
teſtified againſt Iſrael, and againſt Judah, [m] by all the m Jer. xxv. 4.
prophets, *and by* all the ſeers, ſaying, [n] Turn ye from n Ibid. 5.
your evil ways, and keep my commandments, *and* my
ſtatutes, according to all the law which I commanded
your fathers, and which I ſent to you by my ſervants
the prophets. 14. Notwithſtanding, they would not hear,
[o] but hardned their necks, like to the neck of their fa- o Prov. xxix. 1.
thers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.
15. And they rejected his ſtatutes, and his covenant
that he made with their fathers, and his teſtimonies
which he teſtified againſt them, and they followed vani-
ty, and [p] became vain, and went after the heathen that p Rom. i. 21.
were round about them, *concerning* whom the LORD
had charged them, [q] that they ſhould not do like them. q Joſh. xxiii. 7.
16. And [r] they left all the commandments of the LORD r Iſa. i. 4--6.
their God, and made them [s] molten images, *even* [t] two s Exod. xxxii. 8.
calves, and [u] made a grove, and worſhipped all the hoſt t 1 Kings xii. 28.
of heaven, and [x] ſerved Baal. 17. And [y] they cauſed their u Ibid. xvi. 33.
ſons and their daughters to paſs through the fire, and
uſed divination and enchantments, and [z] ſold themſelves x Ibid. 31. Chap. xi. 18.
to do evil in the ſight of the LORD, to provoke y Lev. xviii. 21. Chap. xvi. 3. Ezek. xxiii. 27.
him to anger. 18. Therefore the LORD was very
angry with Iſrael, and [a] removed them out of his ſight:
there was none left [b] but the tribe of Judah only. 19. z 1 Kings xxi. 20. Iſa. l. 1.
[c] Alſo Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD
their God, but walked in the ſtatutes of Iſrael, which
they made. 20. And [d] the LORD rejected all the ſeed a Iſa. x, 5. & xlii. 24.
of Iſrael, and afflicted them, and delivered them into b 1 Kings xi. 13, 34. Hoſ. xi. 12.
the hand of [e] ſpoilers, until he had caſt them out of his
ſight. 21. For [f] he rent Iſrael from the houſe of David, c Jer. iii. 8.
and [g] they made Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat king, and d Deut. xxxii. 30.
Jeroboam drave Iſrael from following the LORD, and e Chap. xiii. 3.
[h] made them ſin a great ſin. 22. For the children of f 1 Kings xi. 31.
Iſrael walked in all the ſins of Jeroboam which he did, g Ibid. xii. 20.
they departed not from them: 23. Until the LORD
removed Iſrael out of his ſight, as he had ſaid by all his h Ibid. 28.
ſervants the prophets. So was Iſrael carried away out of
their own land to Aſſyria, unto this day.

v. 7—23. To vindicate the ways of God to man, and open the cauſes why Iſrael was thus abandoned to ruin, the ſacred hiſtorian, after relating their diſperſion, declares the juſt reaſons of God's procedure.

1. Their ſins had provoked his judgment, great, numberleſs, aggravated, and incorrigible.

(1.) *Baſe ingratitude*. God, had reſcued them from the iron bondage of Egypt; after many wonderful interpoſitions, had beſtowed on them the land of the heathen; and, to crown all, had given them the plaineſt direction for their conduct, and the moſt glorious promiſes to encourage their obedience. But all would not engage their hearts to him; they forgat the God of their mercies, and turned from him to idols.

(2.) *Wilful diſobedience*. They rejected God's covenant, *v.* 15. left all his commandments, *v.* 16. and ſold themſelves to work wickedneſs, *v.* 17. as ſlaves by willing choice to their luſts: and if for a time reſtrained, through fear or ſhame, from open and avowed impiety, they ſtill in ſecret indulged their abandoned hearts, and continued as bad as ever.

(3.) *Groſs idolatry*. Of all their ſins this was moſt provoking: againſt it they had received eſpecial warnings; and, becauſe of it, had ſeen God's heavy judgments on the heathen. Yet, they not only learned their ways, but became worſe than the idolaters they imitated. They readily kiſſed the calves the wicked Jeroboam erected; adopted all their neighbours gods, *v.* 15. worſhipped the hoſts of heaven, the ſun, moon, and planets; yea, ſo mad were they upon their idols, that there was not a grove, or a ſpreading tree ſcarcely, without an image under it. Every city, yea, every village, even to the meaneſt watch-tower, had its, hill-altar, till they were multiplied *as heaps in the furrows of the field*, Hoſ. xii. 11. There they offered incenſe to theſe ſtrange gods; and ſo loſt to natural af-

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ſection, ſo beſotted were they in their adulterous rage after theſe abominations, that their very children were led through the fires, or burnt in them, to honour theſe diabolical deities. Lord, what is man!

(4.) *Hardened incorrigibleneſs.* Prophet after prophet did God raiſe up to warn them, *v.* 13. and, to enforce the word of their mouth, he ſmote them with the ſword of his corrections; but under both they proved alike impenitent. They regarded not the warning voice, nor repented under the ſtroke of judgment. Therefore, when every method of recovery was fruitleſs,

2. God removed them out of his ſight, according to the word of his prophets. The rod of his anger was the Aſſyrian, but the deſtruction was from the Almighty.

3. Judah is glanced at in this catalogue of ſins, *v.* 19. as having learned of their brethren, which was an aggravation of Iſrael's ſin. But let Judah be warned by their ſufferings to repent, leſt evil alſo overtake them.

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24. ¶ And the king of Aſſyria brought *men* from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria, [i] inſtead of the children of Iſrael; and they poſſeſſed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. 25. And *ſo* it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, *that* [k] they feared not the LORD; therefore the LORD ſent lions among them, which ſlew *ſome* of them. 26. Wherefore they ſpake to the king of Aſſyria, ſaying, The nations which thou haſt removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath ſent lions among them, and behold, they ſlay them, becauſe they know not the manner of the God of the land. 27. Then the king of Aſſyria commanded, ſaying, Carry thither one of the prieſts whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. 28. Then one of the prieſts, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in [l] Beth-el, and taught them how they ſhould fear the LORD. 29. Howbeit, every nation [m] made gods of their own, and put *them* in the houſes of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. 30. And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Aſhima, 31. And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to † Adrammelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim. 32. So [n] they feared the LORD, and made unto themſelves of [o] the loweſt of them prieſts of the high places, which ſacrificed for them in the houſes of the high places. 33. They feared the LORD, and ſerved their own gods, after the manner of the nations, whom they carried away from thence. 34. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their ſtatutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, [p] whom he named Iſrael; 35. [q] With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, ſaying, [r] Ye ſhall not fear other gods, nor bow yourſelves to them, nor ſerve them, nor ſacrifice to them: 36. But the LORD, [s] who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and a ſtretched-out arm, him ſhall ye fear, and him ſhall ye worſhip, and to him ſhall ye do ſacrifice. 37. And the ſtatutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment which he wrote for you, ye ſhall obſerve to do for evermore, and ye ſhall not fear other gods. 38. And the covenant that I have made with you, [t] ye ſhall not forget, neither ſhall ye fear other gods. 39. But the LORD your God ye ſhall fear, and he ſhall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. 40. Howbeit, they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner. 41. So theſe nations [u] feared the LORD, and ſerved their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, ſo do they unto this day.

[i] Ver. 6. Iſa. i. 7.
[k] Eph. ii. 12.
[l] 1 Kings xii. 32.
[m] Rom. i. 23.
† i. e. A glorious king.
[n] Zeph. i. 5.
[o] 1 Kings xii. 31.
[p] Gen. xxxii. 28. & xxxv. 10.
[q] Deut. iv. 23.
[r] Exod. xx. 3—5.
[s] Deut. v. 15.
[t] Deut. vi. 12. & viii. 11.
[u] Ver. 32. Zech. i. 5.

v. 24—41. What a change hath this unhappy land undergone! ſtrangers devour it. We have here,

1. The perſons whom the king of Aſſyria ſent to occupy the land of Iſrael from Babylon. &c. who dwelt in the cities of Samaria, and entered into the deſolate heritage of God's people.

2. God's viſitation upon them. Lions, which were common on the banks of Jordan, are ſent to chaſtiſe thoſe ſtrangers. So eaſily could God make their abode too hot to hold them. *Note*, If God let looſe the old raging lion upon the ſoul, then woe to the ſinner.

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3. Concluding Iſrael's God, whom they regarded as a topical deity, offended, becauſe they knew not the manner of his worſhip, they ſend to Aſſyria their complaints; and one of Jeroboam's prieſts is ſent them, who took up his reſidence at Beth-el, the ſeat of the calves. He taught them probably the law of Moſes, ſo far as the outward ritual went; but did not oppoſe, or could not prevail on them to forſake their idols; ſo that there was a ſtrange medley of religion, whilſt in general they obſerved the Jewiſh rites and feſtivals, conſecrating prieſts of the people in common for their ſacrifices, as Jeroboam had done; yet every nation kept its own tutelar god, and ſacrificed to them in the high places. The names of theſe gods are preſerved, but their ſignifications are very dubious. Succoth-benoth is thought to be the goddeſs Venus; the reſt, different names of the ſun, according to the different repreſentations under which theſe nations worſhipped him. This mungrel ſuperſtition continued long, at leaſt till the time of Alexander the Great, and was not quite aboliſhed, even to our Saviour's time. *See* John iv. 22.

4. A ſhort account is given of thoſe who went into captivity. Not the leaſt altered by their ſufferings, *They did after their former manner*, *v.* 40. a reproach to the name of Iſrael, which they bore; ungrateful to their great benefactor, rebellious againſt his word, rooted in idolatry, and therefore left to periſh, loſt and incorporated in the idolatrous nations, among whom they dwelt. *Note*, They whom no judgments can reclaim, muſt periſh without remedy.

CHAP. XVIII.

A more pleaſing ſcene than the laſt opens in Judah, where we have, 1. *Hezekiah reforming his kingdom*, ver. 1—6. 2. *Proſpering in all his undertakings*, ver. 7—12. 3. *Invaded by Sennacherib, the king of Aſſyria*, ver. 13—16. *and Jeruſalem beſieged*, ver. 17. 4. *Rabſhakeh's blaſphemy*, ver. 18—37.

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1. NOW it came to paſs in the third year of Hoſhea ſon of Elah king of Iſrael, *that* [a] Hezekiah the ſon of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. 2. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jeruſalem: his mother's name alſo *was* Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. 3. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, [b] according to all that David his father did. 4. ¶ [c] He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces [d] the braſen ſerpent that Moſes had made: for unto thoſe days the children of Iſrael did burn incenſe to it: and he called it † Nehuſhtan. 5. He [e] truſted in the LORD God of Iſrael, ſo that [f] after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him. 6. For [g] he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moſes. 7. And [h] the LORD was with him, *and* he ‡ proſpered whitherſoever he went forth: and [i] he rebelled againſt the king of Aſſyria, and ſerved him not. 8. He ſmote the Philiſtines, *even* unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

[a] 2 Chron. xxix. 1, &c.
[b] 1 Kings xv. 5.
[c] Deut. vii. 5.
[d] Num. xxi. 9.
† i. e. Mere braſs. Jer. i. 5.
[e] Chap. xix. 10. Job xiii. 15. Pſ. xiii. 5.
[f] Chap. xxiii. 25.
[g] Deut. x. 20. Joſh. xxiii. 9.
[h] 1 Sam. xviii. 14.
‡ Or, did valiantly. Num. xxiv. 18. Pſ. lx. 12.
[i] Chap. xvi. 7.

v. 1—8. Though Iſrael was gone into captivity, Judah yet remained, and in a ſtate of great proſperity, under the pious Hezekiah, who came to the crown at the age of twenty-five, and conſequently muſt be born when his father exceeded not twelve years of age.

1. He copied after the beſt of his progenitors, though the ſon of the worſt; and was, like David in heart and temper, devoted to God's worſhip and ſervice: nor did he, as ſome before him, begin well and end ill, but perſevered to the laſt in conſtant dependance upon God, and unſhaken fidelity to him under all his trials: ſo that in this, neither before nor after him was any like him of all the kings of Judah. *Note*, (1.) God in the darkeſt times, can raiſe up in his church the moſt burning and ſhining lights; let not his people therefore deſpair. (2.) The more obſtacles are in the way, the more does the grace of God appear great and glorious in overcoming them. (3.) Perſeverance in the truth, is the crown of fidelity.

2. His zeal for God's glory immediately appeared on his acceſſion to the throne. He applied no palliatives to the deep and prevailing idolatry, but laid the ax to the root of the tree. Undiſmayed through fear of oppoſition, he not only deſtroyed the groves and images, but alſo removed the high places, which had ſo long been abuſed, and which the moſt pious of his predeceſſors connived at: even the brazen ſerpent which Moſes had

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had made, becauſe in the late reign a ſuperſtitious adoration had been paid to it, he broke in pieces, as *Nebuſtan*, no more than common braſs. *Note*, (1.) They need not fear, who boldly truſt on God, in the path of duty. (2.) No length of cuſtom can conſecrate an evil practice. (3.) If our parents have diſhonoured God, it is our honour to be unlike them.

3. God bleſſed him in all his undertakings. Having delivered the nation from the yoke of idolatry, he bravely threw off the yoke of the king of Aſſyria's uſurped dominion, and recovered from the hand of the Philiſtines the cities his father had loſt, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 18. *Note*, Fidelity in God's ſervice, will be ever accompanied with his bleſſing.

724. 9. ¶ And it came to paſs in the fourth year of king Hezekiah (which *was* the ſeventh year of Hoſhea, ſon of Elah king of Iſrael) *that* [k] Shalmaneſer king of Aſſyria came up againſt Samaria, and beſieged it. 10. And at the end of three years [l] they took it, *even* in the ſixth year of Hezekiah (that *is*, in the ninth year of Hoſhea king of Iſrael) Samaria was taken. 721. 11. And the king of Aſſyria did carry away Iſrael unto Aſſyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: 12. [m] Becauſe they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but tranſgreſſed his covenant, *and* all that Moſes the ſervant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.

[k] Chap. xvii. 3.
[l] 2 Pet. ii. 9.
[m] Dan. ix. 6, 9.

714. 13. ¶ Now [n] in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, did Sennacherib king of Aſſyria come up againſt all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them. 14. And Hezekiah king of Judah ſent to the king of Aſſyria to Lachiſh, ſaying, [o] I have offended, return from me: that which thou putteſt on me, I will bear. And the king of Aſſyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah, three hundred talents of ſilver, and thirty talents of gold. 15. And Hezekiah gave *him* [p] all the ſilver *that was* found in the houſe of the LORD, and in the treaſures of the king's houſe. 16. At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Aſſyria.

[n] 2 Chron. xxxii. 1, &c. Iſa. xxxvi. 1, &c.
[o] Prov. xxix. 25.
[p] Chap. xvi 8.

v. 9—16. The ruin of Iſrael, which we had before, is again here mentioned, in order to introduce the invaſion of Judah, now laid open by the ſubjection of Iſrael to the king of Aſſyria. The conqueſt the father had begun, his ſon Sennacherib deſired to compleat, by adding Judah to the former conqueſts.

1. He makes a ſucceſsful invaſion, and without much reſiſtance ſeizes the frontier towns, and opens a way for the ſiege of Jeruſalem the capital. *Note*, They who are moſt zealous for God, may be reduced, to prove their faith and conſtancy, to great difficulties.

2. Hezekiah's trembling heart began to diſtruſt his Almighty Saviour; and inſtead of having recourſe to God, or his prophet Iſaiah, ſeeks by an inglorious ſubmiſſion, and a vaſt ranſom of 247,500 l. to buy off the danger. *Note*, Unſhaken faith at all times, and in all dangers, is not to be found. Bleſſed be God we have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and though we diſtruſt him, will not be unmindful of us.

About 710. 17. ¶ [q] And the king of Aſſyria ſent Tartan, and Rabſaris, and Rab-ſhakeh from Lachiſh, to king Hezekiah, with a great hoſt againſt Jeruſalem: and they went up and came to Jeruſalem: and when they were come up, they came and ſtood by the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the high-way of the fuller's field. 18. And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the ſon of Hilkiah, which *was* over the houſhold, and Shebna the ſcribe, and Joah the ſon of Aſaph the recorder. 19. And Rab-ſhakeh ſaid unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus ſaith [r] the great king, the king of Aſſyria, [s] What confidence *is* this wherein thou truſteſt? 20. Thou ſayeſt (but *they are but* † vain words) [t] *I have* counſel and ſtrength for the war: now on whom doſt thou truſt, that thou rebelleſt againſt me? 21. Now, behold thou truſteſt upon [u] the ſtaff of this bruiſed reed, *even* upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: ſo *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that truſt on him. 22. But if ye ſay unto me, We truſt in the LORD our God: *is* not that he whoſe high places, and [x] whoſe altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath ſaid to Judah and Jeruſalem, Ye ſhall worſhip before this altar in Jeruſalem? 23. Now therefore I pray thee give ‡ pledges to my lord the king of Aſſyria, and I will deliver thee two thouſand horſes, if thou be able on thy part to ſet riders upon them. 24. How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the leaſt of my maſter's ſervants, and put thy truſt on Egypt for chariots and for horſemen? 25. Am I now come up without the LORD againſt this place to deſtroy it? [y] The LORD ſaid to me, Go up againſt this land, and deſtroy it. 26. Then ſaid Eliakim the ſon of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rab-ſhakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy ſervants in the Syrian language (for we underſtand *it*) and talk not with us in the Jews language, in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall. 27. But Rab-ſhakeh ſaid unto them, Hath my maſter ſent me to thy maſter, and to thee, to ſpeak theſe words? *hath he* not *ſent me* to the men which ſit on the wall, that [z] they may eat their own dung, and drink § their own piſs with you? 28. Then Rab-ſhakeh ſtood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews language, and ſpake, ſaying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Aſſyria. 29. Thus ſaith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you, for [a] he ſhall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: 30. Neither let Hezekiah make you truſt in the LORD, ſaying, the LORD will ſurely deliver us, and this city ſhall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Aſſyria. 31. Hearken not unto Hezekiah: for thus ſaith the king of Aſſyria, ‖ Make *an agreement* with me by a preſent, and come out to me, and *then* eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his ciſtern: 32. Until I come and take you away to a land [b] like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive, and of honey, that ye may live and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah when he perſuadeth you, ſaying, The LORD will deliver us. 33. Hath [c] any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Aſſyria? 34. [d] Where *are* the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand? 35. Who *are* they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, [e] that the LORD ſhould deliver Jeruſalem out of mine hand? 36. But the people held their peace, and anſwered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, ſaying, [f] Anſwer him not. 37. Then came Eliakim the ſon of Hilkiah, which *was* over the houſhold, and Shebna the ſcribe, and Joah the ſon of Aſaph the recorder, to Hezekiah [g] with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rab-ſhakeh.

[q] Iſa. xxxvi. 2, &c.
[r] Jude 16.
[s] Pſ. xlii. 3. & lxxi. 11. & lxxviii. 19.
† Heb. Words of the lips.
[t] Job. xx. 3. Prov. xxi. 30.
[u] Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.
[x] 2 Chron. xxxi. 1. & xxxii. 12.
‡ Or, hoſtages.
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[y] 1 Kings xiii. 18. Iſa. x. 5, 6.
[z] Exod. xv. 9. 1 King. xx. 10. Pſ. lxxiii. 8.
§ Heb. The water of their feet.
[a] Dan. iii. 15. & vii. 25. Rev. xiii. 6.
‖ Heb. Make with me a bleſſing. Gen. xxxiii. 11.
[b] Exod. iii. 8 Deut. xxxii. 13, 14.
[c] Deut. xxxii. 37. Pſal. cxv. 2—8.
[d] Chap. xix. 13.
[e] Rev. xiii. 6.
[f] Pſ. xxxviii. 13, 14. Prov. xxvi. 4. Mat. vii. 6.
[g] Ezra ix. 3. Mat. xxvi. 65.

v. 17—37. Hezekiah had dearly purchaſed his peace; but when he thought he had now appeaſed the ſtorm, to his ſurprize he ſees Jeruſalem ſurrounded by the hoſts of perfidious Aſſyrians. *Note*, (1.) They who neglecting to truſt in God, fly to human confidences, will uſually find the evil they attempt to avert increaſing upon them. (2.) Treaties are ſlight bands to wicked kings.

1. We have the conference between Hezekiah's commiſſioners and the Aſſyrian chiefs, with Rabſhakeh at their head. They make him only one requeſt, to ſpeak to them in the Aſſyrian language, as they were near the gate, where the people might hear, *v.* 26. but Rabſhakeh, who had begun his inſolent ſpeech, only talked the louder and prouder. *Note*, They who have to do with unreaſonable and wicked men, muſt expect from them little complaiſance.

2. Rabſhakeh's ſpeech is artful, inſolent, and blaſphemous; admirably ſuited with lying inſinuations to carry his point with the people, and lead them to ſurrender, and ſhews a great wicked man. [1.] He repreſents their defenceleſs ſtate, and the folly of reſiſting. Their confidences he ſuppoſes to be either their own ſtrength, *v.* 20. the aſſiſtance of Egypt, *v.* 21. or the interpoſition of their God, *v.* 22. neither of which could profit. Their own ſtrength he deſpiſes, *v.* 23. If they could produce two thouſand men, he would give them horſes; and, after that, the meaneſt captain in his army were ſtrong enough to rout them. Egypt was a broken reed; their confidence there was vain, and would deſtroy inſtead of ſupporting them, *v.* 21. And as for God, he neither would nor could help them. He inſinuates as if Hezekiah had offended him by taking away the high places, *v.* 22. and that himſelf had a commiſſion from him to avenge his quarrel, *v.* 25. nay, that ſhould he attempt to ſuccour them, it were vain; blaſphemouſly concluding him as impotent to ſave, as the idol gods whom he proudly boaſts his maſter had vanquiſhed,

v. 33, 35. *Note,* (1.) Men's deeds do not uſually correſpond to their proud boaſting. (2.) Human confidences are certainly a broken reed; they who truſt on them may expect diſappointment. (3.) Ignorant and wicked men often reproach God's people for that which is their higheſt honour. (4.) Many pretend God's commiſſion, whoſe falſhood will ſoon be detected. [2.] He boaſts of the power of his king, the great king, whoſe conqueſts made him look ſo big, and whoſe armies rendered him ſo formidable, that all oppoſition againſt him was uſeleſs. *Note,* Worldly greatneſs is almoſt idolized in the eyes of carnal men, whilſt the eye of faith looks upon a great wicked man only as a great worm. [3.] He endeavours to cajole them into immediate ſurrender, and to buy their peace with a preſent, as if it would be their own intereſt to do ſo. They would elſe be reduced to the greateſt extremities, *v.* 31. if they dared to reſiſt. But, if they ſubmitted, he promiſes them to let them continue for a while in their preſent poſſeſſions, and then remove them into a land as good as their own, where was plenty of every thing. *Note,* (1.) By lying promiſes the tempter baits his hook; but experience too late diſcovers the terrible deception. (2.) We may not truſt the fair words of an enemy. Many a ſmooth tongue hath under it the poiſon of aſps.

3. The commiſſioners of Hezekiah, according to his command, made no reply, but rent their clothes, in token of diſtreſs, as well as in deteſtation of the blaſphemy, and told the king what had paſſed, that he might conſider of an anſwer. *Note,* The beſt anſwer to inſolent abuſe is ſilence. It but exaſperates to anſwer a fool according to his folly.

CHAP. XIX.

1. *Hezekiah, in great diſtreſs, deſires the prayers of the prophet Iſaiah,* ver. 1—5. *and receives from him an anſwer of peace,* ver. 6, 7. 2. *Sennacherib ſends a threatning letter to Hezekiah,* ver. 8—13. 3. *Hezekiah recommends his caſe to God,* ver. 14—19. 4. *God, by Iſaiah, aſſures him of deliverance,* ver. 20—34. 5. *The army of the Aſſyrians is cut off by an angel, and Sennacherib himſelf ſlain by his own ſons,* ver. 35—37.

1.[a] AND it came to paſs when king Hezekiah heard *it,* that he rent his clothes, and covered himſelf with ſackcloth, and [b] went into the houſe of the LORD. 2. And he ſent Eliakim, which *was* over the houſhold, and Shebna the ſcribe, and the elders of the prieſts, covered with ſackcloth, to Iſaiah [c] the prophet the ſon of Amoz. 3. And they ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of † rebuke and [d] blaſphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and [e] *there is* not ſtrength to bring forth. 4. [f] It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rab-ſhakeh, whom the king of Aſſyria his maſter hath ſent to reproach the living God; and [g] will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore [h] lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant *that are* left. 5. So the ſervants of king Hezekiah came to Iſaiah. 6. ¶ And Iſaiah ſaid unto them, Thus ſhall ye ſay to your maſter, Thus ſaith the LORD, [i] Be not afraid of the words which thou haſt heard, with which the ſervants of the king of Aſſyria have blaſphemed me. 7. Behold, I will ſend a ‡ blaſt upon him, and he ſhall hear a rumour, and ſhall return to his own land, and [k] I will cauſe him to fall by the ſword in his own land.

[a] Iſa. xxxvii. 1, &c.
[b] 2 Chron. vii. 15.
[c] Chap. iii. 11. Jam. v. 16.
† Or, reviling. Pſal. cxxiii. 3.
[d] Chap. xviii. 35.
[e] Gen. xxii. 14. Hoſ. xiii. 13.
[f] Exod. ii. 25. 2 Sam. xvi. 12.
[g] Pſ. l. 21.
[h] Joel ii. 17. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.
[i] Exod. xiv. 13.
‡ Heb. Spirit. Ver. 35.
[k] Ver. 37.

v. 1—7. In deep diſtreſs, the afflicted Hezekiah rends his clothes, and puts on the mournful ſackcloth. Human help is vain; God alone can ſuccour him. Therefore,

1. He addreſſes himſelf to God, and goes up to the temple, there to ſeek counſel and comfort. *Note,* Whilſt we have an almighty God to fly to, we need not, in the midſt of trouble, deſpair.

2. He ſends to beg Iſaiah's prayers for him. Eliakim and Shebna could beſt inform him of Rabſhakeh's inſolence and blaſphemy. Now was the critical moment. In this deplorable ſituation, if God did not help inſtantly, they muſt periſh, having no ſtrength and power to help themſelves, *v.* 3. Therefore he intreats the prophet to lift up the prayer of faith and importunity, that the arm of God may be ſtretched out to rebuke the blaſphemy he hath heard, and ſave the remnant which is left. *Note,* (1.) Whilſt we are crying to God in trouble, we ſhould deſire to intereſt the prayers of the miniſters and people of God in our behalf. (2.) They who apply to the great Prophet to be their advocate, have not only an *it may be* to ſupport their hopes, but an *it ſhall be,* to give them aſſurance of relief.

3. Iſaiah's anſwer is comfortable and encouraging. Terrible as the preſent danger appeared, Hezekiah need not fear it: God, who had heard the blaſphemy, undertakes to blaſt their projects, and, with confuſion deſtroying the hoſts of Aſſyria, to ſend their king home covered with diſhonour, there to fall more ingloriouſly by the ſword of domeſtic enemies. *Note,* (1.) None ever truſted in God, and were confounded. (2.) They who liſt up their tongues againſt God, bring down his ſwift vengeance upon their own heads.

8. ¶ So Rab-ſhakeh returned, and found the king of Aſſyria warring againſt Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachiſh. 9. And when he heard ſay of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, [l] he is come out to fight againſt thee: he ſent meſſengers again unto Hezekiah, ſaying, 10. Thus ſhall ye ſpeak to Hezekiah king of Judah, ſaying, [m] Let not thy God in whom thou truſteſt, deceive thee, ſaying, Jeruſalem ſhall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Aſſyria. 11. Behold, thou haſt heard what the kings of Aſſyria have done to all lands, by deſtroying them utterly: and ſhalt thou be delivered? 12. Have the Gods of the nations delivered them [n] which my fathers have deſtroyed; *as* Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in Thelaſar? 13. Where *is* the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah? 14. ¶ And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the meſſengers, and read it: and Hezekiah [o] went up into the houſe of the LORD, and ſpread it before the LORD. 15. And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, [p] which dwelleſt *between* the cherubims, thou art the God, *even* thou [q] alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, [r] thou haſt made heaven and earth. 16. LORD, [s] bow down thine ear, and hear: [t] open, LORD, thine eyes, and ſee: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath ſent him to reproach the living God. 17. Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Aſſyria have [u] deſtroyed the nations, and their lands. 18. And have † caſt their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, [x] but the work of men's hands, wood and ſtone: therefore they have deſtroyed them. 19. Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beſeech thee, ſave thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth [y] may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

[l] Rev. xii. 16.
[m] Chap. xviii. 30.
[n] Chap. xvii. 3.
[o] 1 Kings viii. 30.
[p] 1 Sam. iv. 4. Pſ. lxxx. 1.
[q] Iſa. xliv. 6.
[r] Jer. x. 12.
[s] Pſ. xxxi. 2.
[t] 2 Chron. vi. 40.
[u] Num. xiv. 9.
† Heb. Given.
[x] Jer. x. 3, &c.
[y] Joſh. vii. 9. Pſ. lix. 13. & lxxxiii. 18.

v. 8—19. When Hezekiah's ſilence gave no hopes of a ſurrender, Rabſhakeh returned to give the king an account of the conference, who had left Lachiſh; either it was too ſtrong, or he might have taken it, and now was beſieging Libnah. There intelligence being received, that Tirhakah was coming to Hezekiah's relief, he makes one effort more to terrify him to a ſurrender.

1. He ſends a threatning letter to him, mocking his vain confidence in God; magnifying and boaſting of his conqueſts over other nations and their gods; and therefore intimating the vanity of Hezekiah's reſiſtance. *Note,* (1.) Wicked men, in the diſtreſſes of God's people, ſay, Where is now their God? But, though for a time he may permit their proud boaſting, he will not finally fail thoſe that truſt him. (2.) Vain minds trumpet their own praiſes, but God quickly covers them with ſhame.

2. Hezekiah received and read the letter; and, as the contents ſtruck more at God's glory, than even his crown and dignity, he went up to the temple, and ſolemnly ſpread it before him, as leaving the matter in his hands, and fervently in prayer imploring preſent help. The God of Iſrael, whom Sennacherib deſpiſed as a local deity, he adored as the Univerſal Sovereign; intreats his attention to the diſhonour caſt on his great name; acknowledges the Aſſyrian conqueſts, but over gods the work of men's hands, that could neither help themſelves, nor their worſhippers; and therefore prays that Sennacherib might be made to know the difference between the God of Iſrael and the gods of the nations; and that all the world might ſee, in the greatneſs of the ſalvation wrought for them, the glory of the God they worſhipped. *Note,* We may confidently expect to be heard, when the great object of our requeſts is the manifeſtation of God's glory.

20. ¶ Then Iſaiah the ſon of Amoz [z] ſent to Hezekiah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, *That* which thou haſt prayed to me againſt Sennacherib king of Aſſyria, [a] I have heard. 21. This *is* the word that the LORD hath ſpoken concerning him, [b] The virgin, the daughter of Zion, [c] hath deſpiſed thee, *and* laughed thee to ſcorn, the daughter of Jeruſalem hath ſhaken her head at thee. 22. Whom haſt thou reproached and blaſphemed? and againſt whom haſt thou exalted

thy

[z] Dan. ix. 20.
[a] Pſ. lxv. 2.
[b] Hoſ. xi. 12.
[c] Iſa. viii. 9. Zech. ii. 5.

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thy voice, and lift up thine eyes on high? *even* againſt
the [d] holy *One* of Iſrael. 23. † By thy meſſengers thou
haſt reproached the LORD, and haſt ſaid, With [e] the
multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height
of the mountains, to the ſides of Lebanon, and will cut
down the ‡ tall cedar-trees thereof, *and* the choice fir-
trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his
borders, *and into* the foreſt || of his Carmel. 24. I have
digged and drunk ſtrange waters, and with the ſole of
my feet have I dried up all the rivers of beſieged places.
25. Haſt thou not heard long ago *how* I have done
it, *and* of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have
I brought it to paſs, [f] that thou ſhouldeſt be to lay waſte
fenced cities *into* ruinous heaps. 26. Therefore their in-
habitants were § of ſmall power, they were diſmayed and
confounded, they were *as* the graſs of the field, and *as*
the green herb, [g] *as* the graſs on the houſe-tops, and *as*
corn blaſted before it be grown up. 27. But [h] I know thy
abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and [i] thy
rage againſt me. 28. Becauſe thy rage againſt me, and
thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore [k] I will
put my hook in thy noſe, and [l] my bridle in thy lips,
and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou
cameſt. 29. And [m] this *ſhall be* a ſign unto thee, [n] Ye
ſhall eat this year ſuch things as grow of themſelves, and
in [o] the ſecond year [p] that which ſpringeth of the ſame,
and in the third year ſow ye, and reap, and plant vine-
yards, and eat the fruits thereof. 30. And the † rem-
nant that is eſcaped of the houſe of Judah, [q] ſhall yet a-
gain take root downward, and bear fruit upward. 31.
For [r] out of Jeruſalem ſhall go forth a remnant, and they
that eſcape out of mount Zion: [s] the zeal of the LORD
of hoſts ſhall do this. 32. Therefore thus ſaith the LORD
concerning the king of Aſſyria, [t] he ſhall not come into
this city, nor ſhoot an arrow there, nor come before it
with ſhield, nor caſt a bank againſt it. 33. By the way
that he came, by the ſame ſhall he return, and ſhall not
come into this city, ſaith the LORD. 34. For I will
defend this city to ſave it, for mine own ſake, and [u]
for my ſervant David's ſake.

[d] Pſal. lxxi. 22. Iſa. v. 24.
† Heb. By the hand of, &c.
[e] Pſal. xx. 7. Iſa. x. 13—15.
‡ Heb Tallneſs of thy cedars.
|| Heb. Or, and his fruitful field. Iſa. x. 18.
[f] Iſa. x. 5, 7.
§ Heb. Short of hand. Jer. v. 10.
[g] Pſal. cxxix. 6.
[h] Pſ. cxxxix. 2.
[i] Acts ix. 4.
[k] Job xli. 1, 2. Ezek. xxix. 4. & xxxviii. 4.
[l] Pſal. xxxii. 9.
[m] Like that. Exod. iii. 12.
[n] Pſal. xxxvii. 3.
[o] Lev. xxv. 4.
[p] Eph. iii. 20.
† Heb. Eſcaping of the houſe of Judah that remaineth.
[q] Pſal. lxxx. 9.
[r] Iſa. x. 22. Rom. ix. 27.
[s] Iſa. ix. 7.
[t] Ver. 35.
[u] 1 Kings xi. 12.

v. 20—34. Whilſt Hezekiah was ſpeaking to God in the temple, he was returning an anſwer to him of peace, by his prophet Iſaiah. So ſpeedy are often God's anſwers to the prayer of faith.

1. He aſſures him of the vanity of Sennacherib's boaſt, and the confuſion which ſhould cover him. Jeruſalem, which God as a chaſte virgin had eſpouſed, he would as a faithful huſband protect from every violence. She therefore mocked at theſe inſolent threatnings, and deſpiſed his attempts: theſe reproaches God with jealouſy heard, and would avenge. The conqueſts he boaſted as gotten by his own arm, God had given him as the rod of his anger againſt theſe nations; and ſince *the ax boaſteth itſelf againſt the hewer*, Iſa. x. 13, 14. its pride ſhall be humbled. God, who knew his invenomed heart, and all his ſchemes for the deſtruction of Iſrael, would diſappoint him. As the fiſh that is entangled with the hook, and the horſe held with bit and bridle, ſo ſhould this great king be, his power as eaſily reſtrained and broken. *Note*, (1.) God's people are like a virgin, chaſte; and like a wife of youth, beloved: let them prove faithful, and then never fear being protected. (2.) They who forget God in their atchievements, take to themſelves that praiſe which is not their own. (3.) The powers of ſin and darkneſs have their limited bounds; though theſe proud waves rage horribly, yet God hath ſaid, hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further.

2. He comforts Hezekiah and the people with farther promiſes of the Divine favour, 1. The plenty which they ſhould enjoy. Though the Aſſyrians had waſted the country, and the next year was a ſabbatical year, yet God would take care they ſhould have enough ſpontaneouſly produced, to feed them till the harveſt of the following year. *Note*, If we have truſted God with our ſouls, let us never diſtruſt his care for our bodies. 2. Proſperity and peace ſhould be in their borders. The remnant which is eſcaped, ſhould increaſe in their families, and be affluent in their circumſtances, and no ſiege prevent the quiet purſuit of their ſeveral occupations. *Note*, They enjoy a glorious liberty, who have God for their protector; and rooted in faith, and fruitful in holineſs, are bleſt with a portion among that remnant, which is choſen according to the election of grace. 3. There ſhould not be the leaſt hoſtile attack made againſt them. God will inſtantly defeat the projected ſiege; and for David's ſake, and for his own glory, defend them as with a ſhield. *Note*, (1.) They are ſafe whom God protects. (2.) Though we are unworthy, yet for his own glory, and to fulfil his promiſes made to our David, God will ſave us.

35. ¶ And it came to paſs [x] that night, that [y] the
angel of the LORD went out, and ſmote in the camp
of the Aſſyrians, an hundred fourſcore and five thou-
ſand: and when they aroſe early in the morning, behold,
they *were* all dead corpſes. 36. So Sennacherib king
of Aſſyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt
at Nineveh. 37. And it came to paſs as he was wor-
ſhipping in the houſe of Niſroch [z] his god, that Adram-
melech and Sharezer his [a] ſons ſmote him with the ſword:
and they eſcaped into the land of Armenia; and Eſar-
haddon his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[x] 1 Theſ. v. 2, 3.
[y] 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.
[z] Chap. xvii 35.
[a] Tobit i. 21.

v. 35—37. The promiſe is ſcarce ſooner made, than fulfilled.

1. The army of Aſſyria is deſtroyed. A mighty angel, ſent from God, in one night ſlew 185,000 men; ſo that in the morning they beheld thoſe dead corpſes, who the preceding evening looked ſo formidable. *Note*, (1.) When our laſt hour of trial is ended in death, then ſhall we ſee all our ſpiritual enemies thus ſlain before us. (2.) If one angel could work ſuch a great deliverance, why ſhould the heirs of ſalvation fear, when legions miniſter to them continually?

2. The affrighted king lives to ſee the ruin, and by an ignominious flight, ſeeks to ſave himſelf; but vain is the thought of eſcaping, when God marks the ſinner as the but of his anger. Inſtead of being overcome with the ſenſe of the power of Iſrael's God, and repenting of his blaſphemies, he ſtill cleaves to Niſroch his god. Perhaps he was now thanking him for his deliverance, or imploring his help on ſome new attempt he had meditated; but the arm of death ſeizes him in the idol temple. He is murdered by two of his ſons, who eſcape from juſtice, and Eſarhaddon, another of them, reigned in his ſtead. *Note*, (1.) When parents are rebels againſt God, let them not marvel if their children rebel againſt them. (2.) They who after warning perſiſt in their wickedneſs, juſtly ſuffer the reward of their deeds.

CHAP. XX.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Hezekiah's ſickneſs, and recovery*, ver. 1—11. 2. *Hezekiah's ſin, and recovery*, ver. 12—19. 3. *The concluſion of his reign*, ver. 20, 21.

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1. [a] IN thoſe days was Hezekiah ſick unto death: and
the prophet Iſaiah the ſon of Amoz came to him,
and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, Set thine
houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live. 2. Then
he turned his face [b] to the wall, and prayed unto the
LORD, ſaying, 3. I beſeech thee, O LORD, [c] re-
member now how I have walked before thee in truth,
and [d] with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is*
good in thy ſight: and Hezekiah [e] wept † ſore. 4. And
it came to paſs afore Iſaiah was gone out into the middle
court, that the word of the LORD came to him, ſay-
ing, 5. Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of
my people, Thus ſaith the LORD, the God of Da-
vid thy father, [f] I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeen
[g] thy tears: behold, [h] I will heal thee; on the third day
thou ſhalt go up unto the houſe of the LORD. 6.
And [i] I will add unto thy days fifteen years, and [k] I
will deliver thee, and this city, out of the hand of the
king of Aſſyria, and [l] I will defend this city for mine
own ſake, and for my ſervant David's ſake. 7. And
Iſaiah ſaid, [m] Take a lump of figs. And they took and
laid *it* on the boil, and he ‡ recovered. 8. ¶ And He-
zekiah ſaid unto Iſaiah, What *ſhall be* the ſign that the
LORD will heal me, and [n] that I ſhall go up into the
houſe of the LORD the third day? 9. And Iſaiah
ſaid, This ſign ſhalt thou have of the LORD, that the
LORD will do the thing that he hath ſpoken: [o] ſhall
the ſhadow go forward ten degrees: or go back ten de-
grees? 10. And Hezekiah anſwered, It is a light thing
for the ſhadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but [p] let
the ſhadow return backward ten degrees. 11. And
Iſaiah the prophet [q] cried unto the LORD, and he brought
the ſhadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone
down in the || dial of Ahaz.

[a] 2 Chron. xxxii. 24, &c. Iſa. xxxviii. 1, &c.
[b] 1 Kings viii. 30. or Mat. vi. 6.
[c] Neh. xiii. 22.
[d] Job ii. 3.
[e] Heb. v. 7.
† Heb. With a great weeping.
[f] Pſal. lxi 2.
[g] Ibid. xxxix. 12. & lvi. 8.
[h] Mat. vii. 7.
[i] Job xiv. 5.
[k] 2 Cor. i. 10.
[l] Chap. xix. 34.
[m] Chap. iv. 41. John ix. 6.
‡ Heb. Lived.
Chap. viii. 8.
[n] Pſal. lxxxiv. 2.
[o] Judg. vi. 37, 39.
[p] Joſh. x. 13. Ecclus xlviii. 23.
[q] Exod. xiv. 15.
|| Heb. Degrees.

v. 1—11. We have heard the deliverance of Jeruſalem from deſtruction; here we have the recovery of her king from death.

1. Hezekiah is ſick of a diſeaſe eſteemed mortal. This muſt have happened ſoon before, or ſoon after the ruin of the Aſſyrian army; when he could ill be ſpared, or when in the midſt of his triumphs. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of men are liable to death, and that becauſe the plague of ſin hath ſeized their mortal bodies.

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(2.) Every moment of life is uncertain; death pays no more reſpect to the conqueror than to his priſoners.

2. The prophet is ſent to give him notice that he muſt die, and therefore to prepare for it, by ſettling his family and affairs. *Note*, (1.) God's miniſters need often preſs this argument whilſt men are in health, as a quickning call, to awaken the people's diligence to provide for death. (2.) When we are ill, they are our beſt friends, not who flatter us with life, but admoniſh us to be ready to reſign it. (3.) Our ſouls are infinitely a more important concern than our houſes; let them therefore be ſet in order, through renewed applications to atoning blood, and chearful reſignation of them into the hands of God.

3. Hezekiah, ſtruck with the meſſage, turned his face to the wall, either as deſiring to be unobſerved, or as directing his prayer towards the temple, and cried unto God. He humbly mentions the ſimplicity of his heart; not as his title to God's favour, but as a comfortable proof of the grace of which he had been a partaker, and begs God would ſtill remember him in mercy in this trying ſeaſon, whether for life or death. He wept ſore. The dangerous ſtate of Judah expoſed to the Aſſyrian ſword, the reformation from idolatry ſcarce ſettled, and no ſon yet to ſucceed him; theſe grieved him for the people's ſake, or his tears were the expreſſion of the fervency of his devotion, rather than the effect of any diſmaying fear. *Note*, (1.) Though all our hopes towards God in a dying hour depend upon the finiſhed work of Jeſus, yet will the teſtimony of our conſcience to our ſimplicity before him afford us no ſmall conſolation. (2.) There is in death ſomething terrible to nature, but grace can make us more than conquerors over its fears. (3.) The beſt preparation for death is prayer, when our ſpirit is departing; then let us look up and ſay, "Into thy hands I "commend my ſpirit, for thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord."

4. Iſaiah is immediately ſent back with a meſſage of peace to him; not that there is any change in God's mind, but he who gave him notice of the fatal tendency of his diſeaſe, deſigned to ſtir up Hezekiah's prayer, and to anſwer him in mercy. For his people's ſake, over whom Hezekiah preſided, and as the God of David, mindful of his covenant, he tells him his prayer is heard, and more than anſwered: he ſhall not only recover, but preſently return to God's courts to worſhip, ſhall enjoy fifteen years longer life, and during that time, be protected from every attack of the king of Aſſyria, who threatned his country. *Note*, (1.) God's gifts exceed our deſires as well as deſerts. (2.) Life is a bleſſing, when continued to advance the purpoſes of God's glory upon earth, and this is the only end which can make it deſirable. (3.) Though we know not the limits of our remaining days, we know they are few, and therefore need diligently improve them.

5. The outward means preſcribed for his recovery, was a lump of figs laid on the boil; not that they could ſo ſuddenly operate, or ſo perfectly effect the cure, but God would reſtore him in the uſe of means, though the efficacy was not in the figs, but the faith which applied them. *Note*, (1.) As we muſt not tempt God in our ſickneſs, by the neglect of means, we muſt take care not to truſt in them. (2.) When we are ſick, the prayers and advice of God's prophets may do more good than the preſcription of our phyſician.

6. To confirm his faith, Hezekiah aſked, and God granted him a ſign of his recovering health, and return to the temple. God propoſed to him his choice, whether the ſhadow ſhould go forward or backward ten degrees (or half hours, as it is generally thought) upon the dial of Ahaz, which he might ſee from his window. As the retrograde motion would appear moſt miraculous, he choſe that; and immediately the ſun (as to appearance it ſeemed, but in fact it muſt be the earth) at Iſaiah's prayer returned either ſuddenly to begin its morning courſe again, or gradually; which ſuppoſing it roſe at ſix, and it was then eleven o'clock, would make that day twenty-two hours long. *Note*, He who firſt impreſſed motion on theſe revolving planets, and keeps them in their ſpheres, can when he pleaſes arreſt their rapid courſe, and ſhortly will put a final period to their revolutions.

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12. ¶ [r] At that time Berodach-baladan the ſon of Baladan, king of Babylon, [s] ſent letters and a preſent unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been ſick. 13. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and [t] ſhewed them all the houſe of his precious things, the ſilver, and the gold, and the ſpices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the houſe of his † armour, and all that was found in his treaſures: [u] there was nothing in his houſe, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah ſhewed them not. 14. ¶ Then came Iſaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and ſaid unto him, What ſaid theſe men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah ſaid, They are come from a far country, *even* from Babylon. 15. And he ſaid, What have they ſeen in thine houſe? And Hezekiah anſwered, [x] All *the things* that *are* in mine houſe have they ſeen: there is nothing among my treaſures, that I have not ſhewed them. 16. And Iſaiah ſaid unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. 17. Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine houſe, and that which thy fathers have laid up in ſtore unto this day, [y] ſhall be carried into Babylon: nothing ſhall be left, ſaith the LORD. 18. And of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, [z] ſhall they take away, and [a] they ſhall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. 19. Then ſaid Hezekiah unto Iſaiah, [b] Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou haſt ſpoken. And he ſaid, *Is it* not *good*, if peace and truth be in my days? 20. ¶ And the reſt of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and [c] brought water into the city, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21. And Hezekiah ſlept with his fathers: and ‡ Manaſſeh his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

r Iſa. xxxix. 1, &c.
s 2 Sam. viii. 10.
t 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.
† Heb. Veſſels.
u 1 Kings xiii. 46. Eccleſ vii. 20. 1 John i. 8.
x Joſh. vii. 19. Job xxxi. 33.
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y Chap. xxiv. 13. Jer. xxvii. 22. & lii. 17.
z Chap. xxiv. 12. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.
a Dan. i. 3.
b 1 Sam. iii. 18. Job i. 21. Pſal. xxxix. 9.
c 2 Chron. xxxii. 20.
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‡ i. e. Forgetting, or forgotten.

v. 12—21. The king of Babylon, hitherto tributary to the king of Aſſyria, but probably on the late ſtroke on Sennacherib's forces meditating a revolt, in order to engage Hezekiah's friendſhip, concerning whom he had heard ſuch great things,

1. Sends ambaſſadors to congratulate him on his recovery; with a letter and a preſent, in token of his high reſpect for him, and deſire to cultivate a correſpondence with him. *Note*, It is wiſe to gain their favour, who have God for their friend.

2. Hezekiah unſuſpicious of danger, and probably giving way to the vanity of his heart, flattered with ſuch honour done him by ſo great a king, received them with great cordiality; and to excite a high idea of his riches and magnificence, ſhewed them his treaſures, armoury, palaces, and whatever was curious or noble in his dominions. *Note*, Our poſſeſſions become a ſnare to us when we pride ourſelves on them, take a pleaſure in ſhewing them, and delight to hear them commended.

3. God ſaw and condemned the pride of his heart, and Iſaiah is ſent to reprove him for it. He enquires concerning the perſons, whence they came, and what they had ſeen. Hezekiah without reſerve informed him, and receives a threatning ſentence from the prophet. The treaſures on which he was ſo vain, the king of Babylon ſhould ſeize; and the alliance on which he prided himſelf, would be fatal to his family, *v.* 18. *Note*, (1.) They who will walk in pride, God will abaſe. (2.) That which hath miniſtred to our vanity and ſelf-confidence, ere long will cover us with confuſion.

4. Hezekiah humbly ſubmits to the divine denunciation. Thankful that in judgment God had remembered mercy, and that in his days there ſhould be peace. *Note*, (1.) We muſt ſubmit to God's afflictions not only as juſt, but gracious; deſigned not for our deſtruction, but humiliation. (2.) In the darkeſt diſpenſations of Providence we have cauſe to be thankful, if but that we are out of hell. (3.) The enjoyment of peace and truth, outward quietneſs, and goſpel-preaching, is a ſingular mercy we can never ſufficiently acknowledge.

5. Hezekiah's reign, according to the prophetic word, ended peaceably and glorioully, of which we ſhall hear more, 2 *Chron.* xxix. His aqueduct, for the ſupply of Jeruſalem with water, is here only mentioned, a noble and uſeful work. After a life of piety, he left his crown to his ſon Manaſſeh, an unworthy ſucceſſor, who haſtened the nation's ruin. *Note*, A good man cannot entail his piety on his poſterity.

CHAP. XXI.

In this chapter we have a ſhort but ſad account of the reigns of two of the kings of Judah, Manaſſeh and Amon. 1. *Manaſſeh devoted himſelf to all manner of wickedneſs*, ver. 1—9. *God therefore devoted him and Jeruſalem to ruin*, ver. 10—18. 2. *Amon followed his father's ſteps*, ver. 19—22. *Was ſoon ſlain by the ſword, and left good Joſiah his ſucceſſor*, ver. 23—26.

1. [a] MAnaſſeh *was* twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* [b] Hephzi-bah. 2. And [c] he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD caſt out before the children of Iſrael. 3. For he built up again the high places [d] which Hezekiah his father had deſtroyed, and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, [e] as did Ahab king of Iſrael, and worſhipped all the hoſt of heaven, and ſerved them. 4. And he [f] built altars in the houſe of the LORD, of which the LORD ſaid, [g] In Jeruſalem will I put my name. 5. And he built altars for all the hoſt of heaven, in the two courts of the houſe of the LORD. 6. And [h] he made his ſon paſs through the fire, and [i] ob-

a 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1, &c.
b Iſa. lxii. 4.
c Ver. vi. 16.
d Chap. xviii. 4.
e 1 Kings xvi. 33.
f Jer. xxxii. 34.
g 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings viii. 29. & ix. 3.
h Chap. xvi. 3.

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[i] obſerved times, and uſed inchantments, and dealt with familiar ſpirits, and wizards: he wrought much wickedneſs in the ſight of the LORD, to provoke *him* to anger. 7. And he ſet a graven image of the grove that he had made, in the houſe of which the LORD ſaid to David, and to Solomon his ſon, [k] In this houſe, and in Jeruſalem, which I have choſen out of all the tribes of Iſrael, will I put my name for ever. 8. Neither will I make the feet of Iſrael move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only [l] if they will obſerve to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my ſervant Moſes commanded them. 9. [m] But they hearkened not: and [n] Manaſſeh ſeduced them to do more evil than did the nations, whom the LORD deſtroyed before the children of Iſrael.

[i] Lev. xix. 26, 31. Deut. xviii. 10.
[k] 2 Sam. vii. 10. 1 Kings viii. 29. &, ix. 3. Chap. xxiii. 27. Pſal. cxxxii. 14.
[l] Lev. xxvi. 14.
[m] John. xv. 22. Jam. iv. 17.
[n] Prov. xxix. 12.

v. 1—9. Like the ſeven years famine of Egypt, that made the former plenty forgotten, the wickedneſs of Manaſſeh blots out all the glorious work his father had ſo piouſly accompliſhed.

1. Manaſſeh was young when he began his reign, and continued longeſt of any of the kings of Judah, reckoning the years of his captivity in Babylon. Whether he was immediatediately corrupted by thoſe at court, who, amidſt their pretended reformation, retained their love for the old abominations; and by flattery, gained the ear of the unexperienced king, or whether only after he had children, *v.* 6. he apoſtatized, is uncertain. *Note*, It is very dangerous to come too young to the poſſeſſion of honour and greatneſs; ſo many are in wait to flatter ſuch to their ruin.

2. His wickedneſs was beyond all his predeceſſors. Not warned by Iſrael's puniſhment, he adopted all their ſins with circumſtances of peculiar aggravation; deſpiſing, or rather as if deſigning to caſt reproach on his father's proceedings, he began with rebuilding the high places Hezekiah had deſtroyed. Baal and Aſhtoreth (tranſlated a grove) once more reared up their hateful heads, and the hoſts of heaven were the objects of his worſhip, inſtead of that God who made them. To profane God's holy temple, he dared there erect his idol altars, filled the houſe and courts with theſe abominations, and there ſacrificed to his gods. In the temple itſelf he placed the image of Aſhtoreth, *v.* 7. in oppoſition and defiance to God, provoking him to caſt them off for ever; whom, on their fidelity, he had promiſed ever to protect and preſerve. Mad upon his idols, he made his ſon to paſs through the fire, in honour to theſe falſe deities; and ſuperſtitious as impious, he truſted on charms, and conſulted wizards, as if the devil were a better oracle than the God that ſpoke from between the cherubims. Seduced by their king's example, the people in general followed him, and Judah was filled with idolatry, worſe than the very heathen nations around them. *Note*, (1.) They who have had a religious education, when they give themſelves up to evil, uſually grow of all others the moſt profligate. (2.) Irreligion and ſuperſtition are nearly allied. They who caſt off all fear of God, are often ſeen to be the greateſt ſlaves to the illuſions of the devil. (3.) A bad example is deadly infectious, and eſpecially in kings: how much will they have to anſwer in the day of God, who are chargeable not only with their own blood, but with the murder of thouſands of ſouls, whom they have ſeduced and deſtroyed?

10. ¶ And the LORD ſpake by his ſervants the prophets, ſaying, 11. [o] Becauſe Manaſſeh king of Judah hath done theſe abominations, *and* hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did which *were* before him, and hath made Judah alſo to ſin with his idols: 12. Therefore thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Behold, [p] I *am* bringing *ſuch* evil upon Jeruſalem and Judah, that whoſoever heareth of it, [q] both his ears ſhall tingle. 13. And [r] I will ſtretch over Jeruſalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of [s] the houſe of Ahab: and [t] I will wipe Jeruſalem as *a man* wipeth a diſh, wiping *it*, and turning *it* † upſide down. 14. And I will forſake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies, and they ſhall become a prey, and a ſpoil to all their enemies: 15. Becauſe they have done *that which was* evil in my ſight, and have provoked me to anger ſince the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt even unto this day. 16. Moreover, [u] Manaſſeh ſhed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jeruſalem ‡ from one end to another, beſide his ſin wherewith he made Judah to ſin, in doing *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD. 17. ¶ Now [x] the reſt of the acts of Manaſſeh, and all that he did, and his ſin that he ſinned, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 18. And Manaſſeh ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own houſe, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[o] Jer. xv. 4.
[p] Dan. ix. 12. Mic. iii. 12.
[q] 1 Sam. iii. 11. Jer. xix. 3.
[r] Iſa. xxxiv. 11. Lam. ii. 8. Amos vii. 8.
[s] 1 Kings xxi. 24.
[t] Jer. xxvi. 9.
† Heb. Upon the face thereof.
[u] Chap. xxiv. 4.
‡ Heb. From mouth to mouth.
[x] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11—19.

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v. 10—18. Though their provocations were ſo great, God did not ſtrike without warning. Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk propheſied, it is ſuppoſed, under Manaſſeh; and the tradition is, that Iſaiah was ſawn aſunder by him, *Heb.* xi. 37. At laſt, when incorrigible, the threatned judgment came; of which we ſhall hear more, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. We have here,

1. The charge brought againſt Manaſſeh. His vile idolatry, his infamous ſeduction of God's people; and, as the ſummit of his guilt, *v.* 16. the blood of innocents which he ſhed, and as above hinted, of God's prophets: this filled the meaſure of his iniquities brim full, and brought down the heavy wrath of a juſtly offended God. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt kings muſt ſtand ſhortly as the meaneſt criminals at God's bar. (2.) The perſecution of God's people is the crime which fills ſooneſt the meaſure of a nation's ſins.

2. The ſentence pronounced upon him. A deſtruction ſo terrible, that the neighbour nations ſhould be aſtoniſhed at the report. The ſame judgments ſhould light on Jeruſalem as Samaria, and the houſe of Manaſſeh be deſtroyed as the houſe of Ahab. The country ſhould be thoroughly plundered, ranſacked, and deſolate, *ſpoiled* of all, as a diſh wiped clean, and turned upſide down, and all the inhabitants removed into a ſtrange land. Since they had forſaken God, he would forſake them; and taking now their former ſins, from the day they left Egypt, into the account, reckon with them from firſt to laſt. *Note*, (1.) When by our perfidious apoſtacy we turn from God, old guilt that had otherwiſe been cancelled is recalled, to witneſs againſt and condemn us. (2.) They who forſake God, muſt expect to be forſaken by him. (3.) When God viſits for ſin in the great day, then ſhall indeed the ears of ſinners tingle at the dreadful ſentence denounced upon them.

3. Manaſſeh's death is recorded, and his burial. Whether on his penitence, See 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. he judged himſelf unworthy, or others thought an idolater ought not to lie there, he was not buried in the royal ſepulchres, but privately in his own garden, leaving his crown to his ſon, the heir of his idolatry, as well as his kingdom.

19. ¶ Amon *was* twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Meſhullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. 20. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, as his father Manaſſeh did. 21. And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and ſerved the idols that his father ſerved, and worſhipped them: 22. And [y] he forſook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD. 23. ¶ And the ſervants of Amon conſpired againſt him, and ſlew the king in his own houſe. 24 And the people of the land [z] ſlew all them that had conſpired againſt king Amon, and the people of the land made Joſiah his ſon king in his ſtead. 25. Now the reſt of the acts of Amon which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 26. And he was buried in his ſepulchre, in the garden of Uzza: and Joſiah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[y] Jer. ii. 13.
[z] Jud. i. 7. Mat. vii. 2.

v. 19—26. 1. Amon's reign and life were ſhort, and his end tragical. He returned to theſe idolatries, which, in his latter days, his penitent father had ſuppreſſed; and thus by his wickeneſs, haſtened his death. A conſpiracy was formed; and, after a reign of but two years, he was ſlain in his own houſe. *Note*, (1.) The evil we have occaſioned to others, we can never repair. When we would wiſh to undeceive thoſe we have ſeduced, to our grief, we find every effort vain. (2.) It is a mercy to a nation, that the career of a wicked king is ſhort.

2. The men of Judah revenged his death on the conſpirators, and ſet up Joſiah his ſon in his ſtead; who being an infant, probably they deſigned to rob him of the crown: and they buried Amon with his father, in the garden of Uzza, as unworthy a tomb among his illuſtrious predeceſſors.

CHAP. XXII.

We have here in this chapter, 1. *The good character of Joſiah*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *His regard to God's houſe and worſhip*, ver. 3—7. 3. *The impreſſion made on him by God's word.* ver. 8—11. 4. *The anſwer he received, on conſulting the propheteſs Huldah thereupon*, ver. 12—20.

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1. JOſiah *was* [a] eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jeruſalem: and

[a] Iſa. iii. 4. Ezek. xvi. 14, &c.

and his mother's name *was* Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boſcath. 2. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and [b] turned not aſide to the right hand or to the left. 3. ¶ And it came to paſs [c] in the eighteenth year of king Joſiah, *that* the king ſent Shaphan the ſon of Azaliah, the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſcribe, to the houſe of the LORD, ſaying, 4. Go up to Hilkiah the high prieſt, that he may ſum the ſilver [d] *which is* brought into the houſe of the LORD, which the keepers of the † door have gathered of the people. 5. And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the overſight of the houſe of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which *is* in the houſe of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the houſe. 6. Unto carpenters, and builders, and maſons, and to buy timber and hewn ſtone to repair the houſe. 7. Howbeit, [e] there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, becauſe they dealt ‡ faithfully. 8. ¶ And Hilkiah the high prieſt ſaid unto Shaphan the ſcribe, I have found [f] the book of the law in the houſe of the LORD: and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. 9. And Shaphan the ſcribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and ſaid, Thy ſervants have gathered the money that was found in the houſe, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the overſight of the houſe of the LORD. 10. And Shaphan the ſcribe ſhewed the king, ſaying, Hilkiah the prieſt hath delivered me a book: and Shaphan [g] read it before the king.

v. 1—10. One merciful reſpite more is given to idolatrous Judah; another good king to prove them, if yet they will bring forth fruit, before the ax is laid to the root of the tree.

1. Though Joſiah was very young, but eight years of age when he came to the crown, he gave very early ſymptoms of uncommon piety, and all his days the fruit anſwered the promiſing bloſſoms; and he neither turned to the right or left from following the ſteps of David, that great pattern of excellence. *Note*, (1.) Early piety is peculiarly pleaſing and promiſing. (2.) When a ſon is taken out of ſo wicked a houſe as Amon's, God's ſovereign and rich grace appears more eminently diſplayed in the choice and ſeparation.

2. As ſoon as he was fit to take the reigns of government into his own hand, he began to reform the interrupted worſhip, and repair the decayed temple of God. Nearly the ſame method ſeems to be taken, as in the days of Joaſh, *chap.* xii. to collect the money, and the ſame integrity appears in the perſons employed. *Note*, They who delight in the temple ſervice, may be truſted for their fidelity and honeſty in the repairs of it.

3. In the repairs of the temple, the book of the law was happily found, generally ſuppoſed to be the very copy, *Deut.* xxxi. 24. Moſes laid up in the moſt holy place; and which either ſome wicked high-prieſt had taken from thence, that he might hide what would put him to ſhame; or ſome good one, to prevent its being deſtroyed by the preceding idolatrous kings, had ſecreted, to preſerve it from being deſtroyed. Perhaps in theſe ſad days, the neglect of the word of God was ſo great, that another perfect copy no where remained; and from what appears, neither Joſiah, though ſo good a king, nor Hilkiah, though ſo good a prieſt, had before ſeen ſo perfect a copy of this ſacred treaſure. It is conjectured, that in ſuch troubleſome times under idolatrous kings, the public reading of the law every ſabbatical year, had been diſcontinued, and the kings no longer tranſcribed it, as was commanded. Whilſt perhaps ſome abſtracts from it ſerved for a ritual, in which the threatnings and promiſes, *Lev.* xxvi. and *Deut.* xxviii. were omitted; theſe therefore, when read, ſo affected the king, *v.* 11. *Note*, (1.) The preſervation of the inſpired writings through ſo many ages, and amidſt ſo many enemies, is a ſtanding witneſs to their divine authority. (2.) When God's word is thruſt into a corner, unnoticed by, or cruelly with-held from the people, no marvel iniquity abounds. (3.) They who have never read through *all* the book of God, know not how much it contains to make them tremble: and yet how many chriſtians, yea proteſtants, are thus negligent, and never once in their lives read God's word entire?

4. Hilkiah having firſt read the book himſelf to Shaphan, deſires him to convey it to the king, and read it in his ears, as it contained matters ſo deeply and nearly affecting him. *Note*, (1.) Reading their Bibles, is among the beſt employments in which kings can be engaged. (2.) They are inexcuſable, who have this ſacred book in their hands, and continue wilfully ignorant of its contents.

11. And it came to paſs, when the king had heard [h] the words of the book of the law, that he [i] rent his clothes. 12. And the king commanded Hilkiah the prieſt, and Ahikam the ſon of Shaphan, and Achbor the ſon of Micaiah, and Shaphan the ſcribe, and Aſahiah a ſervant of the king, ſaying, 13. Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book *that is* found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled againſt us, becauſe our fathers have not hearkned unto the words of this book, to do according unto all *that which is* written concerning us. 14. So Hilkiah the prieſt, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Aſahiah, went unto Huldah [k] the propheteſs, the wife of Shallum, the ſon of Tikvah, the ſon of Harhas, keeper of the † wardrobe (now ſhe dwelt in Jeruſalem, in the ‡ college) and they communed with her. 15. ¶ And ſhe ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Tell the man that ſent you to me, 16. Thus ſaith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* [l] all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read. 17. Becauſe they have forſaken me, and have burnt incenſe unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all [m] the works of their hands: therefore my wrath ſhall be kindled againſt this place, and ſhall not be quenched. 18. But to [n] the king of Judah which ſent you to inquire of the LORD, thus ſhall ye ſay to him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, *As touching* the words which thou haſt heard; 19. Becauſe [o] thine heart was tender, and [p] thou haſt humbled thyſelf before the LORD, when thou heardeſt what I ſpake againſt this place, and againſt the inhabitants thereof, that they ſhould become a deſolation and a curſe, and haſt rent thy clothes, and wept before me: I alſo have heard *thee*, ſaith the LORD. 20. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and [q] thou ſhalt be gathered into thy grave [r] in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

v. 11—20. We have here the effect which the reading the law produced upon the good Joſiah.

1. He rent his clothes in token of his awakened ſenſe of the guilt lying upon them. He perceived clearly the dreadful diſobedience of his anceſtors, and juſtly feared the impending wrath, which was denounced againſt them. *Note*, (1.) When God's ſpiritual law is laid open to the heart, it will rend it in deep humiliation under a ſenſe of ſin. (2.) When we ſee the heavy wrath of God hanging over us, it is high time to bethink us of flying from it.

2. He ſent inſtantly to enquire of God, what method to take to avert the ſtorm, if yet there might be hope. Jeremiah and Zephaniah both propheſied at that time, but probably they were at a diſtance from Jeruſalem; where Huldah, the wife of Shallum, who had a poſt at court, was more known, and nearer to be applied to. Though a woman, yet honoured with prophetic inſpiration, and though in a court, eminent for her piety. *Note*, (1.) Though God hath given the ſuperiority to the man, yet will he put ſuch honour upon the weaker ſex, as may make them reſpected. (2.) If we have holy men or women near us, it is wiſe to make them our friends and adviſers.

3. The propheteſs from God returned a plain anſwer to his enquiry. She uſed no compliment to introduce her meſſage, *v.* 15. but declared the unquenchable wrath of God gone forth againſt the land, for their paſt abominations; nor could any prayers or intreaties ſtay its ravages, though for a time it might be ſuſpended: becauſe Joſiah's heart was tender, impreſſed with the words of God's law, and in deep humiliation laid low before theſe dreaded threatnings, in his days the evil ſhould not come, he ſhould die in peace. For though he fell in battle, it was not till afterwards, in his ſon's days, that the threatned wrath was poured out on the nation. *Note*, (1.) When ſinners are taken away to their final puniſhment, there the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (2.) Obſtinate and wilful ſin muſt end in remedileſs and endleſs miſery. (3.) A tender heart is a great mercy from God; and young perſons uſually moſt impreſſible: how then ſhould we improve the bleſſed moment, before the heart be hardned, through the deceitfulneſs of ſin? (4.) The ſoul that trembles under the apprehenſion of deſerved wrath, is in the way to eſcape from it. (5.) They who are happy in preſent peace with God, muſt needs go in peace to the grave, as the gate of that eternal reſt, which remaineth for the people of God.

CHAP.

Before Chriſt 623.

[b] Deut. v. 32.

623.

[c] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8.

[d] Chap. xii. 4.

† Heb. Threſhold. Pſal. lxxxiv. 10.

[e] Chap. xii. 12.

‡ Heb. In truth. Neh. vii. 2.

[f] Deut. xxxi. 24—26.

[g] Jer. xxxvi. 21.

Before Chriſt 623.

[h] Deut. xvii. 19. & xxviii. 3—68.

[i] Joel ii. 13.

[k] Exod. xv. 20. Judg. iv. 4.

† Heb. Garments.

‡ Or ſecond court.

[l] Dan. ix. 12.

[m] Pſal. cxv. 4. Iſa. ii. 8. Mic. v. 13.

[n] Iſa. iii. 10.

[o] Pſal. li. 17.

[p] Lev. xxvi. 40, 42. Prov. xxviii. 13. Iſa. lvii. 15.

[q] Chap. xxiii. 29, 30.

[r] Pſ. xxxvii. 37. Iſa. lvii. 2.

Before Chriſt 623.

CHAP. XXIII.

We have here, 1. *The happy continuance of Joſiah's reign, and the progreſs of the reformation,* ver. 1—20. 2. *His keeping a ſolemn paſſover,* &c. ver. 21—25. 3. *His untimely death,* ver. 26—30. 4. *The bad reigns of his two ſons Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim,* ver 31—37.

1. AND the king ſent, and [a] they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah, and of Jeruſalem. 2. And the king went up into the houſe of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jeruſalem with him, and the prieſts, and the prophets, and [b] all the people both ſmall and great: and he read in their ears all the words of [c] the book of the covenant *which was* found in the houſe of the LORD. 3. ¶ And [d] the king ſtood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his teſtimonies, and his ſtatutes, with all *their* heart and all *their* ſoul, to perform the words of this covenant, *that were* written in this book: and all the people [e] ſtood to the covenant.

a 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29, &c.
b Neh. viii. 2, 3.
c Chap. xxii. 8.
d Chap. xi. 14.
e Eccleſ. viii. 2.

v. 1—3. To avert, if poſſible, the threatned wrath, Joſiah, with earneſt ſollicitude, ſeeks the reformation of the people.

1. In a general aſſembly of the elders, prieſts, prophets, and people, convened on purpoſe for the occaſion, he himſelf, as it ſeems, read in their ears the words of the book found in the houſe of the Lord, that it might more deeply engage their attention.

2. The book of the covenant being rehearſed, the tenor of which was, that on their fidelity, they were aſſured of God's bleſſing. The king, to encourage and engage the people, ſolemnly, as in the preſence of God, declared his purpoſe of walking after the Lord, in all the ways of his inſtituted worſhip, and obſerving all his commandments moral, judicial, and ceremonial; and this with all ſimplicity and ſincerity, truſting upon God to enable him for what was ſo plainly his duty, and ſo greatly his deſire. The people join the king in his engagement, and promiſing all fidelity, ſtand to the covenant. *Note,* (1.) A good and great example is very influential. (2.) Jeſus our king, is our covenant-head, and covenant-fulfiller: faith in him is now our ſecurity. (3.) God's people are bound to him, not ſo much by bonds of vows and promiſes, as by better bonds of love indiſſoluble.

4. And the king commanded Hilkiah the high prieſt, and the prieſts of the ſecond order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD, all [f] the veſſels *that were* made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the hoſt of heaven: and he burnt them without Jeruſalem, in the fields of Kidron, and carried the aſhes of them unto [g] Beth-el. 5. And he † put down [h] the idolatrous prieſts, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incenſe in the high places, in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jeruſalem, them alſo that burnt incenſe unto Baal, to the ſun, and to the moon, and to the ‡ planets, and to all the hoſt of heaven. 6. And he brought out [i] the grove from the houſe of the LORD, without Jeruſalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burnt it at the brook Kidron, and ſtampt *it* ſmall to powder, and [k] caſt the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people. 7. And he brake down the houſes of [l] the ſodomites that *were* by the houſe of the LORD, where the women wove ‖ hangings for the grove. 8. And he brought all the prieſts out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the prieſts had burnt incenſe, from Geba to Beer-ſheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that *were* in the entring in of the gate of Joſhua the governor of the city, which *were* on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. 9. [m] Nevertheleſs, the prieſts of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jeruſalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren. 10. And he defiled [n] Topheth, which *is* in [o] the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man [p] might make his ſon or his daughter to paſs through the fire to Molech. 11. And he took away the horſes that the kings of Judah had given to the ſun, at the entring in of the houſe of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which *was* in the ſuburbs, and burnt the chariots of the ſun with fire. 12. And the altars that *were* [q] on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars [r] which Manaſſeh had made in the two courts of the houſe of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake *them* down from thence, and caſt the duſt of them into the brook Kidron. 13. And the high places that *were* before Jeruſalem, which *were* on the right hand of § the mount of corruption, [s] which Solomon the king of Iſrael had builded for Aſhtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemoſh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcolm the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. 14. And [t] he brake in pieces the images and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men. 15. ¶ Moreover, [u] the altar that *was* at Beth-el, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burnt the high place, *and* ſtampt *it* ſmall to powder, and burnt the grove. 16. And as Joſiah turned himſelf, he ſpied the ſepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and ſent and took the bones out of the ſepulchres, and [x] burnt *them* upon the altar, and polluted it according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed theſe words. 17. Then he ſaid, What title *is* that that I ſee? And the men of the city told him, [y] *It is* the ſepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed theſe things that thou haſt done againſt the altar of Beth-el. 18. And he ſaid, Let him alone, [z] let no man move his bones: ſo they let his bones alone, with [a] the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria. 19. And all the houſes alſo of the high places that *were* [b] in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Iſrael had made to provoke *the LORD* to anger, Joſiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el. 20. And [c] he † ſlew all the prieſts of the high places that *were* there upon the altars, and burnt men's bones upon them, and returned to Jeruſalem. 21. ¶ And the king commanded all the people, ſaying, [d] Keep the paſſover unto the LORD your God, [e] as *it is* written in the book of this covenant. 22. Surely [f] there was not holden ſuch a paſſover, from the days of the judges that judged Iſrael, nor in all the days of the kings of Iſrael, nor of the kings of Judah: 23. But in the eighteenth year of king Joſiah, *wherein* this paſſover was holden to the LORD [g] in Jeruſalem. 24. ¶ Moreover, the *workers with* [h] familiar ſpirits, and the wizards, and the ‡ images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were ſpied in the land of Judah, and in Jeruſalem, did Joſiah put away, that he might perform [i] the words of the law, *which were* written in the book [k] that Hilkiah the prieſt found in the houſe of the LORD.

f Chap. xxi. 4, 7.
g 1 Kings xii. 29.
† Heb. Cauſed to ceaſe.
h Jer. iii. 6, 7. Zeph. i. 4.
‡ Or conſtellations.
i Chap. xxi. 7.
k 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.
l Deut. xxiii. 17. 1 Kings xv. 12.
‖ Or ſhrines. Acts xix. 24.
m Ezek. xliv. 10—14.
n Jer. vii. 31. & xix. 6, 11.
o Joſh. xv. 8.
p Lev. xviii. 21. Deut. xviii. 10. Ezek. xxiii. 37, 39.
q Jer. xix 13. Zeph. i. 5.

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r Chap. xxi. 5.
§ i. e. the mount of Olives.
s 1 Kings xi. 7.
t Exod. xxiii. 24. Deut. vii. 5, 25.
u 1 Kings xii. 29.
x 1 Kings xiii. 2.
y Ibid. 30.
z Iſa. lvii. 2.
a 1 Kings xiii. 31.
b 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6.
c 1 Kings xiii. 2.
† Or ſacrificed. Exod. xxii. 20. Prov. xxi. 3.
d 2 Chron. xxxv. 1.
e Exod. xii. 3. Num. ix. 3. Deut. xvi. 2.
f 2 Chron. xxxviii. 18.
g Deut. xii. 5.
h Chap. xxi. 6.
‡ Or teraphim.
i Lev. xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 10, &c.
k Chap. xxii. 8.

v. 4—24. In conſequence of his ſolemn engagements, Joſiah without delay, ſet himſelf to remove all the abominations, contrary to the book of the law, which were found in the land.

1. He began with Judah and Jeruſalem; where, ſhocking to tell! the moſt groſs and ſtrange monuments of idolatry remained. To purge the houſe of the Lord was his firſt concern: thence he fetched all the veſſels which had been conſecrated to, and employed in the ſervice of Baal and Aſhtoreth, and the hoſts of heaven; and having burnt them, carried their aſhes to Beth-el, that hated beginning of idolatry, which now he would make a dunghill, and lay there the filth and off-ſcouring of all theſe abominations. The idolatrous prieſts, (for ſuch there will be, when court favour follows Baal's worſhip) he put down, deſtroying all the high places where they offered incenſe, which though Hezekiah had ruined, his wicked ſucceſſors had reſtored. Theſe were degraded from their office; and though they had a portion with the prieſts for their maintenance, they were no more ſuffered to approach the altars of the Lord. The images of their falſe deities he ſtamped to powder; and to render them more loathſome, caſt the duſt on the graves of their worſhippers, as a reproach to their memory, and in contempt to their idols; whilſt he dug up the bones of the prieſts, and ſcattered them upon the high places, where they had uſed to ſacrifice. The houſes of the ſodomites, unnatural crime! that with dire effrontery were placed near the temple, where women, as well as men, wrought all iniquity, in honour of their impure deities, he raſed to the foundations. Tophet, a valley near Jeruſalem, ſo called, from the drums they beat, to drown the cries of infants burnt there in the fire to Molech, he defiled, making it a burying-place. The horſes which had been dedicated to the ſun, according to the blind uſages of the heathen,

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either to be offered in ſacrifice, or to draw the chariots ſacred to that deity, he burnt with the chariots. His own houſe alſo he thoroughly purged: the altar of Ahaz, which was on the roof, and thoſe Manaſſeh had made; which, though once caſt out of Jeruſalem, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 15. Amon had brought back again: theſe he beat to powder, and threw the duſt into the brook Kidron. Throughout Judah, he put away all wizards and workers with familiar ſpirits; and in ſhort, every abomination he found, after the ſtricteſt ſearch made, according to the word of the Lord, he utterly aboliſhed it. *Note*, True converſion to God makes thorough work, caſting away every weight, and the ſin which doth moſt eaſily beſet us.

2. He proceeded to carry the reformation he had begun in Judah, into part of the cities of Iſrael; ſeveral of which, and Beth-el particularly, had after the captivity, or on the laſt defeat of Sennacherib, ſubmitted to him, 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 6. The altar at Beth-el he defiled; and, after ſacrificing the idolatrous prieſts, and burning the bones of dead men upon it, deſtroyed it, with the high place and the grove adjoining; carefully preſerving however the bones of the prophet, who, about 350 years before, had foretold what now was literally fulfilled. And as he did at Beth-el, he did in all the cities of Samaria, under his dominion, utterly rooting out every monument of idolatry. *Note*, Though God's word be long ere it be fulfilled, whether it be promiſe or threatning, the accompliſhment is ſure.

3. The land being thus cleanſed from idols, and the people, according to their engagements, returning in truth to the worſhip of God; a ſolemn paſſover is proclaimed and kept, with ſuch exactneſs and conformity to the divine inſtitution, with ſuch delight and joy, that ſince the days of the judges, even under the beſt of their kings, no ſuch paſſover had been obſerved. *Note*, They who are faithful in the covenant, will be happy to partake of the ſeals of it. Neglect of the table of the Lord, is a ſure mark of the continuing apoſtacy of the heart from God.

25. And [l] like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to the LORD [m] with all his heart, and with all his ſoul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moſes; neither after him aroſe there *any* like him. 26. ¶ [n] Notwithſtanding, the LORD turned not from the fierceneſs of his great wrath, whereupon his anger was kindled againſt Judah, becauſe of all the † provocations that Manaſſeh had provoked him withal. 27. And the LORD ſaid, I will [o] remove Judah alſo out of my ſight, as I have removed [p] Iſrael, and will caſt off this city Jeruſalem, which I have choſen, and the houſe of which I ſaid, [q] My name ſhall be there. 28. Now the reſt of the acts of Joſiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 29. ¶ [r] In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up againſt the king of Aſſyria to the river Euphrates: and king Joſiah went againſt him, and [s] he ſlew him at Megiddo, when [t] he had ſeen him. 30. And his ſervants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jeruſalem, and buried him in his own ſepulchre: and the people of the land took ‡ Jehoahaz the ſon of Joſiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's ſtead.

[l] Chap. xviii. 5. [m] Deut. vi. 5. 1 Kings ii. 4. [n] 1 Sam. iii. 14. Chap. xxiv. 4. Jer. iii. 10. & xv. 1. † Heb. Angers. [o] Chap. xxiv. 14—16. & xxv. 11. [p] Chap. xvii. 6. [q] 1 Kings viii. 29. [r] 2 Chron. xxxv. 20. [s] Ver. 25. Pſal. xxxvi. 6. Rom. xi. 33. [t] Chap xiv. 8. ‡ Called Shallum. 1 Chron. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11.

v. 25—30. We have here,

1. A moſt noble character given of Joſiah. As Hezekiah was diſtinguiſhed for his faith in God, ſo was Joſiah, above all his predeceſſors, remarkable for his ſincerity and zeal in the reformation he ſought. With his whole heart, in uprightneſs and truth, he turned to the Lord, and with all his might uſing his utmoſt influence to convert his people, and ever making God's word the rule of his conduct. *Note*, (1.) God regards the heart; when that is right, then the ſervice is acceptable. (2.) They who would pleaſe God, muſt give up their whole heart, and make no allowed reſerves. (3.) When we have true zeal for God, much more may be done, than at firſt we could imagine.

2. God's anger is not however turned away. Notwithſtanding the apparent reformation, many were ſtill hypocritical, and the former abominations of Manaſſeh had fixed the Divine decree. *Note*, Tho' the decree may be paſſed concerning a nation's ſins, yet every real penitent may be aſſured, whenever he returns unto God, he will turn away from his fierce anger; and though he ſinks in a common calamity, his eternal ſafety is ſecured.

3. Joſiah is ſlain in the midſt of his days. Attempting to oppoſe the invaſion which the king of Egypt made on his ally the king of Babylon, and now alſo of Aſſyria, he fell in battle at Megiddo. Whether he could be juſtified in this war, is uncertain; we are ſure God was juſt in permitting his fall, as a puniſhment to the people, and in mercy took him away before the deſolation threatned againſt his kingdom came upon them. *Note*, When men know not to value their mercies, and to profit under the means they enjoy, God will puniſh them by removing them.

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31. ¶ Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. 33. And Pharaoh-nechoh [u] put him in bands at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jeruſalem, and put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of ſilver, and a talent of gold. 34. And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the ſon of Joſiah king, in the room of Joſiah his father, and [x] turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and [y] died there. 35. And Jehoiakim gave the ſilver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh; he exacted the ſilver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaoh-nechoh. 36. ¶ Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. 37. And he did *that which was* [z] evil in the ſight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

[u] Ezek. xix. 3, 4. [x] Chap. xxiv. 17. Dan. i. 7. [y] Jer. xxii. 10—12. [z] Jer. xxii. 13. & xxvi. 23. & xxxvi. 26.

v. 31—37. With Joſiah periſhed all the glory of Judah. Like a man mortally wounded, the kingdom gaſped a while under his ſons, and then expired, as it were, under Nebuchadnezzar's invaſion.

1. Jehoahaz ſucceeded his father; though not the eldeſt ſon, yet ſet up by the people, becauſe perhaps he ſeemed more warlike than his brother; but his wickedneſs made his valour uſeleſs. Following the idolatries of his wicked forefathers, he was forſaken of God; and after a ſhort reign of three months, taken priſoner by Pharaoh-nechoh, and died in bondage in Egypt. *Note*, When neither warnings will reſtrain, nor good examples influence, deſtruction is near.

2. His brother is made king in his ſtead; his name is changed by Pharaoh, in token of his ſubjection, into Jehoiakim, and a tribute levied upon the land, to which every man was obliged to contribute, according to his abilities, amounting to upwards of forty thouſand pounds. Yet none of theſe afflictions availed to admoniſh him; he followed the ways of his bad predeceſſors, and thereby haſtened the ruin of the land.

CHAP. XXIV.

We have here, 1. *Jehoiakim ſubdued and chaſtiſed by the king of Babylon, for attempting to ſhake off his yoke*, ver. 1—6. 2. *Egypt alſo is conquered by Nebuchadnezzar*, ver. 7. 3. *Jehoiachin, and all his great men, are carried captives to Babylon*, ver. 8—16. 4. *Zedekiah, the laſt king, appointed*, ver. 17—20.

1. [a] IN his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his ſervant three years: then he turned and rebelled againſt him. 2. And [b] the LORD ſent againſt him [c] bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and ſent them againſt Judah to deſtroy it, according to the word of the LORD, [d] which he ſpake by his ſervants the prophets. 3. Surely at the commandment of the LORD came *this* upon Judah, to remove *them* out of his ſight, [e] for the ſins of Manaſſeh, according to all that he did. 4. And alſo [f] for the innocent blood that he ſhed (for he filled Jeruſalem with innocent blood) [g] which the LORD would not pardon. 5. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 6. So [h] Jehoiakim ſlept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 7. And the king of Egypt [i] came not again any more out of his land: for [k] the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river of Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

606. [a] Jer. xxv. 1. Dan. i. 1. 603. [b] 1 Kings xii. 15. [c] Ezek. xix. 8. [d] Lev. xxvi. 17. Chap. xxii. 16. Jer. xxv. 9. [e] Chap. xxiii. 26.27. [f] Chap. xx. 16. Rev. xviii. 24. [g] Chap. xxiii. 26. 599. [h] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. Jer. xxii. 18, 19. & xxxvi. 30. [i] Jer. xxxvii. 7. [k] Jer. xlvi. 2.

v. 1—7. Jehoiakim, the vaſſal of the king of Egypt, ſoon changed his maſter; and from this æra of the third of Jehoiakim, the ſeventy years of the Babyloniſh captivity commence.

1. In the third, or beginning of his fourth year, Jehoiakim was ſubdued by the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar; and, on

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on promiſe of obedience, reſtored to his government: but, in hopes of aſſiſtance from Egypt, he rebelled, and ſmarted for it. A vaſt army of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, ſubjects of the king of Babylon, are ſent of God in juſt judgment againſt Judah, according to the word of the Lord by his prophets Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Huldah, becauſe of the innocent blood Manaſſeh had ſhed, and they had conſented to, and followed his bad example, *Jer.* xxii. 17. And tho' on his repentance his ſin was pardoned, reſpecting the eternal conſequences to his own ſoul, the temporal puniſhment of it upon the land was decreed, and now accompliſhed. Jehoiakim, unable to reſiſt, was made priſoner, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 6. and bound in chains to be carried to Babylon, but died before he could be removed; and, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, his dead body *was caſt out, buried with the burial of an aſs*, *Jer.* xxii. 18. xxxvi. 30. *Note*, (1.) Many who are ſerving their own pride and ambition, little think they are but the ſcourge in God's hand. (2.) Vain is reſiſtance when God will deſtroy. (3.) Let not ſinners think that one jot or tittle of God's threatnings againſt them ſhall fail. Heaven and earth ſhall ſooner paſs away, than his word be diſappointed.

2. The king of Egypt was ſubdued, and loſt great part of his country, whereby he became unable to aſſiſt Jehoiakim. *Note*, The ſinner's vain confidences in a day of wrath ſhall all utterly fail.

8. ¶ Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jeruſalem [l] three months: and his mother's name *was* Nehuſhta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jeruſalem. 9. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. 10. ¶ At that time the ſervants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up againſt Jeruſalem, and the city was beſieged, 11. And [m] Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came againſt the city, and his ſervants did beſiege it. 12. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his ſervants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon [n] took him in the eighth year of † his reign. 13. And he carried out thence all the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD, and the treaſures of the king's houſe, and cut in pieces all the veſſels of gold which Solomon king of Iſrael had made in the temple of the LORD, [o] as the LORD had ſaid. 14. And he carried away all Jeruſalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thouſand captives, and all the craftſmen and ſmiths: none remained, ſave [p] the pooreſt ſort of the people of the land. 15. And [q] he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, *thoſe* carried he into captivity, from Jeruſalem to Babylon. 16. And [r] all the men of might, *even* ſeven thouſand, and craftſmen, and ſmiths a thouſand, all *that were* ſtrong *and* apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. 17. ¶ And [s] the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his ſtead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18. Zedekiah *was* twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* [t] Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 20. For [u] through the anger of the LORD it came to paſs in Jeruſalem and Judah, until he had caſt them out from his preſence, that Zedekiah [x] rebelled againſt the king of Babylon.

[l] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9.
[m] Deut. xxviii. 49, &c.
[n] Chap. xxv. 27.
599.
† i. e. Nebuchadnezzar's. Jer. xxv. 1.
[o] Chap. xx. 17. Jer. xx. 5. & xxvii. 18.
[p] Chap. xxv. 12. Jer. xxxix. 10.
[q] Eſth. ii. 6.
[r] Pſ. lxxvi. 5.
[s] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11. Jer. xxxvii. 1. & lii. 1.
599.
[t] Chap. xxiii. 31.
[u] Chap. xvii. 18.
[x] Ezek. xvii. 12—15.
About 593.

v. 8—20. Jehoiachin, called alſo Jeconiah, and in contempt, Coniah, ſucceeded his father. We have here,

1. His ſhort reign, and long captivity. He did evil, like his forefathers, againſt God, and gave the king of Babylon ſuch reaſon to be diſpleaſed with his government, that, after a ſhort reign of three months, he came up to beſiege him in his capital; and being defenceleſs, not only deſtitute of forces, but forſaken of God, he is forced, with all his family, to ſurrender priſoner at diſcretion. His palace and the temple are now plundered of all that was left, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 7. The veſſels of gold, many of them at leaſt, Nebuchadnezzar cut up, and coined, probably to pay his army, and carried the reſt to Babylon, *See Dan.* v. 2, 3. and, to prevent future revolts by weakening the land, all the great men, and officers of the army, with the craftſmen and the ſmiths, were led away captives. Among theſe were Ezekiel the prophet, and Mordecai, the uncle of Eſther. *Note*, When wickedneſs is in high places, deſolations are at hand.

2. His uncle Mattaniah is appointed to ſucceed Jehoiachin, and his name changed into Zedekiah, as the king of Babylon's ſervant, and as a preſage of *the juſtice of the Lord*, as the name ſignifies, which ſhould overtake him upon his revolt. His ways were wicked, as thoſe who went before him; and, fooliſh as falſe, he dared rebel againſt the king who ſet him up, though ſo unable to contend with him, which is aſcribed to God's anger, who infatuated him to ruſh on his deſtruction. *Note*, (1.) There is no evil in the city, but the Lord hath done it. To his hand muſt every ſuffering be aſcribed. (2.) A nation is on the verge of ruin, when God gives up her rulers to infatuation.

Before Chriſt 590.

CHAP. XXV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The utter deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Chaldeans,* ver. 1—4, 8—10. 2. *The king made a moſt miſerable priſoner, and the ſeed royal deſtroyed,* ver. 5—7. 3. *The principal officers put to death,* 18—21. 4. *The ſacred veſſels that remained are carried away to Babylon,* ver. 13—17. 5. *The diſtraction of them that were left under Gedaliah,* ver. 22—26. 6. *The kindneſs which was ſhewn to Jehoiachin the captive king of Judah,* ver. 27—30.

1. AND it came to paſs [a] in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his hoſt, againſt Jeruſalem, and pitched againſt it, and they [b] built forts againſt it round about. 2. And the city was beſieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. 3. And on the ninth *day* of the *fourth* month, the famine prevailed in the city, and [c] there was no bread for the people of the land. 4. ¶ And [d] the city was broken up, and [e] all the men of war *fled* [f] by night, by the way of the gate between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden, (now the Chaldees *were* againſt the city round about) and *the king* went the way toward the plain. 5. And the army of the Chaldees purſued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were ſcattered from him. 6. So [g] they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon, to Riblah, and they † gave judgment upon him. 7. And they ſlew the ſons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and [h] put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and [i] bound him with fetters of braſs, and carried him to Babylon.

590.
[a] Jer. lii. 4, &c. Ezek. xxiv. 1.
[b] Ezek. iv. 2.
588.
[c] Lam. iv. 4. Ezek. v. 10.
[d] Jer. lii. 7.
[e] Deut. xxviii. 25.
[f] Ezek. xii. 12.
[g] Ezek. xii. 13. Amos. ii. 14.
† Heb. Spake judgment with him. Ezek. xvii. 18.
[h] Ezek. xii. 13.
[i] Pſ. cvii. 10, 11.

v. 1—7. Zedekiah ſoon felt what an unequal match he was for the king he had by rebellion provoked; for how could he hope to reſiſt, who had not only the powers of earth, but the arm of God againſt him?

1. Jeruſalem is beſieged, and, after ſuffering the greateſt extremities of famine, *Ezek.* v. 10. *Jer.* lii. 6. taken by ſtorm. How terrible is war! What thanks do we owe for peace in our borders!

2. The king is taken priſoner as he attempted to eſcape, forſaken of his guards, and brought back with ſhame to the camp of the Chaldeans, to behold thoſe miſeries, which, had he followed Jeremiah's advice, *chap.* xxxviii. 17. he might have eſcaped; He is condemned to ſuffer the reward of his deeds; firſt, to behold the tormenting ſight of his ſons all murdered before his eyes, and then for ever to cloſe them upon this mournful ſcene, as left in miſery to ruminate on the cauſe; whilſt, languiſhing in fetters of iron, he paſſed his wretched days, a miſerable ſpectacle, and monument of the wages of ſin. *Note*, (1.) They who refuſe God's counſel to eſcape, will find the vanity of their own contrivances. (2.) The impenitent ſinner's doom is to be bound in chains of darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day.

8. ¶ And [k] in the fifth month, on the ſeventh *day* of the month (which *is* the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) came Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard, a ſervant of the king of Babylon, unto Jeruſalem: 9. And he [l] burnt the houſe of the LORD, and the king's houſe, and all the houſes of Jeruſalem, and [m] every great *man's* houſe burnt he with fire. 10. And all the army of the Chaldees that *were* with the captain of the guard, [n] brake down the walls of Jeruſalem round about. 11. Now [o] the reſt of the people *that were* left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard carry away. 12. But the captain of the guard [p] left the poor of the land, *to be* vine-dreſſers, and huſbandmen. 13. And [q] the pillars of braſs that *were* in the houſe of the LORD, and the

[k] Jer. lii. 12, &c.
[l] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. Pſ. lxxix. 1. Jer. vii. 14.
[m] Jer. xxxix. 8.
[n] Neh. i. 3.
[o] Jer. lii. 15.
[p] Chap. xxiv. 14.
[q] 1 Kings vii. 15, &c.

baſes, and the braſen ſea that *was* in the houſe of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the braſs of them to Babylon. 14. And the pots, and the ſhovels, and the ſnuffers, and the ſpoons, and all the veſſels of braſs wherewith they miniſtred, took they away. 15. And the fire-pans, and the bowls, *and* ſuch things as *were* † of gold, *in* gold, and of ſilver, *in* ſilver, the captain of the guard took away. 16. The two pillars, one ſea, and the baſes which Solomon had made for the houſe of the LORD, the braſs of all theſe veſſels was without weight. 17. The height of the one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it *was* braſs: and the height of the chapiter three cubits: and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of braſs: and like unto theſe had the ſecond pillar with wreathen work. 18. ¶ And the captain of the guard took [r] Seraiah the chief prieſt, and Zephaniah the ſecond prieſt, and the three keepers of the ‡ door. 19. And out of the city he took an officer, that was ſet over the men of war, and five men of them that § were in the king's preſence, which were found in the city, and the principal ſcribe of the hoſt, which muſtered the people of the land, and threeſcore men of the people of the land *that were* found in the city. 20. And Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took theſe, and brought them to the king of Babylon, to Riblah. 21. And the king of Babylon ſmote them, and ſlew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. [s] So Judah was carried away out of their land.

† Heb. Gold gold, and ſilver ſilver.

[r] 1 Chron. vi. 14.

‡ Heb. Threſhold. Chap. xxii. 4.

§ Heb. Saw the king's face. Eſth. i. 14.

[s] Deut. xxviii. 36. Jer. xxix. 9. Amos. ii. 4.

v. 8—21. Near two months were ſpent in plundering the city, or given of God as a reprieve to the people, and then the decree went forth.

1. The temple, and all the palaces in Zion, are laid in aſhes, the walls diſmantled, and the whole city laid in ruins. The temple had now ſtood about four hundred and twenty years; and it is remarked by Joſephus, that on the ſame month, and the ſame day, the ſecond temple was deſtroyed by the Romans. *Note*, (1.) The temple is no longer precious in God's ſight, when the people are apoſtate. (2.) God's patience with ſinners by and by will end, and then judgment will overtake them to the uttermoſt.

2. The few veſſels of ſilver and gold which remained in the temple, were now carried away, with all the braſs, the pillars, the ſea, the baſes, and all the veſſels belonging to the ſervice, which for its vaſt quantity is ſaid to be without weight. Thus a period was put to their worſhip. They who had ſo abuſed God's houſe, and theſe conſecrated veſſels, deſerved to be deprived of them.

3. Many of the great men are ſeized and executed, as being the ſupporters of the rebellion, *v.* 18—20. and the reſt carried away captive, *Jer.* lii. 29. only the poor of the land were left to till the ground for their proud conquerors. Thus, after about 860 years poſſeſſion, the ſame iniquities caſt them out, as had been fatal to the Canaanites, on whom they had executed God's judgments. If Canaan be not ſpared, let not Iſrael think to eſcape.

22. ¶ And *as for* the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even [t] over them he made Gedaliah the ſon of Ahikam, the ſon of Shaphan, ruler. 23. And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Iſhmael the ſon of Nethaniah, and Johanan the ſon of Careah, and Seraiah the ſon of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the ſon of a Maachathite, they, and their men. 24. And Gedaliah ſware to them, and to their men, and ſaid unto them, Fear not to be the ſervants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and ſerve the king of Babylon, and it ſhall be well with you. 25. But it came to paſs in the ſeventh month, that Iſhmael the ſon of Nethaniah, the ſon of Eliſhamah, of the ſeed † royal, came, and ten men with him, and [u] ſmote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. 26. And all the people, both ſmall and great, and the captains of the armies aroſe, and [x] came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

[t] Jer. xl. 5, &c.

† Heb. Of the kingdom Chap. xi. 1.

[u] Jer. xli. 2.

[x] Ibid. xliii. 7.

v. 22—26. The few who remained were put under the care of Gedaliah, a good man it ſhould ſeem, and one who, if it had been poſſible, might have yet preſerved them from utter ruin; but what the king of Babylon left unfiniſhed, their own madneſs and folly compleated. Iſhmael, one of the ſeed-royal, was among the number of thoſe who came to Gedaliah, under pretence of ſubmiſſion to his government: but envying his power, or to be revenged of the Chaldeans, who ſupported him, he treacherouſly fell upon him, ſlew him and his friends, whether Jews or Chaldeans; and then, in ſpite of Jeremiah's remonſtrance, all the people who remained under him as their leader, went down to Egypt, and mixed probably with that idolatrous people, (*See Deut.* xxviii. 68.) and thus their deſolations were accompliſhed.

27. ¶ [y] And it came to paſs in the ſeven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the ſeven and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* [z] Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, [a] did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of priſon. 28. And he ſpake † kindly to him, and ſet his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon, 29. And changed his priſon-garments: and he [b] did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. 30. And his allowance *was* a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

[y] Jer. lii. 31, &c.

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[z] Prov. xxi. 1.

[a] Gen. xl. 13.

† Heb. Good things with him.

[b] 2 Sam. ix. 7.

v. 27—30. How hopeleſs, how deſperate appeared the caſe of Judah and her king! yet now in the midſt of their captivity there ariſeth up light in their darkneſs. Their captive king Jehoiachin is brought from his mournful priſon, and, on the acceſſion of Evil-merodach, Nebuchadnezzar's ſon, admitted into the royal favour, obtains apartments in the palace, a noble proviſion for himſelf and family, and pre-eminence over the other kings who were captives with him. This happened juſt in the midſt of the ſeventy years during which this captivity was to laſt, as a means to ſupport the hopes, and confirm the faith of the people in the fulfilment of the promiſes in due time. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt there is life, there is hope: we may not deſpair. God can turn the dungeon, when he pleaſes, into a palace. (2.) When our friend the great King ſhall ſit on the throne of his kingdom, then he ſhall looſe the bands of death, change the priſon garments of his ſaints, cloath them with immortality, and placing their throne next his own, make them ſit down with him, and reign in glory everlaſting.

THE

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the FIRST BOOK of
CHRONICLES.

The penman of theſe books is ſuppoſed to be Ezra; they are called in the Hebrew, Words of days, *journals, or annals; becauſe by Divine direction collected out of ſome public and authentic records. The collection was made after the captivity, and yet the language of the originals written before is ſometimes retained; as* 2 Chron. v. 9. *There it is* unto this day, *which muſt have been written before the deſtruction of the temple. The Septuagint calls it a book* Παραλειπομένων *of* things left, *or overlooked by the preceding hiſtorians, and ſeveral ſuch things there are in it. It is the rereward, the ſcattered hoſt of this ſacred camp, which gathers up what remained, that nothing might be loſt. In this firſt book we have,* 1. *A collection of ſacred genealogies, from Adam to David; and they are none of thoſe which the Apoſtle calls endleſs genealogies, but have their uſe and end in Chriſt,* chap. i---ix. *Divers little paſſages of hiſtory are here inſerted, which we had not before.* 2. *A repetition of the hiſtory of the tranſlation of the kingdom from Saul to David, and of the triumphs of David's reign, with large additions,* chap. x---xxi. 3. *An original account of the ſettlement David made of the eccleſiaſtical affairs, and the preparation he made for the building of the temple,* chap. xxii---xxix.

Before Chriſt 4004.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The deſcents from Adam to Noah, and his ſons,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The poſterity of Noah's ſons,* ver. 5—23. 3. *The deſcents from Shem to Abraham,* ver. 24—28. 4. *The poſterity of Iſhmael, and of Abraham's ſons by Keturah,* ver. 29—33. 5. *The poſterity of Eſau,* ver. 35—54.

1. ADAM, [a] Sheth, [b] Enoſh, 2. [c] Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, 3. Henoch, Methuſhelah,
Lamech, 4. [d] Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 5. ¶ [e] The ſons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal,
and Meſhech, and Tiras. 6. And the ſons of Gomer;
Aſhchenaz, and † Riphath, and Togarmah. 7. And
the ſons of Javan; Eliſha, and Tarſhiſh, Kittim, and
‡ Dodanim. 8. ¶ [f] The ſons of Ham; Cuſh, and
Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 9. And the ſons of Cuſh;
Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the ſons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.
10. And Cuſh [g] begat Nimrod: he began to be mighty
upon the earth. 11. And Miſraim begat Ludim, and
Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, 12. And
Pathruſim, and Caſluhim (of whom came the Philiſtines)
and [h] Caphtorim. 13. And [i] Canaan begat Zidon his
firſt-born, and Heth, 14. The Jebuſite alſo, and the
Amorite, and the Girgaſhite, 15. And the Hivite, and
the Archite, and the Sinite, 16. And the Arvadite,
and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. 17. ¶ [k] The
ſons of Shem; Elam, and Aſhur, and Arphaxad, and
Lud, and Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and
‖ Meſhech. 18. And Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber. 19. And unto Eber were born two
ſons: the name of the one *was* § Peleg, (becauſe in his
days the earth was divided) and his brother's name *was*
Joktan. 20. And [l] Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, 21. Hadoram alſo, and Uzal, and Diklah, 22. And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba, 23. and Ophir, and Havilah, and
Jobab. All theſe *were* the ſons of Joktan. 24. ¶ [m]
Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah, 25. [n] Eber, Peleg, Reu,
26. Serug, Nahor, Terah, 27. [o] Abram, the ſame *is*
Abraham.

[a] Gen. v. 1, 3.
[b] Ibid. iv. 26.
[c] Ibid. v. 9, &c.
[d] Ibid. x. 1.
[e] Ibid. 2, &c.
† Or Diphath, as ſome read it.
‡ Or Rodanim.
[f] Gen. x. 6.
[g] Ibid. 8.
[h] Deut. ii. 23.
[i] Gen. x. 15.

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[k] Ibid. 2. & xi. 10.
‖ Or Maſh. Gen. x 23.
§ i. e. Diviſion.
[l] Gen. x. 26.
[m] Ibid. xi. 10. Luke iii. 34, &c.
[n] Gen. xi. 15.
[o] Ibid. xvii. 5.

v. 1—27. Adam begins, and Abraham cloſes this firſt genealogical line. The one, our common father after the fleſh; the other, the common father of the faithful. By the guilt of Adam's ſin, the univerſal curſe deſcended on man: by Abraham's promiſed ſeed, the curſe removes, and all who believe on him, are re-inſtated in the favour of God.

The line of Chriſt, for whoſe ſake the reſt are preſerved, reaches in the four firſt verſes as far as Shem; and from him, in the four laſt, to Abraham: the others are more lightly paſſed over. Japhet's poſterity originally peopled Europe; Ham, Africa, Canaan, and Philiſtia; Shem's poſterity, Aſia; and probably from the northern parts of Aſia, America received its firſt inhabitants. *Note*, As we are originally of one ſtock, it ſhould teach us to love all mankind as brethren.

28. The

Before Christ
4004.

[p] Gen. xxi. 2, 3.
[q] Ibid. xvi. 11, 15.
[r] Ibid. xxv. 13—17.
† Or Hader. Gen. xxv. 15.
[s] Ibid. 1, 2.

28. The ſons of Abraham; [p] Iſaac, and [q] Iſhmael. 29. ¶ Theſe *are* their generations: [r] The firſt-born of Iſhmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibſam, 30. Miſhma, and Dumah, Maſſa, † Hadad, and Tema, 31. Jetur, Naphiſh, and Kedemah. Theſe are the ſons of Iſhmael. 32. ¶ Now [s] the ſons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: ſhe bare Zimran, and Jokſhan, and Medan, and Midian, and Iſhbak, and Shuah. And the ſons of Jokſhan; Sheba, and Dedan. 33. And the ſons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All theſe *are* the ſons of Keturah. 34. And [t] Abraham begat Iſaac. [u] The ſons of Iſaac; Eſau and Iſrael. 35. ¶ The ſons of [x] Eſau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeuſh, and Jaalam, and Korah. 36. The ſons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, ‡ Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek. 37. The ſons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. 38. And [y] the ſons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal; and Zibeon, and Anah, and Diſhon, and Ezar, and Diſhan. 39. And the ſons of Lotan; Hori, and ‖ Homam: and Timna *was* Lotan's ſiſter. 40. The ſons of Shobal; Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. And the ſons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah. 41. The ſons of Anah; Diſhon. And the ſons of Diſhon; § Amram, and Eſhban, and Ithran, and Cheran. 42. The ſons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and † Jakan. The ſons of Diſhan; Uz, and Aran. 43. ¶ Now [y] theſe *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before *any* king reigned over the children of Iſrael; Bela the ſon of Beor: and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. 44. And when Bela was dead, Jobab the ſon of Zerah of Bozrah, reigned in his ſtead. 45. And when Jobab was dead, Huſham of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his ſtead. 46. And when Huſham was dead, Hadad the ſon of Bedad (which ſmote Midian in the field of Moab) reigned in his ſtead: and the name of his city *was* Avith. 47. And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Maſrekah reigned in his ſtead. 48. And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river, reigned in his ſtead. 49. And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the ſon of Achbor reigned in his ſtead. 50. And when Baal-hanan was dead, ‡ Hadad reigned in his ſtead: and the name of his city *was* Pai; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. 51. ¶ Hadad died alſo. And the ‖ dukes of Edom were, duke Timna, duke † Aliah, duke Jetheth, 52. Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, 53. Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, 54. Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. Theſe *are* the dukes of Edom.

[t] Ibid. xxi. 2.
[u] Ibid. xxv. 25.
[x] Ibid. xxxvi. 9—27.
‡ Or Zepho. Gen. xxxvi. 11.
[y] Gen. xxxvi. 31—43.
‖ Or Heman. Gen. xxxvi. 22.
§ Or Hemdan. Gen. xxxvi. 26.
† Or Achan. Gen. xxxvi. 27.
‡ Or Hadar. Gen. xxxvi. 39.
1496.
‖ Princes. Job xxi. 8, 9. Pſal. xvii. 14. & xxxvii. 35.
† Or Alvah. Gen. xxxvi. 40.

v. 28—54. Before the ſacred hiſtorian paſſes on to the line of the Meſſiah, he ſpends a moment on the deſcendants of Abraham after the fleſh. Iſhmael, according to *Gen.* xvii. 20. becomes the father of twelve princes. Midian of the ſons of Keturah, is moſt taken notice of, becauſe with his deſcendants the people of God had eſpecial conteſts. Eſau's poſterity, and their dignity, are particularly remarked. Whilſt the children of promiſe were ſuffering in Egypt, the children of the rejected Eſau were reigning in Edom. The ſons of wickedneſs have often in this world the chief portion; God hath prepared a better country for the heirs of ſalvation.

CHAP. II.

Here is, 1. *The names of the twelve ſons of Iſrael,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *An account of the tribe of Judah, down to Jeſſe,* ver. 3—12. 3. *The children of Jeſſe,* ver. 13—17. 4. *The poſterity of Hezron, not only through Ram, from whom David came, but Caleb,* ver. 18—20. *Segub,* ver. 21—24. *Jerahmeel,* ver. 25—33. *and ſo to* ver. 41. *and more by Caleb,* ver. 42—49. *with the family of Caleb the ſon of Hur,* ver. 50—55.

[a] Gen. xxix. 32. & xxx. 5. & xxxv. 18, 22. & xlvi. 8, &c.
[b] Gen. xxxviii. 3. & xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 19.
[c] Gen. xxxviii. 2.
[d] Ibid. 7.
[e] Ibid. 29, 30. Mat. i. 3.

1. THESE *are* the ſons of Iſrael; [a] Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Iſſachar, and Zebulun, 2. Dan, Joſeph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Aſher. 3. ¶ The ſons of [b] Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah: *which* three were born unto him of the daughter of [c] Shua the Canaaniteſs. And [d] Er the firſt-born of Judah was evil in the ſight of the LORD, and he ſlew him. 4. And [e] Tamar his daughter in law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the ſons of Judah *were* five. 5. The ſons of [f] Pharez; Hezron and Hamul. 6. And the ſons of Zerah; † Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and ‡ Dara: five of them in all. 7. And the ſons of [h] Carmi; Achar, the troubler of Iſrael, [i] who tranſgreſſed in the thing accurſed. 8. And the ſon of Ethan; Azariah. 9. The ſons of Hezron that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and ‖ Ram, and † Chelubai. 10. And [k] Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahſhon, [l] prince of the children of Judah; 11. And Nahſhon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz, 12. And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jeſſe, 13. ¶ And [m] Jeſſe begat his firſt-born Eliab, and Abinadab the ſecond, and Shimma the third, 14. Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15. Ozen the ſixth, David the ſeventh: 16. Whoſe ſiſters *were* Zeruiah, and Abigail. And [n] the ſons of Zeruiah; Abiſhai, and Joab, and Aſahel, three. 17. And [o] Abigail bare Amaſa: and the father of Amaſa *was* ‡ Jether the Iſhmeelite.

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[f] Gen. xlvi. 12. Ruth iv. 18.
† Or Zabdi. Joſh. vii. 1.
‡ Or Darda.
[h] See Chap. iv. 1.
[i] Joſh. vi. 19. & vii. 1.
1471.
‖ Or Aram. Mat. i. 3, 4.
† Or Caleb. Ver. 18, 42.
[k] Ruth iv. 19. Mat. i. 4.
[l] Num. i. 7. & ii. 3.
[m] 1 Sam. xvi. 6, &c.
[n] 2 Sam. ii. 18.
[o] Ibid. xvii. 25.
‡ Or Ithra, an Iſraelite.

v. 1—17. We have here the illuſtrious family of Jacob; and of them, Judah, as moſt diſtinguiſhed, hath the pre-eminence in his genealogy. Of him we have the largeſt account, not only becauſe he was of the royal tribe, but for the Meſſiah's ſake, who ſprung from him. The names of many of his deſcendants, Er, Onan, Achan, and of Tamar, his inceſtuous daughter in law, are marked with infamy in ſcripture: yet to theſe was the friend of ſinners allied, and from her deſcended. Let the greateſt criminals not deſpair.

The family of Jeſſe is particularly taken notice of, for David's ſake, of whom as concerning the fleſh Chriſt came. He is called the ſeventh ſon of Jeſſe; though in *Sam.* xvi. 10. Jeſſe had eight, and he the youngeſt. Either one of them died before he came to the crown, or one of the eight might be by another wife.

18. ¶ And Caleb the ſon of Hezron begat *children* of Azubah *his* wife, and of Jerioth: her ſons *are* theſe; Jeſher, and Shobab, and Ardon. 19. And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him [p] Ephrath, which bare him Hur. 20. And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat [q] Bezaleel. 21. ¶ And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of [r] Machir, the father of Gilead, whom he married when he was threeſcore years old, and ſhe bare him Segub. 22. And Segub begat Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead. 23. And [s] he took Geſhur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath and the towns thereof, *even* threeſcore cities: all theſe *belonged to* the ſons of Machir, the father of Gilead. 24. And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-ephratah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him [t] Aſher the father of Tekoa. 25. ¶ And the ſons of Jerahmeel the firſt-born of Hezron were, Ram the firſt-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, *and* Ahijah. 26. Jerahmeel had alſo another wife, whoſe name *was* Atarah, ſhe *was* the mother of Onam. 27. And the ſons of Ram the firſt-born of Jerahmeel were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker. 28. And the ſons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. And the ſons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abiſhur. 29. And the name of the wife of Abiſhur *was* Abihail, and ſhe bare him Ahban, and Molid. 30. And the ſons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children. 31. And the ſons of Appaim; Iſhi. And the ſons of Iſhi; Sheſhan. And [u] the children of Sheſhan; Ahlai. 32. And the ſons of Jada the brother of Shammai; Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children. 33. And the ſons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. Theſe were the ſons of Jerahmeel. 34. ¶ Now Sheſhan had no ſons, but daughters: and Sheſhan had a ſervant, an Egyptian, whoſe name *was* Jarha. 35. And Sheſhan gave his daughter to Jarha his ſervant to wife, and ſhe bare him Attai. 36. And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat [x] Zabad, 37. And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed, 38. And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah, 39. And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleaſah, 40. And Eleaſah begat Siſamai, and Siſamai begat Shallum, 41. And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Eliſhama. 42. ¶ Now the ſons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, *were* Meſha his firſt-born, which *was* the father of Ziph: and the

[p] Ver. 50.
[q] Exod. xxxi. 2.
[r] Num. xxvii. 1.
[s] Ibid. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 14. Joſh. xiii. 30.
[t] Chap. iv. 5.
[u] See ver. 34, 35.
[x] Chap. xi. 41.

Before Christ 1400.

the ſons of Mareſhah the father of Hebron. 43. And
the ſons of Hebron; Korah and Tappuah, and Rekem,
and Shema. 44. And Shema begat Raham, the father
of Jorkoam: and Rekem begat Shammai. 45. And the
ſon of Shammai *was* Maon: and Maon *was* the father
of Beth-zur. 46. And Ephah Caleb's concubine bare
Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez.
47. And the ſons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and
Geſhan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph. 48. Maachah
Caleb's concubine bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.
49. She bare alſo Shaaph the father of Madmannah,
Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibea:
and the daughter of Caleb *was* [y] Achſa. 50. ¶ Theſe
were the ſons of Caleb the ſon of Hur, the firſt-born of
† Ephratah; Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim, 51.
Salma the father of Beth-lehem, Hareph the father of
Beth-gader. 52. And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim
had ſons; ‡ Haroeh, *and* half of the Manahethites.
53. And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and
the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Miſhraites:
of them came the Zareathites, and the Eſhtaulites. 54.
The ſons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites,
|| Attaroth, the houſe of Joab, and half of the Manahethites,
the Zorites. 55. And the families of the ſcribes
which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites,
and Suchathites. Theſe *are* [z] the Kenites that came of
Hemath, the father of the houſe of [a] Rechab.

[y] Joſh. xv. 17.

† Or Ephrath. Ver. 19.

‡ Or Reaiah. Chap. iv. 2.

|| Or Atarites or crowns of the houſe of Joab.

[z] Judg. i. 16.

[a] Jer. xxxv. 2.

v. 18—55. Caleb is the ſame as Chelubai, *v.* 9. and Jenoth ſeems another name of his wife Azubah. A numerous poſterity deſcended from Hezron, who even in old age married, and left his wife with child. He is ſaid to die in Caleb-Ephratah, ſuppoſed to be Beth-lehem, where he reſided, it ſeems, whilſt his brethren dwelt in Goſhen.—Two of the perſons mentioned in this genealogy, died childleſs, *v.* 30, 32. and another had no ſon. God's gifts are ſovereign: let not thoſe murmur from whom the bleſſing of children is with-held, but ſeek to ſecure a name in heaven, better than that of ſons and daughters. He who had no ſons, married his daughter, though an heireſs, *v.* 34. to an Egyptian proſelyte his ſervant. Either it was his choice, from the excellent diſpoſitions he had ſeen in him, and he conſulted her happineſs rather than her greatneſs; or if the choice was her own, and he ſaw her affections placed on him, though her inferior, he was too indulgent to refuſe his conſent, where, except the mere want of worldly wealth, the perſon appeared deſerving her regard. *Note*, A good parent in the diſpoſal of his children, will conſult the happineſs of their lives, rather than mere money, or wretched nobility. Several of theſe genealogies end in the names of places, *v.* 19, 50, 51. where the deſcendants of ſuch an one were afterwards fixed. Some of them were families of ſcribes, among whom eſpecially learning flouriſhed—an honourable diſtinction. The Kenites are here mentioned, *v.* 55. not as deſcended from Salma, but as dwelling among his poſterity in the tribe of Judah, *Judg.* i. 16. *Note*, They who have the heart to join God's militant Iſrael, ſhall ſhare with them their portion in the land of glory.

CHAP. III.

We have here a full account of, 1. *David's ſons*, ver. 1—9. 2. *His ſucceſſors in the throne as long as the kingdom continued*, ver. 10—16. 3. *The remains of his family in and after the captivity*, ver. 17—24.

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1. NOW [a] theſe were the ſons of David which were
born unto him in Hebron; the firſt-born Amnon,
of Ahinoam [b] the Jezreeliteſs: the ſecond † Daniel,
of Abigail the Carmeliteſs: 2. The third, Abſalom the
ſon of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geſhur:
the fourth, Adonijah the ſon of Haggith: 3.
The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: the ſixth, Ithream by
[c] Eglah his wife. *Theſe* ſix were born unto him in Hebron,
and [d] there he reigned ſeven years and ſix months:
and [e] in Jeruſalem he reigned thirty and three years. 5.
And [f] theſe were born unto him in Jeruſalem; Shimea,
and Shobab, and Nathan, and [g] Solomon, four, of Bathſhua
the daughter of ‡ Ammiel: 6. Ibhar alſo, and ||
Eliſhama, and Eliphelet, 7. And Nogah, and Nepheg,
and Japhia, 8. And Eliſhama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet,
nine, 9. *Theſe were* all the ſons of David, beſide
the ſons of the concubines, and [h] Tamar their ſiſter.

[a] 2 Sam. iii. 2, &c.

[b] Joſh. xv. 56.

† Or Chileab. 2 Sam. iii. 3.

[c] Ibid. 5.

[d] Ibid. ii. 11.

[e] Ibid. v. 5.

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[f] 2 Sam. v. 14. Chap. xiv. 4.

[g] 2 Sam. xii. 24.

‡ Or Eliam. 2 Sam. xi. 3.

|| Or Eliſhua. 2 Sam. v. 15.

[h] Ibid. xiii. 1.

v. 1—9. David's illuſtrious family conſiſts of ſixteen ſons and one daughter: four of them by Bathſhua, or Bathſheba; one of which, Solomon, was his ſucceſſor, and Nathan another, from whom St. *Luke* traces our Lord's pedigree, *chap.* iii. The ſons of his concubines are not reckoned.

Before Christ 1300.

10. ¶ And Solomon's ſon *was* [i] Rehoboam, † Abia
his ſon, Aſa his ſon, Jehoſhaphat his ſon, 11. Joram
his ſon, Ahaziah his ſon, Joaſh his ſon, 12. Amaziah
his ſon, Azariah his ſon, Jotham his ſon, 13. Ahaz
his ſon, Hezekiah his ſon, Manaſſeh his ſon, 14. Amon
his ſon, Joſiah his ſon. 15. And the ſons of Joſiah
were, the firſt-born Johanan, the ſecond Jehoiakim, the
third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. 16. And the ſons
of [k] Jehoiakim; Jeconiah his ſon, Zedekiah ‡ his ſon.
17. ¶ And the ſons of Jeconiah; Aſſir, || Salathiel [l] his
ſon, 18. Malchiram alſo, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar,
Jecamiah, Hoſhama, and Nedabiah. 19. And the ſons
of Pedaiah *were*, Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the ſons
of Zerubbabel; Meſhullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith
their ſiſter: 20. And Haſhubah, and Ohel, and
Berechiah, and Haſadiah, Juſhab-heſed, five. 21. And
the ſons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jeſaiah: the ſons
of Rephaiah, the ſons of Arnan, the ſons of Obadiah,
the ſons of Shechaniah. 22. And the ſons of Shechaniah;
Shemaiah: and the ſons of Shemaiah; [m] Hattuſh,
and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, ſix.
23. And the ſons of Neariah; Elioenai, and § Hezekiah,
and Azrikam, three. 24. And the ſons of Elioenai *were*
Hodaiah, and Eliaſhib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and
Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, ſeven.

[i] 1 Kings xi. 34. & xv. 6.

† Or Abijam. 1 Kings xv. 1.

[k] Mat. i. 11.

‡ He was his uncle. See 2 Kings xxiv. 17.

|| Heb. Shealtiel.

[l] Mat. i. 12.

[m] Ezra viii. 2.

§ Heb. Hiſkijahu.

v. 10—24. For ſeventeen deſcents the crown of Judah went from father to ſon, in a direct line. Juſt before the captivity, the lineal deſcent was interrupted. *Jeconiah, Aſſir the captive*, *v.* 17. (not a deſcendant of his, but Jeconiah himſelf) though he was written childleſs, reſpecting the ſucceſſion to the throne, yet ſeems to have ſeveral children in Babylon, *v.* 17, 18. Zerubbabel, here ſaid to be the ſon of Pedaiah, is elſewhere called the ſon Salathiel: either his grandſon, if Pedaiah was Salathiel's ſon, or if his brother, as it ſeems more probable, Pedaiah, as next of kin, might, on his dying childleſs, marry his widow, and raiſe up ſeed to his brother, which ſeems the beſt ſolution of the difficulty. There is an obſervable difference between the deſcendants of Zerubbabel here, and in St. *Matthew*, which may be accounted for by the ſame perſon frequently having more names than one.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A further account of the genealogies of Judah. The poſterity of Shobal the ſon of Hur*, ver. 1—4. *Of Aſhur, the poſthumous ſon of Hezron, who was mentioned*, chap. ii. 24. *with ſomething particular concerning Jabez*, ver. 5—10. *Of Chelub, and others*, ver. 11—20. *Of Shelah*, ver. 21—23. 2. *An account of the poſterity and cities of Simeon, their conqueſt of Gedor, and of the Amalekites in mount Seir*, ver. 24—43.

1. THE ſons of Judah; [a] Pharez, Hezron, and †
Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal. 2. And ‡ Reaiah
the ſon of Shobal begat Jahath, and Jahath begat
Ahumai, and Lahad. Theſe *are* the families of the Zorathites.
3. And theſe *were of* the father of Etam; Jezreel,
and Iſhma, and Idbaſh: and the name of their ſiſter
was Hazelelponi. 4. And Penuel the father of Gedor,
and Ezer the father of Huſhah. Theſe *are* the ſons of [b]
Hur, the firſt-born of Ephratah, the father of Beth-lehem.
5. ¶ And [c] Aſhur the father of Tekoa had two
wives, Helah and Naarah. 6. And Naarah bare him
Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahaſhtari.
Theſe *were* the ſons of Naarah. 7. And the ſons of
Helah *were*, Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan. 8. And
Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel,
the ſon of Harum. 9. ¶ And Jabez [d] was more
honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his
name || Jabez, ſaying, Becauſe I bare him with ſorrow.
10. And Jabez called on the God of Iſrael, ſaying, Oh
that thou wouldſt bleſs me indeed, and enlarge my coaſt,
and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou
wouldſt keep *me* from evil, that it may not grieve me.
And [e] God granted him that which he requeſted.

[a] Gen. xxxviii. 29. & xlvi. 12.

† Or Chelubai. Chap. ii. 9. Or Caleb. Chap. ii. 18.

‡ Or Haroch. Chap. ii. 52.

[b] Chap. ii. 50.

[c] Ibid. 24.

[d] 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ver. 10.

|| i. e. Sorrow.

[e] Iſa. xlv. 19. Mat. vii. 7.

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v. 1—10. Among the numerous deſcendants of Judah, in the line of Pharez, Jabez is eſpecially taken notice of, who ſeems to be of the family of Aharhel.

1. His name was given him from the pangs of travail his mother endured. A memorial of the mercy of God to herſelf, who reſtored her from the jaws of death; or to him, of the ſorrow and trouble to which man is born, as the ſparks fly upwards.

2. He was a great man, more honourable than his brethren; either for wealth, or courage, or wiſdom; or above all, as from his prayer it appears, for piety. Greatneſs when united with goodneſs, is doubly diſtinguiſhed.

3. His prayer and the anſwer is recorded to his honour: for nothing is more truly noble, than in prayer to have power with God as a prince, and to prevail. (1.) The prayer is addreſſed to the God of Iſrael, his covenant God. *Note*, They who draw near to God with faith, as intereſted in a covenant of grace, may expect with confidence they ſhall be heard and anſwered. (2.) The ſubſtance of it is, for God's bleſſing either *temporal*, the enlargement of his border in the expulſion of the Canaanites, the ſupport of God in his attempts againſt them, and preſervation from danger; or *ſpiritual* bleſſings, the enlargement of his heart in light and love, and every holy affection, the ſtrength of divine grace to ſubdue his corruptions; and protection from that greateſt of evils, ſin, and its preſent and eternal conſequences. *Note*, (1.) Every bleſſing, temporal and ſpiritual, comes from God, and ſhould he ſought in the way of prayer. (2.) They who wait upon God, will renew their ſtrength, and be kept from the power of the evil one, the evil heart, and the evil world. (3.) Unleſs God ſtrengthen us, we become a prey to the weakeſt of our enemies.

4. God granted his prayer. So ready is God to give to him that aſketh, and to ſupply the largeſt deſires of our ſouls.

11. ¶ And Chelub, the brother of Shuah, begat Mehir, which *was* the father of Eſhton. 12. And Eſhton begat Beth-rapha, and Paſeah, and Tehinnah the father of † Ir-nahaſh. Theſe *are* the men of Rechah. 13. And the ſons of Kenaz; [f] Othniel, and Seraiah: and the ſons of Othniel; Hathath. 14. And Meonothai begat Ophra: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of [g] the valley of ‡ Charaſhim, for they were craftſmen, 15. And the ſons of Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the ſons of Elah § even Kenaz. 16. And the ſons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Aſareel. 17. And the ſons of Ezra *were*, Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon: and ſhe bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Iſhbah the father of Eſhtemoa. 18. And his wife † Jehudijah bare Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel, the father of Zanoah. And theſe *are* the ſons of Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took. 19. And the ſons of *his* wife Hodiah, the ſiſter of Naham, the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eſhtemoa the Maachathite. 20. And the ſons of Shimon *were*, Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. And the ſons of Iſhi *were*, Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth. 21. ¶ The ſons of Shelah, [h] the ſon of Judah *were*, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareſhah, and the families of the houſe of them that wrought fine linen of the houſe of Aſhbea, 22. And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joaſh, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jaſhubilehem. And *theſe are* ancient things. 23. Theſe were the potters, and thoſe that dwelt amongſt plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.

† Or the city of Naaſh.
[f] Joſh. xv. 17.
[g] Neh. xi. 35.
‡ i.e. Craftſmen.
§ Or Uknaz.
† Or the Jeweſs.
[h] Gen. xxxviii. i. 5.

v. 11—23. We have here among the deſcendants of Judah, two families diſtinguiſhed, as being craftſmen and weavers. Theſe trades deſcended from father to ſon: one of theſe craftſmen was, it ſeems, nobly allied, *v.* 18. it was not then counted mean to be an ingenious mechanic. Another family had, during the days of Moab's ſubjection, been ſent thither as governors for David; but ſince thoſe antient conqueſts, times were now ſadly changed, and they were reduced to be potters and huſbandmen to the king of Babylon, and earned their bread with the ſweat of their brow. *Note*, This world is a changing ſcene: nothing ſubſtantial or enduring is to be expected in it. Let it quicken our diligence to ſecure a better, where our dignity will be ſecure *without variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning*.

24. ¶ The ſons of Simeon *were*, † Nemuel, and Jamin, ‡ Jarib, § Zerah, *and* Shaul: 25. Shallum his ſon, Mibſam his ſon, Miſhma his ſon. 26. And the ſons of Miſhma; Hamuel his ſon, Zacchur his ſon, Shimei his ſon. 27. And Shimei had ſixteen ſons and ſix daughters; but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, like to the children of Judah. 28. And [i] they dwelt at Beer-ſheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-ſhual, 29. And at † Bilhah, and at Ezen, and at ‡ Tolad, 30. And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag, 31. And at Beth-mercaboth, and § Hazar-ſuſim, and at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim: Theſe *were* their cities, unto the reign of David. 32. And their villages *were*, † Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Aſhan, five cities. 33. And all their villages that *were* round about the ſame cities, unto ‡ Baak. Theſe *were* their habitations, § and their genealogy. 34. And Meſhobab, and Jamlech, and Joſhah, the ſon of Amaziah, 35. And Joel, and Jehu the ſon of Joſibiah, the ſon of Seraiah, the ſon of Aſiel, 36. And Elioneai, and Jaakobah, and Jeſhohaiah, and Aſaiah, and Adiel, and Jeſimiel, and Benaiah, 37. And Ziza the ſon of Shiphi, the ſon of Allon, the ſon of Jedaiah, the ſon of Shimri, the ſon of Shemaiah. 38. Theſe † mentioned by *their* names, *were* princes in their families: and the houſe of their fathers increaſed greatly. 39. ¶ And they went to the entrance of Gedor, *even* unto the eaſt-ſide of the valley, to ſeek paſture for their flocks. 40. And they found fat paſture and good, and the land *was* wide, and quiet, and peaceable: for *they* of Ham had dwelt there of old. 41. And theſe written by name, came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and ſmote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and deſtroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: becauſe *there was* paſture there for their flocks. 42. And *ſome* of them, *even* of the ſons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to [k] mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiath, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the ſons of Iſhi. 43. And they ſmote [l] the reſt of the Amalekites that were eſcaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

† Or Jemuel. Gen. xlvi. 10. Exod. vi. 15. Num. xxvi. 12.
‡ Or Jachin.
§ Or Zohar.
Before Christ 1300.
[i] Joſh. xix. 2, &c.
† Or Balah. Joſh. xix. 3.
‡ Or Eltolad. Joſh. xix. 4.
§ Or Hazar-ſuſah. Joſh. xix. 5.
† Or Ether. Joſh. xix. 7.
‡ Baalath-beer. Joſh. xix. 8.
§ Or as they divided themſelves by nations among them.
† Heb. Came to names. Gen. vi. 4.
About 710.
[k] Deut. ii. 5.
[l] 1 Sam. xv. 8. & xxx. 17. 2 Sam. viii. 12.

v. 24—43. The tribe of Simeon follows that of Judah, as being reckoned with it, and having its lot in the midſt of Judah. Three things are remarked of them,

1. That in the reign of David, they either quitted, or were removed from thoſe cities mentioned, *v.* 28, 31.

2. That in the time of Hezekiah, they proſpered greatly; enlarged their borders by two expeditions; one againſt thoſe who inhabited the valley of Gedor, who, as being of the race of Ham, *v.* 40. were probably Philiſtines: the other againſt the Amalekites, who, after the general ſlaughters of Saul and David, fixed upon this ſpot of Edom for their abode, but were now utterly extirpated.

3. That they who were in Seir, were not carried captives with the other Iſraelites into Babylon, but continued there at the return of Ezra, the author of this book. *Note*, (1.) The wrath of God, like the deſtruction of Amalek, will, though long ſuſpended, overtake the ſinner. (2.) That may appear an afflictive ſeparation, which by and by proves a moſt providential deliverance.

CHAP. V.

This chapter gives us ſome account, 1. *Of the two tribes and a half that were ſeated on the other ſide Jordan.* (1.) *Of Reuben,* ver. 1—10. (2.) *Of Gad,* ver. 11—17. (3.) *Of the half tribe of Manaſſeh,* ver. 23, 24. 2. *How they conquered the Hagarites,* ver. 18—22. 3. *How they were at length themſelves conquered by the king of Aſſyria, becauſe they had forſaken God.* ver. 25, 26.

1. NOW the ſons of Reuben the firſt-born of Iſrael (for [a] he *was* the firſt-born, but foraſmuch as [b] he defiled his father's bed, [c] his birthright was given unto the ſons of Joſeph the ſon of Iſrael: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. 2. For [d] Judah prevailed above his brethren, and [e] of him *came* the chief † ruler, but the birthright *was* Joſeph's). 3. The ſons *I ſay*, of [f] Reuben the firſt-born of Iſrael *were* Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 4. The ſons of Joel; Shemaiah his ſon, Gog his ſon, Shimei his ſon, 5. Micah his ſon, Reaia his ſon, Baal his ſon, 6. Beerah his ſon, whom ‡ Tilgath-pilnezer king of Aſſyria, carried away *captive*: he *was* prince of the Reubenites. 7. And his brethren by their families ([g] when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned) *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zecha-

[a] Gen. xxix. 32.
[b] Ibid. xxxv. 22.
[c] Ibid. xlviii. 15, 22.
[d] Ibid. xlix. 8, 10. Pſ. lx. 7. & cviii. 8.
[e] Mic. v. 2. Mat. ii. 6.
† Or, prince. 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[f] Gen. xlvi. 9. Exod. vi. 14. Num. xxvi. 5.
‡ Or, Tiglath-pileſer. 2 Kings xv. 29. & xvi. 7.
[g] Ver. 17.

Zechariah, 8. And Bela, the ſon of Azaz, the ſon of § Shema, the ſon of Joel, who dwelt in [h] Aroer, even unto Nebo and Baal-meon. 9. And eaſtward he inhabited unto the entring in of the wilderneſs from the river Euphrates: becauſe their cattle were multiplied in [i] the land of Gilead. 10. And in the days of Saul they made war with [k] the Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and dwelt in their tents ‖ throughout all the eaſt-*land* of Gilead. 11. ¶ And the children of Gad dwelt over againſt them, in the land of [l] Baſhan unto Salcah: 12. Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Baſhan. 13. And their brethren of the houſe of their fathers *were* Michael, Meſhullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachen, and Zia, and Heber, ſeven. 14. Theſe *are* the children of Abihail the ſon of Huri, the ſon of Jaroah, the ſon of Gilead, the ſon of Michael, the ſon of Jeſhiſhai, the ſon of Jahdo, the ſon of Buz; 15. Ahi the ſon of Abdiel the ſon of Guni, chief of the houſe of their fathers. 16. And they dwelt in Gilead in Baſhan, and in her towns, and in all the ſuburbs of [m] Sharon, upon their † borders. 17. All theſe were reckoned by genealogies in the days of [n] Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of [o] Jeroboam king of Iſrael.

v. 1—17. We have here the genealogy,

1. Of the Reubenites. For his ſin, Reuben was degraded from the pre-eminence and the birthright. Joſeph was ſubſtituted in his place, and, as firſt-born, poſſeſſed a double portion, his two ſons being each head of a tribe; and Judah had the ſceptre annexed to it, and the bleſſing of the Meſſiah. But though degraded, he is not diſinherited; he hath his lot with his brethren in Gilead; and when, by the increaſe of his flocks, he wanted enlargement, he diſpoſſeſſed the Hagarenes, and dwelt in their country. His line is brought down to Beerah, who was their chief, when carried captives into Aſſyria, from whence they never returned. *Note*, (1.) One falſe ſtep leaves often an indelible ſtain on the memory. (2.) They may not utterly be reprobate of God, who for a time may foully fall, and be ſeverely puniſhed in the fleſh.

2. Of the Gadites, who, with the Reubenites, had been numbered twice, under Jeroboam and Jotham.

18. ¶ The ſons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manaſſeh † of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and ſword, and to ſhoot with bow, and ſkilful in war, *were* four and forty thouſand and ſeven hundred and threeſcore, that went out to the war. 19. And they made war with the Hagarites, with [p] Jetur, and Nephiſh, and Nodab. 20. And [q] they were helped againſt them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for they [r] cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them, becauſe [s] they put their truſt in him. 21. And they ‡ took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thouſand, and of ſheep two hundred and fifty thouſand, and of aſſes two thouſand, and of men an hundred thouſand. 22. For there fell down many ſlain, becauſe [t] the war was of God. And they dwelt in their ſteads until [u] the captivity. 23. ¶ And the children of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh dwelt in the land: they increaſed from Baſhan unto Baal-hermon, and Senir, and unto mount Hermon. 24. And theſe *were* the heads of the houſe of their fathers, even Epher, and Iſhi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, § famous men, *and* heads of the houſe of their fathers. 25. ¶ And they tranſgreſſed againſt the God of their fathers, and [x] went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God deſtroyed before them. 26. And the God of Iſrael ſtirred up the ſpirit of [y] Pul king of Aſſyria, and the ſpirit of Tilgath-pilnezer king of Aſſyria, and he carried them away (even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh) and brought them unto [z] Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

v. 18—26. The half tribe of Manaſſeh is here mentioned, who with Reuben and Gad living together, ſeparate from their brethren, by the river Jordan, were particularly aſſociated together, both in their victories, and their captivity.

1. With an army of 44,760 choſen men, they invaded the Hagarenes, and truſting more on the bleſſing of God, than on the ſword and ſpear, they prayed as they fought, and God gave them a diſtinguiſhed victory, with immenſe ſpoils, and enlarged their borders with the extenſive country of their vanquiſhed enemies; for the war was of God, undertaken at his command, and proſecuted under his bleſſing. *Note*, (1.) They who are men of war, ſhould be men of prayer. (2.) When we cry to God, then ſhall our ſpiritual enemies be put to flight. (3.) Every ſucceſs ſhould be gratefully aſcribed, not to the arm of fleſh, but to the help of God.

2. By the king of Aſſyria they were led away captive together, as the juſt puniſhment of their revolt from God's worſhip and ſervice, and their ungrateful returns of the divine mercy. God firſt ſtirred up one king to chaſtiſe them; and, when they were incorrigible, another to deſtroy them; and from their captivity they never returned. *Note*, Incorrigible offenders, who are cut off in their ſins, periſh in them for ever. When death hath ſeized the impenitent, there is no more hope.

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§ Or, Shemaiah. Ver. 4.
[h] Joſh. xiii. 16.
[i] Ibid. xxii. 9.
[k] Gen. xxv. 12.
‖ Heb. Upon all the face of the eaſt.
[l] Joſh. xiii. 11, 24.
[m] Chap. xxvii. 29.
† Heb. Goings forth.
[n] 2 Kings xv. 5, 32.
[o] 2 Kings xiv. 16, 28.
† Heb. Sons of valour.
[p] Gen. xxv. 15. Chap. i. 31.
[q] Ver. 22. Pſ. xlvi. 1.
[r] Exod. xvii. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 32. 2 Chron. xiv. 11.
[s] 2 Kings xviii. 5. Pſ. xci. 2.
‡ Heb. Led captive.
[t] 2 Chron. xxxii. 8. Rom. viii. 31.
[u] 2 Kings xv. 29. & xvii. 6.
§ Heb. Men of names.
[x] 2 Kings xvii. 7.
[y] Ibid. xv. 19.
[z] Ibid. xvii. 6. & xviii. 11.

CHAP. VI.

We have an account in this chapter of the tribe of Levi. 1. *Their pedigree*, ver. 1—3. *The line of the prieſts from Aaron to the captivity*, ver. 4—15. *and of ſome other of their families*, ver. 16—30. 2. *Their works; the work of the Levites*, ver. 31—48. *Of the prieſts*, ver. 40—53. 3. *The cities appointed them in the land of Canaan*, ver. 54—81.

1. THE ſons of Levi; [a] Gerſhom, Kohath, and Merari. 2. And the ſons of Kohath; Amram. [b] Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. 3. And the children of Amram; Aaron, and Moſes, and Miriam. The ſons alſo of Aaron; [c] Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 4. ¶ Eleazar begat Phinehas, Phinehas begat Abiſhua, 5. And Abiſhua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi, 6. And Uzzi begat Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begat Meraioth, 7. Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, 8. And [d] Ahitub begat Zadok, and [e] Zadok begat Ahimaaz, 9. And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan, 10. And Johanan begat Azariah (he *it is* [f] that executed the prieſt's office, in the † temple [g] that Solomon built in Jeruſalem) 11. And [h] Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, 12. And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat ‡ Shallum, 13. And Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah, 14. And Azariah begat [i] Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak, 15. And Jehozadak went *into captivity*, [k] when the LORD carried away Judah and Jeruſalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. 16. ¶ The ſons of Levi; [l] Gerſhom, Kohath, and Merari. 17. And theſe *be* the names of the ſons of Gerſhom; Libni, and Shimei. 18. And the ſons of Kohath *were*, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. 19. The ſons of Merari; Mahli, and Muſhi. And theſe *are* the families of the Levites according to their fathers. 20. Of Gerſhom; Libni his ſon, Jahath his ſon, [m] Zimmah his ſon, 21. § Joah his ſon, ‖ Iddo his ſon, Zerah his ſon, † Jeaterai his ſon. 22. The ſons of Kohath; ‡ Aminadab his ſon, Korah his ſon, Aſſir his ſon, 23. Elkanah his ſon, and Ebiaſaph his ſon, and Aſſir his ſon, 24. Tahath his ſon, § Uriel his ſon, ‖ Uzziah his ſon, and † Shaul his ſon. 25. And the ſons of Elkanah, [n] Amaſai, and Ahimoth. 26. *As for* Elkanah: the ſons of Elkanah; ‡ Zophai his ſon, and [o] Nahath his ſon, 27. [p] Eliab his ſon, Jeroham his ſon, Elkanah his ſon. 28. And the ſons of Samuel; the firſt-born § Vaſhni, and Abiah. 29. The ſons of Merari; Mahli, Libni his ſon, Shimei his ſon, Uzza his ſon, 30. Shimea his ſon, Haggiah his ſon, Aſaiah his ſon.

v. 1—30. As Judah had the pre-eminence, and Joſeph the birthright, Levi had the honour of the prieſthood. The three ſons of Levi, *v.* 1. have been often mentioned. Among the deſcendants of Kohath were Moſes, Aaron, and Miriam, whoſe names are great in God's book. Two of the ſons of Aaron, on whom the prieſthood was ſettled, ſuffered for their daring preſumption. In the others, the prieſtly line was maintained. The line of Eleazar to the captivity is drawn, *v.* 4—15. during which, the high-prieſthood in general continued in that family; though, in the time of the Judges, we find it for a while transferred to the deſcendants of Ithamar, till Solomon again reſtored Zadok. Azariah is mentioned as officiating in Solomon's temple, probably when Uzziah invaded the prieſt's office, whom he ſo nobly withſtood. They who have a zeal for God, fear not to teſtify againſt the ſins of the greateſt men, though at the hazard of priſon or death. Other families of Levites are recorded: the family of Libni, from Gerſhom, honoured with

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[a] Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16. Num. xxvi. 57. Chap. xxiii. 6.
[b] See ver. 22.
[c] Lev. x. 1.
[d] 2 Sam. viii. 17.
[e] Ibid. xv. 27.
[f] 2 Chron. xxvi. 17.
† Heb. Houſe.
[g] 1 King vi. 2 Chron. iii.
[h] Ezra vii. 3
‡ Or, Meſhullam. Chap. ix. 11.
[i] Neh. xi. 11.
[k] 2 Kings xxv. 18.
[l] Exod. vi. 16.
[m] Ver. 42.
§ Or, Ethan, Ver. 42.
‖ Or, Adaiah. Ver. 41.
† Or, Ethni. Ver. 41.
‡ Or, Izhar. Ver. 2, 18.
§ Or, Zephaniah.
‖ Or, Azariah.
† Or, Joel. Ver 36.
[n] Ver. 35, 36.
‡ Or, Zuph. Ver. 35. 1 Sam. i. 1.
[o] Ver. 34. Toah.
[p] Ver. 34. Eliel.
§ Or, Joel. Ver. 33. 1 Sam. viii. 2.

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producing Samuel ; and the family of Mahli, deſcended from Merari.

31. And theſe *are they* whom David ſet over the ſervice of ſong in the houſe of the LORD, after that[q] the ark had reſt. 32. And they miniſtred before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of the congregation, with ſinging, until Solomon had built the houſe of the LORD in Jeruſalem : and *then* they waited on their office according to their order. 33. And theſe *are* they that † waited with their children : of the ſons of the Kohathites ; Heman a ſinger, the ſon of Joel, the ſon of Shemuel, 34. The ſon of Elkanah, the ſon of Jeroham, the ſon of Eliel, the ſon of ‡ Toah. 35. The ſon of § Zuph, the ſon of Elkanah, the ſon of Mahath, the ſon of Amaſai. 36. The ſon of Elkanah, the ſon of ‖ Joel, the ſon of † Azariah, the ſon of ‡ Zephaniah, 37. The ſon of Tahath, the ſon of Aſſir, the ſon of [r] Ebiaſaph, the ſon of Korah, 38. The ſon of Izhar, the ſon of Kohath, the ſon of Levi, the ſon of Iſrael. 39. And his brother Aſaph (who ſtood on his right hand) *even* Aſaph the ſon of Berechiah, the ſon of Shimea, 40. The ſon of Michael, the ſon of Baaſeiah, the ſon of Malchiah. 41. The ſon of [s] Ethni, the ſon of Zerah, the ſon of Adaiah, 42. The ſon of Ethan, the ſon of Zimmah, the ſon of Shimei, 43. The ſon of Jahath, the ſon of Gerſhom, the ſon of Levi. 44. And their brethren the ſons of Merari, *ſtood* on the left hand : § Ethan, the ſon of ‖ Kiſhi, the ſon of Abdi, the ſon of Malluch, 45. The ſon of Haſhabiah, the ſon of Amaziah, the ſon of Hilkiah, 46. The ſon of Amzi, the ſon of Bani, the ſon of Shamer, 47. The ſon of Mahli, the ſon of Muſhi, the ſon of Merari, the ſon of Levi. 48. Their brethren alſo the Levites *were* appointed unto all manner of ſervice of the tabernacle of the houſe of God.

v. 31—48. When David had brought up the ark from Obed-edom's houſe, he appointed a ſolemn choir of Levites, for the conſtant ſinging God's praiſes ; at the head of which were Heman, Aſaph, and Ethan, one out of each of the three great houſes of Levi, with their children, as many as were muſical at leaſt. The other Levites, according to the claſſes into which they were divided, did the reſt of the ſervice, kept the gates, prepared the ſacrifices, &c. *Note,* (1.) The work of praiſe in the great congregation ſhould be as much the miniſter's care, as the work of prayer. It is a ſure ſign of a decay of godlineſs, when there is a neglect of divine pſalmody. (2.) That is only to God a pleaſing ſervice of ſong, when in the heart, as well as the lips, we make melody to God. (3.) In God's houſe there muſt be no idlers ; the work is important, and calls for labour and diligence.

49. ¶ But Aaron and his ſons offered [t] upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and [u] on the altar of incenſe, *and were appointed* for all the work of the *place* moſt holy, and to make an atonement for Iſrael, according to all that Moſes the ſervant of God had commanded. 50. And theſe *are* the ſons of Aaron ; Eleazar his ſon, Phinehas his ſon, Abiſhua his ſon, 51. Bukki his ſon, Uzzi his ſon, Zerahiah his ſon, 52, Meraioth his ſon, Amariah his ſon, Ahitub his ſon, 53. Zadok his ſon, Ahimaaz his ſon.

v. 49—53. Sacrificing was peculiarly appropriated to the prieſts, the ſons of Aaron. They alone ſhed the blood of atonement, and burnt incenſe, and herein were typical of him, who, himſelf both prieſt and ſacrifice, by one oblation of himſelf once offered, hath obtained eternal redemption for us.

54. ¶ [x] Now theſe *are* their dwelling-places throughout their caſtles in their coaſts of the ſons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites : for theirs was the lot. 55. And [y] they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the ſuburbs thereof round about it. 56. [z] But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh. 57. And [a] to the ſons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, *namely,* Hebron *the city* of refuge, and Libnah, with her ſuburbs, and Jattir, and Eſhtemoah, with their ſuburbs, 58. And † Hilen with her ſuburbs, Debir with her ſuburbs, 59. And ‡ Aſhan with her ſuburbs, and Beth-ſhemeſh with her ſuburbs : 60. And out of the tribe of Benjamin : Geba with her ſuburbs, and § Alemeth with her ſuburbs, and Anathoth with her ſuburbs. All their cities throughout their families *were* thirteen cities. 61. And unto the ſons of Kohath, [b] *which were* left of the family of that tribe, *were cities given* out of the half-tribe, *namely, out of* the half-*tribe* of Manaſſeh, [c] by lot, ten cities. 62. And to the ſons of Gerſhom throughout their families, out of the tribe of Iſſachar, and out of the tribe of Aſher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manaſſeh in Baſhan, thirteen cities. 63. Unto the ſons of Merari *were given* by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, [d] twelve cities. 64. And the children of Iſrael gave to the Levites *theſe* cities, with their ſuburbs. 65. And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, theſe cities, which are called by *their* names. 66. And [e] *the reſidue* of the families of the ſons of Kohath had cities of their coaſts out of the tribe of Ephraim. 67. And [f] they gave unto them *of* the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim, with her ſuburbs : *they gave* alſo Gezer with her ſuburbs, 68. [g] And Jokmeam with her ſuburbs, and Beth-horon with her ſuburbs, 69. And Aijalon with her ſuburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her ſuburbs : 70. And out of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh ; Aner with her ſuburbs, and Bileam with her ſuburbs, for the family of the remnant of the ſons of Kohath. 71. Unto the ſons of Gerſhom *were given* out of the family of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, Golan in Baſhan, with her ſuburbs, and Aſhtaroth with her ſuburbs : 72. And out of the tribe of Iſſachar ; Kedeſh with her ſuburbs, Daberath with her ſuburbs, 73. And Ramoth with her ſuburbs, and Anem with her ſuburbs : 74. And out of the tribe of Aſher ; Maſhal with her ſuburbs, and Abdon with her ſuburbs, 75. And Hukok with her ſuburbs, and Rehob with her ſuburbs : 76. And out of the tribe of Naphtali ; Kedeſh in Galilee with her ſuburbs, and Hammon with her ſuburbs, and Kirjathaim with her ſuburbs. 77. Unto the reſt of the children of Merari *were given* out of the tribe of Zebulun, Rimmon with her ſuburbs, Tabor with her ſuburbs : 78. And on the other ſide Jordan by Jericho, on the eaſt ſide of Jordan, *were given them* out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderneſs with her ſuburbs, and Jahzah with her ſuburbs, 79. Kedemoth alſo with her ſuburbs, and Mephaath with her ſuburbs : 80. And out of the tribe of Gad ; Ramoth in Gilead with her ſuburbs, and Mahanaim with her ſuburbs, 81. And Heſhbon with her ſuburbs, and Jazer with her ſuburbs.

v. 54—81. The Levites were diſtributed throughout the tribes, that the people might be better taught : taken off all worldly employments, that they might give themſelves up to the work of the miniſtry ; and liberally provided with cities to dwell in, and the tythes for their maintainance. The names of the cities are much the ſame as *Joſh.* xxi. except ſome trivial differences, which time may be ſuppoſed to have made. *Note,* (1.) They deſerve a liberal proviſion, who labour in the word and doctrine. (2.) They who neglect the Levites work, to eat the bread of the church in idleneſs, not only rob their brethren, but rob God alſo.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter we have ſome account of the genealogies, 1. *Of Iſſachar,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Of Benjamin,* ver. 6—12. 3. *Of Naphtali,* ver. 13. 4. *Of Manaſſeh,* ver. 14—19. 5. *Of Ephraim,* ver. 20—29. 6. *Of Aſher,* ver. 30—40.

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1. NOW the ſons of Iſſachar *were* [a] Tola, and † Puah, Jaſhub, and Shimron, four. 2. And the ſons of Tola ; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibſam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's houſe, *to wit,* of Tola : *they were* valiant men of might in their generations ; [b] whoſe number *was* in the days of David two and twenty thouſand and ſix hundred. 3. And the ſons of Uzzi ; Izrahiah : and the ſons of Izrahiah ; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Iſhiah, five : all of them chief men. 4. And with them, by their generations, after the houſe of their fathers *were* bands of ſoldiers for war, ſix and thirty thouſand *men* : for they had

[q] Chap. xvi. 1.

† Heb. Stood.

‡ Or, Nahath.

§ Or, Zophai. Ver. 26.

‖ Or, Shaul.

† Or, Uzziah.

‡ Or, Uriel. Ver. 24.

[r] Exod. vi. 24.

[s] Ver. 21.

§ Or, Jeduthun. Chap. ix. 16. & xxv. 1, 3, 6.

‖ Or, Kuſhaia. Chap. xv. 17.

[t] Lev. i. 9.

[u] Exod. xxx. 7.

[x] Joſh. xxi.

1444.

[y] Joſh. xxi. 11.

[z] Joſh. xiv. 13. & xv. 13.

[a] Joſh. xxi. 13.

† Or, Holon. Joſh. xxi. 15.

‡ Or, Ain. Joſh. xxi. 16.

§ Or, Almon. Joſh. xxi. 18.

[b] Ver. 66.

[c] Joſh. xxi. 5.

[d] Joſh. xxi. 7. 34.

[e] Ver. 61.

[f] Joſh. xxi. 21.

[g] Joſh. xxi. 22—35. where many of theſe cities have other names.

[a] Gen. xlvi. 13. Num. xxvi. 23.

† Or, Phuvah, Job, &c.

[b] 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, 2. Chap. xxvii. 1.

had many wives and ſons. 5. And their brethren among all the families of Iſſachar *were* valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourſcore and ſeven thouſand. 6. ¶ *The ſons* of [c] Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three. 7. And the ſons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the houſe of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour, and were reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thouſand and thirty and four. 8. And the ſons of Becher; Zemira, and Joaſh, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All theſe *are* the ſons of Becher. 9. And the number of them after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the houſe of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thouſand and two hundred. 10. The ſons alſo of Jediael; Bilhan: and the ſons of Bilhan; Jeuſh, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharſhiſh, and Ahiſhahar. 11. All theſe the ſons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *were* ſeventeen thouſand and two hundred *ſoldiers*, fit to go for war *and* battle. 12. ‡ Shuppim alſo, and Huppim, the children of § Ir, *and* Huſhim, the ſons of ‖ Aher. 13. ¶ The ſons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and † Shallum the ſons of Bilhah. 14. ¶ The ſons of Manaſſeh; Aſhriel, whom ſhe bare: (*but* his concubine the Aramiteſs bare Machir the father of Gilead: 15. And Machir took to wife *the ſiſter* of Huppim, and Shuppim, whoſe ſiſter's name *was* Maachah) and the name of the ſecond *was* Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters. 16. And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a ſon, and ſhe called his name Pereſh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh: and his ſons *were* Ulam, and Rakem. 17. And the ſons of Ulam; [d] Bedan. Theſe *were* the ſons of Gilead, the ſon of Machir, the ſon of Manaſſeh. 18. And his ſiſter Hammoleketh bare Iſhod, and ‡ Abiezer, and Mahalah. 19. And the ſons of Shemida were, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.

[c] Gen. xlvi. 21. Num. xxvi. 38. Chap. viii. 1, &c.
‡ Muppim, Gen. xlvi. 21. and Shupham, Num. xxvi. 39.
§ Or, Iri, Ver. 7.
‖ Or, Ahiram, Num. xxvi. 38.
† Or, Shillem, Gen. xlvi. 24.
[d] 1 Sam. xii. 11.
‡ Or, Jeezer, Num. xxvi. 30.

v. 1—19. We have a ſhort account of three tribes and a half. 1. Of Iſſachar. They were very numerous, owing to the polygamy then allowed, *v.* 4. and very warlike, amounting, in the time of David, to 87,000 fighting men. 2. Of Benjamin. They were fewer, 59,430, if all of them were numbred, as they ſeem not to have been. 3. Of Naphtali. The fathers of the families only are mentioned. 4. Of the half tribe of Manaſſeh. The marriage of his ſon Aſhriel with a Syrian is noted; and of his ſon Gilead, who more wiſely choſe a partner of the daughters of his brother Benjamin. Bad examples, though of our parents, ſhould not be imitated. Bedan, one of the judges, probably the ſame as Jair, was of this tribe, *v.* 17.

20. ¶ And [e] the ſons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his ſon, and Tahath his ſon, and Eledah his ſon, and Tahath his ſon, 21. ¶ And Zabad his ſon, and Shuthelah his ſon, and Ezer and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land ſlew, becauſe they came down to take away their cattle. 22. And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and [f] his brethren came to comfort him. 23. ¶ And when he went in to his wife, ſhe conceived and bare a ſon, and he called his name † Beriah, becauſe it went evil with his houſe. 24. (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-ſherah.) 25. And Rephah *was* his ſon, alſo Reſheph, and Telah his ſon, and Tahan his ſon, 26. Laadan his ſon, Ammihud his ſon, Eliſhama his ſon, 27. ‡ Non his ſon, Jehoſhua his ſon. 28. ¶ And their poſſeſſions and habitations *were* Beth-el, and the towns thereof, and eaſtward § Naaran, and weſtward Gezer with the ‖ towns thereof, Shechem alſo and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof: 29. And by the borders of the children of [g] Manaſſeh, Beth-ſhean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, [h] Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In theſe dwelt the children of Joſeph the ſon of Iſrael.

[e] Num. xxvi. 35.
[f] Job ii. 11.
† i. e. In evil.
‡ Nun, Num. xiii. 8, 16.
§ Naarath, Joſh. xvi. 7.
‖ Heb. Daughters.
[g] Joſh. xvii. 7.
[h] Ibid. 11.

v. 20—29. Ephraim the moſt diſtinguiſhed of the tribes next to Judah, ſuffers more than any of them at firſt. We have here,

1. The breach made in his family. The men of Gath, who had gone up from Egypt to ſettle there, now made an irruption upon that part of Goſhen where Zabud (who ſeems to be a ſecond ſon of Ephraim after Shuthelah) and his ſons fed their cattle, in defending which they loſt their lives. *Note,* (1.) Providences ſeem often to contradict promiſes; (*See Gen.* xlviii. 19.) but the counſel of the Lord, that ſhall ſtand. (2.) We are nowhere ſafe from danger; as thoſe therefore who are in jeopardy every hour, let us be always ready for the ſtroke of death. (3.) A good cauſe is not always ſucceſsful. God now often permits the wicked to proſper; but a day is coming, when all God's diſpenſations will be cleared up to us.

2. Ephraim beheld with anguiſh the loſſes of his family, and was ready to lay down his grey hairs with ſorrow in the grave; but his brethren pour the friendly balm of conſolation into his wounded heart, and encourage him to truſt ſtill in God. *Note,* (1.) They who live long, only live to ſee their ſorrows multiplied, and to bury the choiceſt of their worldly comforts. (2.) To ſooth the griefs of the afflicted, is to act the part of a brother: an unfeeling heart cannot be in a true Iſraelite.

3. God gave him another ſon in his old age, whom, in remembrance of the evils which had happened to his family, he called *Beriah, in evil*; a fit name for every miſerable babe born in ſin, expoſed to an evil world, and liable to eternal ſuffering.

4. Sherah, a diſtant deſcendant of Beriah, not his immediate daughter, was famous in after-times for her buildings in Canaan, *v.* 24.

5. The genealogy cloſes with Joſhua, ſo famed in the book of God, who was the peculiar glory of this tribe. *Note,* A great good man reflects honour on all who are related to him.

30. ¶ [i] The ſons of Aſher; Imnah, and Iſuah, and Iſhuai, and Beriah, and Serah their ſiſter. 31. And the ſons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who *is* the father of Birzavith. 32. And Heber begat Japhlet, and † Shomer, and Hotham, and Shua their ſiſter. 33. And the ſons of Japhlet; Paſach, and Bimhal, and Aſhuath: theſe *are* the children of Japhlet. 34. And the ſons of Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram. 35. And the ſons of his brother Helem, Zophah, and Imna, and Sheleſh, and Amal. 36. The ſons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah, 37. Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilſha, and Ithran, and Beera. 38. And the ſons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Piſpah, and Ara. 39. And the ſons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia. 40. All theſe *were* the children of Aſher, heads of *their* father's houſe, choice *and* mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the number throughout the genealogy of them, that were apt to the war, *and* to battle, *was* twenty and ſix thouſand men.

[i] Gen. xlvi. 17. Num. xxvi. 44.
† Shamer, Ver. 34.

v. 30—40. The tribe of Aſher is the laſt mentioned, Dan and Zebulun being wholly omitted. The heads of the chief families are taken notice of, and their ſelect militia, amounting to 26,000 in the time of David; perhaps fewer of them might be trained to war, than of the other tribes, their borders not being ſo much expoſed.

CHAP. VIII.

From Benjamin aroſe the firſt king; and they cleaving to Judah, returned with them after the captivity; therefore a more particular account is given, 1. *Of the heads of that tribe,* ver. 1—32. 2. *Of the family of Saul,* ver. 33—40.

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1. NOW Benjamin begat [a] Bela his firſt-born, Aſhbel the ſecond, and Aharah the third, 2. Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. 3. And the ſons of Bela were † Addar, and Gera, and Abihud. 4. And Abiſhua, and Naaman, and Ahoah, 5. And Gera, and ‡ Shephuphan, and Huram. 6. And theſe *are* the ſons of Ehud: theſe are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them to [b] Manahath: 7. And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud. 8. And Shaharaim begat *children* in the country of Moab, after he had ſent them away; Huſhim and Baara *were* his wives. 9. And he begat of Hodeſh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Meſha, and Malcham, 10. And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. Theſe *were* his ſons, heads of the fathers. 11. And of Huſhim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal. 12. The ſons of Elpaal; Eber, and Miſham, and Shamed, who built Ono, and Lod with the towns thereof: 13. Beriah alſo, and [c] Shema, who *were* heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath: 14. And Ahio, Shaſhak, and Jeremoth,

[a] Gen. xlvi. 21. Num. xxvi. 38. Chap. vii. 6.
† Ard. Gen. xlvi. 21.
‡ Shupham, Num. xxvi. 39. Chap. vii. 12.
[b] Chap. ii. 52.
[c] Ver. 21.

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moth, 15. And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader, 16. And Michael, and Iſpah, and Joha, the ſons of Beriah; 17. And Zebediah, and Meſhullam, and Hezeki, and Heber. 18. Iſhmerai alſo, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the ſons of Elpaal; 19. And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi, 20. And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel, 21. And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the ſons of § Shimhi; 22. And Iſhpan, and Heber, and Eliel, 23. And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan, 24. And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah, 25. And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the ſons of Shaſhak; 26. And Shamſherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah, 27. And Jareſiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the ſons of Jeroham. 28. Theſe *were* heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief *men*: Theſe dwelt in Jeruſalem. 29. And [d] at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, (whoſe wife's name *was* Maachah) 30. And his firſt-born ſon Abdon, and Zur, and Kiſh, and Baal, and Nadab, 31. And Gedor, and Ahio, and ‖ Zacher. 32. And Mikloth begat † Shimeah. And theſe alſo dwelt with their brethren in Jeruſalem over againſt them.

§ Shema, Ver. 13.

[d] Chap. ix. 5.

‖ Zechariah, Chap. ix. 37.

† Shimeam, Chap. ix. 38.

v. 1—32. The names of ſome of Benjamin's deſcendants vary ſomewhat from thoſe in *Gen.* xlvi. but what ſeems variety and intricacy to us, was, at the time when this was written, no doubt, well underſtood. In *v.* 8. after *ſent them away*, it may beſt be read, *even Huſhim and Baara his wives*, as divorced. The Ehud mentioned, *v.* 6. ſeems not to be the judge of that name. Thoſe who dwelt at Jeruſalem, *v.* 28—32. are twice mentioned, as an inducement to their poſterity to ſettle there after their return from Babylon, When we depart from the priſon of the body, happy will it be for thoſe who have a part in the new Jeruſalem.

33. ¶ And [e] Ner begat Kiſh, and Kiſh begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchiſhua, and † Abinadab, and ‡ Eſhbaal. 34. And the ſon of Jonathan *was* § Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat [f] Micah. 35. And the ſons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and ‖ Tarea, and Ahaz. 36. And Ahaz begat † Jehoadah, and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza. 37. And Moza begat Binea: ‡ Rapha *was* his ſon, Eleaſah his ſon, Azel his ſon: 38. And Azel had ſix ſons, whoſe names *are* theſe, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Iſhmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All theſe *were* the ſons of Azel. 39. And the ſons of Eſhek his brother *were* Ulam his firſt-born, Jehuſh the ſecond, and Eliphelet the third. 40. And the ſons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers, and had many ſons, and ſons ſons an hundred and fifty. All theſe *are* the ſons of Benjamin.

[e] 1 Sam. xiv. 51.

† Iſhui, 1 Sam. xiv. 49.

‡ Iſh-boſheth, 2 Sam. ii. 8.

§ Mephiboſheth, 2 Sam. iv. 4. & ix. 6, 10.

[f] 2 Sam. ix. 12.

‖ Tahrea, Chap. ix. 41.

† Jarah, Chap. ix. 42.

‡ Rephaiah, Chap. ix. 43.

v. 33—40. The family of Saul is here taken notice of. Several ſons he had, but the line of Jonathan only is continued for about ten generations to Ulam, whoſe family was much increaſed, and remarkable for their valour, and uſe of the bow or ſling. The name of a valiant ſoldier is great, but that of a ſaint of God greater.

CHAP. IX.

On their return from the captivity we have an account who dwelt at Jeruſalem, 1. *The Iſraelites,* ver. 2–9. 2. *The prieſts,* ver. 10—13. 3. *The Levites, and other Nethinims,* ver. 14—26. 4. *Here is the particular charge of ſome of the prieſts and Levites,* ver. 27—34. 5. *A repetition of the genealogy of king Saul,* ver. 35—44.

1. SO [a] all Iſrael were reckoned by genealogies, and behold, they *were* written in the book of the kings of Iſrael and Judah, *who* were carried away to Babylon for their tranſgreſſion. 2. ¶ [b] Now the firſt inhabitants *that dwelt* in their poſſeſſions in their cities *were*, the Iſraelites, the prieſts, Levites, and [c] the Nethinims. 3. And in [d] Jeruſalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manaſſeh: 4. Uthai the ſon of Ammihud, the ſon of Omri, the ſon of Imri, the ſon of Bani, of the children of Pharez the ſon of Judah. 5. And of the Shilonites; Aſaiah the firſt-born, and his ſons. 6. And of the ſons of Zera; Jeuel, and their † brethren, ſix hundred and ninety. 7. And of the ſons of Benjamin: Sallu the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſon of Hodaviah, the ſon of Haſenuah, 8. And Ibneiah the ſon of Jeroham, and Elah the ſon of Uzzi, the ſon of Michri, and Meſhullam the ſon of Shephatiah, the ſon of Reuel, the ſon of Ibnijah, 9. And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and ſix. All theſe men *were* chief of the fathers in the houſe of their fathers.

[a] Ezra ii. 59.

[b] Ibid. 70. Neh. vii. 73.

[c] Ezra ii. 43. & viii. 20.

[d] Neh. xi. 1.

† i. e. Kinſmen. Gen. xiii. 8. Ver. 9.

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10. ¶ [e] And of the prieſts; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin, 11. And ‡ Azariah the ſon of Hilkiah, the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſon of Zadok, the ſon of Meraioth, the ſon of Ahitub, the ruler of the houſe of God. 12. And Adaiah the ſon of Jeroham, the ſon of Paſhur, the ſon of Malchijah, and Maaſiai the ſon of Adiel, the ſon of Jahzerah, the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſon of Meſhillemith, the ſon of Immer, 13. And their brethren, heads of the houſe of their fathers, a thouſand and ſeven hundred and threeſcore; § very able men for the work of the ſervice of the houſe of God.

[e] Neh. xi. 10, &c.

‡ Seraiah, Neh. xi. 11.

§ Heb. Mighty men of valour.

v. 1—13. Iſrael never more returned from Aſſyria: there all their genealogies periſhed, ſo that the writer could carry them no farther: *but Judah* (as it ſhould be rendered) being returned again, their families were preſerved, and the places where their anceſtors reſided, particularly thoſe who were fixed at Jeruſalem. It is remarked, they were carried away *for their tranſgreſſion*, a warning to them now when they are returned, to beware of their fathers ſins. Many of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, either at the captivity of Iſrael, or when Judah was in Babylon, joined them, and returned with them to Jeruſalem. It is a mercy if afflictions drive us together, and, forgetting former variance, we unite in the work and ſervice of God, Ephraim no more vexing Judah, or Judah Ephraim. The prieſts appear to have the greateſt zeal for returning to Jeruſalem: more of them came, than of Judah and Benjamin put together, *v.* 13. and what was their peculiar commendation, they were as able as willing for the ſervice of God. It is an unſpeakable mercy, when abilities and zeal unite in a miniſter of the ſanctuary: under ſuch rulers in the houſe of God, the cauſe may be expected to proſper.

14. And of the Levites; Shemaiah the ſon of Haſhub, the ſon of Azrikam, the ſon of Haſhabiah, of the ſons of Merari, 15. And Bakbakhar, Hereſh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the ſon of Micah, the ſon of Zichri, the ſon of Aſaph, 16. And Obadiah the ſon of Shemaiah, the ſon of Galal, the ſon of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the ſon of Aſa, the ſon of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites. 17. And the porters *were* Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum *was* the chief. 18. (Who hitherto *waited* in the king's gate eaſtward) They *were* porters in the companies of the children of Levi. 19. And Shallum the ſon of Kore, the ſon of Ebiaſaph, the ſon of Korah, and his brethren: (of the houſe of his father) the Korahites *were* over the work of the ſervice, keepers of the † gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers *being* over the hoſt of the LORD, *were* keepers of the entry. 20. And [f] Phineas the ſon of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time paſt, *and* the LORD *was* with him. 21. *And* Zechariah the ſon of Meſhelemiah, *was* porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 22. All theſe *which were* choſen to be porters of the gates, *were* two hundred and twelve. Theſe were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages: whom [g] David and Samuel [h] the ſeer ‡ did ordain in their ſet office. 23. So they and their children *had* the overſight of the gates of the houſe of the LORD, *namely* the houſe of the tabernacle, by wards. 24. In four quarters were the porters, toward the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth. 25. And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come [i] after ſeven days from time to time with them. 26. For theſe Levites, the four chief porters, were in *their* § ſet office, and were over the ‖ chambers and treaſuries of the houſe of God. 27. ¶ And they lodged round about the houſe of God, [k] becauſe the charge *was* upon them, and the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them. 28. And *certain* of them had the charge of the miniſtring veſſels, that they ſhould bring them in and out by tale. 29. *Some* of them alſo *were* appointed to overſee the veſſels, and all the inſtruments of the ſanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincenſe, and the ſpices. 30. And *ſome* of the ſons of the prieſts [l] made the ointment of the ſpices. 31. And Mattathiah, *one* of the Levites (who *was* the firſt-born of Shallum the Korahite) had the ſet office over [m] the things

† Heb. Threſholds.

[f] Num. xxv. 6.

[g] Chap. xxvi. 1, 2.

[h] 1 Sam. ix. 9.

‡ Heb. Founded in their truſt.

[i] 2 Kings xi. 5.

§ Or, Truſt, Ver. 31.

‖ Or, Store-houſes.

[k] Rom. xii. 7.

[l] Exod. xxx. 23.

[m] Lev. ii. 5. & vi. 21.

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that were made † in the pans. 32. And *other* of their brethren of the ſons of the Kohathites [n] *were* over the ſhew-bread to prepare *it* every ſabbath. 33. And theſe *are* [o] the ſingers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers, *were* free: for ‡ they were employed in *that* work day and night. 34. Theſe chief fathers of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations; theſe dwelt at Jeruſalem.

† Or, on flat plates.
[n] Lev. xxiv. 8.
[o] Chap. vi. 31. & xxv. 1.
‡ Heb. Upon them was, &c.

v. 14—34. The Levites imitated their brethren the prieſts in their zeal for the work of the Lord. Long had they been deſtitute of temple, altar, and ſacrifice; immediately therefore on their return, till a temple can be built, a tabernacle is reared, *v.* 19. and the ſervice commences. According to their diſtribution in the days of David, which he had planned with Samuel the prophet, they were divided into courſes, two hundred and twelve by turns ſucceeding to keep the charge of the tabernacle. Thoſe who were in waiting, had their lodging round about the houſe of God, that they might be at hand for their work. Every one had his ſeveral duty, *v.* 28—32. and ſome, diſcharged from all other employment, were conſtantly, or at ſtated hours by turns, engaged day and night in ſinging God's praiſes. *Note*, (1.) Order in the houſe of God conduces greatly to the profitableneſs of the ſervice. (2.) They who begin with God, may hope to proſper in their undertakings. (3.) Reſidence, labour and zeal, are indiſpenſibly required from every miniſter of God.

35. ¶ And [p] in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whoſe wife's name *was* Maachah: 36. And his firſt-born ſon Abdon, then Zur, and Kiſh, and Baal, and Ner, and Nadab, 37. And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zechariah, and Mikloth, 38. And Mikloth begat Shimeam: and they alſo dwelt with their brethren at Jeruſalem, over againſt their brethren. 39. And [q] Ner begat Kiſh, and Kiſh begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchiſhua, and Abinadab, and Eſh-baal. 40. And the ſon of Jonathan *was* Merib-baal: and Merib-baal begat Micah. 41. And the ſons of Micah *were* Pithon, and Melech, Tahrea, [r] *and Ahaz*. 42. And Ahaz begat Jarah, and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza, 43. And Moza begat Binea; and Rephaiah his ſon, Eleaſah his ſon, Azel his ſon. 44. And Azel had ſix ſons, whoſe names *are* theſe, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Iſhmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. Theſe *were* the ſons of Azel.

[p] Chap. viii. 29.
[q] Chap. viii. 33.
[r] Chap. viii. 35.

v. 35—44. Theſe verſes are a repetition of *chap.* viii. 29—38. to introduce the hiſtory of Saul in the following chapter.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The Iſraelites routed by the Philiſtines, and Saul ſlain,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The Philiſtines triumph thereupon,* ver. 8—10. 3. *The reſpect which the men of Jabeſh-gilead ſhewed to the royal corps,* ver. 11, 12. 4. *The reaſon of Saul's rejection,* ver. 13, 14.

1. [a] NOW the Philiſtines fought againſt Iſrael, and the men of Iſrael fled from before the Philiſtines, and fell down † ſlain in mount Gilboa. 2. And the Philiſtines followed hard after Saul, and after his ſons, and the Philiſtines ſlew [b] Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchiſhua, the ſons of Saul. 3. And the battle went ſore againſt Saul, and the archers [c] hit him, and he was wounded of the archers. 4. Then ſaid Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy ſword, and [d] thruſt me through therewith; leſt theſe uncircumciſed come and abuſe me. But his armour-bearer would not, for [e] he was ſore afraid. So Saul took a ſword, and fell upon it. 5. And when his armour-bearer ſaw that Saul was dead, he fell likewiſe on the ſword, and died. 6. So Saul died, and his three ſons, and [f] all his houſe died together. 7. And when all the men of Iſrael that *were* in the valley, ſaw that they fled, and that Saul and his ſons were dead; then they forſook their cities, and fled: and the Philiſtines came and dwelt in them.

[a] 1 Sam. xxxi. 1, &c.
† Heb. Thruſt through.
[b] Eccleſ. ix. 1, 2.
[c] Amos ii. 14.
[d] Judg. ix. 54.
[e] 1 Sam. xxvi. 9.
[f] 2 Sam. iii. 1.

v. 1—7. For this account of Saul's death, ſee 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 1. It was a juſt judgment on Saul; and, no doubt, his bloody houſe following his ill example, deſerved to fall with him. Thus a way was made for David to the crown, moſt of his competitors being removed. We pity Jonathan, that lovely name, fallen among the ſlain; but all is wiſe and good which God doth, though we are ſhort-ſighted, and ſee not always the reaſons of his procedure.

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8. ¶ And it came to paſs on the morrow, when the Philiſtines came to ſtrip the ſlain, that they found Saul and his ſons fallen in mount Gilboa. 9. And when they had ſtripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and ſent into the land of the Philiſtines round about, [g] to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people. 10. And they put his armour in the houſe of their gods, and faſtened his head in [h] the temple of Dagon. 11. ¶ And when all [i] Jabeſh-gilead heard all that the Philiſtines had done to Saul; 12. They aroſe, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his ſons, and brought them to Jabeſh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabeſh, and [k] faſted ſeven days. 13. ¶ So Saul died for his tranſgreſſion which he committed againſt the LORD, *even* [l] againſt the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and alſo for [m] aſking *counſel* of one that had a familiar ſpirit, to inquire *of it*; 14. And [n] inquired not of the LORD: [o] therefore he ſlew him, and [p] turned the kingdom unto David the ſon of Jeſſe.

[g] Judg. xvi. 24.
[h] 1 Sam. v. 2.
[i] Ibid. xi. 3, 9, 11.
[k] Gen. l. 10.
[l] 1 Sam. xiii. 13. & xv. 23.
[m] Ibid. xxviii. 7.
[n] Ibid. 6.
[o] 1 Kings xii. 15.
[p] 1 Sam. xiii. 14. & xv. 28.

v. 8—14. The indignity offered the bodies of Saul and his ſons, and the bold attempt of the men of Jabeſh-gilead, were before obſerved; and his diſobedience to God, in the caſe of Amalek, and his conſulting a familiar ſpirit, are here mentioned as the cauſes of his fall. *Note*, (1.) God will viſit for ſin, and the higheſt are not above his arm. (2.) They who abuſed their power when alive, deſerve to be ſtigmatized when dead, for a warning to others. (3.) Ruin muſt be near, when men, like Saul, turn away from God, and abandon themſelves to the devil.

CHAP. XI.

In this chapter is repeated, 1. *David's elevation to the throne,* ver. 1—3. 2. *His conqueſt of the caſtle of Zion,* ver. 4—9. 3. *A catalogue of his worthies, and the great men of his kingdom,* ver. 10—47.

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1. THEN [a] all Iſrael gathered themſelves to David unto Hebron, ſaying, Behold, [b] we *are* thy bone and thy fleſh. 2. And moreover in time paſt, even when Saul was king, [c] thou *waſt* he that leddeſt out, and broughteſt in Iſrael: and [d] the LORD thy God ſaid unto thee, [e] Thou ſhalt feed my people in Iſrael, and thou ſhalt be ruler over my people Iſrael. 3. Therefore came all the elders of Iſrael to the king to Hebron, and [f] David made a covenant with them in Hebron, [g] before the LORD, and [h] they anointed David king over Iſrael, [i] according to the word of the LORD, by Samuel. 4. ¶ And [k] David and all Iſrael [l] went to Jeruſalem which *is* Jebus, where the Jebuſites *were*, the inhabitants of the land. 5. And the inhabitants of Jebus ſaid to David, Thou ſhalt not come hither. Nevertheleſs, David took the caſtle of Zion, which *is* the city of David. 6. And David ſaid, Whoſoever ſmiteth the Jebuſites firſt, ſhall be chief and captain. So Joab the ſon of Zeruiah went firſt up, and was chief. 7. And David dwelt in the caſtle, therefore they called it, The city of David. 8. And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the reſt of the city. 9. So David waxed greater and greater: [m] for the LORD of hoſts *was* with him.

[a] 2 Sam. v. 1.
[b] Deut. xvii. 15. Eph. v. 30.
[c] 1 Sam. xviii. 13.
[d] Ibid. xvi. 12.
[e] Pſ. lxxviii. 71. Iſa. xl. 11. John x. 11.
[f] 2 Kings xi. 17.
[g] Judg. xi. 11.
[h] 2 Sam. ii. 4. Pſ. ii. 6.
[i] 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 12, 13.
[k] 2 Sam. v. 6.
[l] Judg. i. 8. & xix. 11.
[m] Rom. viii. 31.

v. 1—9. David, on Saul's death, was ſoon received in Judah, and reigned in Hebron, though he was not, till ſeven years afterwards, acknowledged as king by the other tribes. But God's counſel muſt ſtand: the time came, when Iſrael bowed before him, ſwore allegiance, and received the reciprocal aſſurance of an equitable and righteous government. The obligation between prince and people is mutual; the one as much bound to rule with juſtice, as the other to obey with chearfulneſs. When they were gathered together on this ſolemn occaſion, David led them againſt the fortreſs of Jebus, where he intended to fix his royal reſidence; and though ſtrong by art and nature, yet, animated by the proſpect of preferment, Joab entered the place. Shall the proſpect of a poſt of honour thus engage the ſoldier to hazard his life; and ſhall we heſitate at any difficulties in our ſpiritual warfare, where we are aſſured of ſucceſs, and animated by promiſes of eternal glory?

10. ¶ [n] Theſe alſo *are* the chief of the mighty men which David had, who † ſtrengthened themſelves with him in his kingdom, *and* with all Iſrael, to make him king, [o] according to the word of the LORD, concerning Iſrael. 11. And this *is* the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jaſhobeam an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lift up his ſpear againſt three hundred ſlain *by him* at one time. 12. [p] And after him *was* Eleazar the ſon of Dodo the Ahohite, who *was one* of the three mighties. 13. He was with David at ‡ Paſ-dammim, and there the Philiſtines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley, and [p] the people fled from before the Philiſtines. 14. And they ſet themſelves in the midſt of *that* parcel, and delivered it, and ſlew the Philiſtines; and [q] the LORD ſaved *them* by a great deliverance. 15. ¶ Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into [r] the cave of Adullam, and the hoſt of the Philiſtines encamped in the valley of Rephaim. 16. And David *was* then in the hold, and the Philiſtines gariſon *was* then at Beth-lehem. 17. And David longed, and ſaid, O that one would give me drink of [s] the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that *is* at the gate! 18. And the three [t] brake through the hoſt of the Philiſtines, and [u] drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink *of* it, but poured it out to the LORD, 19. And ſaid, My God forbid it me, that I ſhould do this thing: ſhall I drink [x] the blood of theſe men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with *the jeopardy of* their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. Theſe things did theſe three mightieſt. 20. ¶ And Abiſhai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his ſpear [y] againſt three hundred, he ſlew them, and had a name among the three. 21. Of the three, he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain; howbeit, [z] he attained not unto the *firſt* three. 22. Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, the ſon of a valiant man of Kabzeel, § who had done many acts, [a] he ſlew two lion-like men of Moab; alſo he went down and ſlew a lion in a pit in a ſnowy day. 23. And he ſlew an Egyptian, a man of *great* ſtature, five cubits high, and in the Egyptian's hand *was* a ſpear like a weaver's beam, and he went down to him with a ſtaff, and pluckt the ſpear out of the Egytian's hand, and [b] ſlew him with his own ſpear. 24. Theſe *things* did Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties. 25. Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the *firſt* three: and David ſet him over his ‖ guard. 26. ¶ Alſo the valiant men of the armies *were* [c] Aſah-el the brother of Joab, Elhanan the ſon of Dodo, of Beth-lehem, 27. † Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite, 28. Ira the ſon of Ikkeſh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite, 29. ‡ Sibbecai, the Huſhathite, § Ilai the Ahohite, 30. Maharai the Netophathite, ‖ Heled the ſon of Baanah the Netophathite, 31. Ithai the ſon of Ribai of Gibeah, *that pertained* to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite, 32. † Hurai of the brooks of Gaaſh, ‡ Abiel the Arbathite, 33. Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite. 34. The ſons of § Haſhem the Gizonite, Jonathan the ſon of Shage the Hararite, 35. Ahiam the ſon of Sacar the Hararite; ‖ Eliphal the ſon of † Ur, 36. Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, 37. Hezro the Carmelite, ‡ Naarai the ſon of Ezbai, 38. Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the ſon of Haggeri, 39. Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the ſon of Zeruiah. 40. Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 41. Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the ſon of Ahlai, 42. Adina the ſon of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, 43. Hanan the ſon of Maachah, and Jehoſhaphat the Mithnite, 44. Uzzia the Aſhterathite, Shama and Jehiel the ſons of Hothan the Aroerite, 45. Jediael the ſon of Shimri, and Joha his brother the Tizite, 46. Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joſhaviah, the ſons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, 47. Eliel, and Obed, and Jaſiel the Meſobaite.

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[n] 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, &c.

† Or held ſtrongly with him.

[o] 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 12.

[p] Ibid. xxiii. 9, &c.

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‡ Epheſ-dammim. 1 Sam. xvii. 1.

[q] Pſ. iii. 8. Prov. xxi. 31.

[r] 1 Sam. xxii. 1.

[s] John iv. 10, 14.

[t] Mat. xi. 12.

[u] Iſa. xii. 3.

[x] Pſ. lxxii. 14.

[y] Rom. viii. 31.

[z] Mat. xiii. 8.

§ Heb. Great in deeds. Luke xxiv. 19.

[a] Exod. xv. 15.

[b] 1 Sam. xvii. 51.

‖ Or, council.

[c] 2 Sam. ii. 18.

† Shammah the Harodite. 2 Sam. xxiii. 25.

‡ Or, Mehunnai.

§ Or, Zalmon.

‖ Or, Keleb.

† Or, Huddai.

‡ Or, Abialbon.

§ Or, Jaſhem.

‖ Or, Eliphelet.

† Or, Ahaſbai.

‡ Or, Paari.

v. 10—47. This catalogue of worthies we had before, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. others are here added to them, *v.* 42—47. By their aſſiſtance chiefly the kingdom was confirmed to David, and by ſupporting him they ſtrengthened and advanced themſelves. They who have been our helpers in any ſhape, have a right to our grateful returns. The exploits theſe performed were great and aſtoniſhing; but every believer, liſted under the banner of Jeſus, is ſtrengthened for mightier conflicts, and enabled for more glorious atchievements; for we wreſtle not with fleſh and blood only, but with angels, principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkneſs of this world. It was not, however, till after enduring many dangers with their king, that they came to reign with him. Through much tribulation, and ſuffering hardſhip, as good ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, can we only hope to ſit down with him in his kingdom.

CHAP. XII.

We are here told, 1. *Who came in to David to Ziklag to make him king of Judah,* ver. 1—22. 2. *Who came in to him to Hebron to make him king over all Iſrael,* ver. 23—40.

1. NOW theſe *are* they that came to David to [a] Ziklag, while he yet kept himſelf cloſe, becauſe of Saul the ſon of Kiſh: and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers of the war. 2. *They were* armed with bows, and [b] could uſe both the right hand and the left, in *hurling* ſtones, and *ſhooting* arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin. 3. The chief *was* Ahiezer, then Joaſh, the ſons of † Shemaah, the Gibeathite, and Jeziel, and Pelet, the ſons of Azmaveth, and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite, 4. And Iſmaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty, and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Joſabad the Gederathite, 5. Eluſai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah, the Haruphite. 6. Elkanah, and Jeſiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jaſhobeam, the Korhites, 7. And Joelah, and Zebadiah the ſons of Jeroham of Gedor. 8. And of the Gadites there ſeparated themſelves unto David, into [c] the hold to the wilderneſs, men of might, *and* men of war fit for the battle, that could handle ſhield and buckler, whoſe faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* ‡ as ſwift as the roes upon the mountains: 9. Ezer the firſt, Obadiah the ſecond, Eliab the third, 10. Miſhmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, 11. Attai the ſixth, Eliel the ſeventh, 12. Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, 13. Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh. 14. Theſe *were* of the ſons of Gad, captains of the hoſt: one of the leaſt § *was* over an hundred, and the greateſt over a thouſand. 15. Theſe *are* they that went over Jordan in the firſt month, [d] when it had overflown all his banks, and they put to flight all *them* of the valleys, *both* toward the eaſt, and toward the weſt. 16. And there came of the children of Benjamin, and Judah, to the hold unto David. 17. And David went out to meet them, and anſwered and ſaid unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me, to help me, mine heart ſhall be ‖ knit unto you: but if *ye be come* to betray me to mine enemies, [e] ſeeing *there is* no wrong in mine hands, [f] the God of our fathers look *thereon*, and rebuke *it*. 18. Then the ſpirit † came upon Amaſai, *who was* chief of the captains, *and he ſaid*, Thine *are we*, David, and on thy ſide, thou ſon of Jeſſe: Peace, peace, *be* unto thee, and peace *be* to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band. 19. And there fell *ſome* of Manaſſeh to David (when he came with the Philiſtines againſt Saul to battle, but they helped them not, for [g] the lords of the Philiſtines, upon adviſement, ſent him away, ſaying, He will fall to his maſter Saul, ‡ to *the jeopardy of* our heads) 20. As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manaſſeh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thouſands that *were* of Manaſſeh. 21. And they helped David againſt [h] the band *of the rovers*: for [i] they *were* all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the hoſt. 22. For at *that* time day by day, there came to David to help him, until *it was* a great hoſt, like the hoſt of God.

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About 1058.

[a] 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.

[b] Judg. xx. 16.

† Or, Haſmaah.

About 1062.

[c] 1 Sam. xxii. 4.

‡ Heb. Like the roes of the mountains in ſwiftneſs.

§ Or, could reſiſt. Deut. xxxii. 30.

[d] Cant. viii. 7. Rom. viii. 35.

‖ Heb. One with you. 2 Kings x. 15.

[e] 1 Sam. xxiv. 17.

[f] Zech. iii. 2.

† Heb. Cloathed. Judg. vi. 34.

About 1056.

[g] 1 Sam. xxix. 4.

‡ Heb. On our heads

[h] 1 Sam. xxx. 1—17.

[i] Chap. v. 24.

Before Chriſt 1048.

v. 1—22. As the time drew nearer for David's acceſſion to the throne, God, in whoſe hand, are the hearts of all men, appears here inclining them towards his anointed. Some of theſe joined him before Saul's death, *v.* 8, 19. but the moſt of them, it is probable, immediately after it.

1. Some of Saul's relations of Benjamin, men of great dexterity and valour, came to him in Ziklag.

2. Of the Gadites, ſome of moſt diſtinguiſhed courage joined him in the wilderneſs; men who had afterwards great commands in their tribe, *v.* 14. like lions for ſtrength and boldneſs, and ſwift as roes to purſue their enemies. Not deterred by the overflowings of Jordan, they plunged into the rapid ſtream, and ſwam through; and on their way to the hold, meeting ſome plundering bands of Philiſtines, or Moabites, fell upon them, and routed them. *Note*, (1.) When we are in the way to Jeſus, no difficulties muſt diſcourage us. (2.) As ſwift to fly from evil, and as bold in the cauſe of truth, ought every follower of the ſon of David to be.

3. Many of Judah and Benjamin, beſides thoſe *v.* 2. under the conduct of Amaſai, or Amaſa, David's nephew, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 25. fell to him; who being a numerous body, David had ſome ſuſpicion, leſt they had ſome ill deſign. They who have been once endangered by falſe friends, need be more jealous of future profeſſions. [1.] He queſtions them therefore on their intentions: *If they came peaceably*, as real friends to aſſiſt him, *his heart would be knit unto them*; he would love them affectionately, and they ſhould ſhare his future welfare: if, under colour of friendſhip, to betray him, then he refers himſelf to God, as the avenger of the perfidious and deceitful. *Note*, (1.) There is one who ſeeth and judgeth, whom lying lips and a deceitful tongue cannot impoſe upon. (2.) They who come to us in friendſhip, with profeſſions of real regard, are entitled to a warm return of equal affection. (3.) They who have a good cauſe, and a good conſcience, can comfortably leave their all in God's hands. [2.] Amaſai, as the mouth of the company, with a ſpirit of wiſdom and genuine affection, ſilences David's fears; aſſuring him of their fidelity; praying for his peace, and for all his friends, and profeſſing a full confidence, that God would ſtrengthen him to overcome all his enemies. Such a frank and zealous good wiſh removed David's ſuſpicions: he received them, and preferred them probably when he came to the crown, *v.* 18. *Note*, (1.) It is prudence to ſeek thoſe for our friends, who have God for their helper. (2.) He who is under the divine protection, ſhall be kept in peace in the midſt of trouble. (3.) It is our duty thus to make an unreſerved ſurrender of ourſelves to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to ſpend and be ſpent in his honourable ſervice. (4.) Whatever ſtrength, zeal, or diligence, God hath bleſſed us with for his work, we muſt never forget to be importunate for his bleſſing; elſe we ſhall labour in vain, and ſpend our ſtrength for nought. (5.) Whom the Lord Jeſus Chriſt receives into the arms of his love, he will advance to the kingdom of his glory.

4. Of Manaſſeh, ſeveral chief men joined him as he went to battle with the Philiſtines, and in his return to Ziklag, who being all valiant warriors, aſſiſted him greatly in the purſuit and conqueſt of the Amalekites. *Note*, God will often, juſt at the critical moment, raiſe us up thoſe very friends we want.

5. After the defeat of Saul, multitudes flocked to him from every ſide, till his little band became a vaſt army, *v.* 22. *Note*, They who patiently wait by faith on the promiſe, ſhall aſſuredly ſee at laſt the ſalvation of God.

† Heb. Heads.
1048.
[k] 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 3.
‡ Or, prepared.
[l] 2 Sam. viii. 17.
§ Heb. Brethren.
[m] 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9.
‖ Heb. Men of names. Gen. vi. 4.
[n] Eſth. i. 13. Dan. v. 11. Mat. xvi. 3.
[o] Gen. xlix. 15.

23. ¶ And theſe *are* the numbers of the † bands *that were* ready armed to the war, *and* came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, [k] according to the word of the LORD. 24. The children of Judah that bare ſhield and ſpear, *were* ſix thouſand and eight hundred, ready ‡ armed to the war. 25. Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, ſeven thouſand and one hundred. 26. Of the children of Levi, four thouſand and ſix hundred. 27. And Jehoiada *was* the leader of the Aaronites, and with him *were* three thouſand and ſeven hundred. 28. And [l] Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's houſe twenty and two captains. 29. And of the children of Benjamin the § kindred of Saul, three thouſand: for hitherto [m] the greateſt part of them had kept the ward of the houſe of Saul. 30. And of the children of Ephraim, twenty thouſand and eight hundred mighty men of valour, ‖ famous throughout the houſe of their fathers. 31. And of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, eighteen thouſand which were expreſſed by name, to come and make David king. 32. And of the children of Iſſachar, *which were men* [n] that had underſtanding of the times, to know what Iſrael ought to do: the heads of them *were* two hundred, and [o] all their brethren *were* at their commandment. 33. Of Zebulun ſuch as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all inſtruments of war, fifty thouſand, which could keep rank: *they were* † not of double heart. 34. And of Naphtali a thouſand captains with them, with ſhield and ſpear, thirty and ſeven thouſand. 35. And of the Danites expert in war, twenty and eight thouſand and ſix hundred. 36. And of Aſher, ſuch as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thouſand. 37. And on the other ſide of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, with all manner of inſtruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thouſand. 38. All theſe men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Iſrael: and all the reſt alſo of Iſrael *were* of one heart to make David king. 39. And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. 40. Moreover, they that were nigh them, *even* unto Iſſachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought bread on aſſes, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, *and* ‡ meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raiſins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and ſheep abundantly, for [p] *there was* joy in Iſrael.

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† Heb. Without a heart and a heart. John i. 47.
‡ Or, victuals of meal.
[p] Prov. xi. 10.

v. 23—40. During the life of Iſhboſheth, the cauſe of the houſe of Saul daily weakened; on his death, all the tribes, convinced of the divine appointment of David, with joint conſent aſſembled to make him king; and they brought with them ſuch a force as would enable him to maintain his pretenſions againſt all oppoſers. Near 350,000 valiant men met on this occaſion, and, among the reſt,

1. The prieſts and Levites ſhewed great zeal for David, not only ready to pray for him, as by office bound, but to hazard their lives for him, if needful, in the field. *Note*, A faithful miniſter of God cannot but be a loyal ſubject to his prince.

2. The men of Iſſachar ſent a deputation of two hundred of their chiefs, men of deep underſtanding, able counſellors, who knew what was for Iſrael's advantage, and therefore gladly welcomed David to the throne; and men of great influence, the whole tribe being under their ſway. *Note*, A wiſe and able head is of greater weight to a cauſe, than the ſword of the mighty.

3. All theſe are ſaid to have a perfect heart. It was the reſult of conviction, that David *ought*, and the wiſh of their hearts that he *might* reign over them. He is truly a great king, whom his ſubjects obey, not only from conſcience of duty, but from real love of his perſon and government.

4. So great a camp required vaſt proviſion, and ſo liberally the country ſupplied them, that they were not only fed, but feaſted, whilſt Iſrael rang again for joy to ſee the man after God's own heart upon the throne. *Note*, When Jeſus erects his throne in the heart, he gives preſent joy in believing; and when he comes at laſt to reign over his ſaints, then ſhall we be for ever filled with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

CHAP. XIII.

Here, 1. *A reſolution is made by David and the elders, to bring up the ark from Kirjath-jearim,* ver. 1—4. 2. *It is brought out thence with great joy and ſolemnity,* ver. 5—8. 3. *Uzza is ſtruck dead for touching it, which ſpoils the ſolemnity, and ſtops their proceedings,* ver. 9—14.

[a] Prov. xi. 14. & xv. 22.
[b] 1 Sam. xxxi. 1.
[c] 2 Sam. vi. 1.
[d] Joſh. xv. 9. 1 Sam. vii. 1.
† Heb. Made to ride.
[e] Num. vii. 9. 1 Sam. vi. 7. Mat. xxviii. 20.

1. AND David [a] conſulted with the captains of thouſands, and hundreds, *and* with every leader. 2. And David ſaid unto all the congregation of Iſrael, If *it ſeem* good unto you, and *that it be* of the LORD our God, let us ſend abroad unto our brethren every where, [b] *that are* left in all the land of Iſrael, and with them *alſo* to the prieſts and Levites *which are* in their cities *and* ſuburbs, that they may gather themſelves unto us. 3. And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. 4. And all the congregation ſaid, that they would do ſo: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people. 5. So [c] David gathered all Iſrael together, from Shihor, of Egypt, even unto the entring of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim. 6. And David went up, and all Iſrael to [d] Baalah, *that is* to Kirjath-jearim, which *belonged* to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, whoſe name is called *on it*. 7. And they † carried the ark of God [e] in a new cart, out of the houſe of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. 8. And Da-

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vid and all Iſrael [f] played before God with all *their* might, and with ſinging, and with harps, and with pſalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

[f] Pſ. lxviii. as ſome ſuppoſe.

v. 1—8. No ſooner was David gone up from Hebron, and had ſecured the fortreſs of Jeruſalem, where he reſolved to take up his future abode, than he is ſollicitous to raiſe the neglected ark from its obſcurity, and to bring it to a more honourable place.

1. He propoſes the matter to his great men and officers, for their advice and concurrence. They had neglected the ark in the days of Saul, when religion went greatly to decay. It would be now the ſtability of the kingdom, and the happineſs of the land to enjoy the divine preſence and favour; and therefore if it ſeemed good to them, as he doubted not they would approve the motion, they would without delay collect the prieſts and Levites, and the principal men of the land to attend the ſolemnity of bringing up the ark to Jeruſalem. *Note*, (1.) To have God with us ſhould be our firſt and chief deſire, as the foundation of all true felicity. (2.) Reſpect paid to thoſe whom we might command, engages their conſent to our wiſhes, and is the way to be obeyed with chearfulneſs.

2. The propoſal was very much applauded, and the congregation aſſembled from one end of the land to the other, and with great delight and joy they began the proceſſion. *Note*, (1.) It is matter of unſpeakable joy to true Iſraelites, to ſee the drooping cauſe of God revive. (2.) When princes are promoters of godlineſs, it ſhould ſtir up prieſts and people to correſpond with their godly deſigns.

9. ¶ And when they came unto the threſhing-floor of † Chidon, Uzza [g] put forth his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen ‡ ſtumbled. 10. And the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Uzza, and he ſmote him, becauſe he put his hand to the ark: and [h] there he died before God. 11. And [i] David was diſpleaſed, becauſe the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza; wherefore that place is called ‖ Perez-uzza to this day. 12. And David was afraid of God that day, ſaying, [k] How ſhall I bring the ark of God *home* to me? 13. So David brought not the ark *home* to himſelf to the city of David, but carried it aſide into the houſe of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14. And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his houſe three months. And the LORD [l] bleſſed the houſe of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

† Nachon. 2 Sam. vi. 6.
[g] Num. iv. 15.
‡ Or ſhook it.
[h] Lev. x. 3. Pſal. l. 16.
[i] Job iv. 17.
‖ i. e. The breach of Uzza.
[k] Job xxv. 6. Pſal. cxix. 120.
[l] Mat. vi. 33. 2 Cor. ii. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 6, &c.

v. 9—14. The error they committed in removing the ark, hath been already obſerved, 2 *Sam.* vi. as well as the death of Uzza, and the interruption of the ſolemnity conſequent thereupon. It may teach us, 1. Careful attention to the Divine preſcription, nor to make light of the leaſt commandment. (2.) Ignorance in thoſe who miniſter before the ark, is eſpecially criminal. (3.) In the midſt of every earthly joy, we have need to tremble. (4.) Diſcouraging providences are apt to cool our zeal in the way of duty, ſo that, like David, we ſtop ſhort. (5.) The ſame word of God, like the ark to Uzza and Obed-edom, is to one man the ſavour of life unto life, to another the ſavour of death unto death.

CHAP. XIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *David's kingdom eſtabliſhed*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *His family built up*, ver. 3—7. 3. *His enemies the Philiſtines routed in two campaigus*, ver. 8—17.

1. NOW [a] Hiram king of Tyre ſent meſſengers to David, and timber of cedars, with maſons, and carpenters, to build him an houſe. 2. And David perceived that [b] the LORD had confirmed him king over Iſrael, for his kingdom was lift up on high, becauſe of his people Iſrael. 3. ¶ And David [c] took more wives at Jeruſalem: and David begat more ſons and daughters. 4. Now theſe *are* the names of his children which he had in Jeruſalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, 5. And Ibhar, and Eliſhua, and Elpalet, 6. And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia, 7. And Eliſhama, and † Beeliada, and Eliphalet.

[a] 2 Sam. v. 11.
[b] Pſal. lxxv. 6.
[c] Deut. xvii. 17.
† Eliada. 2 Sam. v. 16.

v. 1—7. This account of Hiram's kindneſs and David's family, we had 2 *Sam. v.* 11. (1.) Like Hiram, we ſhould not envy, but rejoice in our neighbour's proſperity, and wiſh to increaſe it. (2.) Like David, we ſhould conſider every temporal bleſſing we poſſeſs, as lent us of the Lord, to be improved for his glory, and the good of mankind.

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8. ¶ And [d] when the Philiſtines heard that David was anointed king over all Iſrael, [e] all the Philiſtines went to ſeek David: and David heard *of it*, and went out againſt them. 9. And the Philiſtines came and ſpread themſelves [f] in the valley of Rephaim. 10. And David [g] inquired of God, ſaying, [h] Shall I go againſt the Philiſtines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD ſaid unto him, Go up, for I will deliver them into thine hand. 11. So they came up to Baal-perazim; and David ſmote them there. Then David ſaid, [i] God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place † Baal-perazim. 12. And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and [k] they were burnt with fire. 13. And the Philiſtines yet again ſpread themſelves abroad in the valley: 14. Therefore David enquired again of God; and God ſaid unto him, Go not up after them, turn away from them, and come upon them over-againſt the mulberry-trees. 15. And it ſhall be, when thou ſhalt hear [l] a ſound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, *that* then thou ſhalt go out to battle: for [m] God is gone forth before thee, to ſmite the hoſt of the Philiſtines. 16. David therefore did as God commanded him: and they ſmote the hoſt of the Philiſtines from Gibeon even to Gazer. 17. And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.

[d] 2 Sam. v. 17.
[e] Pſal. ii. 1, 2.
[f] Iſa. xvii. 5.
[g] Num. xxvii. 21. Pſal. lxxiii. 28.
[h] Prov. iii. 6.
[i] Pſal. xliv. 3.
† i. e. Lord of the breaches. Iſa. xxviii. 21.
[k] Deut. vii. 25.
1047.
[l] Lev. xxvi. 36. 2 Kings vii. 6.
[m] Phil. ii. 13.

v. 8—17. The Philiſtines invaſions, and David's victories, we heard before. They give us, 1. A comfortable emblem of the conqueſts which Jeſus hath made for us of all our enemies. (2.) They admoniſh us of the reſtleſs enmity of the ſeed of the ſerpent againſt the children of God. (3.) They teach us, with David, to cry to God for direction in all our difficulties, and to aſcribe to him the praiſe of all our mercies. (4.) David's ſon and David's Lord hath gotten him a greater name, by his victories over ſin, and death, and hell: in him his people rejoice, before him his enemies tremble.

CHAP. XV.

A ſecond time David ſeeks to bring up the ark to Zion. 1. *A place is prepared for it*, ver. 1. 2. *The prieſts are ordered to carry it*, ver. 2—15. 3. *The Levites have their offices aſſigned them in attending on it*, ver. 16—24. 4. *It is done ſucceſsfully*, ver. 25—28. 5. *Michal deſpiſes David*, ver. 29.

1. AND *David* made him houſes in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and [a] pitched for it a tent. 2. Then David ſaid, [b] None ought to carry the ark of God, but the Levites: for them hath the LORD choſen to carry the ark of God, and to miniſter unto him for ever. 3. And David gathered all Iſrael together to Jeruſalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it. 4. And David aſſembled the children of Aaron and the Levites: 5. Of the ſons of Kohath: Uriel the chief, and † his brethren an hundred and twenty. 6. Of the ſons of Merari: Aſaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty. 7. Of the ſons of Gerſhom: Joel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and thirty. 8. Of the ſons of [c] Elizaphan: Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred. 9. Of the ſons of [d] Hebron: Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourſcore. 10. Of the ſons of Uzziel: Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve. 11. And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the prieſts, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Aſaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, 12. And ſaid unto them, Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: [e] ſanctify yourſelves *both* ye and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Iſrael, unto *the place that* I have prepared for it. 13. For becauſe ye *did it* not at the firſt, [f] the LORD God made a breach upon us, for that we ſought him not [g] after the due order, 14. So the prieſts and the Levites ſanctified themſelves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Iſrael. 15. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their ſhoulders, with the ſtaves thereon, [h] as Moſes commanded, according to the word of the LORD.

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[a] Chap. xvi. 1.
[b] Num. iv. 15. Deut. x. 8.
† Or kinſmen.
[c] Exod. vi. 22.
[d] Ibid. vi. 18.
[e] Ibid. xii. 10, 15.
[f] Chap. xiii. 10. See Lev. x. 1, 2.
[g] Num. iv. 15.
[h] Exod. xxv. 14. Num. iv. 15. & vii. 9.

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LORD. 16. And David ſpake to the chief of the Levites, to appoint their brethren [i] *to be* the ſingers with inſtruments of muſic, pſalteries, and harps, and cymbals, ſounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. 17. So the Levites appointed [k] Heman the ſon of Joel; and of his brethren, [l] Aſaph the ſon of Berechiah: and of the ſons of Merari their brethren, [m] Ethan the ſon of Kuſhaiah. 18. And with them their brethren of the ſecond *degree*, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaſeiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters. 19. So the ſingers, Heman, Aſaph, and Ethan, *were appointed* to ſound with cymbals of braſs. 20. And Zechariah, and † Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaſeiah, and Benaiah, with pſalteries on ‡ Alamoth; 21. And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azziah, with harps [n] on the Sheminith to excel. 22. Chenaniah chief of the Levites *was* § for ſong: he inſtructed about the ſong, becauſe he *was* ſkilful. 23. And Berechiah, and Elkanah *were* door-keepers for the ark. 24. And Shebaniah, and Jehoſhaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amaſai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer the prieſts [o] did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and Obed-edom, and Jehiah *were* door-keepers for the ark.

[i] Pſal. cl. 3, 4, 5.
[k] Chap. vi. 33.
[l] Chap. vi. 39.
[m] Chap. vi. 44.
† Jaaziel. Ver. 18.
‡ Or the treble. Pſal. 46. title. It ſignifies virgins. Cant. i. 3. & vi. 8.
[n] Pſal. vi. Title.
§ Heb. Over the lifting up.
[o] Num. x. 8. Pſal. lxxxi. 3.

v. 1—24. The firſt attempt to remove the ark proved abortive. The reaſon of their misfortune David now had learnt; he therefore juſtifies God, humbles himſelf, and warns the Levites to be more exact for the future. When we mean well, yet ſuffer for our miſtakes, we muſt not be diſcouraged, but with greater circumſpection apply to the work before us.

1. David having built his own houſe, and reared a tabernacle for the reception of the ark, gathers the prieſts and Levites to the amout of eight hundred and ſixty-two, beſides their ſix chiefs; and having admoniſhed them of the cauſe of the late diſaſter, exhorts them to prepare for the ſolemnity, and be more exactly obſervant of the Divine preſcription. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt reformers are men, and therefore not faultleſs. (2.) It is a mercy when we diſcover our errors, and amend them.

2. The Levites carefully now obſerved the Divine rule, and God enabled them for their work. Each man had his ſeveral poſt; ſome bore the ark, others were porters to keep the doors of the tabernacle from intruders; and now probably ſurrounded the ark, that others might not touch it, as Uzza had done. Some with muſical inſtruments joined in concert, whilſt others were appointed to lead the ſacred ſong, and join the vocal with inſtrumental harmony. *Note*, (1.) When we have a right underſtanding of the way of duty, and ability to walk in it, both theſe come from the Lord. (2.) Church muſic, when under good regulations, might ſtill be made a bleſſing; though the abſurd and irreligious manner in which it is commonly performed, is juſtly offenſive, and a diſturbance to devotion.

25. ¶ [p] So David and the elders of Iſrael, and the captains over thouſands, went to bring up the covenant of the LORD, out of the houſe of Obed-edom with joy. 26. And it came to paſs when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams. 27. And [q] David *was* clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the ſingers, and Chenaniah the maſter of the ſong, with the ſingers: David alſo *had* upon him an ephod of linen. 28. Thus all Iſrael brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [r] with ſhouting, and with ſound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noiſe with pſalteries and harps. 29. ¶ And it came to paſs *as* the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looking out at a window, ſaw king David dancing and playing: and [s] ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart.

[p] 2 Sam. vi. 13, &c.
[q] 1 Sam. ii. ii. 18.
[r] Pſal. lxxxi. 1. & xcviii. 6.
[s] Acts ii. 13. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Jude 10.

v. 25—29. With ſolemn ſacrifices, as atonements for paſt miſtakes, and to obtain preſent aſſiſtance, the Levites proceeded, ſupported under their burden, and with every expreſſion of joy, David and the people rejoiced before the ark. Michal, David's wife, ſeems the only diſcontented ſpirit that was that day in Iſrael. She could not without indignation and contempt behold her huſband, as ſhe thought, thus demeaning himſelf. *Note*, (1.) Songs of praiſe are the natural expreſſions of the ſoul that is happy in God. (2.) They who have no reliſh for a chriſtian's joys, are apt to deſpiſe them, and think theſe ſervices of religion mean and contemptible, which the believer counts his moſt honourable and happy employment.

CHAP. XVI.

Here is, 1. *The ſolemnity with which the ark was fixed*, ver. 1—6. 2. *The pſalm David gave to be ſung on this occaſion*, ver. 7—36. 3. *The ſetting of the conſtant ſtated worſhip of God in order from thenceforward*, ver. 37—43.

1. SO [a] they brought the ark of God, and ſet it in the midſt of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt-ſacrifices and peace-offerings before God. 2. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offerings, and the peace-offerings, [b] he bleſſed the people in the name of the LORD. 3. And [c] he dealt to every one of Iſrael, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of fleſh, and a flagon *of wine*. 4. ¶ And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to miniſter before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praiſe the LORD God of Iſrael: 5. Aſaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel † with pſalteries, and with harps: but Aſaph made a ſound with cymbals. 6. Benaiah alſo and Jahaziel the prieſts with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

[a] 2 Sam. vi. 17.
[b] 1 Kings viii. 55. Luke xxiv. 50.
[c] Neh. viii. 10.
† Heb. With inſtruments of pſalteries and harps.

1—6. The ark being ſafely lodged, vaſt ſacrifices were offered in honour to God; the people nobly feaſted, and a conſtant courſe of Levites were now appointed to ſing God's praiſes, and to commemorate the mercies they had received from him. *Note*, (1.) Grateful praiſe is the moſt acceptable ſacrifice. (2.) The hungry who wait upon God, ſhall be filled with his good things. (3.) Our worſhip of God muſt be regular and conſtant: whatever engagements may call us off, we muſt never omit the daily work of prayer and praiſe.

7. ¶ Then on that day, David delivered firſt [d] *this pſalm* to thank the LORD, into the hand of Aſaph and his brethren. 8. Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, [e] make known his deeds among the people. 9. Sing unto him, ſing pſalms unto him, [f] talk you of all his wondrous works. 10. [g] Glory ye in his holy name, [h] let the heart of them rejoice that ſeek the LORD. 11. Seek the LORD and [i] his ſtrength, ſeek his face continually. 12. [k] Remember his [l] marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth. 13. O ye ſeed of Iſrael his ſervant, ye children of Jacob [m] his choſen ones. 14. He *is* the LORD our God, his judgments *are* in all the earth. 15. [n] Be ye mindful always of his covenant: the word *which* he commanded to a thouſand generations; 16. *Even* [o] *of the covenant* which he made with Abraham, and of [p] his oath unto Iſaac: 17. And hath confirmed the ſame [q] to Jacob for a law, *and* to Iſrael *for* an everlaſting covenant, 18. Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance. 19. When ye were but few, even a few, and [r] ſtrangers in it. 20. And *when* they went [s] from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people: 21. He ſuffered no man to do them wrong: yea, [t] he reproved kings for their ſakes, 22. *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and [u] do my prophets no harm. 23. [x] Sing unto the LORD all the earth: [y] ſhew forth from day to day his ſalvation. 24. Declare his glory among the heathen: his marvellous works among all nations. 25. For great *is* the LORD, and [z] greatly to be praiſed: he alſo *is* to be feared [a] above all gods. 26. For all the gods of the people *are* † idols: but [b] the LORD made the heavens. 27. Glory and honour *are* in his preſence, ſtrength and gladneſs *are* in his place. 28. [c] Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD [d] glory and ſtrength. 29. Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name: [e] bring an offering and come before him, [f] worſhip the LORD in the beauty of holineſs. 30. Fear before him all the earth: the world alſo ſhall be ſtable, that it be not moved. 31. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let *men* ſay [g] among the nations, [h] The LORD reigneth. 32. Let the ſea rore, and the fulneſs thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein. 33 Then ſhall the trees

[d] Pſal. cv. 1, &c.
[e] Pſal. cxlv. 4—6.
[f] Ibid. 11, 12.
[g] 1 Cor. i. 31.
[h] Phil. iv. 4.
[i] 2 Chron. vi. 41.
[k] Pſal. lxxvii. 11.
[l] Ibid. cxi. 2, 3.
[m] Deut. vii. 7, 8.
[n] Pſal. cv. 8.
[o] Gen. xvii. 2—8.
[p] Ibid. xxvi. 3.
[q] Ibid. xxviii. 13.
[r] Heb. xi. 9, 13.
[s] Gen. xii. 1. & xx. 1.
[t] Gen. xii. 17. & xx. 3. Exod. vii. 15.
[u] Gen. xx. 7.
[x] Pſal. xcvi. 1, &c.
[y] Ibid. iii. 8.
[z] Rev. iv. 11.
[a] Pſal. xcv. 3.
† Heb. Nought. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
[b] Iſa. xlii. 5.
[c] Pſal. xxix. 1.
[d] Ibid. cxv. 1.
[e] Rom. xii. 1.
[f] Pſal. xxix. 2.
[g] Ibid. xviii. 49.
[h] Ibid. xciii. 1. Rev. xi. 15.

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of the wood ſing out at the preſence of the LORD, becauſe [i] he cometh to judge the earth. 34. [k] O give thanks to the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 35. And [l] ſay ye, [m] Save us, O God of our ſalvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, *and* glory in thy praiſe. 36. [n] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael for ever and ever: and [o] all the people ſaid, Amen, and praiſed the LORD.

[i] Rev. xxii. 12.
[k] Pſal. cvi. 1. & cvii. 1. & cxviii. 1. & cxxxvi. 1.
[l] Hoſ. xiv. 2. Luke xi. 2.
[m] Pſal. cvi. 47, 48.
[n] 1 Kings viii. 15. Eph. i. 3.
[o] Deut. xxvii. 15. Neh. viii. 6.

v. 3—36. This pſalm is chiefly compoſed of two others, cv. 1—15. and the xcvi.

It opens, [1.] With thankſgiving. God's people, (1.) Are bound to praiſe him. (2.) To call upon him in prayer, for the continuance of his mercies. (3.) To publiſh his glory to others, *v.* 9. (4.) To rejoice in him, yea to glory in his name, in his love, power, faithfulneſs, and mercy. [2.] It contains grateful memorials of God's dealings, which deſerve everlaſting remembrance; (1.) His election of his people, of ſovereign grace, *v.* 13. (2.) The covenant eſtabliſhed with their fathers, and fulfilled to them, *v.* 15—18. (3.) The miraculous works and providential preſervation for which they were indebted, *v.* 12, 19—22. (4.) The ſtatutes and judgments of his revealed will, with which they were ſo peculiarly favoured, *v.* 12. [3.] It proceeds to declare the tranſcendant excellency of Iſrael's God; (1.) He, as the creator, is alone deſerving worſhip, fear, and adoration, *v.* 25, 26. (2.) His perfections are great beyond compare, his ſtrength almighty, his goodneſs unutterable, his glory ſurpaſſing, his dominion univerſal, *v.* 27—32, 34. (3.) He who is the univerſal governor, is alſo the univerſal judge; at whoſe bar the eternal ſtate of man muſt be determined, *v.* 33. [4.] In conſequence of theſe views of God's glory, and paſt experience of his mercy, the Pſalmiſt cloſes his ſong of praiſe with the language of prayer; (1.) He begs ſalvation from every enemy, *v.* 35. (2.) That God would gather together his elect, now in the land of promiſe, and ſhortly in the regions of glory, *v.* 35. (3.) The conſequence of his continual grace will engage their everlaſting praiſe, *v.* 36. [5.] The people hereunto added their joyful Amen, and praiſed the Lord. And ſo may every faithful ſoul, in every age and place, exalt God's glory, grace and faithfulneſs; and as in duty bounden, earneſtly ſupplicate the continuance of the ſame bleſſings.

37. ¶ So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Aſaph and his brethren, to miniſter before the ark continually, † as every days work required: 38. And Obed-edom, with their brethren, threeſcore and eight: Obed-edom alſo the ſon of Jeduthun, and Hoſah *to be* porters: 39. And Zadok the prieſt, and his brethren the prieſts [p] before the tabernacle of the LORD, in the high place that *was* at Gibeon, 40. To offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD, upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually [q] morning and evening, and *to do* according to all *that is* written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Iſrael: 41. And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the reſt *that were* choſen, who were expreſſed by name, to give thanks to the LORD, [r] becauſe his mercy *endureth* for ever: 42. And with them Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets, and cymbals, for thoſe that ſhould make a ſound, and with muſical inſtruments of God: and the ſons of Jeduthun *were* ‡ porters. 43. And all the people departed every man to his houſe: and [s] David returned to bleſs his houſe.

† Heb. According to the work of a day in its day.
[p] Chap. xxi. 29. 2 Chron. i. 3.
[q] Exod. xxix. 38. Num. xxviii. 3.
[r] 2 Chron. v. 13. & vii. 3. Ezra iii. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
‡ Heb. For the gate.
[s] 2 Sam. vi. 20.

v. 37—43. The ark being fixed at Jeruſalem, and the Levites appointed to miniſter before it, David takes a like care of the tabernacle at Gibeon, *v.* 39. There Zadok attended, with the prieſts and Levites, to offer the appointed ſacrifices continually, whilſt Abiathar probably abode at Jeruſalem, to conſult the Lord before the ark. The ſervice of God being thus ſettled, the people departed with joy, and David went down to bleſs his houſe, to pray with them, and for them. *Note*, Public ſervices muſt never ſuperſede private and family devotion.

CHAP. XVII.

This chapter contains, 1. *God's acceptance of David's purpoſe to build him an houſe, and the promiſe he made him thereupon,* ver. 1—15. 2. *David's thankfulneſs for the promiſe, and prayer for its fulfilment,* ver. 16—27.

1. NOW [a] it came to paſs, as David ſat in his houſe, that David ſaid to Nathan the prophet, [b] Lo, I dwell in an houſe of cedars, [c] but the ark of the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* under curtains. 2. Then Nathan ſaid unto David, [d] Do all that *is* in thine heart, for God *is* with thee. 3. ¶ And it came to paſs the ſame night, that the word of God came to Nathan, ſaying, 4. Go and tell David my ſervant, Thus ſaith the LORD, Thou ſhalt not build me an houſe to dwell in. 5. For I have not dwelt in an houſe [e] ſince the day that I brought up Iſrael, unto this day, but have gone from tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle *to another*. 6. Whereſoever I have walked with all Iſrael, ſpake I a word to any of the judges of Iſrael (whom I commanded to [f] feed my people) ſaying, Why have ye not built me an houſe of cedars? 7. Now therefore thus ſhalt thou ſay unto my ſervant David, Thus ſaith the LORD of hoſts, [g] I took thee from the *ſheep*-cote, *even* † from following the ſheep, that thou ſhouldeſt be ruler over my people Iſrael: 8. And [h] I have been with thee whitherſoever thou haſt walked, and [i] have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and [k] have made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in the earth. 9. Alſo I will ordain a place for my people Iſrael, and will plant them, and they ſhall dwell in their place, and ſhall be moved no more; [l] neither ſhall the children of wickedneſs waſte them any more: (as at the beginning, 10. And ſince the time that [m] I commanded judges *to be* over my people Iſrael) moreover I will ſubdue all thine enemies. Furthermore, I tell thee, that [n] the LORD will build thee an houſe. 11. ¶ And it ſhall come to paſs, [o] when thy days be expired, that thou muſt go *to be* with thy fathers, that [p] I will raiſe up thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons, and [q] I will eſtabliſh his kingdom. 12. [r] He ſhall build me an houſe, [s] and I will eſtabliſh his throne for ever. 13. I will be his father, and [t] he ſhall be my ſon, and [u] I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee. 14. But I will ſettle him in mine houſe, and [x] in my kingdom for ever, and his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed [y] for evermore. 15. [z] According to all theſe words, and according to all this viſion, ſo did Nathan ſpeak unto David.

[a] 2 Sam. vii. 1.
[b] Hag. i. 4.
[c] Acts vii. 46.
[d] 1 Cor. xiii. 9.
[e] 1 Kings viii. 16.
[f] 2 Sam. v. 2.
[g] 1 Sam. xvi. 11. Pſal. lxxviii. 70.
† Heb. From after.
[h] 2 Sam. viii. 6, 14.
[i] Pſal. lxxxix. 23.
[k] 2 Sam. v. 10. Pſal. cxiii. 7, 8.
[l] Pſal. lxxxix. 22.
[m] Judg. ii. 16.
[n] Exod. i. 21. Pſal. cxxvii. 1.
[o] 1 Kings viii. 20. Acts xiii. 36.
[p] Ibid 23. Rom. i. 3.
[q] Iſa. ix. 6, 7. Dan. vii. 25.
[r] Mat. xvi. 18.
[s] Luke i. 32.
[t] Heb. i. 5.
[u] Acts xiii. 34.
[x] Pſal. lxxxix. 28, 34, &c. Dan. ii. 44.
[y] John xii. 34.
[z] Jer. xxiii. 28.

v. 1—15. David's pious purpoſe, Nathan's encouragement, and God's gracious acceptance of his intentions, though he reſtrained him from the ſervice, we had before, 2 *Sam.* vii. We may obſerve, (1.) How ſollicitous the heart of every faithful Iſraelite is, that God's glory may be ſet forth. (2.) That God's miniſters ſhould delight to encourage others, to every good word and work. (3.) A gracious deſire, though ineffectual, is not forgotten of God. (4.) Bleſſings on our children, are mercies to ourſelves. (5.) In Jeſus Chriſt is the promiſe fulfilled, *v.* 14. who is exalted to ſit upon the throne of David for ever and ever.

16. ¶ And David the king came, and ſat before the LORD, and ſaid, [a] Who *am* I, O LORD God, and what is mine houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto? 17. And [b] *yet* this was a ſmall thing in thine eyes, O God, for [c] thou haſt *alſo* ſpoken of thy ſervant's houſe for a great while to come, and haſt regarded me according to the eſtate of a man of high degree, O LORD God. 18. What can David *ſpeak* more to thee for the honour of thy ſervant? for [d] thou knoweſt thy ſervant. 19. O LORD, [e] for thy ſervant's ſake, and [f] according to thine own heart haſt thou done all this greatneſs, in making known all *theſe* great things. 20. O LORD, [g] *there is* none like thee, neither *is there any* God beſides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 21. And [h] what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people Iſrael, [i] whom God went to redeem *to be* his own people, to make thee a name of greatneſs and terribleneſs, by driving out nations from before thy people whom thou haſt redeemed out of Egypt? 22. For thy people Iſrael didſt thou make thine own people for ever, and [k] thou, LORD, becameſt their God. 23. Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy ſervant, and concerning his houſe, [l] be eſtabliſhed for ever, and do as thou haſt ſaid. 24. Let it even be eſtabliſhed, that [m] thy name may be magnified for ever, ſaying, The LORD of hoſts *is* the God of Iſrael, *even* a God to Iſrael: and *let* the houſe of David thy ſervant *be* eſtabliſhed before thee. 25. For thou, O my God, haſt † told thy

[a] Gen. xxxii. 10. Judg. vi. 15. 1 Sam. xviii. 18. Pſal. cxliv. 3. Eph. iii. 8.
[b] Ver. 7, 8.
[c] 1 Kings iii. 13. Eph. iii. 20.
[d] 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Pſal. cxxxix. 1. John xxi. 16.
[e] Iſa. xlix. 6.
[f] Mat. xi. 26. Eph. i. 11.
[g] Exod. xv. 11. Deut. iii. 24. Pſal. lxxxix. 6—8. Iſa. xlv. 5, 22.
[h] Deut. iv. 7. & xxxiii. 29. Pſal. cxlvii. 20. Amos iii. 2.
[i] Exod. iii. 8. Tit. ii. 14.
[k] Gen. xvii. 7. Pſal. xlviii. 14.
[l] Ezek. xxxvi. 37.
[m] Mat. vi. 9. John xii. 28.
† Heb. Revealed before the ear of, &c. 1 Sam. ix. 15.

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thy ſervant, that thou wilt build him an houſe: therefore thy ſervant [n] hath found *in his heart* to pray before thee. 26. And now, LORD (thou art God, and [o] haſt promiſed this goodneſs unto thy ſervant). 27. Now therefore let it pleaſe thee to bleſs the houſe of thy ſervant, that it may be before thee for ever: for [p] thou bleſſeſt, O LORD, and *it ſhall be* bleſſed [q] for ever.

[n] Pſal. x. 17.
[o] Tit. i. 2.
[p] Num. xxii. 6.
[q] Rom. xi. 29.

v. 16—27. David's prayer differs little here from the former, but in a few expreſſions. It teaches, (1.) With what deep humility we ſhould approach God, *v.* 16. (2.) That thoſe are the truly honourable of the earth, whom God regards, *v.* 17. (3.) That the higheſt glory of the greateſt king, is to be the ſervant of God, *v.* 18. (4.) As there is no God like the Lord, ſo there is no happineſs equal to a ſenſe of his favour. (5.) When we have God's promiſes, we may confidently plead them, and be aſſured we ſhall be heard and anſwered. (6.) They who now ſhare in God's covenant of grace, will aſſuredly partake of everlaſting glory.

CHAP. XVIII.

Here, 1. *David conquers the Philiſtines,* ver. 1. 2. *The Moabites,* ver. 2. 3. *The king of Zobah,* ver. 3, 4. 4. *The Syrians,* ver. 5—8. 5. *He makes the king of Hamath his tributary,* ver. 9—11. *as alſo the Edomites,* ver. 12, 13. 6. *A ſhort account is given of his court and kingdom,* ver. 14—17.

1. NOW [a] after this it came to paſs, that David ſmote the Philiſtines, and ſubdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philiſtines. 2. And [b] he ſmote Moab; and the Moabites became David's ſervants, *and* brought gifts. 3. ¶ And David ſmote Hadarezer king of [c] Zobah unto Hamath, as he went to ſtabliſh [d] his dominion by the river Euphrates. 4. And David took from him a thouſand chariots, and [e] ſeven thouſand horſemen, and twenty thouſand footmen: David alſo [f] houghed all the chariot-*horſes,* but [g] reſerved of them an hundred chariots. 5. And when the Syrians of Damaſcus came to [h] help Hadarezer king of Zobah, David [i] ſlew of the Syrians two and twenty thouſand men. 6. Then David put *garriſons* in Syria-Damaſcus, and the Syrians became David's ſervants, *and* brought gifts. Thus [k] the LORD preſerved David whitherſoever he went. 7. And David took the ſhields of gold that were on the ſervants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jeruſalem. 8. Likewiſe from † Tibbath, and from ‡ Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much braſs, wherewith [l] Solomon made the brazen ſea, and the pillars, and the veſſels of braſs.

[a] 2 Sam. viii. 1.
[b] Num. xxiv. 17. Pſal. lx. 8.
[c] Pſal. lx. Title.
[d] Gen. xv. 18.
[e] 2 Sam. viii. 4.
[f] Joſh. xi. 6.
[g] Pſal. xx. 7. & xxxiii. 16, 17.
[h] Iſa. viii. 9.
[i] Job ix. 13. Iſa. xxxi. 3.
[k] Pſal. xx. 8. Prov. xxi. 31.
† Betah.
‡ Berothai. 2 Sam. viii. 8.
[l] 1 Kings vii. 23. 2 Chron. iv. 15.

v. 1—8. David's conqueſts, here recorded, we had 2 *Sam.* viii. They followed upon the prayer and promiſe of the preceding chapter; for they who have God for their friend, have nothing to fear from their enemies. *Note,* (1.) Such ſhall be the believer's victories, over all his corruptions: though they are numerous, and often return to the attack, yet ſin ſhall not prevail againſt him. (2.) The aſſociated forces of earth and hell in vain oppoſe God's church; it ſhall ſtand triumphant at laſt, over every foe. (3.) Shields of Gold cannot defend us, but the ſhield of faith never faileth.

9. ¶ Now [m] when Tou king of Hamath heard how David had ſmitten all the hoſt of Hadarezer, king of Zobah: 10. He ſent † Hadoram his ſon to king David, to enquire of his welfare, and to ‡ congratulate him, becauſe he had fought againſt Hadarezer, and ſmitten him (for Hadarezer ‖ had warred with Tou) and *with him* all manner of veſſels of gold, and ſilver, and braſs. 11. ¶ Them alſo king David dedicated unto the LORD, [n] with the ſilver and the gold that he brought from all *theſe* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philiſtines, and from Amalek. 12. Moreover, Abiſhai the ſon of Zeruiah ſlew of the Edomites in the valley of ſalt, eighteen thouſand. 13. ¶ And he put garriſons in Edom; and [o] all the Edomites became David's ſervants. Thus the LORD preſerved David whitherſoever he went. 14. ¶ So David reigned over all Iſrael, and [p] executed judgment and juſtice among his people. 15. And Joab the ſon of Zeruiah *was* over the hoſt, and Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Ahilud, § recorder. 16. And Zadok the ſon of Ahitub, and Abimelech the ſon of Abiathar, *were* [q] the prieſts, and † Shauſha *was* ſcribe. 17. And Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites, and the Pelethites: and the ſons of David *were* [q] chief ‡ about the king.

[m] 2 Sam. viii. 9.
† Joram. 2 Sam. viii. 10.
‡ Heb. Bleſs him.
‖ Heb. Was a man of wars with Tou.
[n] Mic. iv. 13.
[o] Gen. xxvii. 37. Pſal. xviii. 44.
[p] Iſa. xi. 3, 4.
§ Or Remembrancer.

Before Chriſt 1040.

† Seraiah. 2 Sam. viii. 17.
[q] Rev. i. 6.
‡ Heb. At the hand of the king.

v. 9—17. They who are proſperous, like David, will be courted; but a true friend is beſt known in adverſity. Tou counted David's favour well worth the moſt valuable preſent he could ſend him; and ſhall we not be more ſollicitous to ſecure him for our friend, whoſe favour is better than life itſelf, and which may be obtained without price or preſent? David's government appears to be as excellent, *v.* 14. as his victories were glorious, and no wonder when God proſpered him in every undertaking. The ſon of David rules with greater equity, as well as enjoys a more univerſal dominion: happy the people who are ſubjects of his righteous government, and enjoy his divine protection.

CHAP. XIX.

Here is, 1. *David's civility to the king of Ammon,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The affront ſhewn to David, in the baſe uſage of his ambaſſadors,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *David's juſt reſentment of it,* ver. 6—19.

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1. NOW [a] it came to paſs after this, that Nahaſh the king of the children of Ammon died, and his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 2. And David ſaid, [b] I will ſhew kindneſs unto Hanun the ſon of Nahaſh, becauſe his father ſhewed kindneſs to me. And David ſent meſſengers, to comfort him concerning his father: ſo the ſervants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon, to Hanun, to comfort him. 3. But the princes of the children of Ammon ſaid to Hanun, † Thinkeſt thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath ſent comforters unto thee? [c] are not his ſervants come unto thee, for to ſearch, and to overthrow, and to ſpy out the land? 4. Wherefore Hanun took David's ſervants, and [d] ſhaved them, and cut off their garments in the midſt [e] hard by their buttocks, and ſent them away. 5. Then there went *certain,* and told David how the men were ſerved; and he ſent to meet them (for the men were greatly aſhamed) and the king ſaid, [f] Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

[a] 2 Sam. x. 1.
[b] See 2 Sam. ix. 1.
† Heb. In thine eyes doth David, &c.
[c] 1 Cor. xiii. 7.
[d] Lev. xix. 27. 2 Sam. x. 4.
[e] Iſa. xx. 4.
[f] Pſal. xxxvii. 6, 7.

v. 1—5. This ſtory we may find, 2 *Sam.* x. It ſhews, (1.) How the kindeſt actions may be miſinterpreted, and the moſt friendly concern be repaid with ingratitude. (2.) That the moſt innocent character may ſuffer much reproach. (3.) Where whiſperers are heard, very friends are ſeparated. (4.) That they who receive damage in our ſervice, ought to be tenderly taken care of, and provided for.

6. ¶ [g] And when the children of Ammon ſaw that they had made themſelves † odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon ſent a thouſand talents of ſilver to [h] hire them chariots and horſemen out of Meſopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, and out of Zobah. 7. So they hired thirty and two thouſand chariots, and the king of Maacah and his people, who came and pitched before Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themſelves together from their cities, and came to battle. 8. And when David heard *of it,* he ſent Joab, and all the hoſt of [i] the mighty men. 9. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in aray before the gate of the city: and [k] the kings that were come, *were* by themſelves in the field. 10. Now when Joab ſaw that † the battle was ſet againſt him, before and behind, he choſe out of all ‡ the choice of Iſrael, and put *them* in aray againſt the Syrians. 11. And the reſt of the people he delivered unto the hand of Abiſhai his brother, and they ſet *themſelves* in aray againſt the children of Ammon. 12. And he ſaid, If the Syrians be too ſtrong for me, [l] then thou ſhalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too ſtrong for thee, then I will help thee. 13. [m] Be of good courage, and let us behave ourſelves valiantly [n] for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do *that which is* good in his ſight. 14. So Joab and the people that *were* with him, drew nigh before the Syrians, unto the battle; and they fled before him. 15. And when the children of Ammon ſaw that the Syrians were fled, they likewiſe fled before Abiſhai his brother, and entred into the city. Then Joab came to Jeruſalem. 16. ¶ And when the Syrians ſaw that they

[g] 2 Sam. x. 6.
† Heb. To ſtink. Gen. xxxiv. 30. Exod. v. 21. 1 Sam xiii. 4.
[h] Iſa. viii. 9.
[i] Ibid. xiii. 3.
[k] 2 Sam. x. 8.
† Heb. Face of the battle.
‡ Heb. Young men.
[l] Neh. iv. 20. Luke xxii. 32. Rom. xv. 1.
[m] 1 Cor. xvi. 15.
[n] Neh. iv. 14.

they were put to the worſe before Iſrael, [o] they ſent meſſengers, and drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond § the river: and † Shophach the captain of the hoſt of Hadarezer *went* before them. 17. And it was told David, and he gathered all Iſrael, and paſſed over Jordan, and came upon them, and ſet *the battle* in aray againſt them: ſo when David had put the battle in aray againſt the Syrians, they fought with him. 18. But the Syrians fled before Iſrael, and David ſlew of the Syrians [p] ſeven thouſand men, *which fought in* chariots, and [q] forty thouſand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the hoſt. 19. And when the ſervants of Hadarezer ſaw that they were put to the worſe before Iſrael, they made peace with David, and became his ſervants: [r] neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

v. 6—19. 1. Had the Ammonites ſubmitted, they might at much leſs expence have obtained their peace with David, than the uſeleſs aſſiſtance of Syria; but the miſchief which pride begins, obſtinacy often compleats.

2. Joab. *v.* 10. ſeems to have been in imminent danger; like the chriſtian who is often ſore beſet behind and before, only to excite his faith and fortitude, and to exalt the power and grace of God in his preſervation.

3. One loſs only whetted the Syrians revenge, *v.* 16. but their united forces met no more ſucceſs the ſecond time, than the firſt. In vain do they ſtrive, who fight againſt God.

4. Experience taught them at laſt to ſubmit, *v.* 19. It is a mercy if our ſufferings drive us at laſt to God, to take hold of his ſtrength, and make peace with him.

Before Chriſt 1037.

[o] Mic. iv. 11—13.

§ i. e. Euphrates.

† Shobach. 2 Sam. x. 16.

[p] Prov. xxvi. 17.

[q] Pſal. xxxiii. 16.

[r] Ibid. xlviii. 4. Rev. xviii. 10.

CHAP. XX.

We have here David's wars, 1. *With the Ammonites, and the taking of Rabbah,* ver. 1—3. 2. *With the giants of the Philiſtines,* ver. 4—8.

1. [a] AND it came to paſs, that † after the year was expired, [b] at the time that kings go out *to battle,* Joab led forth the power of the army, and waſted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and beſieged Rabbah ([c] but David tarried at Jeruſalem) and Joab ſmote Rabbah, and deſtroyed it. 2. And [d] David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found ‡ it to weigh [e] a talent of gold, and *there were* precious ſtones in it, and it was ſet upon David's head, and he brought alſo exceeding much ſpoil out of the city. 3. And he brought out the people that *were* in it: and cut *them* with ſaws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes: even ſo dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jeruſalem.

v. 1—3. Whilſt Joab conquered the country of the Ammonites, David ſtaid at Jeruſalem. We are told with grief, to how bad purpoſe, 2 *Sam.* xi. Here his crime is paſt over. A veil ſhould be drawn over the ſins that are repented of, and they ſhould no more be mentioned to a man's ſhame.

4. ¶ [f] And it came to paſs after this, that there aroſe war at † Gezer with the Philiſtines, at which time Sibbechai the Huſhathite ſlew ‡ Sippai *that was* of the children of ‖ the giant, and they were ſubdued. 5. And there was war again with the Philiſtines, and Elhanan the ſon of § Jair, ſlew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whoſe ſpear-ſtaff *was* like a weaver's beam. 6. And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of *great* ſtature, whoſe fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, ſix *on each hand,* and ſix *on each foot*: and he alſo was † the ſon of the giant. 7. But when [g] he defied Iſrael, Jonathan the ſon of Shimea, David's brother, ſlew him. 8. Theſe were born unto the giant in Gath; and [h] they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his ſervants.

v. 4—8. The Philiſtines ſtruggle long and hard againſt Iſrael, but all their mighty men fell at laſt before the victorious ſword of David and his ſervants. *Note,* Whilſt life endures, corruption will war; and we may ſtill find giants even to the laſt conflict; but the Lord ſhall in death at leaſt, put all enemies under our feet.

[a] 2 Sam. xi. 1.

† Heb. At the return of the year.

1036.

[b] 1 Kings xx. 22, 26. Eccleſ. iii. 8.

[c] Deut. xxxii. 15.

1035.

[d] 2 Sam. xii. 30.

‡ Heb. The weight of it.

[e] Prov. xiii. 22.

1018.

[f] 2 Sam. xxi. 18.

† Or Gob.

‡ Or Saph.

‖ Or Rapha.

§ Jaare-oregim. 2 Sam. xxi. 19.

† Heb. Born to Rapha. Ver. 8.

[g] 1 Sam. xvii. 10.

[h] Eccleſ. ix. 11. Jer. ix. 23. 1 Cor. i. 27. Rom. viii. 31.

CHAP. XXI.

Here is, 1. *David's ſin in forcing Joab to number the people,* ver. 1—4. 2. *His ſorrow for it,* ver. 5—8. 3. *The judgment ſent of God,* ver. 9—16. 4. *David's repentance, and ſacrifice, and the ſlaying of the plague thereupon,* ver. 18—30.

1. [a] AND Satan ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and provoked David to number Iſrael. 2. And David ſaid to Joab, and to the rulers of the people, [b] Go, number Iſrael from Beerſheba even to Dan; and [c] bring the number of them to me, that I may know *it.* 3. And Joab anſwered, The LORD † make his people an hundred times ſo many more as they *be*: but, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's ſervants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cauſe of treſpaſs to Iſrael? 4. Nevertheleſs, the king's word prevailed againſt Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Iſrael, and came to Jeruſalem. 5. ¶ And Joab gave the ſum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they of* Iſrael were [d] a thouſand thouſand and an hundred thouſand men that drew ſword: and Judah *was* four hundred threeſcore and ten thouſand men that drew ſword. 6. But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

v. 1—6. Obſerve,

1. The greateſt ſaints of God upon earth are men, againſt whom Satan deſpairs not of prevailing; and they have need to take heed leaſt they fall, as David did here.

2. Pride of heart was the corruption the devil wrought upon, and deep it lies in every boſom. If once he can ſtrike a ſpark on this tinder, eaſily it kindles.

3. Even a bad man, as Joab, may ſometimes ſee and condemn the evil in a child of God, yet their ſtate is very different; the one is rotten at the heart, the other deceived by the tempter, though habitually delighting in the law of God after the inner man.

4. When the heart is averſe, the work goes on heavily, and is left imperfect.

7. ¶ And God was diſpleaſed with this thing, [e] therefore he ſmote Iſrael. 8. [f] And David ſaid unto God, [g] I have ſinned greatly, becauſe I have done this thing: but now I beſeech thee, [h] do away the iniquity of thy ſervant, for I have done very fooliſhly. 9. ¶ And the LORD ſpake unto Gad, David's ſeer, ſaying, 10. Go and tell David, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, I offer thee *three* things, chooſe thee one of them, that I may do *it* unto thee. 11. So Gad came to David, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, [i] chooſe thee 12. Either three years [k] famine, or three months to be deſtroyed before thy foes (while that the ſword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee*) or elſe three days the ſword of the LORD, even the peſtilence in the land, and the angel of the LORD deſtroying throughout all the coaſts of Iſrael: now therefore adviſe thyſelf, what word I ſhall bring again to him that ſent me. 13. And David ſaid unto Gad, I am in a great ſtrait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD (for † very [l] great *are* his mercies) but [m] let me not fall into the hand of man. 14. ¶ So the LORD ſent peſtilence upon Iſrael: and there fell of Iſrael [n] ſeventy thouſand men. 15. And God ſent an angel unto Jeruſalem to deſtroy it: and as he was deſtroying, the LORD beheld, and he [o] repented him of the evil, and ſaid to the angel that deſtroyed, It is enough, ſtay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD ſtood by the threſhing-floor of ‡ Ornan the Jebuſite. 16. And David lift up his eyes, and ſaw the angel of the LORD ſtand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn ſword in his hand, ſtretched out over Jeruſalem: then David and the elders *of Iſrael, who were* clothed in ſackcloth, fell upon their faces. 17. And David ſaid, unto God, *Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? [p] even I it is that have ſinned and done evil indeed; but *as for* theſe ſheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's houſe, but not on thy people, that they ſhould be plagued.

Before Chriſt 1017.

[a] 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

[b] Joſh. ix. 14.

[c] Deut. viii. 13, 14. Hab. ii. 4.

† Heb. Add unto.

[d] 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.

[e] Joſh. vii. 1.

[f] 2 Sam. xxiv. 10.

[g] Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 9.

[h] Mic. vii. 8, 9.

[i] Rev. iii. 19.

[k] Lam. iv. 9.

† Or many.

[l] Pſal. ciii. 13. & cxxx. 7. Lam. iii. 22.

[m] Prov. xii. 10. Iſa. xlvi 7. Zech. i. 15.

[n] Iſa. xxvi. 39.

[o] Pſal. lxxviii. 38. Hab. iii. 2.

‡ Araunah. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18.

[p] Ezek. xvi. 63.

v. 7—17. Obſerve here,

1. Where God hath love to a ſinner's ſoul, he will not ſpare the rod of chaſtiſement.

2. Gad's reproof brought David to his knees, but this could not ſave him from the threatned judgment. We ſhall ſuffer in the fleſh for our ſins, though our ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord.

3. Our folly uſually brings us into our greateſt ſtraits, and we have nobody but ourſelves to blame.

4. If God's mercy was not infinite, verily we ſhould be utterly conſumed.

5. The only reſource which we have left, is that God we have offended; when humbled in the duſt we fly to him, he will lay the uplifted thunderbolt aſide, *v.* 16.

18. ¶ Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to ſay to David, that David [q] ſhould go up and ſet up an altar unto the LORD, in the threſhing-floor of Ornan the Jebuſite. 19. And [r] David went up at the ſaying of Gad, which he ſpake in the name of the LORD. 20. † And Ornan turned back, and ſaw the angel; and his four ſons with him hid themſelves. Now Ornan was threſhing wheat. 21. And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and ſaw David, and went out of the threſhing-floor, and bowed himſelf to David with *his* face to the ground. 22. Then David ſaid to Ornan, ‡ Grant me the place of *this* threſhing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou ſhalt grant it me for the full price, [s] that the plague may be ſtayed from the people. 23. And Ornan ſaid unto David, Take *it* to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is* good in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* the oxen *alſo* for burnt-offerings, and the threſhing-inſtruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering, I give it all. 24. And king David ſaid to Ornan, Nay, but [t] I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take *that* which *is* thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without coſt. 25. So David gave to Ornan for the place, [u] ſix hundred ſhekels of gold by weight. 26. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, and called upon the LORD, and [x] he anſwered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering. 27. And the LORD commanded the angel, and [y] he put up his ſword again into the ſheath thereof. 28. ¶ At that time, when David ſaw that the LORD had anſwered him in the threſhing-floor of Ornan the Jebuſite, then he ſacrificed there. 29. For [z] the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moſes made in the wilderneſs, and the altar of the burnt-offering, *were* at that ſeaſon in the high-place at Gibeon. 30. But David could not go before it to enquire of God; for [a] he was afraid, becauſe of the ſword of the angel of the LORD.

[q] Gen. xxii. 14. Pſal. xlvi. 1.
[r] Mat. xxviii. 20. Acts xxvi. 19.
† Or when Ornan turned, &c. then he and his four ſons, &c.
‡ Heb. Give.
[s] Num. xvi. 48.
[t] Rom. xii. 17. & xiii. 8.
[u] 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.
[x] Lev. ix. 24. 2 Chron. iii. 1.
[y] Pſal. lxxxv. 3. Iſa. xii. 1.
[z] Chap. xvi. 39.
[a] Pſal. cxix. 120.

v. 18—30. David is relieved from his terrible diſtreſs: Gad, the meſſenger of his plague, brings him notice of reconciliation, and directs him what to do, in which David makes no delay.

1. He purchaſes the threſhing-floor of Ornan, or Araunah, where the angel appeared, to rear an altar for ſacrifice.

2. He offers there the blood of atonement, and God teſtifies his acceptance, by fire from heaven on the ſacrifice. There is one ſacrifice in which God is well pleaſed; if his blood be upon us, then the ſword of judgment ſhall not hurt us.

3. David continued ever after to ſacrifice on this altar. At firſt, he was afraid to move from Jeruſalem, where he had ſeen the terrible angel, till the judgment was removed; and afterwards God's gracious acceptance of his offering, encouraged him to continue his attendance at the ſame place. *Note*, Where we have found eſpecial bleſſings to our ſouls, it is our wiſdom there to continue our attendance upon God.

CHAP. XXII.

We have here, 1. *David's preparation to build the houſe of God,* ver. 1—5. 2. *His inſtructions to Solomon concerning the work,* ver. 6—16. 3. *His charge to the princes to aſſiſt him,* ver. 17—19.

1. THEN David ſaid, [a] This is the houſe of the LORD God, and this *is* the altar of the burnt-offering for Iſrael. 2. And David commanded to gather together [b] the ſtrangers that *were* in the land of Iſrael, and he ſet maſons to hew wrought ſtones to build the houſe of God. 3. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and braſs in abundance [c] without weight; 4. Alſo cedar-trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre brought much cedar-wood to David. 5. And David ſaid, [d] Solomon my ſon *is* [e] young and tender, and the houſe *that is* to be builded for the LORD, *muſt be* exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

[a] Deut. xii. 5. Chap. xxi. 26. 2 Chron. iii. 1.
[b] 1 Kings ix. 21.
[c] Ver. 14.
[d] Chap. xxix. 1.
[e] 1 Kings iii. 7.

v. 1—5. That a houſe ſhould be built, was before reſolved: here, *v.* 1. the ſpot is fixed upon, and the preparations begun.

1. The reaſons given for the immediate concern David was in to make preparation for the building, though himſelf might not enjoy the honour of it, were, 1. The magnificence of the houſe of God. An abode, though not becoming the divine inhabitant, yet ſuperior to all that earth had ſeen beſide, to engage the attention of ſtrangers, who might be induced by its grandeur to viſit it. 2. Solomon was young, and ſhould the crown devolve to him, it would encourage him to proceed, when ſo much was ready to his hand. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt our moment is prolonged, it becomes us to labour for God. (2.) They who are ſtrong, ſhould eaſe their younger and weaker brethren of the more difficult ſervices.

2. The perſons he employed were ſtrangers; either they were more able artiſts, or he would have no ſervile work laid on free-born Iſraelites; or as a figure of things to come, when gentiles ſhould be called not only into the church, but be employed as maſter builders.

3. The preparations made were vaſt and coſtly, *v.* 2, 3, 4. No labours nor expence ſhould be ſpared, where God's glory is concerned.

6. ¶ Then he called for Solomon his ſon, and charged him to build an houſe for the LORD God of Iſrael. 7. And David ſaid to Solomon, My ſon, as for me, [f] it was in my mind to build an houſe [g] unto the name of the LORD my God: 8. But the word of the LORD came to me, ſaying, [h] Thou haſt ſhed blood abundantly, and haſt made great wars: thou ſhalt not build an houſe unto my name, becauſe thou haſt ſhed much blood upon the earth in my ſight. 9. [i] Behold, a ſon ſhall be born to thee who ſhall be a man of reſt, and I will give him reſt from all his enemies round about: for his name ſhall be † Solomon, and I will give peace and quietneſs unto Iſrael in his days. 10. [k] He ſhall build an houſe for my name, and [l] he ſhall be my ſon, and I *will be* his father, and [m] I will eſtabliſh the throne of his kingdom over Iſrael for ever. 11. Now, my ſon, [n] the LORD be with thee, and proſper thou, and build the houſe of the LORD thy God, as he hath ſaid of thee. 12. Only the LORD give thee [o] wiſdom and underſtanding, and give thee charge concerning Iſrael, that thou mayeſt keep the law of the LORD thy God. 13. [p] Then ſhalt thou proſper, if thou takeſt heed to fulfil the ſtatutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moſes with concerning Iſrael: [q] be ſtrong and of good courage, dread not, nor be diſmayed. 14. Now behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the houſe of the LORD an hundred thouſand talents of gold, and a thouſand thouſand talents of ſilver; and of braſs, and iron, [r] without weight (for it is in abundance) timber alſo and ſtone have I prepared, and thou mayeſt add thereto. 15. Moreover, *there are* workmen with thee in abundance, hewers, and ‡ workers of ſtone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work. 16. Of the gold, the ſilver, and the braſs, and the iron *there is* no number. [s] Ariſe *therefore*, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

[f] 2 Sam. vii. 2. Chap. xvii. 1.
[g] Deut. xii. 5—11.
[h] 1 Kings v. 3. Chap. xxviii. 3.
[i] Chap. xxviii. 5.
† i. e. Peaceable.
[k] 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings v. 5. Chap. xvii. 12, 13.
[l] Heb. i. 5.
[m] Pſal. lxxxix. 29.
[n] Ver. 16.
[o] 1 Kings iii. 9. Pſal. lxxii. 1.
[p] Jer. xxii. 3, 4.
[q] Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. Joſh. i. 6, &c.
[r] Ver. 3.
‡ i. e. Maſons and carpenters.
[s] Ver. 11.

v. 6—16. The work of building the temple being by Divine appointment delegated to Solomon, David gives him inſtructions concerning it.

1. Becauſe of the perpetual wars in which he was engaged, and the blood he had ſhed, God forbad him to do it, but aſſured him withal, that a ſon ſhould be born to him, in whoſe days Iſrael ſhould be at peace, and he at leiſure to undertake the arduous taſk. *Note*, (1.) The church of Chriſt may not be built by the ſword of war, but by the preaching of the goſpel of peace. (2.) They who have leiſure from other avocations, are more immediately called to employ it in the work of God.

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2. As an encouragement, David informs him, (1.) That vaſt preparations were already made, *v.* 14. notwithſtanding the troubles in which he had been involved. They were immenſe indeed, amounting, in ſilver and gold, beſide braſs, iron, cedar, ſtone, to near eight hundred million of our money; but it is rather thought Kikkar here ſignifies an ingot of leſs value than the Moſaic talent. (2.) That God hath promiſed to eſtabliſh his kingdom for ever, therefore that he could never do enough to ſhew his gratitude for the mercy, *v.* 10—14. *Note,* The more God hath done for us, the greater is our obligation to ſerve him.

3. He exhorts him not to be diſcouraged at the greatneſs of the work, or the difficulties in the way, *v.* 13. as alſo to take heed to all God's commandments; from obedience to which, he might hope for God's bleſſing, *v.* 13. *Note,* (1.) They who are intent on building up Chriſt's church, need much courage, for they will find many adverſaries and difficulties. (2.) It is not the greatneſs of the work, but the ſpirituality of the temper that gives it value before God.

4. David prays that God would give him wiſdom and underſtanding thus to walk and act; and bids him without delay addreſs himſelf to the work, up and be doing, aſſuredly concluding the Lord would be with him. *Note,* (1.) When we ariſe from prayer, we may comfortably and confidently expect that God will proſper the work of our hands. (2.) Truſt on his ſupport and bleſſing ſhould quicken our own endeavours.

17. ¶ David alſo commanded all the princes of Iſrael to help Solomon his ſon, *ſaying,* 18. *Is* not the LORD your God with you? and hath he *not* given you reſt on every ſide? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand, and the land is ſubdued before the LORD, and before his people. 19. Now [t] ſet your heart and your ſoul to ſeek the LORD your God, ariſe therefore, and [u] build ye the ſanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy veſſels of God, into the houſe that is to be built to the name of the LORD.

[t] Chap. xxviii. 9. 2 Chron. xx. 3.
[u] 1 Theſ. v. 11.

v. 17—19. David exhorts the princes to aſſiſt his ſon in the undertaking. Kings need able miniſters, to execute the good they deſign.

1. They muſt ſet their heart to ſeek the Lord, as moſt bound by his mercies, *v.* 18. *Note,* The great and leading concern ſhould be, that the heart be right with God.

2. He calls upon them to help Solomon to build the ſanctuary, *v.* 19. *Note,* (1.) When the heart is engaged, head, hand, and purſe, will be employed in the ſervice. (2.) The moſt zealous and active miniſter wants aſſiſtance, and every private chriſtian is called upon to lend a helping hand.

CHAP. XXIII.

In this chapter, 1. *David declares Solomon to be his ſucceſſor,* ver. 1. 2. *He numbers the Levites, and appoints them their offices,* ver. 2—5. 3. *He takes an account of the ſeveral families of the Levites,* ver. 6—23. 4. *He makes a new reckoning of them from twenty years old, and according to their age employs them,* 24—32.

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1. SO when David was old and full of days, [a] he made Solomon his ſon king over Iſrael. 2. ¶ And he gathered together all the princes of Iſrael, with the prieſts and the Levites. 3. Now the Levites were numbred [b] from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thouſand. 4. Of which, twenty and four thouſand *were* to † ſet forward the work of the houſe of the LORD: and ſix thouſand *were* [c] officers and judges. 5. Moreover, four thouſand *were* porters, and four thouſand praiſed the LORD with the inſtruments [d] which I made (*ſaid David*) to praiſe *therewith.* 6. And David [e] divided them into ‡ courſes among the ſons of Levi, *namely,* Gerſhon, Kohath, and Merari. 7. ¶ [f] Of the Gerſhonites *were* ‖ Laadan, and Shimei. 8. The ſons of Laadan, the chief *was* Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three. 9. The ſons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. Theſe *were* the chief of the fathers of Laadan. 10. And the ſons of Shimei *were,* Jahath, § Zina, and Jeuſh, and Beriah. Theſe four *were* the ſons of Shimei. 11. And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the ſecond: but Jeuſh and Beriah † had not many ſons: therefore they were in one reckoning, according to *their* father's houſe. 12. ¶ [g] The ſons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. 13. The ſons of [h] Amram; Aaron and Moſes: and [i] Aaron was ſeparated, that he ſhould ſanctify the moſt holy things, he and his ſons for ever, [k] to burn incenſe before the LORD, to miniſter unto him, and [l] to bleſs in his name for ever. 14. Now *concerning* Moſes the man of God, [m] his ſons were named of the tribe of Levi. 15. [n] The ſons of Moſes *were* Gerſhom, and Eliezer. 16. [o] Of the ſons of Gerſhom, ‡ Shebuel *was* the chief. 17. And the ſons of Eliezer *were* [p] Rehabiah the ‖ chief. And Eliezer had no other ſons; but the ſons of Rehabiah were § very many. 18. Of the ſons of Izhar; † Shelomith the chief. 19. [q] Of the ſons of Hebron; Jeriah the firſt, Amariah the ſecond, Jehaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. 20. Of the ſons of Uzziel; Micah the firſt, and Jeſiah the ſecond. 21. ¶ [r] The ſons of Merari; Mahli, and Muſhi: the ſons of Mahli; Eleazar and [s] Kiſh: 22. And Eleazar died, and [t] had no ſons, but daughters: and their ‡ brethren the ſons of Kiſh [u] took them. 23. [x] The ſons of Muſhi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

[a] 1 Kings i. 33—39. Chap. xxviii. 5.
[b] Num. xhii. 47.
† Or overſee.
[c] Deut. xvi. 18.
[d] See 2 Chron. xxix. 25. Amos vi. 5.
[e] Exod. vi. 16. Num. xxvi. 57. 2 Chron. viii. 14.
‡ Or diviſions.
[f] Chap. xxvi. 21.
‖ Libni. Chap. vi. 17.
§ Zizah. Ver. 11.
† Heb. Did not multiply ſons, &c.
[g] Exod. vi. 18.
[h] Ibid. 20.

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[i] Ex. xxviii. 1. Heb. v. 4.
[k] Deut. xxi. 5.
[l] Num. vi. 23.
[m] See Chap. xxvi. 23—25.
[n] Exod. ii. 22. & xviii. 3, 4.
[o] Chap. xxvi. 24.
‡ Shubael. Chap. xxiv. 20.
[p] Chap. xxvi. 25.
‖ Or firſt.
§ Heb. Highly multiplied.
† Shelometh. Chap. xxiv. 22.
[q] Ibid. 23.
[r] Ibid. 26.
[s] Ibid. 29.
[t] Ibid. 28.
‡ Or kinſmen.
[u] See Num. xxxvi. 6, 8.
[x] Chap. xxiv. 30.

v. 1—23. David having declared Solomon his ſucceſſor, convokes a ſolemn aſſembly to recognize his appointment; and prevent all competition when he ſhould ſleep with his fathers, as he ſhortly expected, being now grown aged and infirm, and this aggravated the crime of Adonijah and his adherents. At this aſſembly, David perfected the ſettlement of the Levites.

1. He numbered them. Thirty-eight thouſand men, a vaſt increaſe ſince the time of Moſes, *Numb.* iv. 47. Even if we ſuppoſe that thoſe above fifty were now reckoned, who were then omitted? It is a diſtinguiſhed mercy to any people, when God giveth the word, and great is the company of the preachers.

2. David appointed them all their ſeveral employments. Twenty-four thouſand were employed, by a thouſand weekly, in rotation, to ſet forward the work of the temple, kill the ſacrifices, waſh, divide them, keep the temple and all the veſſels clean, and in order, and be aſſiſtants in all the ſervice to the prieſts, &c. Six thouſand were appointed judges and officers, as beſt ſkilled in the laws civil and eccleſiaſtical, and diſtributed through the cities of Iſrael, to maintain peace and execute juſtice. Four thouſand were the porters, a kind of guards, to prevent any unfit perſon from entring into the temple, or going farther than their limits. Four thouſand more were ſingers, divided into choirs, and conſtantly in ſucceſſion praiſing God day and night. *Note,* (1.) The work will go on well, where every man knows his poſt and buſineſs. (2.) In whatever ſtation a Levite is placed, diligence and zeal in the ſervice of God is his bounden duty.

3. The whole were divided into three claſſes, according to the three ſons of Levi, from whom they deſcended: thus the neareſt relations were employed together. Thoſe who are united in blood, ſhould be more united in love, and give aſſiſtance to each other. The family of Moſes claſſes with common Levites, and has no mark of diſtinction; an evidence of the diſintereſted conduct of their great progenitor. Rehabiah, one of his deſcendants, is remarked for his numerous family, *v.* 17. Aaron's family appears with chief dignity, conſecrated to God, to miniſter in the moſt holy things. God has a right to chuſe his own ſervants; and it were impious, and with us perjured hypocriſy, for any man to take this honour to himſelf, who is not inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt, and called of God as was Aaron.

24. ¶ Theſe *were* the ſons of [y] Levi after the houſe of their fathers; *even* the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD, [z] from the age of twenty years and upward. 25. For David ſaid, The LORD God of Iſrael hath given reſt unto his people, † that they may dwell in Jeruſalem for ever; 26. And alſo unto the Levites: they ſhall no *more* carry the tabernacle, nor any veſſels of it for the ſervice thereof. 27. For by the laſt words of David, the Levites *were* numbred from twenty years old and above. 28. Becauſe their ‡ office *was* to wait on the ſons of Aaron, [a] for the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the ſervice of the houſe of God; 29. Both for [b] the ſhew-bread, and [c] for the fine flour for meat-offering, and for [d] the unleavened cakes, and for [e] *that which is baked in* the ‖ pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of [f] meaſure and ſize: 30. And to ſtand every morning to thank and praiſe the LORD, and likewiſe [g] at even: 31. And to offer all burnt-ſacrifices unto the LORD [h] in the ſabbaths, in the new moons, and on the ſet feaſts,

[y] Num. i. 17, 21.
[z] Ibid. iv. 3, & viii. 24 Ezra iii. 8.
† Or, And he dwelleth, &c.
‡ Heb. Station was at the hand of the ſons, &c. Neh. xi. 24
[a] Num. iii. 6.
[b] Exod. xxv. 30.
[c] Lev. vi. 20. Chap. ix. 29, &c.
[d] Lev. ii. 4.
[e] Ibid. 5, 7.
‖ Or flat plate.
[f] Lev. xix. 35.
[g] Pſal. cxxxiv. 1.
[h] Num. x. 10. Pſal. lxxxi. 3.

by number, according to the order commanded unto them continually before the LORD: 32. And that they ſhould keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy *place*, and [i] the charge of the ſons of Aaron their brethren, in the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD.

[i] Num. iii. 6, 9.

v. 24—32. The ark and all the ſacred furniture being no more to be removed, as they had been during their marches through the wilderneſs, David by divine appointment makes an alteration in the age at which the Levites were to begin their miniſtration, from twenty years old and upwards, (*See Numb.* viii. 24.) And this was the more neceſſary, as the temple ſervice would be much more frequented, than the tabernacle had been at Shiloh or Gibeon. *Note*, (1.) God proportions our ſtrength to our burdens. (2.) If the harveſt is plenteous, the Lord in mercy will raiſe up labourers.—The particular buſineſs of the attendant Levites, who aſſiſted the prieſts, is here marked out to them. 1. They were to keep the courts and chambers clean, prepare the ſacrifices, and meat and drink-offerings, that the prieſts might have them ready to their hands; and this with exactneſs, according to the weights and meaſures preſcribed. 2. Others, morning and evening, at the time of the daily ſacrifice, offered up praiſes to God, with vocal and inſtrumental muſick. 3. The porters were to take care that nothing came in, or was carried out of the temple, contrary to the law; and to execute the commands of their brethren the prieſts. *Note*, Let not thoſe whom God hath advanced to honour, grow proud and imperious; but remember, that, though exalted above their brethren, they are ſtill to treat them as brethren.

CHAP. XXIV.

We have here the diſtribution, 1. *Of the prieſts,* ver. 1—19. 2. *Of the Levites,* ver. 20—31.

1. NOW theſe *are* the diviſions of the ſons of Aaron: [a] The ſons of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 2. But Nadab and Abihu [b] died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the prieſt's office. 3. And David diſtributed them, both Zadok of the ſons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the ſons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their ſervice. 4. And there were more chief men found of the ſons of Eleazar, than of the ſons of Ithamar; and *thus* were they divided: Among the ſons of Eleazar *there were* ſixteen chief men of the houſe of *their* fathers, and eight among the ſons of Ithamar according to the houſe of their fathers. 5. Thus were they divided [c] by lot, one ſort with another; for the governors of the ſanctuary, and governors *of the houſe* of God, were of the ſons of Eleazar, and of the ſons of Ithamar. 6. And Shemaiah the ſon of Nethaneel the ſcribe, *one* of the Levites, wrote them before the king and the princes, and Zadok the prieſt, and Ahimelech the ſon of Abiathar, and *before* the chief of the fathers of the prieſts and Levites: one † principal houſhold being taken for Eleazar, and *one* taken for Ithamar. 7. Now the firſt lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the ſecond to Jedaiah, 8. The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, 9. The fifth to Malchijah, the ſixth to Mijamin, 10. The ſeventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to [d] Abijah, 11. The ninth to Jeſhuah, the tenth to Shecaniah, 12. The eleventh to Eliaſhib, the twelfth to Jakim, 13. The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeſhebeab, 14. The fifteenth to Bilgah, the ſixteenth to Immer, 15. The ſeventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Aphſes, 16. The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezekel, 17. The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul, 18. The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah. 19. [e] Theſe *were* the orderings of them in their ſervice [f] to come into the houſe of the LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Iſrael had commanded him.

[a] Lev. x. 1, 6.
[b] Num. iii. 4. & xxvi. 61.
[c] Joſh. xviii. 10. Prov, xvi. 33.
† Heb. Houſe of the father.
[d] Neh. xii. 17. Luke i. 5.
[e] 1 Cor. i. 10.
[f] Chap. ix. 25.

v. 1—19. The prieſts were divided into twenty-four courſes, who came into waiting by turns. The family of Eleazar, being moſt numerous, had ſixteen courſes; Ithamar, only eight. That there might be no diſpute about precedence, God appoints the determination to be by lot, of the order in which they ſhould miniſter, *v.* 6—18. and theſe courſes, though interrupted probably during the reigns of wicked kings, or in the captivity, yet ſubſiſted ſtill at their return, and till the deſtruction of the ſecond temple. In *Luke* i. 5. we find John the Baptiſt's father of the courſe of Abijah, *v.* 10. *Note*, Order and regularity in God's worſhip muſt be carefully preſerved.

20. ¶ And the reſt of the ſons of Levi *were theſe*: Of the ſons of Amram; Shubael: of the ſons of † Shubael; Jehdeiah. 21. Concerning [g] Rehabiah: of the ſons of Rehabiah, the firſt *was* Iſſhiah. 22. Of the Izharites; ‡ Shelomoth: of the ſons of Shelomoth; Jahath. 23. And the ſons *of* [h] *Hebron*; Jeriah *the firſt*, Amariah the ſecond, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth. 24. *Of* the ſons of Uzziel; Michah: of the ſons of Michah; Shamir. 25. The brother of Michah *was* Iſſhiah: of the ſons of Iſſhiah; Zechariah. 26. [i] The ſons of Merari *were*, Mahli and Muſhi: the ſons of Jaaziah; Beno. 27. ¶ The ſons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri. 28. Of Mahli *came* Eleazar, [k] who had no ſons. 29. Concerning Kiſh: the ſon of Kiſh *was* Jerahmeel. 30. [l] The ſons of Muſhi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth. Theſe *were* the ſons of the Levites, after the houſe of their fathers. 31. Theſe likewiſe [m] caſt lots over againſt their brethren the ſons of Aaron, in the preſence of David the king, and Zadok and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the prieſts and Levites, even § the principal fathers, over againſt their younger brethren.

† Shebuel. Chap. xxiii. 16.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 17.
‡ Shelomith, Chap. xxiii. 18.
[h] Chap xxiii. 19. & xxvi. 31.
[i] Exod. vi. 19. Chap. xxiii. 21.
[k] Chap. xxiii. 22.
[l] Ibid. 23.
[m] Ver. 5.
§ Heb. The chief againſt his younger brother.

v. 20—31. The Levites, divided into the ſame number of courſes as the prieſts, caſt lots alſo to determine their order of ſervice. When God determined their lot, there would be no room for ſtrife. The prieſts are called their brethren, becauſe, though the Levites were in a ſtation inferior, yet they were employed in the ſame ſacred ſervice, and to be regarded not as ſervants, but as aſſiſtants in their work.

CHAP. XXV.

We have here, 1. *The perſons that were to be employed as ſingers, Aſaph, Heman, and Jeduthun,* ver. 1. *Their ſons,* ver. 2—6. *and other artiſts,* ver. 7. 2. *The order in which they were to attend determined by lot,* ver. 8—31.

1. MOreover David and the captains of the hoſt ſeparated to the ſervice of the ſons of [a] Aſaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who ſhould propheſy with harps, with pſalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen, according to their ſervice, was: 2. Of the ſons of Aſaph: Zaccur, and Joſeph, and Nethaniah, and † Aſarelah, the ſons of Aſaph, under the hands of Aſaph, which [b] propheſied ‡ according to the order of the king. 3. Of Jeduthun: the ſons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and § Zeri, and Jeſhaiah, Haſhabiah, and Mattithiah, ‖ ſix, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who propheſied with a harp, to give thanks, and to praiſe the LORD. 4. Of Heman: the ſons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattithiah, † Uzziel, ‡ Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joſhbekaſhah, Mallothi, Hothir, *and* Mahazioth: 5. All theſe *were* the ſons of Heman the king's [c] ſeer [d] in the words of God, to lift up the § horn. And [e] God gave to Heman fourteen ſons and three daughters. 6. All theſe were under the hands of their father, [f] for ſong *in* the houſe of the LORD with cymbals, pſalteries, and harps, for the ſervice of the houſe of God, according to the king's order, to Aſaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. 7. So the number of them, with their brethren, that were inſtructed in the ſongs of the LORD, *even* all that were cunning, *was* [g] two hundred fourſcore and eight. 8. ¶ And they caſt lots, ward againſt *ward*, as well the ſmall as the great, [h] the teacher as the ſcholar. 9. Now the firſt lot came forth for Aſaph to Joſeph, the ſecond to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and ſons *were* twelve: 10. The third to Zaccur, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 11. The fourth to Izri, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 12. The fifth to Nethaniah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 13. The ſixth to Bukkiah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 14. The ſeventh to Jeſharelah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 15. The eighth to Jeſhaiah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve:

[a] Chap. vi. 33, 39, 44.
† Jeſharelah, Ver. 14.
[b] 1 Cor. xiv. 24.
‡ Heb. By the hands of the king.
§ Izri, Ver. 11.
‖ i. e. With Shimei, mentioned ver. 17.
† Azareel, Ver. 18.
‡ Shubael, Ver. 20.
[c] 1 Sam. ix. 9.
[d] 1 Pet. iv. 11.
§ A kind of muſical inſtrument.
[e] Gen. xxxiii. 5. Pſ. cxxvii. 3.
[f] Col. iii. 16.
[g] Chap. xxiii. 5.
[h] 2 Chron. xxiii. 13.

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16. The ninth to Mattaniah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 17. The tenth to Shimei, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 18. The eleventh to Azareel, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 19. The twelfth to Haſhabiah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 20. The thirteenth to Shubael, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 21. The fourteenth to Mattithiah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 22. The fifteenth to Jeremoth, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 23. The ſixteenth to Hananiah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 24. The ſeventeenth to Joſhbekaſhah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 25. The eighteenth to Hanani, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 26. The nineteenth to Mallothi, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 27. The twentieth to Eliathah, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 28. The one and twentieth to Hothir, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 29. The two and twentierh to Giddalti, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 30. The three and twentieth to Mahazioth, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve: 31. The four and twentieth to Romamti-ezer, *he*, his ſons and his brethren *were* twelve.

v. 1—31. The courſes of ſingers are here appointed to accompany the prieſts and Levites in their ſervice. Aſaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, or Ethan, were the three great maſters, and their ſons under them, four and twenty, according to the number of courſes. Their ſervice is called prophecying, (*See* 1 *Cor*. xi. 4. xiv. 24.) for the ſongs in which they praiſed God were chiefly prophetical of the Meſſiah. A variety of inſtruments were uſed to fill the ſacred chorus, whilſt their hearts and voices joined in the ſongs of the Lord. Muſic is highly pleaſing; but we muſt not loſe the ſenſe in the ſound. Songs of praiſe are no longer harmonious, than whilſt we are making melody in our hearts unto God. Each of theſe twenty-four had eleven aſſiſtant ſingers, of the moſt muſical of their brethren, in all 288; and as four thouſand are before ſaid to be appointed for ſong, either they were divided into claſſes, and followed when theſe principal ſingers led; or they might be employed in teaching the divine hymns of David to the reſt of the people in the country. The ſingers were appointed by lot as before, and we may obſerve many of the younger ſons were preferred before their elders. *Note*, The younger in years, are often the elder in grace.

CHAP. XXVI.

We have here an account, 1. *Of the Levites that were to be porters*, ver. 1—19. 2. *Of thoſe that were to be treaſurers and ſtorekeepers*, ver. 20—28. 3. *Of thoſe that were to be officers and judges in the country*, ver. 29—32.

1. CONCERNING the diviſions of the porters: Of the Corhites *was* † Meſhelemiah the ſon of Kore, of the ſons of ‡ Aſaph. 2. And the ſons of Meſhelemiah, *were* Zechariah the firſt-born, Jediael the ſecond, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, 3. Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the ſixth, Elioenai the ſeventh. 4. Moreover, the ſons of Obed-edom *were* Shemaiah the firſt-born, Jehozabad the ſecond, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth, 5. Ammiel the ſixth, Iſſachar the ſeventh, Peulthai the eighth: [a] for God bleſſed him. 6. Alſo unto Shemaiah his ſon were ſons born, that ruled throughout the houſe of their father: for they *were* mighty men of valour. 7. The ſons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whoſe brethren *were* ſtrong men; Elihu and Semachiah. 8. All theſe of the ſons of Obed-edom: they and their ſons and their brethren, able men for ſtrength for the ſervice, *were* threeſcore and two of Obed-edom. 9. And Meſhelemiah had ſons and brethren, ſtrong men, eighteen. 10. Alſo [b] Hoſah of the children of Merari had ſons; Simri the chief (for *though* he was not the firſt-born, yet his father made him the chief). 11. Hilkiah the ſecond, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the ſons and brethren of Hoſah *were* thirteen. 12. Among theſe *were* the diviſions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, *having* wards one againſt another, to miniſter in the houſe of the LORD. 13. ¶ And they caſt lots § as well the ſmall as the great, according to the houſe of their fathers for every gate. 14. And the lot eaſtward fell to ‖ Shelemiah; then for Zechariah his ſon (a wiſe counſeller) they caſt lots, and his lot came out northward. 15. To Obed-edom ſouthward, and to his ſons, the houſe of † Aſuppim. 16. To Shuppim and Hoſah, *the lot came forth* weſtward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the cauſey of the going up, ward againſt ward. 17. Eaſtward *were* ſix Levites, northward four a day, ſouthward four a day, and toward Aſuppim two *and* two. 18. At ‡ Parbar weſtward, four at the cauſey, *and* two at Parbar. 19. Theſe *are* the diviſions of the porters among the ſons of Kore, and among the ſons of Merari.

† Or Shelemiah, Ver. 14.
‡ Ebiaſaph, Chap. vi. 37. & ix. 19.
a Chap. xiii. 14. Pſal. cxxvii. 3. & cxxviii. 1.
b Chap. xvi. 38.
§ Heb. As well for the ſmall as for the great. Chap. xxv. 8.
‖ Meſhelemiah, Ver. 1.

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† Heb. Gatherings.
c See 1 Kings x. 5. 2 Chron. ix. 4.
‡ A Chaldee word, ſignifying an out-part.

v. 1—19. The porters ſeem to have been divided into the ſame number of courſes as the reſt of their brethren, each poſted at their ſeveral gates by lot. They are ſpoken of as mighty men, ſtrong and able, ſuch as their poſt required, to keep conſtant guard, that no profane intruder might be admitted, nor the ſacred houſe violated. The family of Obed-edom were employed in this office. He was bleſſed with a numerous family, and none more deſerving of keeping the charge of the temple, than he who had ſo chearfully entertained, and diligently waited on, the ark at his own houſe. They who have been faithful in leſſer ſervices, deſerve to be preferred. Simri, one of the ſons of Hoſah, was chief, his elder brother being probably by bodily indiſpoſition incapacitated for the ſervice.

20. And of the Levites, Ahijah *was* over the treaſures of the houſe of God, and over [d] the treaſures of the † dedicate things. 21. *As concerning* the ſons of ‡ Laadan: the ſons of the Gerſhonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of Laadan the Gerſhonite, *were* Jehieli. 22. The ſons of § Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* over the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD. 23. Of the Amramites, *and* the Izharites, the Hebronites, *and* the Uzzielites: 24. And [e] Shebuel the ſon of Gerſhom the ſon of Moſes, *was* ruler of the treaſures. 25. And his brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his ſon, and Jeſhaiah his ſon, and Joram his ſon, and Zichri his ſon, and [f] Shelomith his ſon. 26. Which Shelomith and his brethren, *were* over all the treaſures of the dedicate things, which David the king and the chief fathers, the captains over thouſands and hundreds, and the captains of the hoſt had dedicated. 27. ‖ Out of the ſpoils won in battles, did they dedicate to maintain the houſe of the LORD. 28. And all that Samuel [g] the ſeer, and Saul the ſon of Kiſh, and Abner the ſon of Ner, and Joab the ſon of Zeruiah had dedicated, *and* whoſoever had dedicated *any thing*, *it was* under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.

d Deut. xii. 11. Chap. xxviii. 12. Mal. iii. 10.
† Heb. Holy things.
‡ Libni, Chap. vi. 17.
§ Jehiel, Chap. xxiii. 8. & xxix. 8.
e Chap. xxiii. 16.
f Ibid. 18.
‖ Heb. Out of the battles and ſpoils.
g 1 Sam. ix. 9.

v. 20—28. In the houſe of God there were great ſtores needed for the daily uſe and ſervice of the altar, veſtments, utenſils, &c. and alſo great treaſures, either offerings of the people, or things which had been dedicated to God by Samuel, David, Saul, Abner, and Joab, chiefly of the ſpoil won in war. Over theſe Ahijah at firſt preſided, but afterwards they were under the care of different perſons. *Note*, (1.) When God increaſes our ſtores with providential bleſſings, he is entitled to a part at leaſt of the wealth he beſtows. (2.) There is in the church of Chriſt greater treaſures, not indeed of ſilver and gold, for his kingdom is not of this world; but more valuable and durable treaſures, of ſpiritual wiſdom, and divine grace; and not, like theſe, locked up, but freely diſpenſed to every faithful worſhipper, and yet there ſtill remains enough and to ſpare.

29. ¶ Of the Izrahites, Chenaiah and his ſons *were* for the outward buſineſs over Iſrael, for [h] officers and judges. 30. *And* of the Hebronites, Haſhabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thouſand and ſeven hundred *were* † officers among them of Iſrael on this ſide Jordan weſtward, in all buſineſs of the LORD, and in the ſervice of the king. 31. Among the Hebronites *was* [i] Jerijah the chief, *even* among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David, they were ſought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour, [k] at Jazer of Gilead. 32. And his brethren, men of valour, *were* two thouſand and ſeven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, for every matter pertaining to God, and [l] affairs of the king.

h Chap. xxiii. 4.
† Heb. Over the charge.
i Chap. xxiii. 19.
k See Joſh. xxi. 34, 39.
l 2 Chron. xix. 11.

v. 29—32. The ſervice at Jeruſalem was well provided for; here the buſineſs of the country is alike taken care of. The

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Levites had the adminiſtration of juſtice, with the princes and elders of the ſeveral tribes, who may be ſuppoſed not ſo well ſkilled in the law, and in need of their aſſiſtance. All matters relating to God's worſhip alſo, and the king's revenue, came under their care. In the remote tribes beyond Jordan, the greateſt number was ſtationed, where they would be moſt in danger, but by their preſence might be preſerved faithful in the ſervice of God, and loyal to their ſovereign. Theſe regulations employed the laſt year of David, whoſe uſefulneſs ended only with his life. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt life endures, there is always ſomething to be done for God. (2.) They are like to be a happy people, who are taught to fear God, and honour the king.

CHAP. XXVII.

In this chapter we have the civil liſt, including the military. 1. *The twelve captains for every ſeveral month of the year*, ver. 1—15. 2. *The princes of the ſeveral tribes*, ver. 16—24. 3. *The officers of the court*, ver. 25—34.

1. NOW the children of Iſrael after their number, *to wit*, the chief fathers and captains of thouſands, and hundreds, and their officers that ſerved the king in any matter of the courſes, which came in and went out month by month, throughout all the months of the year, of every courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 2. Over the firſt courſe for the firſt month, *was* [a] Jaſhobeam the ſon of Zabdiel: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 3. Of the children of Perez, *was* the chief of all the captains of the hoſt for the firſt month. 4. And over the courſe of the ſecond month, *was* † Dodai an Ahohite, and of his courſe *was* Mikloth alſo the ruler: in his courſe likewiſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 5. The third captain of the hoſt for the third month, *was* Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada a ‡ chief prieſt: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 6. This *is that* Benaiah, [b] *who was* mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his courſe *was* Ammizabad his ſon. 7. The fourth *captain* for the fourth month, *was* [c] Aſahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his ſon after him: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 8. The fifth captain for the fifth month, *was* Shamhuth the Izrahite: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 9. The ſixth *captain* for the ſixth month, *was* [d] Ira the ſon of Ikkeſh the Tekoite: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 10. The ſeventh *captain* for the ſeventh month, *was* [e] Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 11. The eighth *captain* for the eighth month, *was* [f] Sibbecai the Huſhathite, of the Zarhites: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 12. The ninth *captain* for the ninth month, *was* [g] Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 13. The tenth *captain* for the tenth month, *was* [h] Mahari the Netophathite, of the Zarhites: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 14. The eleventh *captain* for the eleventh month, *was* [i] Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand. 15. The twelfth *captain* for the twelfth month, *was* § Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel: and in his courſe *were* twenty and four thouſand.

[a] 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. Chap. xi. 11.
† Dodo. 2 Sam. xxiii 9.
‡ Or, principal officer.
[b] 2 Sam. xxiii. 20, 22, 23. Chap. xi. 22, &c.
[c] 2 Sam. xxiii. 24. Chap. xi. 26.
[d] Chap. xi. 28.
[e] Chap. xi. 27.
[f] 2 Sam. xxi. 18.
[g] Chap. xi. 28.
[h] 2 Sam. xxiii. 28.
[i] Chap. xi. 31.
§ Heled. Chap. xi. 30.

v. 1—15. The military eſtabliſhment was divided into twelve courſes of twenty-four thouſand men, ſerving monthly, amounting in all to 288,000 men. This regulation, though now mentioned, ſeems to have taken place early in David's reign, Aſahel, *v.* 7. being killed whilſt David reigned in Hebron. Without the expence of a ſtanding army, a vaſt force was thus always ready; a well-ordered militia, the nation's beſt ſecurity. The chief fathers, *v.* 1. ſeem not to be the real fathers of the ſoldiers, but the general officers, who had the chief ſuperintendance. Benaiah, one of them, is called a chief prieſt, *v.* 5. but *Cohen* ſignifies a prince, or ruler, it being hardly probable, that one of that order would be engaged thus in a military life. *Note*, When we are at peace, it is wiſe to be always ready for war: and eſpecially in our ſpiritual concerns, never to think ourſelves ſo ſafe, as not to keep a conſtant guard and watch againſt our enemies.

16. ¶ Furthermore, over the tribes of Iſrael: the ruler of the Reubenites *was* Eliezer the ſon of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the ſon of Maachah: 17. Of the Levites, [k] Haſhabiah the ſon of Kemuel: of the Aaronites, Zadok: 18. Of Judah, † Elihu, *one* of the brethren of David: of Iſſachar, Omri the ſon of Michael: 19. Of Zebulun, Iſhmaiah the ſon of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the ſon of Azriel: 20. Of the children of Ephraim, Hoſhea the ſon of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manaſſeh, Joel the ſon of Pedaiah: 21. Of the half-*tribe* of Manaſſeh in Gilead, Iddo the ſon of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaaſiel the ſon of Abner. 22. Of Dan, Azareel the ſon of Jeroham. Theſe *were* the princes of the tribes of Iſrael. 23. ¶ But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under: becauſe the LORD had ſaid, he would increaſe Iſrael like to [l] the ſtars of the heavens. 24. Joab the ſon of Zeruiah [m] began to number, but he finiſhed not, becauſe [n] there fell wrath for it againſt Iſrael, neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David. 25. ¶ And over the king's treaſures *was* Azmaveth the ſon of Adiel: and over the ſtorehouſes in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the caſtles, *was* Jehonathan the ſon of Uzziah. 26. And over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground, *was* Ezri the ſon of Chelub. 27. And over the vineyard *was* Shimei the Ramathite: over ‡ the increaſe of the vineyards for the vine-cellars, *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite. 28. And over the olive-trees, and the ſycamore-trees, that *were* in the low plains, *was* Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil *was* Joaſh. 29. And over the herds that fed in Sharon, *was* Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds *that were* in the valleys, *was* Shaphat the ſon of Adlai. 30. Over the camels alſo, *was* Obil the Iſhmeelite: and over the aſſes, *was* Jehdeiah the Meronothite. 31. And over the flocks, *was* Jaziz the Hagerite. All theſe *were* the rulers of the ſubſtance which *was* king David's. 32. Alſo Jonathan David's uncle was a counſeller, a wiſe man, and a § ſcribe: and Jehiel ‖ the ſon of Hachmoni *was* with the king's ſons. 33. And [o] Ahithophel *was* the king's counſeller, and [p] Huſhai the Archite *was* the king's companion. 34. And after Ahithophel, *was* Jehoiada the ſon of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king's army *was* [q] Joab.

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[k] Chap. xxvi. 30.
† Eliab. 1 Sam. xvi. 6.
[l] Gen. xv. 5.
[m] Chap. xxi. 4.
[n] 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. Chap. xxi. 7.
‡ Heb. That which was of the vineyards.
§ Or ſecretary.
‖ Or Hachmonite.
[o] 2 Sam. xv. 12.
[p] Ibid. 37. & xvi. 17.
[q] Chap. xi. 6.

v. 16—34. 1. Every tribe ſeems to have ſtill a preſident, or prince; who, tho' ſubject to the king, had great authority under him among his brethren. Among theſe we find a ſon of Abner: his father's oppoſition to David prevented not the ſon's preferment.

2. In the numbering of the people, *v.* 23. David, deſirous only to know the ſtate of his men of war, numbered not thoſe under twenty years of age, for the reaſon given, *v.* 23. but even the regiſter Joab had taken, was never entered into the book of annals, David having been convinced of his ſin, and unwilling any monument of it ſhould remain. *Note*, Though our ſins ſhould never be forgotten by us, yet it is deſirable, that the records of them ſhould not remain; leſt poſterity, inſtead of being excited to imitate what is excellent, ſhould ſtumble at what is evil.

3. David's finances were wiſely managed. He had not only a treaſurer to take care of the tribute, and the money brought into his exchequer; but he had vaſt tracts of crown lands, for corn and oil, vineyards, flocks, and herds, over which ſeveral officers were placed; an example of good management to his ſubjects.

4. About his perſon and court were ſelect perſons eminent for their wiſdom. One was preceptor to his children. He knew the advantage of a good education, and would therefore train up his ſons betimes in the way they ſhould go. Others were his counſellors, and, among them, Ahithophel. Huſhai had the diſtinguiſhed honour of being his companion and friend. *Note*, (1.) A wicked man may be a wiſe counſellor. (2.) Though a good king may find it neceſſary to make uſe of ſuch in his cabinet for council, he will chuſe a better man for his companion and friend.

CHAP. XXVIII.

The account here given of David's end is truly noble, 1. *A general convention of the ſtates is ſummoned*, ver. 1. 2. *Solomon is appointed to the crown, and to build the temple*, ver. 2—7. 3. *David exhorts Solomon and the people to make religion their buſineſs*, ver. 8—10. 4. *Delivers to Solomon the model and materials for building the temple*, ver. 11—19. 5. *Encourages him to undertake it*, ver. 20, 21.

1. AND David aſſembled all the princes of Iſrael, [a] the princes of the tribes, and [b] the captains of the

[a] Chap. xxvii. 16.
[b] Ibid. 1, &c.

the companies that miniſtred to the king by courſe, and the captains over the thouſands, and captains over the hundreds, and [c] the ſtewards over all the ſubſtance and † poſſeſſion of the king, ‡ and of his ſons, with the § officers, and with [d] the mighty men, and with all the valiant men unto Jeruſalem. 2. Then David the king ſtood up upon his feet, and ſaid, Hear me, my brethren, and my people, *As for me*, [e] I had in mine heart to build an houſe of [f] reſt for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for [g] the footſtool of our God, and had made ready for the building: 3. But God ſaid unto me, [h] Thou ſhalt not build an houſe for my name, becauſe thou *haſt been* a man of war, and haſt ſhed ‖ blood. 4. Howbeit, the LORD God of Iſrael choſe me before all the houſe of my father, to be king over Iſrael for ever: for he hath choſen [i] Judah *to be* the ruler; and of the houſe of Judah, [k] the houſe of my father: and among the ſons of my father, [l] he liked me to make *me* king over all Iſrael: 5. And [m] of all my ſons (for the LORD hath given me many ſons) [n] he hath choſen Solomon my ſon, to ſit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Iſrael. 6. And he ſaid unto me, [o] Solomon thy ſon, he ſhall build my houſe and my courts: for I have choſen him *to be* my ſon, and I will be his father. 7. Moreover, I will eſtabliſh his kingdom for ever, [p] if he be † conſtant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day. 8. Now therefore in the ſight of all Iſrael the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, keep and ſeek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: that ye may poſſeſs this good land, and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you for ever. 9. ¶ And thou, Solomon my ſon, [q] know thou the God of thy father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for [r] the LORD ſearcheth all hearts, and underſtandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou ſeek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever. 10. Take heed now, for the LORD hath choſen thee to build an houſe for the ſanctuary: be ſtrong and do *it*.

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[c] Chap. xxvii. 25.
† Or cattle.
‡ Or, and his ſons.
§ Or eunuchs.
[d] Chap. xi. 10.
[e] 2 Sam. vii. 2.
[f] Pſ. cxxxii. 5.
[g] Pſ. xcix. 5. & cxxxii. 7.
[h] 2 Sam. vii. 5, 13. 1 Kings v. 3. Chap. xxii. 8.
‖ Heb. Bloods.
[i] Gen. xlix. 8. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. Chap. v. 2. Pſ. lx. 7. & lxxviii. 68.
[k] 1 Sam. xvi. 1.
[l] Ibid. 12.
[m] Chap. xxiii. 1.
[n] Chap. xxii. 9.
[o] 2 Sam. vii. 13, 14. 2 Chron. i. 9.
[p] 1 Kings ii. 3.
† Heb. Strong.
[q] Jer. ix. 24. John xvii. 3.
[r] 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Chap. xxix. 17. Pſ. vii. 9. & cxxxix. 2. Prov. xvii. 3. Jer. xi. 20. & xvii. 10. & xx. 12.

v. 1—10. Sinking under age and infirmities, the good old king makes one laſt effort to addreſs the grand aſſembly he had convened for the ſolemn appointment of his ſucceſſor.

1. He opens his ſpeech with the moſt gracious expreſſions; and whilſt as their king he demands attention, he calls them his brethren, and beloved people, to teſtify the affection he bore them, and to engage a more ready concurrence with his intentions. *Note*, (1.) Chriſt, the greater king of his Iſrael, is not aſhamed of this endeared relation, *Heb.* xi. 11. (2.) Reſpect and kindneſs to inferiors will engage their more chearful ſervice.

2. He lets them know his intentions to have built a temple for the ark, the footſtool of God, his preſence being viſible over it between the cherubims; but God, for the reaſons given, *chap.* xxii. 7, 8. prevented him, and reſerved it for his ſon's reign, who ſhould have leiſure for the vaſt undertaking. However, he had amaſſed vaſt preparations to facilitate the work.

3. He informs them of the divine appointment of Solomon for his ſucceſſor; nor need it ſeem ſtrange to them, that a younger ſon of his family was preferred to this honour. Judah and Jeſſe were younger branches, yet elected of God; and himſelf the youngeſt ſon, yet of ſovereign grace advanced to the kingdom. God has a right to chuſe who ſhall rule his people, and Solomon is appointed to that ſtation of eminence, and ordained to build the glorious temple; and if he approved himſelf faithful to God, as he had begun, the proſperity of his kingdom would be for ever eſtabliſhed. *Note*, (1.) Every ſon of God, and heir of his kingdom, is an elect veſſel, and reigns not in right of nature, but of grace. (2.) Perſeverance in the path of duty is the only way to make our calling and election ſure.

4. He ſolemnly, in the preſence of God and the congregation, charges them to ſearch what is the will of God, and diligently and faithfully to obey it, which was not only their bounden duty, but alſo their higheſt intereſt, as what would ſecure to them and theirs the poſſeſſion of their glorious inheritance. *Note*, (1.) If we would follow God faithfully, we muſt ſearch the ſcriptures diligently, that we may know what he would have us to do. (2.) The beſt inheritance we can leave our children, is the example of our piety, and the bleſſing of God promiſed thereupon.

Laſtly, He concludes with a ſtriking exhortation to his ſon; [1.] To know his father's God, to be acquainted with his glorious perfections, and to remember the mercies received from him, as the ſtrongeſt obligation to love and obey him. [2.] To ſerve him in ſincerity and truth, with delight and readineſs. *Note*, Love to God makes us count none of his commandments grievous. [3.] He urges this exhortation with the conſideration of God's all-ſearching wiſdom, who knows the ſecrets of all hearts, and who rewards and puniſhes with unbiaſſed equity, thoſe who faithfully ſeek him, or thoſe who perfidiouſly forſake him. *Note*, It is juſt that they who forſake God, ſhould be forſaken by him. [4.] As he was peculiarly honoured, as choſen of God to build the temple, he was more eſpecially called upon to take heed to his ways, that he might walk and pleaſe God, and not be diſcouraged at any difficulties, ſince God, who had appointed him the work, was able to carry him through. *Note*, (1.) We can never be enough jealous of ourſelves, or confident in God. (2.) When God employs us, we may be ſure he will ſupport us.

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11. ¶ Then David gave to Solomon his ſon [s] the pattern of the porch, and of [t] the houſes thereof, and of the treaſuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-ſeat. 12. And the pattern of all that he had by the ſpirit, of the courts of the houſe of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treaſuries of the houſe of God, and of [u] the treaſuries of the dedicate things. 13. Alſo for the courſes of the prieſts and the Levites, and for all the work of the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD, and for all the veſſels of ſervice in the houſe of the LORD. 14. *He gave* of gold by weight, for *things* of gold, for all inſtruments of all manner of ſervice, *ſilver alſo* for all inſtruments of ſilver, by weight, for all inſtruments of every kind of ſervice: 15. Even the weight [x] for the candleſticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candleſtick, and for the lamps thereof: and for the candleſticks of ſilver by weight, *both* for the candleſtick, and *alſo* for the lamps thereof, according to the uſe of every candleſtick. 16. And by weight *he gave* gold [y] for the tables of ſhew-bread, for every table, and *likewiſe* ſilver for the tables of ſilver; 17. Alſo pure gold for fleſh-hooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden baſons *he gave gold* by weight for every baſon: and *likewiſe ſilver* by weight for every baſon of ſilver: 18. And for the altar of incenſe, refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of [z] the chariot of the cherubims, that ſpread out *their wings*, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 19. All *this*, *ſaid David*, [a] the LORD made me underſtand in writing by *his* hand upon me, *even* all the works of this pattern. 20. And David ſaid to Solomon his ſon, [b] Be ſtrong and of good courage, and do *it*: fear not, nor be diſmayed, for the LORD God, *even* my God, *will be* with thee, [c] he will not fail thee, nor forſake thee, untill thou haſt finiſhed all the work for the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD. 21. And behold, the courſes of the prieſts and the Levites, *even they ſhall be with thee*, for all the ſervice of the houſe of God, and *there ſhall be* with thee for all manner of workmanſhip, [d] every willing ſkilful man for any manner of ſervice: alſo the princes and all the people *will be* wholly at thy commandment.

[s] See Exod. xxv. 40. Ver. 19.
[t] 1 Kings vi. 10.
[u] Chap. xxvi. 20.
[x] Exod. xxv. 31. 1 Kings vii. 49.
[y] 2 Chron. iv. 19.
[z] 1 Sam. iv. 4. 1 Kings vi. 23, &c. Pſ. xviii. 10. & lxviii. 17.
[a] See Exod. xxv. 40. & xxvi. 30.
[b] Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. Joſh. i. 6, &c. Chap. xxii. 13.
[c] Joſh. i. 5. Heb. xiii. 5.
[d] Exod. xxxv. 25, 26. & xxxvi. 1, 2.

v. 11—21. We have here,

1. An exact copy given to Solomon of the temple, veſſels, and manner of ſervice in it, either by divine inſpiration communicated to David, or written by the finger of God, as the tables of the law were, *v.* 19. The cherubims, *v.* 18. are called the chariot of the cherubims, becauſe God's glorious preſence was manifeſted between them; and in the *Pſalms*, the angels, whom theſe cherubims repreſented, are called the chariots of God, *Pſal.* lxviii. 17.

2. That the veſſels might be exact, David weighed the gold and ſilver for each; vaſt and immenſe they were in number and ſize, amounting, according to a jewiſh author, to no leſs than 810,000. Beſides the original golden table and candleſtick, which were in the tabernacle, ten others of the ſame ſort were placed in the temple oppoſite each other. The ſilver candleſticks ſeem for the prieſt's apartments, and the ſilver tables probably for the uſe of the court where the ſacrifices were prepared and offered. *Note*, When Jeſus, the true temple, appeared among men, his outward form ſeemed not to correſpond to this glorious type; but they who by faith diſcovered the incarnate God, beheld his glory infinitely ſurpaſſing.

3. David repeats his encouragement. No expence, danger, or difficulty, muſt deter him. God being his helper, he might be aſſured of ſucceſs, as David could teſtify by experience; and he might expect ready aſſiſtance from prieſts, princes, and

people, whom God would incline to further the work to the utmoſt of their power. *Note*, (1.) If we have God's promiſes on our ſide, it becomes us to renounce every unbelieving fear. (2.) When God inclines miniſters and people to be hearty in the work, the ſpiritual building riſes gloriouſly.

CHAP. XXIX.

Here, 1. *David preſſeth the people to contribute towards the building and furniſhing of the temple*, ver. 1—5. 2. *They make their preſents accordingly*, ver. 6—9. 3. *David offers up prayers, praiſes, and ſacrifices to God upon the occaſion*, ver. 10—21. 4. *Solomon inthroned with great joy and magnificence*, ver. 22—25. 5. *David departs*, ver. 26—30. *And it is hard to ſay which ſhines brighter here, the ſetting or the riſing ſun.*

1. FUrthermore, David the king ſaid unto all the congregation, Solomon my ſon, whom alone God hath choſen, [a] *is yet* young and tender, and the work *is* great: for the palace *is* not for man, but for the LORD God. 2. Now I have prepared with all my might for the houſe of my God, the gold for *things to be made* of gold, and the ſilver for *things* of ſilver, and the braſs for *things* of braſs, the iron for *things* of iron, and wood for *things* of wood; [b] onyx-ſtones, and *ſtones* to be ſet, gliſtering ſtones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious ſtones, and marble-ſtones in abundance. 3. Moreover, [c] becauſe I have ſet my affection to the houſe of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and ſilver, *which* I have given to the houſe of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy houſe, 4. *Even* three thouſand talents of gold, of the gold of [d] Ophir, and ſeven thouſand talents of refined ſilver, to overlay the walls of the houſes *withal*: 5. The gold for *things* of gold, and the ſilver for *things* of ſilver, and for all manner of work *to be made* by the hand of artificers. And who *then* is [e] willing to conſecrate his ſervice this day unto the LORD? 6. ¶ Then [f] the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Iſrael, and the captains of thouſands, and of hundreds, with [g] the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly, 7. And gave for the ſervice of the houſe of God, of gold, five thouſand talents, and ten thouſand drams; and of ſilver, ten thouſand talents; and of braſs eighteen thouſand talents; and one hundred thouſand talents of iron. 8. And they with whom *precious* ſtones were found, gave *them* to the treaſures of the LORD, by the hand of [h] Jehiel the Gerſhonite. 9. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered [i] willingly, becauſe with [k] perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king alſo rejoiced with great joy.

[a] 1 King iii. 7. Chap. xxii. 5. Prov. iv. 1.
[b] Iſa. liv. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 18, &c.
[c] 2 Cor. v. 14.
[d] 1 Kings ix. 28.
[e] 2 Cor. viii. 12.
[f] Chap. xxvii. 1.
[g] Chap. xxvii. 25, &c.
[h] Chap. xxvi. 21.
[i] Judg. v. 9.
[k] 1 Kings viii. 61.

v. 1—9. Having finiſhed his diſcourſe to Solomon, he addreſſes himſelf to the people, to exhort them to a liberal contribution. The work was great: a palace for God deſerved the utmoſt magnificence: we can never do enough for him. Solomon was young, and therefore their help was the more needful: beginners muſt be encouraged. What he himſelf had done ſhould engage their liberality. He intended not to lay the chief burden on them; he had prepared with his utmoſt might, and led the way; for he had an hearty affection to the ſervice, which made him ſo chearful a giver, and ſo warm an advocate for it; and therefore he might well aſk, *Who is willing to conſecrate his ſervice this day unto the Lord?* not doubting but they would be as ready immediately to give, as he was to ſollicit. *Note*, (1.) That is a pleaſing ſervice to God, which is done from hearty affection to him. (2.) When our heart is right, our hand will be open: a niggard ſoul cannot be a child of God. (3.) God loveth a chearful giver. (4.) When we lead the way ourſelves in what is good, we can with confidence ſay, Be ye followers of me. (5.) It is not enough to give ourſelves, but we are bound to ſtir up others alſo to every work of faith, and labour of love. (6.) What we do for God, muſt be done without delay.—The ſucceſs of his exhortation was great. Willingly the princes and people offered a ſum immenſe! amounting, according to Brerewood's computation, to 22,607,500 l. beſides precious ſtones, and of braſs and iron a prodigious weight. The people were happy that they had it to give, and hearts to offer it; and David rejoiced at a liberality which teſtified ſuch real zeal for God's glory, and afforded ſuch a promiſing proſpect for his ſon. *Note*, (1.) What we beſtow in God's ſervice, brings uſually its own reward in preſent comfort. (2.) Every Chriſtian is happy to ſee a mutual emulation in good works. (3.) It is a joy to God's departing ſaints, to leave the world in the comfortable proſpect of the growing increaſe of God's church.

10. ¶ Wherefore David bleſſed the LORD before all the congregation: and David ſaid, Bleſſed *be* thou, LORD God of Iſrael our father, for ever and ever. 11. [l] Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatneſs, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majeſty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth, *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. 12. [m] Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and [n] thou reigneſt over all, and in thine hand *is* power and might, and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give ſtrength unto all. 13. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious name. 14. But [o] who *am* I, and what *is* my people, [p] that we ſhould † be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort? for all things *come* of thee, and [q] of thine own have we given thee. 15. For [r] we *are* ſtrangers before thee, and ſojourners, as *were* all our fathers: [s] our days on the earth *are* as a ſhadow, and *there is* none abiding. 16. O LORD our God, all this ſtore that we have prepared to build thee an houſe for thine holy name, *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own. 17. I know alſo, my God, that [t] thou trieſt the heart, and [u] haſt pleaſure in uprightneſs. As for me, in the uprightneſs of mine heart I have willingly offered all theſe things: and now have I ſeen with joy, thy people which are preſent here, to offer willingly unto thee. 18. O LORD God of Abraham, Iſaac, and of Iſrael our fathers, [x] keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and [y] prepare their heart unto thee. 19. And [z] give unto Solomon my ſon a perfect heart to keep thy commandments, thy teſtimonies, and thy ſtatutes, and to do all *theſe things*, and to build the palace [a] *for* the which I have made proviſion. 20. ¶ And David ſaid to all the congregation, Now [b] bleſs the LORD your God. And all the congregation bleſſed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worſhipped the LORD and the king. 21. And they ſacrificed ſacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD on the morrow after that day, *even* a thouſand bullocks, a thouſand rams, *and* a thouſand lambs, with their drink-offerings, and ſacrifices in abundance for all Iſrael: 22. And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladneſs, and they made Solomon the ſon of David king [c] the ſecond time, and anointed *him* unto the LORD *to be* the chief governor, and Zadok *to be* prieſt.

[l] Mat. vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17. Rev. v. 13.
[m] Prov. x. 22. Jam. i. 17.
[n] Dan. vi. 26, 27.
[o] Pſ. cxv. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 5.
[p] Phil. ii. 13.
† Heb. Obtain ſtrength.
[q] 1 Cor. iv. 7.
[r] Pſ. xxxix. 12. Heb. xi. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
[s] Job xiv. 2. Pſ. xc. 9. & cii. 11. & cxliv. 4.
[t] 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Chap. xxviii. 9.
[u] Pſ. li. 6. Prov. xi. 20.
[x] Jer. x. 23.
[y] Prov. xvi. 1.
[z] Pſ. lxxii. 1.
[a] Chap. xxii. 14. & ver. 4.
[b] Pſ. ciii. 1, 20.
[c] 1 Kings i. 35.

v. 10—22. Big with the ſenſe of divine mercy, and filled with joy on the gracious inclinations which appeared in the people, David pours out in thankful adoration his grateful heart before God and this great congregation. *Note*, Praiſe and thankſgiving are ever our bounden duty; but they eſpecially become departing ſaints of God, ready to enter on the ſervice of everlaſting praiſe.

1. We have here his grateful prayer. [1.] With adoration he begins, bleſſing the name of Iſrael's God, exalting his almighty power, his tranſcendent greatneſs and glory, his ſovereign dominion, and univerſal agency and government: of him and from him came all they poſſeſſed, and to him alone the praiſe of all was due. *Note*, When we approach God in prayer, our hearts ſhould be impreſſed with a ſenſe of his adorable perfections, that with reverence and godly fear we may bow before him. [2.] With thankfulneſs he aſcribes to God the ability and inclination he had given them to contribute ſo liberally for his ſervice. *Note*, No works merit any thing at God's hands; but it is a freſh obligation upon ourſelves, that we are inclined or enabled to do good. [3.] With deep humility he mentions their poor imperfect ſervices. Though ſo great a king, ſo good a man, he ſpeaks of himſelf as a worm before God; and of his people, though ſo rich, numerous, and great, as ſtrangers and ſojourners; as creatures of a day, whoſe momentary exiſtence made their greateſt ſervices appear trivial before the eternal God. And what they had offered, was but out of the abundance God had beſtowed, only a part of what was lent them of the Lord. *Note*, (1.) They who have the deepeſt ſenſe of God's perfections, will have the lowlieſt apprehenſions of themſelves. (2.) Whatever we are enabled to do for God, from him both the holy deſire and the juſt work doth proceed; ſo that boaſting is for ever excluded. (3.) The more we conſider how ſhort our moment is, the greater diligence we ſhould give to fill it with works of faith, and labours of love, which, through Jeſus Chriſt, may redound to the praiſe and glory of God. [4.] He could appeal to God for the ſimplicity of his heart before him, as he was comfortably confident alſo in the people, *v.* 17. *Note*, It is a ſolid ſatisfaction to have the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in

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godly ſincerity we have our converſation in the world. [5.] He begs, that God, as their covenant God, would ever keep alive on the hearts of the people the ſame gracious diſpoſitions, and incline them to his bleſſed ſervice; and that Solomon might poſſeſs an upright heart, be enabled exactly to correſpond with the pattern given him to build God's palace; and, above all, to follow God's holy law, without which the temple-ſervice could profit him nothing. *Note*, (1.) Our good purpoſes will be of no long continuance, unleſs he who hath excited them, continues to preſerve them; for we have no fund of grace in ourſelves. (2.) This muſt awaken our unceaſing prayers for continual ſtrength to perſevere. (3.) A heart ſincerely fixed on himſelf, is the greateſt bleſſing God can beſtow upon us here below.

2. As the king enjoined, the people gladly gave their aſſent to this grateful prayer, bowing their heads in token of adoration, and withal paying their reſpects to the king, whom they regarded as the chief human means of their preſent happy ſtate. On this occaſion a great ſacrifice was offered of burnt-offerings in honour of God, and peace-offerings of thankſgiving; on which the whole congregation were nobly feaſted, and rejoiced before the Lord. Solomon now was a ſecond time ſolemnly inveſted with the ſovereign power, as he had been more haſtily before, on Adonijah's aſpiring to the throne; and Abiathar, for his adherence to him, being degraded, Zadok was appointed chief prieſt in his ſtead. *Note* (1.) Whilſt we bow the head before God, we muſt lift up the heart to him. (2.) Thoſe who in God's hands are made to us the inſtruments of ſpiritual good, we muſt ever love and reſpect. (3.) Holy joy ſhould enliven every act of communion with God. (4.) We have now an unction from the Holy One, but we expect a ſecond more glorious inauguration, when the Son of David ſhall bring his ſaints to ſit down with him on his throne.

23. Then Solomon ſat on [d] the throne of the LORD
as king inſtead of David his father, and proſpered, and
all Iſrael obeyed him. 24. And [e] all the princes and the
mighty men, and all the ſons likewiſe of king David
† ſubmitted themſelves unto Solomon the king. 25. And
the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the
ſight of all Iſrael, and [f] beſtowed upon him *ſuch* royal
majeſty as had not been on any king before him in Iſrael.
26. ¶ Thus David the ſon of Jeſſe reigned over all
Iſrael. 27. And [g] the time that he reigned over Iſrael,
was forty years; [h] ſeven years reigned he in Hebron, and
thirty and three *years* reigned he in Jeruſalem. 28.
And he died [i] in a good old age, full of days, riches, and
honour: and Solomon his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 29.
Now the acts of David the king, firſt and laſt, behold,
they *are* written in the book of Samuel the ſeer, and
in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book
of Gad the ſeer. 30. With all his reign and his might,
and [k] the times that went over him, and over Iſrael, and
over all the kingdoms of the countries.

[d] Iſa. ix. 7. [e] Eccleſ. viii. 2. † Heb. Gave the hand under Solomon. See Gen. xxiv. 2. & xlvii. 29. Ezek. xvii. 18. [f] 1 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chron. i. 12. Eccleſ. ii. 9. [g] 2 Sam. v. 4. 1 Kings ii. 11.

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[h] 2 Sam. v. 5. [i] Chap. xxiii. 1. Job xlii. 17. [k] Dan. ii. 21.

v. 23—30. We have here,

1. Solomon on the throne. It is called the Lord's throne, he being Iſrael's immediate king, ſetting up whom he pleaſed for his vicegerents, preſcribing all their laws, and directing them in all their undertakings. Great proſperity was the natural conſequence therefore, as long as the king continued faithful to him who had appointed him. All the great men of the kingdom, and David's ſons, though elder than Solomon, peaceably acquieſced in the divine appointment, and ſwore fidelity and allegiance to him; ſo that he appeared with diſtinguiſhed ſplendor, and out-ſhone all his predeceſſors. Perhaps his perſon was as majeſtic, as his throne reſplendent, and commanded awe and reſpect from all around him. *Note*, Since David's Son, the greater than Solomon, now ſits on the throne, it ſhould be our happineſs and honour to ſubmit to his government, and pledge to him our faithful hearts.

2. David in the grave. After a long reign, diſtinguiſhed with glory, and crowned with riches and honour, the good old king, full of days, like a ripe ſheaf in time of harveſt, was gathered to the tomb; and as, during all his greatneſs, that chiefly engaged his deſire, he went to awake up in God's likeneſs, in which alone he hoped to enjoy perfect felicity. For a fuller account of his life and victories, we are referred to the books of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad; either the canonical books of Samuel, the latter of which theſe prophets might have written, or to ſome authentic records that they kept, which, not being divinely inſpired, nor deſigned to be preſerved in the church, are ſince periſhed. *Note*, (1.) The throne and the tomb are but a ſtep aſunder. This ſtamps vanity on all ſublunary greatneſs, and ſhould quicken us to ſeek a more enduring kingdom. (2.) A good man, however diſtinguiſhed his ſtation, will have enough of this world, and wait with deſire his diſmiſſion to that bleſt abode, where only true joys are to be found.

THE EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR; OR, A PRACTICAL COMMENT Upon the SECOND BOOK of CHRONICLES.

This book is a continuation of the former, from the beginning of Solomon's reign, to the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon, containing a hiſtory of about 479 *years. The kings of Iſrael, after the ſeparation made under Rehoboam, are entirely omitted. The kings of Judah alone, from whom the Meſſiah was to deſcend, are the ſubjects of theſe annals. Much we met with of them in the book of Kings; more anecdotes concerning them are here preſerved. In general, all the good kings were ſucceſsful, the wicked ſeverely puniſhed. The path of duty is the path of bleſſing; but diſobedience to God leads inevitably to miſery. In particular we have, the peaceable reign of Solomon,* chap. i—ix. *the blemiſhed reign of Rehoboam,* chap. x—xii. *the ſhort but buſy reign of Abijah,* chap. xiii. *the long and happy reign of Aſa,* chap. xiv—xvi. *the pious and proſperous reign of Jehoſhaphat,* chap. xvii—xx. *the impious and infamous reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah,* chap. xxi. xxii. *the unſteady reigns of Joaſh and Amaziah,* chap. xxiii—xxv. *the long and proſperous reign of Uzziah,* chap. xxvi. *the regular reign of Jotham,* chap. xxvii. *the prophane and wicked reign of Ahaz,* chap. xxviii. *the gracious and glorious reign of Hezekiah,* chap. xxix—xxxii. *the wicked reigns of Manaſſeh and Amon,* chap. xxxiii. *the reforming reign of Joſiah,* chap. xxxiv. xxxv. *the deſtructive reigns of his ſons,* chap. xxxvi.

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CHAP. I.

We have an account, 1. *Of Solomon's ſacrifice and prayer,* ver. 1—12. 2. *Of his commerce for the enriching his ſubjects,* ver. 13—17.

[a] 1 Kings iv. 46. [b] Rom. viii. 31. [c] Phil. ii. 9.

1. AND [a] Solomon, the ſon of David, was ſtrengthened in his kingdom, and [b] the LORD his God *was* with him, and [c] magnified him exceedingly. 2. Then Solomon ſpake unto all Iſrael, to the captains of thouſands, and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Iſrael, the chief of the fathers. 3. So [d] Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at Gibeon, for [e] there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moſes the ſervant of the LORD had made in the wilderneſs. 4. But [f] the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim, to *the place which* David had prepared for it: for [g] he had pitched a tent for it at Jeruſalem. 5. Moreover, the braſen altar [h] that Bezaleel the ſon of Uri, the ſon of Hur, had made, † he put before the tabernacle of the LORD: and Solomon and the congregation ſought unto it. 6. And Solomon went up thither to the braſen altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thouſand burnt-offerings upon it. 7. ¶ [i] In that [k] night did God appear unto Solomon, and ſaid unto him, [l] Aſk what I ſhall give thee. 8. And Solomon ſaid unto God, Thou haſt ſhewed great mercy unto David my father, and [m] haſt made me to reign in his ſtead: 9. Now, O LORD God, let thy promiſe unto David my father be eſtabliſhed: for thou haſt made me king over [n] a people, like the duſt of the earth in multitude. 10. [o] Give me now [p] wiſdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for [q] who can judge this thy people, *that is ſo* great? 11. And God ſaid to Solomon, Becauſe this was in thine heart, and thou haſt not aſked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet haſt aſked long life; but haſt aſked wiſdom and knowledge for thyſelf, that thou mayeſt judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: 12. [r] Wiſdom and knowledge *is* granted unto thee, and [s] I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, ſuch as none of the kings have had, that *have been* before thee, neither ſhall there any after thee have the like.

About 1012. [d] 1 Kings iii. 4, &c. [e] 1 Chron. xxi. 29.

[f] Ibid. xvi. 1.

[g] Ibid. xv. 1. [h] Exod. xxxviii. 1. † Or, was there.

[i] 1 Kings iii. 5. [k] Pſ. xvii. 3.

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[l] Mat. vii. 7. John xvi. 23. [m] Dan. ii. 21. [n] Gen. xiii. 16. [o] Jam. i. 5. & iii. 17. [p] Prov. iii. 13—15. & xvi. 16. [q] 2 Cor. ii. 16. & iii. 5.

[r] Mat. vii. 8. 1 John v. 15. [s] Mat. vi. 33. Eph. iii. 20.

v. 1—12. We left Solomon in quiet poſſeſſion of Iſrael's throne. His authority was ſtill more firmly eſtabliſhed by the removal of ſome ſecret enemies, (*See* 1 *Kings* ii. 25—36.) and God being evidently with him, his proſperity increaſed.

1. He ſummoned the chief men of Iſrael to attend him at Gibeon, where the tabernacle was; for this he well knew, that having God for his friend, was the only ſure eſtabliſhment of his throne. By his own example alſo he laboured to diffuſe an univerſal attachment to God and his ordinances through his kingdom;

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kingdom; as being perſuaded that good men would be the moſt loyal ſubjects. There he offered a thouſand burnt-offerings, beſide peace-offerings, and all the aſſembled congregation kept a feaſt with him before the Lord. *Note*, (1.) Great is the influence of a good magiſtrate's example. (2.) When we begin well, we have half ended. (3.) The more God does for us, the more ſhould we labour to teſtify our gratitude towards him.

2. God appeared to him at night, and bid him aſk and have whatever he choſe. His prayer and happy choice, and God's gracious anſwer we find 1 *Kings* iii. 5. We may farther obſerve here, (1.) That a man's ſtate is beſt known by the ſecret deſires of his ſoul. (2.) Faith, that through the great ſacrifice enables us to realize eternal things, will make us count all things dung and loſs, compared with ſpiritual graces, and the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom. (3.) Our father's mercies are an encouragement to us, to pray and hope for the ſame bleſſing. (4.) The more eminent our predeceſſors, the more earneſtly need we beg, that being in their place, we may be ſtrengthened with equal ability and fidelity for our work. (5.) If we have God's promiſes with us, we may pray in faith, nothing doubting. (6.) God often exceeds our deſires. When ſeeking only his favour, we are content to truſt all our worldly affairs on his Providence, the bleſſing of the Lord ſhall enrich us; and better than all our gains, he will give us a heart to enjoy what he beſtows with thankfulneſs to his glory.

13. ¶ Then Solomon came *from his journey*, to the high place that *was* at Gibeon, to Jeruſalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned over Iſrael. 14. [t] And Solomon [u] gathered chariots and horſemen: and he had a thouſand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thouſand horſemen, which he placed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jeruſalem. 15. And [x] the king made ſilver and gold at Jeruſalem *as plenteous* as ſtones, and cedar-trees made he as the ſycamore-trees that *are* in the vale for abundance. 16. And [y] Solomon had horſes brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. 17. And they fetcht up, and brought forth out of Egypt a chariot for ſix hundred *ſhekels* of ſilver, and an horſe for an hundred and fifty: and ſo brought they out *horſes* for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their † means.

[t] 1 Kings x. 26, &c.
[u] Deut. xvii. 16.
[x] Ver. 12. Mat. vi. 33.
[y] Chap. ix. 28.
† Heb. Hands.

v. 13—17. When he had waited upon God, he returned to the exerciſe of his royal government. Religious exerciſes muſt never lead us to the neglect, but rather to the more vigorous diſcharge of our ſeveral occupations. Riches quickly began to flow in upon him, by trade with Egypt, and the linen manufactory he eſtabliſhed. Hereby he was enabled to maintain an additional number of forces, and to appear with a ſplendor and dignity greater than had ever been ſeen before in Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) In the midſt of the greateſt peace, it is wiſe to be prepared for war. (2.) Increaſe of wealth too frequently brings on increaſe of luxury and pride: a man needs a great increaſe of ſpiritual grace and wiſdom to bear being exalted.

CHAP. II.

Here is, 1. *Solomon's reſolution to build the temple and a royal palace, and his appointing of labourers to be employed herein*, ver. 1, 2, 17, 18. 2. *His requeſt to Huram, to furniſh him with artiſts and materials*, ver. 3—10. 3. *Huram's ready compliance therewith*, ver. 11—16.

1. AND Solomon determined to build an houſe for the name of the LORD, and an houſe for his kingdom. 2. And [a] Solomon told out threeſcore and ten thouſand men to bear burdens, and fourſcore thouſand to hew in the mountain, and three thouſand and ſix hundred to overſee them. 3. ¶ [b] And Solomon ſent to Huram the king of Tyre, ſaying, [c] As thou didſt deal with David my father, and didſt ſend him cedars to build him an houſe to dwell therein, *even ſo deal with me.* 4. Behold, I build an houſe to the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate *it* to him, *and* to burn before him † ſweet incenſe, and [d] for the continual ſhew-bread, and [e] for the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the ſabbaths, and on the new-moons, and on the ſolemn feaſts of the LORD our God. This *is an ordinance* for ever to Iſrael. 5. And the houſe which I build *is* great: for [f] great *is* our God above all gods. 6. But who is able to build him an houſe, [g] ſeeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who *am* I then that I ſhould build him an houſe, ſave only to burn ſacrifice before him? 7. [h] Send me now therefore a man, cunning to work in gold, and in ſilver, and in braſs, and in iron, and in purple, and crimſon, and blue, and that can ſkill to grave with the cunning men that *are* with me in Judah and in Jeruſalem, whom David my father [i] did provide. 8. Send me alſo cedar-trees, fir-trees, and [k] algum-trees, out of Lebanon (for I know that thy ſervants can ſkill to cut timber in Lebanon) and behold, my ſervants *ſhall be* with thy ſervants, 9. Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the houſe which I am about to build, *ſhall be* ‡ wonderful great. 10. [l] And behold, I will give to thy ſervants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thouſand meaſures of beaten wheat, and twenty thouſand meaſures of barley, and twenty thouſand baths of wine, and twenty thouſand baths of oil.

[a] 1 Kings v. 15. Ver. 18.
[b] 1 Kings v. 2, &c.
[c] 1 Chron. xiv. 1.
† Heb. Incenſe of ſpices.
[d] Exod. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 8.
[e] Num. xxviii. 3, 9. 11.
[f] Exod. xv. 11.
[g] Chap. vi. 18.

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[h] Iſa. lx. 10.
[i] 1 Chron. xxii. 3.
[k] 1 Kings x. 11.
‡ Heb. Great and wonderful.
[l] 1 Kings v. 11. 1 Tim. v. 18.

v. 1—10. Solomon being appointed to build God's houſe, and by his wiſdom ſo highly qualified for it, begins to ſet about the glorious ſtructure; and afterwards reſolves to raiſe a palace for himſelf. *Note*, Let God be always firſt and beſt ſerved. For this purpoſe, he ſends an embaſſage to Hiram, or Huram, king of Tyre, 1 *Kings* v. 1. whoſe aſſiſtance he wanted in the work. He mentions the kindneſs Hiram had ſhewn to David, as a reaſon for continuing his friendſhip to him his ſon; informs him of his deſign to build the houſe of God, of whoſe glory he ſpeaks moſt highly. The God of Iſrael was above all gods, therefore a temple became him, ſuch as no where elſe could be found: not that the moſt pompous ſtructure could be worthy the infinite God, or his immenſity be circumſcribed by the largeſt palace, ſince the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain him. He pretended only to build a place to worſhip, and ſacrifice before him. The Tyrians being moſt expert workmen, he begs him to ſend him a capital artiſt in engraving and embroidery, who might inſtruct thoſe who were ingenious among his own people: and that he would cut down and convey to him from Lebanon, cedars and other timber; in which ſervice he would ſend his own ſervants, with Hiram's, who were more ſkilled in the buſineſs. In conſideration for which ſervices, he offers to give as wages, and maintenance for Hiram's ſervants, twenty thouſand meaſures of wheat and barley, and as many baths of wine and oil, commodities which Tyre wanted, and in which Canaan abounded. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould deſire to make our father's friends our own. (2.) They who have the knowledge of the true God themſelves, would fain have others acquainted with him alſo. (3.) Though when we have done our beſt, it is poor and unworthy of God; yet it ſpeaks at leaſt our humble gratitude.

11. ¶ [m] Then Huram the king of Tyre anſwered in writing, which he ſent to Solomon, Becauſe the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. 12. Huram ſaid moreover, [n] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael, [o] that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wiſe ſon, † endued with prudence and underſtanding, that might build an houſe for the LORD, and an houſe for his kingdom. 13. And now I have ſent a cunning man (endued with underſtanding) of Huram [p] my fathers; 14. The ſon of a woman of the daughters of [q] Dan, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, ſkilful to work in gold and in ſilver, in braſs, in iron, in ſtone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimſon: alſo to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which ſhall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father. 15. Now therefore the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine which my lord hath ſpoken of, let him ſend unto his ſervants: 16. And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, ‡ as much as thou ſhalt need, and we will bring it to thee in floats, by ſea to Joppa, and thou ſhalt carry it up to Jeruſalem. 17. ¶ And Solomon numbred [r] all the ſtrangers that *were* in the land of Iſrael, after the numbring [s] wherewith David his father had numbred them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thouſand and three thouſand and ſix hundred. 18. And he ſet threeſcore and ten thouſand of them *to be* bearers [t] of burdens, and fourſcore thouſand *to be* hewers in the mountain, and three thouſand and ſix hundred overſeers to ſet the people a-work.

[m] 1 Kings v. 7.
[n] Dan. iii. 28.
[o] Pſal. cii. 25. Acts iv. 24. Rev. x. 6.
† Heb. Knowing prudence, &c.
[p] Chap. iv. 16.
[q] 1 Kings vii. 14.
‡ Heb. According to thy need.
[r] 1 Kings ix. 20. Chap. viii. 7.
[s] 1 Chron. xxii. 2.
[t] Ver. 2.

v. 11—17. Hiram was as ready to grant, as Solomon to aſk, and that in the moſt friendly manner; congratulating Iſrael on ſo good a king, and bleſſing God for giving ſo gracious a ſon to

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to his friend. He ſent him an ingenious artiſt, half an Iſraelite, and therefore more likely to be hearty in the ſervice; undertook to convey the timber to Joppa by ſea, and accepted of the wages propoſed. *Note,* (1.) The polite manner in which a favour is conferred, doubles the obligation. (2.) The aſſiſtance of the gentiles in building the church, was a figure of their incorporation in the fulneſs of time with the Iſrael of God.

Solomon immediately diſpatched his ſervants to Lebanon, to meet Hiram's. He employed no Iſraelites in ſervile work, but the ſtrangers, which probably by becoming proſelytes, were incorporated among them; whether of the remnant of the old inhabitants, or others. Theſe, to the number of 153,600, David had regiſtered before; and Solomon now ſet them to work for him, and no doubt well paid them for their labour.

CHAP. III.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The place and time of building the temple,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Its dimenſions and rich ornaments,* ver. 3—9. 3. *The cherubims in the moſt holy place,* ver. 10—13. 4. *The vail,* ver. 14. 5. *The two pillars,* ver. 15—17.

[a] 1 Kings vi. 1, &c. [b] Gen. xxii. 2. [c] 1 Chron. xxi. 18.

1. [a] THEN Solomon began to build the houſe of the LORD at Jeruſalem in [b] mount Moriah, [c] where *the LORD* appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threſhing-floor of Ornan the Jebuſite. 2. And he began to build in the ſecond *day* of the ſecond month, in the fourth year of his reign. 3. ¶ Now theſe *are the things* [d] wherein Solomon was † inſtructed for the building of the houſe of God. [e] The length by cubits after the firſt meaſure *was* threeſcore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits. 4. And [f] the porch that *was* in the front *of the houſe,* the length *of it was* according to the breadth of the houſe twenty cubits, and the height *was* an hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it with pure gold. 5. And the greater houſe he cieled with fir-tree, which he over-laid with fine gold, and ſet thereon palm-trees and chains. 6. And he ‡ garniſhed the houſe [g] with precious ſtones for beauty: and the gold *was* gold of Parvaim. 7. He overlaid alſo the houſe, the beams, the poſts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof with gold, and graved cherubims on the walls. 8. And he made the ‖ moſt holy houſe, the length whereof *was* according to the breadth of the houſe, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, *amounting* to ſix hundred talents. 9. And the weight of the nails *was* fifty ſhekels of gold: and he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

[d] 1 Chron. xxviii. xi. † Heb. Founded. [e] 1 Kings vi. 2. [f] Acts iii. 11.

‡ Heb. Covered. [g] Rev. xxi. 18—20.

‖ Heb. Houſe of holineſs of holineſſes.

v. 1—9. The account of the building the temple, we had, 1 *Kings* vi. more at large. Here we are told the place where it was built, on mount Moriah, where Abraham had offered up Iſaac, the great type of him who was ſignified in all the temple ſervice. David had fixed the ſpot by God's direction, and purchaſed the land of Ornan the Jebuſite. Three years were taken up in needful preparations; on the fourth, Solomon laid the foundation. The dimenſions exactly correſponded with the pattern given him by David, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 2. The porch led into the *greater houſe,* or the holy place; and that into the holieſt of all, within the vail. The whole was covered throughout on the inſide with plates of gold, with golden chains and palm-trees emboſſed; the very nails were fine gold, each of fifty ſhekels weight, or perhaps of that value. In the gold, the precious ſtones were ſet, glittering by the light of the lamps with inconceivable luſtre; yet all this, great and glorious as it was, how poor! compared with that heavenly temple, where every believer conſecrated to God, is not only for a time to miniſter, but for eternity to dwell. *See Rev.* xxi. 18, 19, 21.

10. And in the moſt holy houſe he made two cherubims † of image-work, and overlaid them with gold. 11. ¶ And the wings of the cherubims *were* twenty cubits long: one wing *of the one cherub was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the houſe: and the other wing *was likewiſe* five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub. 12. And *one* wing of the other cherub *was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the houſe: and the other wing *was* five cubits *alſo,* joining to the wing of the other cherub. 13. The wings of theſe cherubims ſpread themſelves forth twenty cubits: and they ſtood on their feet, and their faces *were* ‡ inward. 14. ¶ And he made [h] the vail *of* blue, and purple, and crimſon, and fine linen, and ‖ wrought cherubims thereon. 15. Alſo he made before the houſe [i] two pillars of thirty and five cubits § high, and the chapiter that *was* on the top of each of them *was* five cubits. 16. And he made chains, *as* in the oracle, and put *them* on the heads of the pillars, and made [k] an hundred pomegranates, and put *them* on the chains. 17. And he [l] reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and he called the name of that on the right hand, † Jachin, and the name of that on the left, ‡ Boaz.

† Or, as ſome think of moveable work.

‡ Or, toward the houſe. Exod. xxv. 20. [h] Mat. xxvii. 51. ‖ Or, cauſed to aſcend.

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[i] 1 Kings vii. 15, 21. Jer. lii. 21. § Heb. Long. [k] 1 Kings vii. 20. [l] Ibid. 21.

† i. e. He will eſtabliſh. 2 Sam. vii. 12. Iſa. ix. 7. ‡ i. e. In it is ſtrength. Pſal. xxix. 11. & lxxiii. 26. Iſa. xxvi. 4.

v. 10—17. The cherubims repreſented the angels, bending in adoration towards the mercy-ſeat, to teach us what is their work ſhould be ours. A vail ſeparated the moſt holy place: that diſpenſation was dark, but the vail is done away in Chriſt, and the mercy-ſeat open to every believing ſinner. On this vail cherubims were wrought, or *cauſed to aſcend,* either raiſed work, or in an aſcending poſture, as if mounting to heaven, whither in our devotions our hearts ſhould ſoar. The two pillars were at the entrance, *See* 1 *Kings* vii. 15. Every believer is like theſe, firm and immoveable againſt all enemies; and adorned with divine graces, more precious than wrought gold.

CHAP. IV.

We have here, 1. *The brazen altar, ſea, lavers, &c.* ver. 1—6. 2. *The golden candleſticks, tables, altar of incenſe and veſſels,* ver. 7, 8, 19—22.

[a] Ezek. xliii. 13, 16.

[b] 1 Kings vii. 23.

1. MOreover, he made [a] an altar of braſs, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof. 2. ¶ [b] Alſo he made a molten ſea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compaſs, and five cubits the height thereof, and a line of thirty cubits did compaſs it round about. 3. And under it *was* the ſimilitude of oxen, which did compaſs it round about: ten in a cubit compaſſing the ſea round about. Two rows of oxen *were* caſt, when it was caſt. 4. [c] It ſtood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the weſt, and three looking toward the ſouth, and three looking toward the eaſt: and the ſea *was ſet* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward. 5. And the thickneſs of it *was* an hand-breadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, † with flowers of lilies; *and* it received and held three thouſand baths. 6. ¶ He made alſo [d] ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to waſh in them: ſuch things as they offered for the burnt-offering, they waſhed in them; but the ſea *was* for the prieſts to waſh in. 7. And [e] he made ten candleſticks of gold [f] according to their form, and ſet *them* in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left. 8. He made alſo ten [g] tables, and placed *them* in the temple, five on the right ſide, and five on the left; and he made an hundred ‡ baſons of gold. 9. ¶ Furthermore [h] he made the court of the prieſts, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with braſs. 10. And he ſet the ſea on the right ſide of the eaſt end, over againſt the ſouth.

[c] Ibid. 25. Jer. lii. 20.

† Or like lily flower.

[d] 1 Kings vii. 38. Zech. xiii. 1. John xiii. 10. John i. 7. [e] 1 Kings vii. 49. [f] Exod. xxv. 31, 40. 1 Chron. xxviii. 12, 19. [g] 1 Kings vii. 48. ‡ Or bowls. [h] 1 Kings vi. 36.

v. 1—10. The making of all theſe veſſels, except the brazen altar, we had, 1 *Kings* vii. This was four times as wide, and more than thrice as high as that of Moſes. Iſrael being increaſed, and their ſacrifices now likely to be more numerous, a larger altar was needful. According as God increaſes us, we muſt honour him with our ſubſtance. The ſea, and the lavers, were of braſs. Theſe ſtood in the open air without, in the court of the prieſts; within all was gold: the nearer we approach to God, the purer we muſt grow. The golden altar, ten new candleſticks, and as many tables of pure gold, were placed within the holy place, where lights continually burned, where incenſe was daily offered, and the ſhew-bread was placed: all which were ſhadows of good things to come.

1. The brazen altar which ſanctified the gift, where the ſacrifice was accepted, prefigured that Divine Redeemer both altar and ſacrifice; who, by one oblation once offered, obtained eternal redemption for us.

2. The lavers and ſea pointed out that ſanctifying work of the ſpirit of God upon the heart of God's ſpiritual prieſts, cleanſing them from their remaining filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit.

3. The table of ſhew-bread typified the conſtant proviſion which in the goſpel-church ſhould be made for all God's people,

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ple, who ſhould eat and drink before him, to the refreſhing of their ſouls.

4. The candleſticks repreſented the word of goſpel-truth, ſhining as a light in a dark place, and their number the clearer and increaſing diſcoveries God makes of himſelf to his people.

5. The altar of incenſe ſignified that interceſſion Jeſus our high-prieſt makes, who whilſt we are praying without, is ſtanding before the mercy-ſeat, and effectually preſenting our ſupplications, that they may be accepted and anſwered.

[k] 1 Kings vii. 40.
† Or bowls.
‡ Heb. Finiſhed to make.
[l] 1 Kings vii. 41.
[m] Ibid. 20.
‖ Heb. The face.
[n] 1 Kings vii. 27.
§ Or caldrons.
[o] Chap. ii. 13.
† Or braſs made bright, or ſcoured.
[p] 1 Kings vii. 46.
‡ Heb. Cloſeneſs, or thickneſs of the ground.
[q] 1 Kings vii. 48.
[r] Exod. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 6.
[s] Exod. xxvii. 20, 21.
[t] Ibid. xxv. 31, &c.
‖ Heb. Perfections of gold.
§ Or bowls.

11. And [k] Huram made the pots, and the ſhovels, and the † baſons, and Huram ‡ finiſhed the work that he was to make for king Solomon for the houſe of God: 12. *To wit*, the two pillars, and [l] the pommels, and the chapiters *which were* on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which *were* on the top of the pillars: 13. And [m] four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths; two rows of pomegranates on each wreath, to cover the two pommels of the chapiters, which *were* upon ‖ the pillars. 14. He made alſo [n] baſes; and § lavers made he upon the baſes; 15. One ſea, and twelve oxen under it: 16. The pots alſo and the ſhovels, and the fleſh-hooks, and all their inſtruments, did Huram [o] his father make to king Solomon for the houſe of the LORD, of † bright braſs. 17. [p] In the plain of Jordan did the king caſt them, in the ‡ clay-ground, between Succoth and Zeredathah. 18. Thus Solomon made all theſe veſſels in great abundance: for the weight of the braſs could not be found out. 19. ¶ And [q] Solomon made all the veſſels that *were* for the houſe of God, the golden altar alſo, and the tables [r] whereon the ſhew-bread *was ſet*; 20. Moreover, the candleſticks with their lamps, that they ſhould burn [s] after the manner, before the oracle, of pure gold; 21. And [t] the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs *made he of* gold, *and* that ‖ perfect gold. 22. And the ſnuffers, and the § baſons, and the ſpoons, and the cenſers, *of* pure gold: and the entry of the houſe, the inner doors thereof for the moſt holy *place*, and the doors of the houſe of the temple, *were of* gold.

v. 11—22. Huram the great artificer, called his *father*, v. 16. being the preſident and maſter over all the reſt, finiſhed completely his work. He who gave him underſtanding, gave him ſtrength. *Note*, The work of grace in the ſoul, the ſpiritual temple, which the Divine Artificer hath begun, he will not fail to complete, till we ſhall be perfected in glory, lacking nothing.

CHAP. V.

We have here, 1. *The dedication of the temple*, ver. 1—10. 2. *The manifeſtation of God's glory thereupon*, ver. 11—14.

1004.
[a] 1 Kings vii. 51.
[b] 2 Sam. viii. 11.
[c] 1 Kings viii. 1, &c.
[d] 2 Sam. vi. 12.
1003.
[e] Lev. xxii. 34. Deut. xvi. 13.
[f] Exod. xxxvi. 8.
[g] Num. iv. 15.
[h] 2 Sam. vi. 13.
[i] Luke iv. 47.
[k] Exod. xxvi. 33.
[l] Num. iv. 6.

1. THUS all the work that Solomon made for the houſe of the LORD, was finiſhed; and [a] Solomon brought in *all* the things, [b] that David his father had dedicated; and the ſilver, and the gold, and all the inſtruments put he among the treaſures of the houſe of God. 2. ¶ [c] Then Solomon aſſembled the elders of Iſrael, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Iſrael unto Jeruſalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [d] out of the city of David, which *is* Zion. 3. Wherefore all the men of Iſrael aſſembled themſelves unto the king in [e] the feaſt, which *was* in the ſeventh month. 4. And all the elders of Iſrael came, and the Levites took up the ark. 5. And they brought up the ark, and [f] the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy veſſels that *were* in the tabernacle, [g] theſe did the prieſts *and* the Levites bring up. 6. Alſo king Solomon and all the congregation of Iſrael that were aſſembled unto him before the ark, [h] ſacrificed ſheep and oxen, [i] which could not be told nor numbred for multitude. 7. And the prieſts brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD [k] unto his place, to the oracle of the houſe into the moſt holy *place*, *even* under the wings of the cherubims. 8. For the cherubims ſpread forth *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the ſtaves thereof above. 9. And [l] they drew out the ſtaves *of the ark*, that the ends of the ſtaves were ſeen from the ark before the oracle, but they were not ſeen without. And there it is unto this day. 10. *There was* nothing in the ark ſave [m] the two tables which Moſes put *therein* at Horeb, † when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Iſrael, when they came out of Egypt.

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[m] Exod. xvi. 35. Deut. x. 5.
† Heb. Or where.

v. 1—10. This ſolemnity we met with, 1 *Kings* viii. 2. The treaſures his father had dedicated, beſides what were uſed in the building, or for the veſſels, Solomon laid up in the temple for any future occaſion. Our parents pious and charitable bequeſts we muſt carefully diſcharge. The ark he brought up with great ceremony, at a general convention aſſembled for that purpoſe, with all the appurtenances belonging to it, and placed it under the cherubims in the moſt holy place; where it continued to the day the records were written, from whence Ezra made this extract.

The ſacrifices on this occaſion were immenſe, and ſacred feſtal joy was univerſally diffuſed around. *Note*, (1.) The moſt gorgeous ſtructure, without the preſence of God, is not to be compared with a poor tent, where he is pleaſed to manifeſt his glory. (2.) Wherever the faithful aſſemble, there Jeſus hath promiſed to be in the midſt of them. This ark probably was carried into captivity with the people, and is long ſince loſt, but he is with us always to the end of the world. (3.) When the Divine Spirit is pleaſed to come and take up his abode in our heart, then ſhall we taſte greater joys, unſpeakable and full of glory.

[n] 1 Kings viii. 10.
† Heb. Found.
[o] Exod. xix. x. 15.
[p] 1 Chron. xxv. 1.
[q] Rev. xv. 6.
[r] Pſal. cxxxvi.
[s] Pſal. lxii. 30, 31.
[t] Exod. xl. 34. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[u] Mal. iii. 1, 2.
[x] Ezek. xvi. 10. Col. i. 19.

11. ¶ [n] And it came to paſs when the prieſts were come out of the holy *place* (for all the prieſts *that were* † preſent were [o] ſanctified, *and* did not *then* wait by courſe. 12. Alſo the Levites *which were* [p] the ſingers, all of them of Aſaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their ſons, and their brethren; [q] *being* arayed in white linen, having cymbals and pſalteries, and harps, ſtood at the eaſt end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty prieſts, ſounding with trumpets) 13. It came even to paſs as the trumpeters and ſingers *were* as one, to make one ſound to be heard in praiſing and thanking the LORD; and when they lift up *their* voice with the trumpets and cymbals, and inſtruments of muſic, and praiſed the LORD, *ſaying*, [r] For *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever: [s] that *then* [t] the houſe was filled with a cloud, *even* the houſe of the LORD; 14. So that [u] the prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter by reaſon of the cloud: for [x] the glory of the LORD had filled the houſe of God.

v. 11—14. Not all the gold or jewels could be compared with the preſence of the celeſtial inhabitant, whoſe glory filled the temple. No ſooner were the prieſts retired, and the ſong of thankſgiving with united voice and inſtruments began to ſound, than lo! the preſent deity appears, anſwering their grateful acknowledgments, that his mercy endureth for ever; teſtifying how pleaſing the work of praiſe was to him, and that he intended to take up his abode with them, as with their fathers in the wilderneſs. The prieſts, who were all aſſembled on this occaſion, with the courſes of Levites and ſingers, were no longer able to miniſter by reaſon of the cloud: a proof of their infirmity, and an intimation of the imperfection of the Levitical prieſthood. *Note*, (1.) When with united voice we join in prayer and praiſe, then ſhall the cloud of glory be in the midſt of us. (2.) The enduring mercy of God deſerves to be the ſubject of our continual ſongs. (3.) Great as the glory of the firſt temple was, the glory of the ſecond was greater; as favoured with the viſits of Him, in whom dwelt the fulneſs of the godhead bodily.

CHAP. VI.

Here, 1. *Solomon encourages the people, and bleſſes God for the fulfilment of his promiſes*, ver. 1—11. 2. *He begs that all prayers offered up in or towards the temple, may be accepted of God*, ver. 12—42.

[a] 1 Kings viii. 12, &c.
[b] Lev. xvi. 2. Pſal. xviii. 11. & xcvii. 2.
† Heb. Eternities. Mat. xvi. 18.
[c] Num. vi. 23, &c. 2 Sam. vi. 18. Luke xxiv. 50.
[d] Pſal. cxv. 18.
[e] Ver. 15. Tit. i. 2.

1. [a] THEN ſaid Solomon, [b] The LORD hath ſaid that he would dwell in thick darkneſs. 2. But I have built an houſe of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for † ever. 3. And the king turned his face, and [c] bleſſed the whole congregation of Iſrael (and all the congregation of Iſrael ſtood) 4. And he ſaid, [d] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael, who hath with his hands [e] fulfilled *that* which he ſpake with his mouth to my father David, ſaying, 5. Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt, I

choſe no city among all the tribes of Iſrael to build an houſe in, that my name might be there, neither choſe I any man to be a ruler over my people Iſrael: 6. But [f] I have choſen Jeruſalem, that my name might be there, and [g] have choſen David to be over my people Iſrael. 7. [h] Now it was in the heart of David my father to build an houſe for the name of the LORD God of Iſrael. 8. But the Lord ſaid to David my father, Foraſmuch as it was in thine heart to build an houſe for my name, [i] thou didſt well in that it was in thine heart: 9. Notwithſtanding, thou ſhalt not build the houſe, but thy ſon which ſhall come forth out of thy loins, he ſhall build the houſe for my name. 10. The LORD therefore hath performed his word that he hath ſpoken: for I am riſen up in the room of David my father, and am ſet on the throne of Iſrael, [k] as the LORD promiſed, and have built the houſe for the name of the LORD God of Iſrael. 11. And in it have I put the ark, wherein *is* the covenant of the LORD, that he made with the children of Iſrael.

v. 1—11. For this, *See* 1 *Kings* viii. 12—53. We have only farther to obſerve,

1. That it is our duty to correſpond with the Divine appointment, and earneſtly proſecute the work God hath appointed us.
2. When our eye is ſingle to pleaſe God, we ſhall have comfort in our labours.
3. The fulfilment of God's promiſe is ſure; we have only to be faithful, and we ſhall ſet to our ſeal that God is true.
4. Grateful acknowledgments of God's faithfulneſs muſt be made not only for his honour, but for the encouragement of others to truſt on the ſame faithful God.

12. ¶ [l] And he ſtood before the altar of the LORD, in the preſence of all the congregation of Iſrael, and ſpread forth his hands; 13. (For Solomon had made a braſen ſcaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had ſet it in the midſt of the court, and upon it he ſtood, and [m] kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Iſrael, and [n] ſpread forth his hands towards heaven) 14. And ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, [o] *there is* no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; [p] which keepeſt covenant, and *ſheweſt* mercy unto thy ſervants, [q] that walk before thee with all their hearts: 15. Thou which haſt kept with thy ſervant David my father, that which thou haſt promiſed him; and ſpakeſt with thy mouth, and haſt fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day. 16. Now therefore, O LORD God of Iſrael, keep with thy ſervant David my father that which thou haſt promiſed him, ſaying, [r] There ſhall not fail thee a man in my ſight to ſit upon the throne of Iſrael; [s] yet ſo, that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou haſt walked before me. 17. Now then, O LORD God of Iſrael, let thy word be verified, which thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant David. 18. (But [t] will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? [u] behold, heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much leſs this houſe which I have built!) 19. Have reſpect therefore to the prayer of thy ſervant, and to his ſupplication, O LORD my God, to [x] hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy ſervant prayeth before thee: 20. That [y] thine eyes may be opened upon this houſe day and night, upon the place whereof [z] thou haſt ſaid, that thou wouldſt put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer, which thy ſervant prayeth † towards this place. 21. Hearken therefore unto the ſupplications of thy ſervant, and of thy people Iſrael, which they ſhall make [a] towards this place: hear thou from thy dwelling-place, *even* from heaven; and when thou heareſt, [b] forgive. 22. ¶ If a man ſin againſt his neighbour, and ‡ an oath be laid upon him to make him ſwear, and the oath come [c] before thine altar in this houſe: 23. Then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy ſervants, by requiting the wicked, [d] by recompenſing his way upon his own head, and by juſtifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteouſneſs. 24. ¶ And if thy people Iſrael be ‖ put to the worſe before the enemy, [e] becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; and ſhall return and confeſs thy name, and pray, and make ſupplication before thee § in this houſe: 25. [f] Then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the ſin of thy people Iſrael, and bring them again unto the land which thou gaveſt to them, and to their fathers. 26. ¶ [g] When the heaven is ſhut up, and there is no rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; *yet* if they pray towards this place, and confeſs thy name, and turn from their ſin, [h] when thou doſt afflict them: 27. Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the ſin of thy ſervants, and of thy people Iſrael, [i] when thou haſt taught them [k] the good way, wherein they ſhould walk; and [l] ſend rain upon thy land which thou haſt given unto thy people for an inheritance. 28. ¶ If there be dearth in the land, if there be peſtilence, if there be blaſting, or mildew, locuſts, or caterpillers; if their enemies beſiege them in the cities of their land; whatſoever ſore, or whatſoever ſickneſs *there be*: 29. *Then* what prayer, *or* what ſupplication ſoever ſhall be made of [m] any man, or of all thy people Iſrael, [n] when every one ſhall know his own ſore, and his own grief, and ſhall ſpread forth his hands in this houſe: 30. Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whoſe heart thou knoweſt (for [o] thou only knoweſt the hearts of the children of men) 31. That they may fear thee, to walk in thy ways ſo long as they live in the land which thou gaveſt unto our fathers. 32. ¶ Moreover, [p] concerning the ſtranger, which is not of thy people Iſrael, [q] but is come from a far country [r] for thy great name's ſake, and thy mighty hand, and thy ſtretched out arm; if they come and pray in this houſe: 33. Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the ſtranger calleth to thee for; [s] that all the people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as *doth* thy people Iſrael, and may know that † this houſe which I have built, is called by thy name. 34. If thy people go out to war againſt their enemies, by the way that thou ſhalt ſend them, and they pray unto thee toward this city which thou haſt choſen, and the houſe which I have built for thy name: 35. Then hear thou from the heavens their prayer, and their ſupplication, and [t] maintain their cauſe. 36. If they ſin againſt thee (for [u] *there is* no man which ſinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before *their* enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; 37. [x] Yet, *if* they ‡ bethink themſelves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn, and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, ſaying, [y] We have ſinned, we have done amiſs, and have dealt wickedly; 38. If they [z] return to thee with all their heart, and with all their ſoul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land which thou gaveſt unto their fathers, and *toward* the city which thou haſt choſen, and toward the houſe which I have built for thy name: 39. Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, their prayer and their ſupplications, and [a] maintain their cauſe, and forgive thy people which have ſinned againſt thee. 40. Now, my God, let (I beſeech thee) thine eyes be open, and *let* thine ears *be* attent unto the prayer ‖ *that is made* in this place. 41. Now therefore, [b] ariſe, O LORD God, into thy reſting-place, thou, and the ark of thy ſtrength: [c] let thy prieſts, O LORD God, be clothed with ſalvation, and [d] let thy ſaints rejoice in goodneſs. 42. O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine [e] anointed: [f] remember the mercies of David thy ſervant.

v. 12—42. The whole of this prayer we had, 1 *Kings* viii. except the two laſt verſes. We may farther learn here,

1. That this temple was figurative of the Lord Jeſus, thro' whom alone our ſupplications and ſervices find any acceptance with God.
2. To love, honour and fear this holy God of power, faithfulneſs, mercy, and incomprehenſible glory.
3. To be impreſſed with a ſenſe of his heart-ſearching-eye, that no allowed evil may be harboured in us.
4. That man at beſt is but a poor ſinner, *v.* 36. and no ſinleſs perfection under the ſun.
5. Though we are only driven to God by our diſtreſſes, yet he will not even ſo reject us, *v.* 26—28.

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[f] Deut. xii. 11. Pſal. cxxxii. 13.
[g] Hoſ. iii. 5.
[h] 2 Sam. vii. 3, &c.
[i] 2 Cor. viii. 12.
[k] 1 Chron. xxviii. 5.
[l] 1 Kings viii. 22, &c.
[m] Pſal. xcv. 6. & xcix. 5. Dan. vi. 10. Mark i. 40. Luke xxii. 41.
[n] Ezra ix. 5. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[o] Exod. xv. 11.
[p] Dan. ix. 4.
[q] Gen. xvii. 1. Exod. xx. 6. Pſal. cxvi. 9.
[r] 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings vi. 12. Luke i. 33.
[s] Pſal. cxxxii. 12.
[t] Ibid. cxiii. 5, 6. Acts vii. 49.
[u] Chap. ii. 6. Iſa. lxvi. 1. Acts xvii. 24.
[x] Dan. ix. 17, &c.
[y] Pſal. xxviii. 18. Dan ix. 18.
[z] Deut. xii. 11.
† Or in this place. Ver. 21.
[a] Dan. vi. 10.
[b] Pſal. lxxxv. 2, 3.
‡ Heb. He require an oath of him.
[c] Mat. xxiii. 18.
[d] Deut. xxv. 1.
‖ Heb. Smitten.
[e] Deut. xxxii. 25.

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§ Or towards. Ver. 29.
[f] Lev. xxvi. 40, &c.
[g] Deut. xxviii. 23.
[h] Chap. xxxiii. 12. Hoſ. v. 15.
[i] Pſal. xciv. 12. Iſa. xxvi. 9.
[k] Prov. vi. 23. Iſa. xxxv. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 21.
[l] Jam. v. 18.
[m] Ezek. xxii. 30.
[n] 1 Kings viii. 38.
[o] Pſal. xi. 4. Jer. xvii. 10.
[p] Ruth ii. 10, &c.
[q] Mat. ii. 1. Acts viii. 27.
[r] Joſh. ii. 9. Eſth. viii. 17.
[s] Pſal. lxvii. 2.
† Heb. Thy name is called this houſe.
[t] Iſa. xxxvii. 21, 36.
[u] Prov. xx. 9. Eccleſ. vii. 20. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8.
[x] Lev. xxvi. 41.
‡ Heb. Bring back to their heart.
[y] Luke xv. 18.
[z] Jer. xxix. 12—14.
[a] Ver. 35. Zech. i. 15.
‖ Heb. Of this place.
[b] Pſal. cxxxii. 8—10.
[c] 1 Tim. iv. 16.
[d] Neh. ix. 25. Iſa. lxi. 10.
[e] 1 Kings i. 39. or Pſal. ii. 2.
[f] Pſal. cxxxii. 1. Iſa. lv. 3.

6. Though we may not for the ſake of our prayers, expect to be heard of God, yet aſſuredly not without them, *v.* 29.

7. There is no difference between Jew or Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free; but whoſoever in faith, calls on the name of the Lord, ſhall be ſaved.—The prayer cloſes with two verſes out of the Pſalms: no words ſo expreſſive as thoſe God's ſpirit hath dictated. He begs the conſtant reſidence of God among them; his bleſſing upon the miniſters of the ſanctuary, to enable them to ſave their own ſouls, and be inſtruments of ſalvation to the people; and the abiding conſolations of his ſpirit with all his ſaints, making them rejoice in the experience of his goodneſs. He finiſhes with pleading the covenant mercies of his father, and thoſe ſhewed himſelf whom God had anointed: Or this may refer emphatically to the effectual interceſſion of the Meſſiah, whom God always heareth, and in whoſe ſure mercies we may confidently place our hopes for time and for eternity.

CHAP. VII.

We have here, 1. *Solomon's ſacrifice conſumed by fire from heaven, and the temple filled with God's glory,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The ſolemnities of the feaſt continued for fourteen days,* ver. 4—11. 3. *God's appearance to Solomon in a viſion of the night,* ver. 12—22.

1. NOW [a] when Solomon had made an end of praying, [b] the fire came down from heaven, and conſumed the burnt-offering and the ſacrifices; and [c] the glory of the LORD filled the houſe. 2. And [d] the prieſts could not enter into the houſe of the LORD, becauſe the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's houſe. 3. And when all the children of Iſrael ſaw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the houſe, they bowed themſelves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worſhipped, and praiſed the LORD, *ſaying,* [e] For *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 4. ¶ Then the king and all the people offered ſacrifices before the LORD. 5. [f] And king Solomon offered [g] a ſacrifice of [h] twenty and two thouſand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thouſand ſheep: ſo the king and all the people dedicated the houſe of God. 6. And the prieſts waited on their offices: the Levites alſo with inſtruments of muſic of the LORD, which David the king had made to praiſe the LORD, becauſe his mercy *endureth* for ever, when David praiſed by their † miniſtry: and [l] the prieſts ſounded trumpets before them, and all Iſrael ſtood. 7. Moreover, Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that *was* before the houſe of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, becauſe the braſen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt-offerings, and the meat-offerings, and the fat. 8. ¶ Alſo at the ſame time Solomon kept [k] the feaſt ſeven days, and all Iſrael with him, a very great congregation, from the entring in of Hamath, unto the river of Egypt. 9. And in the eighth day they made a ‡ ſolemn aſſembly; for they kept the dedication of the altar ſeven days, and the feaſt ſeven days. 10. And on the three and twentieth day of the ſeventh month, he ſent the people away into their tents, [l] glad and merry in heart for the goodneſs that the LORD had ſhewed unto David and to Solomon, and to Iſrael his people. 11. [m] Thus Solomon finiſhed the houſe of the LORD, and the king's houſe: and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the houſe of the LORD, and in his own houſe, he proſperouſly effected.

[a] Dan. ix. 20.
[b] Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 38.
[c] Ibid. 11. Chap. v. 14.
[d] Chap. v. 13. Rev. xv. 8.
[e] Chap. v. 13. Pſal. cxxxvi.
[f] 1 Kings viii. 62, &c.
[g] Rom. xii. 1.
[h] Mic. vi. 7.
† Heb. Hand.
[l] Chap. v. 12.
[k] Lev. xxiii. 34.
‡ Day of reſtraint. Lev. xxiii. 36.
[l] Pſal. cvii. 1, 2. & cxxxvi. 1, &c.
[m] 1 Kings ix. 1.

v. 1—11. A glorious anſwer was given to Solomon's fervent prayer. Fire from heaven, either diſtinct from the former, or iſſuing from the cloud which had filled the houſe, conſumed the ſacrifices. Struck with the awful ſight, the people reverentially bowed and worſhipped, and regarding it as a token of God's eſpecial favour, adored his goodneſs and never-ending mercy. A vaſt multitude of ſacrifices fed this ſacred fire, which was maintained continually. The prieſts and Levites with diligence and zeal diſcharged their offices; the ſingers, with the pſalms and inſtruments David appointed, ſet forth God's praiſes, *v.* 6. the people with delight and joy feaſted before the Lord fourteen days; and Solomon enjoyed the peculiar ſatisfaction of ſeeing the labours of his hands accepted and proſperous; an encouragement never to be weary of ſerving ſo great and ſo good a maſter. *Note,* (1.) The fire which once broke forth on Jeſus our ſacrifice, though terrible to behold, ſpeaks God now for ever reconciled to believing ſinners, as having taken one for all. (2.) When God hath kindled the fire of divine love in our hearts, it becomes us to feed it with the continual ſacrifices of prayer and praiſe, and whilſt it thus is kept burning, we are aſſured our ſacrifice is accepted. (3.) A ſinner conſcious of his deſerts, is aſhamed and confounded before a holy God. (4.) We can never be in any ſituation, in which praiſe is not our bounden duty. As long as we are out of hell, we muſt ever ſay, He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. (5.) They who delight in God's worſhip, will never count the time long they ſpend in his ſervice. (6.) All our proſperity in our undertakings muſt be aſcribed wholly to the Divine bleſſing; and when we make God's glory our firſt concern, we may confidently expect it.

12. ¶ And [n] the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and ſaid unto him, [o] I have heard thy prayer, and have choſen this place to myſelf, for an houſe of ſacrifice. 13. [p] If I ſhut up heaven that there be no rain, or if [q] I command the locuſts to devour the land, or if I ſend peſtilence among my people; 14. If my people which are called by my name, [r] ſhall humble themſelves, and [s] pray, and [t] ſeek my face, and [u] turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their ſin, and will heal their land. 15. Now [x] mine eyes ſhall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer † *that is made* in this place. 16. For now have I choſen and ſanctified this houſe, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart ſhall be there perpetually. 17. And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and ſhalt obſerve my ſtatutes and my judgments: 18. Then will I eſtabliſh the throne of thy kingdom, [y] according as I have covenanted with David thy father, ſaying, There ſhall not fail thee a man *to be* ruler in Iſrael. 19. [z] But if ye turn away and forſake my ſtatutes and my commandments which I have ſet before you, and ſhall go and ſerve other gods, and worſhip them: 20. [a] Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and [b] this houſe which I have ſanctified for my name, will I caſt out of my ſight, and will make it *to be* a proverb and a by-word among all nations. 21. And this houſe which is high, ſhall be an aſtoniſhment to every one that paſſeth by it; [c] ſo that he ſhall ſay, [d] Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land and unto this houſe? 22. And it ſhall be anſwered, [e] Becauſe they forſook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worſhipped them, and ſerved them: [f] therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.

[n] 1 Kings ix. 2, &c.
[o] Pſal. x. 17. & lxv. 2. Dan. ix. 23. Mat. vii. 8.
[p] Deut. xxviii. 23.
[q] Joel i. 4, 12.
[r] Jam. iv. 9, 10.
[s] Ezek. xxxvi. 37. Mat. vii. 7.
[t] Iſa. xlv. 19.
[u] Ezek. xviii. 27. xxxiii. 11.
[x] Deut. xi. 12. Chap. vi. 20, 40.
† Heb. Of this place.
[y] 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c.
[z] 1 Sam. xii. 21. Pſal. lxxxix. 30.
[a] 2 Kings xvii. 20.
[b] Ibid. xxv. 9. Jer. vii. 14.
[c] Lam. ii. 15.
[d] Deut. xxix. 24. Jer. xxii. 8.
[e] Jer. ii. 13.
[f] Chap. xxxvi. 16, 17. Lam. i. 8, 18.

v. 12—22. God's ſecond gracious viſit to Solomon we had before, 1 *Kings* ix. He expreſsly grants all the particulars he had prayed for. Whenever the people, according as he had ſpoken, ſhould return in penitence and prayer, their ſin ſhould immediately be pardoned, and their ſufferings removed. He conſents to make this houſe his abode for ever, and to eſtabliſh his kingdom to the lateſt poſterity, provided he approved himſelf faithful; but warns him withal, that if he or they (as it was too poſſible, and they were too prone to do) ſhould turn aſide after other gods, and be unfaithful in his covenant, then they might expect no protection from this temple, their land ſhould be waſted, the people deſtroyed, and the ſanctuary made deſolate, and ſuch terrible judgments overtake them, as ſhould aſtoniſh their heathen neighbours, and even make them reflect with juſt reproach on their apoſtacy. *Note,* (1.) If God is ſo gracious, let us beware not to grieve him. Our hearts are deceitful and deſperately wicked, and we need fear for ourſelves continually. (2.) Whenever God engages the heart in humiliation to return to him, it is a ſign there is ſtill mercy in ſtore.

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The cities Solomon built,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The workmen he employed,* ver. 7—10. 3. *The palace he built for his wife,* ver. 11. 4. *The order he put the temple-ſervice into,* ver. 12—16. 5. *The trading he had with foreign countries,* ver. 17, 18.

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1. AND it came to paſs ([a] at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the houſe of the LORD,

[a] 1 Kings ix. 10, &c.

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LORD, and his own houſe) 2. That the cities which
Huram had reſtored to Solomon, Solomon built them,
and cauſed the children of Iſrael to dwell there. 3. And
Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed againſt
it. 4. And he built [b] Tadmor in the wilderneſs, and
all the ſtore-cities, which he built in Hamath. 5. Alſo he
built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether,
fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars: 6. And
Baalath, and all the ſtore-cities, that Solomon had, and
all the chariot-cities, and the cities of the horſemen, and
all † that Solomon deſired to build in Jeruſalem, and in
Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.
7. ¶ *As for* all the people *that were* left of the Hittites,
and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites,
and the Jebuſites, which *were* not of Iſrael; 8.
But of their children who were left after them in the
land, whom the children of Iſrael conſumed not; them
did Solomon make [c] to pay tribute, until this day. 9.
But of the children of Iſrael did Solomon make no ſervants
for his work: but they *were* men of war, and chief
of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horſemen.
10. And theſe *were* the chief of king Solomon's officers,
even [d] two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over
the people. 11. ¶ And Solomon [e] brought up the
daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David, unto the
houſe that he had built for her: for he ſaid, My wife
ſhall not dwell in the houſe of David king of Iſrael, becauſe
the places are ‡ holy, whereunto the ark of the
LORD hath come.

[b] 1 Kings ix. 18, &c.
† Heb. The deſire of Solomon, which he deſired to build. 1 Kings ix. 1. Eccleſ. ii. 10.
[c] 1 Kings v. 13. & ix. 21.
[d] 1 Kings ix. 23.
[e] Ibid. iii. 1. & vii. 8. & ix. 24.
‡ Heb. Holineſſes.

v. 1—11. The only warlike expedition Solomon was engaged in, we have in *v.* 3. reducing to his obedience Hamath-zobah, which ſeems to have revolted. His buildings, to which his genius led him, ſtill went forward, the beautifying and ſtrengthening his kingdom was a work well worthy ſo great a prince; and the old inhabitants of the land, now brought under tribute and proſelyted, afforded him a number of workmen without employing the nobler free-born Iſraelites. Having built a palace for his wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, he removed her from the city of David, where ſhe had before her reſidence. For though probably a proſelyte herſelf, many of her Egyptian ſervants might retain the idols and iniquities of Egypt; and a place which had been favoured with the ark of God, and ſo long the ſeat of worſhip, where David prayed and ſung before the Lord, ought not to be profaned by ſuch inhabitants. *Note*, (1.) Though we ſhould avoid ſuperſtitious reverence for places, yet what hath been once ſacred to God in reſpect to him, ought not to be treated as a common thing. (2.) They who marry into ſtrange families, will find a burden and a ſnare from the evil manners of their wife's friends and relations, with whom they become neceſſarily connected.

12. ¶ Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto
the LORD, on the altar of the LORD, [f] which he
had built before the porch: 13. Even after a certain
rate [g] every day, offering according to the commandment
of Moſes on the ſabbaths, and on the new moons, and
on the ſolemn feaſts, [h] three times in the year, *even* in
the feaſt of unleavened bread, and in the feaſt of weeks,
and in the feaſt of tabernacles. 14. ¶ And he appointed,
according to the order of David his father, [i] the
courſes of the prieſts to their ſervice, and [k] the Levites
to their charges, to praiſe and miniſter before the prieſts,
as the duty of every day required: [l] the porters alſo by
their courſes, at every gate: for † ſo had David the
man of God commanded. 15. And they departed not
from the commandment of the king unto the prieſts
and Levites, concerning any matter, or concerning the
treaſures. 16. Now all the work of Solomon was prepared
unto the day of the foundation of the houſe of
the LORD, and until it was finiſhed: [m] *ſo* the houſe
of the LORD was perfected. 17. ¶ Then went Solomon
to Ezion-geber, and to [n] Eloth, at the ſea-ſide in
the land of Edom. 18. And [o] Huram ſent him by
the hands of his ſervants, ſhips, and ſervants that had
knowledge of the ſea; and they went with the ſervants
of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence [p] four hundred
and fifty talents of gold, and brought *them* to king
Solomon.

[f] 1 Kings viii. 64.
[g] Exod. xxix. 38.
[h] Ibid. xxiii. 14. Deut. xvi. 6.
[i] 1 Chron. xxiv. 1.
[k] Ibid. xxv. 1.
[l] Ibid. ix. 17. & xxvi. 1.
† Heb. So was the commandment of David.
[m] 1 Kings ix. 25.
[n] Deut. ii. 8. 2 Kings xiv. 22.
[o] Chap. ix. 10, 13.
[p] 1 Kings ix. 28.

v. 12—18. Solomon had not only built a temple for the honour of God, but took care to continue waiting upon God there in his inſtituted ways. Building churches will do a man no good, if his ſpirit be not engaged in the ſervice of the ſanctuary.

1. The temple work was exactly carried on according to the Divine preſcription, *v.* 13. and the courſes of prieſts and Levites in waiting according to David's inſtitution. *Note*, Regular and ſtated returns of worſhip are carefully to be obſerved.

2. Solomon's trade flouriſhed. He viſited his ſea-ports in perſon; and with the aſſiſtance of Hiram's mariners, made a very ſucceſsful voyage to Ophir; *See* 1 *Kings* ix. 26. *Note*, (1.) The maſter's eye is moſt neceſſary over his own affairs. (2.) Men brave every danger of the ſeas for the gold of Ophir, and ſhall we be leſs ſollicitous to ſecure the more enduring treaſures of grace and glory?

CHAP. IX.

Here is, 1. *The honour which the queen of Sheba did to Solomon*, ver. 1—12. 2. *Many inſtances given of the riches and ſplendor of Solomon's court*, ver. 13—28. 3. *The concluſion of his reign*, ver. 29—31.

1. [a] AND when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame
of Solomon, ſhe came [b] to prove Solomon with
hard queſtions at Jeruſalem, with a very great company,
and camels that bare ſpices, and gold in abundance,
and precious ſtones: and when ſhe was come
to Solomon, ſhe communed with him of all that was in
her heart. 2. And Solomon told her all her † queſtions:
and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told
her not. 3. And when the queen of Sheba had ſeen [c] the
wiſdom of Solomon, and the houſe that he had built,
4. And the meat of his table, and [d] the ſitting of his
ſervants, and the ‡ attendance of his miniſters, and their
apparel, his cup-bearers alſo, and their apparel, and
‖ his aſcent by which he went up into the houſe of the
LORD; [e] there was no more ſpirit in her. 5. And
ſhe ſaid to the king, *It was* a true report which I heard
in mine own land, of thine acts, and of thy wiſdom:
6. Howbeit, I believed not their words, until I came
and mine eyes had ſeen *it*: and behold, the one half
of the greatneſs of thy wiſdom was not told me: *for*
[f] thou exceedeſt the fame that I heard. 7. [g] Happy *are*
thy men, and happy *are* theſe thy ſervants, which
ſtand continually before thee, and [h] hear thy wiſdom.
8. [i] Bleſſed be the LORD thy God, which delighted
in thee [k] to ſet thee on his throne, *to be* king for the
LORD thy God: becauſe thy God loved Iſrael, to
eſtabliſh them for ever, therefore made he thee king
over them, to do judgment and juſtice. 9. And [l] ſhe
gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold,
and of ſpices great abundance, and precious ſtones: neither
was there any ſuch ſpice as the queen of Sheba
gave king Solomon. 10. And [m] the ſervants alſo of
Huram, and the ſervants of Solomon, which brought
gold from Ophir, brought algum-trees, and precious
ſtones. 11. And the king made *of* the algum-trees
§ terriſes to the houſe of the LORD, and to the king's
palace, and harps and pſalteries for ſingers: and there
were none ſuch ſeen before in the land of Judah. 12.
And king Solomon [n] gave to the queen of Sheba all her
deſire, whatſoever ſhe aſked, beſides *that* which ſhe had
brought unto the king: ſo ſhe turned, and went away
to her own land, ſhe and her ſervants.

[a] 1 Kings x. 1, &c. Mat. xii. 42.
[b] Prov. i. 5. & xiii. 20. Luke xi. 31.
† Heb. Words.
[c] Prov. viii. 14. Mat. xii. 42. Col. ii. 3.
[d] Rev. iii. 21.
‡ Heb. Standing.
‖ Heb. Or the burnt-offerings in the houſe.
[e] Mat. vii. 28.
[f] 1 Cor. ii. 9.
[g] Pſal. lxxxiv. 4.
[h] Prov. viii. 34.
[i] Chap. v. 7.
[k] Iſa. ix. 6. Luke i. 32.
[l] Pſal. lxxii. 10. 15.
[m] Ibid. i. 3.
§ Heb. Highways.
[n] Eph. iii. 20.

v. 1—12. This ſtory hath been conſidered, 1 *Kings* x. It remains only to obſerve, (1.) That they who know the value of Divine truth, will count no pains too great to ſearch after it. (2.) They are truly great, whoſe piety and zeal for God diſtinguiſh them. (3.) Whatever gifts we enjoy, they are lent us for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, and to be employed diligently. (4.) We have abundant cauſe to bleſs God for the uſeful inſtruments he is pleaſed to raiſe up for the ſervice of his church, and eſpecially for thoſe who have been made inſtruments of good to our own ſouls. (5.) Great ſouls are ever generous. (6.) Though for a time abſence from home may be needful and profitable, yet we muſt, whatever pleaſing engagements intervene, remember that there is our poſt, and haſten our return.

13. ¶ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon
in one year, was ſix hundred and threeſcore and ſix
talents of gold; 14. Beſides *that which* chapmen and
merchants brought: and [o] all the kings of Arabia, and
governors of the country, brought gold and ſilver to
Solomon. 15. ¶ [p] And king Solomon made two hun-

[o] Pſal. lxxii. 10.
[p] 1 Kings x. 16, &c.

dred targets *of* beaten gold: ſix hundred *ſhekels* of beaten gold went to one target. 16. And three hundred ſhields *made he of* beaten gold: three hundred *ſhekels* of gold went to one ſhield: and the king put them in the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon. 17. ¶ Moreover the king made a great [q] throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. 18. And *there were* ſix ſteps to the throne, with a foot-ſtool of gold, *which were* faſtned to the throne, and † ſtays on each ſide of the ſitting-place, and two lions ſtanding by the ſtays. 19. And twelve lions ſtood there on the one ſide and on the other, upon the ſix ſteps. There was not the like made in any kingdom. 20. ¶ And all the drinking-veſſels of king Solomon *were of* gold, and all the veſſels of the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon *were of* pure gold: ‡ none *were of* ſilver; it was *not* any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon. 21. For the king's ſhips went to Tarſhiſh with the ſervants of Huram: every three years once came the ſhips of Tarſhiſh, bringing gold and ſilver, ivory, and apes, and ‖ peacocks. 22. And king Solomon [r] paſſed all the kings of the earth in riches and wiſdom. 23. ¶ And all the kings of the earth ſought the preſence of Solomon, to hear his wiſdom that God had put in his heart. 24. And they brought every man his preſent, veſſels of ſilver and veſſels of gold, and raiment, harneſs and ſpices, horſes and mules, a rate year by year. 25. ¶ And Solomon had [s] four thouſand ſtalls for horſes and chariots, and twelve thouſand horſemen, whom he beſtowed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jeruſalem. 26. ¶ And [t] he reigned over all the kings from the river, even unto the land of the Philiſtines, and to the border of Egypt. 27. And the king [u] made ſilver in Jeruſalem as ſtones, and cedar-trees made he as the ſycamore-trees, that *are* in the low plains in abundance. 28. And [x] they brought unto Solomon horſes out of Egypt, and out of all lands. 29. ¶ Now [y] the reſt of the acts of Solomon, firſt and laſt, *are* they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of [z] Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the viſions of [a] Iddo the ſeer, againſt Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat? 30. And Solomon reigned in Jeruſalem over all Iſrael forty years. 31. And Solomon ſlept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father, and § Rehoboam his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

v. 13—31. 1. Solomon appears in the zenith of his grandeur. Wealth flowing in upon him like a river; ſurrounding potentates courting his favour with the moſt noble preſents, and eager to hear his wiſdom; and his magnificence, palaces, guards, throne, &c. all tended to excite the admiration of his neighbours, and the reverence of his ſubjects. *Note*, (1.) Great was the glory of Solomon, but our Prince of Peace ſhines with glory infinitely more tranſcendent; before his throne all human magnificence vaniſhes, as the ſtars loſe their luſtre before the meridian ſun. (2.) It will be our happineſs as well as duty to pay our grateful homage at his feet; and offer not the gold of Arabia, but that more valuable preſent, our bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits, a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reaſonable ſervice.

2. Solomon is laid low in the grave. *Mors æquâ pede pulſat*, &c. No greatneſs bars death from entring. A veil is here drawn over his former miſcarriages, of which no doubt he had repented; and which being forgiven, ſhall not be mentioned any more againſt him. His ſun ſets in glory, but his crown deſcends to a ſon, whoſe folly quickly tarniſhes all this greatneſs. *Note*, (1.) The faults of great good men ſhould be forgotten, and their virtues remembred for imitation. (2.) One fooliſh ſon will quickly run out all the acquiſitions of his wiſe and illuſtrious anceſtors.

CHAP. X.

We have here, 1. *The application of the tribes to Rehoboam, on his acceſſion*, ver. 1—4. 2. *The good counſel he rejected, and the bad advice he followed*, ver. 5—15. 3. *The revolt of ten tribes thereupon*, ver. 16—19.

1. [a] AND Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to Shechem were all Iſrael come to make him king. 2. And it came to paſs when Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat (who *was* in Egypt, [b] whither he had fled from the preſence of Solomon the king) heard *it*, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt. 3. And they ſent and called him: ſo Jeroboam and all Iſrael came and ſpake to Rehoboam, ſaying, 4. [c] Thy father made our yoke grievous, now therefore eaſe thou ſomewhat the grievous ſervitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will ſerve thee. 5. And he ſaid unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed. 6. ¶ And king Rehoboam took counſel [d] with the old men that had ſtood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived, ſaying, What counſel give ye *me*, to return anſwer to this people? 7. And they ſpake unto him ſaying, If thou be † kind to this people, and pleaſe them, and [e] ſpeak good words to them, they will be thy ſervants for ever. 8. But he forſook the counſel which the old men gave him, and took counſel with the young men that were brought up with him, that ſtood before him. 9. And he ſaid unto them, What advice give ye, that we may return anſwer to this people, which have ſpoken to me, ſaying, Eaſe ſomewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us? 10. And the young men that were brought up with him, ſpake unto him, ſaying, Thus ſhalt thou anſwer the people that ſpake unto thee, ſaying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* ſomewhat lighter for us: thus ſhalt thou ſay unto them, My little *finger* ſhall be thicker than my father's loins. 11. For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chaſtiſed you with whips, but I *will chaſtiſe you* with ſcorpions.

v. 1—11. After what has been ſaid on this chapter in 1 *Kings* xii. we have only to add, (1.) That men are readier to complain of the leaſt expence the wants of government call for, than to acknowledge how indebted they are for the mercies and protection they enjoy. (2.) Young heads are too hot to be wiſe counſellors. (3.) A ſoft anſwer diſarms thoſe, whom oppoſition makes only more furious.

12. [f] So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, ſaying, Come again to me on the third day. 13. And the king anſwered them † roughly; and king Rehoboam forſook the counſel of the old men, 14. And anſwered them after the advice of the young men, ſaying, My father made your yoke heavy, [g] but I will add thereto: my father chaſtiſed you with whips, but I *will chaſtiſe you* with ſcorpions. 15. So the king hearkned not unto the people, [h] for the cauſe was of God, that the LORD might perform his word [i] which he ſpake by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat. 16. ¶ And when all Iſrael *ſaw* that the king would not hearken unto them, the people anſwered the king, ſaying, What portion have we in David? and *we have* none inheritance in [k] the ſon of Jeſſe: [l] every man to your tents, O Iſrael: *and* now, David, ſee to thine own houſe. So all Iſrael went to their tents. 17. But *as for* the children of Iſrael that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. 18. Then king Rehoboam [m] ſent Hadoram that *was* over the tribute, and the children of Iſrael ſtoned him with ſtones, that he died: but king Rehoboam ‡ made ſpeed to get him up to *his* chariot, to flee to Jeruſalem. 19. And Iſrael rebelled againſt the houſe of David unto this day.

v. 12—19. The ill effects of Rehoboam's ſeverity appear in the revolt of the ten tribes; *See* 1 *Kings* xii. They who drive too furiouſly, overturn themſelves. He rejected the good advice, and deſerved to be given up to his folly. God's counſel thus was fulfilled, *v.* 15. though Rehoboam hath only himſelf to blame for his loſs. It was a mercy God left him yet a part of his father's dominions, and that all had not revolted. But God in wrath ſtill remembers mercy, and doth not give us all the chaſtiſement our iniquities deſerve.

CHAP. XI.

We have here, 1. *A ſtop put to Rehoboam's deſign to reduce the ten tribes, by a meſſage from God*, ver. 1—4. 2. *His ſucceſsful endeavours to preſerve the two tribes that remained*, ver. 5—12. 3. *The reſort of the prieſts and Levites to him*, ver. 13—17. 4. *An account of his wives and children*, ver. 18—23.

1. [a] AND when Rehoboam was come to Jeruſalem, he gathered of the houſe of Judah and Benjamin,

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[q] Pſal. ix. 7. Rev. xx. 11.

† Heb. Hands.

‡ Or there was no ſilver in them.

‖ Or Parrots.

[r] Chap. i. 12. Num. xxiv. 7. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

[s] Deut. xvii. 16.

[t] Pſal. lxxii. 8. Dan. vii. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

[u] Chap. i. 12, 15. Mat. vi. 33.

[x] 1 Kings x. 28. Chap. i. 16.

[y] 1 Kings xi. 41.

[z] Ibid. 29.

[a] Chap. xii. 15. & xiii. 22.

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§ Heb. Rechabbam; i. e. The enlargement of the people. Chap. x. 16.

[a] 1 Kings xii. 1, &c.

[b] Ibid. xi. 40.

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[c] 1 Kings iv. 7. & v. 13.

[d] Job xxxii. 7.

† Heb. For good.

[e] Prov. xv. 1.

[f] 1 Kings xii. 12, &c.

† Heb. Hardly. Eccleſ. ii. 19.

[g] Prov. xii. 13. & xviii. 7.

[h] Chap. xxv. 20. Pſal. lxxxi. 12. Amos iii. 6.

[i] 1 Kings xi. 31.

[k] 1 Sam. xxii. 7.

[l] 2 Sam. xx. 1.

[m] 1 Kings v. 14.

‡ Heb. Strengthened himſelf.

[a] 1 Kings xii. 21, &c.

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jamin, an hundred and fourſcore thouſand choſen *men* which were warriors, to fight againſt Iſrael, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam. 2. But the word of the LORD came to [b] Shemaiah the man of God, ſaying, 3. Speak unto Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon king of Judah, and to all Iſrael in Judah and Benjamin, ſaying, 4. Thus ſaith the LORD, [c] Ye ſhall not go up, nor fight againſt your brethren: return every man to his houſe, for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going againſt Jeroboam. 5. ¶ And Rehoboam dwelt in Jeruſalem, and [d] built cities for defence in Judah. 6. He built even Beth-lehem, and Etam, and Tekoa, 7. And Beth-zur, and Shoco, and Adullam, 8. And Gath, and Mareſhah, and Ziph, 9. And Adoraim, and Lachiſh, and Azekah, 10. And Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which *are* in Judah, and in Benjamin, fenced cities. 11. And he fortified the ſtrong-holds, and put captains in them, and ſtore of victual, and of oil and wine. 12. And in every ſeveral city *he put* ſhields and ſpears, and made them exceeding ſtrong, having Judah and Benjamin on his ſide.

[b] Chap. xii. 15.
[c] Exod. ii. 13. Acts vii. 26.
[d] Chap xiv. 6.

v. 1—12. Though Rehoboam had been unſucceſsful in his attempt to reduce the people by fair words, *chap.* x. 18. he reſolved to try the ſword before Jeroboam was ſtrengthened in his kingdom: and he ſoon raiſed out of Judah and Benjamin a formidable force. But,

1. On the prophet's warning, he diſbanded them, *v.* 4. *Note*, It is vain to reſiſt Divine decrees. Oppoſition will only iſſue in our greater confuſion.

2. He fortified his country, weakened by ſuch a defection; and as many of the loyal Iſraelites, as well as the Levites, *v.* 13. choſe to live under his government, they might be fixed in ſome of the cities he built. *Note*, When our loſs is irrecoverable, it is our wiſdom to make the beſt uſe of what remains.

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13. ¶ And the prieſts and the Levites that *were* in all Iſrael, reſorted to him out of all their coaſts. 14. (For the Levites left [e] their ſuburbs, and their poſſeſſion, and came to Judah and Jeruſalem: for [f] Jeroboam and his ſons had caſt them off from executing the prieſt's office unto the LORD. 15. And [g] he ordained him prieſts for the high places, and [h] for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.) 16. And [i] after them out of all the tribes of Iſrael, ſuch as [k] ſet their hearts to ſeek the LORD God of Iſrael, came to Jeruſalem, to ſacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers. 17. So they ſtrengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon ſtrong, three years: [l] for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon. 18. ¶ And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the ſon of David to wife, *and* Abihail the daughter of Eliab the ſon of Jeſſe: 19. Which bare him children: Jeuſh, and Shamariah, and Zaham. 20. And after her, he took [m] Maachah the daughter of Abſalom, which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith. 21. And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Abſalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took eighteen wives, and threeſcore concubines, and begat twenty and eight ſons, and threeſcore daughters) 22. And Rehoboam [n] made Abijah the ſon of Maachah the chief, *to be* ruler among his brethren: for *he thought* to make him king: 23. And he dealt wiſely, and [o] diſperſed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance: and he deſired † many wives.

[e] Num. xxxv. 2.
[f] Chap. xiii. 9.
[g] 1 Kings xii. 31. & xiii. 33. & xiv. 9. Hoſ. xiii. 2.
[h] Lev. xvii. 7.
[i] Chap. xv. 9. & xxx. 11, 18.
[k] Pſal. lxix. 32.
[l] Chap. xii. 1.
[m] See Chap. xiii. 2.
[n] See Deut. xxi. 15, &c.
[o] See Gen. xxv. 6. Chap. xxi. 3.
† Heb. A multitude of wives.

v. 13—23. We have here,

1. The noble conduct of the prieſts and Levites. Since their country was become idolatrous, and they were no more permitted to exerciſe their ſacred functions at home, or to go up in courſe to Jeruſalem, they quitted their cities, and the lands aſſigned them; rather chuſing to ſuffer any hardſhips, than be debarred from God's ſervice, which they valued above all poſſeſſions. Their brethren of Judah gladly received and entertained them. *Note*, (1.) The enjoyment of the free exerciſe of our religion cannot be too dearly purchaſed. (2.) Better is it to beg our bread from door to door with a good conſcience, than by baſe compliances ſecure eaſe and affluence. (3.) They who for the ſake of God forſake all, ſhall one day find themſelves no loſers. (4.) They ſhould be received with open arms, and treated with every kindneſs, who ſuffering for conſcience-ſake, ſeek among us a refuge from perſecution.

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2. Many pious Iſraelites followed their example, and rather choſe to forſake all, than be deſtitute of the paſtors thus driven from them. *Note*, (1.) They who know the value of their ſouls, will prefer the care of them to every conſideration. (2.) When God's miniſters are perſecuted and caſt out, we muſt ſtill adhere to them, and ſhare with them in weal and woe. (3.) Trying ſeaſons of perſecution ſerve to ſeparate the precious from the vile.

3. Iſrael loſt, and Judah gained exceedingly by them. They added not only ſtrength by their numbers, but more by the bleſſing which attended them. Three years they walked in the way of David, but afterwards Rehoboam, and they led by his example, grievouſly turned aſide, and loſt thereby the Divine protection. *Note*, (1.) All perſecution is as impolitic as it is wicked. (2.) We can only expect ſupport, while we continue faithful to God. (3.) Many a refugee in the place of his aſylum, hath found greater danger from eaſe and peace, than from the ſword of the perſecutor.

4. Rehoboam following the unjuſtifiable example of his fathers, greatly multiplied his wives, and increaſed his family. However, he choſe to match among his brethren, and thoſe chiefly of the ſeed royal, and took not ſtrange wives, as Solomon. Abijah his ſon, by Maachah the daughter of Abſalom, (not the ſon of David, *See* 1 *Kings* xv. 2. and xiii. 2.) was appointed his ſucceſſor, and his other ſons diſperſed in the ſeveral cities of Judah and Benjamin, as perſons he could confide in.

CHAP. XII.

Here, 1. *Rehoboam and Judah, for their iniquity, are ſold into the hands of Shiſhak king of Egypt*, ver. 1—4. 2. *They repent at the preaching of a prophet*, ver. 5, 6. 3. *God thereupon turns from his anger, yet leaves them under the marks of his diſpleaſure*, ver. 7—12. 4. *A general character is given of Rehoboam's reign: his death*, ver. 13—16.

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1. AND it came to paſs when [a] Rehoboam had eſtabliſhed the kingdom, and had ſtrengthned himſelf, [b] he forſook the law of the LORD, and [c] all Iſrael with him. 2. [d] And it came to paſs, *that* in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shiſhak king of Egypt came up againſt Jeruſalem ([e] becauſe they had tranſgreſſed againſt the LORD) 3. With twelve hundred chariots, and threeſcore thouſand horſemen: and the people *were* without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians. 4. And [f] he took the fenced cities which *pertained* to Judah, and came to Jeruſalem. 5. ¶ Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and *to* the princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jeruſalem becauſe of Shiſhak, and ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith the LORD, [g] Ye have forſaken me, and therefore have I alſo left you in the hand of Shiſhak. 6. Whereupon the princes of Iſrael, and the king humbled themſelves, and they ſaid, The LORD *is* righteous. 7. And [h] when the LORD ſaw that they humbled themſelves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, ſaying, They have humbled themſelves, *therefore* I will not deſtroy them, but I will grant them † ſome deliverance, and my wrath ſhall not be poured out upon Jeruſalem by the hand of Shiſhak. 8. Nevertheleſs, [i] they ſhall be his ſervants; that they may know my ſervice, and the ſervice of the kingdoms of the countries. 9. So Shiſhak king of Egypt came up againſt Jeruſalem, and took away the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD, and [k] the treaſures of the king's houſe, he took all: he carried away alſo [l] the ſhields of gold which Solomon had made. 10. Inſtead of which king Rehoboam made ſhields of braſs, and committed *them* to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's houſe. 11. And when the king entred into the houſe of the LORD, the guard came and fet them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber. 12. And when he humbled himſelf, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not deſtroy *him* altogether: [m] and alſo in Judah things went well.

[a] Chap. xi. 17.
[b] Deut. xxxii. 15.
[c] Prov. xxix. 12.
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[d] 1 Kings xiv. 25, &c.
[e] Judg. ii. 14.
[f] Jer. v. 10.
[g] Chap. xv. 2.
[h] 1 Kings xxi. 29.
† Heb. A little while.
[i] Iſa. xxvi. 13.
[k] Prov. xxiii. 5.
[l] Chap. ix. 15.
[m] Hoſ. xi. 12.

v. 1—12. Short was the gleam of ſun-ſhine, which brightened the firſt years of Rehoboam's government.

1. He forſook the law of God, and Judah followed his example. Their ſin is recorded, 1 *Kings* xiv. 22—24. Now the kingdom was ſtrengthened, they not only caſt off the fear of man,

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man, but of God. *Note*, Proſperity is the common cauſe of the ruin of men's ſouls.

2. God left them not unpuniſhed. Shiſhak king of Egypt, in the fifth year of Rehoboam invaded the land, and eaſily took the fenced cities, in which Rehoboam had repoſed his confidence. *Note*, Human ſupports will prove but refuges of lies, when God's favour is withdrawn.

3. In this diſtreſs God ſends a prophet to the king and princes, aſſembled probably in council, to enforce the providence for their conviction and humiliation, *v.* 5. *Note*, (1.) The word of God comes with peculiar force, when joined with awakening providences. (2.) It is vain to conſult about our defence, if we continue unhumbled for our ſins.

4. The prophet's word was attended with deep effects. Conviction ſeized their hearts, and they confeſſed the judgment of God juſt. *Note*, A ſinner is never truly humbled, till he juſtifies God in his ſufferings.

5. God, on their humiliation, ſends his prophet again to comfort them. Though corrected, they ſhould not be conſumed. God ſhould prevent the threatened ruin of Jeruſalem; but they would for a time ſmart for their wickedneſs, and prove, under an Egyptian yoke, how bad a choice they had made, when they rejected God for their maſter. *Note*, (1.) God waits to be gracious: the moment we return in penitence, as prodigal ſons, his bowels, as a father, yearn over us. (2.) God makes us often ſmart in the fleſh for it, even when the guilt of our ſin is done away. (3.) They who count God a hard maſter, and the perfect freedom of his ſervice burdenſome, will find the ſlavery to their luſts, and the wages of ſin, a miſerable exchange.

6. Shiſhak, reſtrained of God, after plundering the country, and carrying off the ſhields of gold, and all the treaſures of Rehoboam, which David and Solomon had amaſſed, retired into Egypt; and the king, ſtripped of his grandeur, was forced to ſubſtitute ſhields of braſs in their ſtead. *Note*, The greateſt conquerors are reſtrained by an inviſible arm, who gives them their commiſſion, which they cannot exceed.

7. On Shiſhak's return, and Rehoboam's repentance, God had mercy on Judah; the ravaged country recovered; and religion, that was decayed, again revived and flouriſhed. *Things went well in Judah*; or, *in Judah there were good things.* Bad as the times had been, there was a remnant according to the election of grace. *Note*, (1.) In the worſt days, God has his faithful few. (2.) The judgments which learn us righteouſneſs, are mercies in diſguiſe.

13. ¶ So king Rehoboam ſtrengthened himſelf in Jeruſalem, and reigned: for [n] Rehoboam *was* one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ſeventeen years in Jeruſalem, the city which the LORD had choſen out of all the tribes of Iſrael, to put his name there: and his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammoniteſs. 14. And he did evil, becauſe he † prepared not his heart to ſeek the LORD. 15. Now the acts of Rehoboam, firſt and laſt, *are* they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and [o] of Iddo the ſeer, concerning genealogies? And *there were* wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. 16. And Rehoboam ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David; and ‡ Abijah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[n] 1 Kings xiv. 21.

† Or fixed.

[o] Chap. ix. 29.

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‡ Abijam. 1 Kings xiv. 31.

v. 13—16. On Shiſhak's retiring, Rehoboam recovered ſtrength, and fortified Jeruſalem againſt any future attacks. His wars with Jeroboam were continued to the end of his reign: though no pitched battle was fought, there were conſtant acts of hoſtility on the borders. His humiliation ſeems to have been of no long continuance. His heart was not right with God, *v.* 14. he did not ſeek to him for advice, or pray for his aſſiſtance; at leaſt, he was not truly engaged in the ſervice, when he pretended to do ſo. His reign continued ſeventeen years, and then his ſon, too like himſelf, ſucceeded him. *Note*, (1.) If our heart is not engaged truly in the ſervice of God, all is nought. (2.) Though judgments may bring a man to his knees, nothing but divine grace can turn the ſoul to God.

CHAP. XIII.

Here are, 1. *The armies brought into the field by Abijah and Jeroboam*, ver. 3. 2. *The remonſtrance which Abijah made before the battle, ſetting forth the juſtice of his cauſe*, ver. 4—12. 3. *The diſtreſs which Judah was brought into by the policy of Jeroboam*, ver. 13, 14. 4. *The victory they obtained, notwithſtanding, by the power of God*, ver. 15—20. 5. *The concluſion of Abijah's reign*, ver. 21, 22.

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[a] 1 Kings xv. 1.

1. [a] NOW in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam, began Abijah to reign over Judah. 2. He reigned three years in Jeruſalem: (his mother's name alſo *was* [b] Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah) and there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. 3. And Abijah ſet the battle in array, with an army of valiant men of war, *even* four hundred thouſand choſen men: Jeroboam alſo ſet the battle in array againſt him with eight hundred thouſand choſen men, *being* mighty men of valour. 4. ¶ And Abijah [c] ſtood up upon mount Zemaraim, which *is* in mount Ephraim, and ſaid, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Iſrael, 5. Ought you not to know, that [d] the LORD God of Iſrael gave the kingdom over Iſrael to David for ever, *even* to him and to his ſons [e] by a covenant of ſalt? 6. Yet Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, the ſervant of Solomon the ſon of David, is riſen up, and [f] hath rebelled againſt his lord. 7. And there are gathered unto him vain men, [g] the children of Belial, and have [h] ſtrengthened themſelves againſt Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted, and could not withſtand them. 8. And now ye think to withſtand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the ſons of David; and ye *be* a great multitude, and *there are* with you golden calves [i] which Jeroboam made you for gods. 9. [k] Have ye not caſt out the prieſts of the LORD, the ſons of Aaron, and the Levites, and [l] have made you prieſts after the manner of the nations of *other* lands? [m] ſo that whoſoever cometh to † conſecrate himſelf with a young bullock and ſeven rams, *the ſame* may be a prieſt of *them that are* no gods. 10. But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forſaken him; and the prieſts which miniſter unto the LORD, *are* the ſons of Aaron, and the Levites *wait* upon *their* buſineſs. 11. And [n] they burn unto the LORD every morning and every evening burnt-ſacrifices and ſweet incenſe: [o] the *ſhew*-bread alſo *ſet they in order* upon the pure table, and the candleſtick of gold with the lamps thereof, [p] to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forſaken him. 12. And behold, [q] God himſelf *is* with us for *our* captain, and [r] his prieſts with ſounding trumpets to cry alarm againſt you: O children of Iſrael, [s] fight ye not againſt the LORD God of your fathers, for you ſhall not proſper.

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[b] See 1 Kings xv. 2. Chap. xi. 20.

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[c] Pſ. cxx. 7. Rom. xii. 18.

[d] 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c.

[e] Numb. xviii. 19.

[f] 1 Kings xi. 26.

[g] Deut. xiii. 13.

[h] Chap. xii. 13.

[i] 1 Kings xii. 28. Hoſ. viii. 6.

[k] Chap. xi. 14, 15.

[l] 1 Kings xii. 31.

[m] Exod. xxix. 35.

† Heb. Fill his hand. See Exod. xxix. 1. Lev. viii. 2.

[n] Chap. ii. 4.

[o] Lev. xxiv. 6.

[p] Exod. xxvii. 21. Lev. xxiv. 3.

[q] Rom. viii. 31.

[r] Num. x. 8.

[s] Acts v. 39.

v. 1—12. Abijah is ſcarce fixed on the throne, before we find him involved in a dangerous war. Perhaps Jeroboam thought to take advantage of him on his acceſſion, as unprepared, and unable to withſtand him.

1. Immenſe armies on both ſides were drawn into the field, but the men of Iſrael twice as many as thoſe of Judah. The forces were unequal; but what was wanting in number, was more than ſupplied by the juſtice of Abijah's cauſe.

2. Abijah, if poſſible to prevent bloodſhed, obtains a parley, and tries by force of argument to prevail, rather than by the ſword. He ſought not conqueſt, but would gladly part in peace. Every method of accommodation ſhould be tried, before we have recourſe to war, or the law, where generally much is loſt on both ſides, and little gained by either. Abijah with his party being on mount Ephraim, and Jeroboam and his party within hearing, he expoſtulates with him, [1.] On the injuſtice of Jeroboam's deſign. His former rebellion againſt his father was perfidious and baſe: he had taken advantage of his weakneſs, during the infancy of his government,: and, ſupported by men apoſtate from God, and ſons of Belial, had withdrawn ten tribes from their allegiance: yet, not ſatisfied with this, in oppoſition to the divine promiſes, *v.* 5. he now was impiouſly attempting to diſpoſſeſs David's ſucceſſors of the little which was left, and, in ſo doing, fighting againſt God, *v.* 8. by whom the kings of Judah reigned. *Note*, (1.) Ambition is never ſatisfied. (2.) Succeſs emboldens ſinners. (3.) Proſperous iniquity is but a ſhort-lived joy. [2.] He warns him of the danger to which he expoſed himſelf. What could he hope, an apoſtate, an idolater, a perſecutor, who had calves for his god, and the vileſt of the people for his prieſts. Little could his numerous army profit him in ſuch a caſe, whilſt Abijah boaſts of Judah's fidelity to the great Jehovah; conſtant and exact in his worſhip at home; ſupported and ſtrengthened by him, as the captain of their hoſt; animated by his miniſters ſounding the ſilver trumpets, the earneſt of certain victory. Wiſely therefore he perſuades him to deſiſt from war, and not think to fight againſt the God of their fathers, ſince in ſuch caſe ruin inevitable awaited him. Abijah's own character we find, 1 *Kings* xv. 3. was not of the beſt; yet he maintained God's worſhip; and though his own ſtate was evil, his kingdom was under God's protection. *Note*, (1.) They who have God for their enemy, will find all human efforts vain. (2.) It is juſt in God to give up thoſe to ruin, who apoſtatize from his ſervice.

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(3.) Diligent obſervance of God's inſtituted ordinances will bring its own reward. (4.) A good cauſe gives men courage; and how much more the preſence and ſupport of the great God. (5.) Fair warning of their danger leaves ſinners inexcuſable in their obſtinacy.

t Ver. 16. Prov. xxi. 30.
u Ver. 15. Pſ. cxx. 1.
x Chap. xiv. 12.
y Pſ. iii. 8.
z Pſ. xxxiii. 16.
a 1 Chron. v. 20. Pſ. xxi. 2, 3.
b Joſh. xv. 9.
c 1 Kings xiv. 20.
d 2 Sam. iii. 1.
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† Or commentary.
e Chap. xii. 15.

13. ¶ But Jeroboam [t] cauſed an ambuſhment to come about behind them: ſo they were before Judah, and the ambuſhment *was* behind them. 14. And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle *was* before and behind: and [u] they cried unto the LORD, and the prieſts ſounded with the trumpets. 15. Then the men of Judah gave a ſhout: and as the men of Judah ſhouted, it came to paſs, that [x] God ſmote Jeroboam and all Iſrael before Abijah and Judah. 16. And the children of Iſrael fled before Judah: and God [y] delivered them into their hand. 17. And Abijah and his people ſlew them with a great ſlaughter: ſo there fell down ſlain of Iſrael [z] five hundred thouſand choſen men. 18. Thus the children of Iſrael were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, [a] becauſe they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers. 19. And Abijah purſued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeſhanah with the towns thereof, and [b] Ephrain with the towns thereof. 20. [c] Neither did Jeroboam recover ſtrength again in the days of Abijah: And the LORD ſtruck him, and he died. 21. ¶ But [d] Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two ſons, and ſixteen daughters. 22. And the reſt of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his ſayings, *are* written in the † ſtory of the prophet [e] Iddo.

v. 13—22. They who are devoted to deſtruction, are deaf to admonition.

1. Jeroboam, perhaps whilſt Abijah was ſpeaking, took the advantage to plant an ambuſcade behind him; and, inſtead of anſwering his reaſoning, produced, as he concluded, the weightier argument of the longeſt ſword.

2. Abijah and his ſervants put the battle in array; but no ſooner was the front engaged, than a cry in the rear alarmed and terrified him. In deep diſtreſs they cried to the Lord, Save, or we periſh! and, truſting all on his hands, endure the ſhock. The prieſts with trumpets ſounded, inſpiring more than mortal courage; and loud the men of Judah ſhout as for victory, ruſh on their foes, diſpirited, and ſmitten of God with panic fear. A havock terrible enſued, ſuch as no other hiſtory affords in any one battle: five hundred thouſand men lay dead on the field. *Note*, (1.) God often leaves his people to fall into the moſt imminent danger, to awaken their cries, to exerciſe their faith, and make his deliverance of them more glorious. (2.) If we are enabled to truſt upon God, then ſhall we not be moved. (3.) The prayer of faith, and the ſhout of victory, are inſeparable. (4.) Civil wars and diſputes among brethren are uſually moſt bitter and bloody.

3. Abijah purſued his blow in the recovery of part of the revolted cities, particularly Beth-el, from whence Jeroboam had either withdrawn the calf, or Abijah had not zeal enough to deſtroy it. We find it ſtill there, 2 *Kings* x. 29.

4. Death, ſoon after this, removed them both from the throne, to give an account of their government to the King of kings. Jeroboam, weakened with his defeat, and ſmitten of God with ſickneſs, perhaps broken-hearted through pride and vexation on his loſſes, lingred for a while, and then died as miſerably, as he had lived wickedly. Mark the end of thoſe men who forſake God. Abijah, ſtrengthened by his acquiſitions, and bleſſed with a numerous family, waxed mighty; but his greatneſs was ſhort-lived, (ſuch is the fate of all ſublunary poſſeſſions); he ſoon ſlept with his fathers; and in the book of Iddo, a farther account of his wars, private character, and ſayings, were recorded, which is long ſince periſhed. *Note*, The preſervation of the inſpired writings from the ravages of time, is a ſingular inſtance of divine providence, that with thankfulneſs we are bound to acknowledge.

CHAP. XIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Aſa's pious reign,* ver. 1—5. 2. *His policy,* ver. 6—8. 3. *His victory over a great army of Ethiopians,* ver. 9—15.

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a 1 Kings xv. 8, &c.
b Chap. xv. 17.
c Ezek. xx. 18. 1 Pet. i. 18.

1. SO [a] Abijah ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and Aſa his ſon reigned in his ſtead: in his days the land was quiet ten years. 2. And Aſa did *that which was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God. 3. For he took away the altars of the ſtrange *gods*, and [b] the high places, and [c] brake down the images, and [d] cut down the groves: 4. [e] And commanded Judah to ſeek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law, and the commandment. 5. Alſo he took away out of all the cities of Judah, the high places and the † images: and the kingdom was quiet before him. 6. ¶ And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had reſt, and he had no war in thoſe years; becauſe the LORD had given him reſt. 7. Therefore he ſaid unto Judah, Let us build theſe cities, and make about *them* walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land *is* yet before us; becauſe we have ſought the LORD our God, we have ſought *him*, and he hath given us reſt on every ſide: ſo they built and proſpered. 8. And Aſa had an army *of men* that bare targets and ſpears, out of Judah three hundred thouſand, and out of Benjamin, that bare ſhields and ‡ drew bows, two hundred and fourſcore thouſand: all theſe *were* mighty men of valour.

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d 1 Kings xi. 7.
e Joſh. xxii. 5.
† Heb. Sun-images.
‡ Heb. Trod the bow. 1 Chron. v. 18. & viii. 40.

v. 1—8. Abijah left the crown at his deceaſe to a worthy ſucceſſor, whoſe piety and proſperity are here recorded.

1. His character was excellent. His eye was ſingle to pleaſe God, and he met with his approbation and bleſſing; and ſo ſhall we, when, like him, our only great and prevailing concern is to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord.

2. He gave a ſtriking proof of the uprightneſs of his heart, in his zeal for God's ſervice. No ſooner was he come to the crown, than he aboliſhed every monument of idolatry, which had remained ſince the days of Solomon, and had received the royal ſanction, or at leaſt was connived at during the laſt reigns. And this reformation he carried through all his dominions, bringing back the people to the ſervice of the temple, which, though kept up, had been grievouſly neglected; and to the obſervance of God's laws, about which they had become too careleſs. No foreign enemy diſturbed him, and none of his own ſubjects dared oppoſe him. *Note*, (1.) However difficult or dangerous it may appear to repreſs the torrent of iniquity, zeal for God, and dependance upon his ſupport, will work wonders. (2.) Every body can do ſomething for God; but magiſtrates and miniſters are eſpecially called upon to labour for the eſtabliſhment of pure religion.

3. Aſa improved the peace he enjoyed for the ſtrengthening his kingdom, as well as reforming it. Acknowledging with thankfulneſs the mercy he enjoyed, which he regarded as the bleſſing of the fidelity they had ſhewed, he ſtirs up his chief men to aſſiſt him in fortifying the cities; and, tho' in profound tranquillity, prepared for what might happen, by keeping his militia in conſtant exerciſe, conſiſting of 300,000 men of Judah, and 280,000 of Benjamin, differently armed for the various methods of attack, at a diſtance, or in cloſe fight. *Note*, (1.) Peace is a moſt unſpeakable bleſſing, for which we can never be enough thankful. (2.) Proſperity, the reward of fidelity, is doubly ſweet. (3.) They who ſtay themſelves on God, ſhall find abiding reſt to their ſouls. (4.) We may expect trials; however calm the ſcene at preſent be, it is our wiſdom to be armed and watchful.

941.
f Chap. xvi. 8.
g Pſ. xxxiii. 16. Iſa. viii. 9, 10.
h Joſh. xv. 44.
i Chap. xiii. 14.
k 1 Sam. xiv. 6. Pſ. lxii. 11.
l 1 Sam. xvii. 45. Pſ. lxxi. 16. Prov. xviii. 10.
m Chap. xiii. 15.
† Heb. Broken.
n Gen. xxxv. 5. Chap. xvii. 10.

9. ¶ And [f] there came out againſt them Zerah the Ethiopian, with an hoſt of [g] a thouſand thouſand, and three hundred chariots, and came unto [h] Mareſhah. 10. Then Aſa went out againſt him, and they ſet the battle in aray in the valley of Zephathah at Mareſhah. 11. And Aſa [i] cried unto the LORD his God, and ſaid, LORD, [k] *it is* nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we reſt on thee, and [l] in thy name we go againſt this multitude: O LORD, thou *art* our God, let not man prevail againſt thee. 12. So [m] the LORD ſmote the Ethiopians before Aſa, and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. 13. And Aſa and the people that *were* with him purſued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themſelves, for they were † deſtroyed before the LORD, and before his hoſt; and they carried away very much ſpoil. 14. And they ſmote all the cities round about Gerar, for [n] the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they ſpoiled all the cities, for there was exceeding much ſpoil in them. 15. They ſmote alſo the tents of cattle, and carried away ſheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jeruſalem.

v. 9—15. Clouds overcaſt the brighteſt day. We have here,

1. Aſa in trouble. A vaſt army of Ethiopians and their confederates threaten to ſwallow him up. The waves of the ſea are thus permitted often to rage horribly, that the Lord, who

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dwelleth on high, may make his power more mightily to appear.

2. His prayer; fervent, humble, believing. He drew near to God as his covenant-God, in whoſe favour and regard he had a ſure intereſt; perſuaded of his almighty power, againſt which numbers ſignified nothing; dependent on his ſupport, and pleading his own glory now engaged, which would be diſhonoured, if mortal man ſhould prevail againſt his cauſe and people. *Note,* (1.) When we can ſay in prayer *My God,* we ſhall be heard. (2.) There is no might that can prevail againſt the Lord. (3.) We need not fear the faces of the mighty: man is but a worm: if God be for us, who ſhall be againſt us?

3. His prayer was crowned with victory. The enemy in confuſion fled, ſmitten of God with terrible diſmay; and Aſa and his forces purſued them with great ſlaughter; ſtormed the cities of their confederates, whither they had run for ſhelter, ſtruck with a panic fear, and unable to reſiſt; and plundered their camp, the cities, and the country, carrying away immenſe ſpoils, and vaſt droves of cattle.

CHAP. XV.

We have here, 1. *Aſa met by a prophet on his triumphant return, and encouraged to proceed in his reformation,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The effect of this meſſage: the removal of idolatry; the covenant renewed with God; the ſpoil dedicated to God; and the great peace thereupon,* ver. 8—19.

1. AND [a] the ſpirit of God came upon Azariah the ſon of Oded. 2. And he went out to meet Aſa, and ſaid unto him, Hear ye me, Aſa, and all Judah and Benjamin, [b] the LORD *is* with you while ye be with him; and [c] if ye ſeek him, he will be found of you; but [d] if ye forſake him, he will forſake you. 3. Now [e] for a long ſeaſon Iſrael *hath been* without the true God, and [f] without a teaching prieſt, and without law. 4. But [g] when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Iſrael, and ſought him, he was found of them. 5. And [h] in thoſe times *there was* no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations *were* upon all the inhabitants of the countries. 6. And [i] nation was deſtroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adverſity. 7. [k] Be ye ſtrong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: [l] for your work ſhall be rewarded.

[a] 2 Pet. i. 21.
[b] Jam. iv. 8.
[c] Ver. 4, 15. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Chap. xxxiii. 12, 13. Mat. vii. 7.
[d] Chap. xxiv. 20.
[e] Hoſ. iii. 4.
[f] Lev. x. 11.
[g] Deut. iv. 29.
[h] Judg v. 6.
[i] Chap. xii. 15. & xiii. 17.
[k] 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
[l] Pſ. lviii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Heb. vi. 10.

v. 1—7. Not ſo much to congratulate their victory, as to admoniſh them of the right improvement they ſhould make of it, the prophet Azariah met the victor hoſt returning.

1. He let them know, that the continuance of their proſperity depended upon their perſeverance in well-doing. God was now evidently among them; and while they continued to ſeek his favour, ſo long they might be aſſured of his protection; but, if they forſook him, the conſequences would be fatal. *Note,* None ever ſeek God's face in vain; while they who forſake him, forſake their own mercies.

2. He ſets before them the dangerous conſequences of departure from God, in the experience of their nation during the days of the judges, when they forſook the true God for Baal and Aſhtaroth; neglected their divinely-appointed prieſts, and paid no regard to the law, every man doing what was right in his own eyes, and therefore were enſlaved by ſtrangers, and harraſſed within by plunderers and civil diſſenſions, *v.* 5, 6. yet, when they cried to God, he delivered them. Thus others ſufferings ſhould be our warnings: for this purpoſe they are recorded.—Some refer this to the preſent ſtate of Iſrael through Jeroboam's idolatry; others interpret it as prophetical of what would be their caſe hereafter; but the firſt ſenſe ſeems moſt agreeable to the prophet's intention.

3. He exhorts the king and people therefore to be zealous for God, and aſſures them, as they had now found by experience, their labour ſhould meet an abundant recompence. *Note,* Steady perſeverance is ſure to win the crown of life eternal.

8. And when Aſa heard theſe words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the † abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities [m] which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that *was* before the porch of the LORD. 9. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the ſtrangers with them out of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, and out of Simeon: (for [n] they fell to him out of Iſrael in abundance [o] when they ſaw that the LORD his God *was* with him) 10. So they gathered themſelves together at Jeruſalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Aſa. 11. And [p] they offered unto the LORD ‡ the ſame time, of [q] the ſpoil *which* they had brought, ſeven hundred oxen, and ſeven thouſand ſheep. 12. And they entred into a covenant to ſeek the LORD God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their ſoul; 13. [r] That whoſoever would not ſeek the LORD God of Iſrael [s] ſhould be put to death, whether ſmall or great, whether man or woman. 14. And they [t] ſware unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with ſhouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. 15. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had ſworn with all their heart, and ſought him with their whole deſire, and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them reſt round about. 16. ¶ [u] And alſo *concerning* Maachah [x] the § mother of Aſa the king, he removed her ‖ from *being* queen, becauſe ſhe had made an idol in a grove: and Aſa cut down her idol, and ſtamped *it,* and [y] burnt *it* at the brook Kidron. 17. But [z] the high places were not taken away out of Iſrael: nevertheleſs, [a] the heart of Aſa was perfect all his days. 18. ¶ And [b] he brought into the houſe of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himſelf had dedicated, ſilver, and gold, and veſſels. 19. And there was no *more* war unto † the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Aſa.

† Heb. Abominations. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.
[m] Chap. xiii. 19.
[n] Chap. xi. 16.
[o] Zech. viii. 23.

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[p] Chap. xiv. 15.
‡ Heb. In that day.
[q] Chap. xiv. 13.
[r] Exod. xxii. 20.
[s] Deut. xiii. 5, 9, 15.
[t] Neh. x. 29.
[u] 1 Kings xv. 13, &c.
[x] Deut. xxxiii. 9. Zech. xiii. 3.
§ i. e. Grandmother. 1 Kings xv. 2, 10.
‖ Heb. From the queen.
[y] Exod. xxxii. 20.

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[z] Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. xii. 13, 14.
[a] Chap. xvi. 7, 10, 12.
[b] 1 Kings vii. 51. & xv. 15.
† i. e. From the diviſion of the kingdom; for it was but the 15th of Aſa's reign. So Chap. xvi. 1.

v. 8—19. Encouraged by his victory, but more by the prophet's exhortation, Aſa zealouſly renewed the work of reformation.

1. He ſought out and extirpated every abomination which yet remained, or had crept in ſince the beginning of his reign, or that was found in the cities of Iſrael which he had taken; nor ſpared his own grandmother, though a queen, but deſtroyed her image, cut down her grove, degraded her from her ſtation, and removed her from court. *Note,* No greatneſs of ſtation, or nearneſs of relation, muſt lead us to partiality, or connivance at ſin.

2. He convoked a great aſſembly to Jeruſalem, not only of Judah and Benjamin, but of the Iſraelites who had come over to him on his victory, from a conviction of the bleſſing of God that was upon him. This convocation was held probably at the feaſt of Pentecoſt, when Aſa repaired the altar, the braſs of which might have been damaged by long uſe, and offered numerous ſacrifices of the ſpoil they had taken. Mercies received deſerve returns of grateful praiſe.

3. The people aſſembled, ſolemnly renewed the dedication of themſelves to God as his people, and, by the ceremony of paſſing through the divided calf, confirmed their covenant with the God of their fathers, engaging to ſeek him with all their heart and ſoul, in ſincerity and truth, to worſhip him according to his inſtitutions, and execute judgment upon all idolaters, according to his law: and, to ſtrengthen the bond, they ſware aloud, as happy in their preſent reſolution, to be faithful, and with trumpets, cornets, and ſhouting for joy, celebrated the auſpicious day of their return to God. *Note,* (1.) Solemn ſurrenders of ourſelves to God, though binding us to nothing but what was before our duty, may be uſeful to affect our own minds with the ſenſe of our obligations. (2.) That ſervice is only pleaſing to God, in which the heart is truly engaged. (3.) It were happy for us, could we always preſerve that gracious frame of mind which ſometimes we enjoy. (4.) The ſervice of God, when the ſoul is truly engaged, brings its own comfort and reward along with it.

4. Aſa now brought in the dedicate treaſures into the temple, which his father had laid aſide for this purpoſe, and he had increaſed. It is but juſtice to render unto God the things that are God's: the due return we owe for mercies, is to preſent God with a part of the wealth he beſtows.

5. Peace hereupon enſued for many years; and, though ſome hoſtilities continued on the borders, (*See* 1 Kings xv. 16.) yet in general the nation had reſt from war; a preſent reward for their fidelity. For though the high places ſtill remained, thoſe at leaſt that, before the temple was built, were uſed as places of ſacrifice to the Lord, yet Aſa's heart was perfect all his days. *Note,* (1.) A perfect man is not a ſinleſs man. (2.) He who knows our ſimplicity, for Jeſus's ſake pities and pardons our infirmities.

CHAP. XVI.

Here is, 1. *Aſa's fooliſh treaty with Benhadad,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The reproof which God ſent him by a prophet,* ver. 7—9. 3. *Aſa's diſpleaſure againſt the prophet,* ver. 10. 4. *His ſickneſs and death,* ver. 11—14.

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1. IN [a] the ſix and thirtieth year of the reign of Aſa, [b] Baaſha king of Iſrael came up againſt Judah, and built Ramah, [c] to the intent that he might let none go out, or come in to Aſa king of Judah. 2. Then Aſa brought out ſilver and gold, out of the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD, and of the king's houſe, and ſent to Ben-hadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damaſcus, ſaying, 3. [d] *There is* a league between me and thee, as *there was* between my father and thy father: behold, I have ſent thee ſilver and gold; go, [e] break thy league with Baaſha king of Iſrael, that he may depart from me. 4. And [f] Ben-hadad hearkned unto king Aſa, and ſent the captains of his armies againſt the cities of Iſrael; and they ſmote Ijon, and Dan, and Abal-maim, and all the ſtore-cities of Naphtali. 5. And it came to paſs when Baaſha heard *it*, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work ceaſe. 6. Then [g] Aſa the king took all Judah, and they carried away the ſtones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baaſha was a building, and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.

a See chap. xv. 19.
b 1 Kings xv. 17, &c.
c 1 Kings xii. 27.
d Judg. ii. 2.
e Iſa. xxxi. 1.
f 1 Tim. vi. 10.
g 1 Kings xv. 22.

v. 1—6. The event here recorded we had 1 *Kings* xv. The ſix and thirtieth year of Aſa is reckoned from the diviſion of the kingdoms, which is no more than the ſixteenth of his reign. The expedient Aſa took to divert Baaſha was unjuſtifiable and ſinful: it ſhewed diſtruſt of God, led Ben-hadad into a perfidious breach of his league, and all the miſchiefs which enſued lay at Aſa's door; whilſt himſelf, with half the expence probably, and without robbing God's temple, might, in dependance on his aſſiſtance, have much more nobly ſucceeded againſt Baaſha. *Note*, (1.) The ſtrongeſt believers are ſometimes ſhaken. (2.) Wrong expedients may ſucceed to extricate us from preſent trouble, but we ſhall be made to ſmart for uſing them afterwards.

7. ¶ And at that time [h] Hanani the ſeer came to Aſa king of Judah, and ſaid unto him, [i] Becauſe thou haſt relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the hoſt of the king of Syria eſcaped out of thine hand. 8. [k] Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge hoſt, with very many chariots and horſemen? yet becauſe thou didſt rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand. 9. For [l] the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, † to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of *them* whoſe heart *is* perfect towards him. Herein thou haſt done fooliſhly; therefore [m] from henceforth thou ſhalt have wars. 10. Then Aſa was [n] wroth with the ſeer, and put him in a priſon-houſe; for *he was* in a rage with him, becauſe of this *thing*. And Aſa oppreſſed *ſome* of the people the ſame time. 11. ¶ And behold, [o] the acts of Aſa, firſt and laſt, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Iſrael. 12. And Aſa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign, was diſeaſed in his feet, until his diſeaſe *was* exceeding *great*: yet in his diſeaſe [p] he ſought not to the LORD, but to the phyſicians. 13. ¶ And Aſa ſlept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign. 14. And they buried him in his own ſepulchres, which he had ‡ made for himſelf in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled [q] with ſweet odours, and divers kinds *of ſpices* prepared by the apothecaries art: and they made [r] a very great burning for him.

h 1 Kings xvi. 1. Chap. xix. 2.
i Iſa. xxxi. 1. Jer. xvii. 5.
k Chap. xiv. 9.
l Job xxxiv. 21. Prov. v. 21. & xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. & xxxii. 19. Zech. iv. 10.
† Or ſtrongly to hold with them, &c.
m 1 Kings xv. 32.
n Pſ. cxli. 5.
o 1 Kings xv. 23.
p 1 Chron. x. 14.
914.
‡ Heb. Digged.
q Gen. l. 2.
r Chap. xxi. 19.

v. 7—14. Aſa now probably pleaſed himſelf in the ſucceſs of his policy; but God embittered his joys.

1. By Hanani the prophet he ſends him a ſevere rebuke for his diſtruſt of God, and dependance upon an arm of fleſh, which was to change a rock for a reed: and the experience of his paſt deliverance, *v.* 8. was an aggravation of his ſin, eſpecially when the promiſes of the ſame providential care engaged him to truſt upon that ſtrong arm that would ever be ſtretched out for the protection of thoſe who leaned upon it. And herein alſo his folly was as great as his ſin: he loſt the glory he might have gotten by victory over the confederate hoſts of Syria and Iſrael, and entailed upon himſelf the wars he thus ſought to avoid. *Note*, (1.) Diſtruſt of God's power and love is exceeding diſpleaſing to him. (2.) The more we have experienced his mercy in time paſt, the more ſinful is it to diſtruſt him in preſent trials. (3.) All our departures from God ariſe from the infidelity of our hearts. *Tuſh, God ſhall not ſee*, and *the Lord hath forſaken the earth*, are at the bottom of every evil. (4.) The very means we uſe unlawfully to avert approaching danger, often ſerve to bring it more heavily upon us. (5.) All the wiſdom of the ſinner will at laſt appear the moſt egregious folly.

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2. Far from ſubmitting with penitent ſhame to the juſt rebuke, the angry king vents his rage on the prophet, caſts him into priſon, or, as ſome think, puts him in the ſtocks, as if his faithfulneſs was criminal; and becauſe, probably, the people eſpouſed the prophet's cauſe, and encouraged him in his ſufferings, he wreaked his vengeance upon them in oppreſſive fines, or corporal puniſhments. *Note*, (1.) Paſſion, and impatience of reproof, in a good man, are exceeding ſinful, and will end in bitter groans. (2.) They who know their own hearts, need be jealous, leſt their deſperate wickedneſs break forth. (3.) Faithful reprovers muſt expect to meet ſevere rebuffs. (4.) The priſon-houſe is often the preferment of God's zealous miniſters. (5.) We are called upon to ſupport God's perſecuted prophets, though by ſo doing we may be involved in their ſufferings.

3. Aſa grew diſeaſed in the laſt years of his life: either the gout, or ſome œdematous ſwelling, ſeized his feet, and he languiſhed for a while in great miſery; a juſt rebuke for his injury to the prophet. In his diſeaſe he placed more dependance on his phyſicians than on God, and was more ſollicitous for their aſſiſtance, than to obtain God's bleſſing upon it. So apt are we ſtill to be looking to man more than to God for help. This alſo was the more criminal, if, as ſome have conjectured, theſe were heathens, a kind of conjurers, who dealt in charms and amulets.

4. Medicine, without God's bleſſing, is no elixir of life. Death mocked at his confidence, and brought him to the grave. In reſpect for the good things he had done for Iſrael, the people gave him a moſt ſumptuous funeral, and the clods of the valley were made ſweet unto him. The good report afterwards made of him gives us ground to believe he lamented his ſin, and was forgiven. *Note*, Though the beſt of men have their blemiſhes, their memory is deſervedly had in honour. Let their infirmities ſleep in their graves, and their virtues rouſe us to an imitation of them.

CHAP. XVII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Jehoſhaphat's acceſſion to the throne,* ver. 1, 2, 5. 2. *His perſonal piety*, ver. 3, 4, 6. 3. *His labour to promote religion in his kingdom*, ver. 7—9. 4. *The mighty ſway he bore among his neighbours*, ver. 10, 11. 5. *The great ſtrength of his kingdom*, ver. 12—19.

1. [a] AND † Jehoſhaphat his ſon reigned in his ſtead, and ſtrengthened himſelf againſt Iſrael. 2. And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and ſet gariſons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Aſa his father had taken. 3. And [b] the LORD was with Jehoſhaphat, becauſe he walked in the firſt ways ‡ of his father David, and ſought not unto Baalim; 4. But ſought to the *LORD* God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Iſrael: 5. Therefore [c] the LORD ſtabliſhed the kingdom in his hand, and all Judah brought to Jehoſhaphat preſents, and [d] he had riches and honour in abundance. 6. And his heart was § lift up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah. 7. ¶ Alſo in the third year of his reign he ſent to his princes, *even* to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. 8. And with them *he ſent* Levites, *even* Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Aſahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Eliſhama, and Jehoram, [e] prieſts. 9. And they taught in Judah, and [f] *had* the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and [g] taught the people.

a 1 Kings xxii. 41, &c.
† i. e. The Lord is judge.
b Chap. xv. 2. Rom. viii. 31.
‡ Or, of his father and of David.
c 2 Sam. vii. 25.
d Chap. i. 15. Mat. vi. 33.
§ i. e. enlarged and animated. Pſ. cxix. 32.
912.
e Mal. ii. 7.
f Iſa. viii. 20.
g Chap. xxxv. 3.

v. 1—9. Jehoſhaphat no ſooner comes to the throne, than we ſee the dawnings of a glorious reign.

1. He ſtrengthened his kingdom, by placing ſtrong gariſons in the cities of Judah, and thoſe his father had recovered from Iſrael, and prepared againſt that danger which Ahab's growing power ſeemed to threaten.

2. Religion was his great concern. He copied after the beſt of his predeceſſors in their beſt days, ſuch as were the firſt of David, before the matter of Uriah, and the numbering the people, had blotted his fair copy. Faithful to the worſhip of God, he abhorred all idols: the law of God was his rule of duty, and Iſrael's apoſtacy rendered his fidelity more ſingular and exemplary.. Inſpired with holy zeal, his heart with delight and ſincerity was engaged for God; and no difficulties deterred him from

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from the path of duty. The idols and groves, that in the declining days of Aſa might have been ſet up again, he utterly deſtroyed, with all the high places, where they ſtill offered ſacrifices to theſe abominations. *Note*, (1.) In the faireſt human pattern there will be found imperfections; but there is a Son of David, more than man, who hath ſet us a ſpotleſs example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps. (2.) Fidelity in God's ſervice is the ſtability of a nation. (3.) A lively ſoul on wings of faith and love mounts up to God, riſes ſuperior to every difficulty, and looks down upon every thing, beſides his favour, as altogether vanity.

3. He not only removed the temptations to ſin, but took care to inſtruct the people in the path of duty. Ignorance of God's law had greatly prevailed, and to oblige them merely to conform to his reformation, without grounding them on the true foundation of God's word, promiſed little ſtability. The Levites and prieſts therefore are ſent in progreſs through the cities of Judah, with the book of the law, to explain and inforce the commandments of God; and ſeveral princes accompanied them, in order to engage the people to hear them, and give countenance to theſe preachers by their weight and influence. *Note*, (1.) It is a bleſſed thing, when princes countenance faithful miniſters. Though they cannot make men true converts, their example and authority will induce them to attend. (2.) They who are ſent to teach, muſt ſee they take the pure word of God along with them. A true preacher wiſhes for nothing in his hand but his bible. (3.) Religion is a reaſonable ſervice. Conviction, not compulſion, or education, can only make a man a Chriſtian.

4. The bleſſing of God attended his labours. The Lord was with him; or, as the Targum generally expreſſes it, "the word of the Lord," the divine Logos, to whom all things are committed, ſtrengthened him in his labours, and eſtabliſhed his kingdom. His people, charmed with his government, liberally ſent their preſents to him; and, abounding in riches and honour, his heart, far from being intoxicated by proſperity, was lift up in greater love and thankfulneſs to the gracious giver. *Note*, (1.) Piety God often here rewards with proſperity. (2.) Worldly comforts are then truly bleſſings, when, as the ſteps of Jacob's ladder, they raiſe our hearts to heaven.

10. ¶ And [h] the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, ſo that they made no war againſt Jehoſhaphat. 11. Alſo *ſome* of the Philiſtines brought Jehoſhaphat preſents, and tribute ſilver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, ſeven thouſand and ſeven hundred rams, and ſeven thouſand and ſeven hundred he-goats. 12. ¶ And Jehoſhaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah, † caſtles and cities of ſtore. 13. And he had much buſineſs in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, *were* in Jeruſalem. 14. And theſe *are* the numbers of them according to the houſe of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thouſands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour, three hundred thouſand. 15. And ‡ next to him *was* Jehoanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourſcore thouſand. 16. And next him *was* Amaſiah the ſon of Zichri, [i] who willingly offered himſelf unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thouſand mighty men of valour. 17. And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men, [k] with bow and ſhield, two hundred thouſand. 18. And next him *was* Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourſcore thouſand, ready prepared for the war. 19. Theſe waited on the king, beſides [l] *thoſe* whom the king put in the fenced cities, throughout all Judah.

[h] Gen. xxxv. 5. Chap. xiv. 14.
† Or palaces.
‡ Heb. At his hand.
[i] Judg. v. 2, 9. Pſ. cx. 3. Acts ii. 41.
[k] 1 Chron. xii. 2.
[l] Ver. 2.

v. 10—19. Like the light of the morning, which ſhineth more and more, ſo did Jehoſhaphat's glory increaſe.

1. Feared by his enemies, as beloved by his ſubjects, the neighbouring princes offered not to moleſt him, whilſt thoſe of Philiſtia and Arabia courted his favour, either by a voluntary preſent, or exact payment of the tribute which Aſa had impoſed on them, *See chap.* xiv. 14. God had put an awe upon them of the majeſty of his king in Zion. *Note*, God hath acceſs to the ſpirits of men, and by ſecret, yet irreſiſtible influence, can bow them to his ſovereign will.

2. His military preparations greatly advanced. Whilſt he reformed the people, he fortified their ramparts, and built new caſtles and ſtore-cities, ſtrengthening them within and without againſt their enemies. Under five chief officers an immenſe army was enliſted. Probably all the able men in the country were enrolled, and regularly muſtered, though not drawn out, except in caſe of neceſſity: and this may eaſily account for the greatneſs of their number, if we conſider alſo the long peace they had enjoyed, the acceſſion of Iſraelites to them, and eſpecially the bleſſing of Abraham, which no doubt was eminently fulfilled. Amaſiah, one of the officers, is mentioned with an honourable mark of diſtinction, *v.* 16. a volunteer, that ſerved for the glory of God, not for the ſake of pay. Such patriots are ſcarce.

Before Chriſt 912.

CHAP. XVIII.

Here is, 1. *The alliance Jehoſhaphat contracted with Ahab,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *An expedition againſt Ramoth-gilead propoſed,* ver. 3. 3. *Their conſulting with the prophets, falſe and true, before they went,* ver. 4—27. 4. *Their defeat, Jehoſhaphat's danger, and Ahab's death,* ver. 28—34.

1. NOW [a] Jehoſhaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and [b] joined affinity with Ahab. 2. And after *certain* years, [c] he went down to Ahab to Samaria: and Ahab killed ſheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that *he had* with him, and perſuaded him to go up *with him* to Ramoth-gilead. 3. And Ahab king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he anſwered him, [d] I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people, and *we will be* with thee in the war.

[a] 1 Sam. ii. 30. Mat vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
897.
[b] 2 Kings viii. 18.
[c] 1 Kings xxii. 2, &c.
[d] 2 Kings iii. 7. Prov. xiii. 20. Eph. v. 11.

v. 1—3. Jehoſhaphat's growing greatneſs made the king of Iſrael probably deſirous of his alliance, and Jehoſhaphat too readily conſented. An Iſraelitiſh princeſs ſeemed an eligible match for his ſon, and he might hope to make ſome advantage of it, by recovering the houſe of Iſrael to the ſervice of God, or the kingdom to his poſterity. The connection, however, proved dangerous to himſelf, and ruinous to his family. The firſt bad effect produced by it, was his involving himſelf in a war with the Syrians, in complaiſance to Ahab, who, having nobly entertained him at Samaria, drew him in to be his auxiliary for the recovery of Ramoth-gilead. *Note*, (1.) Marriages founded on pride and worldly mindedneſs cannot fail of bringing miſery along with them. (2.) The ſtrongeſt expreſſions of friendſhip from a wicked man, are to be ſuſpected; at bottom he means to ſerve only himſelf.

4. ¶ And Jehoſhaphat ſaid unto the king of Iſrael, [e] Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day. 5. Therefore the king of Iſrael gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and ſaid unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or ſhall I forbear? And they ſaid, Go up; for [f] God will deliver *it* into the king's hand. 6. But Jehoſhaphat ſaid, [g] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD beſides, that we might enquire of him? 7. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, *There is* yet one man by whom we may enquire of the LORD: [h] but I hate him, for he never propheſieth good unto me, but always evil: the ſame *is* Micaiah the ſon of Imla. And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Let not the king ſay ſo. 8. And the king of Iſrael called for one *of his* † officers, and ſaid, Fetch quickly Micaiah the ſon of Imla. 9. And the king of Iſrael and Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, ſat either of them on his throne, clothed in *their* robes, and they ſat in a ‡ void place at the entring in of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets propheſied before them. 10. And Zedekiah the ſon of Chenaanah, [i] had made him horns of iron, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, With theſe thou ſhalt puſh Syria, until § they be conſumed. 11. And all the prophets propheſied ſo, ſaying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, [k] and proſper: for the LORD ſhall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. 12. And the meſſenger that went to call Micaiah, ſpake to him, ſaying, Behold, the words of the prophets *declare* good to the king with ‖ one aſſent: [l] let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and ſpeak thou good. 13. And Micaiah ſaid, *As* the LORD liveth, [m] even what my God ſaith, that will I ſpeak. 14. And when he was come to the king, the king ſaid unto him, Micaiah, ſhall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or ſhall I forbear? And he ſaid, [n] Go ye up, and proſper, and they ſhall be delivered into your hand. 15. And the king ſaid to him, How many times ſhall I adjure thee that thou ſay nothing but the truth to me, in the name of the LORD? 16. Then he ſaid, [o] I did ſee all Iſrael ſcattered upon the mountains, as ſheep that have no ſhepherd: and the LORD ſaid, [p] Theſe have no maſter; let them return *therefore* every man to his houſe in peace. 17. (And the king of Iſrael ſaid to Jehoſhaphat, Did I not tell thee *that* he would not propheſy good unto me, but evil?) 18. Again he ſaid, Therefore hear the word of the LORD, I ſaw [q] the LORD ſitting upon his throne, and all the

[e] Judg. i. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2.
[f] Ezek. xiii. 7.
[g] 2 Kings iii. 11.
[h] 1 Kings xx. 43. & xxi. 20. Gal. iv. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 3.
† Or eunuchs.
‡ Or floor.
[i] Jer. xxvii. 2.
§ Heb. Thou conſume them.
[k] Ver. 31—34.
‖ Heb. One mouth. Hoſ. vi. 9. Rev. xvii. 17.
[l] Exod. xxiii. 2.
[m] Jer. xxiii. 28. 1 Cor. xi. 23.
[n] 1 Kings xviii. 27. Eccleſ. xi. 9. Lam. iv. 21. Amos iv. 4, 5.
[o] Zeck. xiii. 7.
[p] Jer. xx. 28.
[q] Job i. 6. Iſa. vi. 1. Dan. vii. 9, 10.

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hoſt of heaven ſtanding on his right hand, and *on* his left. 19. And the Lord ſaid, Who ſhall entice Ahab king of Iſrael, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one ſpake ſaying after this manner, and another ſaying after that manner. 20. Then there came out [r] a ſpirit, and ſtood before the LORD, and ſaid, I will entice him. And the LORD ſaid unto him, Wherewith? 21. And he ſaid, I will go out and [s] be a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And *the LORD* ſaid, Thou ſhalt entice *him*, and thou ſhalt alſo prevail: go out, and do *even* ſo. 22. Now therefore behold, [t] the LORD hath put a lying ſpirit into the mouth of theſe thy prophets, and the LORD hath ſpoken evil againſt thee. 23. Then Zedekiah the ſon of Chenaanah came near, and [u] ſmote Micaiah upon the cheek, and ſaid, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me, to ſpeak unto thee? 24. And Micaiah ſaid, Behold, thou ſhalt ſee on that day, when thou ſhalt go into an † inner chamber to hide thyſelf. 25. Then the king of Iſrael ſaid, [x] Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joaſh the king's ſon: 26. And ſay, Thus ſaith the king, [y] Put this *fellow* in the priſon, and [z] feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I return in peace. 27. And Micaiah ſaid, [a] If thou certainly return in peace, *then* hath not the LORD ſpoken by me. And he ſaid, [b] Hearken all ye people.

[r] Job i. 6.
[s] John viii. 44. 2 Theſ. ii. 9, 11. 1 John iv. 1. Rev. xii. 11.
[t] Job xii. 16. Iſa. xix. 14. Ezek. xiv. 9. Rom. i. 24.
[u] Jer xx. 2. Mar. xiv. 65. Acts xxiii. 2.
† Heb. A chamber within a chamber.
1 Kings xx. 30.
[z] 1 Kings xix. 10. Rev. ii. 10.
[y] Chap. xxv. 16.
[z] Pſ. lxxx. 6.
[a] Num xvi. 29. Iſa. xliv. 26.
[b] Mic. i. 2.

v. 4—27. For this, ſee 1 *Kings* xxii. We may only farther remark, (1.) How needful it is to conſult God in all our ways. (2.) When for worldly ends we maintain fellowſhip with thoſe who are enemies to God, for fear of offending, we ſhall hear often what we dare not rebuke, and countenance by our preſence what we were bound to condemn. (3.) Faithful prophets are few, falſe prophets numerous. It becomes us to beware of following the multitude, and attach ourſelves to the faithful few. (4.) They who love prophets that propheſy ſmooth things, and hate plain dealing, are juſtly given up to their own deluſions. (5.) Suffering for the truth's ſake, is the hereditary portion of God's miniſters. (6.) The day is coming, when the deſpiſed word of God's prophets ſhall be fulfilled, and their enemies too late will wonder and periſh.

28. So the king of Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-gilead. 29. And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, [c] I will diſguiſe myſelf, and will go to the battle, but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Iſrael diſguiſed himſelf, and they went to the battle. 30. Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that *were* with him, ſaying, Fight ye not with ſmall or great, ſave only with the king of Iſrael. 31. And it came to paſs, when the captains of the chariots ſaw Jehoſhaphat, that they ſaid, It *is* the king of Iſrael: therefore [d] they compaſſed about him to fight: but Jehoſhaphat [e] cried out, and [f] the LORD helped him, and God moved them *to depart* from him. 32. For it came to paſs, that when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Iſrael: they turned back again from † purſuing him. 33. And a *certain* man drew a bow at ‡ a venture, and ſmote the king of Iſrael between the joints § of the harneſs: therefore he ſaid to his chariot-man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayſt carry me out of the hoſt, for I am wounded. 34. And the battle increaſed that day: howbeit, the king of Iſrael ſtayed *himſelf* up in *his* chariot againſt the Syrians, until the even: and about the time of the ſun going down, [g] he died.

[c] Ver. 30. Job v. 13. Pſ. xii. 2. Prov. xxi. 30.
[d] Prov. xiii. 20.
[e] Ex. xiv. 15. 1 Kings xvii. 20.
[f] Pſ. xlvi. 1.
† Heb. After him.
‡ Heb. In his ſimplicity.
§ Heb. and between the breaſt-plate.
[g] Ver. 16.

v. 28—34. Ahab pretends to honour Jehoſhaphat, but in fact to expoſe him; ſo deceitful are the kiſſes of an enemy: but God turns his wicked devices on his own head. Jehoſhaphat by divine interpoſition eſcapes, whilſt Ahab falls in his diſguiſe, and his armour is no protection from the arrow God ſhoots againſt the perſecutors. Man in vain contrives to eſcape, when God hath determined his fall. *There is neither counſel nor might againſt the Lord.*

CHAP. XIX.

We have here, 1. *Jehoſhaphat's return in peace to Jeruſalem,* ver. 1. 2. *The reproof given him for his league with Ahab,* ver. 2, 3. 3. *The great care he took thereupon to reform his kingdom,* ver. 4. 4. *The inſtructions he gave to his judges,* ver. 5—11.

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1. AND Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah returned to his houſe in peace to Jeruſalem. 2. And Jehu the ſon of Hanani [a] the ſeer went out to meet him, and ſaid to king Jehoſhaphat, Shouldſt thou [b] help the ungodly, and [c] love them that hate the LORD? therefore *is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD. 3. Nevertheleſs, there are good things found in thee, in that [d] thou haſt taken away the groves out of the land, and haſt prepared thine heart to ſeek God. 4. And Jehoſhaphat dwelt at Jeruſalem: and he † went out again through the people, from Beerſheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

[a] 1 Sam. ix. 9.
[b] Chap. xviii. 3.
[c] Pſ. cxxxix. 21.
[d] Chap. xvii. 4, 6.
896.
† Heb. Returned and went out.

v. 1—4. Imminent was the danger Jehoſhaphat had eſcaped, yet through mercy he arrives at his houſe in peace, whilſt Ahab was left dead at Samaria. *Note,* Providential eſcapes from danger deſerve to be deeply and gratefully remembered. But tho' God ſuffered him not to fall in battle, he goes not without a juſt rebuke for his folly.

1. Jehu the ſon of Hanani is ſent, nor fears to deliver his meſſage, though his father's ſufferings, *chap.* xvi. 10. admoniſhed him of his danger. He expoſtulates with him on the evil of his conduct; Ought ſuch a man as he to help an idolater and perſecutor? or join in affinity and friendſhip with ſuch a hater of God as Ahab? He threatens him therefore with the diſpleaſure of God. War was his choice, and war he ſhould have; and that Jehoram, whom he had matched ſo wickedly, prove a deadly ſcourge to his family. But as there were good things found in him, and his heart was found with God, he is not finally caſt off, or rejected. *Note,* (1.) We muſt never make thoſe our friends, who are the enemies of God. (2.) Every diſobedient ſinner is at bottom a hater of God. (3.) God's wrath reſpecting the eternal conſequences of ſin may be removed, when, for our correction, our preſent ſufferings may be grievous. (4.) God is not unrighteous to forget the works of faith, and labours of love.

2. The rebuke was received with ſilence, and the effect of it gracious. He no more viſited his idolatrous neighbours, but ſtaid at home to mind his own concerns: and as he had been told by the prophet, God approved of what he had done for the reformation of the people, he ſought to carry it ſtill on by a progreſs through his dominions, to engage them to ſeek the God of their fathers, and to bring back thoſe who had departed from him, perhaps emboldened by ſeeing his connections with Ahab. *Note,* (1.) A good man eſteems rebuke the moſt friendly office. (2.) When we have, though undeſignedly, encouraged others to do evil, we cannot but be ſollicitous to recover them from the error of their ways. (3.) The commendations of good men ſhould quicken us to greater zeal and diligence in the cauſe of God.

5. ¶ And he ſet judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city; 6. And ſaid to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for [e] ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, [f] who *is* with you in the judgment. 7. Wherefore now, let the fear of the LORD be upon you, take heed, and do *it*: for [g] *there is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, [h] nor reſpect of perſons, nor taking of gifts. 8. ¶ Moreover, in Jeruſalem did Jehoſhaphat ſet of the Levites, and *of* the prieſts, and of the chief of the fathers of Iſrael, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controverſies, when they returned to Jeruſalem. 9. And he charged them, ſaying, Thus ſhall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart. 10. And [i] what cauſe ſoever ſhall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, ſtatutes and judgments, ye ſhall even warn them that they treſpaſs not againſt the LORD, and [k] *ſo* wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye ſhall not treſpaſs. 11. And behold, Amariah the chief prieſt *is* over you in [l] all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the ſon of Iſhmael, the ruler of the houſe of Judah, for all the king's matters: alſo the Levites *ſhall be* officers before you. † Deal courageouſly, and the LORD ſhall be with the good.

[e] Deut. i 17.
[f] Pſ. lxxxii. 1. Eccleſ. v. 8.
[g] Deut. xxxii. 4. Rom. ix. 14.
[h] Deut. x. 17. Job xxxiv. 19. Acts x. 34. Col. iii. 25.
[i] Deut. xvii. 8.
[k] Num. xvi. 46.
[l] 1 Chron. xxvi. 30.
† Heb. Take courage and do.

v. 5—11. To preſerve the people in the careful obſervance of the divine ordinances, and to provide for the equitable adminiſtration of juſtice,

1. Jehoſhaphat placed judges in every city, with a ſolemn charge, to take heed to the diligent diſcharge of their office, with all circumſpection and impartiality; and eſpecially to have the fear of God upon their minds, the great preſervative from all injuſtice. And this he urges, becauſe they acted as God's

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vicegerents; would be directed by him, if they looked up to him, or be detected if they judged iniquitouſly: and as no bribe, or reſpect of perſons, found place before him, they muſt ſhew no favour, nor receive gifts. *Note*, The impartial diſtribution of juſtice is among the greateſt bleſſings a nation can enjoy.

2. He eſtabliſhed a ſupreme court of judicature at Jeruſalem, on his return from the progreſs he had made. It conſiſted of prieſts and Levites, as moſt ſkilled in the law; and the chief fathers, thoſe moſt diſtinguiſhed for their ſtation, men of age and experience, with inferior officers, who ſaw the ſentence executed, *v.* 11. under the high-prieſt, as preſident in eccleſiaſtical cauſes, and Zebadiah in the matters of civil government. To this court all caſes of murder or manſlaughter were referred, and appeals made from the inferior judges in difficult caſes of controverſy, where the law ſeemed dubious. Jehoſhaphat enjoins them to act faithfully and conſcientiouſly, as men fearing God, and judging righteouſly. They muſt warn the people of the great evil of ſin in general; of the danger of falſe witneſs, and of ſtubborn diſobedience againſt the law; and, undiſmayed by any man's greatneſs, impartially adminiſter juſtice; that ſo they might deliver their own ſouls, and not treſpaſs againſt God: the iſſue of which upright conduct would be God's bleſſing upon them. *Note*, (1.) Ability and integrity are eſſential qualities of a good judge. (2.) Magiſtrates are chargeable with the crimes they connive at, or neglect to puniſh. (3.) They who have courage to act for God, will find his ſupports and bleſſing carrying them through every danger.

CHAP. XX.

We have here, 1. *Jehoſhaphat's diſtreſs from an invaſion*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The pious courſe he and the people took for their ſafety*, ver. 3–13. 3. *A promiſe given them of victory*, ver. 14—17. 4. *Their thankful reception of it*, ver. 18—21. 5. *The overthrow of their enemies*, ver. 22—25. 6. *Their ſolemn thankſgiving for this victory*, ver. 26—30. 7. *The clouds that darkened his ſetting ſun*, ver. 31—37.

1. IT came to paſs after this alſo, *that* [a] the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them *other* beſide the Ammonites, [b] came againſt Jehoſhaphat to battle. 2. Then there came ſome that told Jehoſhaphat, ſaying, There cometh a great multitude againſt thee from beyond the ſea on this ſide Syria, and behold, they *be* in [c] Hazazon-tamar, which *is* Engedi. 3. And Jehoſhaphat [d] feared, and ſet himſelf to [e] ſeek the LORD, and proclaimed a faſt throughout all Judah. 4. And Judah gathered themſelves together, to aſk *help* of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to ſeek the LORD: 5. ¶ And Jehoſhaphat ſtood in the congregation of Judah and Jeruſalem, in the houſe of the LORD, before the new court, 6. And ſaid, O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou God in heaven? and [f] ruleſt *not* thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and [g] in thine hand *is there not* power and might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee? 7. *Art* not thou [h] our God, [i] who didſt drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Iſrael, and gaveſt it to the ſeed of Abraham [k] thy friend for ever? 8. And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a ſanctuary therein for thy name, ſaying, 9. [l] If *when* evil cometh upon us, *as* the ſword, judgment, or peſtilence, or famine, we ſtand before this houſe, and in thy preſence, (for thy name *is* in this houſe) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. 10. And now behold, the children of Ammon, and Moab, and mount Seir, [m] whom thou wouldſt not let Iſrael invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but [n] they turned from them, and deſtroyed them not: 11. Behold, *I ſay*, *how* they reward us, [o] to come to caſt us out of thy poſſeſſion, which thou haſt given us to inherit. 12. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? [p] for we have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us: neither know we what to do, but [q] our eyes *are* upon thee. 13. And all Judah ſtood before the LORD, [r] with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

[a] Joſh. ix. 1. Pſ. lxxxiii. 5, &c.
[b] Chap. xix. 2.
[c] Gen. xiv. 7.
[d] Chap. xix. 2.
[e] Pſ. xxxiv. 4.
[f] Dan. iv. 35.
[g] 1 Chron. xxix. 12. Mat. vi. 13.
[h] Gen. xvii. 7.
[i] Pſ. xliv. 2.
[k] Iſa. xli. 8. Jam. ii. 23.
[l] 1 Kings viii. 33, 37. Chap. vi. 28.
[m] Deut. ii. 4, 9, 19.
[n] Num. xx. 21.
[o] Pſ. lxxxiii. 12. Jer. xviii. 20.
[p] Deut. xxxii. 36.
[q] Pſ. xxv. 15. & cxxiii. 1, 2. & cxli. 8. Jonah ii. 4.
[r] Deut. xxix. 11.

v. 1—13. Little did Jehoſhaphat apprehend, in the midſt of the pious and uſeful eſtabliſhments in which he was engaged, the threatning ſtorm which hung over him. *Note*, When we are moſt faithful, we may be involved in uncommon difficulties, God permitting our faith to be tried, that *it may appear to praiſe, and honour, and glory.*

1. The Moabites, Ammonites, and their confederates, aſſemble their forces, and march to the borders of Judah, before intelligence is brought of their deſigns; ſo ſudden and unexpected was the attack. *Note*, Whilſt we are on this ſide the grave, we are never ſafe.

2. Terrified at the danger, and fearing leſt the wrath he had deſerved, *chap.* xix. 2. was about to overtake him, in deep humiliation the king ſet himſelf earneſtly to ſeek the Lord; proclaimed a faſt throughout Judah, that they might together mourn over the ſins which had provoked their God: and, at his command, all Judah aſſembled; not ſo much as warriors, to oppoſe their enemies; but as penitents, to avert the divine diſpleaſure, without which every effort would be vain; and with their wives and children, as in deep diſtreſs, appeared at the temple, before the *new court*, probably the court of the prieſts lately repaired, *to aſk help of the Lord.* *Note*, (1.) In national calamities, national faſts are highly expedient, that a ſinful people, humbled before a holy God, may find mercy in his ſight. (2.) The danger which drives us to God, will not deſtroy us.

3. Jehoſhaphat's prayer on the occaſion is remarkable. In the midſt of the congregation he lift up his eyes to heaven, and cried unto the God of their ſalvation. He addreſſes God as their covenant God, the ground of all their hopes; aſcribes to him that univerſal ſovereignty and almighty power, which now he truſts God will diſplay for their reſcue. He pleads the gift God had made to Abraham of the land, as an argument for continuing them in poſſeſſion; and the promiſe he had given them, 1 *Kings* ix. 3. of hearing and anſwering the prayers, that in diſtreſs they ſhould offer before his holy temple. He urges the ingratitude of their enemies, whom Iſrael had of old, at God's command, left unmoleſted; and their injuſtice, in attempting to diſpoſſeſs them of their divinely-appointed inheritance. Into God's hands, the righteous judge, he therefore refers the cauſe; unable to withſtand this ſudden invaſion, deſtitute of help and counſel, he looks up to him who alone can ſave, earneſtly deſiring, and humbly expecting, to ſee the ſalvation of God. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt we have a God of mercy to flee to, let us never deſpair. (2.) The cries of the oppreſſed will enter into the ears of the righteous Judge. Woe to thoſe who provoke them. (3.) The more entirely we are taken off from every ſelf-dependance in the view of our wants and wretchedneſs, the ſurer we are to find mercy in time of need. (4.) Whilſt the eye of faith and hope looks upward, underneath us will be the everlaſting arms.

14. ¶ Then upon Jahaziel the ſon of Zechariah, the ſon of Benaiah, the ſon of Jeiel, the ſon of Mattaniah, a Levite of the ſons of Aſaph, [s] came the Spirit of the LORD in the midſt of the congregation: 15. And he ſaid, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and thou king Jehoſhaphat, Thus ſaith the LORD unto you, [t] Be not afraid, nor diſmayed by reaſon of this great multitude; for [u] the battle *is* not yours, but God's. 16. To-morrow go ye down againſt them: behold, they come up by the † cliff of Ziz, and ye ſhall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderneſs of Jeruel. 17. [x] Ye ſhall not *need* to fight in this *battle*; ſet yourſelves, [y] ſtand ye *ſtill*, and ſee the ſalvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jeruſalem: fear not, nor be diſmayed; to-morrow go out againſt them, for [z] the LORD *will be* with you. 18. And Jehoſhaphat [a] bowed his head, with *his* face to the ground: and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem fell before the LORD, worſhipping the LORD. 19. And the Levites of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, ſtood up [b] to praiſe the LORD God of Iſrael with a loud voice on high.

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[s] Num. xi. 25, 26. & xxiv. 2. Chap. xxiv. 20.
[t] Exod. xiv. 13. Iſa. xxxvii. 6.
[u] Exod. xiv. 14. Ver. 17.
† Heb. Aſcent.
[x] Ver. xxiv.
[y] Exod. xiv. 13.
[z] Num. xiv. 9.
[a] So Exod. iv. 31.
[b] Ver. 1°. Pſ. lx. 6.

v. 14—19. Swift is the anſwer ſent from God. Jahaziel, a Levite of the ſons of Aſaph, filled with the ſpirit of prophecy, in the midſt of the congregation foretels the approaching victory.

1. He bids them lift their drooping heads, and not be afraid: the cauſe is God's, and he will appear for them. He fixes the time and place, when and where they ſhould meet the enemy, not to fight, but to be ſpectators of the glorious victory God would give them. *Note*, (1.) Unbelieving fear muſt be ſuppreſſed and oppoſed, as diſhonourable to God. (2.) They who go forth at the word of God againſt their ſpiritual enemies, ſhall ſee the ſalvation of God.

2. The meſſage was received by the king and people with humble thankfulneſs and adoration. They doubted not the promiſe, and ſhouted, as ſure of victory. *Note*, Faith realizes the unſeen things, and can enable us to rejoice in future promiſes, as equally ſecure with preſent poſſeſſions.

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c Iſa. vii. 9.
d Iſa. xxviii. 16.
e 1 Chron. xvi. 29.
f Ibid. 34. Pſ. cxxxvi. 1.
g 1 Chron. xvi. 41.
† Heb. In ſinging and praiſe.
h Judg. vii. 22. 1 Sam. xiv. 20.
‡ Or, ſmote one another.
i Exod. xiv. 30.
§ Heb. There was no eſcaping. Pſ. l. 22.
|| i. e. Bleſſing.
‡ Heb. Head.
k Neh. xii. 43.
l Gen. xxxv. 5. Chap. xiv. 14. & xvii. 10.
m Job xxxiv. 29.

20. ¶ And they roſe early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderneſs of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoſhaphat ſtood, and ſaid, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jeruſalem, [c] Believe in the LORD your God, [d] ſo ſhall you be eſtabliſhed; believe his prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper. 21. And when he had conſulted with the people, he appointed ſingers unto the LORD, and [e] that ſhould praiſe the beauty of holineſs, as they went out before the army, and to ſay, [f] Praiſe the LORD, [g] for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 22. ¶ And when they began † to ſing and to praiſe, [h] the LORD ſet ambuſhments againſt the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come againſt Judah, and they ‡ were ſmitten. 23. For the children of Ammon and Moab ſtood up againſt the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to ſlay and deſtroy *them*: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to deſtroy another. 24. And when Judah came toward the watch-tower in the wilderneſs, they looked unto the multitude, and behold, [i] they *were* dead bodies fallen to the earth, and § none eſcaped. 25. And when Jehoſhaphat and his people came to take away the ſpoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels (which they ſtript off for themſelves) more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the ſpoil, it was ſo much. 26. ¶ And on the fourth day they aſſembled themſelves in the valley of Berachah; for there they bleſſed the LORD: therefore the name of the ſame place was called, The valley of || Berachah, unto this day. 27. Then they returned every man of Judah and Jeruſalem, and Jehoſhaphat in the ‡ fore-front of them, to go again to Jeruſalem with joy: for [k] the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies. 28. And they came to Jeruſalem with pſalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the houſe of the LORD. 29. And [l] the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *thoſe* countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought againſt the enemies of Iſrael. 30. So the realm of Jehoſhaphat was quiet; for [m] his God gave him reſt round about.

v. 20—30. The order of battle beſpoke the temper of the combatants, and their confidence in God.

1. Jehoſhaphat, as the army paſſed in review before him, encourages their truſt in God, and the word of his prophet, with aſſurance of ſucceſs; and, with the advice of his council, inſtead of the mighty men of valour, they appointed the ſingers to lead the van, and charge their foes, not with the arm of fleſh, but with the ſharp two-edged ſword of God's praiſes in their mouths, as if the victory was already gotten, and the triumphant ſong begun. *Note*, (1.) Unſhaken faith is certain victory. (2.) Praiſe is a mighty weapon to overcome our ſpiritual foes.

2. The event exceeded their expectations. No ſooner was the ſong of praiſe begun, than the Lord ſet ambuſhments, either the angelic hoſts his miniſters, ſay ſome, or their own ambuſhments, ſay others, that, infatuated of God, fell upon their army; which bred ſuch confuſion, and apprehenſion of treachery, that each man's ſword was againſt his fellow; the Moabites and Ammonites againſt the Edomites, and then againſt each other. *Note*, (1.) Though the enemies of God's people aſſemble themſelves, they ſhall be broken to pieces. (2.) God can make thoſe the inſtruments of mutual deſtruction, who are leagued againſt his choſen. (3.) Diviſion produces ruin, wherever it ariſes.

3. On the approach of Jehoſhaphat's army towards the watch-tower, which probably ſtood on the cliff of Ziz, and overlooked the plain beneath, behold, it was covered with carcaſes, and not a living foe remained. Immenſe ſpoils loaded the people: three days they were employed in collecting them; on the fourth, the whole army aſſembled, with the king at their head, and kept a day of ſolemn thankſgiving on the field of victory, giving it a name to perpetuate the memorial of the mercy; and returned to Jeruſalem, as they had come from thence, with increaſing joy, and with louder ſongs of praiſe, for the amazing interpoſition of God they had experienced. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is all the tribute we poor worms can pay, and God accepts our gratitude, as a more welcome ſacrifice than a hecatomb. (2.) The memory of paſt mercies ought to be preſerved for the encouragement of future generations.

4. The effect of this glorious victory was peace in their borders. Their neighbours heard and trembled, nor dared provoke thoſe for whom God ſo eminently appeared; and all was quiet at home, under Jehoſhaphat's happy government. *Note*, They who have God for their protector, will be kept in peace, and no evil ſhall come nigh their dwellings.

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n 1 Kings xxii. 41, &c.
o 1 Kings xv. 11.
p See Chap. xvii. 6.
† Heb. Words.
q 1 Kings xvi. 1, 7.
896.
r Chap. xix. 2.
‡ At firſt he was unwilling. 1 Kings xxii. 49.
s 1 Kings ix. 26.
t Chap. xv. 2. & xix. 2.
u 1 Kings xxii. 48.

31. ¶ [n] And Jehoſhaphat reigned over Judah: *he was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 32. And he walked in [o] the way of Aſa his father, and departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD: 33. Howbeit, [p] the high places were not taken away; for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers. 34. Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoſhaphat, firſt and laſt, behold, they *are* written in the † book of Jehu the ſon of Hanani, [q] who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Iſrael. 35. ¶ And after this [r] did Jehoſhaphat king of Judah join himſelf with Ahaziah king of Iſrael, who did very wickedly: 36. And ‡ he joined himſelf with him to make ſhips to go to Tarſhiſh: and they made the ſhips in [s] Ezion-gaber. 37. Then Eliezer the ſon of Dodavah of Mareſhah, propheſied againſt Jehoſhaphat, ſaying, [t] Becauſe thou haſt joined thyſelf with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And [u] the ſhips were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarſhiſh.

v. 31—37. Jehoſhaphat's conduct in general was excellent and exemplary, but the ſacred hiſtorian ſpares not his faults: two of them are here recorded.

1. The ſuffering the high places to remain, where ſacrifices to God had been offered before the temple was built, and to which the people ſtill reſorted, in oppoſition to the divine command, *Deut.* xii. 5—7.

2. That, after the danger he had run, and the reproof he had received for his connection with Ahab, he joined in league with Ahaziah his ſon, taking him in as partner in a voyage to Tarſhiſh. But he ſmarted for it. A prophet was ſent to rebuke him for his folly and perverſeneſs, and to predict the ſtorm which deſtroyed their navy in the port. We find, 1 *Kings* xxii. 49. that theſe warnings had their deſired effect, to break off the evil alliance. *Note*, (1.) They who are connected with the wicked, will fare the worſe for them. (2.) It is a great gain, when our providential loſſes turn us from the path of evil.

CHAP. XXI.

Here is, 1. *Jehoram's elevation to the throne*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The wicked courſe he took to eſtabliſh himſelf in it*, ver. 4. 3. *The idolatries, and other crimes that he was guilty of*, ver. 5, 6, 11. 4. *The prophecy of Elijah againſt him*, ver. 12—15. 5. *The revolt of his ſubjects from him*, ver. 8, 10 *and the ſucceſs of his enemies againſt him*, ver. 16, 17. 6. *His miſerable ſickneſs, and inglorious death and burial*, ver. 18—20. 7. *The preſervation of the houſe of David for all this*, ver. 7.

889.
† i. e. alone.
About 891.
a Gen. xxv. 6.
‡ i. e. Made him his partner in it. See note on 1 Kings xxii. 50.
b Deut. xxi. 17. Judg. ix. 5.
c Hab. ii. 12.
d 2 Kings viii. 17, &c.
§ i. e. In conſort the ſecond time.
e 1 Kings xvi. 30, 31.
f Gen. vi. 2—5.
g 2 Sam. vii. 13.
h Tit. i. 2.
|| Or Lamp. 1 Kings xi. 36. Pſal. cxxxii. 11, &c.
About 888.
i Gen. xxvii. 40.
† Heb. Hand.

1. NOW Jehoſhaphat ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Jehoram his ſon † reigned in his ſtead. 2. And he had brethren the ſons of Jehoſhaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all theſe *were* the ſons of Jehoſhaphat king of Iſrael. 3. And [a] their father gave them great gifts of ſilver and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but ‡ the kingdom gave he to Jehoram, [b] becauſe he *was* the firſt-born. 4. Now when Jehoram was riſen up to the kingdom of his father, he ſtrengthened himſelf, and [c] ſlew all his brethren with the ſword, and *divers* alſo of the princes of Iſrael. 5. ¶ [d] Jehoram *was* thirty and two years old when he began § to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jeruſalem. 6. And he walked in the way of the kings of Iſrael, [e] like as did the houſe of Ahab: for [f] he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD. 7. Howbeit the LORD would not deſtroy the houſe of David, [g] becauſe of the covenant that he had made with David, and [h] as he promiſed to give a || light to him, and to his ſons for ever. 8. ¶ In his days [i] the Edomites revolted from under the † dominion of Judah, and made themſelves a king. 9. Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he roſe up by night, and ſmote the Edomites, which compaſſed him in, and the captains of the chariots. 10. So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of

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Judah unto this day. The ſame time *alſo* did Libnah revolt from under his hand; [k] becauſe he had forſaken the LORD God of his fathers. 11. Moreover, [l] he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and [m] cauſed the inhabitants of Jeruſalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah *thereto*.

k Chap. xv. 2.
l Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 5. & xii. 3.
m Rev. ii. 20.

v. 1—11. Jehoſhaphat's death opened the ſucceſſion to the unworthy Jehoram, whom, during his life-time, he had aſſociated with him in the government, whilſt he had provided for his other children by governments and rich preſents, that they might appear becoming their royal birth. *Note*, Though the eldeſt ſon be entitled to the double portion, it is unjuſt, for the ſake of making one great, to deprive the reſt of their due proportion.

1. Jehoram's reign opened with the moſt bloody and unnatural murder of his brethren, leſt any of them, more pious than himſelf, ſhould oppoſe the idolatry he intended to introduce; and the princes of Iſrael, the great men who had ſettled in Judah under Jehoſhaphat, were maſſacred, becauſe probably they refuſed to comply with his abominable innovations, or remonſtrated againſt his crimes. *Note*, (1.) Ambition is deaf to the cries of nature or humanity. (2.) Tyrants ever rule in fear, and all their precautions ſhew the tormented ſtate of their own minds. (3.) Kingdoms ſupported by blood-ſhed are in a tottering condition.

2. Thoſe whom he feared as his oppoſers being removed, he throws off the maſk, and eſtabliſhes groſs and bare-faced idolatry, like Ahab his father-in-law; not only inviting the people by his countenance, but compelling them by force to frequent his idolatrous ſacrifices. What a curſe on a land is a wicked king!

3. God's hand ſoon overtook him in judgments; his tributary Edom revolted, and his ſubjects in Libnah rebelled: nor, though he obtained a victory over Edom, could he reduce them to obedience. *See* 2 *Kings* viii. 17—22.

4. For David's ſake, God would not utterly conſume this wicked king and his houſe. His promiſes ſtood firm amidſt Jehoram's provocations.

12. ¶ And there came † a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD God of David thy father, Becauſe thou haſt not walked in [n] the ways of Jehoſhaphat thy father, nor in [o] the ways of Aſa king of Judah, 13. But haſt walked in the way of the kings of Iſrael, and haſt made Judah and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem to go [p] a whoring, [q] like to the whoredoms of the houſe of Ahab, and alſo [r] haſt ſlain thy brethren of thy father's houſe, *which were* better than thyſelf: 14. Behold, with a great plague will the LORD ſmite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods. 15. And [s] thou *ſhalt have* great ſickneſs by diſeaſe of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out, by reaſon of the ſickneſs day by day. 16. ¶ Moreover, the LORD ſtirred up againſt Jehoram the ſpirit of the Philiſtines, and of the Arabians that *were* near the ‡ Ethiopians. 17. And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the ſubſtance *that was* found in the king's houſe, and [t] his ſons alſo, and his wives; ſo that there was never a ſon left him, ſave § Jehoahaz the youngeſt of his ſons. 18. ¶ And after all this [u] the LORD ſmote him in his bowels with an incurable diſeaſe. 19. And it came to paſs that in proceſs of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reaſon of his ſickneſs; ſo he died of ſore diſeaſes: And his people made no burning for him, like [x] the burning of his fathers. 20. Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jeruſalem eight years, and departed ‖ without being deſired: howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the ſepulchres of the kings.

† Which muſt have been wrote before his death, tho' not ſent till now.
n Chap. xvii. 3.
o Chap. xiv. 2.
p Exod. xxxiv. 15. Deut. xxxi. 16.
q 1 Kings xvi. 31—33.
r Ver. 4.
s Ver. 18. Deut. xxviii. 59.
‡ Heb. Cuſhites.
t Chap. xxii. 1.
§ Or Ahaziah, Chap. xxii. 1. or Azariah, Chap. xxii. 6.
886.
u Ver. 15.
x Chap. xvi. 14.
884.
‖ Heb. Without deſire. Prov. x. 7. Jer. xxii. 18.

v. 12—20. Elijah appears to have been tranſlated ſeven years before this; but by the ſpirit of prophecy foreſeeing the abominations of Jehoram, he ſeems to have left this letter with Eliſha, or ſome other, to be ſent to Jehoram at this time.

1. He reproaches him with his iniquities, in imitation of Iſrael's ſins, and his forſaking the ways of his pious forefathers, to whom he was the greateſt ſcandal. Tyranny, idolatry, and murder, are particularly charged upon him, and judgment pronounced for theſe crimes. Ruin ſhould overtake his family and people; and, ſmitten of God by a diſeaſe terrible and loathſome, he ſhould linger out the remains of his life, without eaſe or remedy. *Note*, Diſeaſes are God's ſcourges: he can ſoon make thoſe who are by their crimes a burden to the earth, a burden to themſelves.

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2. The warning being diſregarded, the accompliſhment of the threatning was ſpeedy. [1.] The Arabians, ſtirred up of God, made an irruption into Judah; plundered the king's palace, either that at Jeruſalem, or it may be ſome palace in the country, where the court at that time was; ſlew all his ſons but one, *chap.* xxvii. 1. and carried away his wives captives, except Athaliah, who eſcaped. [2.] A diſeaſe, painful as incurable, ſeized him, rendered him incapable of recovering his loſſes, and, robbed of every domeſtic comfort, without hope in God, under his curſe in body and ſoul, he lingred two long years, and then thoſe bowels, that yearned not over his brethren, fell out, and he died. *Note*, The ſick bed of a ſinner is among the moſt miſerable ſcenes on this ſide hell. The body tormented with pain, death ſtanding with terrible aſpect before him, horror of conſcience increaſing every pang, and a fearful looking for judgment, already waking up the gnawing worm that never dies.

3. He died unlamented, and was buried with diſgrace. Glad to be rid of ſuch a monſter, they carried him to a common grave, as unworthy a place in the ſepulchre of his anceſtors; and, as his memory was odious, they burnt no ſweet ſpices over him, leaving the loathſome corpſe, an emblem of the more loathſome ſoul. *Note*, Tyrants, when alive, though feared, will be hated; and, when dead, will be branded with infamy.

CHAP. XXII.

We have here, 1. *Ahaziah's wicked life, and untimely death,* ver. 1—9. 2. *Athaliah murders all the ſeed-royal, and uſurps the throne,* ver. 10—12.

1. AND the inhabitants of Jeruſalem made [a] Ahaziah his youngeſt ſon, king in his ſtead: for [b] the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp, had ſlain all the eldeſt. So Ahaziah the ſon of Jehoram king of Judah reigned. 2. Forty and two years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jeruſalem: his mother's name alſo *was* Athaliah [c] the daughter of Omri. 3. He alſo walked in the ways of the houſe of Ahab: for his mother was his counſeller to do wickedly. 4. Wherefore he did evil in the ſight of the LORD, like the houſe of Ahab: for they were his counſellers after the death of his father, [d] to his deſtruction. 5. ¶ He walked alſo after their counſel, and went with Jehoram the ſon of Ahab king of Iſrael, to war againſt Hazael king of Syria, at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians ſmote Joram. 6. And [e] he returned to be healed in Jezreel, becauſe of the wounds † which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the ſon of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to ſee Jehoram the ſon of Ahab at Jezreel, becauſe he was ſick. 7. And [f] the deſtruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram againſt Jehu the ſon of Nimſhi, whom the LORD had anointed [g] to cut off the houſe of Ahab. 8. And it came to paſs, that when Jehu was executing judgment upon the houſe of Ahab, and [h] found the princes of Judah, and the ſons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that miniſtred to Ahaziah, he ſlew them. 9. And he ſought Ahaziah: and they caught him (for he was hid ‡ in Samaria) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had [i] ſlain him, they buried him, becauſe (ſaid they) he *is* the ſon of Jehoſhaphat, who ſought the LORD with all his heart. So the houſe of Ahaziah had no power to keep ſtill the kingdom.

884.
a 2 Kings viii. 24, &c.
b Chap. xxi. 17.
c Ibid. 6.
d 1 Kings xii. 15.
e 1 Kings viii. 29. & ix. 15.
† Heb. Wherewith they wounded him.
f 1 Kings xii. 15.
g Ibid. ix. 7.
h Ibid. x. 13.
‡ i. e. At Megiddo in the kingdom of Samaria. 1 Kings ix. 27.
i Prov. xii. 20. Rev. xviii. 4.

v. 1—9. Ahaziah, called Jehoahaz, the name being the ſame in ſignification, who alone had eſcaped the maſſacre of the Arabians, ſucceeded his father at the age, it is ſaid, of forty-two, or rather at twenty-two, *See* 2 *Kings* viii. 26. Various methods have been deviſed to reconcile this difficulty; but the moſt natural, and indeed the only ſatisfactory ſolution, is to acknowledge an error in the tranſcriber, the Hebrew numerals for 22 and 42 being very liable to be miſtaken. The Syriac and Arabic verſions, with ſome copies of the Septuagint, read it twenty-two.

The account we have here of Ahaziah is bad, very bad. He was influenced by the worſt of counſellors, an idolatrous mother, and his wicked relations of the houſe of Ahab; the conſequence of which was, that, inſtead of taking warning by his father's miſerable end, he continued, after his death, in the ſame evil ways, and followed the abominations of the houſe of Ahab, to the deſtruction both of body and ſoul. Forgetting the danger Jehoſhaphat had run in a former expedition againſt Ramoth-gilead, he conſents to join with the king of Iſrael in attacking

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attacking it, where Joram being wounded, and returning to be cured at Jezreel: thither Ahaziah, appointed to deſtruction, went to viſit him, and met his death with Joram, from the ſword of Jehu. Yet in reſpect to his grandfather, they ſhewed his corpſe reſpect, and gave leave for his honourable interment in the ſepulchre of his fathers; *See* 2 *Kings* ix. 28. *Note*, (1.) The moſt unhappy ſituation for a young man, is to be under the influence of wicked adviſers. (2.) They whom God dooms to ruin, cannot fly from their deſtiny. (3.) The companion of wicked men juſtly periſhes with them.

[k] 2 Kings xi. 1, &c. [l] Rev. xvii. 6.

10. ¶ [k] But when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, ſaw that her ſon was dead, ſhe aroſe, and [l] deſtroyed all the ſeed royal of the houſe of Judah. 11. But Jehoſhabeath the daughter of the king, took Joaſh the ſon of Ahaziah, and ſtole him from among the king's ſons *that were* ſlain, and put him and his nurſe in a bed-chamber. So Jehoſhabeath the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the prieſt (for ſhe was the ſiſter of Ahaziah) hid him from Athaliah, ſo that ſhe ſlew him not. 12. And he was with them [m] hid in the houſe of God ſix years, and [n] Athaliah reigned over the land.

[m] Pſal. xxvii. 5. & xxxi. 20. [n] Mal. iii. 15.

v. 10—12. Never was the promiſe made to David, to human view, more in danger of failing. The monſter Athaliah, to uſurp the throne, deſtroys all her grand-children, and the whole ſeed-royal of Judah: one babe only of a year old, as a brand from the burning, is ſnatched from the maſſacre by the care of his aunt, the wife of Jehoiada. *Note*, Vain is every attempt of earth or hell to defeat the word of truth; one jot or tittle of it ſhall never fail.

CHAP. XXIII.

After ſix years uſurpation, 1. *Jehoiada ſets up the rightful heir*, ver. 1—11. 2. *Slays the uſurper*, ver. 11—15. 3. *Reforms the kingdom*, ver. 16—21.

8-8.

[a] 2 Kings iv, &c.

1. [a] AND in the ſeventh year Jehoiada ſtrengthned himſelf, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the ſon of Jehoram, and Iſhmael the ſon of Jehohanan, and Azariah the ſon of Obed, and Maaſeiah the ſon of Adaiah, and Eliſhaphat the ſon of Zichri, into covenant with him. 2. And they went about in Judah, and [b] gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Iſrael, and they came to Jeruſalem. 3. And all the congregation [c] made a covenant with the king in the houſe of God: and he ſaid unto them, Behold, the king's ſon ſhall reign, [d] as the LORD hath ſaid of the ſons of David. 4. This *is* the thing that ye ſhall do: [e] A third part of you entring on the ſabbath of the prieſts and of the Levites, *ſhall be* porters of the † doors; 5. And [e] a third part *ſhall be* at the king's houſe; [e] and a third part at the gate of the foundation: and all the people *ſhall be* in the courts of the houſe of the LORD. 6. But let none come into the houſe of the LORD, ſave the prieſts, and [f] they that miniſter of the Levites, they ſhall go in, for they *are* ‡ holy: but all the people ſhall keep the watch of the LORD. 7. And the Levites ſhall compaſs the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand, and whoſoever *elſe* cometh into the houſe, he ſhall be put to death: but be you with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out. 8. So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the prieſt had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the ſabbath, with them that were to go *out* on the ſabbath: for Jehoiada the prieſt diſmiſſed not [g] the courſes. 9. Moreover, Jehoiada the prieſt delivered to the captains of hundreds, ſpears and bucklers, and ſhields, that *had been* king David's, which *were* in the houſe of God. 10. And he ſet all the people (every man having his weapon in his hand) from the right ‖ ſide of the § temple, to the left ſide of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about. 11. Then they brought out the king's ſon, and put upon him the crown, and [h] *gave him* the teſtimony, and made him king: and Jehoiada and his ſons anointed him, and ſaid, † God ſave the king.

[b] Pſal. cxii. 5. Mat. x. 16. [c] Neh. ix. 38. [d] 1 Sam. vii. 13. Chap. vi. 16. & vii. 18. & xxi. 7. [e] Luke i. 8, 9. † Heb. Threſholds. [f] 1 Chron. xxiii. xxviii. xxix. ‡ Heb. Holineſs. [g] 1 Chron. xxiii. xxiv. xxv. & xxvi. ‖ Heb. Shoulder. § Heb. Temple. [h] Deut. xvii. 18. † Heb. Let the King live. Pſal. lxxii. 15.

v. 1—11. Six years the uſurped dominion of Athaliah laſted; but by the prudence and courage of Jehoiada, ſhe is hurled from her bloody throne, and the rightful heir reſtored, 2 *Kings* xi. 4.

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12. ¶ [i] Now when Athaliah heard the noiſe of the people running and praiſing the king, ſhe came to the people into the houſe of the LORD. 13. And ſhe looked, and behold, the king ſtood [k] at his pillar, at the entring in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king; and [l] all the people of the land rejoiced, and [m] ſounded with trumpets, alſo the ſingers with inſtruments of muſic; and ſuch as taught to ſing praiſe. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and ſaid, [n] Treaſon, treaſon. 14. Then Jehoiada the prieſts brought out the captains of hundreds that were ſet over the hoſt, and ſaid unto them, Have her forth of the ranges: and whoſo followeth her, [o] let him be ſlain with the ſword. For the prieſt ſaid, Slay her not in the houſe of the LORD. 15. So they laid hands on her; and when ſhe was come to the entring of the horſe-gate, by the king's houſe, [p] they ſlew her there. 16. ¶ And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and [q] between all the people, and [r] between the king, that they ſhould be the LORD's people. 17. Then all the people went to the houſe of Baal, and [s] brake it down, and brake his altars, and his images in pieces, and [t] ſlew Mattan the prieſt of Baal before the altars. 18. Alſo Jehoiada appointed the offices of the houſe of the LORD by the hand of the prieſts the Levites, [u] whom David had diſtributed in the houſe of the LORD, to offer the burnt-offerings of the LORD, [x] as *it is* written in the law of Moſes, with rejoicing and with ſinging, [y] *as it was ordained* by David. 19. And he ſet the porters at the gates of the houſe of the LORD, that none *which was* unclean in any thing, ſhould enter in. 20. And he took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the houſe of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's houſe, and ſet the king upon the throne of the kingdom. 21. And [z] all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had ſlain Athaliah with the ſword.

[i] 2 Kings xi. 13, &c. [k] 2 Kings xxiii. 3. [l] Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xix. 1, 2. [m] Num. x. 10. [n] 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. Mat. vii. 5. Rom. ii. 1, 3. [o] Rev. xiv. 9, 10. & xix. 20. [p] Judg. i. 7. Mat. vii. 2. Rev. xviii. 6. [q] Rom. xiii. 3, 4. [r] 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. [s] 2 Kings x. 27. [t] Deut. xiii. 9. 1 Kings xviii. 40. Cant. ii. 15. Zech. xiii. 3. [u] 1 Chron. xxiv. 1. [x] Num. xxviii. 2. [y] 1 Chron. xxvi. 1. [z] Eſth. viii. 15. Pſal. lviii. 10. Prov. xi. 10.

v. 12—21. Athaliah's impotent attempt haſtens her ruin: the people were too tired of her government to afford her any aſſiſtance; ſhe fell therefore a juſt ſacrifice to the manes of her murdered family. Joy and gladneſs now ſpread through the land; the king and people, by Jehoiada as mediator, renew their covenant with God and each other; and as the firſt-fruits of their zeal, Baal's hated worſhip is deſtroyed, and regularity and order reſtored to the houſe of God. Thus was this happy revolution effected ſo proſperouſly and ſpeedily, and once more the ſeed of David poſſeſſed in peace the throne of their anceſtors. *Note*, (1.) The throne of David ſhall never be vacant; one king for ever reigns upon it, whom none of his enemies can gainſay or reſiſt: happy they who are ſpiritually the ſubjects of his government. (2.) Let kings conſider the maintenance of God's holy religion and virtue, as the great ſtability of their crown.

CHAP. XXIV.

Joaſh's end ill correſponded with his gracious beginning. 1. *While Jehoiada lived he did well, and repaired the temple*, ver. 1—14. 2. *After his death, he ſhook off his profeſſion, ſet up the worſhip of Baal*, ver. 15—18. *tho' warned to the contrary*, ver. 19. *and put Zechariah the prophet to death, for reproving him for it*, ver. 20—22. 3. *The Syrians invaded him*, ver. 23—24. 4. *He was ſtruck with ſore diſeaſes, ſlain by his ſervants, and buried under a mark of infamy*, ver. 25—27.

1. [a] JOaſh *was* ſeven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jeruſalem: his mother's name alſo *was* Zibeah of Beer-ſheba. 2. And Joaſh [b] did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, all the days of Jehoiada the prieſt. 3. And Jehoiada took for him two wives, and he begat ſons and daughters. 4. ¶ And it came to paſs after this, *that* Joaſh was minded to repair the houſe of the LORD. 5. And he gathered together the prieſts and the Levites, and ſaid to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Iſrael money to repair the houſe of your God from year to year, and ſee that ye haſte the matter: howbeit the Levites haſtened *it* not. 6. And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and ſaid unto him, Why haſt thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Ju-

[a] 2 Kings xii. 1, &c. [b] Chap. xxv. 2.

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dah and out of Jeruſalem, the collection, [c] *according to the commandment* of Moſes the ſervant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Iſrael, for the tabernacle of witneſs? 7. For [d] the ſons of Athaliah that wicked woman, had broken up the houſe of God, and alſo [e] all the dedicate things of the houſe of the LORD did they beſtow upon Baalim. 8. And at the king's commandment they made [f] a cheſt, and ſet it without, at the gate of the houſe of the LORD. 9. And they made a † proclamation through Judah and Jeruſalem, to bring in to the LORD, the collection *that* Moſes the ſervant of God *laid* upon Iſrael in the wilderneſs. 10. And all the princes, and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and caſt into the cheſt, until they had made an end. 11. Now it came to paſs, that at what time the cheſt was brought unto the king's office, by the hand of the Levites; and when they ſaw that *there was* much money: the king's ſcribe, and the high-prieſt's officer, came and emptied the cheſt, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. 12. And the king and Jehoiada [g] gave it to ſuch as did the work of the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD, and hired maſons and carpenters to repair the houſe of the LORD, and alſo ſuch as wrought iron and braſs, to mend the houſe of the LORD. 13. So the workmen wrought, and ‡ the work was perfected by them, and they ſet the houſe of God in his ſtate, and ſtrengthened it. 14. And when they had finiſhed *it*, they brought the reſt of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made [h] veſſels for the houſe of the LORD, *even* veſſels to miniſter, and to offer *withal*, and ſpoons, and [h] veſſels of gold and ſilver: and they offered burnt-offerings in the houſe of the LORD continually, all the days of Jehoiada.

[c] Exod. xxx.
[d] Chap. xxi. 17.
[e] Hoſ. ii. 8.
[f] Mark xii. 41.
† Heb. Voice.
[g] Mat. x. 10.
‡ Heb. The healing of the work went up by their hand.
[h] 1 Kings vii. 50.
[i] 2 Kings xii. 13.

v. 1—14. Under Jehoiada's influence, Joaſh continued to reign with credit and honour. *See 2 Kings* xii. 1. We may add to what was there obſerved,

1. How great a mercy it is for young people, when they fall into good hands.

2. That to be adviſed and influenced by age and experience, ſhews the trueſt wiſdom.

3. Many a fair profeſſion hath no root at bottom. The religion that is put on, through prejudice of education, or maintained purely by the influence of others, will, when theſe reſtraints are removed, be eaſily ſhook off; or if the form ſtill continues, it can but more fatally deceive thoſe who are deſtitute of the power of godlineſs.

4. Many a commendable action, as Joaſh's repairing the temple, hath appeared in thoſe, who being ſtill in the fleſh, cannot pleaſe God; though their zeal is a juſt reproof of the backwardneſs of better men.

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15. ¶ But Jehoiada waxed old, and [k] was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old *was he* when he died: 16. And they buried him in the city of David [l] among the kings, [m] becauſe he had done good in Iſrael, both towards God, and [n] towards his houſe. 17. Now [o] after the death of Jehoiada, came the princes of Judah, and made obeiſance to the king: then the king hearkned unto them. 18. And [p] they left the houſe of the LORD God of their fathers, and ſerved groves and idols: and [q] wrath came upon Judah and Jeruſalem for this their treſpaſs. 19. Yet [r] he ſent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD, and they teſtified againſt them [s] but they would not give ear. 20. And the ſpirit of God came upon Zechariah the ſon of Jehoiada the prieſt, which ſtood above the people, and ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith God, Why tranſgreſs ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot proſper? [t] becauſe ye have forſaken the LORD, he hath alſo forſaken you. 21. And they conſpired againſt him, and [u] ſtoned him with ſtones, at the commandment of the king, [x] in the court of the houſe of the LORD. 22. Thus Joaſh the king remembred not the kindneſs which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but ſlew his ſon: and when he died, he ſaid, The LORD look upon *it*, and [y] require *it*. 23. ¶ And it came to paſs at the end of the year, *that* [z] the hoſt of Syria came up againſt him: and they came to Judah and Jeruſalem, and deſtroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and ſent all the ſpoil of them unto the king of † Damaſcus. 24. For the army of the Syrians [a] came with a ſmall company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great hoſt into their hand, becauſe they had forſaken the LORD God of their fathers: ſo they executed judgment againſt Joaſh. 25. And when they were departed from him (for they left him in great [b] diſeaſes) his own ſervants conſpired againſt him, [c] for the blood of the ſons of Jehoiada the prieſt, and ſlew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, [d] but they buried him not in the ſepulchres of the kings. 26. And theſe *are* they that conſpired againſt him; Zabad the ſon of Shimeath an Ammoniteſs, and † Jehozabad the ſon of ‡ Shimrith a Moabiteſs. 27. ¶ Now *concerning* his ſons, and [e] the greatneſs of the burdens *laid* upon him, and the ‖ repairing of the houſe of God, behold, they *are* written in the § ſtory of the book of the kings. And Amaziah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[k] Gen. xxxv. 29. 1 Chron. xxiii. 1.
[l] 1 Sam. ii. 30. Prov. x. 7.
[m] Heb. vi. 10.
[n] Chap. xxiii. 18.
[o] Acts xx. 29.
[p] 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[q] Judg. v. 8. Chap. xix. 2. & xxviii. 13.
[r] Chap. xxxvi. 15.
[s] Neh. ix. 26. Zech. vii. 11, 12.

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[t] Deut. xxix. 25. & xxxi. 16, 17. Chap. xv. 2.
[u] Mat. xxi. 35. Acts vii. 58. & xiv. 19.
[x] Mat. xxiii. 35.
[y] Gen. ix. 6

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[z] 2 Kings xii. 17, &c.

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† Heb. Darmeſk.
[a] Deut. xxxii. 30. Iſa. xxx. 17.
[b] 2 Kings viii. 29.
[c] Ver. xxi.
[d] Prov. x. 7.
† Jozacher.
‡ Shomer. 2 Kings xii. 21.
[e] Ibid. 18.
‖ Heb. Founding.
§ Or commentary.

v. 15—27. How ſad the apoſtacy of the unhappy Joaſh! The ſun that roſe ſo bright, here ſets eclipſed in darkneſs.

1. Jehoiada dies. Long had God ſpared his uſeful life, during ſix reigns before Joaſh. His character was exemplary, and his laſt works greater than his firſt. In reſpect to his memory, the people, ſenſible of their deep obligations to him, honoured him with a ſepulchre among the kings of Judah; but whilſt they thus reſpected his corps, they quickly forgat his counſel. *Note*, (1.) A long life is a bleſſing, when thus employed in the cauſe of God. (2.) They who in life have been moſt uſeful, deſerve after death the moſt honourable remembrance. (3.) The departure of a great good man, is a national affliction. (4.) They who continue to reverence the memory of great and good reformers, often grievouſly degenerate from their practice and precepts.

2. The princes of Judah, never truly changed, though conforming to the reformation, ſeize the preſent favourable opportunity; and with obſequious flattery gaining the king's ear, eaſily prevail on him to reſtore idolatry, and to plant again thoſe groves which he had deſtroyed. *Note*, (1.) Many conform to religion when it is faſhionable, who are glad to get the firſt opportunity to throw off the reſtraint. (2.) Flatterers about the throne, are often the ruin of the prince. (3.) Falſe converſion iſſues quickly in fatal apoſtacy.

3. God left not himſelf without witneſs. His prophets, commiſſioned from him, rebuked this ſhameful idolatry, and particularly Zachariah, the worthy ſon of the great Jehoiada, ſtood up, moved by the Holy Ghoſt, and plainly and ſeriouſly reminded them of the perverſeneſs of their ways, and the danger thereby incurred. *Note*, (1.) Miniſters muſt be faithful to men's ſouls. (2.) In times of great degeneracy, great zeal is needful to oppoſe the torrent of ungodlineſs. (3.) In the worſt of days, God will not want ſome witneſſes for him. (4.) They who hate to be reformed, ſhall at leaſt be left without excuſe.

4. Vile was the treatment theſe holy men received. In general they deſpiſed their admonitions; and as Zechariah's reproof, though mild and gentle, particularly exaſperated them, at the inſtigation of the princes, and by the command of the king, the people raiſed a tumult, even in the Lord's houſe, and ſtoned him to death between the porch and the altar; neither reſtrained by the ſacredneſs of the place or perſon, daringly defying his warnings, and ungratefully forgetting the innumerable obligations they owed his pious father. *Note*, (1.) God's miniſters who are zealous for the truth, muſt expect to ſuffer for it. (2.) Ingratitude is amongſt the greateſt ſins. (3.) They are ripe for ruin, who fill up the meaſure of their iniquities with the perſecution of God's prophets.

5. The dying martyr foretells the vengeance of God, which was ready to overtake them; not deſiring it might come out of a ſpirit of revenge, but predicting its certainty from the ſpirit of prophecy. *Note*, (1.) God will avenge the blood of his ſaints. (2.) Though we may not wiſh to avenge ourſelves, we cannot but deſire the manifeſtation of God's juſtice, and the vindication of his injured honour.

6. God ſoon aroſe to judgment. A ſmall army of Syrians vanquiſhed the more numerous hoſts of Joaſh, plundered his capital, ſlew his princes, and left him lingring either under the wounds they had given him, or ſome diſeaſe which had ſeized him; but what they left unfiniſhed, his own ſervants accompliſhed: a conſpiracy was formed, and they ſlew him on his bed. And ſince he had degenerated ſo greatly from his anceſtors, they judged him unworthy to ſleep in their ſepulchres. Thus juſtly did God require blood for blood, and laid on him the heavy burdens his iniquities had provoked. *Note*, (1.) Woe unto any people, when God hath forſaken them; they cannot but fall an eaſy prey to every invader. (2.) Nothing but blood can ſatisfy for blood. (3.) They who lie down under the wrath of God, will feel the intolerable burden to eternity. (4.) Let apoſtates from the truth behold and tremble at Joaſh's miſerable end.

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CHAP. XXV.

1. *Amaziah revenges his father's death*, ver. 1—4. 2. *Obſerves the command of God*, ver. 5—10. 3. *Conquers the Edomites*, ver. 11, 12, 13. 4. *Worſhips the gods of Edom*, ver. 14, 15, 16. 5. *Challenges the king of Iſrael, but ſmarts for it*, ver. 17—24. 6. *Ends his days ingloriouſly*, ver. 25—28.

1. [a] AMAZIAH *was* twenty and five years old *when* he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jeruſalem. 2. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, [b] but not with a perfect heart. 3. ¶ Now it came to paſs, when the kingdom was eſtabliſhed to him, that [c] he ſlew his ſervants [d] that had killed the king his father. 4. But he ſlew not their children, but *did* as *it is* written in the law in the book of Moſes, where the LORD commanded, ſaying, [e] The fathers ſhall not die for the children, neither ſhall the children die for the fathers, but every man ſhall die for his own ſin. 5. ¶ Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thouſands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houſes of *their* fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbred them [f] from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thouſand choice *men*, *able* to go forth to war, that could handle ſpear and ſhield. 6. He hired alſo an hundred thouſand mighty men of valour out of Iſrael, for an hundred talents of ſilver. 7. But there came a man of God to him, ſaying, O king, let not the army of Iſrael go with thee: for [g] the LORD *is* not with Iſrael, *to wit*, *with* all the children of Ephraim. 8. But if thou wilt go, do *it*, be ſtrong for the battle: God ſhall make thee fall before the enemy: for [h] God hath power to help, and to caſt down. 9. And Amaziah ſaid to the man of God, But what ſhall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the † army of Iſrael? And the man of God anſwered, [i] The LORD is able to give thee much more than this. 10. Then Amaziah ſeparated them, *to wit*, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go ‡ home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled againſt Judah, and they returned home in ‖ great anger. 11. ¶ And Amaziah ſtrengthned himſelf, and led forth his people, and [k] went to the valley of ſalt, and ſmote of the children of Seir ten thouſand. 12. And *other* ten thouſand *left* alive, did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and caſt them down from the top of the rock, that they were broken all in pieces. 13. ¶ But the ſoldiers of the army which Amaziah ſent back, that they ſhould not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria, even unto Beth-horon, and ſmote three thouſand of them, and took much ſpoil.

[a] 2 Kings xiv. 1, &c.
[b] Hoſ. x. 2. Jam. i. 8. Rev. iii. 16.
[c] Gen. ix. 6. Num. xxxv. 33.
[d] Chap. xxiv. 25.
[e] Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii. 4. 20.
[f] Num. i. 18.
[g] 1 Kings xii. 28. Iſa. xxviii. 1. Hoſ. v. 13, 14.
[h] Judg. vii. 7. Chap. xiv. 11.
† Heb. Hand.
[i] Prov. x. 22.
‡ Heb. To their place.
‖ Heb. Heat of anger.
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[k] 2 Kings xiv. 7.

v. 1—13. Amaziah's reign we had before, 2 *Kings* xiv. His lukewarm temper in religion, and his execution of his father's murderers were there recorded; his expedition againſt Edom is here more at large deſcribed.

1. He collected his own forces, which we find greatly diminiſhed under the three laſt reigns. To ſtrengthen them therefore, he hired an 100,000 auxiliaries out of Iſrael.

2. God, by a prophet, rebukes him for deſiring Iſrael's aſſiſtance, whoſe forces being under the Divine diſpleaſure, would weaken inſtead of ſtrengthening his army. If he hopes to proſper therefore, he is commanded to diſband them immediately. God with fewer forces can caſt down his foes before him; and theſe offenſive auxiliaries, if retained, will but inſure his overthrow. *Note*, (1.) Multitudes profit nothing, when God is our foe. (2.) Connection with God's enemies, is the way to bring his curſe on our enterprizes.

3. Amaziah with ſome reluctance at laſt conſents, unwilling at firſt to loſe the hundred talents with which he had hired the Iſraelites, but encouraged by the promiſes of the prophet that he ſhould be no loſer by his compliance. *Note*, (1.) Worldly-mindedneſs is apt to raiſe many objections againſt the precepts of ſelf-denial. (2.) They who are content to truſt God, will never have cauſe to regret it. He will more than repay whatever he calls us to part with for his ſake.

4. When he had diſmiſſed the Iſraelites, he advanced into Idumea, and obtained a compleat victory; ſlew 10,000 on the ſpot, and executed, with terrible ſeverity, 10,000 captives which fell into his hands. What induced him to exerciſe this cruelty is not recorded.

5. The diſbanded army reſented highly the affront put upon them. Ungodly as they were, they could not bear to be treated as ſuch; and in their return, miſerably ravaged a part of Judah, and ſlew three thouſand men, in revenge for their diſappointment of the ſpoil of Edom. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe who have no concern about religion, feel their pride hurt to be treated as irreligious. (2.) Though we ſuffer for what is well done, we ought not to be diſcouraged.

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14. ¶ Now it came to paſs, after that Amaziah was come from the ſlaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and ſet them up [l] *to be* his gods, and [m] bowed down himſelf before them, and burned incenſe unto them. 15. Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Amaziah, and he ſent unto him a prophet, which ſaid unto him, [n] Why haſt thou ſought after the gods of the people, [o] which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand? 16. And it came to paſs as he talked with him, that *the king* ſaid unto him, Art thou made of the king's counſel? [p] forbear; why ſhouldſt thou be ſmitten? Then the prophet [q] forbare, and ſaid, I know that [r] God hath determined to deſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not hearkned unto my counſel.

[l] Chap. xxviii. 23.
[m] Exod. xx. 5.
[n] Pſal. xcvi. 5.
[o] Ver. 11.
[p] Iſa. xxx. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 3.
[q] Hoſ. iv. 17.
[r] 1 Sam. ii. 25. Chap. xxxvi. 16.

v. 14—16. What infatuation, what ſottiſh ſtupidity! To leave the ſervice of the conquering Jehovah, for the idols of a vanquiſhed foe. We have,

1. The reproof given to the idolatrous king. Juſtly was God diſpleaſed, and ſends his prophet to reaſon with him on his folly, *v.* 15. *Note*, They who depart from God, act as unwiſely as wickedly.

2. With indignation he received the mild rebuke; inſolently rejects his warning as impertinent, bids him hold his peace, or threatens him with Zechariah's fate. *Note*, (1.) The ſoul that hateth reproof is brutiſh. (2.) Prophets muſt not wonder if their kindeſt notices are thus inſolently returned.

3. The prophet perceiving his labour fruitleſs, retires; leaving however behind him a ſolemn notice of that approaching ruin, which his hardned obſtinacy provoked. *Note*, They who comfort themſelves in having removed their troublers, will quickly feel by their puniſhments, how little cauſe they have to rejoice in their ſucceſs.

826.

17. ¶ [s] Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and ſent to Joaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz, the ſon of Jehu king of Iſrael, ſaying, [t] Come, let us ſee one another in the face. 18. And Joaſh king of Iſrael ſent to Amaziah king of Judah, ſaying, [u] The thiſtle that *was* in Lebanon, ſent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy daughter to my ſon to wife: and there paſſed by a wild beaſt that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thiſtle. 19. Thou ſayeſt, Lo, thou haſt ſmitten the Edomites, and [x] thine heart lifteth thee up to boaſt: abide now at home, [y] why ſhouldſt thou meddle to *thine* hurt, that thou ſhouldſt fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee? 20. But Amaziah [z] would not hear, [a] for it *came* of God, that he might deliver them into the hand *of their enemies*, becauſe they ſought after the gods of Edom. 21. So Joaſh the king of Iſrael went up, and they ſaw one another in the face, *both* he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-ſhemeſh, which *belongeth* to Judah. 22. And Judah was † put to the worſe before Iſrael, and they fled every man to his tent. 23. And Joaſh the king of Iſrael [b] took Amaziah king of Judah, the ſon of Joaſh, the ſon of Jehoahaz, at Beth-ſhemeſh, and brought him to Jeruſalem, and brake down the wall of Jeruſalem, from the gate of Ephraim to the ‡ corner-gate; four hundred cubits. 24. And *he took* all the gold, and the ſilver, and all the veſſels *that were* found in the houſe of God, with Obed-edom, and the treaſures of the king's houſe, the ‖ hoſtages alſo, and returned to Samaria. 25. ¶ And Amaziah the ſon of Joaſh king of Judah, lived after the death of Joaſh ſon of Jehoahaz king of Iſrael, fifteen years. 26. Now the reſt of the acts of Amaziah, firſt and laſt, behold, *are* they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Iſrael? 27. ¶ Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away § from following the LORD, they made a conſpiracy againſt him in Jeruſalem, and he fled to Lachiſh: but they ſent to Lachiſh after him and ſlew him there. 28. And they brought him

[s] 2 Kings xiv. 8, &c.
[t] Prov. vii. 14. & xviii. 6. & xx. 3.
[u] Judg. ix. 8.
[x] Chap. xxvi. Prov. xiii. 10. Hab. ii. 4.
[y] Luke xiv. 31.
[z] 1 Sam. ii. 25.
[a] Chap. xxii. 7.
† Heb. Smitten.
[b] Prov. xvi. 18.
‡ Heb. Gate that looketh out. Zech. xiv. 10.
‖ Heb. Sons of pledge.
810.
§ Heb. From after.

Before Chriſt 810.

him upon horſes, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

v. 17—28. Amaziah's pride and fall were before recorded, 2 *Kings* xiv. Urged on by evil counſellors, inſtead of adviſing with God's prophet, and juſtly hurried to his ruin, as the puniſhment of his apoſtacy from God, he firſt was enſlaved by the king of Iſrael, and then ſlain by a conſpiracy of his own ſervants, from whom he in vain attempted to flee; they purſued him to Lachiſh, and there murdered him. *Note,* (1.) They who reject the counſel of God, are juſtly given up to be deluded and deſtroyed. (2.) However wicked the inſtruments may be who are employed, God is righteous in his judgments.

CHAP. XXVI.

Here is, 1. *The good character of Uzziah,* ver. 1—5. 2. *His great proſperity,* ver. 6—15. 3. *His preſumption in invading the prieſt's office, for which he was ſtruck with a leproſy unto the day of his death,* ver. 16—23.

1. [a] THEN all the people of Judah took † Uzziah, who *was* ſixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. 2. He built Eloth, and reſtored it to Judah, after that the king ſlept with his fathers. 3. Sixteen years old *was* Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jeruſalem: his mother's name alſo *was* Jecoliah of Jeruſalem. 4. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, [b] according to all that his father Amaziah did. 5. And he ſought God [c] in the days of Zechariah, who [d] had underſtanding in the viſions of God: and [e] as long as he ſought the LORD, God made him to proſper. 6. And he went forth and warred againſt the Philiſtines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Aſhdod, and built cities about Aſhdod, and among the Philiſtines. 7. And [f] God helped him againſt the Philiſtines, and againſt the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Mehunims. 8. And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah, and his name ſpread abroad, *even* to the entring in of Egypt, for he ſtrengthned *himſelf* exceedingly. 9. Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jeruſalem [g] at the corner-gate, and at the valley-gate, and at the turning *of the wall,* and † fortified them. 10. Alſo he built towers in the deſert, and digged many wells, for he had much cattle, both in the low-country, and in the plains: huſbandmen *alſo,* and vine-dreſſers in the mountains, and in ‖ Carmel: for he loved § huſbandry. 11. Moreover, Uzziah had an hoſt of fighting men that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account, by the hand of Jeiel the ſcribe, and Maaſeiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains. 12. The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour, *were* two thouſand and ſix hundred. 13. And under their hand *was* † an army, three hundred thouſand and ſeven thouſand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king againſt the enemy. 14. And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the hoſt, ſhields and ſpears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and [h] ſlings *to caſt* ſtones. 15. And he made in Jeruſalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to ſhoot arrows and great ſtones withal: and his name ‡ ſpread far abroad, for [i] he was marvellouſly helped till he was ſtrong.

[a] 2 Kings xv. 1, &c.
† i. e. The power of God. He is called Azariah, 2 Kings xiv. 21.
[b] Chap. xxv. 2.
[c] Ibid. xxiv. 2.
[d] Gen. xli. 15. Dan. i. 17. & ii. 19. & x. 1.
[e] 1 Sam. ii. 30. Chap. xv. 2.
800.
[f] Pſal. iii. 8.
[g] Chap. xxv. 23.
† Or repaired.
‖ Or fruitful fields.
§ Heb. Ground.
† Heb. The power of an army, or a powerful army.
[h] Judg. xx. 16.
‡ Heb. Went forth.
[i] Pſal. xviii. 30.

v. 1—15. Uzziah followed the beſt ways of his father Amaziah, and under the influence of Zechariah, a man favoured with prophetic viſions, or deeply converſant with the writings of the prophets before him, kept cloſe to the worſhip of the true God, and proſpered in all his undertakings.

1. He was victorious in all his battles. God enabled him to vanquiſh the Philiſtines and Arabians, and ſeize their country. The Ammonites fearing his arms, ſued humbly to obtain his favour with preſents, and his ſpreading fame overawed the neighbouring nations. *Note,* As long as we cleave to God, he will help us againſt all our foes.

2. He repaired and fortified Jeruſalem; the wall of which in his father's time had been broken down; and built cities or garriſons in the conquered countries; and places for the protection of his cattle in the wilderneſs; for he abounded in flocks and herds, and was a great lover of huſbandry, an employment and amuſement not unworthy the greateſt king.

Before Chriſt 800.

3. He kept up a great army, ready for any emergency, parties of which were ſent out againſt the neighbouring people, who made inroads on the borders; the reſt ſerved to garriſon the cities. They were well armed, men of great courage, and provided with warlike engines, whether for defending or aſſaulting beſieged cities. Such forces and mighty preparations for war exceedingly ſtrengthened his kingdom, and made him feared and reſpected.

16. ¶ But [k] when he was ſtrong, his heart was lifted up to *his* deſtruction: for he tranſgreſſed againſt the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD, to burn incenſe upon the altar of incenſe. 17. And Azariah the prieſt went in after him, and with him fourſcore prieſts of the LORD *that were* valiant men: 18. And they withſtood Uzziah the king, and ſaid unto him, [l] *It appertaineth* not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incenſe unto the LORD, but [m] to the prieſts the ſons of Aaron *that are* conſecrated to burn incenſe: go out of the ſanctuary, for thou haſt treſpaſſed, [n] neither *ſhall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God. 19. Then Uzziah was wroth, and *had* a cenſer in his hand to burn incenſe: and [o] while he was wroth with the prieſts, [p] the leproſy even roſe up in his forehead before the prieſts in the houſe of the LORD from beſide the incenſe-altar. 20. And Azariah the chief prieſt, and all the prieſts looked upon him, and behold he *was* leprous in his forehead, and they thruſt him out from thence, yea, [q] himſelf haſted alſo to go out, becauſe the LORD had ſmitten him. 21. And [r] Uzziah the king was [s] a leper unto the day of his death, and [t] dwelt in a ſeveral houſe *being* a leper, for he was cut off from the houſe of the LORD: and Jotham his ſon *was* over the king's houſe, judging the people of the land. 22. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Uzziah, firſt and laſt, [u] did Iſaiah the prophet the ſon of Amoz write. 23. [x] So Uzziah ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which *belonged* to the kings; for they ſaid, He *is* a leper: and † Jotham his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[k] Deut. xxxii. 15. Prov. iv. 23.
765.
[l] Num. xvi. 40. & xviii. 7. 1 Kings xiii. 1. Heb. v. 4.
[m] Exod. xxx. 7.
[n] James iv. 6.
[o] Num. xi. 33. Dan. iv. 31.
[p] Num. xii. 10.
[q] Eſth. vi. 12.
[r] 2 Kings xv. 5.
[s] Num. xii. 10.
[t] Lev. xiii. 46. Num. v. 2.
[u] Iſa. i. 1.
[x] Ibid. vi. 1.
758.
† i. e. The perfection of the Lord, or the Lord is perfect.

v. 16—23. Puffed up with the proſperity to which he was advanced, Uzziah blots his fair character, by an act of daring intruſion into the prieſts office. So buſy a ſin is pride, and ſo ready to creep into the hearts of truly pious men.

1. He would offer incenſe upon the golden altar, and enter that holy place, to which all acceſs was forbidden, except to the prieſts alone: and as his tranſgreſſion was wilful and obſtinate, his ſin was great againſt the Lord.

2. Azariah the high-prieſt, with fourſcore of his brethren, bravely oppoſed the profane attempt; not by violence, but by a ſerious remonſtrance. They urge the king to an immediate departure from the place into which he had intruded, warn him of the tranſgreſſion he had already committed, remind him of the unlawfulneſs of the ſervice he intended, and threaten him with the danger to which he was expoſed; far from contributing to his honour, it would end in his perpetual ſhame and diſgrace. *Note,* (1.) God's inſtitutions are ſacred; it is at our peril if we violate them. (2.) They who at all hazard will gratify their pride, often bring themſelves to deſerved ſhame.

3. Uzziah, far from ſubmitting, was angry at the remonſtrance, and refuſed to quit his cenſer. *Note,* The wiſeſt and juſteſt rebuke, often exaſperates the wilful.

4. God therefore appeared to decide the controverſy. The leproſy, foul and incurable, ſeized him, and the marks of it appeared viſible in his forehead: emboldened hereby, the prieſts hurried him forth from the holy place; and far from reſiſting, the ſtroke he felt bowed his ſtubborn heart, and he haſted to be gone, leſt worſe evils ſhould overtake him. And now no more dares he approach God's houſe; nay, he is excluded from his own palace whilſt he lives, and from the ſepulchre of his anceſtors when he dies: a puniſhment admirably ſuited to his ſin, and to deter others from imitating ſo bad an example. *Note,* (1.) They who will not ſubmit to admonition, ruſh on their ruin. (2.) When we feel God's diſpleaſure, it is madneſs to perſiſt: humiliation is the only door of eſcape which remains. (3.) Though our iniquity may be pardoned of God, ſome ſins leave a diſgrace among men which is indelible.

CHAP. XXVII.

Jotham ſucceeded his father Uzziah. We have here, 1. *The date and continuance of his reign,* ver. 1—8. 2. *The general good character of it,* ver. 1—6. *The proſperity of it,* ver. 3, 4, 5. 4. *The period of it,* ver. 7—9.

Before Christ 758.

1. [a] JOTHAM *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ſixteen years in Jeruſalem: his mother's name alſo *was* Jeruſhah the daughter of Zadok. 2. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, [b] according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit [c] he entred not into the temple of the LORD. And [d] the people did yet corruptly. 3. He built the high gate of the houſe of the LORD, and on the wall of † Ophel he built much. 4. Moreover, he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the foreſts he built caſtles and towers. 5. ¶ He fought alſo with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed againſt them. And the children of Ammon gave him the ſame year an hundred talents of ſilver, and ten thouſand meaſures of wheat, and ten thouſand of barley. ‡ So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the ſecond year and the third. 6. So Jotham became mighty, becauſe he ‖ prepared his ways before the LORD his God. 7. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Iſrael and Judah. 8. He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned ſixteen years in Jeruſalem. 9. ¶ And Jotham ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[a] 2 Kings xv. 32.
[b] Chap. xxvi. 4.
[c] Ibid. 16.
[d] 2 Kings xv. 35.
† Or the tower. Neh. iii. 26. & xi. 21.
‡ Or this.
‖ Or eſtabliſhed. Chap. xix. 3.

v. 1—9. The reign of Jotham was pious and proſperous.

1. He copied the beſt of his father's ways, and avoided his wickedneſs. His heart was right with God, and he endeavoured diligently to walk and pleaſe him: but the people followed not his good example; either he wanted zeal to reſtrain them, or they were too headſtrong to be with-held. *Note*, (1.) It is wiſe to avoid the rocks on which others have ſplit. (2.) They are inexcuſable who ſlight the advantages they enjoy, and refuſe to be reformed.

2. His proſperity went hand in hand with his piety; he fortified his dominions, built new cities, ſubdued the Ammonites, and brought them under tribute for three years, and becauſe he had choſen God's ways, he became mighty under his protection.

3. Too ſoon for his people he finiſhed his happy reign: farther particulars of which were recorded in the annals of Judah long ſince periſhed. The unworthy ſon who ſucceeded him, made the loſs of ſuch a king more ſenſibly felt and lamented by every true Iſraelite.

CHAP. XXVIII.

We have here, 1. *Ahaz's wickedneſs*, ver. 1—4. *His diſtreſs from the kings of Syria and Iſrael*, ver. 5—8. 3. *The army of Iſrael reproved for afflicting Judah*, ver. 9—11. *and the impreſſion it made upon them*, ver. 12—15. 4. *Ahaz's ſufferings from the Edomites*, ver. 16, 17. *the Philiſtines*, ver. 18, 19. *and the Aſſyrians*, ver. 20, 21. 5. *The continuance of his idolatry notwithſtanding*, ver. 22—25. 6. *His death and burial*, ver. 26, 27.

742.

1. [a] AHAZ *was* twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ſixteen years in Jeruſalem: but he did not *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, like David his father. 2. For [b] he walked in the ways of the kings of Iſrael, and made alſo molten images for Baalim. 3. Moreover, he burnt incenſe in the valley of the ſon of Hinnom, and [c] burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had caſt out before the children of Iſrael. 4. He ſacrificed alſo, and burnt incenſe [d] in the high places, and on the hills, and [e] under every green tree. 5. [f] Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria, and they ſmote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought *them* to † Damaſcus: and he was alſo delivered into the hand of the king of Iſrael, who ſmote him with a great ſlaughter.

[a] 2 Kings xvi. 2, &c.
[b] Chap. xxi. 6.
[c] Lev. xviii. 21. Pſal. cvi. 37.
[d] Lev. xxvi. 30.
[e] Deut. xii. 2.
[f] Judg. ii. 14. iv. 2. & vi. 1.
† Heb. Darmeſek.

v. 1—5. Ahaz, the degenerate ſon of a pious father, no ſooner came to the crown, than he ſunk into every abomination, following the ways of wicked Iſrael, and ſerving Baalim as the heathens around him: yea, ſo mad was he upon his idols, that he ſpared not his own children, but burnt them in honour of Moloch. Swift vengeance overtook him. The hoſts of Syria defeated his army, plundered his country, and captivated his people; and Iſrael ſeconded the blow with a very great ſlaughter. *Note*, They who ſell themſelves to work wickedneſs, ſhall ſurely receive the wages of their ſin in condign ſuffering.

Before Chriſt 741.

6. ¶ For [g] Pekah the ſon of Remaliah ſlew in Judah an hundred and twenty thouſand in one day, *which were* all † valiant men; [h] becauſe they had forſaken the LORD God of their fathers. 7. And Zichri a mighty man of Ephraim ſlew Maaſeiah the king's ſon, and Azrikam the governor of the houſe, and Elkanah *that was* next to the king. 8. And the children of Iſrael carried away captive of their brethren, two hundred thouſand women, ſons and daughters, and took alſo away much ſpoil from them, and brought the ſpoil to Samaria. 9. But a prophet of the LORD was there, whoſe name *was* Oded: and he went out before the hoſt that came to Samaria, and ſaid unto them, Behold, [i] becauſe the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have ſlain them in a rage [k] *that* reacheth up unto heaven. 10. And now ye purpoſe to keep under the children of Judah and Jeruſalem for [l] bond-men, and bond-women unto you: [m] *but are there* not with you, even with you, ſins againſt the LORD your God? 11. Now hear me therefore, and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: for the fierce wrath of the LORD *is* upon you. 12. Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the ſon of Johanan, Berechiah the ſon of Meſhillemoth, and Jehizkiah the ſon of Shallum, and Amaſa the ſon of Hadlai, ſtood up againſt them that came from the war: 13. And ſaid unto them, Ye ſhall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended againſt the LORD *already*, ye intend to add *more* to our ſins and to our treſpaſs: for our treſpaſs is great, and *there is* fierce wrath againſt Iſrael. 14. So the armed men left the captives and the ſpoil, before the princes and all the congregation. 15. And the men [n] which were expreſſed by name, roſe up, and took the captives, and with the ſpoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arayed them, and ſhod them, and [o] gave them to eat and to drink, and [p] anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon aſſes, and brought them to Jericho, [q] the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

[g] 2 Kings xv. 27.
† Heb. Sons of valour.
[h] Chap. xv. 2.
[i] Pſal. lxix. 26. Iſa. x. 5. & xlvii. 6. Ezek. xxv. 12, 15. Obad. x, &c. Zech. i. 15.
[k] Ezra ix. 6.
[l] Lev. xxv. 39, 42.
[m] Jer. xxv. 29.
[n] Ver. 12.
[o] Prov. xxv. 21. Rom. xii. 20.
[p] Luke x. 34.
[q] Deut. xxxiv. 43. Judg. i. 16.

v. 6—15. Wicked inſtruments are often made the ſcourges of righteous vengeance.

1. Triumphant Iſrael tramples down the ſtrength of treacherous Judah. One hundred and twenty thouſand men fall by the ſword, and double that number of women and children are led away captive. The king's ſon and his principal officers fell in the battle, and the country is ravaged and plundered. When God is departed, all our defence is gone.

2. The Lord ſends a prophet to the people of Iſrael to rebuke the ſeverity with which they had ſtained their victory. He met them on their return to Samaria, and warns them from God. The victory they had obtained was not the effect of their valour or goodneſs, but God's wrath againſt Judah. Cruel was the ſlaughter they had made, and which cried to God for vengeance againſt them; and hard the bondage, which as an iron yoke they would lay on their brethren: but let them conſider their own ſins, and be confounded, and juſtly fear a return of greater ſeverity on themſelves. To avert which, he enjoins them inſtantly to releaſe their captives, elſe the fierce wrath of God would quickly overtake them. *Note*, (1.) Cruelty to an enemy is a great crime: even in a juſt war much blood-guiltineſs may lie at our door. (2.) They who are ſenſible of their own ſins, will be moſt compaſſionate to the ſufferings of others. (3.) Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy.

3. The princes ſtruck with this divine admonition, immediately interpoſed with the men of war, inſiſted the captives ſhould be brought no farther, warned them of the anger of God againſt their cruelty, and confeſſing how much ſin already lay upon them, reſolved not to add this to the meaſure of it, the enſlaving their brethren. Overcome by the remonſtrance, the men of war nobly yielded up both priſoners and ſpoil; and with tender care and liberal proviſion, the princes took care ſafely to carry them to Jericho, that they might thence return to their own homes. *Note*, (1.) It is better to take warning late than never. (2.) The victory of ſelf-denial, is greater than the necks of vanquiſhed foes. (3.) They who are mighty ſhould be merciful; this is their greateſt honour.

740.

16. ¶ At that time [r] did king Ahaz ſend unto the kings of Aſſyria [s] to help him. 17. For [t] again the Edomites had come and ſmitten Judah, and carried away † captives.

[r] 2 Kings xvi. 7.
[s] Jer. xvii. 5.
[t] Lev. xxvi. 18.
† Heb. A captivity.

captives. 18. [u] The Philiſtines alſo had invaded the cities of the low-country, and of the ſouth of Judah, and had taken Beth-ſhemeſh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho, with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo alſo and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there. 19. For the LORD brought Judah low, becauſe of Ahaz king of Iſrael; for [x] he made Judah naked, and tranſgreſſed ſore againſt the LORD. 20. And [y] Tilgath-pilneſer king of Aſſyria came unto him, and [z] diſtreſſed him, but ſtrengthned him not. 21. For Ahaz took away a portion *out* of the houſe of the LORD: and *out* of the houſe of the king, and of the princes, and [a] gave *it* unto the king of Aſſyria: but he helped him not. 22. ¶ And [b] in the time of his diſtreſs did he treſpaſs yet more againſt the LORD: this *is that* king Ahaz. 23. For [c] he ſacrificed unto the gods of Damaſcus, which ſmote him: and he ſaid, Becauſe the gods of the kings of Syria [d] help them, *therefore* will I ſacrifice to them, that they may help me: but they were the ruin of him and of all Iſrael. 24. And Ahaz gathered together the veſſels of the houſe of God, and [e] cut in pieces the veſſels of the houſe of God, and [f] ſhut up the doors of the houſe of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jeruſalem. 25. And in every ſeveral city of Judah he made high places to ‡ burn incenſe unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers. 26. ¶ Now the reſt of his acts, and of all his ways, firſt and laſt, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Iſrael. 27. And Ahaz ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even* in Jeruſalem: but they brought him not into the ſepulchres of the kings of Iſrael: and Hezekiah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

Before Christ 740.
[u] Ezek. xvi. 27, 57.
[x] Exod. xxxii. 25.
[y] 2 Kings xv. 29.
[z] Iſa. xxxi. 1, 2.
[a] 2 Kings xii. 18. & xviii. 6.
[b] Iſa. i. 5. 2 Tim. iii. 13.
[c] 2 Kings xvi. 12.
739.
[d] Pſal. cxv. 4, &c. Hab. i. 11.
[e] 2 Kings xvi. 14.
[f] Chap. xxix. 3.
‡ Or offer.

v. 16—27. When a ſtate is weakned and ſinking, the meaneſt foe ſpurns at it. Sin had left the land naked, expoſed to every invader, and unable to reſiſt. Edom and Philiſtia joined Syria and Iſrael in their ravages; the cities are taken, the inhabitants led captive, and Ahaz reduced to deep diſtreſs. We have here,

1. The unſucceſsful attempt he made to extricate himſelf from his difficulties. By impoveriſhing himſelf, and emptying his treaſures, as well as robbing the houſe of God, and fleecing the princes, he engaged the king of Aſſyria, to make a diverſion in his favour, but he received no benefit from him, for his auxiliaries diſtreſſed him as much as his enemies. *Note*, They who forſake God, muſt needs be diſappointed in every other confidence.

2. The aggravated wickedneſs of this infatuated king. Unmoved by all God's judgments, he hardned his heart in idolatry; grew worſe under theſe reproofs, and inſtead of repenting of his ſins, he added to his ſtrange gods; ſhut up the temple, defaced and deſtroyed the veſſels; and inſtead of one altar, ſet up multitudes in every corner of Jeruſalem, to ſacrifice to the idols of Syria, as if the ſucceſs of the Syrians were owing to their influence, and he hoped to be helped by them: but alas! found to his coſt, that he only haſtned his own and his people's ruin. This is that Ahaz, a monſter of iniquity, and branded in the book of God with everlaſting infamy. *Note*, When judgments harden, inſtead of humbling, the caſe ſeems very deſperate.

3. God was graciouſly pleaſed to rid the kingdom of this heavy plague, and in the midſt of his days cut down this wicked king. Nor would the men of Judah ſuffer him to lie among his godly progenitors, but caſt him into a common grave, an intimation of that awful and eternal ſeparation, that after death ſhall be made between the righteous and the wicked.

CHAP. XXIX.

Hezekiah's godly reign we may with pleaſure a ſecond time peruſe. Here is, 1. *His exhortation to the prieſts and Levites, on reſtoring the temple-ſervice,* ver. 1—11. 2. *The care the Levites took to cleanſe the temple,* ver. 12—19. 3. *A ſolemn revival of God's neglected ordinances,* ver. 20—36.

1. [a] HEZEKIAH began to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jeruſalem: and his mother's name *was* Abijah the daughter of [b] Zechariah. 2. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight of the LORD, [c] according to all that David his father had done. 3. ¶ He in the firſt year of his reign, in the firſt month, [d] opened the doors of the houſe of the LORD, and repaired them. 4. And he brought in the prieſts, and the Levites, and gathered them together in the eaſt-ſtreet. 5. And ſaid unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, [e] ſanctify now yourſelves, and ſanctify the houſe of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthineſs out of the holy *place*. 6. For our fathers have treſpaſſed, and done *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forſaken him, and [f] have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned *their* backs. 7. Alſo [g] they have ſhut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burnt incenſe, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy *place*, unto the God of Iſrael. 8. [h] Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jeruſalem, and he hath delivered them to † trouble, to aſtoniſhment, and to [i] hiſſing, as ye ſee with your eyes. 9. For lo, [k] our fathers have fallen by the ſword, and our ſons, and our daughters, and our wives *are* in captivity for this. 10. Now *it is* in mine heart [l] to make a covenant with the LORD God of Iſrael, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. 11. My ſons, ‡ be not now negligent: for the LORD hath [m] choſen you to ſtand before him, to ſerve him, and that you ſhould miniſter unto him, and ‖ burn incenſe.

[a] 2 Kings xviii. 1, &c.
[b] Chap. xxvi. 5.
[c] 1 Kings xv. 5.
726.
[d] Chap. xxviii. 24.

Before Christ 726.
[e] Exod. xix. 10, 15. 1 Chron. xv. 12.
[f] Jer. ii. 27. Ezek. viii. 16.
[g] Chap. xxviii. 24.
[h] Ibid. 5, 19.
† Heb. Commotion. Deut. xxviii. 25.
[i] 1 Kings ix. 8.
[k] Lev. xxvi. 17. Chap. xxviii. 5, 6, 8.
[l] 2 Kings xi. 4.
‡ Or be not deceived, or are not. 1 Cor. iii. 10.
[m] Deut. viii. 14. & xviii. 2, 6.
‖ Or offer ſacrifices.

v. 1—11. No ſooner is the crown devolved to Hezekiah, than with unremitting zeal he ſets himſelf to repair the late deſolations of God's houſe, and recover the people from their dreadful apoſtacy. His heart was right with God, as David's, and religion his firſt and great concern. Happy the land that hath ſuch a king.

1. He opens and repairs the doors of God's houſe, where of late had neither been incenſe or offering. Probably though no public ſervice had been maintained there, the ſacred fire was ſtill preſerved.

2. He convokes the prieſts and Levites, who ſeem to have too much correſponded with the ſad changes of the laſt reign, and to have teſtified little zeal for a reformation: in this auguſt aſſembly, he laments the evils of their fathers, their neglect of God and his ſervice, and juſtly aſcribes thereto all the miſeries they had ſuffered, and under which they yet groaned. He declares his own intentions to join himſelf ſolemnly in covenant with God, and admoniſhes them heartily to aſſiſt him in the reſtoration of God's worſhip, and the reformation of the people. As prieſts and Levites, they were eſpecially obliged to purify their own ſouls, and ſhew zeal and diligence for others; the honour God had put on them, ſhould quicken them in his ſervice; and as the father of his people, he addreſſes them as ſons, by every endearing entreaty, engaging them to that which was ſo evidently their duty. *Note*, (1.) They who neglect God's ordinances, declare thereby their apoſtacy from him. The perſons, the family who neglect the lamp of God's word, and offer no daily incenſe of prayer and praiſe, cannot but be in a ſtate of terrible guilt. (2.) There is no way of averting God's fierce anger, but by a penitent return to him in his inſtituted way. (3.) When God ſtirs up our heart to deſire to return, then there is hope. (4.) It is in vain to attempt reforming others, till we have firſt begun with our own ſouls. (5.) A negligent miniſter is a moſt criminal character.

12. ¶ Then the Levites aroſe, Mahath the ſon of Amaſai, and Joel the ſon of Azariah, of the ſons of the Kohathites: and the ſons of Merari; Kiſh the ſon of Abdi, and Azariah the ſon of Jehalelel: and of the Gerſhonites; Joah the ſon of Zimmah, and Eden the ſon of Joah: 13. And the ſons of Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and [n] of the ſons of Aſaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah: 14. And of the ſons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the ſons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel. 15. And they gathered their brethren, and ſanctified themſelves, and came according to the commandment of the king, † by the words of the LORD, to cleanſe the houſe of the LORD. 16. And the prieſts went into the inner part of the houſe of the LORD, to cleanſe *it*, and brought out all the uncleanneſs that they found in the temple of the LORD, into the court of the houſe of the LORD. And the Levites took *it* to carry *it* out abroad [o] into the brook Kidron. 17. Now they began on the firſt *day* of the firſt month to ſanctify, and on the eighth day of the month, came they to the porch of the LORD: ſo they ſanctified the houſe of the LORD in eight days, and in the ſixteenth day of the firſt month they made an end. 18. Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and ſaid,

[n] 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2.
† Or in the buſineſs of, &c. Chap. x. 12.
[o] Deut. ix. 21.

We have cleanſed all the houſe of the LORD, and the altar of burnt-offering, with all the veſſels thereof, and the ſhew-bread table, with all the veſſels thereof. 19. Moreover, all the veſſels [p] which king Ahaz in his reign did caſt away in his tranſgreſſion, have we prepared and ſanctified, and behold, they *are* before the altar of the LORD.

[p] Chap. xxviii. 24.

v. 12—19. The firſt ſervice neceſſary was the thorough cleanſing of the houſe of the Lord, which had been ſo long neglected, and to which with diligence and earneſtneſs the principal Levites then addreſſed themſelves, according to the commandment of the king, and agreeably to God's will, gathering their brethren, and united in the ſame work: many hands and zeal for the cauſe made great diſpatch. In eight days they had thoroughly purged the houſe, and brightened the veſſels of ſervice; in eight more the courts were cleanſed, and the filth was carried to the brook Kidron, that ran at the foot of the hill on which the temple was built. Thus began the happy year; and Hezekiah with pleaſure heard that all things were ready for renewing the interrupted worſhip of God. *Note*, (1.) Much may be done in a ſhort time, when we are truly engaged in the work. (2.) When zealous miniſters lead the way, they provoke their brethren to jealouſy. (3.) If they were ſo careful to purge the temple from filth, how much more ſo ſhould we be, who are conſecrated prieſts unto God, to cleanſe the temple of our hearts from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, that God alone may be exalted there?

20. ¶ Then Hezekiah the king roſe [q] early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the houſe of the LORD. 21. And [r] they brought ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and ſeven lambs, and ſeven he-goats, for [r] a ſin-offering for the kingdom, and for the ſanctuary, and for Judah: and he commanded the prieſts, the ſons of Aaron, to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD. 22. So they killed the bullocks, and the prieſts received the blood, and [s] ſprinkled *it* on the altar: likewiſe when they had killed the rams, they ſprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed alſo the lambs, and they ſprinkled the blood upon the altar. 23. And they brought † forth the he-goats *for* the ſin-offering, before the king and the congregation, and [t] they laid their hands upon them: 24. And the prieſts killed them, and they made [u] reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, [x] to make an atonement for all Iſrael: for the king commanded *that* the burnt-offering and the ſin-offering *ſhould be made* for all Iſrael. 25. And [y] he ſet the Levites in the houſe of the LORD with cymbals, with pſalteries, and with harps, [z] according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's ſeer, and Nathan the prophet: [a] for *ſo was* the commandment ‡ of the LORD ‡ by his prophets. 26. And the Levites ſtood with [b] the inſtruments of David, and the prieſts [c] with the trumpets: 27. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar: and when the burnt offering began, [d] the ſong of the LORD began *alſo* with the trumpets, and with the inſtruments [e] *ordained* by David king of Iſrael. 28. And all the congregation worſhipped, and ‖ the ſingers ſang, and the trumpeters ſounded: *and* all *this continued* until the burnt-offering was finiſhed. 29. And when they had made an end of offering, [f] the king and all *that were* preſent with him, bowed themſelves and worſhipped. 30. Moreover, Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to ſing praiſe unto the LORD, with the words of David, and [g] of Aſaph the ſeer: and they ſang praiſes with gladneſs, and they bowed their heads and worſhipped. 31. Then Hezekiah anſwered and ſaid, Now ye have § conſecrated yourſelves unto the LORD, come near and bring ſacrifices and [h] thank-offerings into the houſe of the LORD. And the congregation brought in ſacrifices and thank-offerings, and as many as were of a free heart burnt-offerings. 32. And the number of the burnt-offerings which the congregation brought, was threeſcore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs: all theſe *were* for a burnt-offering to the LORD. 33. And the conſecrated things *were* ſix hundred oxen and three thouſand ſheep. 34. But the prieſts were too few, ſo that [i] they could not ſlay all the burnt-offerings: wherefore [k] their brethren the Levites † did help them till the work was ended, and until the *other* prieſts had ſanctified themſelves: for the Levites [l] *were* more upright in heart, to ſanctify themſelves than the prieſts. 35. And alſo the burnt-offerings *were* in abundance, with [m] the fat of the peace-offerings, and [n] the drink-offerings for *every* burnt-offering. So the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD was ſet in order. 36. And [o] Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was *done* ſuddenly.

[q] Gen. xxii. 3. Exod. xxiv. 4. Pſal. cxix. 60.
[r] 1 Chron. xv. 26. Lev. iv. 3, 14.
[s] Lev. viii. 14, &c. Hebr. ix. 21, 22.
† Heb. Near.
[t] Lev. iv. 15, 24.
[u] Gal. iii. 13. Col. i. 20.
[x] Rom. iii. 25.
[y] 1 Chron. xvi. 4. & xxv. 6.
[z] 1 Chron. xxiii. 5. & xxv. 1. Chap. viii. 14.
[a] Chap. xxx. 12.
‡‡ Heb. By the hand of, &c.
[b] 1 Chron. xxiii. 5. Amos vi. 5.
[c] Num. x. 10.
[d] Pſal. cxxvi. 1.
[e] Chap. xxiii. 18.
‖ Heb. They ſang the ſong.
[f] Chap. xx. Ver. 28.
[g] Pſal. l. Title.
§ Heb. Filled your hand.
[h] Lev. vii. 12.
[i] Ibid. i. 5, 6.
[k] Chap. xxxv. 11.
† Heb. Strengthened them.
[l] Chap. xxx. 3.
[m] Exod. xxix. 13.
[n] Lev. xxiii. 13.
[o] 1 Chron. xxix. 9.

v. 20—36. No ſooner is the houſe ready, than Hezekiah is eager to be there. Early the next morning he aroſe, ſummoned the rulers to attend him, and went up to the courts of God's ſanctuary.

1. He opened the ſervice with ſacrifices of atonement for the people in general; all ranks and degrees having been greatly offenders; and king, prieſts and people alike culpable. One goat was only appointed, but in the view of their great tranſgreſſions, and the long neglect of ſacrifices, they offered ſeven; the king and people ſolemnly confeſſing their iniquities, and laying their hands on the heads of their ſacrifices. *Note*, (1.) There is no returning to God without the atoning blood of Jeſus; repentance without that, could profit us nothing. (2.) They who by faith lay their hands on their redeemer, transferring all their guilt to him, ſhall find him a Saviour to the uttermoſt.

2. Burnt-offerings of thankſgiving accompanied the ſacrifices of atonement. When God is reconciled, praiſe and thankfulneſs are our bounden duty.

3. Whilſt the offerings were burning, the Levites were, according to the diſpoſition of David, praiſing God with inſtruments of muſick; and the king and people now emboldened to draw near the throne of grace, repeatedly bowed the head, and worſhipped. *Note*, All our praiſes and prayers are then acceptable when they aſcend in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and in the virtue of his one oblation once offered.

4. As the miniſtrations were renewed, Hezekiah exhorts the people liberally to ſupply God's altar, and to draw near to him as his reconciled people: nor were they backward to receive the exhortation, but willingly, according to their abilities, brought, the more generous, burnt-offerings which were wholly conſumed, and others peace-offerings in abundance, on part of which themſelves feaſted. *Note*, (1.) They who love God's altar, will delight to ſupport the ſervice. (2.) Paſt neglect ſhould quicken us to more abundant diligence.

5. The prieſts were not ſufficient to offer the ſacrifices, many of them had been defiled with idols, and might be ſuſpended from their office; others wanted zeal for the ſervice, and neglected to ſanctify themſelves. The Levites in general had been more upright, and many of them were now employed in helping to ſlay the ſacrifices, for want of more prieſts to whom that office properly belonged: and this, though not according to the law, was from the neceſſity of the caſe, diſpenſed with. *Note*, (1.) They who ſhould be the firſt to encourage the revival of godlineſs, to their ſhame are often the laſt. (2.) When the heart is upright and zealous for God, and they whoſe duty it is to labour in the miniſtry are negligent, God will not blame what men may call irregularity in the ſervice.

6. It was matter of univerſal joy to ſee the bleſſed change. The king and people could not but obſerve the hand of God, preparing and diſpoſing them ſo readily to join in the ſervice; and the expedition and eaſe with which the work was done, was a farther manifeſtation of the Divine bleſſing upon them. *Note*, They who ſet about God's work, though at firſt the difficulties appear arduous and inſurmountable, will often find the mountain before Zerubbabel become a plain. God has men's hearts in his hand, and can bow the moſt ſtubborn to ready compliance.

CHAP. XXX.

We have here, 1. *A ſolemn paſſover appointed to be obſerved,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The invitation Hezekiah ſent to Judah and Iſrael to come to keep it,* ver. 1, 6—12. 3. *The joyful celebration of it,* ver. 13—27.

1. AND Hezekiah ſent to all Iſrael and Judah, and wrote letters alſo to Ephraim and Manaſſeh, that they ſhould come to the houſe of the LORD [a] at Jeruſalem, to keep [b] the paſſover unto the LORD God of Iſrael. 2. For the king had taken counſel, and his princes and all the congregation in Jeruſalem, to keep the paſſover [c] in the ſecond month. 3. For they could not keep it [d] at that time, [e] becauſe the prieſts had not ſanctified themſelves ſufficiently, neither had the people gathered themſelves together to Jeruſalem. 4. And the thing † pleaſed the king, and all the congregation. 5. So they eſtabliſhed a decree, to make proclamation throughout all Iſrael, from Beer-ſheba even to Dan, that they

[a] Deut. xvi. 5, 6.
[b] 1 Cor. v. 7.
[c] Num. ix. 10, 11.
[d] Exod. xii. 18. Lev. xxiii. 5.
[e] Chap. xxix. 34.
† Heb. Was right in the eyes of, &c.

they ſhould come to keep the paſſover unto the LORD God of Iſrael at Jeruſalem: for they had not done *it* of a long *time in ſuch ſort* as it was written. 6. So the poſts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Iſrael and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, ſaying, Ye children of Iſrael, [f] turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael, [g] and he will return to the remnant of you, [h] that are eſcaped out of the hand of the kings of Aſſyria. 7. And [i] be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which treſpaſſed againſt the LORD God of their fathers, [k] *who* therefore gave them up to deſolation, as ye ſee. 8. Now be ye not ſtiff-necked [l] as your fathers *were, but* ‡ yield yourſelves unto the LORD, and enter into his ſanctuary, which he hath ſanctified for ever: and ſerve the LORD your God, that the fierceneſs of his wrath may turn away from you. 9. For [m] if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children [n] *ſhall find* compaſſion before them that lead them captive, ſo that they ſhall come again unto this land: for [o] the LORD your God *is* gracious and merciful, and will not turn away *his* face from you, if ye return unto him. 10. So the poſts paſſed from city to city, through the country of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, even unto Zebulun: but [p] they laughed them to ſcorn, and mocked them. 11. Nevertheleſs, [q] divers of Aſher and Manaſſeh, and of Zebulun, humbled themſelves, and came to Jeruſalem. 12. Alſo in Judah, [r] the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king, and of the princes, [s] by the word of the LORD.

v. 1—12. The engagements which employed them in the firſt ordering the ſervice, the fewneſs of the prieſts which were prepared, and the diſtance of the people to whom proper notice could not be given, cauſed the time appointed for the paſſover in the firſt month to elapſe. But Hezekiah was very unwilling to neglect the ſolemn ordinance, and therefore, as the law had made proviſion, *Numb.* ix. 11. that thoſe perſons who were unavoidably prevented, might keep it in the ſecond month, he thought, with the advice of his nobles, that this was equally applicable to the whole congregation. Therefore,

1. He ſends meſſengers with circular letters, not only through Judah, but the cities of Iſrael. He wanted them not to return under his government, but to ſeek the favour of that God whom they had forſaken. He exhorts them to embrace the preſent opportunity, and by an unfeigned ſurrender of themſelves to God, continue no longer rebellious and ſtiff-necked as their fathers, leſt their obſtinacy ſhould iſſue in their ruin. Severe had been the corrections that for their apoſtacy they had endured; a ſmall remnant of them only now remained. Their ſufferings at leaſt ſhould make them wiſe, and engage them to ſeek the ſlighted ſanctuary of God: and highly it was their intereſt, as well as duty, for by no other means could they hope to avert the fierce wrath of God gone forth againſt them. But if now they humbled themſelves, God would remember his covenant with their fathers, and ſhew himſelf gracious and merciful according to the promiſes, and not turn his face from them in anger, but lift up the light of his countenance to comfort them, and reſtore their brethren from captivity. *Note*, (1.) It is never too late for the ſinner to return, whilſt the calls of grace ſound in his ears, and the promiſes afford a ground of hope. (2.) Nothing can prove the deſperate ſtubbornneſs of the ſinner's heart, ſo much as his inſenſibility to the gracious invitations of God. (3.) Impenitence perſiſted in, muſt neceſſarily be fatal. (4.) When we have done all we can to beſeech men by the mercies of God to return to him, if they obſtinately refuſe, their blood then is on their own heads; we are free.

2. The meſſengers meet with very different entertainment. The king of Iſrael gave them no obſtruction in the execution of their commiſſion; but the people of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, and the reſt in general, not only ſlighted the meſſage, but derided the meſſengers. Some however felt the weighty contents of the letters, and with deep humiliation before God for their paſt abominations, gladly embrace the opportunity of coming to Jeruſalem to keep the paſſover. The men of Judah were happily more unanimous; God bowed their hearts, as the heart of one man, to come according to God's word, and the king's command, to the ſolemn feſtival. *Note*, (1.) It is no uncommon thing for the meſſengers of God to be mocked for their meſſage ſake. (2.) Their diſeaſe ſeems very deſperate, who thus impiouſly reject the only method of cure. (3.) Of the multitudes to whom the goſpel is preached, few, comparatively, receive it. (4.) It is a comfort to God's miniſters, that ſome at leaſt hear and fear. (5.) When God brings a ſinner to humiliation, then there is hope. (6.) If any man is inclined or enabled to return to God, this muſt be acknowledged as his gift.

[f] Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Joel ii. 12.
[g] 1 Sam. ii. 30. Chap. xv. 2..
[h] 2 Kings xv. 19, 29.
[i] Ezek. xx. 18.
[k] Chap. xxix. 8.
[l] Exod. xxxii. 9.
‡ Heb. Give the hand unto, &c. 1Chron. xxix. 24. Ezra x. 19.
[m] Chap. vii. 14.
[n] Pſ. cvi. 46.
[o] Exod. xxxiv. 6.
[p] Chap. xxxvi. 16.
[q] So Chap. xi. 16. Ver. 18. Acts xvii. 34.
[r] Pſ. cx. 3.
[s] Exod. xii. 6.

13. ¶ And there aſſembled at Jeruſalem much people, to keep the feaſt of unleavened bread in the ſecond month, a very great congregation. 14. And they aroſe and took away [t] the altars that *were* in Jeruſalem, and all the altars for incenſe took they away, and caſt *them* into the brook Kidron. 15. Then they killed the paſſover on the fourteenth *day* of the ſecond month: and the prieſts and the Levites [u] were aſhamed, and ſanctified themſelves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the houſe of the LORD. 16. And they ſtood in their place after their manner, [x] according to the law of Moſes the man of God: the prieſts ſprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites. 17. For *there were* many in the congregation that were not ſanctified: [y] therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the paſſovers, for every one *that was* not clean, to ſanctify *them* unto the LORD. 18. For [z] a multitude of the people, *even* many of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, Iſſachar, and Zebulun, [a] had not cleanſed themſelves, yet did they eat the paſſover, otherwiſe than it was written: but Hezekiah prayed for them, ſaying, The good LORD pardon every one 19. *That* prepareth his heart to ſeek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though *he be* not *cleanſed* according to [b] the purification of the ſanctuary. 20. And the LORD hearkned to Hezekiah, [c] and healed the people.

v. 13—20. A vaſt congregation being aſſembled on the fourteenth day of the ſecond month,

1. They prepared for the celebration of the paſſover, by removing every idol altar that was found in Jeruſalem. *Note*, When we truly return to God, it will be our care to put away iniquity from us.

2. The zeal of the people ſhamed the prieſts and Levites, and ſtirred them up with earneſtneſs to ſanctify themſelves, that they might be ready for their work; the Levites to bring, and the prieſts to ſprinkle the blood of the ſacrifices. *Note*, (1.) The hope of the ſinner is this blood of ſprinkling. (2.) Others zeal ſhould provoke us to jealouſy.

3. Becauſe many maſters of families were ceremonially unclean, the Levites killed the paſſover for them; yet were they admitted to eat it, though they were not prepared according to the divine preſcription.

4. Hezekiah, who obſerved the irregularity, failed not to cry to God to pardon it. The ſhortneſs of the notice permitted not thoſe who in ſincerity deſired to pleaſe God, to be cleanſed according to the purification of the ſanctuary; therefore he prays the good Lord that it might be forgiven. *Note*, (1.) If our ſouls are ſimply deſirous to ſeek God, he will pity and pardon our infirmities. (2.) In our beſt approaches to God, ſomething ſtill is wanting: we attain not to all that meaſure of love, and zeal, and purity, which God's ſervice requires. (3.) Therefore, amidſt all our other petitions, we ſhould never forget to beg forgiveneſs for the evil which cleaves to the beſt things we do.

5. In anſwer to Hezekiah's prayers, God healed the breach their ſin had made, and graciouſly embraced them in the arms of his pardoning mercy.

21. And the children of Iſrael *that were* preſent at Jeruſalem, [d] kept the feaſt of unleavened bread ſeven days with great gladneſs: and the Levites and the prieſts praiſed the LORD day by day, *ſinging* with † loud inſtruments unto the LORD. 22. And Hezekiah ſpake ‡ comfortably unto all the Levites [e] that taught the good knowledge of the LORD; and they did eat throughout the feaſt ſeven days, offering peace-offerings, and making confeſſion to the LORD God of their fathers. 23. And the whole aſſembly took counſel to keep [f] other ſeven days; and they kept *other* ſeven days with gladneſs. 24. For Hezekiah king of Judah § did [g] give to the congregation a thouſand bullocks, and ſeven thouſand ſheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thouſand bullocks, and ten thouſand ſheep; and a great number of prieſts ſanctified themſelves. 25. And all the congregation of Judah, with the prieſts and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Iſrael, and the ſtrangers that came out of the land of Iſrael, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. 26. So there was great joy in Jeruſalem; for ſince the time of Solomon the ſon of David, king of Iſrael, *there was* not the like in Jeruſalem. 27. ¶ Then the prieſts the Levites aroſe, and [h] bleſſed the people; and their voice was heard, and their prayer came *up* to ‖ his holy dwelling-place, *even* unto heaven.

[t] Chap. xxviii. 24.
[u] Chap. xxix. 34.
[x] Num. xviii. 7.
[y] Chap. xxix. 34.
[z] Ver. 11.
[a] Num. xix. 20. See Pſ. li. 17. 1 Cor. xi. 28.
[b] Exod. xii. 43, &c.
[c] Pſ. ciii. 3. Iſa. lvii. 18.
[d] Exod. xii. 15. Lev. xxiii. 6, &c. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.
† Heb. Inſtruments of ſtrength.
‡ Heb. To the heart. Iſa. xl. 2.
[e] Chap. xxxv. 3.
[f] See 1 Kings viii. 65.
§ Heb. Lifted up, or offered.
[g] See Chap. xxxv. 7, 8.
[h] Num. vi. 23.
‖ Heb. The habitation of his holineſs. Pſ. lxviii. 5.

v. 21—27. The ſeven days of unleavened bread followed the paſſover, and they were ſpent in ſacrifices and holy joy before the Lord. Hezekiah nobly ſupplied the altar with a thouſand bullocks, and ſeven thouſand ſheep, for peace-offerings, and the people with proviſion; and the princes, quickned by his zeal, emulated his example. The Levites, comforted and encouraged by the king, diligently inſtructed the people in the good word of God, aſſiſted them in their devotions, whilſt they confeſſed their ſins, and acknowledged the undeſerved mercy they now experienced; and every day they praiſed God in pſalms, and made melody in their hearts unto God. Great was the joy of all the aſſembly; and, happy in the ſervice, they prolonged it ſeven days more, and then parted, after the prieſts had pronounced the benediction, and God from heaven ratified the bleſſing. *Note,* (1.) They who are great, are called eſpecially to be generous. (2.) When we appear before God, it becomes us to rejoice in his mercy. (3.) A word of comfortable encouragement is the wages due to faithful labourers. (4.) In all our approaches to God, confeſſion of ſin ought never to be forgotten. (5.) They who truly love God's ſervice, will not think any time ſpent in it long. (6.) When God's miniſters bleſs in his name, he will confirm their word, and beſtow the benediction they pronounce.

CHAP. XXXI.

We have here, 1. *The deſtruction of the remainders of idolatry,* ver. 1. 2. *The miniſters of the ſanctuary employed and provided for,* ver. 2—10. 3. *Commiſſioners appointed for the due diſtribution of what was brought in for their maintenance,* ver. 11—19. 4. *Hezekiah's ſincerity in all his undertakings,* ver. 20, 21.

1. NOW when all this was finiſhed, all Iſrael *that were* † preſent, went out to the cities of Judah, [a] and brake the images in pieces, and [b] cut down the groves, and [c] threw down the high places, and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim alſo and Manaſſeh, until they had utterly deſtroyed them all. Then all the children of Iſrael returned every man to his poſſeſſion into their own cities. 2. ¶ And Hezekiah appointed [d] the courſes of the prieſts and the Levites after their courſes, every man according to his ſervice, the prieſts and [e] Levites for burnt-offerings, and for peace-offerings, to miniſter and to give thanks, and to praiſe in the gates of the tents of the LORD. 3. *He appointed* alſo [f] the king's portion of his ſubſtance, for the burnt-offerings, *to wit,* for the morning and evening burnt-offerings, and the burnt-offerings for the ſabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the ſet feaſts, [g] as *it is* written in the law of the LORD. 4. Moreover, he commanded the people that dwelt in Jeruſalem, [h] to give the portion of the prieſts and the Levites, that they might be encouraged [i] in the law of the LORD. 5. ¶ And as ſoon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Iſrael brought in abundance [k] the firſt-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and ‡ honey, and of all the increaſe of the field, and the tithe of all *things* brought they in abundantly. 6. And *concerning* the children of Iſrael and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they alſo brought in the tithe of oxen and ſheep, and [l] the tithe of holy things *which were* conſecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* § by heaps. 7. In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finiſhed *them* [m] in the ſeventh month. 8. And when Hezekiah and the princes came and ſaw the heaps, they bleſſed the LORD and his people Iſrael. 9. Then Hezekiah queſtioned with the prieſts and the Levites concerning the heaps. 10. And Azariah the chief prieſt of the houſe of Zadok, anſwered him, and ſaid, [n] Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the houſe of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for [o] the LORD hath bleſſed his people; and that which is left *is* this great ſtore.

† Heb. Found.
[a] 2 Kings xviii. 4. Chap. xiv. 3.
[b] Exod. xxxiv. 13.
[c] Deut. vii. 5.
[d] 1 Chron. xxiii. 6. & xxiv. 1.
[e] Num. viii. 19.
[f] See 1 Chron. xxix. 3.
[g] Numb. xxviii. & xxix.
[h] So Neh. xiii. 10, 11. 1 Cor. ix. 14.
[i] Iſa. viii. 20.
[k] Exod. xxii. 29.
‡ Or dates.
[l] Lev. xxvii, 30. Deut xiv. 28.
§ Heb. heaps heaps.
[m] Exod. xxiii. 16.
[n] Mal. iii. 10, 11.
[o] Hag. ii. 19.

v. 1—10. The gracious impreſſion God had made on the people's hearts ended not with the ordinance from whence they came, but they continued to make their profiting appear,

1. In the deſtruction of every idolatrous relick, not only in Judah, but alſo in Ephraim and Manaſſeh; out of thoſe cities at leaſt, from whence the people came up to Jeruſalem: and when this good work was done, they returned in peace every man to his own houſe. *Note,* (1.) It is comfortable returning to our home, when we carry along with us the bleſſing of God: (2.) They who truly cleave to God, have their hearts ſet againſt all ſin, without one allowed reſerve.

2. Hezekiah took care that the ſervice which was begun, ſhould be regularly carried on. The prieſts, Levites, and ſingers, in their ſeveral courſes, were appointed to miniſter before the Lord, and their maintenance provided for. He himſelf ſet the example, by appropriating a part of his revenue for the ſtated offerings, morning and evening, on the new moons, ſabbaths, and feſtivals; and he commanded his people to contribute to ſo good a work, for the encouragement of God's miniſters in their labours. *Note,* (1.) The ſupport of a godly miniſtry will be the care of wiſe and pious princes. (2.) They deſerve to be encouraged, who labour in the word and doctrine. (3.) God never intended any drones ſhould be fed in his hive. (4.) Whether we want or abound here, we know, if we are faithful, we cannot at laſt loſe our reward.

3. The people very readily obeyed the king's command: their firſtlings, tithes, and offerings were brought; and what was more than the prieſts and Levites could uſe, was laid on heaps, from the beginning to the end of harveſt. The quantity attracted the king's enquiry, and the high-prieſt informed him of God's bleſſing on the people, and that theſe juſt dues afforded them a plentiful maintenance, and enough for winter's ſtore. For ſuch mercies the king and princes bleſſed the Lord, and commended the people for their readineſs and faithful contribution. *Note,* (1.) None were ever loſers by a conſcientious rendering to God the things that are God's. (2.) Whatever good appears, God muſt be acknowledged as the bleſſed author of it. (3.) They who do well, deſerve commendation. (4.) The ſoul that hath profited by God's miniſters, will never grudge them a maintenance.

11. ¶ Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare † chambers in the houſe of the LORD; and they prepared *them,* 12. And brought in the offerings, and the tithes, and the dedicate *things* faithfully: over which Cononiah the Levite *was* ruler, and Shimei his brother *was* the next. 13. And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Aſahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Iſmachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, *were* overſeers ‡ under the hand of Cononiah, and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the houſe of God. 14. And Kore the ſon of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the eaſt, *was* over the free-will-offerings of God, to diſtribute the oblations of the LORD, and the moſt holy things. 15. And § next him *were* Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeſhua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in [p] the cities of the prieſts, in *their* ‖ ſet office, to give to their brethren by courſes, as well to the great as to the ſmall. 16. Beſide their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, *even* unto every one that entreth into the houſe of the LORD, † his daily portion for their ſervice in their charges, according to their courſes; 17. Both to the genealogy of the prieſts by the houſe of their fathers, and the Levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges, by their courſes: 18. And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their ſons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their [q] ſet office they ſanctified themſelves in holineſs. 19. Alſo of the ſons of Aaron the prieſts, *which were* in [r] the fields of the ſuburbs of their cities, in every ſeveral city, the men that were expreſſed by name, to give portions to all the males among the prieſts, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies, among the Levites. 20. ¶ And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and [s] wrought *that which was* good and right and truth before the LORD his God. 21. And in every work that he began in the ſervice of the houſe of God, and in the law and in the commandments to ſeek his God, he did *it* with all his heart, and [t] proſpered.

† Or, ſtore-houſes.
‡ Heb. At the hand.
§ Heb. At his hand.
[p] Joſh. xxi. 9, &c.
‖ Or, truſt. Ver. 18.
† Heb. The portion for the things of a day in his day.
[q] Ver. 16.
[r] Lev. xxv, 34. Num. xxxv. 2.
[s] 2 Kings xx. 3.
[t] Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10. Mat. vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

v. 11—21. We have here,

1. The care which Hezekiah took of the tithes, and the equitable diſtribution of them. Keepers were appointed; chambers fitted up in the court of the temple, to lay up the ſtores; and whilſt they who in courſe waited in the temple, with their ſons from three years old and upwards, were entirely provided for, that they might wait on the Lord without diſtraction, they who lived in the cities or villages were not neglected; but every one received a proportionate ſupply, according to the largeneſs of their families. *Note,* (1.) Wiſe œconomy is the way to ſecure abiding plenty. (2.) They who wait upon the Lord with diligence, may confidently truſt him for a proviſion. (3.) Miniſters families, as well as themſelves, ſhould be conſidered, and taken care of. (4.) The unequal diſtribution of church revenues

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nues is a great evil. How unjuſt is it, that one ſhould loll in affluence and indolence, whilſt a laborious brother ſcarce eats bread from the altar at which he ſerves?

> *Pudet hæc opprobria nobis,*
> *Et dici potuiſſe, et non potuiſſe refelli.*

2. Hezekiah's univerſally excellent character is remarked. All his people ſhared his pious regard: God had his heart; he was zealouſly affected in his bleſſed ſervice, and went through with it without declenſion, or wearineſs; and, as the effect of ſuch perſeverance, proſperity attended all his undertakings. *Note*, When our heart is truly ſincere in God's ſervice, we ſhall ſee with comfort the fruit of our labours.

CHAP. XXXII.

This chapter concludes the hiſtory of the reign of Hezekiah. 1. *He fortifies himſelf, his city, and the minds of his people, againſt Sennacherib*, ver. 1—8. 2. *Sennacherib ſends him a meſſage*, ver. 9—19. 3. *Hezekiah's prayer is anſwered in the total rout of the Aſſyrian army*, ver. 20—23. 4. *Hezekiah's ſickneſs and recovery; his ſin and humiliation; with the honours that attended him living and dead*, ver. 24—33.

1. AFTER *theſe* things and the eſtabliſhment *thereof* [a] Sennacherib king of Aſſyria came, and entred into Judah, and encamped againſt the fenced cities, and thought to † win them for himſelf. 2. And when Hezekiah ſaw that Sennacherib was come, and that ‡ he was purpoſed to fight againſt Jeruſalem: 3. He took counſel with his princes and his mighty men, to ſtop the waters of the fountains which *were* without the city: and they did help him. 4. So there was gathered much people together, who ſtopt all the fountains, and the brook that § ran through the midſt of the land, ſaying, Why ſhould the kings of Aſſyria come, and find much water? 5. Alſo [b] he ſtrengthned himſelf, and built up all the wall [c] *that was* broken, and raiſed *it* up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired [d] Millo *in* the city of David, and made ‖ darts and ſhields in abundance. 6. And he ſet captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the ſtreet of the gate of the city, and ſpake † comfortably to them, ſaying, 7. [e] Be ſtrong and courageous, be not afraid nor diſmayed for the king of Aſſyria, [f] nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: for [g] *there be* more with us than with him. 8. With him *is* [h] an arm of fleſh, but [i] with us *is* the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles. And the people ‡ reſted themſelves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

[a] 2 Kings xviii. 13, &c. Iſa. xxxvi. 1, &c.
† Heb. To break them up.
‡ Heb. His face was to war.
§ Heb. Overflowed.
[b] Iſa. xxii. 9.
[c] Chap. xxv. 23.
[d] 2 Sam. v. 9.
‖ Or ſwords.
† Heb. To their heart.
[e] 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
[f] Pſ. xxxiii. 16.
[g] 2 Kings vi. 16. 1 John iv. 4.
[h] Jer. xvii. 5.
[i] Chap. xiii. 12. Rom. viii. 31.
‡ Heb. Leaned.

v. 1—8. We might have expected all would be peace and ſafety *after theſe good things* Hezekiah had done; but behold, a dreadful ſtorm ariſes. We may be in the way of duty, yet expoſed to ſevere ſufferings. It was happy Hezekiah was not interrupted, before he had well proceeded in his work; and now having God's bleſſing, he is better prepared to meet his violent foe.

1. Sennacherib the king of Aſſyria invades his country, and with an army that threatned to ſwallow him up. His father had lately ſubdued Iſrael, and he hoped to find Judah as eaſy a prey.

2. Hezekiah, who perceived his deſign againſt Jeruſalem, not having forces to meet him in the field, prepares wiſely for the ſiege he expected, by endeavouring to cut off all ſupplies of water from the beſiegers, ſtrengthening the city with new fortifications, and providing abundance of military weapons. *Note*, When danger threatens, it is prudent to prepare for it. We muſt truſt God above all means, but never tempt him in the neglect of them.

3. The good king aſſembles the people, and, whilſt he marſhals them under proper officers, encourages their hearts, and comforts them, that they may not think of ſurrender, but bravely ſtand in the evil day. The danger was great, and required boldneſs and courage; yet they need not be diſmayed at this mighty and numerous hoſt. Angelic legions, if needful, more numerous, ſhould protect them; and, above all, God was with them, in power almighty, in faithfulneſs unchangeable; and therefore they might confidently expect the victory over their enemies. *Note*, (1.) Strong faith ſilences fear. (2.) No foes can ſtand before him who is the Captain of our ſalvation, and having already vanquiſhed for us ſin, death, and hell, will make us more than conquerors over them.

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9. ¶ [k] After this did Sennacherib king of Aſſyria ſend his ſervants to Jeruſalem (but he *himſelf laid ſiege* againſt Lachiſh, and all his power with him) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that *were* at Jeruſalem, ſaying, 10. Thus ſaith Sennacherib king of Aſſyria, [l] Whereon do ye truſt, that ye abide in † the ſiege in Jeruſalem? 11. Doth not Hezekiah perſuade you to give over yourſelves to die by famine and by thirſt, ſaying, [m] The LORD our God ſhall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Aſſyria? 12. [n] Hath not the ſame Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jeruſalem, ſaying, Ye ſhall worſhip before one altar, and burn incenſe upon it? 13. Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of *other* lands? [o] were the gods of the nations of thoſe lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? 14. [p] Who *was there* among all the gods of thoſe nations, that my fathers utterly deſtroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, [q] that your God ſhould be able to deliver you out of mine hand? 15. Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor perſuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no God of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand and out of the hand of my fathers: [r] how much leſs ſhall your God deliver you out of mine hand? 16. And his ſervants ſpake yet *more* againſt the LORD God, and againſt his ſervant Hezekiah. 17. [s] He wrote alſo letters to rail on the LORD God of Iſrael and to ſpeak againſt him, ſaying, As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, ſo ſhall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand. 18. Then they [t] cried with a loud voice in the Jews ſpeech unto the people of Jeruſalem, that *were* on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them, that they might take the city. 19. And they ſpake againſt the God of Jeruſalem as againſt the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* the work of the hands of man. 20. And for this *cauſe* [u] Hezekiah the king, and [u] the prophet Iſaiah the ſon of Amoz, prayed, and cried to heaven. 21. ¶ And the LORD ſent an angel, [x] which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Aſſyria: ſo he returned with ſhame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the houſe of his god, [y] they that came forth of his own bowels, ſlew him there with the ſword.

[k] 2 Kings xviii. 17, &c. Iſa. xxxvi. 2, &c.

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[l] Pſ. xlii. 3. & lxxi. 11. & lxxviii. 19.
† Or, the ſtrong hold.
[m] Jer. xli. 23.
[n] Chap. xxxi. 1. & xxxii. 12.
[o] Deut. xxxii. 31. Pſal. cxv. 2—8.
[p] 2 Kings xix. 12.
[q] Rev. xiii. 6.
[r] Exod. v. 2. Dan. iii. 15.
[s] 2 Kings xix. 9, &c. Iſa. xxxvii. 9, &c.
[t] 1 Sam. xvii. 18.
[u] 2 Kings xix. 4, 15.
[x] 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.
[y] Tobit i. 21.

v. 9—21. This account we had before more at large, 2 *Kings* xviii, xix. The ſubſtance is here ſhortly ſummed up, of Sennacherib's blaſphemy, Hezekiah's prayer, and God's gracious interpoſition to ſave him. It may teach us, (1.) The enmity of the natural heart againſt God and his people. (2.) The great enemy of ſouls eſpecially labours to diſcourage us, knowing, that till our faith is ſhaken, we cannot be moved. (3.) Railing and abuſe are poor arguments, and ſinners will find ſhortly their own tongues ſhall fall upon them. (4.) Prayer in every diſtreſs, is the way to the door of hope. (5.) God covers the proud with confuſion, and turns againſt themſelves the ſword they draw againſt others.

22. Thus the LORD ſaved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Aſſyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and † guided them on every ſide. 23. And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jeruſalem, and [z] preſents to Hezekiah king of Judah: ſo that he was magnified in the ſight of all nations from thenceforth.

† i. e. As a ſhepherd his ſheep. Pſ. xxiii. 1. & lxxvii. 20.
[z] Chap. xvii. 5.

v. 22, 23. Such a wonderful deliverance alarmed the neighbour nations, and they with preſents courted his favour, who had God ſo evidently for his friend. God thus protected them from every enemy, and guided and guarded them, as a ſhepherd doth his flock. How happy, how honourable, how ſafe the ſoul, that dwells thus under the ſhadow of the Almighty!

24. ¶ [a] In thoſe days Hezekiah was ſick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he ſpake unto him, and he gave him a ſign. 25. But Hezekiah [b] rendred not again according to the benefit *done* unto him, for [c] his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jeruſalem. 26. Notwithſtanding [d] Hezekiah humbled himſelf for the † pride of his heart (*both* he and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem) ſo that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the

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[a] 2 Kings xx. 1, &c. Iſa. xxxviii. 1, &c.
[b] Pſ. lxxviii. 11. & cvi. 12, 13.
[c] Hab. ii. 4.
[d] Jer. xxvi. 19.
† Heb. Lifting up.

days

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days of Hezekiah. 27. ¶ And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himſelf treaſuries for ſilver and for gold, and for precious ſtones, and for ſpices, and for ſhields, and for all manner of ‡ pleaſant jewels. 28. Store-houſes alſo for the increaſe of corn, and wine, and oil; and ſtalls for all manner of beaſts, and cotes for flocks. 29. Moreover, he provided him cities, and poſſeſſions of flocks, and herds in abundance, for [e] God had given him ſubſtance very much. 30. [f] This ſame Hezekiah alſo ſtopped the upper water-courſe of Gihon, and brought it ſtraight down to the weſt-ſide of the city of David. And Hezekiah proſpered in all his works. 31. ¶ Howbeit, in *the buſineſs of* the ambaſſadors of the princes of Babylon, who ſent unto him [g] to enquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, God left him [h] to try him, [i] that he might know all *that was* in his heart. 32. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Hezekiah, and his ‖ goodneſs, behold, [k] they *are* written in the viſion of Iſaiah the prophet, the ſon of Amoz, *and* [l] in the book of the kings of Judah and Iſrael. 33. And Hezekiah ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefeſt of the ſepulchres of the ſons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem [m] did him honour at his death: and Manaſſeh his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

‡ Heb. Inſtruments of deſire.
[e] 1 Chron. xxix. 12. Prov. x. 22.
[f] Ver. 4.
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[g] 2 Kings xx. 12. Iſa. xxxix. 1.
[h] Gen. xxii. 1. Job i. 12.
[i] Gen. xxii. 12. John ii. 25.
‖ Heb. Kindneſſes.
[k] Iſa. xxxvi—xxxix.
[l] 2 Kings xviii—xx.
[m] Prov. x. 7.

v. 24—33. Hezekiah's reign concludes glorioufly, notwithſtanding the fall which is here recorded.

1. Hezekiah's ſickneſs and recovery, more largely treated of before, are here but juſt mentioned. But,

2. His ſin and recovery have ſeveral particulars more than in 2 *Kings* xx. [1.] The embaſſy of the king of Babylon was intended not ſo much to congratulate him on his recovery, or his victory, as to enquire into the wonder of the ſun's going back at the prophet's word. [2.] He did not ſuitably improve his mercies, but inſtead of being humbled before God, grew proud on the inſtances of his favour, and the honour and reſpect paid him by the neighbouring nations. *Note*, (1.) Tho' we can never repay the obligations we owe to God, the tribute he expects is at leaſt a grateful heart. (2.) Pride is the buſy ſin: even God's gifts and graces may afford a handle for ſelf-complacence. We need ever pray that God would cloath us with humility. [3.] God in this inſtance left him to his own heart, to convince him how weak and wretched he muſt be, if but a moment deſtitute of his ſupport. [4.] His ſin provoked the Divine diſpleaſure. Pride in God's people is eſpecially offenſive to him. [5.] His humiliation, in which the people joined him, prevented the immediate execution of the threatned judgments. *Note*, (1.) Heart ſins muſt be repented of, or they will deſtroy us. (2.) When God gives a ſpirit of humiliation, it is a proof of his reconciliation.

3. Hezekiah's days ended proſperouſly. His riches and treaſures were greatly increaſed. The ſupply of the city with water from the ſtream of Gihon, is remarked among his noble works; many other of which, as well as a farther account of his goodneſs, are written in the books of *Iſaiah* and *Kings*. At laſt death removed him to a better crown, and the people, afflicted with the loſs of ſo great and good a king, ſhewed him every diſtinguiſhed honour, by laying him in the nobleſt ſepulchre of his fathers, burning ſpices, and lamenting him with no feigned grief. *Note*, They who have lived reverenced and reſpected, will in death be juſtly lamented.

CHAP. XXXIII.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Manaſſeh's idolatry,* ver. 1—10. 2. *His captivity under the king of Aſſyria,* ver. 11. 3. *His repentance and proſperity,* ver. 12—14. 4. *His reformation,* ver. 15—17. 5. *The concluſion of his reign,* ver. 18—20. 6. *Ammon ſucceeds him, reigns wickedly, and is ſlain by his ſervants,* ver. 21—25.

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1. [a] MANASSEH *was* twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jeruſalem: 2. But did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD, [b] like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had caſt out before the children of Iſrael. 3. ¶ For he † built again the high places, [c] which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and [d] made groves, and [e] worſhipped all the hoſt of heaven, and ſerved them. 4. Alſo [f] he built altars in the houſe of the LORD, whereof the LORD had ſaid, [g] In Jeruſalem ſhall my name be for ever. 5. And he built altars for all the hoſt of heaven, in the two courts of the houſe of the LORD. 6. And [h] he cauſed his children to paſs through the fire in the valley of the ſon of Hinnom: alſo [i] he obſerved times, and uſed enchantments, and uſed witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar ſpirit, and with wizards: he ‡ wrought much evil in the ſight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. 7. And he ſet a carved image (the idol which he had made) in the houſe of God, of which God had ſaid to David, and to Solomon his ſon, [k] In this houſe, and in Jeruſalem, which I have choſen before all the tribes of Iſrael, will I put my name for ever. 8. [l] Neither will I any more remove the foot of Iſrael from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; [m] ſo that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law, and the ſtatutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moſes. 9. So [n] Manaſſeh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem to err, *and* to do worſe than the heathen, whom the LORD had deſtroyed before the children of Iſrael. 10. And the LORD ſpake to Manaſſeh, and to his people: [o] but they would not hearken.

[a] 2 Kings xxi. 1, &c.
[b] Deut. xviii. 9, 10.
† Heb. Returned and built. Eccleſ. ii. 19.
[c] Chap. xxxi. 1.
[d] Deut. xvi. 21.
[e] Ibid. xvii. 3. Jer. xxxii. 34.
[f] Deut. xii. 11. Chap. vi. 6. & vii. 16.

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[h] Lev. xviii. 21. Chap. xxviii. 3. Ezek. xxiii. 37.
[i] Lev. xix. 26, 31. Deut. xviii. 10.
‡ Heb. Multiplied to do evil. Amos iv. 4.
[k] 1 Kings viii. 29. & ix. 3. Pſal. cxxxii. 14.
[l] 2 Sam. vii. 10.
[m] Lev. xxvi. 14.
[n] Prov. xxix. 12.
[o] John xv. 22. Jam. iv. 17.

v. 1—10. Manaſſeh's wicked beginning was before obſerved, 2 *Kings* xxi. Idolatrous, profane, abandoned to every evil, and ſtriving as if to root out the name of the Lord, that it ſhould be no more had in remembrance: hardned againſt reproof, and not content to be vile himſelf, compelling his people to worſe abominations than ever the heathen committed. *Note*, (1.) The work of reformation is difficultly accompliſhed, the eſtabliſhment of wickedneſs readily complied with. (2.) Could many a good father return from their graves, their hearts would break to ſee the abominations of their ungodly children. (3.) God leaves not the worſt without ſome checks of conſcience, or reproofs from his word, but they ruſh determinately on their ruin.

11. ¶ [p] Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the hoſt of the king of Aſſyria, which took Manaſſeh [q] among the thorns, and [r] bound him with fetters, and [s] carried him to Babylon. 12. And when he was [t] in affliction, he beſought the LORD his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his fathers, 13. And prayed unto him, and [u] he was entreated of him, and heard his ſupplication, and brought him again to Jeruſalem into his kingdom. Then Manaſſeh [x] knew that the LORD he *was* God. 14. Now after this, he built a wall without the city of David, on the weſt-ſide of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entring in at the fiſh-gate, and compaſſed [y] about Ophel, and raiſed it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. 15. And [z] he took away the ſtrange gods, and the idol out of the houſe of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the houſe of the LORD, and in Jeruſalem, and caſt *them* out of the city. 16. And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and ſacrificed thereon peace-offerings, and [a] thank-offerings, and [b] commanded Judah to ſerve the LORD God of Iſrael. 17. Nevertheleſs, [c] the people did ſacrifice ſtill in the high places, *yet* unto the LORD their God only. 18. ¶ Now the reſt of the acts of Manaſſeh, and † his prayer unto his God, and the words of [d] the ſeers that [e] ſpake to him in the name of the LORD God of Iſrael, behold, they *are written* in the book of the kings of Iſrael. 19. His prayer alſo, and *how God* was entreated of him, and all his ſin, and his treſpaſs, and the places wherein he built high places, and ſet up groves and graven images before he was humbled: behold, they *are* written among the ſayings of the ſeers. 20. ¶ So Manaſſeh ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own houſe: and Amon his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

[p] Deut. xxviii 36.
[q] 2 Sam. xxiii. 6.
[r] Pſal. cvii. 10, 11.
[s] 2 Kings xx. 18.
[t] Job xxxvi. 7—10. Mic. vi. 9. Luke xv. 16—18.
[u] Iſa. i. 18. 1 Tim. i. 13, 15.
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[x] Dan. iv. 25.
[y] Chap. xxvii. 3.
[z] Iſa. xxx. 22. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Hoſ. xiv. 8.
[a] Lev. vii. 12.
[b] Luke xxii. 32.
[c] 1 Kings xv. 14.
† There is one ſaid to be his in the Apocrypha.
[d] 1 Sam. ix. 9.
[e] Deut. xviii. 19.

v. 11—20. Though God bear long and is kind, he will make inquiſition at laſt.

1. The king of Babylon, now the conqueror of Aſſyria, advances, and having born down all before him, drags forth the wicked Manaſſeh from a thicket of thorns, whither he had fled to hide himſelf; and binding him in fetters, carries him captive to Babylon. Now Hezekiah's treaſures were given for a prey, and the people received the juſt ſcourge of their faithleſs apoſtacy.

2. What all former warnings never effected, this heavy affliction brought about. In his miſery, Manaſſeh thought upon God, and with deep humiliation cried for mercy. Happy priſon! How infinitely better to him, than the defiled palaces of

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Zion. *Note*, (1.) Sanctified afflictions are among the greateſt mercies. (2.) They who remember in trouble their own evil ways, will feel the bitterneſs of them, and groan being burdened. (3.) No caſe ſo deſperate as to exclude hope, whilſt there is yet acceſs to the throne of grace.

3. God had compaſſion upon him, and inclined the heart of the king of Babylon to pity and reſtore him to his loſt dignity. *Note*, (1.) The vileſt of ſinners need not deſpair, when Manaſſeh is pardoned. (2.) When our miſery drives us to God, he will not refuſe to help us. (3.) The prayer of penitence never yet returned without the anſwer of peace.

4. Made wiſe by paſt experience, he now knew that the Lord alone was God, whoſe rod he had felt, and whoſe mercy he had taſted: therefore, with deteſtation of his former abominations, every idol is deſtroyed out of God's houſe; his ruined altar repaired; his ſacrifices and ſervice reſtored; and the people brought back from their idolatry. The high places indeed were not taken away; but though on them they ſtill ſacrificed, it was to the Lord Jehovah only. *Note*, (1.) Where the heart is truly converted, there will be a thorough change in the conduct. (2.) The worſhip of God is among the firſt concerns of the awakened ſoul. (3.) When we are brought to a ſenſe of our own ſins, we ſhall zealouſly labour to recover thoſe whom we have ſeduced, or emboldened to tranſgreſs by our own ill examples.

5. In conſequence of his unfeigned repentance, God ſtrengthened him in his kingdom; Jeruſalem was fortified, and the cities of Judah garriſoned. Without God all defences are vain: if he be with us, *his name is a ſtrong tower; the righteous flieth unto it, and are ſafe*.

6. Manaſſeh no more revolted from God. The ſun that roſe ſo eclipſed, ſet with ſplendor. Accounts of his wickedneſs and repentance were preſerved in the books of the kings of Iſrael, and the writings of the ſeers, who had ſpoken to him in the name of the Lord. He rejected their meſſage indeed at firſt, but afterwards acknowledged his guilt and ſhame, and wiſhed it to be perpetuated for a warning to others. He was buried privately, probably at his own deſire, as a mark of humiliation, and left his throne to his ungodly ſon and ſucceſſor Amon. *Note*, (1.) Though God hath forgiven our ſin, to our laſt hour we need remember, and be confounded at the review of it. (2.) They who are true penitents, are moſt willing to take ſhame to themſelves for their ſins.

[f] 2 Kings 21. ¶ [f] Amon *was* two and twenty years old when
xxi. 19, &c. he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jeruſa-
lem. 22. But he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of
[g] Ver. 2—7. the LORD, [g] as did Manaſſeh his father: for Amon ſa-
Ezek. xx. crificed unto all the carved images, which Manaſſeh his
18. father had made, and ſerved them; 23. And humbled
[h] Ver. 12. not himſelf before the LORD, [h] as Manaſſeh his father
† Heb. Multiplied had humbled himſelf; but Amon † treſpaſſed more and
treſpaſs. Ver. 6. 2 more. 24. And his ſervants conſpired againſt him, and
Tim. iii. 13. [i] ſlew him in his own houſe. 25. ¶ But the people of
641. [i] Job xv. 32, the land [k] ſlew all them that had conſpired againſt king
33. Pſ. lv. 23. Amon, and the people of the land made Joſiah his ſon
[k] Judg. i. 7. king in his ſtead.
Mat. vii. 2.

v. 21—25. Amon copied the worſt of his father's wicked ways. The images which Manaſſeh had caſt out, and ſhould have deſtroyed, he reſtored. More mad upon his idols, than even his unhappy father, and incorrigible in his ſin, he never like him repented. Short was his career of impiety: in two years he fell by a conſpiracy of his own ſervants, and left the kingdom to the laſt good king of Judah. *Note*, (1.) Final impenitence ſeals up the ſoul under eternal ruin. (2.) That which is evil, is much eaſier copied, than what is good. (3.) It is a mercy to a land, when wicked magiſtrates are quickly cut off from it.

CHAP. XXXIV.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A general account of Joſiah's character*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *His zeal to root out idolatry*, ver. 3—7. *and to repair the temple*, ver. 8—13. 3. *The book of the law found, with the good uſe made of it*, ver. 14—28. 4. *The law read to the people, and their covenant renewed with God*, ver. 29—33.

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[a] 2 Kings xxii. 1, &c. 1. [a] JOSIAH *was* eight years old when he began to
[b] Deut. v. reign, and he reigned in Jeruſalem one and thirty
32. Prov. iv. 27. years. 2. And he did *that which was* right in the ſight
633. [c] Eccleſ. xii. of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his fa-
1. 2 Tim. iii. 15. ther, and [b] declined *neither* to the right hand nor to the
[d] Chap. xv. 2. left. 3. ¶ For in the eighth year of his reign, [c] while he
629. was yet young, he began [d] to ſeek after the God of David
[e] 1 Kings xiii. 2. his father: and in the twelfth year he began to [e] purge
Judah and Jeruſalem from the high places and the groves, Before Chriſt 629.
and the carved images, and the molten images. 4. And
[f] they brake down the altars of Baalim in his preſence; [f] Exod. xxiii.
and the † images that *were* on high above them he cut 24. Deut.
down, and the groves, and the carved images, and the vii. 5, 25. † Or, Sun-
molten images he brake in pieces, and made duſt *of them*, images.
and [g] ſtrowed *it* upon the graves of them that had ſa- [g] 2 Kings
crificed unto them. 5. And [h] he burnt the bones of the xxiii. 6.
prieſts upon their altars, and cleanſed Judah and Jeruſa- [h] 1 Kings xiii. 2.
lem. 6. And *ſo did he* in the cities of Manaſſeh and
Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their
mattocks round about. 7. And when he had broken
down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the
graven images [i] into powder, and cut down all the [i] Deut. ix.
idols throughout all the land of Iſrael, he returned to 21.
Jeruſalem.

v. 1—7. Joſiah began very young to reign, and probably, during his minority, things continued as his ungodly father had left them: but in his ſixteenth year God was pleaſed graciouſly to work upon his heart; and, notwithſtanding the bad education he may be ſuppoſed to have had, he then began to ſeek the Lord; and when, in the twelfth year of his reign, he took the reins of government into his own hands, he reſolutely ſet himſelf to purge out the abominations of his kingdom. Nor did he merely remove them, as Manaſſeh, but utterly deſtroyed them; reduced the idols and groves to duſt, and caſt it on the graves of the dead; defiled the altars with burning the dead bones of their prieſts upon them, and then beat them in pieces; and this reformation he carried on not only through Judah, but through the cities of Iſrael, that, ſince the captivity, came under his government, going round himſelf to ſee the work accompliſhed. *Note*, (1.) Thoſe whom God chuſes, he generally calls in the days of youth. There are, comparatively, few aged converſions. (2.) The buſineſs the maſter himſelf attends, will be well done.

8. ¶ [k] Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when 623.
he had purged the land, and the houſe, he ſent Shaphan [k] 2 Kings
the ſon of Azaliah, and Maaſeiah the governor of the ci- xxii. 3, &c.
ty, and Joah the ſon of Joahaz the recorder, [l] to repair [l] Chap. xxix.
the houſe of the LORD his God. 9. And when they 4.
came to Hilkiah the high-prieſt, [m] they delivered the [m] Chap.
money *that was* brought into the houſe of God, which xxiv. 5.
the Levites that kept the doors, had gathered of the
hand of Manaſſeh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant
of Iſrael, and of all Judah and Benjamin, and they re-
turned to Jeruſalem. 10. And they put *it* in the hand
of the workmen, that had the overſight of the houſe of
the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that
wrought in the houſe of the LORD, to repair and mend
the houſe: 11. Even to the artificers and builders gave
they *it*, to buy hewn ſtone, and timber for couplings,
and to floor the houſes which the kings of Judah had
deſtroyed. 12. And the men did the work † faithfully: † Heb. In
and the overſeers of them *were* Jahath, and Obadiah, truth. 2 Kings xii.
the Levites, of the ſons of Merari; and Zechariah, and 15. Neh. vii.
Meſhullam, of the ſons of the Kohathites, to ſet *it* for- 2.
ward; and *other of* the Levites, all that could ſkill of
inſtruments of muſick. 13. Alſo *they were* over the bear-
ers of burdens, and *were* overſeers of all that wrought
the work in any manner of ſervice: and of the Levites,
there were ſcribes, and officers, and porters.

v. 8—13. When the houſe of God was thorougly purged, and he had returned from his progreſs through his dominions, (which he ſeems to have repeated, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 4, 20. after the temple-ſervice was re-eſtabliſhed) he gave orders for the repair of the Lord's houſe, whom he had choſen for his God. By his command money was collected, workmen of approved fidelity hired, and officers of the Levites appointed to ſee the work well done. *Note*, (1.) A ruinous church is a ſad ſymptom of an irreligious people. (2.) An honeſt labourer is a worthy character.

14. ¶ And when they brought out the money *that
was* brought into the houſe of the LORD, Hilkiah
the prieſt found [n] the book of the law of the LORD [n] Deut. xxxi.
given by † Moſes. 15. And Hilkiah anſwered and ſaid 24, 26. 2 Kings xxii.
to Shaphan the ſcribe, I have found the book of the law 8, &c.
in the houſe of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered † Heb. The hands of
the book to Shaphan: 16. And Shaphan carried the Moſes.
book to the king, and brought the king word back again,
ſaying, All that was committed to thy ſervants, they do
it.

it. 17. And they have ‡ gathered together the money *that was* found in the houſe of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overſeers, and to the hand of the workmen. 18. Then Shaphan the ſcribe told the king, ſaying, Hilkiah the prieſt hath given me a book, And Shaphan [o] read § it before the king. 19. And it came to paſs when the king had heard [p] the words of the law, that he [q] rent his clothes. 20. And the king commanded Hilkiah and Ahikam the ſon of Shaphan, and || Abdon the ſon of Micah, and Shaphan the ſcribe, and Aſaiah a ſervant of the king's, ſaying, 21. Go, [r] enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Iſrael, and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, becauſe our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all *that is* written in this book. 22. And Hilkiah, and *they* that the king *had appointed*, went to Huldah [s] the propheteſs, the wife of Shallum, the ſon of Tikvath, the ſon of Haſrah, keeper of the † wardrobe; (now ſhe dwelt in Jeruſalem, in the ‡ college) and they ſpake to her to that *effect*. 23. ¶ And ſhe anſwered them, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Tell ye the man that ſent you to me, 24. Thus ſaith the LORD, Behold, [t] I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* [u] all the curſes *that are* written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah: 25. [x] Becauſe they have forſaken me, and have burned incenſe unto other gods, that they might [y] provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; [z] therefore my wrath ſhall be poured out upon this place, and ſhall not be quenched. 26. And [a] as for the king of Judah, who ſent you to enquire of the LORD, ſo ſhall ye ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael *concerning* the words which thou haſt heard, 27. Becauſe [b] thine heart was tender, and [c] thou didſt humble thyſelf before God, when thou heardſt his words againſt this place, and againſt the inhabitants thereof, and humbledſt thyſelf before me, and didſt rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard *thee* alſo, ſaith the LORD. 28. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and [d] thou ſhalt be gathered to thy grave [e] in peace, neither ſhall thine eyes ſee all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the ſame. So they brought the king word again.

v. 14—28. We have remarked upon this paſſage, 2 *Kings* xxii. 8—20. It may be further obſerved, (1.) That tenderneſs of heart in hearing God's word is a gracious ſymptom of a choſen veſſel. (2.) God's providence in thus preſerving his written word is, even to this hour, matter of thankfulneſs. (3.) When God gives us his book, let us not be negligent to examine it. Wilful ignorance is wilful ſin. (4.) To tremble at God's word, and, under conviction of our ſins, to humble our ſouls before him, is the way to obtain mercy; whilſt wrath certain and terrible awaits the hardened ſinner.

29. ¶ [f] Then the king ſent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jeruſalem. 30. And the king went up into the houſe of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and the prieſts, and the Levites, and [g] all the people great and ſmall: and he read in their ears all [h] the words of the book of the covenant, *that was* found in the houſe of the LORD. 31. And [i] the king ſtood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his teſtimonies, and his ſtatutes, with all his heart and with all his ſoul, to perform the words of the covenant *which are* written in this book. 32. And he cauſed all *that were* † preſent in Jeruſalem and Benjamin to [k] ſtand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Jeruſalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. 33. And [l] Joſiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that *pertained* to the children of Iſrael, and made all *that were* preſent in Iſrael to ſerve, *even* to ſerve the LORD their God. *And* [m] all his days they departed not ‡ from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

v. 29—33. Concerned for his people, as for himſelf, Joſiah aſſembles them to hear the words of God's book, and, by his example and command, engages them to renew their covenant with God. And what he ſo faithfully began, all his days he perſevered in; ſo that publicly, and in profeſſion, the ſervice of God was diligently maintained. But with many, with far the greateſt part, the reformation, as appears by the prophets Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Ezekiel, was hypocritical, and their ſins exceedingly aggravated, that with ſo good an example before them, and ſuch means of grace, they choſe their own deluſions, and were unfaithful to their covenant. *Note*, (1.) The great concern of a good king will be to make his ſubjects acquainted with God's word. (2.) We are bound by every tie of duty to cleave to God; but unleſs he binds our heart to him with the cords of his grace, all other bonds, or vows, or covenants, will be ineffectual. (3.) They who reſiſt the means of grace, and continue unchanged under a preached goſpel, fill up moſt grievouſly the meaſure of their iniquities.

‡ Heb. Caſt, or melted.
[n] 2 Kings xxii. 9.
[o] Deut. xvii. 19. Joſh. i. 8. Jer. xxxvi. 21.
§ Heb. in it before the face of, &c.
[p] Deut. xvii. 19. & xxviii. 3—68.
[q] Joel ii. 13.
|| Achbor, 2 Kings xxii. 12.
[r] Acts xvi. 30.
[s] Exod. xv. 20. Judg. iv. 4.
† Heb. Garments.
‡ Or ſecond court.
[t] Chap. xxxvi. 6, 17. Iſa. v. 5.
[u] Lev. xxvi. 15—39. Deut. xxviii. 24, 26. Dan. ix. 12.
[x] Chap. xv. 2.
[y] Pſ. cxv. 4. Iſa. ii. 8. Mic. v. 13.
[z] Jer. xv. 1.
[a] Iſa. iii. 10.
[b] Pſ. li. 17.
[c] Lev. xxvi. 40, 42. Prov. xxviii. 13. Iſa. lvii. 15.
[d] Chap. xxxv. 24.
[e] Pſ. xxxvii. 37. Iſa. lvii. 2.
[f] 2 Kings xxiii. 1, &c.
[g] Neh. viii. 1, 3.
[h] Ver. 15.
[i] 2 Kings xi. 14. & xxiii. 3.
† Heb. Found.
[k] Eccleſ. viii. 2.
[l] 2 Kings xxiii. 4—20.
[m] Joſh. xxiv. 31. Judg. ii. 7.
‡ Heb. From after.

CHAP. XXXV.

We have here, 1. *The religious obſervance of the paſſover, according to the law*, ver. 1—19. 2. *Joſiah's raſhneſs in engaging with the king of Egypt*, ver. 20—23. 3. *The lamentation at his funeral*, ver. 24—27.

1. [a] MOREOVER, Joſiah kept a paſſover unto the LORD in Jeruſalem: and [b] they killed the paſſover on the fourteenth *day* of the firſt month. 2. And he ſet the prieſts [c] in their charges, and [d] encouraged them to the ſervice of the houſe of the LORD, 3. And [e] ſaid unto the Levites [f] that taught all Iſrael, which were holy unto the LORD, Put the holy ark in the houſe which Solomon the ſon of David king of Iſrael did build; [g] *it ſhall* not *be* a burden upon *your* ſhoulders: ſerve now the LORD your God, and his people Iſrael. 4. And prepare *yourſelves* by the houſes of your fathers, after your courſes, [h] according to the writing of David king of Iſrael, and [i] according to the writing of Solomon his ſon. 5. And ſtand in the holy *place* according to the diviſions of the † families of the fathers of your brethren the ‡ people, and *after* the diviſion of the families of the Levites. 6. So kill the paſſover and [k] ſanctify yourſelves, and prepare your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD, by the hand of Moſes. 7. And Joſiah [l] gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the paſſover-offerings, for all *that were* preſent, to the number of thirty thouſand, and three thouſand bullocks: theſe *were* of the king's ſubſtance. 8. And his princes [m] gave willingly unto the people, to the prieſts and to the Levites: Hilkiah and Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the houſe of God, gave unto the prieſts for the paſſover-offerings, two thouſand and ſix hundred *ſmall cattle*, and three hundred oxen. 9. Conaniah alſo, and Shemaiah, and Nethaneel, his brethren, and Heſhabiah, and Jehiel, and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave unto the Levites for paſſover-offerings, § five thouſand *ſmall cattle*, and five hundred oxen. 10. So the ſervice was prepared, and the prieſts ſtood in their place, and the Levites in their courſes, according to the king's commandment. 11. And they killed the paſſover, and the prieſts [n] ſprinkled *the blood* from their hands, and the Levites [o] flayed *them*. 12. And they [p] removed the burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the diviſions of the families of the || people, to offer unto the LORD as *it is* written in the book of Moſes: and ſo *did they* with the oxen. 13. And [q] they roaſted the paſſover with fire, according to the ordinance: but the *other* holy offerings ſod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided *them* ſpeedily among all the people. 14. And afterward they made ready for themſelves, and for the prieſts: becauſe the prieſts the ſons of Aaron *were buſied* in offering of burnt-offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themſelves and for the prieſts the ſons of Aaron. 15. And the ſingers the ſons of Aſaph *were* in their † place, [r] according to the commandment of David, and Aſaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's ſeer; and [s] the porters *waited* at every gate; they might not depart from their ſervice; for their brethren the Levites prepared for them. 16. So all the ſervice of the LORD was prepared the ſame day, to keep the paſſover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Joſiah. 17. And the children of Iſrael *that were* preſent,

[a] 2 Kings xxiii. 21, &c.
[b] Exod. xii. 6. Num. ix. 11.
[c] Numb. xviii. 5.
[d] Chap. xxxi. 4.
[e] Col. iv. 17.
[f] Mal. ii. 7.
[g] 1 Chron. xxiii. 26.
[h] 1 Chron. xxiii—xxvi.
[i] Chap. viii. 14.
† Heb. houſe.
‡ Heb. Sons of the people.
[k] Chap. xxix. 5, 15. & xxx. 3, 5.
[l] Chap. xxx. 24.
[m] 2 Cor. ix. 7.
§ In all, 3,800 bullocks, and 37,600. ſmall cattle.
Pſ. li. 16, 17. Mic. vi. 7, 8.
[n] Chap. xxix. 22. Heb. ix. 21, 22.
[o] Chap. xxix. 34.
[p] Lev. iii. 10, 11.
|| Heb. Sons of the people.
[q] Exod. xii. 8, 9.
† Heb. Station.
[r] 1 Chron. xxv. 1, &c.
[s] Ibid. ix. 17, 18. & xxvi. 14.

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‡ Heb. Found.
[t] Exod. xii. 15. 1 Cor. v. 8.
[u] 2 Kings xxiii. 22.

‡ preſent, kept the paſſover at that time, and [t] the feaſt of unleavened bread ſeven days. 18. And [u] there was no paſſover like to that kept in Iſrael, from the days of Samuel the prophet, neither did all the kings of Iſrael keep ſuch a paſſover as Joſiah kept, and the prieſts and the Levites, and all Judah and Iſrael *that were* preſent, and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem. 19. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Joſiah was this paſſover kept.

v. 1—19. The paſſover being among the moſt ſolemn ordinances God had inſtituted, Joſiah, having removed every known abomination, prepares to keep it with great devotion.

1. He ſet the prieſts in their courſes, encouraged them to diligence and fidelity in their work; commanded the ark, which, during the repairs of the temple, had probably been removed, to be replaced; enjoined the Levites, who taught the people, to exerciſe with zeal their miniſtry for the glory of God, and the good of his Iſrael; and, in order thereunto, he exhorts them to ſanctify themſelves, that they might be fitted for the work, and prepare their brethren for the ſolemnity of the paſſover, by their admonitions, inſtructions, and directions how to kill and order the lamb according to the law of Moſes. *Note,* (1.) Zealous magiſtrates will ſtir up miniſters to their work. (2.) They who would prepare others for God's ſervice, muſt firſt ſet the example of that holineſs they preach. (3.) Encouragement is very needful, where miniſters meet ſo many difficulties.

2. The king and his princes, with the chief of the prieſts, liberally contributed on this occaſion; the king giving 30,000 lambs for thoſe poor families who came to keep the paſſover, and 3000 bullocks for ſacrifices of peace-offerings, to feaſt upon during the ſeven days. The great officers of God's houſe alſo provided handſomely for their poorer brethren, that the feaſt might be kept with affluence and gladneſs. *Note,* (1.) They who are hearty in the ſervice of men's ſouls, grudge no expence. (2.) Though we muſt beware not to make men hypocrites for the ſake of advantage, yet it becomes us to encourage thoſe who are ſincere. (3.) They who enjoy the largeſt revenues of the church, are eſpecially called upon liberally to diſtribute them for the ſupport of their poorer brethren.

3. The whole was conducted with great exactneſs and regularity. The prieſts and Levites diſcharged their office diligently, delivering out the paſcal lambs to the ſeveral families, after ſprinkling the blood on the altar. Theſe were roaſted whole, according to God's ordinance; and the peace-offerings, that belonged to the offerers, they boiled and divided among thoſe to whom the king had given the oxen for ſacrifice. And when they had ſerved the people, the prieſts and Levites prepared the paſſover for themſelves, ſome of their body being appointed for this ſervice, whilſt the reſt were buſy in their miniſtrations in the temple, or employed in praiſing God, or watching at the gates. Thus was this remarkable paſſover kept, like unto which there was none from the days of the judges, ſo exact was their obſervance, and ſo ſingular the liberality of the king and the prieſts. *Note,* (1.) Let not thoſe who miniſter to others, forget the great concern of their own ſouls. (2.) It is not the greatneſs of the gift, but the temper of the offerer, that makes the ſervice honourable and acceptable.

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† Heb. Houſe.
[x] 2 Kings xxiii. 29.
‡ Heb. What is it to me and thee? 2 Sam. xvi. 10. Mat. viii. 29.
§ Heb. Of my war.
[y] 2 Kings xviii. 25.
[z] 1 Kings xxii. 30.
[a] 1 Eſd. i. 28.
[b] Zech. xii. 11.

20. ¶ After all this, when Joſiah had prepared the † temple, [x] Necho king of Egypt came up to fight againſt Carchemeſh by Euphrates: and Joſiah went out againſt him. 21. But he ſent ambaſſadors to him, ſaying, ‡ What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? *I come* not againſt thee this day, but againſt the houſe § wherewith I have war: for [y] God commanded me to make haſte, forbear thee from *meddling* with God, who *is* with me, that he deſtroy thee not. 22. Neverthleſs Joſiah would not turn his face from him, but [z] diſguiſed himſelf that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho [a] from the mouth of God, and came to fight in [b] the valley of Megiddo. 23. And the archers ſhot at king Joſiah; and the king ſaid to his ſervants, Have me away, for I am ſore wounded. 24. His ſervants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the ſecond chariot that he *had*, and they brought him to Jeruſalem, and [c] he died, and was buried in *one of the* ſepulchres of his fathers: and all Judah and Jeruſalem [d] mourned for Joſiah. 25. ¶ And Jeremiah [e] lamented for Joſiah, and all the ſinging-men, and the ſinging-women ſpake of Joſiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Iſrael: and behold, they *are* written in the lamentations. 26. Now the reſt of the acts of Joſiah, and his ‖ goodneſs, according to *that which was* written in the law of the LORD, 27. And his deeds firſt and laſt, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Iſrael and Judah.

[c] Pſ. xxxvi. 6. Eccleſ. ix. 2.
[d] Zech. xii. 11.
[e] Lam. iv. 20.
‖ Heb. Kindneſſes. Chap. xxxii. 32.

v. 20—27. *After all this,* we might have expected to hear the ſingular proſperity of Judah; but alas! in juſt diſpleaſure for their hypocriſy and unprofitableneſs, God removes from them their good king, and with him dies all this appearance of godlineſs.

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1. He imprudently went out to battle againſt Necho king of Egypt, who was on his march againſt the king of Aſſyria. Fain would he have perſuaded him to deſiſt, by his ambaſſadors, aſſuring him he meant nothing hoſtile againſt Judah; that the expedition he had undertaken was at God's command; and therefore, if he perverſely oppoſed him, he would ſuffer for it. Notwithſtanding, Joſiah credited him not, and, neglecting to enquire of God, reſolved to oppoſe him. The battle was fought near Megiddo; and though the king of Judah, for greater ſafety, had diſguiſed himſelf, the archers wounded him, and he quickly died in his chariot. *Note,* (1.) In an unjuſt cauſe we may not hope to proſper. (2.) When we have fair warning, our death lies at our own door. (3.) If we neglect to enquire of God, no wonder we involve ourſelves in miſchief.

2. His death exceedingly afflicted the nation. Jeremiah the prophet eſpecially lamented the loſs, foreſeeing the evils that would follow; and the people in mournful poems annually commemorated his unhappy fall. Though they had not heartily joined him in his fidelity when alive, they felt their loſs of him when dead, and ſtrove to honour his memory. *Note,* (1.) When our bleſſings are removed, we are then often led to lament too late our folly and ſin in not improving them. (2.) God's prophets, who ſee the approaching evils, cannot but mourn for poor ſinners who provoke them.

CHAP. XXXVI.

We have here the unhappy reigns, 1. *Of Jehoahaz,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Of Jehoiakim,* ver. 5—8. 3. *Of Jehoiachin,* ver. 9, 10. 4. *Of Zedekiah,* ver. 11. *under whom the deſolations for ſin came upon the people,* ver. 12—21. 5. *The proclamation of Cyrus for their return after their long captivity,* ver. 22, 23.

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[a] 2 Kings xxiii. 30, &c.
† Shallum, 1 Chron. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11.
[b] Ezek. xix. 3, 4.

1. THEN [a] the people of the land took † Jehoahaz the ſon of Joſiah, and made him king in his father's ſtead in Jeruſalem. 2. Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jeruſalem. 3. And the king of Egypt [b] put him down at Jeruſalem, and condemned the land in an hundred talents of ſilver and a talent of gold. 4. And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jeruſalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and [c] carried him to Egypt. 5. ¶ Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem: and [d] he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD his God. 6. [e] Againſt him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters to carry him [f] to Babylon. 7. Nebuchadnezzar alſo carried off [g] the veſſels of the houſe of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon. 8. Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and *that which was* found in him, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Iſrael and Judah: and ‡ Jehoiachin his ſon reigned in his ſtead. 9. ¶ [h] Jehoiachin *was* eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jeruſalem, and he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD. 10. And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar ſent, and brought him to Babylon, with the § goodly veſſels of the houſe of the LORD, and made ‖ Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jeruſalem.

[c] Jer. xxii. 10—12.
610.
[d] Jer. xxii. 13. & xxvi. 23. & xxxvi. 26.
606.
[e] 2 Kings xxiv. 1, &c.
[f] Jer. xxii. 18, 19. & xxxvi. 30.
[g] 2 Kings xxiv. 13. Dan. i. 2.
‡ Called Jechoniah, 1 Chron. iii. 16. & Coniah, Jer. xxii. 24.
599.
[h] 2 Kings xxiv. 8, &c.
§ Heb. At the return of the year.
‖ Heb. Veſſels of deſire.
† Or Mattaniah, 2 Kings xxiv. 17.

v. 1—10. Theſe ſhort and evil reigns were the forerunners of the kingdom's ruin.

1. Jehoahaz, ſet up by the people, was quickly dethroned, and carried captive into Egypt, by Necho, provoked at his father's oppoſition. He reigned but three months, yet long enough to give a ſufficient ſpecimen of his evil conduct.

2. Jehoiakim, the tributary of the king of Egypt, continued eleven years governor of the impoveriſhed country, yet more abundantly weakened by his wickedneſs, when he fell into the hands of the king of Babylon, and died in chains, after ſeeing Jeruſalem and the temple plundered, and the ſacred veſſels gone into captivity.

3. His ſon, who ſucceeded him at eighteen years of age, rather than eight, (*See 2 Kings* xxiv. 8.) ſhewed, though young, the evil that was in his heart; and, after a ſhort reign of three months and ten days, was depoſed by the king of Babylon, and Zedekiah, the laſt of the kings of Judah, advanced to the throne.

Thus

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Thus did the nation haſtily change her kings; and, not being admoniſhed by the repeated warnings, vengeance came upon them to the uttermoſt.

11. ¶ [i] Zedekiah *was* one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem. 12. And he did *that which was* evil in the ſight of the LORD his God, *and* humbled not himſelf before Jeremiah the prophet, *ſpeaking* from the mouth of the LORD. 13. And he alſo rebelled againſt king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him [k] ſwear by God, but he [l] ſtiffned his neck and hardned his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Iſrael. 14. ¶ Moreover, all the chief of the prieſts and the people tranſgreſſed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the houſe of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jeruſalem. 15. And [m] the LORD God of their fathers ſent to them by † his meſſengers, riſing up betimes, and ſending; becauſe he had compaſſion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: 16. But [n] they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD aroſe againſt his people, till *there was* no ‡ remedy. 17 Therefore he brought upon them [o] the king of the Chaldees, who ſlew their young men with the ſword, in the houſe of their ſanctuary, and had no compaſſion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that ſtooped for age: he gave *them* all into his hand. 18. And all the veſſels of the houſe of God, great and ſmall, and the treaſures of the houſe of the LORD, and the treaſures of the king, and of his princes; all *theſe* he brought to Babylon. 19. And [p] they burnt the houſe of God, and brake down the wall of Jeruſalem, and [q] burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and deſtroyed all the goodly veſſels thereof. 20. And them that had eſcaped from the ſword, carried he away to Babylon: where [r] they were ſervants to him and his ſons, until the reign of the kingdom of Perſia; 21. To fulfil the word of the LORD [s] by the mouth of Jeremiah, until [t] the land had enjoyed her ſabbaths: *for* as long as ſhe lay deſolate, [u] ſhe kept ſabbath, to fulfil threeſcore and ten years.

[i] 2 Kings xxiv. 18. Jer. lii. 1, &c.

[k] Ezek. xvii 16, 19.

[l] 2 Kings xvii. 14.

[m] Jer. xxv. 3, 4. & xxxv. 15.

† Heb. The hand of his meſſengers.

[n] Chap. xxx. 10. Jer. v. 12, 13. Mat. xxi. 35.

‡ Heb. Healing.

590.

[o] 2 Kings xxv. 1, &c.

588.

[p] 2 Kings xxv. 9. Pſal. lxxix. 1. Jer. vii. 14.

[q] Jer. xxxix. 8.

[r] Ibid. xxvii. 7.

[s] Ibid. xxv. 9, 12. & xxvi. 6, 7. & xxix. 10.

[t] Lev. xxvi. 34, 35, 43.

[u] Lev. xxv. 4, 5.

v. 11—21. Behold the deſolations of Zion! the beautiful temple lies in ruins, the line of confuſion is ſtretched over the palaces of Jeruſalem: O ſin, what a bitter and evil thing art thou! We have here,

1. Zedekiah's rebellion againſt the king of Babylon. Tho' he had ſolemnly ſworn to ſerve him, he violated perfidiouſly his engagements, and obſtinately refuſed ſubmiſſion, notwithſtanding all Jeremiah's warnings and entreaties. *Note*, (1.) Oaths are ſacred things, God will not ſuffer them to be broken with impunity. (2.) They who will not bow, muſt break.

2. He rebelled alſo againſt God, nor paid regard to the admonitions of Jeremiah, nor humbled himſelf before him. We need not fear who is our enemy, if God be our friend; but who ever hardned his heart againſt him and proſpered?

3. The prieſts and people univerſally fell into idolatry; they who ſhould have been the firſt to reſtrain others, were the ringleaders in the wickedneſs, and even in the temple their abominations were ſet up. In vain the compaſſionate Lord God of their fathers, unwilling they ſhould periſh, ſent them repeated warnings, and his prophets with diligence and zeal roſe early up to teſtify againſt their ſins; they mocked at his counſel, and would have none of his reproof; ill uſed his prophets, and treated them with ſcorn and contempt, and the hand of the prieſts was chief in the tranſgreſſion. *Note*, (1.) God leaves not the ſinner, till all the methods of his grace have been ineffectual, and his wilful heart refuſes to be reformed. (2.) God's true prophets are earneſt and aſſiduous in their word; woe to thoſe againſt whom they complain, *all day long have we ſtretched out our hands to a diſobedient and gainſaying people.* (3.) When God viſits for ſin, no charge will lie heavier than for a ſlighted goſpel. (4.) God's miniſters, when employed in the kindeſt offices, are often grievouſly miſuſed; but let them not be diſcouraged, they ſhall be glorious though Iſrael be not gathered. (5.) Worldly and wicked prieſts in every age have been the moſt inveterate enemies of God's faithful prophets and preachers. (6.) They who ill-uſe the miniſters of God, ſeek to render their labours ineffectual, and their perſons contemptible, know not what wrath they treaſure up againſt their ſouls.

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4. The conſequence of his conduct was ruin to the uttermoſt. After a terrible ſiege, *See 2 Kings* xxv. the city was taken by ſtorm, and ſacked; no ſanctuary protected young or old; even the temple was filled with the carcaſes of the ſlain; the ſacred houſe ſtripped of all its ornaments, the palaces plundered, the temple burnt, the city raſed to its foundations, the few that were left from the ſword enſlaved and inſulted, dragged to Babylon to weep in vain over the mournful remembrance of their paſt and preſent miſeries; their country ravaged and deſolate, and left to enjoy thoſe ſabbaths which they profanely refuſed to obſerve: and ſeventy years the iron bondage laſted, till the kingdom of Perſia roſe upon the ruins of their conquerors, and the daughter of Babylon, waſted with miſery, drank of the cup of wrath which ſhe had put into the hands of the nations. *Note*, (1.) The more we ſee of the miſeries ſin produces, the more ſhould we fear to provoke a holy God. (2.) When the rod hath done its office, it will be broken or burned. God, though he afflicts his people, will not be wroth for ever.

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22. ¶ [x] Now in the firſt year of Cyrus king of Perſia (that the word of the LORD [y] *ſpoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah, [z] might be accompliſhed) [a] the LORD ſtirred up the ſpirit of Cyrus king of Perſia, that he made a † proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* alſo in writing, ſaying, 23. Thus ſaith Cyrus king of Perſia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath [b] the LORD God of heaven given me, and [c] he hath charged me to build him an houſe in Jeruſalem which *is* in Judah: [d] who *is there* among you of all his people? [e] the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

[x] Ezra i. 1, &c.

[y] Jer. xxv. 12. & xxix. 10.

[z] Heb. x. 23.

[a] Iſa. xliv. 28.

† Heb. Voice.

[b] Dan. ii. 21.

[c] Iſa. xliv. 28.

[d] Zech. ii. 6, 7.

[e] Rom. viii. 31.

v. 22, 23. Theſe verſes conclude the book of Chronicles, and begin the book of Ezra, which ſeems to ſpeak the ſame hand author of both. They mention the prophecy of Jeremiah now exactly accompliſhed by the decree of Cyrus; and after the dark and diſmal night of ſeventy years captivity, the dawnings of the returning day appear, and there is yet hope in their end. They afford us, in the moſt afflicted circumſtances of God's church, encouragement to wait ſtill upon God, and truſt in his mercy. And thus alſo when the dark and ſilent grave ſhall ſeem to ſwallow up the ruins of mortality, the believer may ſtill, dependant on the promiſe, look forward with confidence, and expect a glorious return from his captivity in a reſurrection day.

The End of the CHRONICLES.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
EZRA.

The hiſtory of this book is the accompliſhment of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the return of the Jews out of Babylon, at the end of ſeventy years, and a type of the accompliſhment of the prophecies of the Apocalypſe, concerning the deliverance of the goſpel church out of the New Teſtament Babylon. It relates the difficulties they met with, on their return to Jeruſalem, and the care taken of their genealogies, and this for the ſake of the expected Meſſiah. The author is generally allowed to be Ezra, and the book univerſally admitted as canonical.

CHAP. I.

Before Chriſt 536.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The proclamation of Cyrus for the releaſe of the Jews and the building of the temple in Jeruſalem,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The return of many thereupon,* ver. 5, 6. 3. *The veſſels of the temple that were reſtored,* ver. 7—11.

1. [a] NOW in the firſt year of Cyrus king of Perſia, (that the word of the LORD [b] by the mouth of Jeremiah [c] might be fulfilled) [d] the LORD ſtirred up the ſpirit of Cyrus king of Perſia, that [e] made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* alſo in writing, ſaying, 2. Thus ſaith Cyrus king of Perſia, [f] The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and [g] he hath charged me to build him an houſe at Jeruſalem, *which is* in Judah. 3. [h] Who *is there* among you of all his people? [i] his God be with him, and let him go up to Jeruſalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the houſe of the LORD God of Iſrael ([k] he *is* the God) which *is* in Jeruſalem. 4. And whoſoever remaineth in any place where he ſojourneth, let the men of his place † help him with ſilver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beaſts, beſides the free-will-offering for the houſe of God that *is* in Jeruſalem.

[a] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22.
[b] Jer. xxv. 12. & xxix. 10.
[c] Heb. x. 23.
[d] Pſal. cvi. 46. Prov. xvi. 7.
[e] Rev. xii. 16.
[f] Dan. ii. 21.
[g] Iſa. xliv. 28.
[h] Zech. ii. 6, 7.
[i] Rom. viii. 31.
[k] Deut. xxxii. 31. Dan. ii. 47. & iii. 29. & iv. 37.
† Heb. Lift him up.

v. 1—4. The ſeventy years of captivity now drew to their period, and the drooping hope of God's captive people began to revive on the conqueſt of their oppreſſors by Cyrus, ſo long before propheſied of by name to be their deliverer; nor did he fail their expectations: for no ſooner had he ſubdued the Babyloniſh empire, than he iſſued out an edict for the reſtoration of the Jewiſh people. Probably he had been informed of the prophecies of Iſaiah, and convinced, as appears by the proclamation, of the glory of Iſrael's God, attributed his great ſucceſſes to his bleſſing, and diligently ſought to correſpond with his orders. The Lord ſtirred up his ſpirit, he looked upon himſelf as obliged to build his temple, according to the prophetic word, and therefore whilſt he gives a general leave to the Jews to return, enjoins his ſubjects every where to aſſiſt them, that they who were poor, might be furniſhed with neceſſaries for their journey, and a comfortable ſettlement when they came into their own land. And hereto eſpecially the richer Jews, who choſe to continue ſtill in Babylon, were called to contribute, and if they went not themſelves, to help their brethren, and ſend their free-will-offerings to Jeruſalem. *Note,* (1.) Not one jot or tittle of God's word can fail; though the accompliſhment of his promiſes ſeems long, it is ſure at the appointed time. (2.) When the length of our ſufferings is ready to make us deſpair of their end, God cauſes light to riſe up in the darkneſs, and there is hope in the end. (3.) The greateſt kings are under the Divine government; God hath acceſs to the ſpirits of men, and can incline them to ſerve his purpoſes. (4.) Whatever good deſire is ſtirred up in our hearts, we muſt acknowledge it the gift of God. (5.) God is the diſpoſer of the kingdoms of the world: they are truly wiſe and great who ſee his hand in their proſperity, and deſire to advance his glory in the ſtation to which he hath exalted them. (6.) They who have a love for the temple, will gladly open their hand in liberal contribution, for the furtherance of ſo good a work.

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5. ¶ Then roſe up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the prieſts and the Levites, with all *them* [l] whoſe ſpirit God had raiſed to go up, to build the houſe of the LORD which *is* in Jeruſalem. 6. And [m] all they that *were* about them, ſtrengthned their hands with veſſels of ſilver, with gold, with goods, and with beaſts, and with precious things, beſides all *that* was [n] willingly offered. 7. ¶ [o] Alſo Cyrus the king brought forth the veſſels of the houſe of the LORD, [p] which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jeruſalem, and had put them in the houſe of his god,: 8. Even thoſe did Cyrus king of Perſia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treaſurer, and numbred them unto † Sheſhbazzar the prince of Judah. 9. And this *is* the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thouſand chargers of ſilver, nine and twenty knives, 10. Thirty baſons of gold, ſilver baſons of a ſecond *ſort* four hundred and ten, *and* other veſſels a thouſand. 11. [q] All the veſſels of gold and of ſilver, *were* five thouſand and four

[l] Neh. ii. 12. Prov. xvi. 1. Phil. ii. 13.
[m] Exod. xi. 36. Rev. xii. 16.
[n] Pſal. cx. 3.
[o] Chap. vi. 5.
[p] 2 Kings xxiv. 13. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7.
† i. e. Joy in tribulation.
[q] Rom. ix. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 19, 20.

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four hundred. All *theſe* did Sheſhbazzar bring up with *them of* the captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jeruſalem.

v. 5—11. In conſequence of the proclamation, we have here a ſtirring among the dry bones, and the ſpirit of life breathing upon them, to ariſe and return to their own land.

1. Judah and Benjamin were the firſt to lead the way; the chief fathers of their families aſſembled, and the prieſts and Levites, zealous for the re-eſtabliſhment of the ſervice of God, readily embraced the permiſſion given them. A thouſand difficulties were indeed in their way; by their long abode in Babylon, many were now comfortably ſettled; they were utter ſtrangers to the land whither they were going, and could expect to find there nothing but ruin and deſolation; not ſo much as a houſe to cover their heads; yet all theſe things diſcouraged them not: God animated their hearts with deſire for his temple's reſtoration at Jeruſalem, and filled them with a noble love of liberty. *Note*, (1.) When God's ſervice requires to be ſet forwards, his miniſters ſhould be the firſt to promote it. (2.) The Lord muſt raiſe up our heart, or elſe our earth-born ſouls will chuſe their reſt in Babylon. (3.) The goſpel, like this proclamation, calls forth the ſinner from his bondage; and though the way to the glorious land of life and liberty is difficult, as many as are ſupported by the arms of Almighty Grace dare truſt their all with God, and boldly go forth: whilſt others, diſheartned by the proſpect of danger, refuſe to follow the Divine mandate, and live and die the ſervants of corruption.

2. The Chaldeans liberally aſſiſted the returning Iſraelites, and they who ſtayed at Babylon willingly offered of their ſubſtance for the furtherance of the temple of God, whilſt Cyrus, their great benefactor, nobly reſtores to them all the veſſels which Nebuchadnezzar had carried to Babylon, and placed in the temple of his idol gods. Theſe were delivered up to Sheſhbazzar, ſuppoſed to be the ſame with Zerubbabel, who, though in captivity, was dignified with the honour of prince of Judah. *Note*, (1.) God can make thoſe who have no part themſelves in his kingdom, contribute to its ſupport, and aſſiſt in the furtherance of his ſervice. (2.) Though the veſſels of mercy ſeem for a ſeaſon undiſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world, in the ſervice of their idol maſters, yet God knoweth thoſe that are his, and will in his time ſeparate and purify them for himſelf, as veſſels fit and meet for the maſter's uſe.

CHAP. II.

We have here a catalogue of thoſe that returned from Babylon, ver. 1. 1. *The leaders*, ver. 2. 2. *The people*, ver. 3—35. 3. *The prieſts, Levites, and retainers to the temple*, ver. 36—63. 4. *The ſum total, with an account of their retinue*, ver. 64—67. 5. *Their offerings to the ſervice of the temple*, ver. 68, 69, 70.

1. NOW [a] theſe *are* the children of [b] the province that went up out of the captivity, of thoſe which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jeruſalem and Judah, every one unto his city; 2. Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeſhua, Nehemiah, † Seraiah, ‡ Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilſhan, || Mizpar, Bigvai, § Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Iſrael. 3. The children of Paroſh, two thouſand an hundred ſeventy and two. 4. The children of Shephatiah, three hundred ſeventy and two. 5. The children of Ara, [c] ſeven hundred ſeventy and five. 6. The children of [d] Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeſhua *and* Joab, two thouſand eight hundred and twelve. 7. The children of Elam, a thouſand two hundred fifty and four. 8. The children of Zattu, nine hundred forty and five. 9. The children of Zaccai, ſeven hundred and threeſcore. 10. The children of † Bani, ſix hundred forty and two. 11. The children of Bebai, ſix hundred twenty and three. 12. The children of Azgad, a thouſand two hundred twenty and two. 13. The children of Adonikam, ſix hundred ſixty and ſix. 14. The children of Bigvai, two thouſand fifty and ſix. 15. The children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four. 16. The children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight. 17. The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and three. 18. The children of ‡ Jorah, an hundred and twelve. 19. The children of Haſhum, two hundred twenty and three. 20. The children of || Gibbar, ninety and five. 21. The children of Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three. 22. The men of Netophah, fifty and ſix. 23. The men of [e] Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight. 24. The children of § Azmaveth, forty and two. 25. The children of Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, ſeven hundred and forty and three. 26. The children of Ramah and Gaba, ſix hundred twenty and one. 27. The men of Michmas, an hundred twenty and two. 28. The men of Beth-el and Ai, two hundred twenty and three. 29. The children of Nebo, fifty and two. 30. The children of Magbiſh, an hundred fifty and ſix. 31. The children of the other [f] Elam, a thouſand two hundred fifty and four. 32. The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty. 33. The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, ſeven hundred twenty and five. 34. The children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five. 35. The children of Senaah, three thouſand and ſix hundred and thirty.

[a] Neh. vii. 6, &c. 1 Eſd. v. 7, &c.
[b] Chap. v. 8.
† Azariah. Neh. vii. 7.
‡ Or Raamiah.
|| Or Miſpereth.
§ Or Nehum.
[c] Neh. vii. 10.
[d] Ibid. 11.
† Binnui. Neh. vii. 15.
‡ Hariph. Neh. vii. 24.
|| Gibeon. Neh. vii. 25.
[e] Jer. xi. 21, 23.
§ Beth-azmaveth. Neh. vii. 28.
[f] See Ver. 7.

v. 1—35. We have here an account of the people who returned from the captivity: a poor remnant! compared with the thouſands of Iſrael in their former better days; yet it was a great mercy that any were yet left, and ſuffered to return. They are called children of the province, for to ſuch was the kingdom of Judah now reduced. They are reckoned according to the towns where they formerly reſided, and the anceſtors from whence they ſprung. Their leaders were Zerubbabel, and Jeſhua the high-prieſt. Nehemiah and Mordecai, mentioned *v.* 2. were different men from thoſe, whoſe names were afterwards ſo diſtinguiſhed; unleſs we ſuppoſe that after ſeeing the firſt colony ſettled, they returned again to Babylon. *Note*, (1.) It is a diſtinguiſhing mercy to be found written among thoſe who go up from the captivity of ſin, under our Prince and Prieſt Jeſus, the Captain of our ſalvation. (2.) They who are eminent in their zeal for God's cauſe, deſerve that their names ſhould be recorded to their honour.

36. ¶ The prieſts: the children of [g] Jedaiah, of the houſe of Jeſhua, nine hundred ſeventy and three. 37. The children of [h] Immer, a thouſand fifty and two. 38. The children of [i] Paſhur, a thouſand two hundred forty and ſeven. 39. The children of [k] Harim, a thouſand and ſeventeen. 40. ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeſhua, and Kadmiel, of the children of † Hodaviah, ſeventy and four. 41. ¶ The ſingers: the children of Aſaph, an hundred twenty and eight. 42. ¶ The children of the porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, *in* all, an hundred thirty and nine. 43. ¶ [l] The Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of Haſhupha, the children of Tabbaoth, 44. The children of Keros, the children of ‡ Siaha, the children of Padon, 45. The children of Lebanah, the children of Hagabah, the children of Akkub. 46. The children of Hagab, the children of || Shalmai, the children of Hanan, 47. The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah, 48. The children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam, 49. The children of Uzza, the children of Paſeah, the children of Beſai, 50. The children of Aſnah, the children of Mehunim, the children of § Nephuſim, 51. The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur, 52. The children of † Bazluth, the children of Mehida, the children of Harſha, 53. The children of Barkos, the children of Siſera, the children of Thamah, 54. The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha. 55. ¶ The children of [m] Solomon's ſervants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of ‡ Peruda, 56. The children of Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel, 57. The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of || Ami. 58. All [n] the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's ſervants, *were* three hundred ninety and two. 59. And theſe *were* they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harſa, Cherub, Addan, *and* Immer: but they could not ſhew their father's houſe, and their § ſeed, whether they *were* of Iſrael: 60. The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, ſix hundred fifty and two. 61. ¶ And of the children of the prieſts: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai (which took a wife of the daughters of [o] Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name): 62. Theſe ſought their regiſter *among* thoſe that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: [p] therefore † were they, as polluted,

[g] 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.
[h] Ibid. 14.
[i] Ibid. ix. 12.
[k] Ibid. xxiv. 8.
† Judah. Chap. iii. 9. Or Hodevah. Neh. vii. 43.
[l] 1 Chron. ix. 2.
‡ Or Sia. Neh. vii 47.
|| Or Shamlai.
§ Or Nephiſheſhim.
† Bazlith. Neh. vii. 54.
[m] 1 Kings ix. 21.
‡ Perida. Neh. vii. 57.
|| Amon. Neh. vii. 59.
[n] Joſh. ix. 21, 27. 1 Chron. ix. 2.
§ Pedigrees.
[o] 2 Sam. xvii. 27.
[p] Num. iii. 10.
† Heb. They were polluted from the prieſthood.

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polluted, put from the prieſthood. 63. And the ‡ Tirſhatha ſaid unto them, that they ſhould not eat of the moſt holy things, till there ſtood up a prieſt with [q] Urim and with Thummim.

‡ Or governor. See Neh. viii. 9.
[q] Exod. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21.

v. 36—63. We have here a farther account of thoſe who returned. The prieſts, under four chief fathers, were near a tenth part of the whole. Their zeal for the ſervice made them more ready to improve the preſent opportunity. The Levites, once ſo numerous, 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 3. were now but few. The Nethinims, aſſiſtants to the Levites, ſuppoſed to be the deſcendants of the Gibeonites, whom Joſhua appointed for the meaner offices of the tabernacle, to hew wood and draw water; and the children of Solomon's ſervants, who were the old inhabitants of Canaan, but being proſelyted, were employed by him in building the temple, *See* 1 *Kings* ix. 20. Theſe, to the number of three hundred and ninety-two, joined the returning colony: beſides which, many went up from ſome of the cities of Babylon, who, though Jews, had loſt their genealogies: and many who paſſed for children of the prieſts, but were rejected by the Tirſhatha, or governor, Zerubbabel, from miniſtring, becauſe they could not prove their lineal deſcent from Aaron. One of theſe, by a marriage into the family of the famed Barzillai, ambitious of having his children reckoned of that ſtock, neglected his prieſtly genealogy, and therefore now was excluded from the privileges and honour he had deſpiſed. The excluſion however was not final; they hoped ſome high-prieſt would ariſe with Urim and Thummim, from whoſe illuminations theſe defects might be repaired. *Note,* (1.) They who count the miniſtry a diſparagement, are unworthy of the office. (2.) The great high-prieſt with Urim and Thummim hath appeared, not to fix Jewiſh genealogies, but to conſecrate to himſelf faithful prieſts among all the nations of the world.

64. ¶ [r] The whole congregation together, *was* forty and two thouſand three hundred *and* threeſcore, 65. Beſides their ſervants and their maids, of whom *there were* ſeven thouſand three hundred thirty and ſeven: and *there were* among them two hundred ſinging-men and ſinging-women. 66. Their horſes *were* ſeven hundred thirty and ſix: their mules two hundred forty and five: 67. Their camels, four hundred thirty and five: *their* aſſes, ſix thouſand ſeven hundred and twenty. 68. ¶ And *ſome* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the houſe of the LORD which *is* at Jeruſalem, offered freely for the houſe of God to ſet it up in his place: 69. [s] They gave after their ability unto [t] the treaſure of the work, threeſcore and one thouſand drams of gold, and five thouſand pound of ſilver, and one hundred prieſts garments. 70. [u] So the prieſts and the Levites, and *ſome* of the people, and the ſingers and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Iſrael in their cities.

[r] Neh. vii. 66.
[s] 2 Cor. viii. 3.
[t] 1 Chron. xxvi. 20.
[u] Chap. vi. 16, 17.

v. 64—70. The ſum total of thoſe who returned to Judea, amounted to 42,360; above 12,000 more than are above particularly ſpecified: probably theſe were of the other tribes, whoſe genealogies had been loſt.——Their retinue appears but mean, their ſervants few, and their beaſts of burden ſcarce more than would ſuffice for their baggage, ſo that they muſt have taken their tedious journey on foot. Among their ſervants two hundred ſinging men and women are reckoned, either kept for the recreation of the richer ſort among them, or employed with mournful lamentations, to awaken a ſenſe of their deſolations. When they were come to Jeruſalem, they viſited their beautiful houſe, though in ruins; and grieving to ſee it in the duſt, generouſly contributed, according to their abilities, for its reſtoration. They were not rich now, as in David's days, but their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality, and made the gift more acceptable. The whole contribution in gold and ſilver amounted to about 75,000l. with an hundred prieſts garments for the ſervice of the temple, as ſoon as it ſhould be ready. Part of them fixed immediately at Jeruſalem; the reſt were diſtributed into the ſeveral cities where their forefathers had been ſeated. *Note,* (1.) God's houſe and ſervice lie neareſt upon the heart of a faithful Iſraelite. (2.) It is not the greatneſs of the gift, but the temper of the giver, that ſtamps a value on the donation. (3.) What is ſpent in God's bleſſed work, though ſpared out of our poverty, will return again with abundant intereſt.

CHAP. III.

We have here the gracious beginnings of thoſe who returned from captivity. 1. *They ſet up an altar, offered ſacrifices upon it, kept the feaſts, and contributed towards the rebuilding of the temple,* ver. 1—7. 2. *They laid the foundation of it with a mixture of joy and ſorrow,* ver. 8—13. *Though a* day of ſmall things, *this was* not to be deſpiſed, *Zech.* iv. 10.

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1. AND [a] when the ſeventh month was come, and the children of Iſrael *were* in the cities, the people gathered themſelves together as one man to Jeruſalem. 2. Then ſtood up † Jeſhua the ſon of Jozadak, and his brethren the prieſts, and ‡ Zerubbabel the ſon of ‖ Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Iſrael, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, [b] as *it is* written in the law of Moſes the man of God. 3. And they ſet the altar upon his baſes (for fear *was* upon them, becauſe of the people of thoſe countries) and they offered burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, *even* [c] burnt-offerings, morning and evening. 4. [d] They kept alſo the feaſt of tabernacles, [e] as *it is* written, and [f] *offered* the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the cuſtom, as § the duty of every day required; 5. And afterward *offered* [g] the continual burnt-offering, both of the new-moons and of all the ſet feaſts of the LORD *that were* conſecrated, and of every one [h] that willingly offered a free-will-offering unto the LORD. 6. From the firſt day of the ſeventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD: but the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not *yet* laid. 7. They gave money alſo unto the maſons, and to the carpenters, and meat, and drink, and oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, [i] to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the ſea of Joppa: [k] according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Perſia.

[a] 1 Eſd. v. 4.
† Joſhua. Hag. i. 1. Zech. iii. 1.
‡ Zorobabel the ſon of Salathiel. Mat. i. 12. Luke iii. 27.
[b] Deut. xii. 5.
[c] Num. xxviii. 3, 4.
[d] Neh. viii. 17.
[e] Exod. xxiii. 16.
[f] Num. xxix. 12, &c.
§ Heb. The matter of a day in his day.
[g] Exod. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 6.
[h] Chap. ii. 68.
[i] 2 Chron. ii. 16.
[k] Chap. vi. 3.

v. 1—7. Scarce were they ſettled in their ſeveral poſſeſſions, before,

1. They with one conſent aſſembled at Jeruſalem, at the approach of the ſeventh month, to conſult together about carrying on the work of God, and beginning the ſervice of the ſanctuary. Amidſt all their other cares, many and perplexing as they muſt have been, God's glory was their chief concern. *Note,* All is likely to end well with us, when we are careful thus to begin with God.

2. The high-prieſt, his brethren, and the chief princes hereupon ſet up the altar in the ſame place it had ſtood, perhaps the old baſes might remain: though they could not quickly rear the temple, they would not till then defer the ſervice of the altar. *Note,* (1.) When we cannot enjoy all the ordinances we deſire, we ſhould be the more diligent to improve thoſe in our power. Wherever we are, at leaſt we need not want an altar for prayer and praiſe. (2.) They who are diſtinguiſhed in ſtation, ſhould adorn it by the eminence of their zeal for God.

3. The reaſon given for their ſollicitude to begin God's worſhip, was the fear of their enemies, who hated them, and failed not to oppoſe their deſigns. *Note,* (1.) The beſt defence is God's favourable preſence. (2.) We muſt not be frightned out of our religion: man's threatnings ſhould only quicken our prayers.

4. No ſooner was the altar reared, but they began to offer their ſacrifices, on the firſt day of the ſeventh month, which was the feaſt of blowing of trumpets. From thenceforward, they continued the daily ſacrifice, and kept the appointed feaſts in their ſeaſon, though the foundation of the temple was not laid. *Note,* (1.) We muſt make the beſt of what we enjoy, and do what we can when we cannot do all we would. (2.) Every day we are required to offer the ſacrifice of a grateful heart.

5. Beſides the inſtituted ſacrifices, they offered alſo free-will-offerings. Tho' they could ill ſpare them from their little ſtock of cattle, yet they concluded they ſhould be never the poorer for what burned on God's altar.

6. They began to make preparations for building the temple, laying out the money they had collected to the proper workmen, and engaging thoſe of Tyre and Zidon to ſupply them with materials, according to the grant Cyrus had made them. Thus a ſecond time did they aſſiſt in rearing a temple for God. *Note,* Many help to build God's houſe, whoſe names, it is to be feared, are not found in his book of life. They ſerve his intereſts only, becauſe they thereby promote their own.

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8. ¶ Now in the ſecond year of their coming unto the houſe of God at Jeruſalem, in the ſecond month, began Zerubbabel the ſon of Shealtiel, and Jeſhua the ſon of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the prieſts and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jeruſalem; and [l] appointed the Levites from twenty years old and upward, to ſet forward the work of the houſe of the LORD. 9. Then ſtood [m] Jeſhua

[l] 1 Chron. xxiii. 24, 27.
[m] Chap. ii. 40.

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ſhua *with* his ſons, and his brethren, Kadmiel and his ſons, the ſons of † Judah ‡ together, to ſet forward the workmen in the houſe of God: the ſons of Henadad, *with* their ſons, and their brethren the Levites. 10. And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, [n] they ſet the prieſts in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the ſons of Aſaph, with cymbals, to praiſe the LORD, after [o] the ordinance of David king of Iſrael. 11. And [p] they ſung together by courſe, in praiſing and giving thanks unto the LORD; [q] becauſe *he* is good, [r] for his mercy *endureth* for ever towards Iſrael. And all the people ſhouted with a great ſhout, when they praiſed the LORD, becauſe the foundation of the houſe of the LORD was laid. 12. [s] But many of the prieſts and Levites, and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had ſeen the firſt houſe, when the foundation of this houſe was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice, and many ſhouted aloud for joy: 13. So that the people could not diſcern the noiſe of the ſhout of joy, from the noiſe of the weeping of the people: for the people ſhouted with a loud ſhout, and the noiſe was heard afar off.

† Hodoviah. Chap. ii. 40.
‡ Heb. As one.
[n] 1 Chron. xvi. 5, 6.
[o] Ibid. vi. 31. xvi. 7. & xxv. 1.
[p] Exod. xv. 21. 2 Chron. vii. 3. Neh. xii. 24.
[q] 1 Chron. xvi 34.
[r] Ibid 41. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
[s] Hag. ii. 3. Zech. iv. 10. Job viii. 7. Mat. xiii. 31.

v. 8—13. Though the work was great, their hearts were eager upon it, and therefore the preparations went on briſkly.

1. In the ſecond month of the ſecond year the foundation was laid; ſeven months the materials were preparing; and then they without delay began to build. *Note*, (1.) If church work is ſlow, it is becauſe they who are engaged in it, care not for the worſhip. (2.) What our hand findeth to do for God, we muſt do it with our might.

2. Zerubbabel and Jeſhua, and his brethren the prieſts and Levites, forwarded with zeal the ſervice: and of the Levites, officers were appointed to look over the workmen. *Note*, The eye which overſees, is as neceſſary as the hand that builds.

3. When the foundation was laid, the prieſts with trumpets, and the Levites with cymbals, praiſed God in the Euchariſtic hymn, the burden of which was, *for his mercy endureth for ever*, See *Pſal.* cxxxvi. *Note*, The never failing mercy of God is juſt matter of everlaſting praiſe, and we can be in no circumſtance and condition in which we are not bound to acknowledge this precious truth.

4. Very different emotions on this occaſion were awakened in the boſoms of the ſpectators; the younger part, who had never ſeen the former temple, beheld with delight the glorious fabric riſing to their view, whilſt the more aged fathers could not but look back to the magnificence of the ancient houſe, and weep to behold the change. It was now about fifty-four years, according to the moſt received computation, ſince Solomon's temple was deſtroyed, and many of thoſe who were returned from the captivity might well remember it. The voice of weeping and ſhouting thus was blended together, but the ſhouting prevailed, and was heard at a diſtance, the mourning only was heard at home. *Note*, (1.) It is matter of joy to ſee revivals of religion, though they come not up to thoſe in the days of our fathers. (2.) Even in our joys, ſome drops of ſorrow will mingle: it will only be pure when we come to the better temple. (3.) The world ſhould hear a chriſtian's joys loudeſt: though we ſometimes mourn through manifold temptations, theſe ſorrows are beſt confined to our own boſoms, or communicated to a faithful friend, leaſt we diſhearten the feeble, or bring up an ill report on the good ways of our God.

CHAP. IV.

The work of God ſoon met with oppoſition. 1. *The Samaritans, becauſe refuſed admiſſion among them, ſeek to diſcourage them,* ver. 1—5. 2. *They preſent a memorial againſt it, baſely miſrepreſenting the deſign,* ver. 6—16. 3. *The king of Perſia by an edict ſtops the building,* ver. 17—24.

1. NOW when [a] the adverſaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the † children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Iſrael: 2. Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and ſaid unto them, Let us build with you, for [b] we ſeek your God, as ye *do*, and we do ſacrifice unto him, ſince the days of Eſar-haddon king of Aſſur, [c] which brought us up hither. 3. But Zerubbabel and Jeſhua, and the reſt of the chief of the fathers of Iſrael, ſaid unto them, [d] You have nothing to do with us, to build an houſe unto our God, but we ourſelves together will build unto the LORD God of Iſrael, [e] as king Cyrus the king of Perſia hath commanded us. 4. Then the people of the land [f] weakned the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, 5. And hired counſellors againſt them, [g] to fruſtrate their purpoſe all the days of Cyrus king of Perſia, even until the reign of Darius king of Perſia.

[a] Ver. 7, 8, 9. 1 Eſd. v. 66.
† Heb. Sons of the tranſportation.
[b] 2 Kings xvii 29.
[c] Ibid 24. Ver. 10.
[d] Neh. ii. 20.
[e] Chap. i. 1, &c.
[f] Rev. xii. 13.

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[g] Pſal. ii. 1.

v. 1—5. Whoever ſets his heart zealouſly to ſerve God, muſt expect oppoſition. Chriſt's church is never built, but Satan rages. No ſooner do Zerubbabel and the children of the captivity (for yet the ſcars of this yoke were not healed) begin to build, than the Samaritans put obſtructions in their way: they were the people who had been ſettled in Iſrael by the king of Aſſyria; and by the teaching of one of Jeroboam's prieſts, had eſtabliſhed a mixed religion of the ſervice of Jehovah, together with their own dunghill deities. *Note*, Pretenders to religion, are generally the bittereſt enemies to true godlineſs.

1. They firſt, under pretence of joining in the work, deſired to be incorporated among them, profeſſing to ſerve the ſame God; but they were liars, and meant only to ſow diſcord, or to mar the ſervice by introducing their own mungrel worſhip, and then better have no temple. *Note*, We may not believe every ſpirit; the darkeſt deſigns lurk often under the faireſt profeſſions.

2. The chief of the fathers, with Zerubbabel and Jeſhua, aware of their deſign, refuſed any connection with them, reſolved to keep united among themſelves; and whilſt the law of God enjoined them to ſeparate themſelves from the nations, the king's commiſſion authoriſed them. *Note*, (1.) Nothing ſo dangerous as bad connections. (2.) It is prudent to make uſe of our privileges as men, when they ſerve as a barrier to guard our religion.

3. The failure of this plot diſcouraged not their reſtleſs foes; at home they ſought to diſcourage the building, by ridiculing the attempt, or threatning to fall upon them, or preventing the neceſſary ſupplies from Tyre. Whilſt by bribing the counſellors, who were about the perſons of the king of Perſia's governors, or the great men at his court, they ſought to retard or ſtop the work, and this they continued till the reign of Darius. *Note*, (1.) The devil and his ſervants are reſtleſs in their attempts; the people of God may expect no truce. (2.) Many a wicked counſellor, for the ſake of the fee, little cares how bad the cauſe is, he is engaged in.

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6. And in the reign of † Ahaſuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they *unto him* an accuſation againſt the inhabitants of Judah and Jeruſalem. 7. And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Biſhlam, Mithridath, Tabeel, and the reſt of their ‡ companions unto Artaxerxes king of Perſia: and the writing of the letter *was* written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. 8. Rehum the chancellor, and Shimſhai the ‖ ſcribe, wrote a letter againſt Jeruſalem to Artaxerxes the king, in this ſort: 9. Then *wrote* Rehum the chancellor, and Shimſhai the ſcribe, and the reſt of their companions; [h] the Dinaites, the Apharſathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharſites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Suſanchites, the Dehavites, *and* the Elamites. 10. And [i] the reſt of the nations whom the great and noble Aſnapper brought over and ſet in the cities of Samaria, and the reſt *that are* on this ſide the river, and § at ſuch a time. 11. ¶ This *is* the copy of the letter that they ſent unto him, *even* unto Artaxerxes the king, Thy ſervants the men on this ſide the river, and at ſuch a time. 12. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jeruſalem, building [k] the rebellious and the bad city, and [l] have ſet up the walls *thereof*, and † joined the foundations. 13. Be it known now unto the king, that if this city be builded, and the walls ſet up *again*, *then* will they not pay toll, tribute, and cuſtom, and *ſo* thou ſhalt endamage the revenue of the kings. 14. Now becauſe we ‡ have maintenance from *the king's* palace, and it was not meet for us to ſee the king's diſhonour: therefore we have ſent and certified the king, 15. That ſearch may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: [m] ſo ſhalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city *is* a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved ſedition ‖ within the ſame of old time: for which cauſe was this city deſtroyed. 16. We certify the king, that if this city be builded *again*, and the walls thereof ſet up, by this means thou ſhalt have no portion on this ſide the river.

† Heb. Ahaſhveroſh
‡ Heb. Societies. Ver. 9, 17.
‖ Or ſecretary.
[h] 2 Kings xvii. 30, 31.
[i] Ver. 2.
§ Chald. Cheeneth. Ver. 11, 17. Chap. vii. 12.
[k] Amos vii. 10. Luke xxiii. 2. Acts xxiv. 5.
[l] Neh. i. 3. Pſal. lii. 2.
† Chald. ſowed together.
‡ Chald. Are ſalted with the ſalt of the palace.
[m] Eſth. iii. 8.
‖ Chald. In the midſt thereof.

v. 6—16. No ſooner was Cyrus, the profeſſed friend of the Jewiſh people, aſleep in the grave, and Ahaſuerus or Artaxerxes (ſuppoſed to be the Cambyſes of the heathen hiſtorians) advanced

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vanced to the throne of Perſia, than the enemies of God's people determined to improve the opportunity. Happy were it, if the church's friends were as watchful to ſerve her intereſts, as her enemies to do her miſchief.

1. The general deſign was to render them odious to the government, by repreſenting them a turbulent, ſeditious people; and the vouchers for the accuſation were the Samaritan governors, whom the king of Perſia had appointed, backed and ſupported by all the colonies of different nations ſettled in Samaria. *Note*, (1.) Lying accuſations are the lot of all God's people. (2.) When godlineſs is to be oppreſſed, ſubſcriptions will not be wanting to ſupport any charge, however malicious or unjuſt. (3.) The many join in the general cry, uſually without knowing why or wherefore.

2. The particulars of the letter are here recited, and ſhew as much of the old ſerpent's cunning and malice, as we might expect to find. [1.] To ingratiate themſelves, and obtain the eaſier credit, they profeſs a high zeal for the king's honour, and deep gratitude for the maintenance or ſalaries they received from him, and therefore could not unconcerned ſee his government injured. *Note*, Pretended fears of danger to the ſtate, are a common plea for the oppreſſion of God's people. [2.] They brand the Jews as a people infamouſly diſloyal, call Jeruſalem the rebellious and bad city, which had in all time paſt been dangerous to kings and provinces; and for the confirmation of their aſſertion, appeal to the records which contained Zedekiah's rebellion. *Note*, (1.) The enemies of God's people will not ſpare hard names; and the moſt are ſo eaſily influenced, that they conclude a bad name muſt imply a bad thing. (2.) Dangerous deſigns are often imputed to God's people, when they of all others mean to be quiet in the land. (3.) If once an evil thing hath been done by profeſſors of religion an age ago, they are ſure to have it laid it at their door ever after, however much they diſapprove and condemn it. (4.) When men deſire occaſion to ſtumble, the devil will not fail to ſupply them with it. [3.] They make a moſt lying report of the ſtate of Jeruſalem, and give a moſt malicious inſinuation of the conſequences: they declare the walls of the city are ſet up, when it does not appear that a ſtone had been taken from the rubbiſh, the temple alone engaged them; and that it was ſoon to be feared there would be a general revolt of all the conquered provinces on this ſide the Euphrates, encouraged by the example of the Jews, to the diſmembering his kingdom, and the great loſs of his revenue. *Note*, They who ſet their heart againſt God's people, heſitate not at lies; groſs or improbable as they are, the world is ready to ſwallow them; as they ſay, throw dirt enough, and ſome will ſtick.

17. ¶ *Then* ſent the king an anſwer unto Rehum the chancellor, and *to* Shimſhai the ſcribe, and *to* the reſt of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and *unto* the reſt beyond the river, Peace, and at ſuch a time. 18. The letter which ye ſent unto us, hath been plainly read before me. 19. And I commanded, and ſearch hath been made, and it is found, that [n] this city of old time hath † made inſurrection againſt kings, and *that* rebellion and ſedition have been made therein. 20. [o] There have been mighty kings alſo over Jeruſalem, which have ruled over all *countries* [p] beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and cuſtom [q] was paid unto them. 21. ‡ Give you now commandment to cauſe theſe men to ceaſe, and that this city be not builded, untill *another* commandment ſhall be given from me. 22. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why ſhould damage grow to the hurt of the kings? 23. ¶ Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before Rehum, and Shimſhai the ſcribe, and their companions, they went up [r] in haſte to Jeruſalem unto the Jews, and made them to ceaſe by ‖ force and power. 24. Then ceaſed the work of the houſe of God, which *is* at Jeruſalem. So it ceaſed unto the ſecond year of the reign of Darius king of Perſia.

n 2 Kings xxiv. 1. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13.
† Chald. Lifted up itſelf.
o 1 Kings iv. 21.
p 1 Chron. xviii. 3.
q 2 Sam. viii. 2. 2 Chron. xvii. 11. & xxvi. 8. & xxxii. 23.
‡ Chald. Make a decree.
r Prov. iv. 16.
‖ Chald. Arm.

v. 17—24. God in wiſdom ſometimes permits innocence to be oppreſſed, and ſuffers the lying miſrepreſentations of the enemies of his people to prevail. But the day is coming when the lying lips ſhall be put to ſilence, and they who have loved as well as made a lie, ſhall lie down together in the pit.

1. The king, without ſending perſons on the ſpot to make enquiry, credits the repreſentations which his counſellors that had been hired probably ſtrenuouſly reported (for in a court what will not gold do?) and having found in the records Zedekiah's and Jehoiakim's ſtruggle for liberty, and that former kings of Jeruſalem had extended their dominions to the river Euphrates, he readily concludes that the danger was imminent, and bids an immediate ſtop be put to building the city, and appoints his governors in Samaria to ſee his orders executed. *Note*, It is a hard matter for kings, beſet with courtiers and flatterers, to know the truth.

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2. With delight and eagerneſs their enemies run to execute, yea to exceed their orders. They were only enjoined to cauſe the Jews to ceaſe building the city that was never begun; however this was eaſily conſtrued to extend to the temple; and having power on their ſide, there could be no reſiſtance: thus the work continued at a ſtand till the ſecond year of Darius Hyſtaſpes. *Note*, (1.) Nothing gives greater pleaſure to a carnal world, than the ſuppreſſion of God's cauſe and truth. (2.) Patient ſubmiſſion under unjuſt oppreſſion, is a hard leſſon. (3.) Though for a while God permits wicked men and oppreſſors to ride over our heads, their triumphing is but for a moment.

CHAP. V.

Here is, 1. *The building renewed*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The governors treat them more mildly, and make a fairer repreſentation of the matter to the king*, ver. 3—17.

1. [a] THEN the prophets, [b] Haggai the prophet, and [c] Zechariah the ſon of Iddo, propheſied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jeruſalem, in the name of the God of Iſrael, *even* unto them. 2. Then roſe up [d] Zerubbabel the ſon of Shealtiel, and Jeſhua the ſon of Jozadak, and began to build the houſe of God which *is* at Jeruſalem: and with them *were* the prophets of God [e] helping them.

a 1 Eſd. vi. 1.
b Hag. i. 1.
c Zech. i. 1.
d Chap. iii. 2.
e Eccleſ. iv. 11.

v. 1, 2. About fifteen years the building ſeems to have continued at a ſtand, till God by his prophets rouſed the people to the work.

1. The perſons ſent of God were Haggai and Zechariah, whoſe prophecies are preſerved. They propheſied unto them, or againſt them; reproved them for their lukewarmneſs, and provoked them to renew the building. *Note*, (1.) Miniſters muſt be faithful reprovers, and urge the ſluggiſh builders to their work. (2.) When God raiſes up zealous preachers of his word, then there is hope the wall will be built.

2. The effect of their prophecy was ſoon evident. Zerubbabel and Jeſhua immediately ſet themſelves to the work, and the prophets helped them; ſo that the people once more with vigour began to build. *Note*, (1.) They who are firſt in ſtation, ſhould be firſt to promote every good work. (2.) The help of the prophets is the moſt eſſential part towards the eſtabliſhment of the ſpiritual church: though a good magiſtrate can do much, a good miniſter can do more.

3. ¶ At the ſame time came to them Tatnai, governor on this ſide the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and ſaid thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this houſe, and to make up this wall? 4. [f] Then ſaid we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? 5. But [g] the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that [h] they could not cauſe them to ceaſe, till the matter came to Darius: and then they returned anſwer by letter concerning this *matter*. 6. ¶ The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this ſide the river, and Shethar-boznai, and [i] his companions the Apharſachites, which *were* on this ſide the river, ſent unto Darius the king: 7. They ſent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace. 8. Be it known unto the king that we went into the province of Judea, to the houſe of [k] the great God, which is builded with † great ſtones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth faſt on, and proſpereth in their hands. 9. Then aſked we thoſe elders, *and* ſaid unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this houſe, and to make up theſe walls? 10. We aſked their names alſo, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that *were* the chief of them. 11. And thus they returned us anſwer, ſaying, [l] We are the ſervants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the houſe [m] that was builded theſe many years ago, which a great king of Iſrael builded, and ſet up. 12. But after that [n] our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of [o] Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon the Chaldean, who deſtroyed this houſe, and carried the people away into Babylon. 13. But [p] in the firſt year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, *the ſame* king Cyrus made a decree to build this houſe of God. 14. And [q] the veſſels alſo of gold and ſilver of the houſe of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that *was* in Jeruſalem, and

f Ver. 10.
g 2 Chron. xvi. 9.
h Phil. i. 28.
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i Chap. iv. 7.
k Deut. x. 17.
† Chald. Stones of rolling.
l Mat. x. 32.
m 1 Kings vi. 2, &c.
n 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, 17. Iſa. lx. 2.
o 2 Kings xxiv. 2. & xxv. 8.
p Chap. i. 1.
q Chap. i. 7, 8. & vi. 5.

and brought them into the temple of Babylon, thoſe
did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Baby-
lon, and they were delivered unto *one*, [r] whoſe name *was*
Sheſhbazzar, whom he had made ‡ governor: 15. And
ſaid unto him, Take theſe veſſels, go carry them into
the temple that *is* in Jeruſalem, and let the houſe of God
be builded in his place. 16. Then came the ſame
Sheſhbazzar, *and* laid the foundation of the houſe of
God which *is* in Jeruſalem. And ſince that time even
until now, hath it been in building, [s] and *yet* it is not
finiſhed. 17. Now therefore, if *it ſeem* good to the
king, [t] let there be ſearch made in the king's treaſure-
houſe, which *is* there at Babylon, whether it be *ſo* that
a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this houſe
of God at Jeruſalem, and let the king ſend his pleaſure
to us concerning this matter.

[r] Hag. i. 14. & ii. 2, 21.
‡ Or Deputy.
[s] Chap. vi. 14.
[t] Chap. vi. 1, 2.

v. 3—17. No ſooner began the work to revive, than the jealouſy of their neighbours began to appear.

1. The governors of Samaria, who had ſucceeded the former in their office, probably at the beginning of the new reign of Darius, immediately enquired into the authority on which the Jews proceeded. They were not however afraid or aſhamed to produce their charter, and to give in the names of the principal authors of this good work; God encouraging them, and ſtrengthening them to perſevere, till the matter came before Darius, to whom they appealed. *Note*, (1.) If God's eye be upon us for good, we need not fear what man can do unto us. (2.) The comfortable preſence of God ſhould quicken and enliven us to greater diligence in his ſervice.

2. The governors Tatnai and Shethar-boznai hereupon diſpatched a letter to the king, informing him of what was doing, and deſiring his directions; and herein they acted with much greater candor and honeſty than their predeceſſors, repreſenting the true ſtate of the fact. After wiſhing the king proſperity and all earthly happineſs, they inform him, that they had viſited the province of Judea, and obſerved there a magnificent ſtructure raiſing to the great God whom the Jews worſhipped, which was carried on with aſſiduity and zeal; that, on enquiring into the authority on which they preſumed thus to act, they received for anſwer, That this houſe, which a great king among them had formerly erected, and for their ſins God had ſuffered Nebuchadnezzar to deſtroy, Cyrus had given them a commiſſion to rebuild, and reſtored to them withal the veſſels which had been carried to Babylon; in conſequence of which, they had proceeded under the direction of Sheſhbazzar, their prince; and that ever ſince they had been at work upon it, though, by reaſon of the interruptions they had met, it was not yet finiſhed. They beg therefore, if the king pleaſed, ſearch might be made in the records, reſpecting the truth of this decree in their favour, and that he would inform them of his pleaſure in the matter. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould ever reflect with ſhame on the ſins which have provoked God's viſitations. (2.) If the people of God can but obtain a fair hearing, they need not fear for their cauſe. (3.) Many an unjuſt ſentence hath gone forth againſt the faithful, not ſo much from malice in the magiſtrate, as from the miſinformation of their enemies. (4.) Truth, tho' long ſuppreſſed, will uſually at laſt prevail.

CHAP. VI.

We have here, 1. *A recital of Cyrus's decree for the building of the temple*, ver. 1—5. 2. *That decree enforced by a new order from Darius*, ver. 6—12. 3. *The finiſhing of the temple thereupon*, ver. 13—15. 4. *The ſolemn dedication of it*, ver. 16—18. 5. *The celebration of the paſſover*, ver. 19—22.

1. THEN Darius the king made a decree, and
[a] ſearch was made in the houſe of the † rolls,
where the treaſures were laid up in Babylon. 2. And
there was found at ‡ Achmetha, in the palace that *is* in
the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein *was* a
record thus written: 3. In the firſt year of Cyrus the
king, *the ſame* Cyrus the king made a decree *concerning*
the houſe of God at Jeruſalem, Let the houſe be builded,
the place where they offered ſacrifices, and let the foun-
dations thereof be ſtrongly laid, the height thereof
threeſcore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof threeſcore cu-
bits. 4. [b] *With* three rows of great ſtones, and a row of
new timber: and [c] let the expences be given out of the
king's houſe. 5. And alſo [d] let the golden and ſilver veſ-
ſels of the houſe of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took
forth out of the temple which *is* at Jeruſalem, and
brought unto Babylon, be reſtored, and brought again
unto the temple which *is* at Jeruſalem, *every one* to
his place, and place *them* in the houſe of God. 6.
[e] Now *therefore* Tatnai, governor beyond the river, She-
thar-boznai, and your companions the Apharſachites,
which *are* beyond the river, be ye far from thence:
7. Let the work of this houſe of God alone, let the go-
vernor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews, build
this houſe of God in his place. 8. Moreover, I
make a decree, what ye ſhall do to the elders of theſe
Jews, for the building of this houſe of God: that of
the king's goods, *even* of the tribute beyond the river,
forthwith expences be given unto theſe men, that they
be not § hindered. 9. And that which they have need
of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for
the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, wheat,
ſalt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of
the prieſts which *are* at Jeruſalem, let it be given them
day by day without fail: 10. [f] That they may offer
ſacrifices of ‖ ſweet ſavours unto the God of heaven,
and [g] pray for the life of the king and of his ſons.
11. Alſo I have made a decree, that [h] whoſoever ſhall
alter this word, let the timber be pulled down from his
houſe, and being ſet up, let him be † hanged thereon,
and [i] let his houſe be made a dunghil for this. 12.
And the God [k] that hath cauſed his name to dwell there
deſtroy all kings and people that ſhall put to their
hand, to alter *and* to deſtroy this houſe of God which
is at Jeruſalem: I Darius have made a decree, [l] let it be
done with ſpeed.

[a] Chap. v. 17. 1 Eſd. vi. 23.
† Chald. Books.
‡ Or, Ecbatana, or, in a coffer.
[b] 1 Kings vi. 36.
[c] Chap. vii. 20.
[d] Chap. i. 7, 8. & v. 14.
[e] Pſ. lxxvi. 10. Prov. xxi. 30.
§ Chald. Made to ceaſe.
[f] Chap. vii. 23. Jer. xxix. 7.
‖ Chald. Reſt.
[g] 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.
[h] Dan. iii. 29.
† Chald. Deſtroyed.
[i] Dan. ii. 5.
[k] Pſ. cxxxii. 14.
[l] Rev. xii. 16.

v. 1—12. We have here,

1. Search made, in conſequence of the application, after the original record in the houſe of the rolls, and it was found in Achmetha, thought to be Ecbatana, the ſummer reſidence of the kings of Babylon; and it contained not only a commiſſion for building the houſe, but a command to the governors to furniſh out of the revenue all neceſſary materials; which privilege it ſeems the Jews either generouſly waved, or the change of affairs at court prevented their receiving the benefit of this order. *Note*, (1.) Diligent enquiry after truth is neceſſary, in order to adminiſter impartial juſtice. (2.) It is prudent often to decline making uſe of thoſe offers, which the generoſity of our friends may put in our power.

2. Darius, hereupon perfectly ſatisfied, confirms the edict in its full extent. As probably the interruption the work had met with from the malice of the former governors now appeared, he charges them to give the Jews no let or moleſtation; commands them to furniſh all neceſſary materials for the building, and the ſacrifices and offerings they needed, out of the revenues; ſpeaks with deep reſpect of Iſrael's God, and puts a high value on the prayers of this favoured people, low as they were now reduced. He enforces the decree with the penalty of death on any man who dared counteract it; Let him be hanged on the beams of his own houſe, and let it be made a dunghil to perpetuate the infamy: and, as highly zealous for the honour of that glorious God, whoſe preſence had formerly ſo diſtinguiſhed this houſe, and he ſuppoſes would again, he denounces a curſe on the king or people, that ſhould ever after attempt to alter the worſhip, or deſtroy the temple. He concludes with commanding immediate execution of his orders. *Note*, (1.) The Lord can overrule the malice of the church's enemies, and bring good out of their evil deſigns. (2.) They are, through God's good providence, often made inſtrumental in carrying on the work of God, who have themſelves neither part nor lot in the matter. (3.) Whilſt we are enabled to truſt all our concerns with God, he hath the hearts of the greateſt in his power, and will overrule them for the purpoſes of his own glory. (4.) If kings knew the efficacy of the prayers of God's people, they would be careful to ſecure an intereſt in them. (5.) Thoſe, whom God hath ſet in authority over us, we are bound to pray for, though heathens or oppreſſors; and how much more, when truly defenders of the faith, and really nurſing fathers to the church. (6.) The curſe denounced will ſurely fall on all the enemies of God's ſpiritual temple. They who fight againſt that, deſtroy their own ſouls.

13. ¶ Then Tatnai, governor on this ſide the river,
Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that
which Darius the king had ſent, [m] ſo they did ſpeedily.
14. [n] And the elders of the Jews builded, and they
proſpered through the propheſying of Haggai the pro-
phet, and Zechariah the ſon of Iddo; and they builded,
and finiſhed *it*, according to the commandment of the
God of Iſrael, and according to the † commandment of
[o] Cyrus and [p] Darius, and [q] Artaxerxes king of Perſia.
15. And this houſe was finiſhed on the third day of
the month Adar, which was in the ſixth year of the

[m] Eſth. vi. 11. Job. v. 12, 13.
[n] Chap. v. 1.
† Chald. Decree.
[o] Chap. i. 1. & v. 13. & Ver. 3.
[p] Chap. iv. 14.
[q] Chap. vii. 1.

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reign of Darius the king. 16. ¶ And the children of Iſrael, the prieſts and the Levites, and the reſt of the children of the ‡ captivity, kept [r] the dedication of this houſe of God with Joy. 17. And [s] offered at the dedication of this houſe of God, an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a ſin-offering for all Iſrael, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Iſrael. 18. And they ſet the prieſts in their diviſions, and the Levites in their courſes, for the ſervice of God, which *is* at Jeruſalem; [t] as it is written in the book of Moſes. 19. And the children of the captivity kept the paſſover [u] upon the fourteenth *day* of the firſt month. 20. For the prieſts and the Levites were purified together, all of them *were* pure, and killed the paſſover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the prieſts, and [x] for themſelves. 21. And the children of Iſrael which were come again out of captivity, and all ſuch as had ſeparated themſelves unto them, from [y] the filthineſs of the heathen of the land, to ſeek the LORD God of Iſrael, did eat, 22. And kept the feaſt of [z] unleavened bread ſeven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and [a] turned the heart of the king of Aſſyria unto them, to ſtrengthen their hands in the work of the houſe of God, the God of Iſrael.

‡ Chald. Tranſportation.
[r] 1 Kings viii. 63. 2 Chron. vii. 5.
[s] Chap. viii. 35.
[t] Num. iii. 6. & viii. 9.
[u] Exod. xii. 6.
[x] Heb. vii. 27.
[y] Chap. ix. 11.
[z] 1 Cor. v. 8.
[a] Prov. xxi. 1. John xix. 11.

v. 13—22. When the obſtacles were removed, and the encouragements to labour ſo many, the work went on briſkly. We have here,

1. The finiſhing the temple. The governors dared no longer obſtruct the work, but, though it may be with reluctance, were immediately obliged to comply with the king's orders; whilſt the prophets Haggai and Zechariah pleaded theſe mercies they enjoyed, as an argument of God's bleſſing, and an obligation diligently to improve them; ſo that in four years the temple was compleatly finiſhed. *Note*, (1.) Every mercy we enjoy ſhould be improved as an argument for increaſing diligence in God's ſervice. (2.) Though the work of God in the ſoul meets with many obſtructions, and ſometimes for a while ſeems at a ſtand, or on the decline, he will not ſuffer it to fail, but will revive it in the midſt of the years, and perfect what he hath begun, till the top-ſtone be laid with ſhouting, *crying*, *Grace, grace unto it*. (3.) The grand means God makes uſe of for the perfecting of the ſaints, is the miniſtry of the word.

2. The ſolemn dedication of it. The prieſts and Levites being ſet in their ſeveral courſes, according to the law of Moſes, they offered liberal ſacrifices to God on the occaſion. As there were many, not only of Benjamin and Judah, but of the other tribes joined with them, a ſin-offering of twelve he-goats was offered for the congregation; and now through the blood of atonement having obtained reconciliation, though ſtill ſome marks of bondage continued upon them, yet with great gladneſs they rejoiced to ſee the long diſcontinued temple-worſhip once more happily revived. *Note*, (1.) The great concern of the returning ſinner is to obtain remiſſion of ſin. (2.) When the atoning blood is ſprinkled on the conſcience, that fills the ſoul with peace and joy in believing. (3.) Revivals of God's bleſſed worſhip and ſervice are the heart-felt rejoicing of every faithful Iſraelite.

3. The next month they kept the paſſover with great ſolemnity and exactneſs, a memorial of their eſcape from Egypt, and now of their repeated deliverance from Babylon, the ſecond houſe of their bondage. The prieſts and Levites, unanimous to purify themſelves, to a man were ready for their functions, and killed the paſſover for their brethren, as well as themſelves. Not only the people who had returned from Babylon, but many proſelytes from the heathen, who had renounced their idolatry, and were circumciſed, joined with them; and ſeven days with univerſal gladneſs they kept the feaſt of unleavened bread, God comforting their hearts, and making them happy in the protection and encouragement they received from the king. *Note*, (1.) All true converts to Chriſt fail not to feed upon him in the feaſt he has inſtituted, in memory of the deliverance wrought for them by his dying love. (2.) Purity in the miniſters of God's ordinances is moſt conducive to the comfort and profiting of them: under ſuch miniſtrations a bleſſing may be expected. (3.) When we draw near to God, we are called to put off all filthineſs, and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs; to ſeparate ourſelves from the ways of a wicked world; and to renounce our former company, and join ourſelves to God's people. (4.) Thoſe who wait upon God in his ways, he cauſes to rejoice. He is the well-ſpring of all ſpiritual comfort, and out of his fulneſs we ſhall receive. (5.) When God becomes our portion, he can make thoſe we feared as enemies, our faſt friends.

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CHAP. VII.

Here is, 1. *The lineage and character of Ezra,* ver. 1—6. 2. *His commiſſion from Artaxerxes, and journey to Jeruſalem,* ver. 7—26. 3. *His grateful acknowledgment of the mercy,* ver. 27, 28.

1. NOW [a] after theſe things, in the reign of [b] Artaxerxes king of Perſia, [c] Ezra the ſon of [d] Seraiah, the ſon of Azariah, the ſon of Hilkiah, 2. The ſon of Shallum, the ſon of Zadok, the ſon of Ahitub, 3. The ſon of Amariah, the ſon of Azariah, the ſon of Meraioth, 4. The ſon of Zerahiah, the ſon of Uzzi, the ſon of Bukki, 5. The ſon of Abiſhua, the ſon of Phinehas, the ſon of Eleazar, the ſon of Aaron the chief prieſt: 6. This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he *was* [e] a ready ſcribe in the law of Moſes, which the LORD God of Iſrael had given: and the king granted him all his requeſt, [f] according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. 7. And [g] there went up *ſome* of the children of Iſrael, and of the prieſts, and [h] the Levites, and the ſingers, and the porters, and [i] the Nethinims, unto Jeruſalem, in the ſeventh year of Artaxerxes the king. 8. And he came to Jeruſalem in the fifth month, which *was* in the ſeventh year of the king. 9. For upon the firſt *day* of the firſt month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the firſt day of the fifth month, [k] came he to Jeruſalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him. 10. For Ezra had [l] prepared his heart to ſeek the law of the LORD, and [m] to do *it*, and [n] to teach in Iſrael ſtatutes and judgments.

[a] 1 Eſd. viii. 1.
[b] Neh. ii. 1.
[c] 1 Chron. vi. 3—14.
[d] 2 Kings xxv. 18.
[e] Ver. 11, 21. Pſ. xlv. 1.
[f] Ver. 9. Chap. viii. 22, 31.
[g] Zech. ii. 6, 7.
[h] Chap. viii. 15, &c.
[i] Chap. ii. 43.
[k] Prov. iii. 6.
[l] 1 Sam. vii. 3.
[m] John xiii. 17.
[n] 1 Tim. iii. 2. & iv. 16.

v. 1—10. Ezra ſeems, ſoon after the dedication of the temple, to have returned to court, whether to give an account of their proceedings, or to complain of the backwardneſs of the governors to ſupply them according to the king's commiſſion, or to invite more of his brethren to return, ſince their beginnings were now ſo proſperous. We have,

1. His genealogy. He was a prieſt, and nearly allied, probably uncle, to Jeſhua the high-prieſt. The omiſſions in his genealogical line may be ſupplied out of 1 *Chron.* vi. 7—10.

2. His character anſwered his high birth. He was eminent for his learning, eſpecially in the law of God; and as eminent for his practice. His knowledge was not barren and unfruitful; it engaged him to fidelity in doing God's will, whilſt he earneſtly ſought deeper diſcoveries of it; and he was zealouſly communicative of his ſpiritual wiſdom, in order to teach others how to walk and pleaſe God. *Note*, (1.) Of all learning, ſcripture learning is moſt deſirable: none beſide can make us wiſe to ſalvation. (2.) They who would know God's truth, muſt ſearch for it as for ſilver. Idleneſs and ignorance are neceſſarily connected. (3.) That is truly profitable knowledge, which is employed in the inſtruction of others in the good ways of our God. (4.) They who practiſe what they teach, can ſpeak with greater confidence, and may expect ſucceſs. Little can be hoped from the ſcribe that ſits in Moſes's ſeat, who ſaith, and doth not.

3. Having executed his commiſſion ſucceſsfully at the Perſian court, he returned to Jeruſalem, bringing along with him a number of his brethren, who hearing the proſperity of Zion, were deſirous to ſhare in it. Though the journey was long, God's preſence and providence comforted and ſtrengthened them, and they arrived ſafe, after four months travel, at Jeruſalem. *Note*, God's merciful providence is continually to be acknowledged in all our goings out, and comings in: every mercy we enjoy comes from his good hand.

11. ¶ Now this *is* the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the prieſt, the ſcribe, *even* a ſcribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his ſtatutes to Iſrael. 12. Artaxerxes [o] king of kings, Unto Ezra the prieſt, † a ſcribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect *peace*, and [p] at ſuch a time. 13. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Iſrael, and *of* his prieſts and Levites in my realm, which are minded [q] of their own free will to go up to Jeruſalem, go with thee. 14. Foraſmuch as thou art ſent of the king, and of [r] his ſeven counſellers, to enquire concerning Judah and Jeruſalem, according to the law of thy God which *is* in thine hand: 15. And to carry the ſilver and gold, which the king and his counſellers have freely offered unto the God of Iſrael, [s] whoſe habitation

[o] Ezek. xxvi. 7. Dan. ii. 37.
† Or, a perfect ſcribe of the law of the God of heaven, peace, &c.
[p] Chap. iv. 10.
[q] Pſ. cx. 3.
[r] Eſth. i. 14.
[s] 2 Chron. vi. 2. & xxix. 6.

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t Chap. viii. 35.

u Chap. vi. 9.

tation *is* in Jeruſalem. 16. And [t] all the ſilver and gold that thou canſt find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people, and of the prieſts, offering willingly for the houſe of their God, which *is* in Jeruſalem: 17. That [u] thou mayſt buy ſpeedily with this money, bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the houſe of your God, which *is* in Jeruſalem. 18. And whatſoever ſhall ſeem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the reſt of the ſilver and gold, that do after the will of your God. 19. The veſſels alſo that are given thee, for the ſervice of the houſe of thy God, *thoſe* deliver thou before the God of Jeruſalem. 20. And whatſoever more ſhall be needful for the houſe of thy God, which thou ſhalt have occaſion to beſtow, beſtow *it* out of the king's treaſure-houſe. 21. And I, *even* I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treaſurers which *are* beyond the river, that whatſoever Ezra the prieſt, the ſcribe of the law of the God of heaven, ſhall require of you, it be done ſpeedily; 22. Unto ‡ an hundred talents of ſilver, and to an hundred § meaſures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and ſalt without preſcribing *how much*. 23. Whatſoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the houſe of the God of heaven: for [x] why ſhould there be wrath againſt the realm of the king and his ſons? 24. Alſo we certify you, that touching any of the prieſts, and Levites, ſingers, porters, Nethinims, or miniſters of this houſe of God, it ſhall not be lawful to impoſe toll, tribute, or cuſtom upon them. 25. And thou, Ezra, after the wiſdom of thy God, that *is* in thine hand, [y] ſet magiſtrates and judges, which may judge all the people that *are* beyond the river, [z] all ſuch as know the laws of thy God, and [a] teach ye them that know *them* not. 26. And whoſoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed ſpeedily upon him, whether *it be* unto death, or to ‖ baniſhment, or to confiſcation of goods, or to impriſonment.

‡ About 375,000 pounds.

§ Chald. Cors.

x Chap. x. 6.

y Exod. xviii. 21, 22.

z Mal. ii. 7. Mat. xiii. 52. Tit. i. 9.

a 2 Chron. xvii. 7.

‖ Chald. Rooting out.

v. 11—26. We have here the honourable commiſſion addreſſed to Ezra the ſcribe, from the king of Babylon, whoſe dominions were ſo extenſive, that he aſſumed the title of King of kings.

1. He gives full liberty to all the Jews in his dominions to return to their own land, under the leading of Ezra, who is conſtituted chief inquiſitor into the affairs of the Jewiſh people, and authorized to take care, that the law of God in all things may be obſerved among them.

2. He ſends by him a noble preſent from himſelf and his princes, with veſſels of ſilver and gold, to be employed in the ſervice of the temple, as Ezra and his brethren ſaw moſt adviſeable; and authoriſes him to collect from the Jews, who continued to reſide in Babylon, whatever free-will offerings they choſe to ſend to the houſe of God at Jeruſalem, to be laid out according to the will of God. *Note,* (1.) The revealed will of God muſt be the conſtant ſtandard of our conduct. (2.) They who are employed in ſuch truſts of public money, need be men of tried integrity.

3. He gives him a large order upon his governors, for whatever more might be wanting for the ſervice of God; to maintain which, he would grudge no expence, knowing how much his intereſt it was to engage him as a friend, and how dangerous by neglect to provoke him as an enemy. *Note,* (1.) How will the ſollicitude of a heathen king to obtain God's favour, riſe up in judgment to reprove the negligence and careleſsneſs of profeſſed Chriſtians? (2.) They who are zealous in the cauſe of God, will have generous hearts, and open hands.

4. He exempts all the miniſters of the ſanctuary, from the higheſt to the loweſt, from tribute, as an honourable mark of diſtinction. However now they may be ſlighted, once even heathen kings thought they ought to be had in honour.

5. Ezra is empowered to nominate magiſtrates, ſkilled in God's law, over his own people, that no heathen judge might have juriſdiction among them. They were to adminiſter juſtice, and inſtruct the ignorant; and all pains and penalties were put in their power, to puniſh the diſobedient, even to priſon or death. *Note,* (1.) Magiſtrates muſt not bear the ſword in vain. (2.) Among the greateſt temporal bleſſings, is an impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, according to the law of God.

27. ¶ [b] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of our fathers, [c] which hath put ſuch *a thing* as this in the king's heart, to beautify the houſe of the LORD, which *is* in Jeruſalem: 28. And [d] hath extended mercy unto me, before the king and his counſellers, and before all the king's mighty princes: and [e] I was ſtrengthened as [f] the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me, and I gathered together out of Iſrael, chief men to go up with me.

b 1 Chron. xxix. 10.

c Chap. vi. 22. Prov. xxi. 1. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 17.

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d Chap. ix. 9.

e Pſal. cxxxviii. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 17.

f Chap. vii. 18.

v. 27, 28. With grateful acknowledgment Ezra interrupts the ſtory, to offer up one pious thankful ejaculation to his merciful God.

1. For the gracious commiſſion, which the Lord had put into the king's heart to give him. *Note,* (1.) In all our bleſſings we muſt look above men and means to the great Author of all grace. (2.) If there be a good deſire put into the heart, we may be aſſured it is from above.

2. For the ſupport and ſtrength he had been ſupplied with in negociating this ſervice. *Note,* Whatever abilities or natural fortitude we poſſeſs, we muſt aſcribe all our ſucceſs not to ourſelves, but the ſupports of God's good grace.

3. For the company God gave him, inclining his brethren, and the chief of them, to go with him. *Note,* (1.) It is not our perſuaſions as miniſters, but God's powerful operative grace upon the heart, which can engage any man to quit this Babylon of the world, to travel to Zion the mount of God. (2.) It is matter of moſt unſpeakable thankfulneſs to miniſters, when their preaching is made effectual to the engaging men's hearts to follow Chriſt and his goſpel.

CHAP. VIII.

We have here, 1. *The company that went with Ezra to Jeruſalem,* ver. 1—20. 2. *The ſolemn faſt which they kept, to implore God's preſence with them in their journey,* ver. 21—23. 3. *The treaſure committed to the prieſts, with a ſolemn charge,* ver. 24—30. 4. *God's bringing them ſafe to Jeruſalem,* ver. 31, 32. 5. *The faithful delivery of the treaſures,* ver. 33, 34. 6. *Sacrifices offered,* ver. 35. 7. *Their commiſſions to the king's lieutenants delivered,* ver. 36.

1. [a] THESE *are* now the chief of their fathers, and *this is* the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king. 2. Of the ſons of Phinehas; Gerſhom: of the ſons of Ithamar; Daniel: of the ſons of David; [b] Hattuſh. 3. Of the ſons of Shechaniah, of the ſons of [c] Pharoſh; Zechariah: and with him were reckoned by genealogy of the males, an hundred and fifty. 4. Of the ſons of Pahath-moab; Elihoenai the ſon of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males. 5. Of the ſons of Shechaniah; the ſon of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males. 6. Of the ſons alſo of Adin; Ebed the ſon of Jonathan, and with him fifty males. 7. And of the ſons of Elam; Jeſhaiah the ſon of Athaliah, and with him ſeventy males. 8. And of the ſons of Shephatiah; Zebadiah the ſon of Michael, and with him fourſcore males. 9. Of the ſons of Joab; Obadiah the ſon of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males. 10. And of the ſons of Shelomith; the ſon of Joſiphiah, and with him an hundred and threeſcore males. 11. And of the ſons of Bebai; Zechariah the ſon of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males. 12. And of the ſons of Azgad; Johanan the † ſon of Hakkatan, and with him an hundred and ten males. 13. And of the laſt ſons of Adonikam, whoſe names *are* theſe, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with him threeſcore males. 14. And of the ſons alſo of Bigvai; Uthai, and ‡ Zabbud, and with them ſeventy males. 15. ¶ And I gathered them together to [d] the river that runneth to Ahava; and there § abode we in tents three days: and [e] I viewed the people, and the prieſts, and found there [f] none of the ſons of Levi. 16. Then ſent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meſhullam, chief men; alſo for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of underſtanding. 17. And I ſent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief, at the place Caſiphia, and I ‖ told them what they ſhould ſay unto Iddo, *and* to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Caſiphia, that they ſhould bring unto us miniſters for the houſe of our God. 18. And by [g] the good hand of our God upon us, they brought us a man of underſtanding, of the ſons of Mahli, the ſon of Levi, the ſon of Iſrael, and Sherebiah, with his

a 1 Eſd. viii. 28.

b 1 Chron. iii. 22.

c Chap. ii. 3, &c.

† Or, youngeſt ſon.

‡ Or Zaccur, as ſome read.

d Pſal. cxxxvii. 1.

§ Or pitched.

e Prov. xxvii. 23. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2.

f Chap. vii. 7. Ver. 2.

‖ Heb. Put words in their mouth. 2 Sam. xiv. 3, 19.

g Chap. vii. 28.

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ſons and his brethren, eighteen; 19. And Haſhabaiah, and with him Jeſhaiah of the ſons of Merari, his brethren and their ſons, twenty; 20. [h] Alſo of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the ſervice of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of whom were expreſſed by name.

[h] See Chap. ii. 43.

v. 1—20. The proclamation of Artaxerxes having given the Jews full liberty to return to their own land, we have here the muſter-roll of thoſe who accepted the proffered liberty.

1. The volunteers in this ſervice were 1496; among them, ſeveral of great name. Many of the former families alſo followed their brethren, and all the ſons of Adonikam now left Babylon for Jeruſalem. *Note,* If our relations have led the way towards the good land, let it provoke us to jealouſy, and to caſt in our lot with them. Pity it is, houſes ſhould be divided, and any dear relatives chuſe to ſtay behind, rather than go with us to the heavenly Jeruſalem.

2. At a general review on New-year's day, among all this company no Levite was found. Ezra could not but be grieved at ſuch a vacancy, and, as they came not of their own accord, ſends eleven of the principal people to Iddo, who was chief over them, at Caſiphia, (a ſtreet ſo called probably at Babylon, where they reſided together), that he might provide miniſters for the houſe of God. *Note,* They who are backward to their duty muſt be ſtirred up to it. If miniſters are negligent, they are to be put in mind, that they take heed to their miniſtry.

3. The application ſucceeded: thirty-eight Levites, under three principal leaders, offered themſelves for the ſervice, and two hundred and twenty Nethinims accompanied them, whoſe names were honourably inſerted in the regiſter. This Ezra juſtly aſcribes to God's gracious interpoſition, inclining and diſpoſing the hearts of his miniſters to undertake the ſervice.

21. ¶ Then I [i] proclaimed a faſt there, at the river Ahava, that [k] we might afflict ourſelves before our God, [l] to ſeek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our ſubſtance. 22. For [m] I was aſhamed to require of the king a band of ſoldiers and horſemen, to help us againſt the enemy in the way: becauſe we had ſpoken unto the king, ſaying, [n] The hand of our God *is* upon all them for good, that ſeek him, but his power and [o] his wrath *is* againſt all them that forſake him. 23. So we faſted, and beſought our God for this, and [p] he was intreated of us.

[i] 2 Chron. xx. 3.
[k] Lev. xvi. 29.
[l] Jer. l. 4, 5.
[m] So 1 Cor. ix. 15.
[n] 1 Chron. xvi. 10.
[o] 2 Chron. xv. 2.
[p] Mat. vii. 7.

v. 21—23. Dangerous and tedious was the journey they were about to undertake, and they had to fear from their enemies, the Arabs, and Samaritans. Therefore they proclaim a faſt, to humble their ſouls for their ſins, and entreat God to direct their way aright, and preſerve them and theirs. They might indeed have procured a guard; but Ezra, jealous for the honour of God, in whom, before the king, he had expreſſed his firm confidence, as the protector of his people, and the deſtroyer of his enemies, would rather meet the danger, dependent on his care, than give the leaſt occaſion of offence by ſuch an application. And their prayers procured a better guard than legions of armed men; for God was intreated of them, and covered them with the ſhadow of his wing. *Note,* (1.) It becomes us ever to be jealous for the honour of God, and rather expoſe ourſelves to difficulty, than give any occaſion of ſtumbling to others. (2.) They who humbly ſeek God, dependent on his care, will find him a very preſent help in trouble.

24. ¶ Then I ſeparated twelve of the chief of the prieſts, Sherebiah, Haſhabiah, and ten of their brethren with them, 25. And [q] weighed unto them [r] the ſilver, and the gold, and the veſſels, *even* the offering of the houſe of our God, which the king, and his counſellers, and his lords, and all Iſrael *there* preſent, had offered. 26. I even weighed unto their hand, ſix hundred and fifty talents of ſilver, and ſilver veſſels an hundred talents, *and* of gold an hundred talents: 27. Alſo twenty baſons of gold, of a thouſand drams, and two veſſels of † fine copper, ‡ precious as gold. 28. And I ſaid unto them, Ye *are* holy unto the LORD, [s] the veſſels *are* holy alſo, and the ſilver and the gold *are* a free-will-offering unto the LORD God of your fathers. 29. [t] Watch ye, and keep *them* until ye weigh *them* before the chief of the prieſts, and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Iſrael at Jeruſalem, in the chambers of the houſe of the LORD. 30. So took the prieſts and the Levites the weight of the ſilver and the gold, and the veſſels, to bring *them* to Jeruſalem unto the houſe of our God.

[q] Chap. i. 7.
[r] Chap. vii. 15, 16.
† Heb. Yellow, or ſhining braſs.
‡ Or deſirable.
[s] Num. iv. 4.
[t] Luke xii. 37, 38. Acts xx. 31. 1 Tim. iv. 16.

v. 24—30. Before they ſet forth on their journey, Ezra appointed twelve prieſts and as many Levites, to take the charge of the treaſures and veſſels which were conſecrated to God's ſervice, with which they, as holy men employed in the ſervice of God alſo, were the fitteſt to be entruſted, till they came to Jeruſalem, where they might be produced according to their preſent weight, and their care and fidelity approved before the prieſts and chief fathers, and their brethren at Jeruſalem. *Note,* (1.) They who have the care of holy things, ought themſelves to be holy men. (2.) They who are entruſted with the money of the public, or the contributions devoted to charitable uſes, need be exact in their accounts, that they may, without ſuſpicion of diſhoneſty, miniſter the abundance entruſted with them. (3.) They who have the care of immortal ſouls, thoſe veſſels of mercy, infinitely more precious than gold and ſilver, need take heed, and watch always over the flock, of which the Holy Ghoſt hath made them overſeers; that when the chief ſhepherd ſhall appear, they may with comfort and confidence give an account of their ſtewardſhip.

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31. ¶ Then we departed from the river of Ahava, on the twelfth *day* of [u] the firſt month, to go unto Jeruſalem: and [x] the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of ſuch as lay in wait by the way. 32. And [y] we came to Jeruſalem, and abode there three days. 33. ¶ Now on the fourth day was the ſilver and the gold, and the veſſels weighed in the houſe of our God, by the hand of Merimoth the ſon of Uriah the prieſt, and with him *was* Eleazer the ſon of Phinehas, and with them *was* Jonabad the ſon of Jeſhua, and Noadiah the ſon of Binnui, Levites: 34. By number, *and* by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time. 35. *Alſo* the children of thoſe that had been carried away which were come out of the captivity, [z] offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Iſrael, twelve bullocks for all Iſrael, ninety and ſix rams, ſeventy and ſeven lambs, twelve he-goats *for* a ſin-offering: all *this was* a burnt-offering unto the LORD. 36. ¶ And they delivered the king's commiſſions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this ſide the river, and [a] they furthered the people, and the houſe of God.

[u] Chap. vii. 9.
[x] Chap. vii. 6, 28.
[y] Neh. ii. 11.
[z] Chap. vi. 17. Rom. xii. 1.
[a] Chap. vii. 16. Rev. xii. 16.

v. 30—36. After a long journey of four months, we have here,

1. Their ſafe arrival at Jeruſalem, under the gracious conduct of a preſerving God, notwithſtanding all the wiles of their enemies. *Note,* (1.) None who truly ſet their faces towards glory, ever periſh by the way. Though their enemies are mighty, many, and crafty, God will break through every ſnare, and make them more than conquerors. (2.) Whenever we return ſafe from a journey, or a voyage, let us never forget the tribute of grateful acknowledgement for the mercy.

2. The faithful delivery of the dedicate treaſures and veſſels for the Lord's houſe into the hands of the chief prieſts and Levites, appointed to receive them, in tale and weight, exact as they were committed to Sherebiah and his brethren, and the receipt of them recorded to their honour. *Note,* It will be a happy day, when we give up our truſt to Jeſus, if we can hear him ſay, Well done, good and faithful ſervant.

3. No ſooner are they arrived, than their firſt care is to compaſs God's altar, and offer there their ſacrifices: a ſin-offering of atonement, to make peace with God, and burnt-offerings of thankſgiving for all Iſrael, now once more united in the ſame happy ſervice, and under the ſame leader. *Note,* When our perſons are accepted through the atoning blood, our ſervice becomes acceptable, a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmell, well-pleaſing to God.

4. Ezra delivered the commiſſions to the king's lieutenants in the neighbouring provinces, who, ſeeing the king's pleaſure, contributed as they were required to the ſupport of the people, and the houſe of God. Thus can God make his people's foes bow down at their feet, and know that he hath loved them.

CHAP. IX.

The ſun hath his ſpots; the beſt churches, in their beſt days, are not perfect. I have a few things againſt thee, *Rev.* ii. 20. *We have here,* 1. *A complaint brought to Ezra of the people's ſtrange wives,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The great trouble it gave him and others,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *His deep contrition and prayer to God on this occaſion,* ver. 5—15.

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1. NOW [a] when theſe things were done, the princes came to me, ſaying, The people of Iſrael, and [b] the prieſts, and the Levites [c] have not ſeparated themſelves

[a] 1 Eſd. viii. 68.
[b] Mat. xxiii. 3. Rom. ii. 18, 21.
[c] Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3, 4.

ſelves from the people of the lands, *doing* according to their abominations, *even* of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebuſites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2. For [d] they have taken of their daughters for themſelves, and for their ſons: ſo that the holy ſeed have mingled themſelves with the people of *thoſe* lands: yea, the hand of the princes, and rulers hath been chief in this treſpaſs. 3. And when I heard this thing, [e] I rent my garment and my mantle, and pluckt off the hair of my head, and of my beard, and [f] ſat down aſtoniſhed. 4. Then were aſſembled unto me every one [g] that trembled at the words of the God of Iſrael, becauſe of the tranſgreſſion of thoſe that had been carried away, and I ſat aſtoniſhed until the evening ſacrifice.

[d] Mal. ii. 11.
[e] Job i. 20.
[f] Pſal. cxliii. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 11.
[g] Chap. x. 3. Iſa. lxvi. 2.

v. 1—4. All things appeared very fair and promiſing, but there were concealed abominations, which ſome of the princes, zealous for the honour of God, diſcovered and complained of.

1. They informed Ezra, as the perſon ſet in authority over them, of the ſtrange marriages which the people had contracted with the heathen; and that the prieſts and Levites, who ſhould have been the firſt to reprove ſuch wickedneſs, were equally concerned, and the princes and rulers chief in this treſpaſs; to the great diſhonour of God's law, and of their nation, as well as thereby expoſing themſelves and their children to the peril of idolatry. *Note*, (1.) To be unequally yoked with unbelievers, is the readieſt way to apoſtatize from God. (2.) When princes lead the way in evil, and prieſts, inſtead of remonſtrating againſt it, comply with and copy after them, no marvel iniquity among the people reigns triumphant: ſurely theſe ſhall receive the greater damnation. (3.) They who are zealous for God's honour, cannot ſee ſin committed without grief, and deſire to reſtrain it.

2. The information deeply affected the pious Ezra; in diſtreſs he rent his cloaths, plucked off his hair, and ſat down aſtoniſhed at the baſe ingratitude of the people, and trembling for the conſequences. *Note*, (1.) Though careleſs ſinners have no concern about their own ſouls, their zealous paſtors mourn over, and tremble for them. (2.) The ſins of profeſſors have eſpecial aggravations, and as they bring the greateſt diſhonour upon God, they awaken the deepeſt grief and indignation of the faithful.

3. Ezra's affecting grief ſoon drew to him at the temple, where he ſeems to have been, all thoſe who like him reverentially trembled before God, and feared for the conſequences of the people's ſin. *Note*, (1.) The word of God is an awful thing to the true-hearted Iſraelite; he trembles before it for himſelf, leaſt he ſhould offend, and for others, whom he ſees offending. (2.) We are bound to ſtrengthen the hands of thoſe, and to join with them, who zealouſly deſire to purge out every abomination from the congregation of the Lord.

5. ¶ And at the evening ſacrifice, I aroſe up from my † heavineſs, and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and [h] ſpread out my hands unto the LORD my God, 6. And ſaid, O my God, [i] I am aſhamed, and bluſh to lift up my face to thee, my God: for [k] our iniquities are increaſed over *our* head, and [l] our treſpaſs is grown up unto the heavens. 7. Since the days of our fathers *have* we *been* in a great treſpaſs unto this day, and for our iniquities have we, our kings, *and* our prieſts, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the ſword, to captivity, and to a ſpoil, and to confuſion of face, as *it is* this day. 8. And now for a little ſpace, grace hath been *ſhewed* from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to eſcape, and to give us a ‡ nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. 9. For [m] we *were* bondmen, yet [n] our God hath not forſaken us in our bondage, but [o] hath extended mercy unto us in the ſight of the kings of Perſia, to give us a reviving to ſet up the houſe of our God, and to repair the deſolations thereof, and to give us [p] a wall in Judah and in Jeruſalem. 10. And now, O our God, what ſhall we ſay after this? for we have forſaken thy commandments, 11. Which thou haſt commanded by thy ſervants the prophets, ſaying, The land unto which ye go to poſſeſs it, is an unclean land, with the filthineſs of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it ‖ from one end to another, with their uncleanneſs. 12. Now therefore [q] give not your daughters unto their ſons, neither take their daughters unto your ſons, [r] nor ſeek their peace, or their wealth for ever: that ye may be ſtrong, and eat the good of the land, and [s] leave *it* for an inheritance to your children for ever. 13. And after all that is come upon us, for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that [t] thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities *deſerve*, and haſt given us *ſuch* deliverance as this: 14. [u] Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of theſe abominations? wouldſt thou not be angry with us till thou hadſt conſumed *us*, ſo that *there ſhould be* no remnant nor eſcaping? 15. O LORD God of Iſrael, [x] thou *art* righteous, for we remain yet eſcaped, as *it is* this day: behold, [y] we *are* before thee in our treſpaſſes: for [z] we cannot ſtand before thee, becauſe of this.

† Or affliction.
[h] 1 Kings viii. 54.
[i] Rom. vi. 21.
[k] Pſal. xxxviii. 4. Dan. ix. 5.
[l] Gen. xviii. 20. 2 Chron. xxviii. 9. Jonah i. 2. Rev. xviii. 5.
‡ Heb. Pin. Iſa. xxii. 23.
[m] Neh. ix. 36.
[n] Pſal. cxxxvi. 23.
[o] Chap. vii. 28.
[p] Iſa. v. 2. Zech. ii. 5.
‖ Heb. From mouth to mouth. 2 Kings xxi. 16.
[q] Exod. xxiii. 32. Deut. vii. 3.
[r] Deut. xxiii. 6.
[s] Prov. xiii. 22. & xx. 7.
[t] Pſal. ciii. 10. Lam. iii. 22.
[u] John v. 14.
[x] Neh. ix. 33.
[y] Pſal. xxxii. 5.
[z] Rom. iii. 20, 23.

v. 5—15. Deep was Ezra's diſtreſs; long it continued; till the time of evening ſacrifice he ſat aſtoniſhed on the ground: then when the lamb went to the altar, he roſe; and in the hope of this atoning blood, the only refuge of the miſerable, with deep abaſement of body and ſoul he poured out his penitent confeſſions and humbling acknowledgments before God.

1. He approaches God as his covenant God, and therefore encouraged, deſperate as the caſe almoſt ſeemed, to draw near unto him. *Note*, (1.) There can be no true prayer, where faith doth not lead us to God as our reconciled God in Chriſt. (2.) Our repentance will ever be moſt deep and humbling, when we have the ſureſt confidence in the pardoning mercy of God. *See Ezek.* xvi. 61—63.

2. With ſhame and confuſion of face he appears before him, bluſhing to think of the baſeneſs and diſobedience of the people. *Note*, (1.) Holy ſhame will cover us in the view of our tranſgreſſion. (2.) We ſhall bluſh for thoſe who take no ſhame to themſelves. (3.) Though we can ſay *my God*, we ſhall the more loath ourſelves for our ingratitude againſt him.

3. He confeſſes the greatneſs and aggravations of their ſins. Though not perſonally in the tranſgreſſion, he looks on himſelf as involved in the national guilt. Like the ſtormy billows, their iniquities were ready to overwhelm them: heaped up as mountain on mountain, they reached to the clouds, and cried for vengeance; long continued, and like hereditary diſeaſes more inveterate, tranſmitted from ungodly fathers to ungodly children; neither the ſevere corrections they had ſuffered had reclaimed them, nor the late aſtoniſhing mercies which he enlarges upon, conſtrained them to return to God. Their deliverance was recent; the pure effect of God's mere grace; the favour great, that they were permitted to eſcape from the houſe of their priſon; greater, that they ſhould be fixed in God's holy place Jeruſalem; greateſt of all, that they ſhould ſee the temple raiſed, and the glorious worſhip of God reſtored, as light riſing up in the darkneſs to revive them, after the long night of their captivity. Notwithſtanding all theſe favours to prove ungrateful, what an aggravation of their tranſgreſſions! *Note*, (1.) True penitents go to the bottom, and bring forth the worſt they can ſay of themſelves; they deſire not to hide, but to confeſs their iniquities. (2.) Every ſin increaſes in malignity, according to the means and mercies we have ungratefully abuſed.

4. He appears at a loſs what apology to make; or rather as if almoſt aſhamed to aſk God for any farther forgiveneſs, the ſin was ſo wilful againſt a precept ſo evident and clear.

5. He acknowledges all their paſt puniſhments to be leſs than their iniquities deſerved; and expreſſes his juſt apprehenſions leaſt this repeated provocation ſhould weary out God's patience, and bring upon them final and utter extirpation. *Note*, (1.) In every affliction it becomes us to acknowledge God's mercy as well as juſtice, and to own while we are out of hell, that we have leſs, unſpeakably leſs ſufferings than our ſins deſerve. (2.) It is juſtly to be feared that they are near reprobacy, whom neither corrections humble, nor mercies conſtrain.

6. With entire ſatisfiedneſs in God's righteouſneſs, however he ſhould deal with them, he refers their miſerable caſe to him, if yet there might be hope, renouncing every plea, juſtifying God if he ſhould utterly conſume them, and lying down as ſelf-condemned before him, to hear their doom; deſerving wrath to the uttermoſt, but if yet ſpared, would ſtand monuments of the aſtoniſhing mercy, and tranſcendantly rich and ſovereign grace of God. *Note*, When we caſt our ſouls as deſperate upon God, juſtifying him in all his judgments againſt us, and glorifying his righteouſneſs, he will not, cannot thruſt us from him: his bowels yearn, his pity moves, and magnifying his mercy upon us, where ſin hath abounded, there, ſaith he, ſhall grace much more abound.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The deep humiliation of the people for marrying ſtrange wives,* ver. 1. 2. *Shechaniah's propoſal to put them away,* ver. 2—4. 3. *The oath whereby the great men bound themſelves to ſtand to it,* ver. 5, 6. 4. *A general aſſembly called,* ver. 7—9. 5. *Their agreement to the reformation,* ver. 10—14.

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10—14. 6. *Commiſſioners appointed to enquire who were guilty in this reſpect*, ver. 14—17. 7. *A liſt of their names*, ver. 18—44.

a 1 Eſd. viii. 91.
b Pſal. xxxii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 9, 10.
c 1 Kings viii. 30. & ix. 3.
d 2 Chron. xx. 3.
† Heb. A great weeping.
e Chap. ix. 2. Neh. xiii. 23.
f Chap. ix. 4.
g Deut. vii. 3.
h Joſh. vii. 10.
i Iſa. xxxv. 3, 4.
k Neh. v. 12.

1. NOW [a] when Ezra had prayed, and when he had [b] confeſſed, weeping and caſting himſelf down [c] before the houſe of God, there aſſembled unto him out of Iſrael, a very great congregation of men, and [d] women, and children: for the people wept † very ſore. 2. And Shechaniah the ſon of Jehiel, *one* of the ſons of Elam, anſwered and ſaid unto Ezra, We have treſpaſſed againſt our God, and [e] have taken ſtrange wives, of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Iſrael concerning this thing. 3. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God, to put away all the wives, and ſuch as are born of them, according to the counſel of my lord, and of thoſe [f] that tremble at [g] the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the law. 4. [h] Ariſe: for *this* matter *belongeth* unto thee; we alſo *will be* with thee: [i] be of good courage, and do *it*. 5. Then aroſe Ezra, and made the chief prieſts, the Levites, and all Iſrael to [k] ſwear that they ſhould do according to this word: and they ſware.

v. 1—5. Great is the influence of one good man. No ſooner was Ezra's deep concern noiſed abroad, than we find,

1. The congregation aſſembled before the houſe of God, men, women, and children, and whilſt they beheld him thus weeping over their ſins, their eye affected their heart, and they wept ſore for themſelves, brought to a deep conviction of the great evil which they had committed. *Note*, It is very affecting when miniſters weep over their flocks; their tears are often more moving than their words.

2. When nothing but the ſound of weeping is heard, as if there was no hope, the voice of Shechaniah, like a good angel, revives the diſconſolate hearts of Ezra and the people. He owns the guilt which was evidently upon them, and in which his own family, *v.* 26. was deeply involved, but he encourages them not to deſpair. The caſe, though bad, was not utterly deſperate; a remedy might yet be found for the inveterate diſeaſe, and God pardon their paſt tranſgreſſion. He adviſes therefore without delay, that they ſhould ſolemnly engage to put away their ſtrange wives, and the children begotten of them; and that if Ezra, with thoſe who tremble at God's word, zealouſly proſecuted the matter, as he exhorts them, they would find enough to ſupport them, and the affair however difficult yet practicable. *Note*, (1.) In the deepeſt diſtreſſes, let us never deſpair. (2.) When our ſin is ſeen and felt, however terrible and diſcouraging the views, there is then hope. (3.) It is a great mercy in times of ſoul-dejection, to have one to ſupport our fainting hearts. (4.) However dear our ſins are, we muſt not ſtick at parting with them, elſe there is indeed no hope. (5.) That which ſeems deſperate to the dejected, the ſpirit of a courageous Iſraelite can bring about. To have a good heart in times of difficulties, is more than half to have overcome them.

3. Ezra immediately ſtruck in with the propoſal ſo agreeable to his deſires, and diſdained not to be encouraged by an inferior. On the ſpot he engaged the chief prieſts and Levites, and the aſſembled congregation, upon oath to ſtand by him, and thereto they conſented: thus the matter got into a happy train for its accompliſhment.

l 1 Eſd. ix. 1.
m Neh. xiii. 5.
† Heb. Devoted.
‡ Or excommunicated. John ix. 22.
n See 1 Sam. xii. 18.
§ Heb. Showers.
o Prov. xxviii. 13.
p Rom. xii. 2.
q See 1 Cor. vii. 12.

6. ¶ [l] Then Ezra roſe up from before the houſe of God, and went into [m] the chamber of Johanan the ſon of Eliaſhib: and *when* he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned becauſe of the tranſgreſſion of them that had been carried away. 7. And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jeruſalem, unto all the children of the captivity, that they ſhould gather themſelves together unto Jeruſalem; 8. And that whoſoever would not come within three days, according to the counſel of the princes and the elders, all his ſubſtance ſhould be † forfeited, and himſelf ‡ ſeparated from the congregation of thoſe that had been carried away. 9. ¶ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin, gathered themſelves together unto Jeruſalem within three days: it *was* the ninth month, on the twentieth *day* of the month, and [n] all the people ſat in the ſtreet of the houſe of God, trembling becauſe of *this* matter, and for the § great rain. 10. And Ezra the prieſt ſtood up, and ſaid unto them, Ye have tranſgreſſed, and have taken ſtrange wives to increaſe the treſpaſs of Iſrael. 11. Now therefore [o] make confeſſion unto the LORD God of your fathers, and [p] do his pleaſure: and [q] ſeparate yourſelves from the people of the land, and from the ſtrange wives. 12. Then all the congregation anſwered, and ſaid with a loud voice, As thou haſt ſaid, ſo muſt we do. 13. But the people are many, and *it is* a time of much rain, and we are not able to ſtand without, neither *is this* a work of one day or two: for we ‖ are many that have tranſgreſſed in this thing. 14. Let now our rulers of all the congregation ſtand, and let all them which have taken ſtrange wives in our cities, come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.

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‖ Or, Have greatly offended in this thing.

v. 6—14. Ezra, determined neither to eat nor drink till he ſaw this unhappy affair in a way to be redreſſed, went to Johanan's chamber, a perſon of note who reſided at the temple, and there probably a counſel was held; on the breaking up of which, the following proclamation went forth:

1. A general aſſembly of all the children of the captivity is ſummoned to attend within three days, on pain of forfeiture of lands and goods to the treaſury of God, and excommunication from the church and congregation of Iſrael.

2. The ſummons was univerſally obeyed: the people aſſembled in the ſtreet that led to the temple, trembling for the penalties which might be inflicted on them for their diſobedience, and yet more deeply through fear of God's diſpleaſure, as the ſign of which they interpreted the great and unuſual rain that now fell; as if the angry heavens loured over their guilty ſouls, and threatned a freſh deluge of wrath to ſweep them away. *Note*, Trembling conſciences are ready to interpret every providence as a token of evil.

3. Ezra addreſſed the aſſembled congregation, ſetting before them the heinous guilt they were under, endeavouring to bring them to a penitent ſenſe and confeſſion of it, and engaging them to put away their ſtrange and idolatrous wives. *Note*, That is no real repentance, which is extorted by force; it muſt proceed from conviction.

4. The people, convinced of the neceſſity of complying with his exhortation, conſented to the expedient; but as multitudes were culpable, and it would require time to examine every caſe, and the violent rain at preſent ſo greatly incommoded them; therefore they propoſe, that perſons be particularly appointed to take cognizance of the matter with their judges and elders of every city, that thus the matter might be thoroughly cured, and impartial juſtice done, in order that the wrath, which they acknowledge they had provoked, might be averted from them. *Note*, (1.) No man parts with his ſins, till he ſees he is undone and loſt if he perſeveres in them. Conviction muſt precede converſion. (2.) When we truly return to God, he will return to us, and cauſe all his anger to ceaſe.

r See Ge. vii. 1.
† Or, ſtood againſt this matter.
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s 1 K x. 15.
t Mat. 8.
u Lev.
x Lev.
y See Ch ii.

15. ¶ [r] Only Jonathan the ſon of Aſahel, and Jahaziah the ſon of Tikvah, † were employed about this *matter*: and Meſhullam, and Shabbethai the Levite helped them. 16. And the children of the captivity did ſo: and Ezra the prieſt, *with* certain chief of the fathers, after the houſe of their fathers, and all of them by *their* names were ſeparated, and ſat down in the firſt day of the tenth month to examine the matter. 17. ¶ And they made an end with all the men that had taken ſtrange wives, by the firſt day of the firſt month. 18. ¶ And among the ſons of the prieſts, there were found that had taken ſtrange wives: *namely*, of the ſons of Jeſhua the ſon of Jozadak, and his brethren; Maaſeiah, and Eliezar, and Jarib, and Gedaliah. 19. And [s] they gave their hands, that [t] they would put away their wives; and [u] *being* guilty, *they offered* [x] a ram of the flock for their treſpaſs. 20. And of the ſons of [y] Immer; Hanani and Zebadiah. 21. And of the ſons of Harim; Maaſeiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah. 22. And of the ſons of Paſhur; Elioenai, Maaſeiah, Iſhmael, Nethaneel, Jozabad, and Elaſah. 23. Alſo of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah, (the ſame *is* Kelita) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. 24. Of the ſingers alſo; Eliaſhib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri. 25. Moreover, of Iſrael: of the ſons of Paroſh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamim, and Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah. 26. And of the ſons of Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah. 27. And of the ſons of Zattu; Elioenai, Eliaſhib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza. 28. Of the ſons alſo of Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, *and* Athlai. 29. And of the ſons of Bani; Meſhullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jaſhub, and Sheal, and Ramoth. 30. And of the ſons of Pahath-moab;

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Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaſeiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manaſſeh. 31. And *of* the ſons of Harim; Eliezer, Iſhijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32. Benjamin, Malluch, *and* Shemariah. 33. Of the ſons of Haſhum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manaſſeh, *and* Shimei. 34. Of the ſons of Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel, 35. Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh, 36. Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliaſhib, 37. Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaaſau, 38. And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei, 39. And Shelamiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah, 40. † Machnadebai, Shaſhai, Sharai, 41. Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42. Shallum, Amariah, *and* Joſeph. 43. Of the ſons of Nebo, Jeiel, Mattathiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah. 44. All theſe had taken ſtrange wives: and *ſome* of them had wives by whom they had children.

† Some read, Mabnadebai.

v. 15—44. Ezra having conſented to the reaſonable propoſal of the people, they were diſmiſſed for the time, and commiſſioners appointed to hear and determine.

1. The perſons delegated to prepare the matter for the judges, were Jonathan and Jahaziah, aſſiſted by two Levites; though the words will bear an oppoſite ſenſe, that *theſe ſtood againſt this matter*; oppoſed it, either the ſeparation deſigned, or the method of procedure.

2. Ezra, with the chief of the fathers, decided on the caſes brought before them, wholly giving themſelves up to this buſineſs, till in about three months they had compleated it. *Note*, They who have the cauſe of God at heart, ſpare neither time nor pains to ſerve it.

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3. They who were found guilty, ſubmitted to put away their wives, no doubt taking becoming care for their proviſion. Among the offenders were found ſome even of the high-prieſt's family, who, as eſpecially guilty, ſolemnly engaged to divorce their ſtrange wives; and, conſcious of their ſin, offered a treſpaſs-offering, as confeſſing their iniquity, and crying for mercy. Many other prieſts and Levites, with other Iſraelites, to the amount of about 113, who were convicted of tranſgreſſing, put away their ſtrange wives; and many of them had children by them, which made the ſeparation more irkſome. It is generally ſuppoſed, the children were not diſmiſſed with their mothers, but educated in the knowledge of the God of Iſrael. *Note*, (1.) When they who ſhould be patterns of goodneſs to others, offend themſelves, their example is grievouſly infectious. (2.) The people of God may for a while, yea for a long ſeaſon, backſlide, but God will not ſuffer them to periſh in their iniquities, but will pluck them as brands from the burning; tho' ſuch uſually paſs through the deepeſt diſtreſs of ſoul, when the backſlider in heart is filled with his own way, and often go down to their graves in darkneſs, mourning over the bitter remembrance of their unfaithfulneſs.

THE

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
NEHEMIAH.

This book, called in ſome verſions the ſecond of Ezra, is the continuation of the hiſtory of the Jews, during the twelve years of Nehemiah's government, who obtained a commiſſion from Artaxerxes to go to Jeruſalem, chap. i, ii. *and, by his zeal and pious adminiſtration, greatly furthered the fortifying Jeruſalem, in oppoſition to the enemies who obſtructed it,* chap. iii, iv. vi. *Redreſſed the people's grievances,* chap. v. *Stirred up a ſpirit of religion among them,* chap. viii, ix, x. *Peopled Jeruſalem,* chap. vii, xi, xii. *Reformed their abuſes,* chap. xiii. *and brought their affairs into a more proſperous and flouriſhing ſituation. With this book the hiſtorical ſcripture of the Old Teſtament cloſes.*

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CHAP. I.

We have here, 1. *Nehemiah at court, inquiſitive about his brethren at Jeruſalem,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Much affected at hearing their diſtreſſes, and with faſting and prayer applying to God thereupon,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *His prayer recorded,* ver. 5—11.

1. THE words of Nehemiah the ſon of Hachaliah. And it came to paſs in the month Chiſleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shuſhan the palace, 2. That Hanani one of my brethren came, he and *certain* men of Judah: and I aſked them concerning the Jews that had eſcaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jeruſalem. 3. And they ſaid unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province, *are* in great affliction and reproach: [a] the wall of Jeruſalem alſo *is* [b] broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire. 4. ¶ And it came to paſs when I heard theſe words, that [c] I ſat down and [d] wept, and mourned *certain* days, and [e] faſted and prayed before the God of heaven,

[a] Chap. ii. 17.
[b] 2 Kings xxv. 10.
[c] Zeph. iii. 18.
[d] Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26.
[e] Joel ii. 12.

v. 1—4. Nehemiah, though nobly advanced at court, and honoured with a manſion in the palace of Shuſhan, ſtill bore on his heart the welfare of Zion, and ſtill preferred Jeruſalem's proſperity before his chief joy. *Note,* God has ſometimes his friends, even in the palace; and though a court is uſually a ſoil too unfavourable to religious concerns, he can make monuments of ſovereign grace even in Nero's houſhold.

1. Nehemiah, on the viſit of ſome of his brethren to Babylon, probably to ſollicit ſome favour in behalf of the Jews, earneſtly enquires after Jeruſalem, and the returned captives who dwelt in it; but receives an afflicting narrative of their wretched ſituation: the city lying in its deſolations, and the people under diſtreſs, inſulted, oppreſſed, and reproached by their more powerful neighbours. *Note,* (1.) We muſt not in our advancement forget ourſelves, and grow ſtrange to our brethren, becauſe poor or afflicted. (2.) The perſecution of God's people, that diſcourages the unfaithful, awakens the greater zeal and concern of ſuch as are true-hearted.

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2. The melancholy account affected the good Nehemiah: the tears ran down his cheeks, and in affliction for days he faſted and prayed before the God of heaven, that he would remember their miſery, and return to them in mercy. *Note,* (1.) In ſeaſons of public or private calamities, faſting and weeping ſhould accompany our prayers. (2.) It is a relief to the oppreſſion of our own ſpirit, when with tears we can pour our complaints into the boſom of a compaſſionate God. (3.) Whilſt we have a God in heaven to go to, our deepeſt diſtreſſes are not deſperate.

5. And ſaid, I beſeech thee, [f] O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that [g] keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and obſerve his commandments: 6. Let thine ear now be attentive, and [h] thine eyes open, that thou mayſt hear the prayer of thy ſervant, which I pray before thee now, [i] day and night, for the children of Iſrael thy ſervants, and confeſs the ſins of the children of Iſrael, which we have ſinned [k] againſt thee: both I, and my father's houſe have ſinned. 7. We have dealt very corruptly againſt thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the ſtatutes, nor the judgments which thou commandedſt thy ſervant Moſes. 8. [l] Remember, I beſeech thee, the word that thou commandedſt thy ſervant Moſes, ſaying, [m] *If* ye tranſgreſs, I will ſcatter you abroad among the nations: 9. But [n] *if* ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; [o] though there were of you caſt out unto the uttermoſt part of the heaven, *yet* will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have choſen to ſet my name there. 10. Now [p] theſe *are* thy ſervants, and thy people, [q] whom thou haſt redeemed by thy great power, and by thy ſtrong hand. 11. O LORD, I beſeech thee, let now thine ear

[f] Dan. ix. 4.
[g] Exod. xx. 6.
[h] 1 Kings viii. 29. Pſ. xxxiv. 15.
[i] Luke xviii. 1.
[k] Pſ. li. 4.
[l] Iſa. xliii. 26.
[m] Lev. xxvi. 39. Deut. iv. 25, &c.
[n] Joel ii. 17.
[o] Deut. xxx. 4.
[p] Dan. ix. 15.
[q] Exod. xiii. 9.

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ear be attentive to the prayer of thy ſervant, and to the prayer of thy ſervants, [r] who deſire to fear thy name: and proſper, I pray thee, thy ſervant this day, and grant him mercy in the ſight of [s] this man. For I was the king's cup-bearer.

[r] Iſa. xxvi. 8. Heb. xiii. 18.
[s] Pſ. ix. 20.

v. 5—11. Nehemiah's prayer, here recorded, ſpeaks the gracious temper of his ſoul.

1. He draws near to God with reverence and godly fear, yet mixed with filial confidence, as to the great God, terrible in judgments, yet faithful to his promiſes, and never failing thoſe who truſt him. *Note*, (1.) There is a reverential fear of God, which is perfectly conſiſtent with the moſt enlarged love towards him. (2.) They who experience the love of God in their ſouls, may comfortably conclude the ſtability of his covenant with them.

2. He humbly prays God would graciouſly hear the prayer, which zeal for his glory dictated, and ſee the deſires of his heart, which his grace excited. *Note*, When God pours out upon us the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, we may aſſuredly conclude, he will hear and anſwer us.

3. He penitently confeſſes their ſins, that juſtly had brought down theſe afflictions upon them; taking ſhame to himſelf, among the reſt, for having added to the provocation. *Note*, Confeſſion of ſin ſhould have a place in every prayer.

4. He pleads for mercy and pardon, urging, as the ground of his hope, the divine promiſe God had given by Moſes, that whenever they returned to him, wherever diſperſed, or however diſtreſſed, he would return to them, (*See Deut.* xxx. 1—5.) and ſuch was now their earneſt deſire and prayer. They were ſtill God's people, and what he had done for them of old, encouraged his hope, that he would yet redeem them from the hand of their preſent enemy; for which purpoſe he particularly begs God would proſper his intentions, and grant him favour that day in the ſight of this man, the king, whoſe cup-bearer he was. *Note*, (1.) As we ſee the fulfilment of God's threatnings, we may conclude the fulfilment of God's promiſes. (2.) The moſt reviving pleas in prayer are drawn from God's faithful word, wherein he hath cauſed us to put our truſt. (3.) Tho' we are not worthy to be called God's people, yet, when we return with penitential prayer, he will not diſclaim the relation. (4.) The greateſt kings are but dying men, and worms of earth, and their hearts are in God's hand, to turn them according to the good pleaſure of his own will.

CHAP. II.

We have here, 1. *Nehemiah's ſadneſs taken notice of by the king, his enquiries into the cauſe, and the commiſſion given him,* ver. 1—8. 2. *His journey to Jeruſalem,* ver. 9—11. 3. *His ſucceſs in engaging the people to rebuild the walls,* ver. 12—18. 4. *The oppoſition he met with,* ver. 19, 20.

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1. AND it came to paſs in the month Niſan, in the twentieth year of [a] Artaxerxes the king, *that* wine *was* before him: and [b] I took up the wine, and gave *it* unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime* ſad in his preſence. 2. Wherefore the king ſaid unto me, Why *is* thy countenance ſad, ſeeing thou art not ſick? [c] this *is* nothing *elſe* but ſorrow of heart. Then I was very ſore afraid, 3. And ſaid unto the king, [d] Let the king live for ever: [e] why ſhould not my countenance be ſad, when the city, the place of my fathers ſepulchres, *lieth* waſte, and the gates thereof are conſumed with fire? 4. Then the king ſaid unto me, For what doſt thou make requeſt? So [f] I prayed to the God of heaven. 5. And I ſaid unto the king, If it pleaſe the king, and if thy ſervant have found favour in thy ſight, that thou wouldſt ſend me [g] unto Judah, unto the city of my father's ſepulchres, that I may build it. 6. And the king ſaid unto me, (the † queen alſo ſitting by him) For how long ſhall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? [h] So it pleaſed the king to ſend me, and I ſet him [i] a time. 7. Moreover, I ſaid unto the king, If it pleaſe the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over, till I come into Judah; 8. And a letter unto Aſaph, the keeper of the king's foreſt, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to the houſe, and for the wall of the city, and for the houſe that I ſhall enter into. And [k] the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

[a] Ezra vii. 1.
[b] Chap. i. 11.
[c] Prov. xv. 13.
[d] 1 Kings i. 31. Dan. ii. 4. & vi. 6, 21.
[e] See 1 Sam. iv. 20, 21.
[f] As Exod. xiv. 15. 1 Sam. i. 13.
[g] See Pſal. cii. 14.
† Heb. Wiſe.
[h] See Chap. i. 11. Pſ. lxv. 2.
[i] Chap. v. 14. & xiii. 6.
[k] Ezra v. 5. & vii. 6, 9, 23. Ver. 18.

v. 1—8. Four months in ſecret Nehemiah lamented and prayed over his afflicted country, and now his turn in waiting probably being come, he is called to attend the king as his cup-bearer, where we find,

1. His ſadneſs. The grief of his heart affected his countenance; and, though a courtier, he could not, or perhaps ſought not, to diſſemble his ſorrows.

2. The king immediately obſerved, as he preſented the cup, the unuſual ſadneſs which appeared viſible in his aſpect, and kindly enquired after the cauſe, as he perceived it was not ſickneſs, but ſome inward ſorrow that dejected him. *Note*, (1.) A kind ſollicitude for thoſe who ſerve us, becomes every maſter towards his ſervants. (2.) There is a bitterneſs of heart that changes the countenance more than ſickneſs; and a burden of ſin and ſorrow, more heavy to be borne than that of pain or diſeaſe.

3. He, with great reſpect, informs the king of the cauſe of his grief. He owns he was afraid at the king's enquiry, either, leſt he ſhould be angry at him for appearing ſad in his preſence, or refuſe him the requeſt he was about to make. He therefore wiſely prefaced his apology with dutiful wiſhes for the king's proſperity, then owns the deſolations of Jeruſalem lay heavy on his mind, and hopes the king would not think his ſorrows unreaſonable, whilſt the afflictions of his native land, where ſlept his pious anceſtors, could not but beget in his heart tender ſympathy. *Note*, (1.) Inordinate fear of man is apt to overtake us. (2.) When we take in hand God's work, we cannot but be deeply concerned for the ſucceſs. (3.) The afflictions of God's church and people draw forth the ſympathetic tear from every friend of Zion. (4.) In our paſſage through this mortal vale, the beſt of men muſt expect to meet dark and gloomy days. (5.) There is a King who minutes our ſorrows, and will not ſuffer us to mourn long, without a word of kind conſolation.

4. The king perceiving the meaning of theſe ſorrows, and his fear to aſk, kindly bids him make his requeſt. *Note*, Chriſt our king hath given us an unlimited promiſe, and ſhall we be backward to make our requeſts known unto him?

5. Encouraged by this condeſcenſion, he lifts up his heart to God for power to ſpeak aright, and a bleſſing on his requeſt; a warm ejaculation fled to the throne of grace, and God ſtrengthened and proſpered him. He begs permiſſion to rebuild his native city, a convoy to guard him ſafe, and an order upon the governors to ſupply him with neceſſaries for the work. *Note*, (1.) Whatever we ſet about, let prayer prepare the way. (2.) Frequent ejaculations tend to preſerve the ſpirituality of our temper. (3.) Nothing is too much to aſk when we come to Jeſus, who will do for us exceeding abundantly above all we can aſk or think.

6. The king conſented he ſhould go; but, unwilling to part with him long, engages him to return within a ſtipulated time. The queen, who providentially was now preſent, probably ſtood his friend, and he had peculiar reaſon that day to acknowledge the good hand of God in his ſucceſs. *Note*, (1.) The prayer of faith never returns in vain. (2.) Providential help is often given, which we little expected; and friends raiſed up of God in our difficulties, unknown to us before. (3.) Whatever mercy we receive, let God's good hand be acknowledged with thankfulneſs.

9. ¶ Then I came to the governors beyond the river: and gave them the king's letters. (Now the king had ſent captains of the army, and horſemen with me. 10. When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the ſervant the Ammonite, heard *of it*, [l] it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to ſeek the welfare of the children of Iſrael. 11. So [m] I came to Jeruſalem, and was there three days. 12. ¶ And [n] I aroſe in the night, I and ſome few men with me, neither told I *any* man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jeruſalem: neither *was there any* beaſt with me, ſave the beaſt that I rode upon. 13. And I went out by night, by [o] the gate of the valley, even before the dragon-well, and to [p] the dung-port, and viewed the walls of Jeruſalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were conſumed with fire. 14. Then I went on to [q] the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but *there was* no place for the beaſt *that was* under me to paſs. 15. Then went I up in the night by [r] the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entred by the gate of the valley, and *ſo* returned. 16. And the rulers [s] knew not whither I went, or what I did, neither had I as yet told *it* to the Jews, nor to the prieſts, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the reſt that did the work. 17. ¶ Then ſaid I unto them, Ye ſee the diſtreſs that we *are* in, how Jeruſalem *lieth* waſte, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire: come and let us build up the

[l] See Num. xxii. 3. Eſt. v. 13. Prov. xxvii. 4. Acts xiii. 45.
[m] Ezra viii. 32.
[n] Pſ. cxix. 60. Rom. xii. 11.
[o] 2 Chron. xxvi. 9.
[p] Chap. iii. 13.
[q] Chap. iii. 15.
[r] 2 Sam. xv. 23.
[s] Eccleſ. iii. 7.

the wall of Jeruſalem, that we be [t] no more a reproach. 18. Then I told them of [u] the hand of my God which was good upon me; and alſo the king's words that he had ſpoken unto me. And they ſaid, Let us riſe up and build. So they ſtrengthned their hands for this good *work.* 19. But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah [x] the ſervant the Ammonite, and Geſhem the Arabian heard *it*, [y] they laughed us to ſcorn, and deſpiſed us, and ſaid, What *is* this thing that ye do? [z] will ye rebel againſt the king? 20. Then anſwered I them, and ſaid unto them, The God of heaven, he will proſper us; therefore we his ſervants will ariſe and build: but [a] you have no portion, nor right, [b] nor memorial in Jeruſalem.

v. 9—20. The king having permitted Nehemiah to go, and given him an order upon the governors, grants him withal an honourable eſcort to protect him. *Note*, Each child of God, whom the king of heaven delights to honour, is attended with mightier angelic guards. We have here,

1. The vexation of Tobiah and Sanballat, the enemies of the Jews, on hearing of Nehemiah's journey, and the deſign of it. *Note*, Every favour ſhown the ſervants of God, awakens the envy, and provokes the rage of a wicked world.

2. The ſurvey Nehemiah took of the ſtate of the walls. He reſted on his arrival three days, and by night, with a few ſelect perſons for ſecreſy, that the deſign he was forming might not be known, or counteracted, went round the walls to obſerve the breaches, and what repairs would be needful. *Note*, (1.) Secreſy and ſilence are very neceſſary, when our enemies are ſo ready to take the alarm. The wiſdom of the ſerpent is uſeful, when joined to the innocence of the dove. (2.) A well-ſettled plan of procedure is the way to enſure ſucceſs in every enterprize.

3. The diſcovery he made to the rulers, of his commiſſion. He aſſembled them, intimated the ruinous ſtate of the city, and the reproach which their defenceleſs ſtate brought on them from their wicked neighbours; then informed them of God's good providence in advancing him at court, giving him favour with the king, and produced his commiſſion for repairing their deſolations, encouraging them hereupon to ſet about the work. Quickened by ſuch an exhortation, they eagerly ſeize the opportunity, and ſtrengthen each other immediately to ariſe and build the wall. *Note*, (1.) A good miniſter, or magiſtrate, that is active and zealous, will find many ready to ſecond his labours, who themſelves had not courage to lead. (2.) They who would work heartily for God, muſt begin out of hand. Delays are dangerous.

4. The oppoſition the work met. Their old and ſworn foes derided their attempts, and maligned their intentions; but Nehemiah, undiſmayed, and confident in God's bleſſing, deſpiſed their taunts, and perſiſted in the work; nor would ſuffer theſe Samaritans to have any portion or lot among them. *Note*, (1.) Every arrow of invenomed malice, deriſion, ſlander, and threatning, will be ſhot againſt God's ſaints; but they are clad in armour weapon-proof. (2.) Inſtead of being diſcouraged, we ſhould be quickened by oppoſition: if God proſper us, we need not fear.

CHAP. III.

In this chapter we have the building the wall, the order of the work, the names of the builders, and their proſperous concluſion, ver. 1—32.

1. THEN [a] Eliaſhib the high prieſt roſe up with his brethren the prieſts, and they built [b] the ſheep-gate, they ſanctified it, and ſet up the doors of it; [c] even unto the tower of Meah they ſanctified it, unto the tower of [d] Hananeel. 2. And † next unto him builded [e] the men of Jericho: and next to them builded Zaccur the ſon of Imri. 3. But [f] the fiſh-gate did the ſons of Haſſenah build, who *alſo* laid the beams thereof, and [g] ſet up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. 4. And next unto them repaired Meremoth the ſon of Urijah the ſon of Koz: and next unto them repaired Meſhullam the ſon of Berechiah, the ſon of Meſhezabeel: and next unto them repaired Zadok the ſon of Baana. 5. And next unto them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles [h] put not their necks to the work of their Lord. 6. Moreover, [i] the old gate repaired Jehoiadah the ſon of Paſeah, and Meſhullam the ſon of Beſodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and ſet up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. 7. And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this ſide the river. 8. Next unto him repaired Uzziel the ſon of Harhaiah, of the goldſmiths: next unto him alſo repaired Hananiah the ſon of *one of* the apothecaries, and they fortified Jeruſalem [k] unto the broad wall. 9. And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the ſon of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jeruſalem. 10. And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the ſon of Harumaph, even over againſt his houſe: and next unto him repaired Hattuſh the ſon of Haſhabniah. 11. Malchijah the ſon of Harim, and Haſhub the ſon of Pahath-moab, repaired the ‡ other piece, [l] and the tower of the furnaces. 12. And next unto him repaired Shallum the ſon of Haloheſh, the ruler of the half part of Jeruſalem, he and [m] his daughters. 13. [n] The valley-gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and ſet up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thouſand cubits on the wall unto the dung-gate. 14. But the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the ſon of Rechab, the ruler of part of Beth-haccerem: he built it, and ſet up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. 15. But [o] the gate of the fountain repaired Shallun the ſon of Col-hozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah: he built it, and covered it, and ſet up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of [h] the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the ſtairs that go down from the city of David. 16. After him repaired Nehemiah the ſon of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Beth-zur, unto *the place* over againſt the ſepulchres of David, and to [q] the pool *that was* made, and unto the houſe of the mighty. 17. After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the ſon of Bani: next unto him repaired Haſhabiah the ruler of the half part of Keilah, in his part. 18. After him repaired their brethren, Bavai the ſon of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah. 19. And next to him repaired Ezer the ſon of Jeſhua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece over againſt the going up to the armory, at the turning *of the wall*. 20. After him Baruch the ſon of § Zabbai, [r] earneſtly repaired the other piece, from the turning *of the wall*, unto the door of the houſe of Eliaſhib the high prieſt. 21. After him repaired Meremoth the ſon of Urijah, the ſon of Koz, another piece, from the door of the houſe of Eliaſhib, even to the end of the houſe of Eliaſhib. 22. And after him repaired the prieſts, the men of the plain. 23. After him repaired Benjamin, and Haſhub, over againſt their houſe: after him repaired Azariah, the ſon of Maaſeiah, the ſon of Ananiah, by his houſe. 24. After him repaired Binnui the ſon of Henadad, another piece, from the houſe of Azariah, unto the turning *of the wall*, even unto the corner. 25. Palal the ſon of Uzai, over againſt the turning *of the wall*, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high houſe, that *was* by [s] the court of the priſon: after him, Pedaiah the ſon of Paroſh. 26. Moreover, [t] the Nethinims dwelt in ‖ Ophel, † unto *the place* over againſt [u] the water-gate toward the eaſt, and the tower that lieth out. 27. After them the Tekoites repaired another piece, over againſt the great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel. 28. [x] From above the horſe-gate repaired the prieſts, every one over againſt his houſe. 29. After them repaired Zadok the ſon of Immer, over againſt his houſe: after him repaired alſo Shemaiah, the ſon of Shechaniah, the keeper of the eaſt-gate. 30. After him repaired Hananiah the ſon of Shelemiah, and Hanun the ſixth ſon of Zalaph, another piece: after him repaired Meſhullam the ſon of Berechiah, over againſt his chamber. 31. After him repaired Malchiah, the goldſmith's ſon, unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants over againſt the gate Miphkad, and to the ‡ going up of the corner. 32. And between the going up of the corner unto the ſheep-gate, repaired the goldſmiths and the merchants.

v. 1—32. The work being reſolved upon, we have here the diſtribution of it. Holy emulation warmed their hearts, and zeal for the public welfare quickened their labour.

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[t] Chap. i. 3.

[u] Ver. 8.

[x] Prov. xxx. 22.

[y] See Job xxx. 1. Pſ. xliv. 13, 14. Jer. xx. 7, 8. Heb. xi. 36.

[z] Chap. vi. 6

[a] Ezra iv. 3. Acts viii. 21.

[b] Rev. xxi. 27.

[a] Chap. xii. 10.

[b] John v. 2.

[c] Chap. xii. 39.

[d] Jer. xxxi. 38.

† Heb. At his hand.

[e] Ezra ii. 34.

[f] Chap. xii. 39. Zeph. i. 10.

[g] See Chap. vi. 1. & vii. 1.

[h] Judg. v. 23.

[i] Chap. xii. 39.

[k] Chap. xii. 38.

‡ Heb. Second meaſure.

[l] Chap. xii. 38.

[m] See Exod. xxxv. 25. Phil. iv. 3.

[n] Chap. ii. 13.

[o] Chap. ii. 14.

[p] John ix.

[q] 2 Kings xx. 20.

§ Or, Zaccai.

[r] Rom. xii. 11.

[s] Jer. xxxii. 2. & xxxiii. 1. & xxxvii. 21.

[t] Ezra ii. 43.

‖ Or, the tower. 2 Chron. xxvii. 3.

† i. e. Repaired unto, &c.

[u] Chap. viii. 1. & xii. 37.

[x] 2 Kings xi. 16. 2 Chron. xxiii. 15. Jer. xxxi. 40.

‡ Or, corner-chamber.

1. The high prieſt with his brethren led the way, beginning at the ſheep-gate, through which the ſacrifices went to the temple; and when they had finiſhed their portion, they ſanctified it by prayer and thankſgiving, for the aſſiſtance God had given them. *Note*, (1.) Miniſters of God ſhould ſhow among the foremoſt zeal for his glory, and diligence in his ſervice. (2.) Our common employments ſhould be ſanctified by prayer and thankſgiving. (3.) They who look up to God for help, will be enabled to finiſh the work he hath given them to do.

2. The reſt zealouſly followed ſo good an example; and not only the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, but thoſe of the neighbouring cities and villages, chearfully lent their hand to the work. Rulers, and people of all trades and occupations, aſſiſted. None were too great to think themſelves debaſed by labouring; none ſo little, but that they could contribute ſomething to the general good. The nobles of Tekoa alone refuſed their aſſiſtance, and therefore a juſt brand of infamy ſtands for ever on their memory. *Note*, (1.) Unanimity in a good cauſe is the ſureſt token of ſucceſs. (2.) Every man hath ſomething to do for God according to his ſtation and abilities: none are ſo little as to be uſeleſs; none ſo great, as to be above the work of the Lord.

3. Shallum's daughters are honourably mentioned, as aſſiſting in this good work. Though they could not themſelves handle the trowel, they could hire aſſiſtance, and provide materials. Good women in every age have been great helpers in the cauſe of God.

4. One of the builders is noted for his zeal, *v.* 20. another, though the ſixth ſon, is remarked as more honourable than his brethren, *v.* 30. who ſeem not to have like him engaged in the ſervice. *Note*, (1.) When the work is God's, we cannot be too zealouſly affected. (2.) The bleſſing of God doth not always follow the birthright: the younger ſon is often the better man.

5. Some, who had finiſhed their firſt portion, having done ſooner than their brethren, undertook a ſecond, *v.* 4—21. 5—27. When we affect the ſervice, we ſhall not merely conſider how much *we muſt* do to ſave our credit, but do all *we can*, becauſe we love the cauſe.

CHAP. IV.

God's work muſt needs meet oppoſition from a wicked world. 1. Their enemies mocked and ridiculed them, and they anſwered with their prayers, ver. 1—6. 2. *By the vigilance and courage of Nehemiah, their attempt to interrupt the work is defeated*, ver. 7—23.

1. BUT it came to paſs that [a] when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and [b] took great indignation, and [c] mocked the Jews. 2. And he ſpake before his brethren, and the army of Samaria, and ſaid, What do [d] theſe feeble Jews? will they fortify themſelves? will they ſacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the ſtones out of the heaps of the rubbiſh which are burnt? 3. Now Tobiah the Ammonite *was* by him, and he ſaid, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he ſhall even break down their ſtone-wall. 4. [e] Hear, O our God, for we are deſpiſed: and [f] turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity: 5. And [g] cover not their iniquity, and let not their ſin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked *thee* to anger before the builders. 6. So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people [h] had a mind to work.

[a] Chap. ii. 10.
[b] Acts v. 17.
[c] Chap. ii. 19.
[d] 1 Cor. i. 27.
[e] Pſ. cxxiii. 2, 3.
[f] Prov. iii. 34.
[g] Pſ. lxix. 27, 28. & cix. 14, 15. Jer. xviii. 23.
[h] Pſ. cx. 3.

v. 1—6. Never did the cauſe of God begin to proſper, but the enemies of God began to malign and reſiſt it. Let us never be diſcouraged if we ſee this old enmity revive.

1. Sanballat and Tobiah, the ſworn enemies of the Jews, no ſooner have intelligence of the deſign, than, vexed at the heart, they ſet themſelves to oppoſe it. They treat the feeble Jews with ſcorn, ridicule the attempt as impracticable; mock the hopes they entertained, that they ſhould finiſh the work, and dedicate it with ſacrifice; and Tobiah wittily repreſents their contemptible efforts, as if the wall was ſo low, a fox might leap over it, and the materials ſo weak, that his feet would throw down their building. *Note*, (1.) Ridicule and contempt are ſome of the ſharp arrows in the world's quiver, which they never fail to throw at God's faithful labourers. (2.) Though many pretend to mock and deſpiſe the work of God, at heart they are grieved, and fear whereunto this will grow. (3.) One wicked man encourages another; but though ſcoffers make their bands ſtrong, God will cover them ſhortly with confuſion.

2. Nehemiah prays againſt the revilings of his enemies; and, if he can intereſt God's regard for him, little cares for their oppoſition, which he knows God will then turn to their own ſhame. *Note*, (1.) The way to anſwer the ſcorn of the world, is by carrying our caſe to the Lord our God: he heareth, and judgeth. (2.) They who would be Chriſt's ſervants, muſt expect the world's ill word and abuſe. (3.) Though we may not, from a ſpirit of private revenge, pray againſt men's oppoſition, we cannot but wiſh God would glorify himſelf, and vindicate his own cauſe in the confuſion of all his enemies. (4.) They who diſcourage the hearts of God's faithful labourers, treaſure up a peculiar meaſure of wrath againſt the day of wrath.

3. The people, more encouraged by Nehemiah's prayer, than deterred by their enemies abuſe, raiſed the wall all round the city to half its height, for their hearts were in the work. *Note*, (1.) Much may be done in a little while, when all are hearty in lending their aſſiſtance. (2.) We need not fear the revilings of men, when we are aſſured of the bleſſing of God upon our labours.

7. ¶ But it came to paſs, *that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and [i] the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Aſhdodites heard that the walls of Jeruſalem † were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be ſtopped, then [k] they were very wroth, 8. And [l] conſpired all of them together, to come *and* to fight againſt Jeruſalem, and to hinder it. 9. ‡ Nevertheleſs, [m] we made our prayer unto our God, and [n] ſet a watch againſt them day and night, becauſe of them. 10. And Judah ſaid, [o] The ſtrength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and *there is* much rubbiſh, ſo that [p] we are not able to build the wall. 11. And our adverſaries ſaid, [q] They ſhall not know, neither ſee, till we come in the midſt among them, and ſlay them, and cauſe the work to ceaſe. 12. And it came to paſs that when the Jews which dwelt by them, came, they ſaid unto us ten times, § From all places, whence ye ſhall return unto us, *they will be upon you*. 13. ¶ [r] Therefore ſet I ‖ in the lower places behind the wall, *and* on the higher places, I even ſet the people after their families, with their ſwords, their ſpears, and their bows. 14. And I looked, and roſe up, and ſaid unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the reſt of the people, [s] Be not ye afraid of them: remember the LORD [t] *which is* great and terrible, and [u] fight for your brethren, your ſons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houſes. 15. And it came to paſs when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and [x] God had brought their counſel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

[i] Chap. ii. 19.
† Heb. Aſcended.
[k] Gen. iii. 15.
[l] See 2 Chron. xx. 1. Mark v. 9.
‡ Or, therefore.
[m] Pſ. l. 15.
[n] Mat. xxvi. 41.
[o] See Num. xxxii. 9.
[p] Num. xiii. 31.
[q] Pſ. lvi. 6.
§ Or, From all places ye muſt return to us. Or, From all places we come, that ye may return to us.
[r] Pſ. cxii. 5.
‖ Heb. From the lower parts of the places.
[s] Num. xiv. 9.
[t] Exod. xv. 3.
[u] So 2 Sam. x. 12. Pſ. cxxii. 8.
[x] Job v. 12, &c.

v. 7—15. When ſecret reviling prevented not the progreſs of the building, by open force they prepared to reſiſt it.

1. Sanballat and Tobiah engaged the Arabians, Ammonites, and Aſhdodites, to aſſiſt them, and join their forces to attack the Jews, whoſe piety they alike hated, and whoſe growing proſperity they envied. To cruſh them therefore in the bud, they in great wrath formed a league, ſecretly contriving to fall upon the builders before they were apprized of their danger, and there to maſſacre them, unarmed and unprepared; the conſequence of which muſt needs be the interruption of the building. *Note*, (1.) The hatred of the wicked is a deadly hatred, that thirſteth for the precious life. Perſecutors of God's people are ever cruel. (2.) When God's cauſe is to be oppreſſed, they who were never ſo much at variance among themſelves, will cordially unite their forces againſt this hated object. (3.) Though craft and power be with the enemies of God's church, he that ſitteth above the heavens mocks at their impotent attempts.

2. The faintheartedneſs of ſome of the men of Judah was as great a diſcouragement, as the threatnings of the Samaritans. Wearied with the ſervice, diſheartened at the difficulties, and deſpairing of ſucceſs, they are ready to ceaſe their efforts, as if tired out, and unable longer to ſupport the fatigue. *Note* (1.) Whilſt without are fightings, within will often be fears. (2.) Unbelieving Iſraelites are a greater hindrance than infidel enemies.

3. Intelligence was brought of their enemies deſigns, either by friends, who wiſhed them to be prepared, or by falſe-hearted Jews, gained over by the Samaritans, who ſought to diſcourage their brethren; as it may be rendered, inſtead of, *from all places whence ye ſhall return unto us*, they will be upon you; *from all places* we come, *that ye may return to us*: ſave yourſelves from danger, return every man to his city, and leave the work alone. *Note*, (1.) Though the counſels of the wicked are never ſo ſecret,

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cret, God can detect and diſappoint them. (2.) Falſe friends are more dangerous than open enemies.

4. Nehemiah bravely and prudently provided againſt the impending danger. To God he firſt committed their caſe, in fervent prayer for direction and ſupport; then placed a proper guard, ſome behind the wall, where it was loweſt, and others on the higher part, or towers, whence they could moſt incommode the enemy. And, as he perceived them in conſternation, he encourages them to truſt on God, their almighty aid, whoſe arm could eaſily baffle their foes; and animates them to fight, from the conſideration that their all was at ſtake, and on their courage the ſafety of all depended. *Note*, (1.) In every diſtreſs our firſt recourſe ſhould be to God. (2.) Every prudent human means muſt be diligently uſed in dependance on him. (3.) Nothing inſpires the heart of a believer with ſuch courage, as the views of that almighty grace engaged for his ſupport.

5. The enemy hearing their deſign diſcovered, and the preparations made to receive them, deſiſted from their enterprize, and the work again happily went forward. *Note*, Experience of God's care over us ſhould engage our increaſing fidelity and zeal in his ſervice.

16. And it came to paſs from that time forth, *that* the half of my ſervants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the ſpears, the ſhields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers *were* behind all the houſe of Judah. 17. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with thoſe that laded, *every one* with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other *hand* held a weapon. 18. For the builders, every one had his ſword girded † by his ſide, and *ſo* builded: and he that ſounded the trumpet *was* by me. 19. ¶ And I ſaid unto the nobles and to the rulers, and to the reſt of the people, The work *is* great and large, and we are ſeparated upon the wall, one far from another. 20. In what place *therefore* ye hear the ſound of the trumpet, reſort ye thither unto us: [y] our God ſhall fight for us. 21. So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the ſpears, from the riſing of the morning, till the ſtars appeared. 22. Likewiſe at the ſame time, ſaid I unto the people, Let every one with his ſervant lodge within Jeruſalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day. 23. So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my ſervants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, ‡ *ſaving that* every one put them off for waſhing.

† Heb. On his loins.

y Exod. xiv. 14, 25. Deut. i. 30. Rom. viii. 31.

‡ Or, every one went with his weapon for water; as Judg. v. 11.

v. 16—23. Though the preſent ſtorm was blown over, Nehemiah took care to be always prepared for any unforeſeen attack. Security is dangerous: it becomes the ſoldier of Chriſt to be continually on his guard.

1. Half Nehemiah's guards were ready accoutred continually, whilſt the other half worked on the wall, and relieved each other. Every builder had his ſword on his thigh, and his weapons ready at hand, that at a moment's warning he might be ready. Their rulers alſo ſtood behind them to encourage them, and Nehemiah kept a trumpeter near him, that at any approach of danger, on the ſignal given, they might immediately aſſemble in a body where he was. *Note*, (1.) They who labour for God, ever need the ſword of the ſpirit, that they may be ready armed againſt every enemy. (2.) Union among Chriſtians is their great ſtability. (3.) They who are diſtinguiſhed in ſtation, gifts, or office, muſt be encouragers of others by their zeal and examples.

2. To ſtrengthen them againſt any ſurprize by night, Nehemiah cauſed all the country labourers to lodge in the city, that they might be at hand in caſe of attack. As for himſelf and his attendants, they never put off their cloathes, unleſs to change, or to waſh for any ceremonial uncleanneſs. From the dawn of day to the twilight they held their ſpears; and at night, whilſt ſome kept guard, the reſt were ready at a moment's call. *Note*. (1.) As we are ever in danger, we muſt watch always: our ſpiritual enemies neither ſleep nor ſlumber. (2.) Any hardſhip will the good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt chearfully endure, when called to it for the glory of God, and the ſervice of immortal ſouls.

CHAP. V.

Foreign foes being diſappointed, Nehemiah ſets himſelf to redreſs domeſtic grievances. 1. *The poor complain of their debts and oppreſſions*, ver. 1—5. 2. *Nehemiah expoſtulates with the oppreſſors*, ver. 6—13. *And* 3. *ſets them an example of compaſſion and tenderneſs*, ver. 14—19.

1. AND [a] there was a great cry of the people, and of their wives, againſt [b] their brethren the Jews. 2. For there were that ſaid, We, our ſons, and our daughters *are* many: therefore [c] we take up corn *for them*, that we may eat and live. 3. *Some* alſo there were that ſaid, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houſes, that we might buy corn, becauſe of the dearth. 4. There were alſo that ſaid, We have borrowed money for [d] the king's tribute, *and that upon* our lands and vineyards. 5. Yet now [e] our fleſh *is* as the fleſh of our brethren, our children as their children: and lo, we bring into [f] bondage our ſons and our daughters, to be ſervants, and *ſome* of our daughters are brought unto bondage *already*, neither *is it* in our power *to redeem them*: for other men have our lands and vineyards.

a Iſa. v. 7.
b Lev. xxv 35. Deut. xv. 7. Jam. ii. 6, 15.

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c Hag. i. 6.
d Ezra vii. 24.
e Iſa. lviii. 7.
f Lev. xxv. 39.

v. 1—5. We heard but late the cry of fear, becauſe of the enemy without; here we have the cry of the poor, becauſe of the oppreſſor within. Two cauſes had contributed to their poverty and diſtreſs, the dearth of their land, and the tribute ſtill lying on them which muſt be paid. To ſatisfy the cravings of hunger for themſelves and families, as well as the relentleſs demands of the tax-gatherers, they were obliged not only to mortgage their lands and vineyards, but to ſell their children, tho' of the ſame ſtock and family as the richeſt, to relieve their wants, without the power of redemption, becauſe of the growing debt from the uſury exacted by their hard-hearted brethren. *Note*, (1.) Among the moſt unhappy ſituations in life, we may juſtly reckon being in debt without power to pay. (2.) It is cruel to take advantage of our brethren's diſtreſs, and to make their yoke heavier by uſurious exactions. (3.) When times are hard, the wants of the poor cry for relief: it becomes us to have our ears open to their application, and our hand ready to relieve their wants. (4.) Let thoſe who grind the faces of the poor, tremble at their cries, which enter into the ears of a compaſſionate God. (5.) The diſtreſs of his family is more grievous to a tender parent, than his own.

6. ¶ And [g] I was very angry, when I heard their cry, and theſe words. 7. Then † I conſulted with myſelf, and [h] I rebuked the nobles and the rulers, and ſaid unto them, [i] You exact uſury every one of his brother. And I ſet a great aſſembly againſt them. 8. And I ſaid unto them, We, after our ability, [k] have redeemed our brethren the Jews, *which were* ſold unto the heathen; and will you even ſell your brethren? or ſhall they be ſold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing *to anſwer*. 9. Alſo I ſaid, It *is* not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk [l] in the fear of our God, [m] becauſe of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? 10. I likewiſe, *and* my brethren, and my ſervants might exact of them money and corn: I pray you [n] let us leave off this uſury. 11. [o] Reſtore, I pray you, to them even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houſes, alſo the hundredth *part* of the money, and of the corn, the wine and the oil, that ye exact of them. 12. Then ſaid they, We will reſtore *them*, and [p] will require nothing of them; ſo will we do as thou ſayeſt. Then I called the prieſts, and [q] took an oath of them, that they ſhould do according to this promiſe. 13. Alſo [r] I ſhook my lap, and ſaid, So God ſhake out every man from his houſe, and from his labour, that performeth not this promiſe, even thus be he ſhaken out, and emptied. And [s] all the congregation ſaid, Amen, and praiſed the LORD. And the people [t] did according to this promiſe.

g Eph. iv. 26.
† Heb. My heart conſulted in me.
h 1 Tim. v. 20.
i Exod. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36.
k Lev. xxv. 48.
l Lev. xxv. 36.
m 2 Sam. xii. 14. Rom. ii. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 12.
n Pſ. xv. 5. Ezek. xviii. 8.
o Lev. vi. 4. Luke xix. 8.
p Luke vi. 35.
q Ezra x. 5. Jer. xxxiv. 8, 9.
r Mat. x. 14. Acts xiii. 51. & xviii. 6.
s As Deut. xxvii. 15, &c.
t Pſ. l. 14.

v. 6—13. With tender ſympathy for his brethren's diſtreſſed caſe, the good Nehemiah defers not to ſeek immediate redreſs. It was of more importance to ſecure the God of the poor deſtitute for their friend, than to dwell in a city that had bars and gates.

1. He was angry. A holy indignation warmed his heart; yet, not haſty in his ſpirit, he bethought him how beſt the grievance might be redreſſed. *Note*, (1.) We may be angry without offending, when ſin, and not the perſon of the ſinner, is the object of our diſpleaſure. (2.) Before we rebuke, we ſhould deliberate, that we may ſpeak not the language of paſſion, but the word of meekneſs.

2. He openly rebukes the nobles, who had been the authors of the oppreſſion; called an aſſembly to determine upon the caſe; or engaged the people in a body to bring in their complaints, that the offenders might be convicted, and the abuſe reformed. *Note*, (1.) No man is too great to be above the reproof of a faithful miniſter. (2.) Popular complaints, when juſt, demand ſpeedy redreſs.

3. He remonſtrates with them on the evil of their conduct; not merely to reform them by his authority, but to awaken their conſciences to a ſenſe of ſin. They were their brethren, and therefore entitled to peculiar tenderneſs: many of them had been but lately redeemed from their heathen maſters, to whom, at Babylon, and the countries around, they had been ſold; and to bring them again into bondage would be very cruel. They who did ſuch things muſt needs be deſtitute of the fear of God. Himſelf, and thoſe with them, had ſhewn them a better example: beſides, nothing would give the heathen around them greater cauſe for reproach. Therefore he intreats them to immediate reſtitution of the mortgaged lands and houſes, and to deſiſt from their exorbitant uſury. *Note*, (1.) The relation we ſtand in to each other as brethren ſhould engage our compaſſions. (2.) They who are once God's redeemed people, ought never more to return into bondage. (3.) They who have a zeal for God's cauſe, will be tenderly careful to bring no reproach upon it. (4.) A worldly-minded and niggardly profeſſor is the greateſt ſcandal to religion. (5.) When we have done ill, it becomes us to labour to undo it. There can be no ſimplicity towards God, without reſtitution to the oppreſſed. (6.) They who themſelves ſet a good example, can ſpeak with greater confidence. (7.) It is a wiſe man's maxim to entreat where he may command, and ſeek to engage a compliance, rather than uſe compulſion.

4. As they could not anſwer his remonſtrance, and profeſſed their readineſs to comply with his requeſt, the prieſts are called to adminiſter an oath to them, and with a ſolemn execration to bind them to be faithful thereto. Nor were they backward, but added their ready Amen to the oath he exacted, and praiſed the Lord, both thoſe who were relieved, for the mercy they had received; and they who had yielded up the mortgaged lands, that God had given them ſuch a heart; and their performance was as punctual, as the oath was ſolemn. *Note*, (1.) It is a mercy when a wiſe rebuke finds an obedient ear. (2.) An oath is ſacredly to be fulfilled: the perjured God will judge.

14. ¶ Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year, [u] even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that is*, twelve years, [x] I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor. 15. But the former governors that *had been* before me, were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beſide forty ſhekels of ſilver, yea even their ſervants bare rule over the people: but ſo did not I, [y] becauſe of the fear of God. 16. Yea, alſo I continued in the work of this wall, [z] neither bought we any land: and all my ſervants *were* gathered thither unto the work: 17. Moreover, [a] *there were* at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beſides thoſe that came unto us from among the heathen that *are* about us. 18. Now *that* which was prepared *for me* daily, *was* one ox, *and* ſix choice ſheep: alſo fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days ſtore of all ſorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, becauſe the bondage was heavy upon this people. 19. [b] Think upon me, my God, for good, *according* to all that I have done for this people.

[u] Chap. xiii. 6.
[x] 1 Cor. ix. 4, 15.
[y] Prov. xvi. 6.
[z] See Acts xx. 33.
[a] 1 Pet. iv. 9.
[b] Chap. xiii. 22.

v. 14—19. Nehemiah's uprightneſs was a ſevere reproof to the rulers oppreſſion; and he relates it not as priding himſelf in it, but as giving them an example.

1. They who were between Zerubbabel and him, had been maintained at the public expence in a table, and daily ſalary of between four and five pounds; beſides that, they ſuffered their ſervants to domineer, and, by perquiſites extorted from the people, made themſelves grievouſly chargeable. *Note*, (1.) It is the ſcandal and ſhame of governors to fleece the people, to enrich themſelves. (2.) They who connive at their ſervants inſolence and rapaciouſneſs, are chargeable with all the evil they commit.

2. Nehemiah himſelf had done very differently. Far from receiving wages, or enriching himſelf by purchaſes, or ſuffering his ſervants to be burdenſome, he had freely executed the office of governor; maintained himſelf and houſhold out of his own eſtate; employed all his people without hire or reward; and, becauſe he ſaw the heavy bondage which the people ſtill laboured under, he kept an open table for the reception of an hundred and fifty gueſts daily, beſides entertaining all the ſtrangers who came to them. And this he aſcribes to the fear of God, which influenced his conduct, and engaged him to this conſcientious diſcharge of his office. *Note*, (1.) True patriots are ever above ſelfiſh views, and rather generouſly ſpend their own, than rapaciouſly plunder the public. (2.) That which we do not through pride or love of fame, but through the fear of God, will be an acceptable ſervice. (3.) It becomes us in times of private or public diſtreſs, generouſly to remit even our juſt dues. (4.) True hoſpitality is as commendable, as the extravagant luxury of great mens tables is blameable.

3. He makes his prayer to God for a remembrance, not as pleading deſert, but expecting the reward of grace. God, who had diſpoſed his heart for the ſervice, would, he knew, recompenſe theſe labours of love. *Note*, What we generouſly expend in God's ſervice, we cannot loſe by: though we ſhould now receive no return, if he remember us for good, that will be an abundant recompence.

CHAP. VI.

We have here, 1. *The treacherous deſigns of Sanballat diſappointed*, ver. 1—4. 2. *His malignant letter diſregarded*, ver. 5. 3. *The falſe prophets baffled*, ver. 10—14. 4. *The work finiſhed, notwithſtanding the treachery of ſome Jews*, ver. 15—19.

1. NOW it came to paſs, [a] when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geſhem the Arabian, and the reſt of our enemies heard that I had builded the wall, and *that* there was no breach left therein; ([b] though at that time I had not ſet up the doors upon the gates), 2. That Sanballat and Geſhem [c] ſent unto me, ſaying, Come, let us meet together in *ſome one of* the villages in the plain of [d] Ono: but [e] they thought to do me miſchief. 3. And [f] I ſent meſſengers unto them, ſaying, I *am* doing a great work, ſo that I cannot come down: why ſhould the work ceaſe, whilſt I leave it, and come down to you? 4. Yet they ſent unto me four times after this ſort; and I anſwered them after the ſame manner.

[a] Chap. ii. 10, 19.
[b] Chap. iii. 3.
[c] Prov. xxvi. 24, 25.
[d] 1 Chron. viii. 12.
[e] Pſ. xxxvii. 12.
[f] Mat. x. 16.

v. 1—4. The reſtleſs enemies of God's people could not bear to ſee the work ſo proſperous, without attempts to hinder and obſtruct it; and therefore they lay a ſnare to take off Nehemiah, the great promoter of the work, by inviting him to a friendly conference in one of the villages of Benjamin. But ſuſpecting ſome plot, or having received ſome intelligence of their deſign, he refuſed to go, pleading the urgency of his work as his excuſe for not meeting them. Four ſeveral times this propoſal was made, and as often rejected with the ſame anſwer. *Note*, (1.) The propoſals of known enemies ſhould be weighed with jealous caution. (2.) When we have buſineſs which calls, viſits of compliment and civility muſt be poſtponed. (3.) Repeated ſollicitations to do what is evil, or imprudent, ſhould meet with repeated denials.

5. Then ſent Sanballat his ſervant unto me, in like manner, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand: 6. Wherein *was* written; [g] It is reported among the heathen, and † Gaſhmu ſaith *it*, *that* thou and the Jews [h] think to rebel: for which cauſe thou buildeſt the wall, that thou mayeſt be their king, according to theſe words. 7. And thou haſt alſo appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jeruſalem, ſaying, *There is* a king in Judah: and now ſhall it be reported to the king according to theſe words. Come now therefore, and let us take counſel together. 8. Then I ſent unto him, ſaying, There are no ſuch things done as thou ſayeſt, but [i] thou feigneſt them out of thine own heart. 9. For they all made us afraid, ſaying, [k] Their hands ſhall be weakned from the work, that it be not done. ‡ Now therefore, *O God*, ſtrengthen my hands.

[g] Jer. xx. 10.
† Geſhem, Ver. 1, 2.
[h] Ezra iv. 13. Chap. ii. 19.
[i] Pſ. lii. 2.
[k] 2 Tim. i. 7.
‡ Or, Now therefore I will ſtrengthen, &c.

v. 5—9. When one deſign miſcarries, Sanballat contrives another: ſince he cannot ſeduce him from the work, he ſeeks to terrify him.

1. He ſends a letter, intimating the information which Geſhem, or Gaſhmu, had given, and deſiring a conference thereupon; pretending friendſhip, as if, ſhould the report ſpread, of his intention to rebel, and make himſelf king, the conſequence might be dangerous. *Note*, (1.) Fair profeſſions of friendſhip often cloak foul deſigns. (2.) It is an old plot of the enemies of God's people, to repreſent them as ſeditious, and make them obnoxious to the government.

2. Nehemiah eaſily ſaw the deſign was to weaken his hands, and therefore, whilſt he denies the accuſation, and lays the invention at the door of his enemy, he looks to God to ſtrengthen him, and then his foes may rage in vain. *Note*, (1.) No lies, or malevolent reports, ſhould weaken our hands from the work of God. (2.) They who have almighty power engaged for them, may look up to God and be comforted; he will uphold them. (3.) The more the enemy rages, the more ſhall God's ſtrength be perfected in our weakneſs.

10. After-

Before Chriſt 445.

10. Afterwards I came unto the houſe of Shemaiah the ſon of Delaiah, the ſon of Mehetabeel, who *was* ſhut up; and [l] he ſaid, Let us meet together in the houſe of God, within the temple, and let us ſhut the doors of the temple; for they will come to ſlay thee, yea in the night will they come to ſlay thee. 11. And I ſaid, [m] Should ſuch a man as I flee? and who *is there*, that *being* as I *am*, would go into the temple to ſave his life? I will not go in. 12. And lo, I perceived that God had not ſent him, but that [n] he pronounced this propheſy againſt me; for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13. Therefore *was* he hired, that I ſhould be afraid, and do ſo, and ſin, and *that* they might have *matter* for an evil report, that they might reproach me. 14. [o] My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to theſe their works, and on [p] the propheteſs Noadiah, and the reſt of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

l Mat. vii. 15.
m Prov. xxviii. 1.
n Ezek. xiii. 22.
o Chap. xiii. 25.
p Ezek. xiii. 17. Rev. ii. 20.

v. 10—14. Deſpairing of ſucceſs by his own contrivances, Sanballat, by bribes, engages ſome of the Jews to betray Nehemiah. The plot laid was under pretence of zeal for his ſafety, which was in danger, to induce him to take refuge in the temple, which was both unlawful for him, as not being a prieſt, and would immediately diſcourage the workmen, and give juſt ſuſpicion that the former accuſations were true. The perſon employed was Shemaiah, a pretended propheteſs, Noadiah, and others. Nehemiah ſeems to have had a good opinion of Shemaiah, and to have come to conſult him on the difficulties and dangers to which he was expoſed; and he, to put him in fear, let him know his life was in danger that very night, unleſs he ſecured himſelf in the temple. But Nehemiah with ſcorn rejected the cowardly ſtep to which he was adviſed, ſo unbecoming a man of his ſtation and character. The advice, ſo contrary to God's glory, detected the lying prophet; and Nehemiah ſoon diſcovered Sanballat at the bottom of this plot, deſigning to draw him into ſin, and thereby blacken his character, and hurt his influence. For ſuch wickedneſs he referred their judgment to God, who would ſurely viſit for theſe things. *Note*, (1.) The treachery of pretended friends is more to be feared, than the oppoſition of profeſſed foes. (2.) Satan's miniſters often wear the garb of God's prophets. We muſt not believe every ſpirit, but try the ſpirits, whether they are of God. (3.) When God's cauſe is at ſtake, our very life muſt not be dear unto us. (4.) It is better to brave the greateſt dangers than commit the leaſt ſin. (5.) The devil's deſign in tempting us to ſin, is not only to wound our own ſouls, but to bring reproach upon our holy profeſſion. (6.) The deepeſt laid ſchemes for his people's hurt, God can diſappoint to his enemies confuſion. (7.) Wo to that ſinner, whoſe iniquity is marked before God, and whoſe judgment lingereth not.

15. ¶ So [q] the wall was finiſhed, in the twenty and fifth *day* of *the month* Elul, in fifty and two days. 16. And it came to paſs, that when all our enemies heard *thereof*, and all the heathen that *were* about us ſaw *theſe things*, they were much caſt down in their own eyes: for [r] they perceived that this work was wrought of our God. 17. ¶ Moreover, in thoſe days the nobles of Judah [s] ſent many letters unto Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came unto them. 18. For *there were* many in Judah ſworn unto him, becauſe he *was* the ſon-in-law of Shechaniah the ſon of Arah; and his ſon Johanan had taken the daughter of Meſhullam, the ſon of Berechiah. 19. Alſo they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my † words to him: *and* Tobiah ſent letters to put me in fear.

q Prov. xxi. 30.
r Pſ. cxxvi. 2.
s Lam. i. 2. Mic. vii. 5, 6.
† Or, matters.

v. 15—19. If God bleſs, then we ſhall be bleſſed in ſpite of every enemy. We have here,

1. The wall finiſhed, to the great diſmay and vexation of their neighbours, in fifty-two days. God's hand evidently appeared in the work, and therefore all oppoſition was impotent and vain. *Note*, (1.) When we are hearty in God's ſervice, much may be done in a little time. (2.) The enemies of God's people ſhall be made to ſee and own his care over them. (3.) When God will work, none can let it.

2. The treacherous correſpondence carried on between Tobiah and ſome of the nobles, and many of the people of Judah; ſo ungrateful were they to Nehemiah, and ſo falſe to the intereſts of their own country. Tobiah and his ſon had both married Jewiſh wives; therefore their families were intimately connected with him; ſpoke handſomely of him to Nehemiah, as a man worthy his regard; and when he utterly diſclaimed all connection with him, they reported all he ſaid to Tobiah, who ſeeing Nehemiah fixed, deſpaired of ingratiating himſelf, and tried by letters to intimidate him. *Note*, (1.) Nobility is no proof againſt baſeneſs and bribery. The greateſt men of a ſtate are often the betrayers of it. (2.) Intimate familiarity, and connection with the ungodly, cannot but tend to corrupt our own ſouls. (3.) Though the enemy threaten never ſo high, we need not fear whilſt God is on our ſide.

Before Chriſt 444.

CHAP. VII.

The city being fortified, we have here, 1. *A conſtant guard appointed,* ver. 1—4. 2. *A review of the people, in order to ſupply the city with inhabitants,* ver. 5—73.

1. NOW it came to paſs when the wall was built, and [a] I had ſet up the doors, and the porters, and the ſingers, and the Levites were appointed, 2. That I gave my brother [b] Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jeruſalem: 3. (for he *was* a faithful man, and [c] feared God above many). And I ſaid unto them, Let not the gates of Jeruſalem be opened, until the ſun be hot; and while they ſtand by let them ſhut the doors, and bar *them*: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, every one in his watch, and every one *to be* over againſt his houſe. 4. Now the city *was* † large and great: but the people *were* few therein, and the houſes *were* not builded.

a Chap. vi. 1.
b Chap. i. 2.
c Exod. xviii. 21.
About 444.
† Heb. Broad in ſpaces.

v. 1—4. The wall being finiſhed, and the gates ſet up, the Levites, porters, and ſingers, who had aſſiſted at the work, returned to their ſervice in the temple; and Nehemiah being, as is generally ſuppoſed, obliged to return for a ſeaſon to Babylon, (from whence he came afterwards, and for twelve years preſided over the Jewiſh ſtate) he endeavours to provide for their ſafety during his abſence. His brother Hanani, and Hananiah, a man eminent for his fear of God, are appointed to take care of the city, which, though walled, was thinly peopled, and the houſes in general lay in ruins; and as he had juſt cauſe to ſuſpect the deſigns of the enemy, to prevent ſurprize, he appoints a guard of the inhabitants to watch the city by night, each againſt his own houſe; enjoins the governors to ſee the gates carefully ſhut at evening, and not to be opened till the ſun had been ſome time riſen, that if any ambuſh was laid near the city, it might be diſcovered. *Note*, (1.) They who are eminent for the fear of God above many, are the fitteſt to be truſted with any public charge, becauſe they will make conſcience of fulfilling it. (2.) They who would be always ſafe, muſt always be upon their guard. (3.) Every man's family is his great concern: he hath need well watch over them night and day, if he would preſerve them from the deſtroyer.

5. ¶ And [d] my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy: and I found a regiſter of the genealogy of them which came up at the firſt, and found written therein, 6. [e] Theſe *are* the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of thoſe that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jeruſalem, and to Judah, every one unto his city; 7. Who came with Zerubbabel: Jeſhua, Nehemiah, † Azariah, ‡ Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilſhan, Miſpereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah; the number, *I ſay*, of the men of the people of Iſrael, *was this*; 8. The children of Paroſh, two thouſand an hundred ſeventy and two. 9. The children of Shephatiah, three hundred ſeventy and two. 10. The children of Arah, ſix hundred fifty and two. 11. The children of Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeſhua and Joab, two thouſand and eight hundred *and* eighteen. 12. The children of Elam, a thouſand two hundred fifty and four. 13. The children of Zattu, eight hundred forty and five. 14. The children of Zaccai, ſeven hundred and threeſcore. 15. The children of § Binnui, ſix hundred forty and eight. 16. The children of Bebai, ſix hundred twenty and eight. 17. The children of Azgad, two thouſand three hundred twenty and two. 18. The children of Adonikam, ſix hundred threeſcore and ſeven. 19. The children of Bigvai, two thouſand threeſcore and ſeven. 20. The children of Adin, ſix hundred fifty and five. 21. The children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight. 22. The children of Haſhum, three hundred twenty and eight. 23. The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and four. 24. The children of ‖ Hariph, an hundred and twelve.

d 2 Cor. iii. 5.
e Ezra ii. 1, &c.
About 536.
† Seraiah.
‡ Reelaiah, Ezra ii. 2.
§ Bani, Ezra ii. 10.
‖ Jorah, Ezra ii. 18.

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twelve. 25. The children of † Gibeon, ninety and five. 26. The men of Beth-lehem and Netophah, an hundred fourſcore and eight. 27. The men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight. 28. The men of ‡ Beth-azmaveth, forty and two. 29. The men of § Kirjath-jearim, Cephirah, and Beeroth, ſeven hundred forty and three. 30. The men of Ramah and Gaba, ſix hundred twenty and one. 31. The men of Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two. 32. The men of Beth-el and Ai, an hundred twenty and three. 33. The men of the other Nebo, fifty and two. 34. The children of [f] the other Elam, a thouſand two hundred fifty and four. 35. The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty. 36. The children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five. 37. The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, ſeven hundred twenty and one. 38. The children of Senaah, three thouſand nine hundred and thirty. 39. ¶ The prieſts: the children of [g] Jedaiah, of the houſe of Jeſhua, nine hundred ſeventy and three. 40. The children of [h] Immur, a thouſand fifty and two. 41. The children of [i] Paſhur, a thouſand two hundred forty and ſeven. 42. The children of [k] Harim, a thouſand and ſeventeen. 43. ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeſhua, of Kadmiel, *and* of the children of ‖ Hodevah, ſeventy and four. 44. ¶ The ſingers: the children of Aſaph, an hundred forty and eight. 45. ¶ The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight. 46. ¶ The Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of Haſhupha, the children of Tabbaoth, 47. The children of Keros, the children of † Sia, the children of Padon, 48. The children of Lebana, the children of Hagaba, the children of ‡ Shalmai, 49. The children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, 50. The children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, 51. The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of Phaſeah, 52. The children of Beſai, the children of Meunim, the children of § Nephiſheſim, 53. The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur, 54. The children of ‖ Bazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harſha, 55. The children of Barkos, the children of Siſera, the children of Tamah, 56. The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha. 57. ¶ The children of Solomon's ſervants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of † Perida, 58. The children of Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel, 59. The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of ‡ Amon. 60. All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's ſervants, *were* three hundred ninety and two. 61. [l] And theſe *were* they which went up *alſo* from Tel-melah, Tel-hareſha, Cherub, § Addon, and Immer: but they could not ſhew their father's houſe, nor their ‖ ſeed, whether they *were* of Iſrael. 62. The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, ſix hundred forty and two. 63. ¶ And of the prieſts: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of [m] Barzillai, which took *one* of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name. 64. Theſe ſought their regiſter *among* thoſe that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: [n] therefore were they, as polluted, put from the prieſthood. 65. And the † Tirſhatha ſaid unto them, that they ſhould not eat of the moſt holy things, till there ſtood *up* a prieſt with [o] Urim and Thummim. 66. ¶ [p] The whole congregation together, *was* forty and two thouſand three hundred and threeſcore, 67. Beſide their man-ſervants, and their maid-ſervants, of whom *there were* ſeven thouſand three hundred thirty and ſeven: and they had two hundred forty and five ſinging-men, and ſinging-women. 68. Their horſes, ſeven hundred thirty and ſix: their mules, two hundred forty and five: 69. *Their* camels, four hundred thirty and five: ſix thouſand ſeven hundred and twenty aſſes. 70. ¶ And ‡ ſome of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work: [q] the Tirſhatha gave to the treaſure a thouſand drams of gold, fifty baſons, five hundred and thirty prieſts garments. 71. And *ſome* of the chief of the fathers gave to the treaſure of the work, twenty thouſand drams of gold, and two thouſand and two hundred pound of ſilver. 72. And *that* which the reſt of the people gave, *was* twenty thouſand drams of gold, and two thouſand pound of ſilver, and threeſcore and ſeven prieſts garments. 73. [r] So the prieſts, and the Levites, and the porters, and the ſingers, and *ſome* of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Iſrael, dwelt in their cities; and when the ſeventh month came, the children of Iſrael *were* in their cities.

† Gibbar, Ezra ii. 20.
‡ Azmaveth, Ezra ii. 24.
§ Kirjath-arim, Ezra ii. 25.
[f] Ver. 12.
[g] 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.
[h] Ibid. 14.
[i] Ibid. ix. 12. & xxiv. 9.
[k] Ibid. xxiv. 8.
‖ Hodaviah, Ezra ii. 40. & Judah, Ezra iii. 9.
† Siaha, Ezra ii. 44.
‡ Shalmai.
§ Nephuſim, Ezra ii. 50.
‖ Bazluth, Ezra ii. 52.
† Peruda, Ezra ii. 55.
‡ Ami, Ezra ii. 58.
[l] Ezra ii. 59.
§ Addan.
‖ Or pedigrees, Ezra ii. 59.
[m] 2 Sam. xvii. 27.
[n] Num. iii. 10.
† Or, Governor.
[o] Exod. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21.
[p] Ezra ii. 64.
‡ Heb. Part.
[q] Chap. viii. 4.
[r] Ezra ii. 70.

v. 5—73. Jeruſalem being ſo thinly peopled, Nehemiah contrives to repleniſh it with inhabitants; for which purpoſe, having aſſembled the rulers and people, he reviews the old regiſter of thoſe who came out of captivity, that he might ſee what families originally belonged to Jeruſalem, but were now diſperſed in the country, in order to bring them back to fix their dwelling there. He acknowledges the deſign was from God, to whom every gracious motion is to be aſcribed: if any thing good be in our hearts, it is his work, and to him ſhould the praiſe be given. The regiſter here recited is nearly the ſame with that, *Ezra* xi. 6—67. The ſmall variation in the numbers may be probably owing to that having been taken in Babylon, this, after they arrived at Jeruſalem. Some perhaps that at firſt gave in their names to go, went back; whilſt others, though they ſtuck out till the laſt, when they ſaw the camp moving, reſolved to follow it. *Note*, There will be ever ſome that lay their hand to the plow, and look back: the Lord keep us from that number.—The contributions, *v.* 70. are ſo different from *Ezra* xi. 68, 69. that it ſeems not the ſame, but ſome additional offering made afterwards. They who have God's work at heart, will not only give according to their power, but, as he increaſes their ſtore, will renew their grateful tribute.

CHAP. VIII.

The work being finiſhed, their firſt leiſure is employed, as it ought, in attending to God's law. 1. *Ezra, at the people's requeſt, reads and expounds it,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Nehemiah encourages them to rejoice on the occaſion,* ver. 9—12. 3. *The ſolemn obſervance of the feaſt of tabernacles,* ver. 13—18.

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1. AND [a] all the people gathered themſelves together as one man, into the ſtreet that *was* before [b] the water-gate, and they ſpake unto Ezra [c] the ſcribe, to bring the book of the law of Moſes, which the LORD had commanded to Iſrael. 2. And Ezra the prieſt [d] brought the law before the congregation, [e] both of men and women, and all that could hear with underſtanding, [f] upon the firſt day of the ſeventh month. 3. And he [g] read therein before the ſtreet that *was* before the water-gate, from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and thoſe that could underſtand; and [h] the ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law. 4. And Ezra the ſcribe ſtood upon a † pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpoſe, and beſides him ſtood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Orijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaſeiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand Pedaiah, and Miſhael, and Malchiah, and Haſhum, and Haſhbadana, Zechariah, *and* Meſhullam. 5. And Ezra opened the book in the ſight of all the people, (for he was above all the people) and when he opened it, all the people ſtood up: 6. And Ezra bleſſed the LORD the great God: and all the people anſwered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and [i] they bowed their heads, and worſhipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground. 7. Alſo Jeſhua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaſeiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites cauſed the people to [k] underſtand the law, and the people *ſtood* in their place. 8. So they read in the book, in the law of God diſtinctly, and gave the ſenſe, and cauſed *them* to underſtand the reading.

[a] Ezra iii. 1.
[b] Chap. iii. 26.
[c] Ezra vii. 6.
[d] Deut. xxxi. 11.
[e] Gal. iii. 28.
[f] Lev. xxiii. 24. 1 Kings viii. 2.
[g] Acts xiii. 15. & xv. 21.
[h] Luke xix. 1. Acts xvi. 14.
† Heb. Tower.
[i] As 2 Chron. xx. 18.
[k] Mat. xxiv. 15.

v. 1—8. It was not the reſtoration of the temple ſervice, nor the rebuilding the ruined wall, which was their great protection. Obedience was better than ſacrifice, and fidelity to God a ſtronger barrier than the loftieſt towers. The people here ſeem to be ſenſible of this.

1. A great congregation aſſembled at the feaſt of trumpets, on the firſt day of the ſeventh month, when the new year began, the day they had ſet up and dedicated the altar at their return

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from captivity; and probably ever ſince, on that account, had kept the feaſt with greater ſolemnity. Men, women, and children, who were arrived at years of underſtanding, came: the place of aſſembly, for convenience, was the large ſtreet which led to the water-gate; and there Ezra, with his aſſiſtants, *v.* 4. at their deſire, aſcending a pulpit, or wooden turret, that he might be better heard, brought forth the law of God, to be read and expounded to the congregation. *Note*, (1.) We have reaſon to be thankful for commodious places for our religious aſſemblies; not but that the prayer of faith, and the preaching of the goſpel, are acceptable ſervices in every place. (2.) They who ſerve God themſelves, cannot but be ſollicitous that their families ſhould ſerve him too. (3.) Nothing ſo needful in the education of our children, as early to acquaint them with the word of God. (4.) It is a pleaſure to preach the word to thoſe who deſire to hear, and hunger and thirſt after it.

2. With great ſolemnity Ezra opened the awful book, whilſt the eyes of the people were fixed upon him. He began with a devout benediction, adoring the great God for the diſtinguiſhing mercy they enjoyed in theſe oracles of divine truth; to which the people joined their hearty Amen, worſhipping with reverential humiliation this glorious Lord. He then proceeded with his aſſiſtants, the prieſts and Levites, by turns to read and expound the moſt uſeful parts of the law, from morning till noon; either commenting upon it, to force and explain it; or as ſome have thought, tranſlating it into the Chaldee tongue, as that was become by their captivity more familiar to them than the Hebrew. *Note*, (1.) When we addreſs ourſelves to prayer on the word, the frame of our minds need be ſolemn and reverential, conſidering that God with whom we have to do. (2.) The reading of the word of God ought never to be omitted in the aſſembly of God's ſaints. (3.) When we carry our bibles into the pulpit, it contains an admonition to us, that we ſpeak according thereunto, and an appeal to them, as deſiring to be judged thereby. (4.) Preaching the word is among the greateſt means of grace; and they who zealouſly ſeek the ſalvation of men's ſouls, will not tire of the work. A ſhort ſermon is a mark of a cold heart. (5.) Among all the abominations of the church of Rome, none is more diabolical, than the ſecreting the ſcriptures from the people. (6.) They who are appointed to teach the knowledge of the ſcripture, ſhould ſtudy rather to ſpeak diſtinct and plain, that they may be underſtood, than elegantly, to be admired. (7.) Expoſition of the ſcripture is highly uſeful, not only to open what is abſtruſe, but to enforce on the conſcience what is plain and evident.

3. The people with fixed attention ſtood up to hear, and unwearied with the length of the time, hung upon the preacher's lips. *Note*, (1.) That ſermon is likely to be effectual, when the audience is thus ſolemnly attentive. (2.) They who reliſh the word of God, will never think the time long which is ſpent in hearing it.

9. ¶ [l] And Nehemiah which *is* the † Tirſhatha, and Ezra the prieſt the ſcribe, and [m] the Levites that taught the people, ſaid unto all the people, [n] This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God, [o] mourn not nor weep: for [p] all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. 10. Then he ſaid unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the ſweet, and [q] ſend portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for [r] *this* day *is* holy unto our Lord: neither be ye ſorry, for the joy of the LORD is your ſtrength. 11. So the Levites ſtilled all the people, ſaying, [s] Hold your peace, for the day *is* holy, neither be ye grieved. 12. And all the people went their way to eat and to drink, and to ſend portions, and to make great mirth, becauſe they had underſtood the words that were declared unto them.

[l] Ezra ii. 63. Chap. x. 1.
† Or governor.
[m] 2 Chron. xxxv. 3. Ver. 8.
[n] Num. xxix. 1.
[o] Deut. xvi. 14, 15. Eccleſ. iii. 4.
[p] 2 Kings xxii. 19. Iſa. lxvi. 2. Hab. iii. 16. Acts ii. 37.
[q] Eſth. ix. 19, 22. Rev. xi. 10.
[r] Lev. xxiii. 24.
[s] Exod. xiv. 14.

v. 9—12. The word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharp as a two-edged ſword. We ſee here,

1. The deep impreſſion it made upon the hearers hearts. Conſcious of manifold breaches, and trembling before a holy God, they all wept. Their hearts were tender, and they could not but tremble at his awful word, which denounced eternal death on every tranſgreſſion. *Note*, The law brings a terrible meſſage to the conſcience; if the goſpel were not to afford us relief, we muſt lie down in everlaſting mournings.

2. Nehemiah and Ezra obſerved the deep effect the word had taken; and though no doubt they were glad to ſee them mourn for their ſins, yet it being a day of rejoicing before the Lord, they endeavour to ſtay the people's ſorrows with kind encouragement. They muſt not grieve inordinately: even ſorrow for ſin may be exceſſive. They enjoin them therefore to refrain from tears, and keep a holy feaſt to the Lord, with liberal and charitable diſtributions to the poor, and joy in God as their ſtrength; joy that enlivens and encourages the heart to every good word and work, and raiſes up the ſoul above fear and deſpondency. *Note*, (1.) It is a pleaſing part of a miniſter's duty to comfort thoſe that mourn. (2.) They who ſow in tears, fail not to reap in joy. (3.) Whilſt the Lord is pleaſed to cover our tables with affluence, let us never forget to draw out our ſoul to the hungry: the greateſt comfort of abundance is to do good with it. (4.) Holy joy will quicken us for every duty, and ſtrengthen us for every conflict.

3. The people hereupon dried up their tears; and underſtanding the great and precious promiſes made to repentant Iſrael, rejoiced in hope of finding favour with their juſtly offended God. *Note*, (1.) Though the ſcriptures pierce like a ſword the heart of a ſinner, they contain that balm which can cure the wound. (2.) A clear knowledge of God's word is the way to ſound and abiding conſolation.

13. ¶ And on the ſecond day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the prieſts and the Levites, unto Ezra the ſcribe, † even to underſtand the words of the law. 14. And they found written in the law, which the LORD had commanded by Moſes, that [t] the children of Iſrael ſhould dwell in booths, in the feaſt of the ſeventh month: 15. And that [u] they ſhould publiſh and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jeruſalem, ſaying, Go forth unto the mount, and [x] fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written. 16. ¶ So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themſelves booths, every one upon the roof of his houſe, and in their courts, and in the courts of the houſe of God, and in the ſtreet of the water-gate, and in [y] the ſtreet of the gate of Ephraim. 17. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity, made booths, and [z] ſat under the booths: for ſince the days of Jeſhua the ſon of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Iſrael done ſo: and [b] there was very great gladneſs. 18. Alſo [c] day by day, [d] from the firſt day unto the laſt day, he read in the book of the law of God: and they kept the feaſt ſeven days, and on the eighth day *was* a ſolemn aſſembly, according unto the manner.

† Or that they might inſtruct in the words of the law. Mat. xiii. 52. 1 Pet. iv. 11.
[t] Lev. xxiii. 34. Deut. xiii. 16.
[u] Lev. xxiii. 4.
[x] Ibid. 40.
[y] 2 Kings xiv. 13. Chap. xii. 39.
[z] Heb. xi. 13.
[a] 2 Chron. v. 3. Ezra iii. 4.
[b] 2 Chron. xxx. 21.
[c] Deut. xxx. 10, &c.
[d] Lev. xxiii. 36.

v. 13—18. The word, which the preceding day had ſo much engaged their attention, and affected their hearts, is again applied to. The chief of the elders, prieſts, and Levites, eſpecially ſollicitous to underſtand the law, aſſembled before Ezra, that he might explain what was obſcure or difficult. *Note*, (1.) They who are appointed to inſtruct others, need uſe double diligence to underſtand the mind of God themſelves. (2.) Converſe with the oracles of God, affords a daily delightful entertainment to the faithful ſouls.—The conſequence of this renewed attendance upon God's word, was

1. A diſcovery of a long-neglected ordinance, the feaſt of tabernacles. As the time approached, Ezra probably ſelected that portion of ſcripture to remind them of it, and to direct them in the obſervance of it. *Note*, (1.) A word ſpoken in ſeaſon, how good is it? (2.) Careful reading God's word, will convince us of many negligences and ignorances.

2. A proclamation is made for the obſervance of it, both at Jeruſalem and the other cities, *v.* 15.

3. The ſolemnity is moſt religiouſly obſerved. Since the days of Joſhua, had not ſuch a feaſt been kept with ſuch exactneſs, holy joy, and daily diligent and ſerious attendance on the word of God. *Note*, (1.) They who have their hearts right with God, will be diligent and ſerious obſervers of all his inſtitutions. (2.) Our leiſure hours will be ever moſt comfortably and profitably employed in the oracles of truth. (3.) When we are waiting on God in the way of his ordinances, he will meet us in them, and fill our hearts with joy and gladneſs.

CHAP. IX.

We have here, 1. *A ſolemn faſt obſerved,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The prayer offered, and the ſolemn reſolution made on that occaſion,* ver. 4—38.

1. NOW in the twenty and fourth day of [a] this month, the children of Iſrael were aſſembled with faſting, and with ſackclothes, [b] and earth upon them. 2. And [c] the ſeed of Iſrael ſeparated themſelves from all † ſtrangers, and ſtood and [d] confeſſed their ſins, and [e] the iniquities of their fathers. 3. And they ſtood up in their place, and [f] read in the book of the law of the LORD their God, *one* fourth part of the day, and *another* fourth part they confeſſed, and worſhipped the LORD their God.

[a] Chap. viii. 2.
[b] Joſh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12. Job ii. 12.
[c] Ezra x. 11. Chap. xiii. 3—30.
† Heb. Strange children.
[d] Prov. xxviii. 13.
[e] Chap. i. 6.
[f] Chap. viii. 7, 8.

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v. 1—3. Their feaſt of gladneſs is here ſucceeded by a day of ſolemn humiliation. Whilſt we are rejoicing in the confidence of God's reconciliation, we ſtill need to remember our own evil ways, and abhor ourſelves.

1. Every outward expreſſion of ſorrow beſpoke the inward affliction of their ſouls for ſin, whilſt they appeared in the courts of the temple, as penitents before God. *Note*, There are ſeaſons, when, without oſtentation, we may appear unto men to faſt.

2. They put away their ſtrange wives, in token of the ſincerity of their humiliation. Some had kept them probably in ſecret, notwithſtanding the former reformation, or had ſince relapſed into the ſame evil. *Note*, As long as allowed ſin is harboured, communion with God is impoſſible, and the appearance of repentance but hypocriſy.

3. They ſpent the whole day in religious exerciſes. Three hours they ſpent in hearing God's law, and as many in prayer and confeſſion; and this probably both morning and afternoon. *Note*, The more we are converſant in God's word, the more deeply ſhall we ſee cauſe to lament over the evil of our fallen hearts.

4. ¶ Then ſtood up upon the † ſtairs of the Levites, Jeſhua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their God. 5. Then the Levites, Jeſhua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Haſhabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, ſaid, Stand up, *and* [g] bleſs the LORD your God for ever and ever; and bleſſed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe. 6. Thou, *even* thou art LORD alone, [h] thou haſt made heaven, [i] the heaven of heavens with [k] all their hoſt, the earth and all *things* that *are* therein, the ſeas and all that *is* therein, and [l] thou preſerveſt them all, and the hoſt of heaven worſhippeth thee. 7. Thou *art* the LORD the God, [m] who didſt chooſe Abram, and broughteſt him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and [n] gaveſt him the name of Abraham, 8. And [o] foundeſt his heart faithful before thee, and [p] madeſt a covenant with him, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebuſites, and the Girgaſhites, to give *it*, *I ſay*, to his ſeed, and haſt performed thy words, for thou art righteous: 9. [q] And didſt ſee the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and [r] heardeſt their cry by the Red ſea: 10. And [s] ſhewedſt ſigns and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his ſervants, and on all the people of his land: for thou kneweſt that [t] they dealt proudly againſt them: [u] ſo didſt thou get thee a name, as *it is* this day. 11. And [x] thou didſt divide the ſea before them, ſo that they went through the midſt of the ſea on the dry land, and their perſecutors thou threweſt into the deeps, [y] as a ſtone into the mighty waters. 12. Moreover [z] thou leddeſt them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they ſhould go. 13. [a] Thou cameſt down alſo upon mount Sinai, and ſpakeſt with them from heaven, and gaveſt them right judgments, and ‡ true laws, good ſtatutes, and commandments. 14. And [b] madeſt known unto them thy holy ſabbath, and commandedſt them precepts, ſtatutes, and laws, by the hand of Moſes thy ſervant: 15. And [c] gaveſt them bread from heaven for their hunger, and [d] broughteſt forth water for them out of [e] the rock for their thirſt, and promiſedſt them [f] that they ſhould go in to poſſeſs the land, which thou hadſt ‖ ſworn to give them. 16. But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and [g] hardned their necks, and hearkned not to thy commandments. 17. And refuſed to obey, [h] neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didſt among them: but hardned their necks, and in their rebellion [i] appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou *art* § a God ready to pardon, [k] gracious and merciful, ſlow to anger, and of great kindneſs, and forſookeſt them not. 18. Yea, [l] when they had made them a molten calf, and ſaid, This *is* thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations: 19. Yet thou in thy manifold mercies, forſookeſt them not in the wilderneſs: [m] the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to ſhew them light, and the way wherein they ſhould go. 20. [n] Thou gaveſt alſo thy good Spirit to inſtruct them, and [o] withheldeſt not thy manna from their mouth, and [p] gaveſt them water for their thirſt. 21. Yea, [q] forty years didſt thou ſuſtain them in the wilderneſs, *ſo that* they lacked nothing; [r] their clothes waxed not old, and their feet ſwelled not. 22. Moreover, thou gaveſt them kingdoms and nations, and didſt divide them into corners: ſo they poſſeſſed [s] the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heſhbon, and [t] the land of Og king of Baſhan. 23. [u] Their children alſo multipliedſt thou as the ſtars of heaven, and broughteſt them into the land, concerning which thou hadſt promiſed to their fathers, that they ſhould go in to poſſeſs *it*. 24. So the children went in and poſſeſſed the land, and [x] thou [y] ſubdueſt before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gaveſt them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them † as they would. 25. And they took ſtrong cities and a [z] fat land, and poſſeſſed houſes full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance, ſo they did eat, and were filled, and [a] became fat, and delighted themſelves in thy great goodneſs. 26. Nevertheleſs they were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt thee, and [b] caſt thy law behind their backs, and [c] ſlew thy prophets which teſtified againſt them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations. 27. Therefore [d] thou deliveredſt them into the hand of their enemies who vexed them: and [e] in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardeſt *them* from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies [f] thou gaveſt them ſaviours, who ſaved them out of the hand of their enemies. 28. But [g] after they had reſt, they ‡ did evil again before thee: therefore lefteſt thou them in the hand of their enemies, ſo that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardeſt *them* from heaven, and many times didſt thou deliver them, [h] according to thy mercies: 29. And [i] teſtifiedſt againſt them, that thou mighteſt bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but ſinned againſt thy judgments ([k] which if a man do, he ſhall live in them) and ‖ withdrew the ſhoulder, and hardned their neck, and would not hear. 30. Yet many years [l] didſt thou forbear them, and [m] teſtifiedſt againſt them by thy Spirit [n] in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: [o] therefore gaveſt thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. 31. Nevertheleſs, for thy great mercies ſake, [p] thou didſt not utterly conſume them, nor forſake them; for thou *art* a gracious and merciful God. 32. Now therefore our God, [q] the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepeſt covenant and mercy; let not all the trouble ſeem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our prieſts, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, ſince the time of the kings of Aſſyria, unto this day. 33. Howbeit, [r] thou *art* juſt in all that is brought upon us: for thou haſt done right, but we have done wickedly: 34. [s] Neither have our kings, our princes, our prieſts, nor our fathers kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and thy teſtimonies wherewith thou didſt teſtify againſt them. 35. For they have not ſerved thee in their kingdom, and [t] in thy great goodneſs that thou gaveſt them, and in the large and fat land which thou gaveſt before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. 36. Behold, [u] we *are* ſervants this day, and *for* the land that thou gaveſt unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold we *are* ſervants in it. 37. And it yieldeth much increaſe unto the kings whom thou haſt ſet over us, becauſe of our ſins: alſo they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleaſure, and we *are* in great diſtreſs. 38. And becauſe of all this, [x] we make a ſure *covenant*, and write *it*; and our princes, Levites, *and* prieſts § ſeal *unto it*.

v. 4—38. The congregation being aſſembled, we have here the names of the chief perſons employed to lead the devotions of the people, and to be engaged in the word of God, together with the prayer which was probably compoſed by Ezra on the occaſion; and as ſo great a number of people could be ſcarcely ſuppoſed capable of hearing in one congregation, they might be divided into ſeveral, each with a Levite at their head; and yet thus uniting in the ſame humbling confeſſion and ſupplication, with one voice as well as one heart glorifying God.

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† Or ſcaffold. Chap. viii. 4.

[g] Pſal. ciii. 1, 2, 22.

[h] Gen. i. 1. Rev. xiv. 7.

[i] Deut. x. 14. 1 Kings viii. 27.

[k] Gen. ii. 1.

[l] Heb. i. 3.

[m] Gen. xii. 1.

[n] Ibid. xvii. 5.

[o] Ibid. xv. 6.

[p] Ibid. xii. 7. & xv. 18. & xvii. 7, 8.

[q] Exod. ii. 25. & iii. 7.

[r] Exod. xiv. 10.

[s] Ibid. Chap. vii—xiv.

[t] Exod. xviii. 11.

[u] Ibid. ix. 16.

[x] Ibid. xiv. 21, 22.

[y] Ibid. xv. 5, 10.

[z] Ibid. xiii. 21.

[a] Ibid. xix. 20. & xx. 21.

‡ Heb. Laws of truth.

[b] Exod. xx. 8.

[c] Ibid. xvi. 14, 15.

[d] Ibid. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 9, &c.

[e] 1 Cor. x. 4.

[f] Deut. i. 8.

‖ Heb. Lift up thine hand to give them. Num. xiv. 30.

[g] Exod. xxxii. 9.

[h] Pſal. cvi. 7, 13.

[i] Num. xiv. 4.

§ Heb. A God of pardons.

[k] Exod. xxxiv. 6. Num. xiv. 18. Pſal. lxxxvi. 5, 15.

[l] Exod. xxxii. 4.

[m] Ibid. xiii. 22. Num. xiv. 14.

Before Chriſt 444.

[n] Num. xi. 17. Iſa. lxiii. 11.

[o] Exod. xvi. 15. Joſh. v. 12.

[p] Exod. xvii. 6.

[q] Deut. ii. 7.

[r] Ibid. viii. 4. & xxix. 5.

[s] Num. xxi. 25.

[t] Ibid. 35.

[u] Gen. xxii. 17.

[x] Pſal. xliv. 3.

[y] Joſh. xi. 16, &c.

† Heb. According to their will.

[z] Ezek. xx. 6.

[a] Deut. xxxii. 15.

[b] 1 Kings xiv. 9.

[c] Ibid. xviii. 4. & xix. 10. 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

[d] Judg. ii. 14. & iii. 8, &c.

[e] Zech. xiii. 9.

[f] Judg. ii. 18. & iii. 9.

[g] Deut. xxxii. 15.

‡ Heb. Returned to do evil.

[h] Lam. iii. 22.

[i] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15.

[k] Lev. xviii. 5. Ezek. xx. 11. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.

‖ Heb. Gave a withdrawing ſhoulder. Zech. vii. 11.

[l] Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

[m] 2 Kings xvii. 13.

[n] 1 Pet. i. 11.

[o] Iſa. v. 5. & xlii. 24.

[p] Jer. iv. 27.

[q] Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

[r] Deut. xxxii. 4. Dan. ix. 14.

[s] Ibid. 8.

[t] Rom. ii. 4, 5.

[u] Deut. xxxii. 48. Ezra ix. 9.

[x] Chap. x. 29.

§ Heb. Are at the ſealing.

1. They open their prayer with ſolemn adoration, to the ſelf-exiſtent Jehovah, the great creator and preſerver of all, the only worthy object of worſhip in heaven and earth, and whoſe tranſcendant excellencies and unutterable glories infinitely exceed all the praiſes that men or angels can offer, *v.* 5, 6.

2. They recite, with deep gratitude, the manifold mercies this great and gracious God had beſtowed on them from the days of old, particularly the call and election of Abraham their great progenitor, and the performance of the covenant eſtabliſhed with him and his ſeed. Abraham was by grace enabled to be faithful, and God had rewarded that fidelity in the accompliſhment of all his promiſes to him and his poſterity. Out of Egypt had God alſo wonderouſly delivered them, to the confuſion and deſtruction of their enemies: through the wilderneſs had he led them ſafe from danger; never forſook them amidſt their multiplied provocations; provided them liberal ſupplies for all their wants; and by daily miracles, fed and guided them in the way to the promiſed land, *v.* 9—12, 15—21. On Sinai he deſcended to promulge his law, ſo holy, juſt, and good, to inſtitute his gracious ordinances, particularly the ſabbath; the diſtinguiſhing token of his ſeparation of them to himſelf, *v.* 13, 14. Before them the Canaanites, though ſo mighty and numerous, had been expelled, and their rich land given them to poſſeſs, where every earthly bleſſing abounded, *v.* 22, 25. There they forſook God, and provoked him with their iniquities, yet his patience endured: he ſent them warnings, he received them whenever they turned to him: he multiplied his pardons, he raiſed them up judges to deliver them from their enemies, and recover them from their backſlidings: yea, though after all they had proved hardned and rebellious, yet to that day God had not utterly forſaken them, for his mercy endureth for ever, *v.* 26—31. All theſe inſtances of the divine goodneſs, whilſt they deſerved the moſt thankful acknowledgment, aggravated the evil of their ſins; yet the paſt experience afforded them preſent hope, if they ſhould, as now, ſeek to the God who is ever ready to pardon, merciful and gracious. *Note,* (1.) The goodneſs of God is the great argument to lead us to repentance. (2.) In the midſt of our deepeſt humiliations, we ſhould never forget to mention the mercies for which we are indebted. (3.) Without ſome views of God's rich grace, the ſenſe of our ſins would be ready to ſink us into deſpair.

3. Amidſt their thankful acknowledgments, they interſperſe their abaſing confeſſions, as every mercy they had received aggravated the guilt of their ſins. From the beginning, the proud hearts of their fathers were too ſtubborn to bow in humble obedience: ingratitude, diſtruſt, diſcontent, rebellion, idolatry, impudent oppoſition to God's prophets, contempt, perſecution, murder; and repeated relapſes into the like abominations, after repeated vows, and repeated deliverances: all theſe things had marked the black catalogue of their father's crimes; nor were they leſs culpable. We have done wickedly, *v.* 33. and joined in the like provocations, the effects of which they were now ſuffering, juſt returned from the houſe of their priſon, and ſtill bearing the galling yoke of ſervitude upon their necks. *v.* 36, 37. *Note,* (1.) True penitents ſearch out the aggravations of their ſins, and ſeek not to exculpate themſelves, but to juſtify God. (2.) Pride is at the root of all our evil. (3.) When we follow our father's ſins, it is juſt in God to viſit their iniquities upon us. (4.) As the ſervice of God is perfect freedom, revolt from it will bring the ſoul into the moſt abject ſlavery.

4. They put up a word of petition, *v.* 32. ſo ſhort, as if they were afraid to aſk for mercy, who were conſcious how little they deſerved it; acknowledging the righteouſneſs of God in all they had ſuffered, only they preſume to beg that he would look upon their affliction, and ſay at laſt, It is enough. God, as the great and terrible God, might juſtly utterly deſtroy them; but as the merciful covenant-keeping God, *v.* 32. there was yet hope, and they were emboldened to pray. *Note,* (1.) The deepeſt and moſt dejecting views of our ſins muſt not drive us from God in deſpondence, but to him in humble prayer. (2.) Remember me in mercy, is all a ſinner can ſay for himſelf. (3.) The covenant eſtabliſhed with our glorious head Chriſt Jeſus, affords hope, when every thing within and without us preaches deſpair.

5. As the concluſion of their prayer, they profeſs their ſolemn return to God; in writing renew their engagements to be faithful, and the princes, prieſts, and Levites ſubſcribe the bond, as a teſtimony againſt themſelves, and promiſe to their utmoſt to ſee it obſerved by the people. *Note,* True penitents not only confeſs their ſins, but through God's grace purpoſe, and are enabled to renounce them.

CHAP. X.

We have in this chapter, 1. *The names of thoſe that ſet their hands and ſeals to the covenant,* ver. 1—27. 2. *An account of thoſe who ſignified their conſent and concurrence,* ver. 28, 29. 3. *The covenant itſelf, and the articles of it,* ver. 29—39.

1. NOW thoſe † that ſealed *were* [a] Nehemiah the
‡ Tirſhatha, [b] the ſon of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah.
2. [c] Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, 3. Paſhur, Amariah,
Malchijah, 4. Hattuſh, Shebaniah, Malluch,
5. Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, 6. Daniel, Ginnethon,
Baruch. 7. Meſhullam, Abijah, Mijamin, 8. Maaziah,
Bilgai, Shemaiah: theſe *were* the prieſts. 9. And the
Levites: both Jeſhua the ſon of Azaniah, Binnui of
the ſons of Henadad, Kadmiel; 10. And their brethren,
Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,
11. Micha, Rehob, Haſhabiah, 12. Zaccur, Sherebiah,
Shebaniah, 13. Hodijah, Bani, Beninu. 14. The
chief of the people; [d] Paroſh, Pahath-moab, Elam,
Zatthu, Bani, 15. Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, 16. Adonijah,
Bagvai, Adin, 17. Ater, Hizkijah, Azzur,
18. Hodijah, Haſhum, Bezai, 19. Harip, Anathoth,
Nebai, 20. Magpiaſh, Meſhullam, Hezir, 21. Meſhezabeel,
Zadock, Jaddua, 22. Pelatiah, Hanan,
Anaiah, 23. Hoſhea, Hananiah, Haſhub, 24. Halloheſh,
Pileha, Shobek, 25. Rehum, Haſhabnah, Maaſeiah,
26. And Ahijah, Hanan, Anan, 27. Malluch,
Harim, Baanah. 28. ¶ [e] And the reſt of the people, the
prieſts, the Levites, the porters, the ſingers, the Nethinims,
and [f] all they that had ſeparated themſelves from
the people of the lands, unto the law of God, their wives,
their ſons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge,
and having underſtanding: 29. They clave to
their brethren, their nobles, and [g] entred into a curſe,
and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was
‖ given by Moſes the ſervant of God, and to obſerve
and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord,
and his judgments and his ſtatutes: 30. And that [h]
we would not give our daughters unto the people of the
land, nor take their daughters for our ſons: 31. And
if the people of the land bring ware, or any victuals on
the ſabbath-day, to ſell, *that* [i] we would not buy it of
them on the ſabbath, or on the holy-day; and *that* we
would leave [k] the ſeventh year, and the [l] exaction of
every debt.

† Heb. At the ſealings.
[a] Chap. viii. 9.
‡ Or governor.
[b] Chap. i. 1.
[c] Chap. xii. 1—21.
[d] Ezra ii. 3, &c. Chap. vii. 8, &c.
[e] Ezra ii. 43.
[f] Ibid. ix. 1. Chap. xiii. 3.
[g] Deut. xxix. 12. Chap. v. 12, 13. Pſal. cxix. 106.
‖ Heb. By the hand of, &c.
[h] Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.
[i] Exod. xx. 10. Lev. xxiii. 3. Deut. v. 12. Chap. xiii. 15, &c.
[k] Exod. xxiii. 10, 11. Lev. xxv. 4.
[l] Deut. xv. 2. Chap. v. 12. Iſa. lviii. 6.

v. 1—31. As in prayer they had engaged to join themſelves anew to God, we have here the perſons who ſubſcribed, and the particulars of their engagement.

1. The perſons who ſubſcribed were the chief of the fathers, with Nehemiah the governor, and the chief of the prieſts and Levites; the perſons who by duty and office were moſt eſpecially obliged to ſet the good example, and to uſe their influence to engage the people to the ſervice of their covenant God; and to this deed of their rulers the people expreſſed their ſolemn conſent; Jews and proſelytes, women and children, all who were come to years of underſtanding, binding their ſouls under an awful imprecation to abide by the engagements they had entered into. *Note,* (1.) In every good work they who are higheſt in dignity, ſhould be the firſt to lead. (2.) They who teach others what is right, muſt commend by their practice the word they preach, and ſhew themſelves examples of all that is praiſe-worthy. (3.) When we give up ourſelves to God, it becomes us to take heed to the ſimplicity and ſincerity of our hearts before him, leaſt raſh engagements involve our ſouls in guilt.

2. The covenant they entered into, was in general, a careful obſervance of all God's commands and inſtitutions, which was before their bounden duty, and now declared to be their hearty choice: and particularly a ſeparation of themſelves from all forbidden intercourſe with the heathen nations; a door at which moſt of their abominations had crept in: the ſtrict obſervance of the ſabbath day, the great token of their peculiarity as a people ſet apart for God's ſervice; the obſervance of the ſabbatical year, when the ground was to reſt, and the diſcharge of their debtors at that time freely, according to *Deut.* xv. 2. *Note,* (1.) A faithful heart will have reſpect to all God's commandments. (2.) Peculiar guard need be placed over thoſe temptations which we have ſeen to be the occaſion of others falls, and proved moſt dangerous to ourſelves. (3.) A careful obſervance of God's ſabbaths is a chief means to preſerve us in a conſtant courſe of fidelity in his ſervice.

32. Alſo we made ordinances for us, to charge ourſelves
yearly with the third part of a ſhekel, for the
ſervice of the houſe of our God, 33. For [m] the ſhewbread,
and for the continual meat-offering, and for the
continual burnt-offering, [n] of the ſabbaths, of the new-
moons,

[m] Lev. xxiv. 5, &c. 2 Chron. ii. 4.
[n] See Num. Chap. xxviii. & xxix.

moons, for the ſet feaſts, and for the holy *things*, and for the ſin-offerings, to make an atonement for Iſrael, and *for* all the work of the houſe of our God, 34. And we caſt the lots among the prieſts, the Levites, and the people, [o] for the wood-offering, to bring *it* into the houſe of our God, after the houſes of our fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, [p] as *it is* written in the law: 35. And [q] to bring the firſt-fruits of our ground, and the firſt-fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the houſe of the LORD: 36. Alſo the firſt-born of our ſons and of our cattle, ([r] as *it is* written in the law) and the firſtlings of our herds, and of our flocks, to bring to the houſe of our God, unto the prieſts that miniſter in the houſe of our God: 37. [s] And *that* we ſhould bring the firſt-fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the prieſts, to the chambers of the houſe of our God, and [t] the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the ſame Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. 38. And the prieſt the ſon of Aaron, ſhall be with the Levites, [u] when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites ſhall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the houſe of our God, to the chambers, into the treaſure-houſe. 39. For the children of Iſrael, and the children of Levi, [x] ſhall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where *are* the veſſels of the ſanctuary, and the prieſts that miniſter, and the porters, and the ſingers: and [y] we will not forſake the houſe of our God.

[o] Chap. xiii. 31.
[p] Lev. vi. 12.
[q] Exod. xxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 26. Lev. xix. 23.
[r] Exod. xiii. 2, 12, 13. Lev. xxvii. 27. Num. xviii. 15, 16.
[s] Lev. xxiii. 17. Num. xv. 19. & xviii. 12, &c. Deut. xviii. 4. & xxvi. 2.
[t] Lev. xxvii. 30. Num. xviii. 21, &c.
[u] Num. xviii. 26.
[x] Deut. xii. 6, 11.
[y] Chap. xiii. 11. Pſal. xvii. 4. Heb. x. 25.

v. 32—39. As the diligent and exact obſervance of the temple-worſhip would moſt effectually engage them to continue faithful to God, according to their vows, we have here,

1. A general contribution agreed upon of the third part of a ſhekel, about ten pence annually, to be employed in purchaſing the neceſſary proviſion for God's table and altar. *Note*, Few or none are ſo poor, but if they have a love of God's ſervice, they will be able and willing to contribute their mite, for the maintenance of a goſpel miniſtry.

2. They agreed by lot, in turn to provide the wood for God's altar as it was needed, that there might be a regular and conſtant ſupply.

3. They engaged, according to the law, for the exact payment of their firſt-fruits, tythes, and redemption-money, and whatever was appointed for the maintenance of thoſe who miniſtred at the altar. Out of the tythes paid the Levites, a tenth was ſeparated for the prieſts maintenance, *v.* 38. Theſe being depoſited in the chambers of the temple, afforded a proviſion for thoſe who miniſtred at the temple; and engaged them not to forſake the houſe of God, whilſt their diligent miniſtration there would keep the people alſo from forſaking it. *Note*, They who have lying on them the great care of men's ſouls, need have no other care about a worldly proviſion.

CHAP. XI.

We have here, 1. *Nehemiah's care to people Jeruſalem,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The principal perſons that reſided there, of Judah and Benjamin,* ver. 3—9. *Of the prieſts and Levites,* ver. 10—19. 3. *The ſeveral cities and villages of Judah and Benjamin, that were peopled by the reſt of their families,* ver. 20—36.

1. AND the rulers of the people dwelt at Jeruſalem: the reſt of the people alſo caſt lots, to bring one of ten, to dwell in Jeruſalem [a] the holy city, and nine parts *to dwell* in *other* cities. 2. And the people bleſſed all the men [b] that willingly offered themſelves to dwell at Jeruſalem. 3. ¶ [c] Now theſe *are* the chief of the province that dwelt in Jeruſalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his poſſeſſion in their cities, *to wit*, Iſrael, the prieſts, and the Levites, and [d] the Nethinims, and [e] the children of Solomon's ſervants. 4. And [f] at Jeruſalem dwelt *certain* of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin: of the children of Judah; Athaiah the ſon of Uzziah, the ſon of Zechariah, the ſon of Amariah, the ſon of Shephatiah, the ſon of Mahalaleel, of the children of [g] Perez; 5. And Maaſeiah the ſon of Baruch, the ſon of Colhozeh, the ſon of Hazaiah, the ſon of Adaiah, the ſon of Joiarib, the ſon of Zechariah, the ſon of Shiloni. 6. All the ſons of Perez that dwelt at Jeruſalem, *were* four hundred threeſcore and eight † valiant men. 7. And theſe *are* the ſons of Benjamin, Sallu the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſon of Joed, the ſon of Pedaiah, the ſon of Kolaiah, the ſon of Maaſeiah, the ſon of Ithiel, the ſon of Jeſaiah. 8. And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight. 9. And Joel the ſon of Zichri *was* their overſeer: and Judah the ſon of Senuah *was* ſecond over the city. 10. [h] Of the prieſts: Jedaiah the ſon of Joiarib, Jachin. 11. Seraiah the ſon of Hilkiah, the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſon of Zadok, the ſon of Meraioth, the ſon of Ahitub, *was* the ruler of the houſe of God. 12. And their brethren that did the work of the houſe, *were* eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the ſon of Jehoram, the ſon of Pelaliah, the ſon of Amzi, the ſon of Zechariah, the ſon of Paſhur, the ſon of Malchiah, 13. And his brethren chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amaſhai, the ſon of Azareel, the ſon of Ahaſai, the ſon of Meſhillemoth, the ſon of Immer, 14. And their brethren mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight: and their overſeer *was* Zabdiel, the ſon † of *one of* the great men. 15. Alſo [i] of the Levites: Shemaiah the ſon of Haſhub, the ſon of Azrikam, the ſon of Haſhabiah, the ſon of Bunni. 16. And Shabbethai, and Jozabad of the chief of the Levites ‖ *had* the overſight of the outward buſineſs of the houſe of God. 17. And Mattaniah the ſon of Micha, the ſon of § Zabdi, the ſon of Aſaph, *was* the principal to begin the thankſgiving in prayer: and Bakbukiah the ſecond among his brethren, and Abda the ſon of Shammua, the ſon of Galal, the ſon of Jeduthun. 18. All the Levites in [k] the holy city, *were* two hundred fourſcore and four. 19. Moreover, the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept † the gates, *were* an hundred ſeventy and two.

[a] Ver. 18. Mat. iv. 5. & xxvii. 53.
[b] Judg. v. 9. Pſal. cx. 3.
[c] 1 Chron. ix. 2.
[d] Ezra ii. 43.
[e] Ibid. 55.
[f] 1 Chron. ix. 3.
[g] Gen. xxxviii. 29.
† Heb. Men of activity.
[h] 1 Chron. ix. 10, &c.
† Or of Haggedolim.
[i] 1 Chron. ix. 14, &c.
‖ Heb. Were over. 1 Chron. xxvi. 29.
§ Zichri. 1 Chron. ix. 15.
[k] 1 Kings xi. 19. Ver. 1. Iſa. lii. 1.
† Heb. At the gates.

v. 1—19. Jeruſalem, the holy city, though now walled, and the temple ſervice carried on, was but thinly inhabited. Probably an abode there was judged moſt dangerous, as againſt this place the enemies of God's people chiefly levelled their deſigns; and alſo leſs could be got here, than by farming or merchandiſe in the country. *Note*, (1.) The fear of man deters many from dwelling in the holy city. (2.) Selfiſh ends and private advantages, are generally more powerful inducements than God's glory, and the intereſts of his church and people. To remedy this evil, we have here the ſteps taken to repleniſh it with inhabitants:

1. The rulers of the people, with their families and attendants, fixed there, as the duty of their office required, and as an encouragement to others to follow their examples. *Note*, (1.) They whom God diſtinguiſhes with honour, ſhould diſtinguiſh themſelves by zeal for his cauſe. (2.) A great and good example is very prevalent.

2. Many voluntarily offered themſelves, and received the deſerved commendations of their brethren, who could not but praiſe that generous ſelf-denial they cared not to imitate. *Note*, (1.) Many more will commend what is excellent than copy it. (2.) They who for God's glory forego their own advantage, ſhall never loſe their reward.

3. The remainder were ſupplied by lot; every tenth man, with his family, being appointed to reſide there. Thus the city was inhabited. As it originally belonged to Judah and Benjamin conjointly, they chiefly reſided there, though the greater number of the latter: moſt of the prieſts took up their abode there, as the place of their ſervice: ſome of the Levites alſo dwelt there, though fewer in number; the reſt being diſperſed as teachers in the other towns and villages. Of ſome of the prieſts it is remarked, they were mighty men of valour, which was the more needful, as they might be called to defend the temple with their ſword, as well as to miniſter in the ſervice. One of the Levites is ſaid to have *the overſight of the outward buſineſs*, repairs, collecting contributions, &c. Another, *v.* 17. was precentor, *to begin the thankſgiving in prayer*. *Note*, (1.) Order in the temple is eſpecially needful. (2.) Praiſe is a noble part of divine worſhip.

20. ¶ And the reſidue of Iſrael, of the prieſts *and* the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance. 21. But [l] the Nethinims dwelt in † Ophel: and Ziha and Giſpa *were* over the Nethinims. 22. The overſeer alſo of the Levites at Jeruſalem, *was* Uzzi the ſon of Bani, the ſon of Haſhabiah, the ſon of Mattaniah, the ſon of Micha: of the ſons of Aſaph, the ſingers *were* over the buſineſs of the houſe of God. 23. For [m] *it was* the king's commandment concerning them, that a ‡ certain portion ſhould be for the ſingers, due

[l] Chap. iii. 26.
† Or the tower.
[m] Ezra vi. 8, 9. & vii. 20, &c.
‡ Or ſure ordinance.

due for every day. 24. And Pethahiah the ſon of Meſhezabeel, of the children of [n] Zerah, the ſon of Judah, *was* at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people. 25. And for the villages, with their fields, *ſome* of the children of Judah dwelt at [o] Kirjath-arba, and *in* the villages thereof, and at Dibon, and *in* the villages thereof, and at Jekabzeel, and *in* the villages thereof, 26. And at Jeſhua, and at Moladah, and at Beth-phelet, 27. And at Hazar-ſhual, and at Beer-ſheba, and *in* the villages thereof, 28. And at Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and *in* the villages thereof, 29. And at En-rimmon, and at Zareah, and at Jarmuth, 30. Zanoah, Adullam, and *in* their villages, at Lachiſh, and the fields thereof, at Azekah, and *in* the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-ſheba, unto the valley of Hinnom. 31. The children alſo of Benjamin, ‖ from Geba, *dwelt* § at Michmaſh, and Aija, and Beth-el, and *in* their villages, 32. *And* at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, 33. Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, 34. Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, 35. Lod, and Ono, [p] the valley of craftſmen. 36. And of the Levites, *were* diviſions *in* Judah, *and* in Benjamin.

v. 20—36. The holy city being furniſhed with inhabitants, we have here an account of the diſpoſition of the reſidue of the people. The Nethinims, whoſe ſervice required their being near the temple, dwelt on the wall of the city; See 2 *Chron.* xxvii. 3. The chief of the Levites alſo dwelt at Jeruſalem, that he might direct and regulate the affairs of his order. The ſons of Aſaph were engaged in the work of praiſe, and maintained by the kings of Perſia out of their treaſury. One of the deſcendants of Zerah *was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people*; the perſon through whom all petitions or applications were made; or perhaps appointed to ſettle any diſputes that might ariſe between the king's officers and the people, about the taxes paid into, or ſtipends paid out of the royal treaſury. All the reſt of the people of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites, were diſtributed in the cities and villages, enjoying once more in peace the heritage of Iſrael. Happy for them if they had learnt, by paſt experience, to improve their mercies; but the prophecy of Malachi, who now flouriſhed, ſhews that they were too like their forefathers; and therefore long ſince have they been caſt out of this good land, now barren and deſolate for the iniquity of thoſe who dwelt therein.

CHAP. XII.

We have here, 1. *The names of the prieſts and the Levites that came up with Zerubbabel,* ver. 1—9. 2. *The ſucceſſion of the high-prieſts,* ver. 10, 11. 3. *The names of the next generation of the other chief-prieſts,* ver. 12—21. 4. *The eminent Levites that were in Nehemiah's time,* ver. 22—26. 5. *The ſolemnity of dedicating the wall of Jeruſalem,* ver. 27—43. 6. *The ſettling of the offices of the prieſts and Levites in the temple,* ver. 44—47.

1. NOW [a] theſe *are* the prieſts and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the ſon of Shealtiel, and Jeſhua: [b] Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2. Amariah, † Malluch, Hattaſh, 3. ‡ Shechaniah, ‖ Rehum, § Meremoth, 4. Iddo, † Ginnetho, [c] Abijah, 5. ‡ Miamim, ‖ Maadiah, Bilgah, 6. Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7. § Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah: theſe *were* the chief of the prieſts, and of their brethren in the days of [d] Jeſhua. 8. Moreover the Levites: Jeſhua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah, *which was* over † the thankſgiving, he and his brethren. 9. Alſo Bakbukiah, and Unni, their brethren, *were* over againſt them in the watches. 10. ¶ And Jeſhua begat Joiakim, Joiakim alſo begat Eliaſhib, and Eliaſhib begat Joiada. 11. And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua. 12. And in the days of Joiakim, were prieſts, the chief of the fathers: of Seraiah, Meraiah: of Jeremiah, Hannaniah: 13. Of Ezra, Meſhullam: of Amariah, Jehohanan: 14. Of Melicu, Jonathan: of Shebaniah, Joſeph: 15. Of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai: 16. Of Iddo, Zechariah: of Ginnethon, Meſhullam: 17. Of Abijah, Zichri: of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai: 18. Of Bilgah, Shammua: of Shemaiah, Jehonathan: 19. And of Joiarib, Mattenah: of Jedaiah, Uzzi: 20. Of Sallai, Kallai: of Amok, Eber: 21. Of Hilkiah, Haſhabiah: of Jedaiah, Nethaneel. 22. ¶ The Levites in the days of Eliaſhib, Joiahah, and Johanan, and Jaddua, *were* recorded chief of the fathers; alſo the prieſts, to the reign of ‡ Darius the Perſian. 23. The ſons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, *were* written in ‖ the book of the chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the ſon of Eliaſhib. 24. And the chief of the Levites: Haſhabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeſhua the ſon of Kadmiel; with their brethren over againſt them, to praiſe *and* to give thanks, [e] according to the commandment of David the man of God, [f] ward over againſt ward. 25. Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meſhullam, Talmon, Akkub, *were* porters keeping the wards, at the § threſholds of the gates. 26. Theſe *were* in the days of Joiakim, the ſon of Jeſhua, the ſon of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the prieſt, the ſcribe.

v. 1—26. The names of great and good men deſerve to be had in remembrance, and lateſt poſterity are bound to bleſs God for their examples, as they may alſo reap much of the fruit of their labours.

The firſt of thoſe here mentioned went up at firſt with Zerubbabel and Jeſhua from Babylon. Jeremiah and Ezra here mentioned, are not ſuppoſed to be the famous prophet and ſcribe; the firſt being probably dead, and the latter arrived afterwards. One of the Levites was over the thankſgiving, ordered the matters of the choir, and ſaw that the ſervice of praiſe was regularly performed. The watches of the Levites, *v.* 9. relieved each other by turns, in the temple-ſervice. *Ver.* 10, begins the ſucceſſion of the high-prieſts from Jeſhua, through five generations; this ſeems to be added by ſome other hand, as Nehemiah can ſcarce be ſuppoſed to ſurvive Eliaſhib. Jaddua is probably the Jaddus mentioned by Joſephus, who met Alexander advancing to Jeruſalem, and obtained ſuch favours from him, on ſhewing him the prophecies of Daniel. *Ver.* 11, recounts the next generation who ſucceeded their fathers in the days of Joiakim, and trod in their ſteps; worthy ſons of worthy anceſtors. God's church ſhall not want miniſters, whilſt the head of the church ever lives to preſide over it. *Ver.* 22, begins another generation, in the days of Eliaſhib: they were Levites, perhaps more eminent for their gifts or graces than the prieſts, and therefore mentioned with honour. Some of them ſingers, others porters, according to David's diviſion, but though in the inferior offices of the temple, their piety, zeal, abilities, and diligence rendered them conſpicuous.

27. ¶ And at [g] the dedication of the wall of Jeruſalem, they ſought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jeruſalem, to keep the dedication with gladneſs, [h] both with thankſgiving, and with ſinging *with* cymbals, pſalteries, and with harps. 28. And the ſons of the ſingers gathered themſelves together, both out of the plain country round about Jeruſalem, and from the villages of Netophathi, 29. Alſo from the houſe of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba, and Azmaveth: for the ſingers had builded them villages round about Jeruſalem. 30. And the prieſts and the Levites [i] purified themſelves, and purified the people, and [k] the gates, and the wall. 31. Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great *companies of them that gave* thanks, [l] *whereof one* went on the right hand upon the wall toward [m] the dung-gate: 32. And after them went Hoſhaiah, and half of the princes of Judah, 33. And Azariah, Ezra, and Meſhullam, 34. Judah and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, 35. And *certain* of the prieſts ſons [n] with trumpets: *namely*, Zechariah the ſon of Jonathan, the ſon of Shemaiah, the ſon of Mattaniah, the ſon of Michaiah, the ſon of Zaccur, the ſon of Aſaph: 36. And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with [o] the muſical inſtruments of David the man of God, and Ezra the ſcribe before them. 37. And at [p] the fountain-gate which was over-againſt them, they went up by [q] the ſtairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the houſe of David, even unto [r] the water-gate eaſtward. 38. And the other *company of them that gave* thanks, went over againſt *them*, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond [s] the tower of the furnaces, even unto [t] the broad-wall: 39. And from above [u] the gate of Ephraim, and above [x] the old gate, and above [y] the fiſh-gate, and [z] the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the ſheep-gate: and they ſtood ſtill in [a] the priſon-gate.

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[n] Gen. xxxviii. 30.

[o] Joſh. xv. 13, &c.

‖ Or of Geba.

§ Or to Michmaſh.

[p] 1 Chron. iv. 14.

[a] Ezra ii. 1. 536.

[b] Chap. x. 2—8.

† Melicu.

‡ Shebaniah. Ver. 14.

‖ Harim.

§ Meraioth. Ver. 15.

† Ginnethon. Ver. 16.

[c] Luke i. 5.

‡ Miniamin.

‖ Moadiah. Ver. 17.

§ Sallai. Ver. 20.

[d] Ezra iii. 2. Hag. i. 1. Zech. iii. 1.

† i. e. The pſalm of thankſgiving

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‡ i. e. The laſt of that name and monarchy. Dan. viii. 20, 21.

‖ Heb. The words of days. 1 Chron. ix. 14, &c.

[e] 1 Chron. xxiv.—xxvi.

[f] Ezra iii. 11.

§ Or treaſuries, or aſſemblies.

[g] Deut. xx. 5. Pſal. xxx. Title.

[h] 1 Chron. xxv. 6.

[i] Exod. xix. 10, 15.

[k] 2 Chron. xxix. 16.

[l] Ver. 38.

[m] Chap. ii. 13. & iii. 13.

[n] Num. x. 8.

[o] 1 Chron. xxiii. 5.

[p] Chap. ii. 14.

[q] Chap. iii. 15.

[r] Chap. iii. 26. & viii. 1, 3, 16.

[s] Chap. iii. 11.

[t] Ibid. 8.

[u] Ibid. viii. 16.

[x] Ibid. iii. 6.

[y] Ibid. 3.

[z] Ibid. 1.

[a] Ibid. 31.

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40. So ſtood the two *companies of them that gave* thanks in the houſe of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me: 41. And the prieſts; Eliakim, Maaſeiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, *and* Hananiah with trumpets: 42. And Maaſeiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer: and the ſingers † ſang loud, with Jezrahiah *their* overſeer. 43. Alſo that day they offered great ſacrifices, and [b] rejoiced: for [c] God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives alſo and the children rejoiced: ſo that the joy of Jeruſalem was heard even afar off.

† Heb. Made their voice to be heard.
[b] Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.
[c] Pſ. iv. 7.

v. 27—43. The wall being finiſhed, and the gates ſet up, notwithſtanding all the malice of their foes, we have the ſolemn dedication of the whole to God. Senſible that their ſecurity was not walls and bulwarks, but the favour of the Lord of Hoſts, they would commend all to his protection, and devote to his glory the work of their hands; whilſt with grateful thankſgivings they acknowledge the ſupport he had afforded in the concluſion of the work, undertaken in dependance on his bleſſing. For this purpoſe,

1. The Levites from the country were ſummoned to attend, and with their brethren the prieſts having purified themſelves by the neceſſary ablutions, or ſprinkling the water of purification, *Numb.* viii. 6—21. they purified the people, the walls, and gates probably with the ſame ceremony, as typical of that blood of ſprinkling which purges our conſciences from dead works, and having cleanſed our ſouls from ſin, reſtores us to the holy uſe and enjoyment of all God's creatures.

2. They made a ſolemn proceſſion in two companies, who ſeparating, ſurrounded the whole city, and met at the temple, ſinging and praiſing God as they went, with inſtruments of muſic.

3. They there offered great ſacrifices, and rejoiced before God; all the people, even the women and children, uniting their voices in loud ſhouts of praiſe, ſo that the ſound was heard afar off. *Note*, (1.) The mouths of babes and ſucklings ſhould be taught to liſp God's praiſes, for this would be the ſweeteſt muſic in his ears. (2.) They who have received great mercies from God, are bound to rejoice before him with great joy, to his glory, as well as their own comfort.

44. ¶ [d] And at that time were ſome appointed over the chambers for the treaſures, for the offerings, for the firſt-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions † of the law for the prieſts and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the prieſts, and for the Levites that waited. 45. And both the ſingers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, [e] according to the commandment of David, *and* of Solomon his ſon. 46. For in the days of David [f] and Aſaph, of old, *there were* chief of the ſingers, and ſongs of praiſe and thankſgiving unto God. 47. And all Iſrael in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the ſingers, and the porters ‡ every day his portion, and they § ſanctified *holy things* unto the Levites, and [g] the Levites ſanctified *them* unto the children of Aaron.

[d] Chap. xiii. v. 12.
† i. e. Appointed by the law.
[e] 1 Chron. xxv. & xxvi.
[f] Ibid. xxv. 1, &c. 2 Chron. xxix. 30.
‡ Heb. The portion of a day in his day.
§ i. e. Set apart.
[g] Numb. xviii. 26.

v. 44—47. The good effects of this holy joy appear in the gracious diſpoſitions here mentioned. The prieſts and Levites in their ſeveral functions with diligence and zeal diſcharged their miniſtrations: the people appeared highly ſatisfied in them, and bleſſed God for them; and as a freſh teſtimony of their reſpect, eſpecial care was taken for their liberal maintenance; overſeers appointed for collecting their tythes and dues, and the diſtribution made to the porters and ſingers, who conſtantly attended the temple-worſhip. The Levites portion of tythes is aſſigned them, and the tenth of theſe ſeparated for the prieſts proviſion. *Note*, When miniſters labour in the word and doctrine, they will be chearfully and liberally ſupported; but no wonder if men grudge that idlers ſhould fatten on the ſpoil of flocks they never fed.

CHAP. XIII.

How ſoon do corruptions creep in after the greateſt reformations! In Nehemiah's abſence matters ſoon went wrong, and, at his return, many grievances cried aloud for redreſs. Therefore, 1. *He expels from the congregation the mixed multitude of Moabites and Ammonites, and particularly Tobiah, from his abode in the temple,* ver. 1—9. 2. *He ſecures the maintenance of the prieſts and Levites,* ver. 10—14. 3. *He reſtrains the profanation of the ſabbath,* ver. 15—22. 4. *He redreſſes the growing miſchief of marrying ſtrange wives,* ver. 23—31.

Before Chriſt 445.

1. ON that day [a] they read in the book of Moſes in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, [b] that the Ammonite and the Moabite ſhould not come into the congregation of God for ever; 2. Becauſe they met not the children of Iſrael with bread and with water, [c] but hired Balaam againſt them, that he ſhould curſe them: howbeit, [d] our God turned the curſe into a bleſſing. 3. Now it came to paſs [e] when they had heard the law, that [f] they ſeparated from Iſrael all the mixed multitude. 4. ¶ And before this, Eliaſhib the prieſt, † having the overſight of the chamber of the houſe of our God, *was* allied unto Tobiah: 5. And he had prepared for him a great chamber, [g] where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincenſe, and the veſſels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, (‡ which was commanded *to be given* to the Levites, and the ſingers, and the porters) and the offerings of the prieſts. 6. [h] But in all this *time* was not I at Jeruſalem: for [i] in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, came I unto the king, and after certain days § obtained I leave of the king: 7. And I came to Jeruſalem, and underſtood of the evil that Eliaſhib did for Tobiah, [k] in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the houſe of God. 8. And it grieved me ſore, therefore I caſt forth all the houſhold-ſtuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. 9. Then I commanded, and they cleanſed the chambers; and thither brought I again the veſſels of the houſe of God, with the meat-offering, and the frankincenſe.

[a] Chap. ix. 3.
[b] Deut. xxiii. 3, 4.
[c] Num. xxii. 5.
[d] Deut. xxiii. 5. Pſ. cix. 28.
[e] Pſ. xix. 7.
[f] Chap. ix. 2. & x. 28.
† Heb. Being ſet over.
[g] Chap. xii. 44.
‡ Heb. The commandment of the Levites.
[h] See Exod. xxxii. 1. Mat. xiii. 25.
433.
[i] Chap. v. 14.
§ Or, I earneſtly requeſted.
[k] Ver. 1.

v. 1—9. Nehemiah's back was ſcarcely turned, before great abominations crept in, which called for his ſpeedy return, and required all his zeal and authority to redreſs.

1. The people had joined in affinity with ſtrangers, Ammonites and Moabites, in direct oppoſition to the Divine injunctions, *Deut.* xxiii. 3—5. This portion therefore of God's law he cauſed to be read to them; and, convinced of their ſin and duty, they ſeparated themſelves from theſe ſinful connections. *Note*, (1.) The people of God muſt keep from evil company, if they would avoid the ways of wickedneſs. (2.) When God's word convinces us of ſin, we cannot be too eager to get rid of the ſerpent from our boſom.

2. The high-prieſt himſelf had led the way to the evil, and been the chief in the tranſgreſſion, having contracted affinity with Tobiah, an avowed enemy of God's people, and in direct oppoſition to the expreſs command, *Lev.* xxi. 14. Not content with this, he had received him into the temple; fitted up for him a noble apartment, by caſting down the partitions of the ſtore-chambers; and he who ought not to be admitted into the congregation, hath his abode in the midſt of the very ſanctuary. But no ſooner did Nehemiah, at his return, underſtand this vile tranſaction, than with holy indignation he ſet himſelf to diſpoſſeſs the uſurper, and reſtore theſe hallowed chambers to their proper uſe; grieved that a prieſt, a high-prieſt, ſhould bring ſuch diſhonour upon his high vocation. Tobiah is inſtantly ejected; his goods, as polluted, caſt out of the temple; the chambers cleanſed from the pollution they had contracted from ſuch profane intruſion, by the water of purification; and the veſſels and ſtores, which had been removed, again repoſited in their appointed places. *Note*, (1.) The higher a man's ſtation, and the holier his office, the more ſcandalous are his ſins. (2.) No dignity muſt plead exemption from rebuke. They who ſin before all, ſhould be put to ſhame before all. (3.) When we would cleanſe the temple of our hearts, the world's ſtuff, and the moſt precious iniquities, muſt be caſt out with abhorrence. (4.) Unleſs our hearts be ſprinkled with atoning blood, they never can be prepared for the reception of the ſacred treaſures of divine grace.

10. ¶ And I perceived that [l] the portions of the Levites had not been given *them*: for the Levites and the ſingers that did the work, were fled every one to [m] his field. 11. Then [n] contended I with the rulers: and ſaid, [o] Why is the houſe of God forſaken; And I gathered them together, and ſet them in their † place. 12. [p] Then brought all Judah the tythe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil; unto the ‡ treaſuries. 13. And I made treaſurers over the treaſuries, Shelemiah the prieſt, and Zadok the ſcribe, and of the Levites,

[l] Mal. iii. 8.
[m] Numb. xxxv. 2.
[n] Ver. 17, 25.
[o] Chap. x. 39.
† Heb. Standing.
[p] Chap. xii. 44.
‡ Or, ſtorehouſes.

Levites, Pedaiah : and next to them *was* Hanan the ſon of Zaccur, the ſon of Mattaniah ; for they were counted [q] faithful, and their office *was* to diſtribute unto their brethren. 14. [r] Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my § good deeds that I have done for the houſe of my God, and for the offices thereof.

q Chap. vii. 2. 1 Cor. iv. 2.
r Chap. v. 19. Ver. 22, 31. Heb. vi. 10.
§ Heb. Kindneſſes.

v. 10—14. One corruption generally makes way for another, and the high-prieſt's ill example could not but have the worſt influence on the people.

1. The tythes had not been given the Levites : either they were embezzled, or the people neglected to bring them in ; the conſequence of which was, the Levites were forced to ſeek a maintainance from their farms, inſtead of the temple : or perhaps, their attention to their worldly concerns, and neglect of their divinely-appointed ſervice, occaſioned the evil. The people might well judge they deſerved not to eat what they refuſed to earn.

2. Nehemiah expoſtulates with the magiſtrates hereupon, for ſuffering ſuch abuſe, whoſe care it ſhould have been to ſee the ſervice obſerved, and the due proviſion made for the miniſters of the ſanctuary. Magiſtrates muſt anſwer it to God, for neglecting the truſt repoſed in them. He ſummons therefore the Levites to return to their poſt ; engages the people to pay their juſt dues ; and appoints faithful men to make an equitable diſtribution of them, that ſo there might be no want, nor interruption in the ſacred ſervice. *Note*, (1.) Negligent paſtors ſhould be admoniſhed to take heed to their miniſtry. (2.) When the workman ſhews himſelf worthy of his hire, his maintenance will be no longer counted burdenſome.

3. He looks up to God for that reward which he expected not from man ; not claiming it indeed as a matter of merit, but begging God's favourable acceptance of his well-meant duty ; and God is not unrighteous to forget our works of faith, and labours of love ; they ſhall be remembered to the everlaſting comfort of God's people.

15. ¶ In thoſe days ſaw I in Judah *ſome* [s] treading wine-preſſes on the ſabbath, and bringing in ſheaves, [t] and lading aſſes ; as alſo wine, grapes, and figs, and [t] all *manner of* burdens, which they brought into Jeruſalem on the ſabbath-day : and I teſtified *againſt them* in the day wherein they ſold victuals. 16. There dwelt men of Tyre alſo therein, which brought fiſh, and all manner of ware, and ſold on the ſabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jeruſalem. 17. [u] Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and ſaid unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the ſabbath-day ? 18. [x] Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city ? yet ye † bring more wrath upon Iſrael, by profaning the ſabbath. 19. And it came to paſs, that when the gates of Jeruſalem [y] began to be dark before the ſabbath, I commanded that the gate ſhould be ſhut, and charged that they ſhould not be opened till after the ſabbath : and *ſome* of my ſervants ſet I at the gates, *that* there ſhould no burden be brought in on the ſabbath-day. 20. So the merchants and ſellers of all kind of ware, lodged without Jeruſalem once or twice. 21. Then I teſtified againſt them, and ſaid unto them, Why lodge ye ‡ about the wall ? if ye do *ſo* again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the ſabbath. 22. And I commanded the Levites, that [z] they ſhould cleanſe themſelves, and *that* they ſhould come *and* keep the gates, to ſanctify the ſabbath-day. [a] Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this alſo, and ſpare me according to the § greatneſs of thy mercy.

s Exod. xxxiv. 20.
t t Exod. xx. 10. Jer. xvii. 21.
u Ver. 11.
x Jer. xvii. 23.
† Heb. Add fierce wrath.
y Lev. xxiii. 32.
‡ Heb. Before the wall?
z Chap. xii. 30.
a Ver. 14, 31.
§ Or multitude.

v. 15—22. Another grievous offence is here remarked and remedied.

1. The ſabbath had been greatly polluted, in oppoſition to the moſt expreſs commands, *Exod.* xxxiv. 21. *Deut.* v. 14. *Jer.* xvii. 21. They trod their wine-preſſes, gathered in their corn, worked their beaſts of burden, trafficked in the markets, bought and ſold, and turned the Lord's day into a day of merchandize ; the conſequence of which conduct could not but be fatal to the manners of the people, and beget a total neglect of God and religion. *Note*, Irreligious neglect of the Lord's day is the proof of an abandoned temper, and the way to perdition of body and ſoul.

2. Nehemiah zealouſly ſet himſelf to reform ſo groſs a profanation. He rebuked ſeverely the people who committed the evil, and remonſtrated againſt the rulers who connived at it ; admoniſhing them of the dire effects of ſuch a conduct in their fathers, and warning them of the aggravated guilt they incurred, and the wrath they provoked. *Note*, (1.) Public ſins deſerve ſharp rebukes. (2.) Connivance at ſin in others, makes us partakers with them in guilt. (3.) The kindeſt office we can do our neighbour, is to endeavour to convince him of his danger, and pluck him as a brand from the burning.

3. Whilſt he uſed the arguments of perſuaſion, as a good man, he employed the power he was inveſted with, as a magiſtrate, to reſtrain the open tranſgreſſion of God's law. On the approach of the ſabbath at evening he commanded the city gates to be ſhut, and guarded by his own ſervants, till the next evening, when the ſabbath ended ; and during this time no burdens might enter, and only thoſe be admitted who came to worſhip. The Tyrians, who, as uſual, had come with their merchandize, he ſhut out, and commanded to depart ; and when they again returned, he threatned, if they continued this conduct, to lay hold of them, and puniſh or impriſon them, the fear of which ſoon made them deſiſt from coming. And whilſt his ſervants kept the gates of the city, he charged the Levites to have the ſame care of the gates of the temple, and ſee that no impure or profane perſons were ſuffered to enter there. *Note*, (1.) Magiſtrates muſt not bear the ſword in vain. (2.) If the laws were faithfully put in execution, though it could not convert men's hearts, yet open vice muſt hide its head. (3.) When faithful miniſters join active magiſtrates, much may be hoped from their united labours.

4. He cries to God for a gracious remembrance in this thing, and for that mercy, without which his duty would deſtroy him. Though we may rejoice in our ſervices, as evidences of our fidelity, we muſt ever remember the iniquity which cleaves to our holieſt things ; and, renouncing all ſelf-dependance, caſt our ſouls as ſinners on God's free mercy to us in Chriſt Jeſus.

23. ¶ In thoſe days alſo ſaw I Jews *that* [b] had married wives of Aſhdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab : 24. And † their children ſpake half in the ſpeech of Aſhdod, and could not ſpeak in the Jews language, but according to the language ‡ of each people. 25. And I contended with them, and [c] curſed them, and ſmote certain of them, and pluckt off their hair, and [d] made them ſwear by God, *ſaying*, Ye ſhall not give your daughters unto their ſons, nor take their daughters unto your ſons, or for yourſelves. 26. Did not Solomon king of Iſrael ſin by theſe things ? yet [e] among many nations was there no king like him, [f] who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Iſrael : nevertheleſs, [g] even him did outlandiſh women cauſe to ſin. 27. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to tranſgreſs againſt our God, in marrying ſtrange wives ? 28. And *one* of the ſons of Joiada, the ſon of Eliaſhib the high-prieſt, *was* ſon-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite : therefore I chaſed him from me. 29. [h] Remember them, O my God, § becauſe they have defiled the prieſthood, and [i] the covenant of the prieſthood, and of the Levites. 30. Thus cleanſed I them from all ſtrangers, and [k] appointed the wards of the prieſts and the Levites, every one in his buſineſs : 31. And for the wood-offering, at times appointed, and for [l] the firſt-fruits. [m] Remember me, O my God, for good.

b Ezra ix. 2. Chap. x. 30. 2 Cor. vi. 14.
† Or, Half of their children ſpake, &c.
‡ Heb. Of people and people.
c Chap. v. 13.
d Chap. x. 29, 30.
e 1 Kings iii. 13.
f 2 Sam. xii. xii. 24.
g 1 Kings xi. 1, &c.
h Chap. vi. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 14.
§ Heb. For the defilings.
i 1 Sam. ii. 30. Mal. ii. 4.
k Chap. xii. 1, &c.
l Chap. x. 34.
m Ver. 14, 22.

v. 23—31. Nehemiah, like a faithful ſervant, deſires to make thorough work, and to leave no evil unredreſſed. We have here,

1. The ſin which had been committed, the taking ſtrange wives, and the bad effects of ſuch marriages. The children followed their mothers tongue, and ſpoke the language of Aſhdod, Ammon, and Moab, and not the Jews language ; the conſequence of which neceſſarily led them to adopt their mothers manners and religion, as they learned their tongue. *Note*, (1.) The evil of one parent's example is more eaſily copied, than the piety of the other. (2.) Marriages with unbelievers cannot but entail the more dangerous ſnares on our offspring. (3.) It is a pity the ſons of God's covenant people ſhould ſpeak the language of Aſhdod, and corrupt communication ſhould proceed out of their mouths.

2. The methods Nehemiah took to remedy the evil. He plainly warned them of their ſin ; produced the caſe of Solomon, to admoniſh them of the fatal influence of ſuch conduct ; declared his ſolemn reſolution, as a magiſtrate, never to connive at ſuch abominations ; denounced God's judgments againſt them, if they perſiſted ; corrected the moſt guilty, according to law, *Deut.* xxv. 2. by ſcourging, and plucked off their hair, as a mark of infamy ; obliging them to put away theſe ſtrange wives, and ſolemnly engage, by an oath, never to return to them. And, to ſhow how reſolute he was not to ſpare the greateſt, he expelled from the prieſthood and the city a grandſon of

Before Chriſt 433.

of the high-prieſt, for having married the daughter of Sanballat, and refuſing to put her away. *Note*, (1.) The rocks which have endangered the ſhipwreck of other good men, we muſt remember and avoid. (2.) The examples of the falls of thoſe who were once high in grace, ſhould lead us to tremble for ourſelves. (3.) It is not enough to ſuppreſs the outward offence againſt human laws; magiſtrates muſt ſeek to impreſs men's conſciences with the ſenſe of the evil of their doings againſt the law of God. (4.) They who make themſelves vile by their ſins, deſerve a brand of infamy to be ſtamped upon them. (5.) Better cut off a mortified limb, than, by ſparing it, endanger the corruption of the whole body. (6.) When we have once put away our abominations, we muſt ſolemnly, thro' grace, reſolve never more to return to them.

3. Having purged out the old leaven, he ſeeks to reſtore order to the ſervice, which had ſuffered by theſe abuſes. The prieſts and Levites are appointed to their ſeveral work in their ſeveral courſes, and ſome employed to provide the fuel for the altar, and the tythes for the maintainance of the miniſters, that both might be ſupplied. *Note*, It is not enough that we ceaſe to do evil, we muſt learn alſo to do well.

4. He concludes with a prayer againſt the tranſgreſſors, who continued impenitent, and by the defilement of the prieſthood brought eſpecial reproach on their profeſſion, that God would remember and puniſh them, either by way of correction to reform them, or of deſtruction, for a warning to others; and for himſelf he begs, that a gracious God would remember him for good, bleſſing him in theſe his labours with ſucceſs, bleſſing his own ſoul with increaſing meaſures of his good ſpirit, and finally bringing him to receive his recompenſe at the reſurrection of the juſt.

Before Chriſt 433.

* * *

THE

THE EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;

OR, A

PRACTICAL COMMENT

Upon the BOOK of

ESTHER.

This book, which the Jews hold in the higheſt eſteem, was probably compoſed by Mordecai. It contains a narrative of a horrid plot, to cut off at a ſtroke, all the Jews which were diſperſed through the provinces of Babylon, but God diſappointed the wicked deſign, and turned it to the deſtruction of the contriver. It is obſervable, that the name of God is not once mentioned throughout the volume, but the finger of God is evidently ſeen extricating the Jews from their difficulties, and encouraging by their example, the faith and hope of his people in their deepeſt diſtreſſes; ſhewing how attentive he is to their prayers, and that as he exalteth the lowly, thoſe who walk in pride he is able to abaſe. The memorial of this ſignal mercy is ſtill kept up by the Jews, in the obſervance of the feaſt of Purim, chap. ix. 20. *inſtituted on this occaſion. The tranſactions of this book contain a hiſtory of about ten years, from the third to the tenth of Ahaſuerus,* chap. i. 3. *and* iii. 7.

CHAP. I.

Before Chriſt 483.

Long before Haman's plot was laid, we have here the providential introduction of Eſther to court, who was deſigned as the inſtrument to defeat it. 1. *Ahaſuerus feaſts all his great men,* ver. 1—9. 2. *In anger he divorceth his queen, becauſe ſhe would not come to him when ſent for,* ver. 10—22.

1. NOW it came to paſs in the days of [a] Ahaſuerus, (this *is* Ahaſuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, [b] over an hundred and ſeven and twenty provinces) 2. *That* in thoſe days, when the king Ahaſuerus ſat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in Shuſhan the palace, 3. In the third year of his reign he made [c] a feaſt unto all his princes, and his ſervants; the power of Perſia and Media, [d] the nobles and princes of the provinces *being* before him. 4. When he ſhewed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majeſty, many days, *even* an hundred and fourſcore days. 5. And when theſe days were expired, the king made a feaſt unto all the people *that were* preſent in Shuſhan the palace, both unto great and ſmall, ſeven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. 6. *Where were* white, green, and † blue *hangings*, faſtned with cords of fine linen, and purple, to ſilver rings, and pillars of marble: [e] the beds *were of* gold and ſilver, upon a pavement ‡ of red, and blue, and white, and black marble. 7. And they gave *them* drink in veſſels of gold, (the veſſels being divers one from another) and ‖ royal wine in abundance, according to the § ſtate of the king. 8. And the drinking *was* according to the law: none did compel: for ſo the king had appointed to all the officers of his houſe, that they ſhould do according to every man's pleaſure. 9. Alſo Vaſhti the queen made a feaſt for the women *in* the royal houſe which *belonged* to king Ahaſuerus.

[a] Ezra iv. 6. Dan. ix. 1.
[b] Pſal. xvii. 14. & xxxvii. 35. Dan. vi. 1.
[c] 1 Tim. iv. 4.
[d] Luke xiv. 13.
† Or violet.
[e] Chap. vii. 8. Ezek. xxiii. 41. Amos ii. 8. & vi. 4.
‡ Or of porphyry, and marble, and alabaſter, and ſtone of blue colour.
‖ Heb. Wine of the kingdom.
§ Heb. Hand.

v. 1—9. Which of the kings of Perſia Ahaſuerus was, is difficult to determine. The moſt probable opinion ſeems to fix on Xerxes, who ſucceeded Darius Hyſtaſpis. We have here,

1. An account of his vaſt empire, extending over 127 provinces; conſiderably increaſed ſince the time of Cyrus, *Dan.* vi. 1. and now reached the ſummit of its grandeur.

2. To diſplay his magnificence, he made a moſt ſumptuous feaſt during 180 days ſucceſſively, entertaining his princes and great men; and when theſe were ended, for ſeven days more he feaſted all the people, ſmall and great, in the court of the garden of the palace, which was adorned with the moſt gorgeous tapeſtry and hangings, the pavement was marble of the moſt exquiſite beauty, the beds on which they lay were maſſy gold and ſilver, and all the veſſels gold, of various and moſt curious workmanſhip. The nobleſt wine plentifully flowed, and every gueſt was welcome, but none compelled to drink. *Note,* (1.) There is no evil in the ſplendor of a court, or the elegance of a royal table; the evil lies in the abuſe of theſe things. (2.) Let the ſobriety of a heathen feaſt confound the ſottiſh cuſtoms of our entertainments; where repeated healths, as they are called, drown the ſenſes in drunkenneſs, and the ſoul in perdition and deſtruction.

3. The queen in her palace entertained her ladies at the ſame time, according to the eaſtern manner, where the women never mix in company, but are always kept ſeparate from the men.

10. ¶ On the ſeventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, [f] Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the ſeven † chamberlains that ſerved in the preſence of Ahaſuerus the king, 11. [g] To bring Vaſhti the

[f] Chap. vii. 9.
† Or eunuchs.
[g] Ver. 12. Prov. xx. 1.

the queen before the king, with the crown royal, to
ſhew the people and the princes her beauty: for ſhe
was † fair to look on. 12. But the queen Vaſhti [h] refuſed
to come at the king's commandment by *his* chamberlains:
therefore was the king [i] very wroth, and his
anger burned in him. 13. ¶ Then the king ſaid to
the wiſe men, [k] which knew the times, (for ſo *was* the
king's manner towards all that knew law and judgment:
14. And the next unto him *was* Carſhena, Shether,
Admatha, Tarſhiſh, Meres, Marſena, *and* Memucan,
[l] the ſeven princes of Perſia and Media, [m] which ſaw the
king's face, *and* which ſat the firſt in the kingdom)
15. What ſhall we do unto the queen Vaſhti, according
to law, becauſe ſhe hath not performed the commandment
of the king Ahaſuerus, by the chamberlains? 16.
And Memucan anſwered before the king and the princes,
Vaſhti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only,
but alſo to all the princes, and to all the people that *are*
in all the provinces of the king Ahaſuerus. 17. For
this deed of the queen ſhall come abroad unto all women,
ſo that they ſhall [n] deſpiſe their huſbands in their
eyes, when it ſhall be reported, The king Ahaſuerus
commanded Vaſhti the queen to be brought in before
him, but ſhe came not. 18. *Likewiſe* ſhall the ladies
of Perſia and Media ſay this day unto all the king's
princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen.
Thus *ſhall there ariſe* too much contempt and wrath.
19. If it pleaſe the king, let there go a royal commandment
from him, and let it be written among the
laws of the Perſians and the Medes, that ‡ it be not altered,
that Vaſhti come no more before king Ahaſuerus,
and let the king give her royal eſtate § unto
another that is better than ſhe. 20. And when the
king's decree which he ſhall make, ſhall be publiſhed
throughout all his empire (for it is great) all [o] the wives
ſhall give to their huſbands honour, both to great and
ſmall. 21. And the ſaying † pleaſed the king and the
princes, and the king did according to the word of
Memucan: 22. For he ſent letters into all the king's
provinces, into every province according to the writing
thereof, and to every people after their language, [p] that
every man ſhould bear rule in his own houſe, and ‡ that
it ſhould be publiſhed according to the language of
every people.

Before Chriſt 483.
† Heb. Good of countenance.
[h] Col. iii. 18.
[i] Eph. iv. 26, 27.
[k] 1 Chron. xii. 32.
[l] Ezra vii. 14.
[m] 2 Kings xxv. 19.
[n] Eph. v. 33.
‡ Heb. Paſs not away. Chap. viii. 8. Dan. vi. 8, 12.
§ Heb. Unto her companion.
[o] 1 Pet. iii. 5.
† Heb. Was good in the eyes of, &c.
[p] Eph. v. 22, 23.
‡ Heb. That one ſhould publiſh it according to the language of his people.

v. 10—22. The end of carnal mirth is commonly heavineſs. The laſt day of Ahaſuerus's jollity cloſes with vexation.

1. In the heat of wine, during the laſt day of the feaſt, having diſplayed all his other magnificence, he reſolved that his beautiful queen ſhould appear in public, with her royal crown, and cloſe with her majeſtic preſence this grand entertainment.

2. The chamberlains, or eunuchs, who were diſpatched to the queen, met with a reſolute denial. She thought it an indignity to be thus expoſed, and therefore proudly refuſed to come.

3. The refuſal highly exaſperated the monarch, and before his company he could not with-hold his anger, but raſhly reſolved to be revenged of her. His counſellors are called, his princes conſulted, that in ſo unuſual a caſe he might know what, according to law, he might do; for, though a king, he thought not himſelf above it. *Note,* (1.) Family quarrels, and before company too, are very grievous, and damp the joy of any entertainment. (2.) It is eaſier to govern a kingdom, than to rule over our own ſpirit. (3.) It is well for a kingdom, when princes profeſs ſuch a veneration for the law.

4. Memucan, in the name of the reſt, propoſes his opinion, that Vaſhti ſhould be divorced for her diſobedience. As the quarrel was public, it would be dangerous to the peace of families, if wives were permitted thus to deſpiſe their huſbands commands; and the queen's example would afford a dangerous precedent; while ſome condign puniſhment on one ſo great would for ever engage obedience from all inferiors throughout the kingdom, and ſecure to every man the rule of his own houſe. *Note,* Where women invert the ordinance of God, refuſe to be in ſubjection, and graſp at dominion, there will be confuſion, and every evil work.

5. The advice was readily embraced, an edict inſtantly iſſued through the kingdom, and Vaſhti divorced. Thus, however wrong the ſteps were which brought on this quarrel, the peace of the kingdom was greatly ſecured by this edict, and, through Divine Providence, a way opened for Eſther to the throne. Thus can God bring good ſtill out of evil, and make mens ſins and follies ſubſervient to the purpoſes of his own glory.

CHAP. II.

We have here, 1. *Eſther advanced to be queen,* ver. 1—20. 2. *A plot againſt the king's life diſcovered by Mordecai,* ver. 21—23.

1. AFTER theſe things, when the wrath of king
Ahaſuerus was appeaſed, he remembred Vaſhti,
and what ſhe had done, and [a] what was decreed againſt
her. 2. Then ſaid the king's ſervants, that miniſtred
unto him, Let there be fair young virgins ſought for
the king. 3. And let the king appoint officers in [b] all
the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather
together all the fair young virgins unto Shuſhan the
palace, to the houſe of the women, unto the † cuſtody
of Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women,
and let their things for purification be given *them*:
4. And let the maiden which pleaſeth the king, be
queen inſtead of Vaſhti. And the thing pleaſed the
king, and he did ſo. 5. ¶ *Now* in Shuſhan the palace,
there was a certain Jew, whoſe name *was* Mordecai,
the ſon of Jair, the ſon of Shimei, the ſon of Kiſh,
a Benjamite: 6. [c] Who had been carried away from
Jeruſalem, with the captivity which had been carried
away with ‡ Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar
the king of Babylon had carried away. 7. And
he § brought up Hadaſſah (that *is* Eſther) [d] his uncle's
daughter, for ſhe had neither father nor mother, and
the maid *was* ‖ fair and beautiful, whom Mordecai
(when her father and mother were dead) took for his
own daughter. 8. ¶ So it came to paſs when the
king's commandment and his decree was heard, and
when many maidens were gathered together unto Shuſhan
the palace, to the cuſtody of Hegai, that Eſther
was brought alſo unto the king's houſe, to the cuſtody
of Hegai keeper of the women. 9. And the maiden
pleaſed him, and [e] ſhe obtained kindneſs of him, and
he ſpeedily gave her things for purification, with † ſuch
things as belonged to her, and ſeven maidens *which*
were meet to be given her out of the king's houſe, and
he preferred her and her maids unto the beſt *place* of the
houſe of the women. 10. [f] Eſther had not ſhewed her
people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged
her that ſhe ſhould not ſhew *it*. 11. And Mordecai
walked every day before the court of the women's
houſe to know ‡ how Eſther did, and what ſhould become
of her. 12. ¶ Now when every maid's turn was
come, to go in to king Ahaſuerus, after that ſhe had
been twelve months, according to the manner of the
women (for ſo were the days of their purifications accompliſhed,
to wit, ſix months with oil of myrrh, and
ſix months with ſweet odours, and with *other* things
for the purifying of the women) 13. Then thus came
every maiden unto the king; whatſoever ſhe deſired
was given her, to go with her out of the houſe of the
women, unto the king's houſe. 14. In the evening ſhe
went, and on the morrow ſhe returned into the ſecond
houſe of the women to the cuſtody of Shaaſhgaz, the
king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: ſhe
came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted
in her, and that ſhe were called by name.
15. ¶ Now when the turn of [g] Eſther, the daughter of
Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai (who had taken her
for his daughter) was come to go in unto the king,
ſhe required nothing, but what Hegai the king's chamberlain,
the keeper of the women appointed: and Eſther
obtained favour in the ſight of all them that looked
upon her. 16. So [h] Eſther was taken unto king Ahaſuerus,
into his houſe royal, in the tenth month (which
is the month Tebeth) in the ſeventh year of his reign.
17. And the king loved Eſther above all the women,
and ſhe obtained grace and § favour in his ſight more
than all the virgins: ſo that he ſet the ‖ royal crown
upon her head, and [i] made her queen inſtead of Vaſhti.
18. Then the king made a great feaſt unto all his princes
and his ſervants, *even* Eſther's feaſt, and he made a
† releaſe to the provinces, and [k] gave gifts according to
the ſtate of the king. 19. And when the virgins were

Before Chriſt 483.
[a] Chap. i. 19.
[b] Chap. i. 1.
† Heb. Hand.
482.
[c] 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15. Jer. xxiv. 1.
‡ Or, Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 6.
§ Heb. Nouriſhed.
[d] Ver. 15.
‖ Heb. Fair of form, and good of countenance.
[e] So Dan. i. 9.
† Heb. Her portions.
[f] Ver. 20.
‡ Heb. The peace of Eſther.
481.
[g] Ver. 7.
[h] Pſ. cxiii. 7, 8.
479.
§ Or, kindneſs.
‖ Heb. Crown of the kingdom.
[i] 1 Sam. ii. 8.
† Heb Reſt.
[k] Pſ. lxviii. 8.

Before Christ 481. gathered together the ſecond time, then Mordecai ſat
in the king's gate. 20. [l] Eſther had not *yet* ſhewed her
[l] Ver. 10. kindred, nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her:
for Eſther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as
when ſhe was brought up with him.

v. 1—20. The advancement of Eſther is here recorded, with the various ſteps of Divine Providence, which led to this wonderful event.

1. The king ſoon repented of the raſhneſs that in his wine he had committed, and with deep regret parted with his beauteous queen, that by an unalterable law he muſt ſee no more. *Note*, What is done haſtily in anger, often gives cauſe to long and bitter remorſe.

2. The courtiers, to divert the king's melancholy, and by ſome new object to obliterate the remembrance of Vaſhti, propoſe to him the collecting of the moſt beautiful damſels in his dominions, that out of them he might ſelect the moſt agreeable, to reign in the ſtead of the divorced queen. *Note*, In kings courts, enough watch the monarch's eye, and appear ready miniſters to all his pleaſures.

3. The king approved the propoſal, and Hege, the king's chamberlain, or eunuch, was appointed to take charge of them, and after a year for purification, that their native beauty might be heightened by the charms of art, they were then in turn to be brought to the king; and if they pleaſed him not, they returned to be ſhut up in the ſeraglio, whilſt the favoured virgin was to be choſen queen.

4. Among thoſe that were collected at Shuſhan was a Jeweſs, named Eſther; an orphan, brought up under the care of her couſin-german Mordecai, a Benjamite, whoſe anceſtor had been carried away from Jeruſalem at the captivity of Jeconiah. As he in tenderneſs had ſhewed himſelf a father to her, and with daily ſollicitude enquired after her welfare, ſhe, in obedience, behaved as a dutiful child, obſervant of his directions. He had bid her conceal her parentage, as it might be an objection to her advancement; and as ſhe was born in Shuſhan, no queſtions probably were aſked of her country, and ſhe paſſed for one of Perſian extraction. *Note*, (1.) They who ſhow to orphans parental tenderneſs, ſhould meet with the grateful return of filial duty and affection. (2.) Though we may never tell a lie, we are not always obliged to ſpeak all we know.

5. The manners, as well as the beauty of this damſel, exceedingly ingratiated her to the keeper of the women, and he ſhewed her eſpecial regard and kindneſs. When her turn came to be introduced to the king, ſhe required no ornaments; her native beauty was ſufficient diſtinction. She no ſooner appeared, than all who ſaw, admired her; and the king, charmed with her perſon, determined to fix on her head the imperial diadem. Behold a captive, a Jew, an orphan, now exalted to the royal throne of Perſia! Thus God can work, and raiſe the poor from the duſt, to ſet them among princes.

6. At the coronation of Eſther a royal feaſt is made, which ſhe graced with her preſence, which Vaſhti had refuſed. To heighten the general joy, a releaſe of taxes was publiſhed thro' the provinces, and royal gifts beſtowed. Though a ſecond collection of virgins was made, Eſther ſeems to have continued unrivalled in the king's affections; and Mordecai now was advanced to ſome honourable poſt at court, probably thro' Eſther's influence, who retained the ſame reſpect and deference for his advice, and changed not her manners with her ſtation, though ſhe had ſtill continued to conceal, as Mordecai directed, her kindred and people. *Note*, (1.) No change of ſtation ſhould make us forget our benefactors. (2.) Younger perſons ſhew their wiſdom in being guided by the counſel of their more aged and experienced friends.

About 478. 21. ¶ In thoſe days (while Mordecai ſat in the king's
gate) two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Te-
† Heb. Threſhold. reſh, of thoſe which kept the † door, were wroth, and
ſought to lay hand on the king Ahaſuerus: 22. And
the thing was known to Mordecai, who told *it* unto
Eſther the queen; and Eſther certified the king *thereof*
in Mordecai's name. 23. And when inquiſition was
made of the matter, it was found out: therefore they
[m] See Mal. iii. 16. were both hanged on a tree: and [m] it was written in
[n] Chap. vi. 1. [n] the book of the chronicles before the king.

v. 21—23. We have here,

1. A plot formed againſt the king's life by two of his ſervants, whom he had diſguſted. Monarchs ſtand on a dangerous eminence: how many of theſe have gone down murdered to the grave! Let them learn juſtice, and to rule with equity, that they may engage the affections as well as the ſubmiſſion of their ſubjects.

2. The plot was diſcovered by Mordecai, for treaſons uſually tranſpire; and, as a loyal ſubject, he communicates his intelligence through Eſther to the king. Inquiſition is made, the traitors convicted and hanged, and a record entered of the faithful ſervice he had performed. *Note*, (1.) God has ſtrange ways of bringing treaſons and bloody deſigns to light. (2.) Concealment of any plot againſt the ſovereign or ſtate, is highly criminal. (3.) May every traitor meet a like reward. (4.) Good ſervices done us deſerve to be recorded, that they may be remembered long, and recompenſed.

Before Christ 478.

CHAP. III.

Here, 1. *Haman becomes the king's favourite,* ver. 1. 2. *Mordecai refuſeth to do him honour,* ver. 2—4. 3. *Haman for this vows to be revenged upon all the Jews,* ver. 5, 6. 4. *He obtains an order from the king to have them all maſſacred,* ver. 7—13. 5. *This order is diſperſed through the kingdom,* ver. 14, 15.

1. AFTER theſe things did king Ahaſuerus [a] pro- About 474.
mote Haman the ſon of Hammedatha [b] the [a] Pſ. xii. 8. Mal. iii. 15.
Agagite, and advanced him, and ſet his ſeat above all [b] 1 Sam. xv. 8.
the princes that *were* with him. 2. And all the king's
ſervants that *were* in the king's gate, bowed, and reve-
renced Haman; for the king had ſo commanded con-
cerning him: but Mordecai [c] bowed not, [d] nor did *him* [c] Deut. xxv. 17.
reverence. 3. Then the king's ſervants which *were* in [d] Pſ. xv. 4.
the king's gate, ſaid unto Mordecai, Why tranſgreſſeſt
thou the king's commandment? 4. Now it came to
paſs, when they ſpake daily unto him, and [e] he hearkned [e] Prov. xix. 27.
not unto them, that they told Haman, to ſee whether
Mordecai his matters would ſtand; for he had told
them that he *was* a Jew. 5. And when Haman ſaw
that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence,
then was Haman [f] full of wrath. 6. And he thought [f] See Dan. iii. 19.
ſcorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had
ſhewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Ha-
man ſought [g] to deſtroy all the Jews that *were* through- [g] Pſ. lxxxiii. 4.
out the whole kingdom of Ahaſuerus, *even* the people
of Mordecai.

v. 1—6. The people of God muſt not long expect the ſunſhine of proſperity. Though they had a queen on the throne, and a friend at court, a ſtorm ariſes, which threatens to ſwallow them up with univerſal deſtruction.

1. Haman, an Agagite, ſome think a deſcendant of Agag the king of Amalek, the hereditary enemy of the Jews, others, a Perſian of this name, is advanced to the firſt poſt of honour, becomes the king's favourite, and receives, at his command, ſuch adoration and reverence as approached idolatry.

2. The riſing ſun is univerſally worſhipped by the fawning courtiers; and as preferment could be hoped for only thro' the favourite's intereſt, all men bowed down before him. Mordecai alone could not conform to the extravagant honours paid him; not envious of his advancement, or proudly diſreſpectful, but conſcientiouſly with-held from ſuch impious adoration. In vain his fellow-ſervants adviſe compliance, or remonſtrate on the danger of refuſal: he chuſes rather to loſe his office, or life itſelf, rather than wound his conſcience. *Note*, No conſideration muſt ſway or influence us to comply with what is evil. Better incur the wrath of princes, than offend the King of kings; better hazard life, than loſe body and ſoul in hell.

3. Haman was ſoon informed of this obſtinate diſreſpect, and that this Jew pleaded religion as the reaſon for refuſing this adoration to a mortal man. His pride fired at the notice, and he reſolves to wreak his vengeance not only on him, but on all his nation. *Note*, (1.) The reſentment of favourites hath been often fatal to the worthieſt ſubjects; but uſually in the end they are made to drink of the cup they had mixed for others. (2.) Inſolent pride begets unrelenting cruelty: woe to thoſe who dare offend ſuch.

7. ¶ In the firſt month (that *is* the month Niſan) in 474.
the twelfth year of king Ahaſuerus, [h] they caſt Pur, [h] Chap. ix. 24.
that *is*, the lot before Haman, from day to day, and
from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is* the
month Adar. 8. ¶ And Haman † ſaid unto king Aha- † Or, had ſaid.
ſuerus, There is a certain people ſcattered abroad, and
diſperſed among the people, in all the provinces of thy
kingdom, and [i] their laws *are* divers from all people, [i] Ezra iv. 13. Acts xvi. 20.
neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not ‡ for ‡ Heb. Meet, or equal.
the king's profit to ſuffer them. 9. If it pleaſe the king,
let it be written that they may be deſtroyed: and I
will § pay ten thouſand talents of ſilver to the hands of § Heb. Weigh.
thoſe that have the charge of the buſineſs, to bring *it*
into

Before Chriſt 474.

into the king's treaſuries. 10. And the king [k] took [l] his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the ſon of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews ‖ enemy. 11. And the king ſaid unto Haman, The ſilver *is* given to thee, the people alſo, to do with them [m] as it ſeemeth good to thee. 12. [n] Then were the king's ſcribes called on the thirteenth day of the firſt month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province, according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; [o] in the name of king Ahaſuerus was it written, and ſealed with the king's ring. 13. And the letters were ſent by poſts into all the king's provinces, to deſtroy, to kill, and to cauſe to periſh all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, [p] in one day, *even* upon [q] the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, (which *is* the month Adar) and [r] *to take* the ſpoil of them for a prey. 14. The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province, was publiſhed unto all people, that they ſhould be ready againſt that day. 15. The poſts went out, [s] being haſtned by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shuſhan the palace: and the king and Haman [t] ſat down to drink, but [u] the city Shuſhan was perplexed.

[k] Gen. xli. 42.
[l] Chap. viii. 2, 8.
‖ Or, Oppreſſor.
[m] Pſ. lxxiii. 7.
[n] Chap. viii. 9.
[o] See 1 Kings xxi. 8.
[p] Chap. viii. 12, &c.
[q] 2 Mac. xv. 36.
[r] Chap. viii. 11.
[s] Rom. iii. 15.
[t] John xvi. 20.
[u] Chap. viii. 15.

v. 7—15. Urged on by impatience of revenge, the wicked Haman concerts his black deſign, and obtains the moſt favourable proſpect of ſucceſs.

1. By miſrepreſentations he obtains of the king full licence to execute his bloody purpoſe. He deſcribes the Jews as a people vile and deſpicable, vagabonds and fugitives, different in their manners from all the king's ſubjects, traiterous in principle, and dangerous to the ſtate: that it would be highly advantageous for the kingdom not to ſuffer them, but to deſtroy them root and branch. And, leſt the revenue might ſeem to ſuffer by the loſs of the tribute they paid, he offers ten thouſand talents, near four millions of our money, to reimburſe the king's treaſury. The king, without enquiry, eaſily conſented to the favourite's requeſts; ſacrifices the people to his will; remits the offer of the ten thouſand talents; and, as a token of his regard and affection, gives him the ring from his finger, or perhaps the royal ſignet, as a mark of his implicit confidence, that he might iſſue whatever order concerning the matter he thought fit. *Note*, (1.) The people of God have been often traduced as deſpicable, and repreſented as dangerous; and becauſe their holy manners correſpond not with a wicked world, their ſingularity is treated as deſign, and their religion counted rebellion. (2.) If Chriſtians were not firſt dreſſed up as monſters, their enemies could not ſo eaſily worry and deſtroy them. (3.) Revenge is ſo ſweet, that wicked men ſtick at nothing to gratify it.

2. Having obtained the king's conſent, (as the 8th verſe may be rendered, *Now Haman had ſaid unto the king*, &c.) he next conſults his diviners to fix the lucky moment for the maſſacre. In order for this the lot is caſt, and ſo Divine Providence ordered it, that it fell on the twelfth month; ſo that eleven months were given for the diſappointment of the wicked device: and, notwithſtanding his malice and haſte, Haman's ſuperſtition prevailed, and he waited for the auſpicious day. *Note*, God has ſecret ways of diſappointing the deſigns of his people's enemies, and making them abortive, by the very means they uſe to enſure ſucceſs.

3. The time being fixed, the bloody edict is drawn, ſealed, and diſpatched into all the provinces, and the thirteenth of the twelfth month is the fatal day. How many times have the enemies of God's church and people thought their prey thus ſecure; but he that ſitteth on the heavens laugheth them to ſcorn.

4. The meſſengers in haſte being gone, Haman and the king ſit down at the feſtal board, where wine and revelry ſhut out from the royal breaſt all thoughts of the bloody ſcene ready to commence. But though they were merry, the city was perplexed, the poor Jews in terror, thoſe who befriended them intereſted in their danger, and the moſt indifferent ſhocked at the barbarity of the order, and dreading the conſequence of ſuch a promiſcuous ſlaughter. *Note*, (1.) Kings are often the greateſt ſtrangers to their people's ſituation. (2.) In times of public calamity, merriment and feaſting are moſt unſuitable.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter, 1. *The Jews weep and mourn on account of this edict*, ver. 1—4. 2. *Eſther enquires the cauſe*, ver. 5—7. 3. *Mordecai informs her, and begs her to intercede with the king*, ver. 8, 9. 4. *She objects the danger; yet, at Mordecai's requeſt, reſolves to venture, after a three days ſolemn faſt*, ver. 10—17.

1. WHEN Mordecai perceived [a] all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on ſackcloth [b] with aſhes, and went out into the midſt of the city, and cried with a loud and bitter cry: 2. And came even before the king's gate: for none *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with ſackcloth. 3. And in every province whitherſoever the king's commandment, and his decree came, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, and faſting, and [c] weeping, and wailing, and † many lay in ſackcloth and aſhes. 4. ¶ So Eſther's maids and her ‡ chamberlains came and told *it* her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved, and ſhe ſent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his ſackcloth from him: but he received *it* not.

[a] Chap. iii. 8—11.
[b] Joſh. vii. 6. Ezek. xxvii. 30.
[c] Pſ. xlii. 5.
† Heb. Sackcloth and aſhes were laid under many. Iſa. lviii. 5. Dan. ix. 3.
‡ Or, Eunuchs.

v. 1—4. No ſooner was the bloody edict noiſed abroad, than terror and diſtreſs ſeized on the unhappy victims.

1. Mordecai, as moſt nearly concerned, and the innocent cauſe of all the evil, rent his cloaths, and with an exceeding bitter cry, which beſpoke his anguiſh, went forth into the city, to alarm his countrymen, and affect them with a ſenſe of their danger. And though none cloathed with ſackcloth might by law appear in the king's court, all ſuch unwelcome objects being baniſhed from the royal preſence; yet he came before the gate, that Eſther might ſome way be made acquainted with their deep calamity. *Note*, A good man feels and laments the heavy ſtrokes of Providence, whilſt with humble reſignation he ſubmits to the rod.

2. The ſorrow ſoon ſpread through every province whither the decree was ſent, and nothing was heard but weeping and wailing. At laſt, the notice of it reached the queen, and Mordecai's diſconſolate appearance, to whom ſhe might have ſhown particular marks of her favour, was reported to her, and grieved her exceedingly. Having heard he was in ſackcloth, ſhe ſent him new apparel; but he refuſed it, nor would appear out of the habit of a mourner, whilſt the cauſe of his diſtreſs ſubſiſted. *Note*, They who are united under one head, Chriſt Jeſus, cannot but ſympathize with every fellow-member that ſuffers.

5. Then called Eſther for Hatach, *one* of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, [d] to know what it *was*, and why it *was*. 6. So Hatach went forth to Mordecai, unto the ſtreet of the city which *was* before the king's gate. 7. And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of [e] the ſum of the money that Haman had promiſed to pay to the king's treaſuries for the Jews, to deſtroy them. 8. Alſo he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shuſhan to deſtroy them, to ſhew *it* unto Eſther, and to declare *it* unto her, and to charge her that ſhe ſhould go in unto the king, to make ſupplication unto him, and to make requeſt before him for her people. 9. And Hatach came and told Eſther the words of Mordecai. 10. ¶ Again Eſther ſpake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai: 11. All the king's ſervants and the people of the king's provinces do know, that whoſoever, whether man or woman, ſhall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, [f] *there is* one law of his to put *him* to death, except ſuch [g] to whom the king ſhall hold out the golden ſcepter, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king theſe thirty days. 12. And they told to Mordecai Eſther's words. 13. Then Mordecai commanded to anſwer Eſther, Think not with thyſelf that thou ſhalt eſcape in the king's houſe, more than all the Jews. 14. For if thou altogether holdeſt thy peace at this time, *then* [h] ſhall there † enlargement and deliverance ariſe to the Jews from another place, [i] but thou and thy father's houſe ſhall be deſtroyed: and [k] who knoweth, whether thou art come to the kingdom for *ſuch* a time as this? 15. ¶ Then Eſther bade *them* return Mordecai *this anſwer*. 16. Go, gather together all the Jews *that are* ‡ preſent in Shuſhan, and faſt ye for me, and neither eat nor drink [l] three days night or day: I alſo and my maidens will faſt likewiſe, and [m] ſo will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law; and [n] if I periſh, I periſh. 17. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Eſther had commanded him.

[d] Rom. xii. 15. Heb. xiii. 3.
[e] Chap. iii. 9.
[f] Dan. ii. 9.
[g] Chap. v. 2. & viii. 4.
[h] See Gen. xxii. 8.
† Heb. Breathing.
[i] See Judg. v. 23.
[k] See Ezek. i. 16.
‡ Heb. Found.
[l] See Chap. v. 1.
[m] See 2 Kings vii. 4.
[n] See Gen. xliii. 14.

v. 5—17. As yet Eſther ſeems to have had but an imperfect knowledge of the cauſe of Mordecai's affliction; and as it was impoſſible, by the cuſtom of Perſia, to have a perſonal conference with him, ſhe ſends Hatach, a truſty eunuch, to enquire and report the particulars. Hereupon,

1. Mordecai relates the whole of the matter; tranſmits, by the eunuch, a copy of the decree, and charges her by all means to uſe her utmoſt influence to get it reverſed, by undeceiving the king with regard to the miſrepreſentations of Haman. *Note*, Could truth but find its way to the royal ear, much of the people's miſeries would be relieved.

2. Eſther returns, by the ſame meſſenger, an anſwer to Mordecai's requeſt. Uncalled, to appear in the royal preſence, was death by the Perſian law, except the king ſtretched out the golden ſceptre; nor were the queens excepted from it: and, for ſome time paſt, the king ſeems to have neglected her, which would make the eſſay more dangerous, and therefore ſhe rather wiſhes him to ſeek ſome other advocate, than expoſe her to the peril of imminent death. *Note*, (1.) The King of kings is not thus inacceſſible; whoſoever will, may come unto him boldly with every requeſt, and are ſure never to be denied. (2.) God in his providence permits the moſt diſcouraging circumſtances, in order to exerciſe the faith, and brighten the crown of the redeemed.

3. Mordecai leſſens not his importunity by the danger which Eſther ſuggeſted to him. He let her know, that if her kindred fell, ſhe muſt not hope to eſcape; that he fully believed God would ſtand by them, and ſhe would loſe the honour of being their deliverer, if ſhe declined this ſervice; nay, that God would viſit upon her and her father's houſe ſuch a cowardly refuſal, and, whilſt the reſt eſcaped, they would be left to periſh: and he concludes with ſuggeſting, that her advancement was ordered for this great purpoſe, and that ſhe was therefore bound to correſpond with the deſigns of God herein. *Note*, (1.) If we have faith to truſt God, he will never fail us. (2.) They who through unbelieving fear decline the path of duty, are juſtly given up to the danger they ſeek thus ſinfully to ſhun. (3.) It is good to obſerve the leadings of providence, and correſpond with what appears to be the deſign of God, in placing us in ſuch a ſtation, or circumſtance.

4. Determined at laſt, Eſther reſolves at all hazards to make the eſſay: but firſt ſhe enjoined Mordecai, and all the Jews in Shuſhan, to ſpend three days in prayer and faſting, whilſt ſhe did the ſame in the palace, to humble their ſouls for the ſins which provoked theſe threatned judgments, and to ſeek God's favour and bleſſing on her attempt, who alone could incline the king's heart to grant her ſuit. Putting her life in her hand, ſhe then reſolved to go to the king: ſhe could but periſh. *Note*, (1.) In all our diſtreſſes there is a throne of grace open, and a God who heareth prayer. (2.) When we are truly humbled under our ſins, we may hope God will deliver us from our afflictions. (3.) Whilſt we are deſiring the prayers of others, let us not forget to be importunate for ourſelves. (4.) When we can truſt God with all, then all is ſafe.

CHAP. V.

Here, 1. *Eſther proves ſucceſsful in her application, and is honoured with the king's preſence at her banquet,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Haman, ſtill more enraged at Mordecai, prepares a gallows for his execution,* ver. 9—14.

1. NOW it came to paſs [a] on the third day, that Eſther put on *her* royal *apparel*, and ſtood in [b] the inner court of the king's houſe, over againſt the king's houſe: and the king ſat upon his royal throne in the royal houſe, over againſt the gate of the houſe. 2. And it was ſo, when the king ſaw Eſther the queen ſtanding in the court, *that* [c] ſhe obtained favour in his ſight: and [d] the king held out to Eſther the golden ſceptre that *was* in his hand: ſo Eſther drew near, and touched the top of the ſcepter. 3. Then ſaid the king unto her, [e] What wilt thou, queen Eſther? and what *is* thy requeſt? [f] it ſhall be even given thee, to the half of the kingdom. 4. And [g] Eſther anſwered, If it *ſeem* good unto the king, [h] let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him. 5. Then the king ſaid, Cauſe Haman to make haſte, that he may do as Eſther hath ſaid: ſo the king and Haman came to the banquet that Eſther had prepared. 6. ¶ And [i] the king ſaid unto Eſther at the banquet of wine, [k] What *is* thy petition? and it ſhall be granted thee: and what *is* thy requeſt? even to the half of the kingdom it ſhall be performed. 7. Then anſwered Eſther, and ſaid, My petition and my requeſt *is*; 8. If I have found favour in the ſight of the king, and if it pleaſe the king to grant my petition, and to perform my requeſt, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I ſhall prepare for them, and I will do to-morrow as the king hath ſaid.

[a] Chap. iv. 16.
[b] Chap. iv. 11. & vi. 4.
[c] Prov. xxi. 1. Eſth. xv. 7.
[d] Chap. viii. 4.
[e] John xvi. 24.
[f] See Mar. vi. 23.
[g] Prov. xxix. 11.
[h] Mat. x. 16.
[i] Chap. vii. 2.
[k] Chap. ix. 12.

v. 1—8. On the third day, when their prayers and faſting had come up for a memorial before God,

1. Eſther boldly approaches the royal throne, dreſſed in royal apparel, meet for the preſence of the king. Having in faith and prayer commended herſelf to God, ſhe could with confidence meet the danger.

2. The king no ſooner perceived her ſtanding in the inner court, than God, who hath in his hands the hearts of kings, inclined him to ſhew her the greateſt kindneſs and regard. He ſtretches out the ſceptre, as an aſſurance to her of life, and encourages her to propoſe her requeſt, (which ſuch an unuſual appearance of the queen ſpoke to be of importance) and it ſhould be granted. *Note*, (1.) They who venture all for God, will find him able to do for them unſpeakably better than their moſt ſanguine hopes. (2.) The ſinner that draws near the throne of the eternal King, ſhall find a like favourable acceptance; his fears ſhall vaniſh, his pardon be ſealed, his petitions granted, and this exceeding abundantly above all he can aſk or think.

3. As it ſeemed not yet a fit occaſion to open her deſign, ſhe only humbly entreats the king's preſence with Haman to her banquet. There ſhe would try his kind regard to her; revive the affection that had ſeemed to ſubſide; watch the favourable moment when his heart was open; and charge Haman to his face with the wickedneſs he meditated. The requeſt is inſtantly granted: Haman is ſent for, and happy, no doubt, in this honourable diſtinction. There the king again bids her aſk, and renews his promiſe of granting her requeſt. Another day ſhe begs his company, and then the important ſecret ſhall be diſcloſed; hoping thus to engage his increaſing affection, and the more ſurely to obtain her requeſt. *Note*, To watch the favourable moment is the way to enſure ſucceſs.

9. ¶ Then went Haman forth that day, [l] joyful, and with a glad heart: but when Haman ſaw Mordecai in the king's gate, that [m] he ſtood not up, nor moved for him, he was [n] full of indignation againſt Mordecai. 10. Nevertheleſs Haman refrained himſelf, and when he came home, he ſent and † called for his friends, and Zereſh his wife. 11. And Haman told them of [o] the glory of his riches, and [p] the multitude of his children, and all *the things* wherein [q] the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and ſervants of the king. 12. Haman ſaid moreover, [r] Yea Eſther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that ſhe had prepared, but myſelf; and to-morrow am I invited unto her alſo with the king. 13. Yet all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee Mordecai the Jew ſitting at the king's gate. 14. ¶ Then ſaid Zereſh his wife, and all his friends unto him, Let a ‡ gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and [s] to-morrow ſpeak thou unto the king, that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleaſed Haman, and he cauſed the gallows to be made.

[l] Amos vi. 13.
[m] Pſ. xv. 4.
[n] Chap. iii. 5. Prov. xxi. 24.
† Heb. Cauſed to come.
[o] Dan. iv. 30, 31. Chap. vii. 10.
[p] Chap. ix. 10.
[q] Chap. iii. 1.
[r] Obad. 3. Chap. vii. 6.
‡ Heb. Tree. Chap. vii. 9.
[s] Rom. iii. 15.

v. 9—14. Little thought Haman, how deceitful was the honour of which he boaſted, or how vain the revenge he meditated.

1. He departs from the banquet highly elated with the honour ſhown him, and more with the renewal of the invitation; flattering himſelf, that now he was equally the favourite of the king and queen, and reigned without a rival in their regard. *Note*, When pride is wound up to the higheſt pitch, the fall, like Lucifer's, is more terrible.

2. Mordecai ſtill perſevered in refuſing him the adoration he demanded. Notwithſtanding the danger which threatned, he dared not, by mean and ſinful compliances, ſeek to avert it; in conſcious uprightneſs ſecure, and only ſollicitous to keep a conſcience void of offence. *Note*, They who are careful to pleaſe God, need not fear or care who are diſpleaſed with them for ſo doing.

3. Haman's boſom ſwelled with indignation: he could not bear this contempt, as he regarded it, without the deepeſt anguiſh; and though he refrained himſelf in the view of the revenge he meditated, this troubled his repoſe, and made all his enjoyments taſteleſs. His riches, his family, his advancement at court, all are nothing in his eyes, whilſt Mordecai lives, and his revenge is ſuſpended. *Note*, (1.) Pride and diſcontent create us numberleſs miſeries, and rob us of the enjoyment of all our mercies. (2.) The curſe of God is often viſible on the wicked in the midſt of all their poſſeſſions.

4. Haman diſcloſed his complaints to his wife and friends, and they cheriſh the malignity of his heart, and propoſe a ſpeedy gratification of his revenge. That a gallows ſhould be erected fifty cubits high, before his own door, that all might ſee the miſcreant, and himſelf be delighted with the execution; that on the morrow, he would early get the death warrant ſigned, nor wait for the general maſſacre, but hang Mordecai without delay; and thus with greater delight he might go to the queen's banquet, and meet no more that unwelcome foe at court. The thing pleaſed Haman, and is no ſooner ſpoke than done; but little thought the builder for whom this gallows was erected. *Note*, When the expectation of the ſinner is greateſt, then ruin and death eternal are at the door.

CHAP. VI.

In this chapter, 1. *The king makes Haman do honour to Mordecai for diſcovering a plot againſt his life,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Haman's friends forebode his doom,* ver. 12—14.

1. [a] ON that night † could not the king ſleep, and he commanded to bring [b] the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. 2. And it was found written, that [c] Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Tereſh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who ſought to lay hand on the king Ahaſuerus. 3. And the king ſaid, [d] What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then ſaid the king's ſervants that miniſtred unto him, There is nothing done for him.

[a] Pſal. xxxiii. 18. & xlvi. 1.
† Heb. The king's ſleep fled away.
[b] Chap. ii. 23.
[c] Ibid. 21.
[d] Gal. vi. 9.

v. 1—3. How vain are all human contrivances! How eaſily can God diſappoint the devices of his enemies to their confuſion! He hath acceſs to the ſpirits of men; and by means unſeen, but irreſiſtible, will accompliſh all his pleaſure. Mordecai as little dreamt of the honour which was deſigned him, as of the deſtruction threatned him; and Haman as little ſuſpected his morning viſit to court would be attended with ſuch conſequences. We have here,

1. The king, reſtleſs on his bed; his ſleep was fled: for he who ſeals up the eye-lids, had forbidden his to cloſe. To amuſe the tedious hour, and perhaps to try this expedient to lull his wakeful eyes to loſt repoſe, he calls for the book of records, and ſo God ordained that the portion fixed upon was the detection of that dangerous conſpiracy, to which Mordecai had been ſo inſtrumental. *Note*, The minuteſt circumſtances may be pregnant with the greateſt events; the opening at a particular leaf of this book, conduced eminently to the preſervation of the Jewiſh people, and in them of God's whole church in all future ages.

2. The remembrance of the ſervice naturally excited enquiry about the honour and advancement of the perſon who had ſo well deſerved it; and it appeared he had been overlooked and neglected: nor was he advanced to any higher poſt than what he had held at court before. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt ſervices are often forgotten and unrewarded. (2.) In courts, modeſt merit is uſually overlooked, whilſt forward flatterers thruſt themſelves into the ſeat of honour. (3.) When we remember the kindneſſes which have been done us, the longer we have neglected to recompenſe them, the deeper ſhould we count our arrears, and the more diligently diſcharge them.

4. ¶ And the king ſaid, Who *is* in the court? (now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's houſe, [e] to ſpeak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him) 5. And the king's ſervants ſaid unto him, Behold, Haman ſtandeth in the court. And the king ſaid, Let him come in. 6. So Haman came in: and the king ſaid unto him, What ſhall be done unto the man † whom the king delighteth to honour? (Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour, more than to myſelf?) 7. And Haman anſwered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, 8. Let the royal apparel be brought ‡ which the king *uſeth* to wear, and [f] the horſe that the king rideth upon; and the crown royal which is ſet upon his head: 9. And let this apparel and horſe be delivered to the hand of one of the kings moſt noble princes, that they may aray the man *withal*, whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horſeback through the ſtreet of the city, and [g] proclaim before him, Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour. 10. Then the king ſaid to Haman, Make haſte, *and* take the apparel, and the horſe, as thou haſt ſaid, and do even ſo to Mordecai the Jew, that ſitteth at the king's gate: ‖ let nothing fail of all that thou haſt ſpoken. 11. Then took Haman the apparel, and the horſe, and arayed Mordecai, and brought him on horſeback through the ſtreet of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus ſhall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

[e] Job v. 13. Pſal. ii. 4.
† Heb. In whoſe honour the king delighteth.
‡ Heb. Wherewith the king clotheth himſelf.
[f] 1 Kings i. 33.
[g] Gen. xli. 43.
‖ Heb. Suffer not a whit to fail.

v. 4—11. Probably when the deſign of God's providence was anſwered, the king ſlept in peace; but no ſooner awaked in the morning, than he is ſollicitous to honour the neglected Mordecai.

1. He makes enquiry who was in the court; and who ſhould be there but Haman, early attending on the king, big with impatience to ſee Mordecai on the gallows, and not doubting to ſucceed eaſily in his petition; him the king commands to be introduced, little ſuſpecting the deſign of his maſter, and probably counting it a happy circumſtance that he was called for.

2. No ſooner is Haman introduced, than the king propoſes a queſtion to him, *v.* 6. which ſelf-love ſtrongly interpreted in his own favour, and therefore he laviſhly adviſes to heap the moſt ſignal diſtinctions on the man whom the king delighted to honour. He preſcribes the royal apparel to adorn him, the royal crown to be ſet upon his head, the king's own horſe to carry him, and one of the chief of the princes as his footman and herald to lead his horſe, and proclaiming the king's delight in the favoured perſon, to command univerſal reverence and obeyſance. *Note*, (1.) Pride and ambition are never ſatisfied with the moſt accumulated honours. (2.) Self-conceit, and a high opinion of ourſelves, is a moſt dangerous rock, againſt which we cannot too carefully guard. (3.) It ſhould be the delight of kings, and all in authority, to beſtow honour on the deſerving, and to encourage thoſe who do well.

3. The king expreſſed his approbation of the advice, and Haman expected with rapture the iſſue; when how aſtoniſhed to hear the name of Mordecai as the honoured perſon, and himſelf fixed on to lead his horſe, and proclaim his high deſerts.

4. The mandate muſt be obeyed, and Haman, however ſtung with envy and grief, is obliged to comply. Mordecai is apparelled, his horſe ready, and Haman the herald of his honour. If ſuch be the dignity of him whom man will have exalted, what ſhall be their portion whom the eternal king delights to honour?

12. ¶ And Mordecai [h] came again to the king's gate: but Haman [i] haſted to his houſe, mourning, and [k] having his head covered. 13. And Haman told Zereſh his wife and all his friends, every *thing* that had befallen him. Then ſaid his wiſe men, and Zereſh his wife unto him, If Mordecai *be* of the ſeed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, [l] thou ſhalt not prevail againſt him, but ſhalt ſurely fall before him. 14. And while they *were* yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and haſted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Eſther had prepared.

[h] Pſal. cxxxi 1.
[i] 2 Chron. xxvi. 20.
[k] 2 Sam. xv. 30. Jer. xiv. 4.
[l] Zech. xii. 3.

v. 12—14. With very different ſenſations theſe two returned; the one to his place at court, the other to his houſe in the city. Mordecai thankful and comforted, receiving the favour done him as a token for good, that God would blaſt the deſigns of his inveterate enemy. Haman covered with confuſion, ſtung with envy, and mourning as under the bittereſt affliction; thus will God render tribulation to thoſe who trouble his people, but to us who are troubled, reſt with him.

1. Haman unboſoms his griefs to his wife and friends. Uſually the communicating our afflictions is a relief, here it tended to aggravate their burden. For,

2. They prove miſerable comforters, and read his doom inſtead of ſoothing his complaints. They foreſee the diſappointment of all his ſchemes: Mordecai is of the ſeed of the Jews, and no weapon formed againſt them can proſper; they predict his own fall in the ſtruggle, and heighten his diſtreſs into deſpair; what had happened was but the earneſt of what would enſue. *Note*, (1.) It is in vain fighting againſt thoſe whom God protects. (2.) Falling favourites hurry downwards faſt. (3.) Sad preſages of approaching ruin, often ſeize the ſinner before deſtruction comes upon him to the uttermoſt.

3. Haman's grief probably made him dilatory, and he foreboded now no good from the banquet in which he had ſo lately gloried. The eunuchs are ſent to haſten him, and he goes; where we ſhall find him, in the next chapter, receiving the judgment he had ſo well deſerved.

CHAP. VII.

At the ſecond banquet, 1. *Eſther petitions for her life, and the life of her people,* ver. 1—4. 2. *She accuſes Haman as the author of the plot,* ver. 5, 6. 3. *The king hereupon orders him to be hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai, which was done accordingly,* ver. 7—10.

1. SO the king and Haman came to † banquet with
Eſther the queen. 2. And the king ſaid again
to Eſther, on the ſecond day, [a] at the banquet of wine,
What *is* thy petition, queen Eſther? and it ſhall be
granted thee: and what *is* thy requeſt? and it ſhall be
performed, *even* to the half of the kingdom. 3. Then
Eſther the queen anſwered and ſaid, If I have found
favour in thy ſight, O king, and if it pleaſe the king,
let my life be given me at my petition, and my people
at my requeſt. 4. For [b] we are ſold, I and my people,
to be deſtroyed, to be ſlain, and to periſh: but if we
had been ſold for bond-men and bond-women, I had
held my tongue, although the enemy [c] could not coun-
tervail the king's damage. 5. ¶ Then the king Aha-
ſuerus anſwered and ſaid unto Eſther the queen, Who is
he? and where is he that durſt preſume in his heart to
do ſo? 6. And Eſther ſaid, ‡ The adverſary and enemy
is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid ‖ be-
fore the king and the queen.

† Heb. Drink.
[a] Chap. v. 6.
[b] Ibid. iii. 9. & iv. 7.
[c] Chap. iii. 9.
‡ Heb. The man, the adverſary.
‖ Heb. At the preſence of.

v. 1—6. The banquet again is ready, and the noble gueſts ſeated; and now the king the third time demands the petition, and renews the ſolemn promiſe to grant it. Hereupon,

1. Eſther preſents an unexpected requeſt. She ſought no honour for herſelf, or poſts at court for her friends; more than theſe was at ſtake her life, and the life of her people; theſe ſhe begs may be granted them, and the dire decree reverſed that threatned their fearful doom. Had it extended no farther than ſervitude, ſhe had in ſilence ſubmitted; but ſo cruel a maſſacre was not only inhuman, but would be a loſs to the government, for which the 10,000 talents of Haman could make poor ſatisfaction. *Note,* (1.) Perſecution is not only impious in the ſight of God, but highly detrimental to the ſtate, where nothing can repair the loſs of induſtrious ſubjects. (2.) When bodily life is at ſtake, how ſollicitous are we to obtain deliverance; when the eternal life of body and ſoul is in danger, ſhall we be leſs importunate?

2. With aſtoniſhment the king hears the ſtrange petition, and with impatient eagerneſs demands who dared attempt ſo vile a deed. Probably in his cups the decree had been obtained, at leaſt he little ſuſpected his queen was involved in it. *Note,* (1.) That is often done raſhly and thoughtleſsly, at which on a moment's cool reflection we cannot but be ſhocked. (2.) Many ſeem amazed at the wickedneſs of others, who overlook the ſame, or greater it may be, in themſelves.

3. Haman is accuſed as the contriver of this diabolical ſcheme: to his face the queen charges him with his malicious deſign, and conſcious guilt fills him with fear and trembling, before the enraged king, whom he had drawn into the ſnare. *Note,* If the terror of human majeſty offended, overwhelms the traitor with horror and diſmay, what will the ſinner feel when arraigned at the bar of God, and ſelf-convicted before the eternal judge and king?

7. And the king ariſing from the banquet of wine
in his wrath, *went* into the palace-garden; and Haman
ſtood up to make requeſt for his life to Eſther the
queen: for [d] he ſaw that there was evil determined a-
gainſt him by the king. 8. Then the king returned out
of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of
wine; and Haman was fallen upon [e] the bed whereon
Eſther *was.* Then ſaid the king, Will he force the
queen alſo before me in the houſe? As the word went
out of the king's mouth, they [f] covered Haman's face.
9. And [g] Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, ſaid be-
fore the king, Behold alſo the gallows fifty cubits high,
[h] which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had
ſpoken good for the king, ſtandeth in the houſe of
Haman. Then the king ſaid, Hang him thereon.
10. So they hanged Haman on the gallows [i] that he had
prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath
pacified.

[d] Prov. xvi. 14.
[e] Chap. i. 6.
[f] Job ix. 24.
[g] Chap. i. 10.
[h] Ibid. v. 14.
[i] Pſal. xv. & x. 2. Prov. xi. 6.

v. 7—10. We have here,

1. The king riſing in fury, and retiring to the garden of the banqueting-houſe, that he might compoſe his ruffled ſpirits, and deliberate on Haman's puniſhment. *Note,* (1.) Judges muſt be cool in their deciſions, and however glaring or aggravated the offence, preſerve their temper towards the criminal. (2.) It is very difficult to reſtrain the firſt burſt of ſudden and heinous provocation.

2. Haman perceived by the king's abrupt departure, his ruin determined; and with abject ſubmiſſion falls at the queen's feet, to beg his life at her hands. *Note,* (1.) The moſt haughty in proſperity, are uſually the moſt dejected in adverſity. (2.) The enemies of God's people, however proud and inſolent, muſt one day bow at their feet.

3. The king returning, found him at Eſther's feet; and filled with prejudice, interprets his moſt innocent, nay commendable humiliation, into a deſign atrociouſly criminal. *Note,* When a man's character is proved to be infamous and abandoned, every motion creates ſuſpicion.

4. No ſooner is Haman's ruin evident, than they who late adored him, are ready to hurry him down the precipice; ſo ſlippery are high places, and ſo precarious kings' favour. The King of kings is not thus changeable in his regards. They cover his face, as a perſon unworthy the royal preſence, or as a malefactor prepared for execution: and one of them who had called Haman in the morning to the banquet, acquaints the king with the gallows erected at the door, deſigned for that loyal ſubject Mordecai, to whoſe fidelity the king had owed his life. Hereupon inſtantly the king orders his execution, and on this very gallows: a righteous ſentence, and juſt retaliation. *Note,* (1.) With more terrible confuſion will the ſinner's face be covered in the great day of the wrath of the Lamb. (2.) The miſchievous often fall themſelves into the pit they have digged for others.

5. The execution is no ſooner ordered than done. Haman hangs a ſpectacle and warning to all the children of pride; and now juſtice is ſatisfied, the king's anger ſubſides.

CHAP. VIII.

We have here, 1. *Mordecai's advancement,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *An edict granted, at Eſther's interceſſion, to render the former abortive,* ver. 3—14. 3. *The joy of the Jews thereupon,* ver. 15—17.

1. ON that day [a] did the king Ahaſuerus give the houſe
of Haman the Jews enemy, unto Eſther the
queen: and Mordecai came before the king; for Eſther
had told [b] what he *was* unto her. 2. And the king took
off [c] his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave
it unto Mordecai. And Eſther [d] ſet Mordecai over the
houſe of Haman.

[a] Job xxvii. 16. Prov. xiii. 22.
[b] Chap. ii. 7.
[c] Ibid. iii. 10.
[d] Pſal. xxxix. 6. Prov. xx. 21.

v. 1, 2. Juſt execution having been performed on the perſon of the wicked Haman, we have here,

1. The diſpoſal of his eſtate, which, as forfeited, the king beſtows on the queen. The ten thouſand talents which were offered, as the price of blood, become the property of thoſe whoſe lives were marked out for a prey.

2. Mordecai is highly advanced. Though before the queen had concealed her kindred, ſhe thinks it a proper ſeaſon now to own her relation and obligations to Mordecai, whoſe good ſervices had already ſo highly recommended him to the king; but this more eſpecially engaged the royal favour to him. He is immediately introduced; and, as a token of the warmeſt regard, the king preſents him with the ring from his finger, and thus he becomes in the king's favour and dignity the worthy ſucceſſor of the wicked Haman. To his truſt alſo the queen commits the management of the forfeited eſtate: thus completely were the tables changed; the wickedneſs of the wicked was upon him, and the wealth of the ſinner laid up for the juſt. *Note,* (1.) This world is a changing ſcene, kings favour precarious, and riches make themſelves wings and fly away. Let it admoniſh us to ſecure his favour, whoſe regards are unchangeable, and thoſe riches which are abiding, even eternal in the heavens. (2.) God's providence often in this world diſplays the juſtice of his government.

3. ¶ And Eſther ſpake yet again before the king,
and fell down at his feet, and † beſought him with tears,
to put away the miſchief of Haman the Agagite, and
his device that he had deviſed againſt the Jews. 4.
Then [e] the king held out the golden ſcepter toward
Eſther. So Eſther aroſe, and ſtood before the king,
5. And ſaid, If it pleaſe the king, and if I have found
favour in his ſight, and the thing *ſeem* right before
the king, and I *be* pleaſing in his eyes; let it be writ-
ten to reverſe the ‡ letters deviſed by Haman the ſon of
Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to deſtroy
the

† Heb. She wept and beſought him.
[e] Chap. iv. 11. & v. 2.
‡ Heb. Device.

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the Jews which *are* in all the king's provinces; 6. For [f] how can I ‖ endure to ſee the evil that ſhall come unto my people? or how can I endure to ſee [g] the deſtruction of my kindred? 7. ¶ Then the king Ahaſuerus ſaid unto Eſther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, [h] I have given Eſther the houſe of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, becauſe he laid his hand upon the Jews. 8. Write ye alſo for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and ſeal *it* with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and ſealed with the king's ring, [i] may no man reverſe. 9. [k] Then were the king's ſcribes called at that time [l] in the third month (that *is* the month Sivan) on the three and twentieth *day* thereof, and it was written (according to all that Mordecai commanded) unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which *are* [m] from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and ſeven provinces, unto every province [n] according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language. 10. And he [o] wrote in the king Ahaſuerus name, and ſealed *it* with the king's ring, and ſent letters by poſts on horſeback, *and* riders on mules, camels, *and* young dromedaries: 11. Wherein the king granted the Jews, which *were* in every city, to gather themſelves together, and to ſtand for their life, to deſtroy, to ſlay, and to cauſe to periſh all the power of the people and province, that would aſſault them, *both* little ones, and women, and [p] *to take* the ſpoil of them for a prey: 12. [q] Upon one day, in all the provinces of king Ahaſuerus, *namely*, upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar. 13. The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, *was* publiſhed unto all people, and that the Jews ſhould be ready againſt that day to avenge themſelves on their enemies. 14. *So* the poſts that rode upon mules *and* camels went out, being haſtned, and preſſed on by the king's commandment; and the decree was given at Shuſhan the palace.

[f] Neh. ii. 3. Jer. ix. 1. Amos vi. 6.
‖ Heb. Be able that I may ſee.
[g] Chap. vii. 4.
[h] Ver. 1.
[i] Chap. i. 19. Dan. vi. 8, 12, 15.
[k] Chap. iii. 12.
[l] Pſal. xxx. 5.
[m] Chap. i. 1.
[n] Ibid. 22. & iii. 12.
[o] Ibid.
[p] Chap. ix. 10, 15.
[q] Chap. iii. 13. & ix. 1.

3—14. Though Haman was hanged, and his ſubſtance given for a ſpoil, the edict was ſtill in force, and the Jews expoſed to ruin from their remaining enemies. Therefore,

1. Eſther again appears before the king; though uncalled, yet confident of his regards, the golden ſcepter bids her be comforted, and ſhe humbly preſents her petition: with tears ſhe pleads the danger of her kindred and people, and the inſupportable grief of ſeeing them maſſacred. With deep ſubmiſſion, repreſents the caſe to the king, and hopes the bloody edict may be reverſed, which Haman, by miſrepreſentations, had obtained. *Note*, (1.) Though we have juſtice on our ſide, yet as inferiors it becomes us to uſe entreaty. (2.) Some men's miſchief ſurvives them; they murder even after death, by the pernicious writings and ſentiments they have propagated. (3.) Our advancement muſt never make us forget our poor relations, or be unconcerned for their diſtreſſes.

2. The king kindly received her requeſt, and inſtantly prepares to counteract the miſchief of the former decree. By a fundamental law of the kingdom, the writing which was ſealed with the king's ſignet was irreverſible; but he gives Mordecai full permiſſion to draw up another decree, in direct oppoſition to the former, impowering the Jews to ſtand on their defence, to deſtroy their enemies who ſhould aſſault them, and take their goods for a ſpoil. The king's ſcribes therefore are ſummoned, the order iſſued under the king's ſeal, and couriers diſperſed with all haſte, on the ſwifteſt beaſts, to diſperſe the decree, both to relieve the Jews from the deep anxiety that for more than two months they had endured, as well as encourage them to prepare againſt their foes, and to make the king's favour towards them known. *Note*, When we have done wrong, we cannot too ſoon endeavour to prevent, to the utmoſt of our power, the miſchievous conſequences which may enſue.

15. ¶ And Mordecai went out from the preſence of the king, in royal apparel of † blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple; and [r] the city of Shuſhan rejoiced and was glad: 16. The Jews had [s] light and gladneſs, and joy and honour. 17. And in every province, and in every city, whitherſoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladneſs, [t] a feaſt and a good day: and many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

† Or voilet.
[r] Chap. iii. 15. Prov. xxix. 2.
[s] Pſal. xcvii. 11.
[t] Chap. ix. 19, 22.

v. 15—17. When the Lord pleaſes to work, how ſoon can he gives beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs! We have here,

1. Mordecai in royal apparel, robed in purple and fine linen, with a coronet of gold upon his head. A great diſtinction this, but poor, compared with the brighter robes with which the King of glory ſhall array his favourites, and put on their heads a crown of glory which fadeth not away.

2. A general joy was diffuſed around on his advancement: the city promiſed themſelves proſperity under his wiſe and juſt adminiſtration: the Jews with gladneſs heard the unexpected tidings of deliverance; and whilſt with exultation they rejoiced, the people around them now perceiving the court favour towards them, paid them all honour and reſpect. *Note*, (1.) A happy change of adminiſtration from bad men and bad meaſures, is a truly national joy. (2.) The anguiſh and ſorrow a chriſtian ſometimes feels, only ſerves to heighten his joy, when the Lord turns and refreſhes him, and brings him from the depths of the earth again.

3. A great acceſſion of converts was made to the Jewiſh church on this occaſion. The evident finger of God ſeen in their deliverance, their preſent happy and proſperous eſtate, and the fear of the power with which they were inveſted, wrought upon multitudes, who, to avoid their reſentment, or to obtain court favour, or perhaps from better motives of Divine conviction, became proſelytes. *Note*, When the church is in proſperity, profeſſors are numerous, but the faithful are proved in adverſity.

CHAP. IX.

As both decrees continued in force, we have here, 1. *The conteſt and victory of the Jews over their enemies on the appointed day,* ver. 1—19. 2. *The memory of it preſerved by an annual feaſt,* ver. 20—32.

1. NOW [a] in the twelfth month (that *is* the month Adar) on the thirteenth day of the ſame, [b] when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them) 2. [c] The Jews gathered themſelves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahaſuerus, to lay hand on ſuch as ſought their hurt; and no man could withſtand them: [d] for the fear of them fell upon all the people. 3. And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and † officers of the king, helped the Jews: becauſe [e] the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. 4. For Mordecai *was* great in the king's houſe, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai [f] waxed greater and greater. 5. Thus the Jews [g] ſmote all their enemies with the ſtroke of the ſword, and ſlaughter and deſtruction, and did what they would unto thoſe that hated them. 6. And in Shuſhan the palace the Jews ſlew and deſtroyed five hundred men. 7. And Parſhandatha, and Dalphon, and Aſpatha, 8. And Poratha, and Adaliah, and Aridatha, 9. And Parmaſhta, and Ariſai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha, 10. [h] The ten ſons of Haman, the ſon of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, ſlew they; but [i] on the ſpoil laid they not their hand. 11. On that day the number of thoſe that were ſlain in Shuſhan the palace, was brought before the king. 12. ¶ And the king ſaid unto Eſther the queen, The Jews have ſlain and deſtroyed five hundred men in Shuſhan the palace, and the ten ſons of Haman; what have they done in the reſt of the king's provinces? now [k] what *is* thy petition? and it ſhall be granted thee: or what *is* thy requeſt further? and it ſhall be done. 13. Then ſaid Eſther, If it pleaſe the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shuſhan, to do to morrow alſo according unto this day's decree, and [l] let Haman's ten ſons be hanged upon the gallows. 14. And the king commanded it ſo to be done; and the decree was given at Shuſhan, and they hanged Haman's ten ſons. 15. For the Jews that *were* in Shuſhan, gathered themſelves together on the fourteenth day alſo of the month Adar, and

[a] Chap. viii. 12.
[b] Ibid. iii. 13.
[c] Ibid. viii. 11.
[d] Exod. xxiii. 27.
† Heb. Thoſe that did the buſineſs for the king.
[e] Gen. xxxv. 5.
[f] 2 Sam. iii. 1. Prov. iv. 18.
[g] Deut. xxxii. 35. 2 Theſ. i. 6.
[h] Job xviii. 19. & xxvii. 14. Pſal. xxi. 10.
[i] Chap. viii. 11.
[k] Ibid. v. 6. & vii. 2.
[l] 2 Sam. xxi. 6.

and ſlew three hundred men at Shuſhan; but [m] on the prey they laid not their hand. 16. But the other Jews that *were* in the king's provinces, gathered themſelves together, and ſtood for their lives, and had reſt from their enemies, and ſlew of their foes [n] ſeventy and five thouſand; but they laid not their hands on the prey. 17. On the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day of the ſame, reſted they, and made it a day of [o] feaſting and gladneſs. 18. But the Jews that *were* at Shuſhan, aſſembled together on the thirteenth *day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof: and on the fifteenth *day* of the ſame they reſted, and made it a day of feaſting and gladneſs. 19. Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar, [p] *a day of* gladneſs and feaſting, and a good day, and of [q] ſending portions one to another.

[m] Ver. 10.
[n] Pſal. xlvi. 8.
[o] Deut. xvi. 11, 14.
[p] Chap. viii. 17.
[q] Neh. viii. 10, 12.

v. 1—19. The day now approached when the great controverſy between the Jews and their enemies muſt be decided; both being countenanced by law, and therefore at full liberty to uſe their utmoſt efforts.

1. The enemies of the Jews, not diſcouraged by the repulſe their chieftain had met with, prepared to revenge his death. The ſons of Haman and his friends ſupported the faction, and hoped by numbers ſtill to cruſh theſe feeble Jews, notwithſtanding the hand of God ſo evidently had appeared for their protection. *Note*, (1.) God often infatuates his enemies to their own deſtruction. (2.) Obſtinate revenge is deaf to admonition.

2. The Jews aſſembled in their own defence; not deſiring bloodſhed, but prepared to repel force by force. *Note*, Though ſome injuries muſt be born ſubmiſſively, it is often both lawful and becoming to ſtand up in ſelf-defence.

3. The governors of the provinces aſſiſted them. By theſe oppoſite decrees left at liberty, they choſe to ſide with thoſe who had now evidently the king's ear and favour; Mordecai's greatneſs overawed them; and as through him they could only now hope for advancement, they will curry favour with his friends. *Note*, Many are friends to God's people for the ſake of advantage, who have no regard for their religion.

4. The conſequence of the conteſt was a deciſive victory, in favour of the Jews. God had ſtruck their enemies with a panic, ſo that though they aſſembled themſelves, it was only as ſheep for the ſlaughter. Seventy-five thouſand of their foes fell in the different provinces, on the 13th of Adar, and even in the royal city Shuſhan five hundred, together with Haman's ten ſons; who, whilſt they ſought to avenge their father, periſhed in the attempt. The 14th, the Jews every where reſted, and kept a great feaſt for their deliverance, except at Shuſhan; where, at Eſther's requeſt, the ten ſons of Haman were hanged *in terrorem*, and another day was given the Jews to be avenged of their enemies, and execute God's judgments on the inveterate foes of his church and people. Three hundred more were ſlain on that day, and then they reſted alſo on the 15th, and kept a feaſt with great gladneſs. The ſpoil of their enemies, though given them for a prey, they nobly refuſed; as they aimed at nothing but ſelf-preſervation, and rather choſe to recommend themſelves to the king's favour, by leaving it to go into the royal treaſury, than they enrich themſelves. *Note*, (1.) The people of God ſhould ever appear diſintereſted. (2.) God's rich mercies demand our praiſes, and ſhould warm our hearts with love and joy.

20. ¶ And Mordecai [r] wrote theſe things, and ſent letters unto all the Jews that *were* in all the provinces of the king Ahaſuerus, *both* nigh and far, 21. To ſtabliſh *this* among them, that they ſhould keep [s] the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the ſame yearly: 22. As the days wherein the Jews reſted from their enemies, and the month [t] which was turned unto them from ſorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they ſhould make them days of feaſting and joy, and of [u] ſending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. 23. And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them. 24. Becauſe Haman the ſon of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had deviſed againſt the Jews to deſtroy them, and [x] had caſt Pur (that *is*, the lot) to † conſume them, and to deſtroy them: 25. But [y] when *Eſther* came before the king, he commanded by letters, that his wicked device which he deviſed againſt the Jews, [z] ſhould return upon his own head, and that he and his ſons ſhould be hanged on the gallows. 26. Wherefore they called theſe days Purim, after the name of ‡ Pur: therefore for all the words of [a] this letter, and *of that* which they had ſeen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them, 27. The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their ſeed, and upon all ſuch as joined themſelves unto them, ſo as it ſhould not fail, that they would keep theſe two days according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time every year: 28. And [b] that theſe days *ſhould be* remembred and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that theſe days of Purim ſhould not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them periſh from their ſeed. 29. Then Eſther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all ‖ authority, to confirm this ſecond letter of Purim. 30. And he ſent the letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred twenty and ſeven provinces of the kingdom of Ahaſuerus, [c] *with* words of peace and truth: 31. To confirm theſe days of Purim in their times *appointed*, according as Mordecai the Jew, and Eſther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for § themſelves and for their ſeed, [d] the matters of the faſtings and their cry. 32. And the decree of Eſther confirmed theſe matters of Purim, and it was written in the book.

[r] Pſal. lxxviii. 6.
[s] 2 Mac. xv. 36.
[t] Pſal. xxx. 11.
[u] Neh. viii. 10.
[x] Chap. iii. 7.
† Heb. Cruſh.
[y] Ver. 13, 14. Chap. vii. 5. &c. & viii. 3, &c.
[z] Chap. vii. 10.
‡ i. e. Lot.
[a] Ver. 20.
[b] Pſal. cxii. 2.
‖ Heb. Strength.
[c] Acts xv. 29.
§ Heb. Their ſouls.
[d] Chap. iv. 16.

v. 20—32. Deliverances ſo great, deſerve to be had in everlaſting remembrance. We have here the method taken to perpetuate the memorial of this ſignal mercy.

1. Mordecai wrote the tranſactions of thoſe days, or probably this whole hiſtory, wherein the various ſteps of Divine interpoſition ſo evidently appeared, and diſperſed copies of it far and near throughout the provinces. *Note*, The written word is a mercy for which we can never enough be thankful.

2. He commanded the anniverſary of this great tranſaction to be kept as a feaſt throughout their generations; to which the Jews gladly conſented, as a means to perpetuate to the lateſt poſterity, a ſenſe of God's mercies towards their forefathers, to awaken their thankfulneſs, encourage their dependance upon the ſame gracious protection, and to declare the mighty efficacy of prayer in time of need. They called the feaſt Purim, in remembrance of the lots which Haman caſt: two days it continued, or as a Jewiſh writer ſays, the villages obſerved it on the 14th, the walled towns on the 15th, according to the days on which they reſted from the ſlaughter of their enemies. Proſelytes, as well as natural Jews, were bound to the obſervance of it, which was kept with great joy, mutual entertainments, congratulations, and liberal diſtributions to the poor. The feaſt hath not yet ceaſed, but the celebration of it hath degenerated from ſacred joy and thankfulneſs, into carnal exceſs and indulgence; as muſt be the caſe with the moſt holy feſtivals, where the profeſſors of religion preſerve the ſhadow, whilſt they have loſt the ſubſtance. *Note*, (1.) Paſt interpoſitions of God's providence in behalf of his people, ſhould be an encouragement to his people in every preſent diſtreſs. (2.) A holy feaſt muſt be kept in a holy manner. It is the ſcandal and reproach of every religion, to ſee exceſs conſecrated as devotion: and what a ſhame to the name of Chriſtian, to have the birth of the holy Jeſus, the ſufferings of the immaculate Lamb of God, and the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, celebrated by bacchanalian entertainments; and thoſe ſacred ſeaſons, when moſt peculiarly we are called to thankful adoration and holy joy, moſt peculiarly marked with lawleſs revelry, thoughtleſs diſſiſipation, gaming, drunkenneſs, lewdneſs, and every abomination. Is this the feaſt that God hath choſen? *pudet hæc opprobria.*

CHAP. X.

In this ſhort chapter we are told, 1. *Ahaſuerus's greatneſs,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Mordecai's advancement, and his kindneſs to his nation,* ver. 2, 3.

1. AND the king Ahaſuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* the iſles of the ſea. 461.
2. And all the acts of his power, and of his might, and the declaration of the greatneſs of Mordecai, whereunto the king † advanced him, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Perſia? 3. For Mordecai the Jew *was* next unto king Ahaſuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted

† Heb. Made him great.

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of the multitude of his brethren, [a] ſeeking the wealth of his people, and ſpeaking peace to all his ſeed.

[a] Neh. ii. 10.

v. 1—3. We have here the concluſion of the book of Eſther; for though in the Greek copies ſix other chapters are added, they are rejected as apocryphal. We are here informed,

1. That Ahaſuerus laid a general tribute on all his dominions. Either the tribute he had remitted, *chap.* ii. 18. or if, as is ſuppoſed, this was Xerxes, his expenſive expeditions made it neceſſary to repleniſh his treaſury. In arbitrary governments, the king's will is law; bleſſed be God for the enjoyment of liberty and property.

2. The greatneſs of this mighty monarch was at large recorded in the chronicles, or records of his kingdom, where Mordecai's name alſo bore a diſtinguiſhed place, and reflected honour upon the maſter to whom he owed his advancement.

3. Mordecai, good as he was great, approved himſelf by every act of kindneſs and favour to his countrymen. His honours had not changed his manners; he was courteous and kind to all his brethren, and his deſire to ſerve them ſeemed but to increaſe with his ability. Univerſally reſpected and beloved, his greatneſs procured no envy; whilſt the multitude of his brethren were deeply ſenſible, that for all their happineſs and proſperity they were indebted to his kindneſs and protection. *Note*, He is truly great, whoſe power and dignity are employed for the public good.

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THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
JOB.

THE book of Job is the firſt of thoſe ſtiled Poetical, and appears to be the moſt antient of them all, and, probably, even prior to the book of Geneſis; it being moſt generally ſuppoſed, that he was a near deſcendant of Uz, Nahor's firſt-born, Abraham's brother, Gen. xxii. 21. *in whoſe family the true religion was kept up, Gen.* xxxi. 53. *His age alſo ſeems to ſpeak him before Moſes's time, when man's life was ſhortned to ſeventy years; whereas Job lived an hundred and forty years after his reſtoration. No mention is made of the giving law, though more antient tranſactions, as the deluge, and deſtruction of Sodom, are referred to; and tradition of former times appears as yet to have been the only repoſitory of truth. It ſhould ſeem alſo, that no other idolatry had as yet crept in, but of the ſun and moon; and that ſacrifices were not confined to one family, but every father was a prieſt in his own houſe; arguments which ſpeak the moſt remote antiquity.*

Some have fancied that the whole was a mere apologue, and not a real hiſtory; but Ezekiel, xiv. 14. *leaves no more doubt of the reality of ſuch a man as Job, than of Noah or Daniel; and the apoſtle James,* v. 11. *is very expreſs to the point. Beſides, the names of his friends and family, his country, ſubſtance, and a variety of particulars, all ſerve to prove the ſtory not fabulous, but authentic.*

Various have been the conjectures about the author of this hiſtory, ſome aſcribing it to Moſes, others to Solomon, Ezra, &c. but Job himſelf ſeems moſt likely to have preſerved and publiſhed theſe memoirs, which ſo nearly related to himſelf. Certain however it it, whoever wrote them, they were given by inſpiration from God, and ſtamped with Divine authority, as appears from James v. 11. *chap.* v. 13. *compared with* 1 *Cor.* xiv. 19. *chap.* v. 17. *compared with Heb.* xii. 5. *Accordingly, this book hath been ever received among the Jews, as belonging to the oracles of God.*

The great deſign of the book, which is full of the moſt ſublime ſentiments and expreſſions, appears to be,

1. *To convince us of the inſufficiency of all human righteouſneſs, the deep corruption of the human nature, and the neceſſity of a better righteouſneſs than our own, if ever we would be juſt before God.*

2. *To aſſert and explain the doctrine of a particular providence; to anſwer the objections which ariſe from the afflictions of good men; to urge ſubmiſſion to all God's diſpenſations, and patient waiting, without murmuring, the iſſue of every temptation.*

3. *To diſplay the glory of God in his adorable perfections, his abſolute ſovereignty, inflexible juſtice, unſearchable wiſdom, irreſiſtible power, and infinite goodneſs; to exalt him as the Creator, Governor, and Judge of all; and to lay every mouth in the duſt in ſilence before him.*

4. *To preſent us with an illuſtrious type of our Divine Saviour, firſt ſuffering, then exalted; ſunk under the depths of adverſity then riſing to the pinnacle of glory.*

The book gives a ſhort hiſtory of Job, and the afflictions he ſuffered; but is chiefly taken up in ſeveral dialogues between himſelf and friends, to whoſe charges he replies; whilſt Elihu, at the cloſe, as moderator of the diſpute, takes up the argument, and God himſelf at laſt determines the queſtion.

The chief argument which his three friends principally inſiſt upon, is the conſtant bleſſedneſs and proſperity of the righteous, and the miſery of the wicked; from whence they would infer, that his ſins muſt neceſſarily be the cauſe of his afflictions; and, as his ſufferings were great, conſequently his ſins, though ſecretly committed, muſt be great alſo. They ſeem to look at no diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments hereafter, but conclude, that the preſent diſpenſations of Divine Providence are ever correſpondent to men's deſerts.

Job appears firm in his replies, conſcious of his integrity reſpecting the accuſations laid againſt him; maintaining his innocence, and appealing to his whole conduct for the exemplarineſs of his converſation: ſo far *was he from acknowledging what they ſuggeſted, that he had by ſome particular acts of ſin brought theſe judgments upon himſelf. Herein he was right, and they cruelly cenſorious. His fault was, that he had too high an opinion of his own righteouſneſs; and however comparatively perfect his way might be before men, he did wrong to appeal to God for a trial, as if able to ſtand the Divine ſcrutiny. This ſhewed him unacquainted with the depths of corruption in his fallen nature, and not enough ſenſible of God's purity, and his own pollution. Hence aroſe his hard thoughts of God at times, and his impatience under the ſufferings, which, though he confeſſed himſelf a ſinner, he was at firſt unwilling to acknowledge that he had deſerved.*

Elihu then ariſes, a wiſer reaſoner than had ſpoken, juſtly diſpleaſed with Job's friends for their raſh and uncharitable judgment, and for condemning Job, whilſt their arguments were evidently mere ſuppoſitions, and utterly inconcluſive; yet far from juſtifying Job's ſelf-righteouſneſs and impatience. He allows all Job's profeſſions may be true, and he neither a hypocrite nor notorious ſinner; yet at God's bar he could not ſtand: His ſovereignty, wiſdom, purity, juſtice, and his other adorable perfections were ſuch, that to arraign his proceedings were preſumption; to murmur againſt any of his diſpenſations, rebellion; every high thought of his own righteouſneſs, ignorance of his fallen nature; and every afflictive diſpenſation, ſo far from being hard, unjuſt, or unkind, was leſs than his iniquity deſerved, and graciouſly deſigned to humble, prove, and do him good, as well as glorify God.

God himſelf at laſt appears. Elihu had ſilenced Job, but God's ſpeech lays him in the duſt. The diſplay of his own wiſdom, power, and righteouſneſs, convinces Job of his ignorance, weakneſs, and ſinfulneſs; brings him to ſelf-abaſement and ſelf-abhorrence; and when the purpoſes of the afflicting providences were thus anſwered, he that rides on the whirlwind rebuked the ſtorm. The viciſſitude was ſudden and wonderful, and the proſperity and happineſs of Job far exceeded all his adverſity and miſery. So true it is, that the trial of our faith will ſurely iſſue in praiſe, and honour, and glory.

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CHAP. I.

We have here, 1. *Job's piety*, ver. 1. 2. *His proſperity*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *His concern for his children's ſpiritual welfare*, ver. 4, 5. 4. *Satan's malice againſt him, and the permiſſion he obtained to try his conſtancy*, ver. 6—12. 5. *The troubles that befel him*, ver. 13—19. *and*, 6. *His exemplary patience under them*, ver. 20—22.

1. THERE was a man in the land of [a] Uz, whoſe name *was* [b] Job, and that man was [c] perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and [d] eſchewed evil. 2. And [e] there were born unto him ſeven ſons and three daughters. 3. [f] His † ſubſtance alſo was ſeven thouſand ſheep, and three thouſand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred ſhe-aſſes, and a very great houſhold: ſo that this man was the greateſt of all the ‡ men of the eaſt.

[a] Gen. x. 23. or xxii. 21.
[b] Ezek xiv. 14. Jam. v. 11.
[c] Chap. ii. 3.
[d] Prov. xvi. 6.
[e] Pſ. cxxviii. 3.
[f] Mat. vi. 33.
† Or, cattle.
‡ Heb. Sons of the eaſt.

v. 1—3. We have here the character and greatneſs of that venerable patriarch Job.

1. He was a native of Uz, ſuppoſed to be that part of Arabia that bordered on Chaldea. His name is by ſome interpreted, *one hated*, as his ſufferings ſeemed to ſpeak; others derive it from a word ſignifying *to deſire*, as if he was the deſire of his parents, though he lived to curſe the day of his birth: ſo uncertain are all our promiſed joys.

2. His piety was remarkable and eminent, and the more ſo, probably, becauſe of the generally abounding wickedneſs. He was *a perfect man*, not in an abſolute ſenſe, as his conduct ſhewed; but one who was in God's ſight without ſpot, as accepted in the Saviour, and whoſe heart was ſincere and *upright* before him. No allowed guile was entertained within, nor known evil indulged in his converſation: *one that feared God*, continually influenced by a regard to his holy will, and diligently engaged in the exerciſes of his worſhip; *and eſchewed evil*, or *departed from evil*, as abominable in the ſight of God, and carefully abſtained not only from the open acts, but from the appearances of evil.

3. His proſperity was ſingular as his piety, *v.* 2, 3. His children were numerous, his houſhold large, and his ſubſtance vaſt in flocks and herds, wherein at that time the riches of men conſiſted; ſo that in all the eaſt there was none ſo great as Job. *Note*, (1.) Though it is not common, it is not impoſſible, to be very great and very good; abounding in the riches of earth, yet more repleniſhed with riches of grace from heaven. (2.) Worldly poſſeſſions are then valuable bleſſings, when in their hands who ſtudy to make them ſubſervient to the intereſts of God, and the good of mankind.

4. And his ſons went and feaſted in *their* houſes, [g] every one his day, and ſent and called for their three ſiſters, to eat and to drink with them. 5. And it was ſo, when the days of *their* feaſting were gone about, that Job ſent and [h] ſanctified them, and roſe up early in the morning, and [i] offered burnt-offerings, *according* to the number of them all: for Job ſaid, [k] It may be that my ſons have ſinned, and † curſed God in their hearts. Thus did Job ‡ continually.

[g] Pſ. cxxxiii. 1.
[h] Exod. xix. 10.
[i] Chap. xlii. 8.
[k] 1 Cor. xi. [illegible]
† Heb. Bleſſed. So 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13. Ver. 11. Chap. ii. 9.
‡ Heb. All the days. Gal. vi. 9.

v. 4, 5. Though children are generally coveted among the firſt bleſſings, yet it is their conduct and behaviour which ſtamp them with real value; elſe they are troubles inſtead of comforts. Job had not only a pleaſing number of both ſexes, but,

1. He ſaw all his ſons happily ſettled in the world; and though each had his ſeparate family, yet they lived together in that harmony, which is ſo deſirable and uncommon among brethren. At ſtated times they viſited each other in turn; invited their ſiſters to join in their entertainment; and round the feſtal board, not of intemperate luxury, or hateful exceſs, but of affluence, crowned with the divine bleſſing, rejoiced in the gifts of God, and thanked him for a heart richly to enjoy their mercies. *Note*, (1.) There is no evil in entertaining our friends, or making a feaſt in our own houſe, whilſt in the fear and love of God we eat our bread with a chearful heart. (2.) Brethren and near relations are eſpecially bound to cultivate mutual love.

2. He continued to watch over them with pious care and holy jealouſy, and they continued to pay him all dutiful reſpect and ſubmiſſion, and readily joined with him in his ſolemn exerciſes of devotion. When therefore the days of their feaſting were ended, fearing leſt in the midſt of youthful mirth *they had ſinned*, and ſome irregularity might have been committed; or *curſed God in their hearts*, that is, had entertained ſome unbecoming apprehenſion of God, or his providence, or been guilty of ſome neglect in their religious ſervices, he ſends to *ſanctify them*, enjoins them to prepare for the ſacrifice he was about to offer in their behalf; to examine themſelves, and ſeriouſly reflecting on the paſt days, to bring their humble confeſſions before the God of mercy, and lay their ſins on the head of the beaſt, the type and figure of that one great ſacrifice, which ſhould be offered for the ſins of the world. Accordingly, *early in the morning he aroſe*, and offered for each a ſacrifice of atonement, whilſt they attended, and joined in the holy worſhip, expecting remiſſion of ſin through the atoning blood: and *thus did Job continually*, or *every year*, after every cloſe of their annual circuit of entertainment: a remarkable inſtance of his paternal care and deep godlineſs, and an evidence alſo of the true ſeriouſneſs of his children, who ſo readily joined in the ſacred ſervice. *Note*, (1.) In the midſt of mirth and feaſting we are in danger of forgetting God and godlineſs, and need a double guard over our hearts. (2.) Every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon. *There is a time to laugh*, but let our mirth be innocent, and never indiſpoſe us for, or detain us from, the neceſſary returns of prayer. (3.) Job's example ſhould be every parent's pattern; not rigidly ſevere, yet watchfully jealous over their children for good. (4.) They who ſerve God truly, ſerve him continually. (5.) We ſee from the beginning, the grand point of true religion conſiſted in the vicarious ſubſtitution of the beaſt for the ſinner. The goſpel thus was preached to them, even as unto us.

6. ¶ Now [l] there was a day when [m] the ſons of God came to [n] preſent themſelves before the LORD, and † Satan came alſo among them. 7. And the LORD

ſaid

[l] Chap. ii. 1.
[m] Chap. xxxviii. 7. or Gen. vi. 2.
[n] 1 Kings xxii. 19. Mat. xviii. 10.
† i. e. The adverſary. See 1 Kings xxii. 21. 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Zech. iii. 1. Rev. xii. 10.

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ſaid unto Satan, Whence comeſt thou? Then Satan anſwered the LORD, and ſaid, [o] From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 8. And the LORD ſaid unto Satan, Haſt thou ‡ conſidered my ſervant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? 9. Then Satan anſwered the LORD, and ſaid, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10. Haſt not thou made [p] an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? [q] thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land. 11. But [r] put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and § he will curſe thee to thy face. 12. And the LORD ſaid unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power, [s] only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the preſence of the LORD.

[o] Chap. ii. 2. Mat. xii. 43. 1 Pet. v. 8.
‡ Heb. Set thy heart upon him?
[p] Pſ. xxxiv. 7. Zech. ii. 5.
[q] Prov. x. 22.
[r] Chap. ii. 5. Iſa. viii. 21.
§ Heb. If he curſe thee not to thy face.
[s] 1 Cor. x. 12.

v. 6—12. We have ſeen Job great and good, and, to appearance, moſt firmly eſtabliſhed; but this is a changing world, and nothing is ſure to us beneath the ſun. His piety and proſperity could not but provoke the envy of the devil, who waited impatiently for an occaſion to gratify his malice upon this holy happy man. We have here,

1. *Satan appearing among the ſons of God.* Some apply this to the angels, returning from their ſervices here below, to receive new orders from the eternal Majeſty, and Satan as an intruder daring to appear, or as a criminal ſummoned to attend. But it is rather to be underſtood of God's people, who had their ſolemn ſeaſons of devotion before the inſtitution of the ſabbath; and even in their aſſemblies, the devil, who is yet permitted to range about the earth, finds a place, and watches, ſeeking whom he may devour. *Note,* We are not ſafe from temptation, or the ſuggeſtions of Satan, even upon our knees; but let not that diſcourage us from continual waiting upon God.

2. God's enquiry, *whence he came:* not as unacquainted with his walks or deſigns, but as reſenting his bold intruſion there; or to lead him to what he ſaw was his malicious purpoſe concerning Job. Though the way wherein ſpirits thus converſe be myſterious, I ſee not therefore why the reality of it ſhould be queſtioned, nor any need to ſuppoſe this tranſaction merely allegorical. *Note,* Many thruſt themſelves in among God's worſhipping people, whoſe malicious and wicked tempers, and bad deſigns even in the houſe of prayer, make them in God's ſight as hateful as Satan himſelf.

3. Satan's anſwer, *v.* 7. which may be conſtrued as the boaſt of pride, as though the earth was his own, and he ſtalked over the vaſt circumference, as a king in progreſs through his dominions; or it may refer to his reſtleſs miſery, that ſuffers him no where to find eaſe; or to his indefatigable diligence in his helliſh work of tempting and deſtroying the ſons of men. *Note,* There is one who ever wakes and watches, and no time or place is ſecured from his ſnares: how wakeful then and watchful need we be, that we enter not into temptation.

4. God queſtions him concerning Job. *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job,* obſerved his piety, or *ſet thine heart upon him,* to do him ſome miſchief? I know thou haſt. God calls him *my ſervant,* the moſt honourable of all titles, and expreſſive of his high approbation of Job's fidelity in his ſervice, *that there is none like him in the earth;* not only in the land of Uz, but probably among the ſons of men, his fellow was not found for true piety; *a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil,* as was before aſſerted, *v.* 1. Such a character could not but awaken Satan's malice, and God knew what was his preſent deſign upon him. *Note,* (1.) God knows all the devices of the wicked one, and will diſappoint them. (2.) They who approve themſelves faithful ſervants to him, will find him a faithful God to them, to preſerve them from the ſnares of the devil.

5. Satan's baſe inſinuation and propoſal. He had nothing whereof to accuſe him; his character was allowedly ſincere and upright, but by a ſly interrogation, *Doth Job ſerve God for nought?* he would inſinuate, that his views were mercenary, and his ſervice at bottom hypocritical. He enumerates, *v.* 10. with a kind of envious grief, the many and ſingular mercies he enjoyed, and therefore would infer, that if Job ſerved God, he was well paid for it; but let God ſtrip him of his worldly comforts, and he would ſoon ſee an alteration. *He will curſe thee to thy face;* or rather the words imply an imprecation, *If he doth not curſe thee to thy face,* then let me ſuffer the damnation of a lying tongue. Such a ſevere trial Satan hoped would ſhake his fidelity; at leaſt, his own malice would be gratified in Job's miſery. *Note,* (1.) The commendations of others in the ears of envy grate harſh diſcord. (2.) Worldly ends and mercenary motives are ſtill made, by Satan's inſtruments, the accuſations againſt thoſe whoſe conduct affords no evil thing juſtly to ſay of them. They cannot prove them vile like themſelves, therefore they will call them hypocrites. (3.) A ſly queſtion often conveys the vileſt inſinuation. (4.) They who uſe imprecations and oaths in common, ſhew with what maſter they have been, though even the devil here ſpeaks with more reſerve than many profane ſwearers, who openly blaſpheme God, and invocate horrid vengeance on their ſouls.

6. God permits the trial he ſuggeſted: *All that he hath is in thy power.* And this he doth, not to gratify Satan's malice, or as doubting of Job's integrity, but to confound the devil, to make Job's graces appear more eminent, and to glorify the greatneſs of his own power and love in his ſupport and ſalvation. *Only upon himſelf put not forth thy hand.* The devil's power is limited: he who permits his wickedneſs, ſaith to him, Hitherto mayeſt thou come, and no farther; and this ſhould ever encourage the children of God againſt deſpair.

7. Satan immediately proceeds to put in force the permiſſion he had received, eager to do miſchief, and hoping, it may be, to prevail againſt this holy man, who ſat ſecure, and little apprehended the impending ſtorm. *Note,* Every moment we are in jeopardy, nor can foreſee what is plotting againſt us by the prince of the power of the air.

Before Chriſt 1520.

13. ¶ And there was a day when his ſons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldeſt brother's houſe: 14. And there came a meſſenger unto Job, and ſaid, The oxen were plowing, and the aſſes feeding beſide them: 15. And the Sabeans fell *upon them,* and took them away, yea, they have ſlain the ſervants with the edge of the ſword, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee. 16. While he *was* yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, † The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the ſheep, and the ſervants, and conſumed them, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee. 17. While he *was* yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and ‡ fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and ſlain the ſervants with the edge of the ſword, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee. 18. While he *was* yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, Thy ſons and thy daughters [t] *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldeſt brother's houſe: 19. And behold, there came [u] a great wind from the wilderneſs, and ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee.

† i. e. A great fire.
‡ Heb. Ruſhed.
[t] Luke xxi. 34.
[u] Eph. ii. 2.

v. 13—19. We have here,

1. The deceitful calm which preceded the terrible ſtorm. The days of feaſting were begun, the tillage going forward, the cattle grazing in fat paſtures, and peace and proſperity ſeemed to reign in all Job's houſe. *Note,* In our happieſt eſtate we need ever rejoice with trembling.

2. The ſudden ſtorm ariſes, and ſucceſſive meſſengers bring the moſt doleful tidings, each on the other's heels purſuing, till the laſt compleats the wretched tale, and adds to the univerſal deſtruction of his ſubſtance, the utter deſolations of his family. His cattle and ſervants at plow are attacked by a roving band of Sabeans, the men ſlain, the oxen and aſſes taken; his ſheep, with the ſhepherds, burnt up with lightning; his camels ſeized, and his ſervants ſlaughtered by the Chaldeans; and, laſt and worſt of all, his children buried together under the ruins of their elder brother's houſe, ſtruck by the reſiſtleſs whirlwind. Afflictions ſo many, great, and aggravated, in which not only the hand of man appeared, but the fire of God was employed, that they ſeemed to beſpeak his diſpleaſure, and the vanity of all that integrity and uprightneſs he had ſo carefully maintained. *Note,* (1.) Sudden and unexpected ſtrokes are apt to ruffle the moſt compoſed temper. (2.) The children of God muſt not count it ſtrange, if evil upon evil purſues them; it is not to deſtroy, but to prove them. (3.) There are great deeps in God's providential dealings, which now we cannot fathom. (4.) If the devil had but permiſſion, he could ſoon arm his inſtruments for our deſtruction; but he is bound. (5.) The loſs of a child is a bitter trial, their ſudden death more afflictive, but to loſe many, all, at once, in the midſt of gayety, and after every other earthly comfort was gone, this to nature would ſeem quite inſupportable; but what cannot Divine grace enable us to bear? Are any thus afflicted, let them remember the patience of Job.

20. [x] Then Job aroſe, and [y] rent his mantle, and [z] ſhaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worſhipped. 21. And ſaid, [a] Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked ſhall I return thither: the LORD gave, and [b] the LORD hath taken away; [c] bleſſed be the name of the LORD. 22. [d] In all this Job ſinned not, nor † charged God fooliſhly.

[x] 2 Sam. xviii. 33.
[y] Gen. xxxvii. 29, 34.
[z] Iſa. xv. 2.
[a] Eccleſ. v. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 7.
[b] Mat. xx. 15.
[c] Iſa. xxiv. 15.
[d] Chap. ii. 10.
† Or, attributed folly to God.

v. 20—22. Behold the awful change that one ſhort day hath made; the greateſt man of the eaſt ſtripped of every comfort, naked and deſtitute. Well may we ſay of all this world, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* Yet hath not Satan gained the leaſt advantage; the darker the ſcene, the brighter ſhine the graces of the holy ſufferer.

1. He felt with deepeſt ſenſibility the afflicting tidings, and with the moſt expreſſive ſigns of bitter anguiſh *rent his cloaths, and ſhaved his head, and fell upon the ground.* His grief was great; and was there not a cauſe? yet no indecent rage, no raſh extravagance appears: he felt as a man, he mourned as a believer. *Note,* (1.) Religion never requires ſtoical apathy, but patient ſubmiſſion. (2.) Mourning for the dead is the tribute we owe to humanity, only let us not ſorrow as thoſe who have no hope.

2. His reſignation and piety appear moſt diſtinguiſhed. *He worſhipped:* far from being driven to curſe God, as Satan vaunted he would, he bleſſes the hand that ſmote him, and humbly ſubmits to the divine diſpoſal. He ſaid, *Naked came I out of my mother's womb,* and brought nothing into this world, and *naked ſhall I return thither,* to the duſt from whence I came, and can carry nothing out of the world: if God therefore pleaſes to ſtrip him of all, he is but as he was born, and as he muſt be when he dies. He acknowledges God's ſovereign right to all he poſſeſſed; *The Lord gave,* out of his undeſerved bounty, and, when he pleaſes, may reſume his gifts: *the Lord hath taken away,* nor have we any thing to complain of: they were his own, and that he hath lent them to us ſo long, deſerves our thankful acknowledgment; *bleſſed be the name of the Lord. Note,* (1.) No afflictions muſt indiſpoſe us for God's worſhip; the more we feel, the more we need his grace to ſupport us. (2.) The conſideration of the near approach of death, when we muſt be ſtripped of all, ſhould wean our affections from a periſhing world. (3.) Every bleſſing is God's gift, and every ſuffering from his hand, whatever inſtrument is employed. This therefore ſhould make us acknowledge him in all, bleſs the gracious giver for the loan, and reſtore it without murmuring, whenever he demands it. (4.) Whatever we loſe, enough is left to deſerve our thankfulneſs, and to engage our praiſe. (5.) Where God beſtows a ſpirit of meekneſs, and patient ſubmiſſion, he leaves a greater bleſſing behind, than any outward thing of which his providence deprives us.

3. God bears teſtimony to Job's gracious diſpoſition. *In all this he ſinned not:* his grief was not exceſſive, his patience was exemplary, and his faith unſhaken: *nor charged God fooliſhly*; did not blaſpheme, as Satan hoped, nor arraign the wiſdom, mercy, or goodneſs of God in this afflictive diſpenſation. *Note,* In great trials God gives great grace, and then we can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening us.

CHAP. II.

The firſt trial diſappointed the tempter, and magnified the ſufferer; but Satan will not yet deſiſt. 1. *He moves for another trial,* ver. 1—5. 2. *God permits it,* ver. 6. 3. *Satan ſmites him with a very painful and loathſome diſeaſe,* ver. 7, 8. 4. *His wife tempts him to curſe God, but he reſiſts the temptation,* ver. 9, 10. 5. *His friends come to condole with, and to comfort him,* ver. 11—13.

1. [a] AGAIN there was a day, when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the LORD, and Satan came alſo among them to preſent himſelf before the LORD. 2. And the LORD ſaid unto Satan, From whence comeſt thou? And Satan anſwered the LORD, and ſaid, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 3. And the LORD ſaid unto Satan, Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? and [b] ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him, to † deſtroy him [c] without cauſe. 4. And Satan anſwered the LORD, and ſaid, Skin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life. 3. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will [d] curſe thee to thy face. 6. And the LORD ſaid unto Satan, Behold, he *is* in thine hand, ‡ but ſave his life.

[a] Chap. i. 6, &c.
[b] Heb. xi. 35.
† Heb. Swallow him up.
[c] Chap. ix. 17.
[d] Chap. i. 5.
‡ Or, only.

v. 1—6. Reſtleſs is our helliſh foe, and diſappointment but ſharpens his rage, and makes him return more furious to the attack. Though proved a liar, he perſiſts in his accuſations, and pretends another trial at leaſt will yet prove Job a hypocrite. They who hate God's people will ſubmit to no evidence, but lie on in ſpite of conviction. We have,

1. Another ſolemn aſſembly of the ſons of God, and Satan with hardened impudence appearing among them, filled with the ſame inveterate malice againſt the faithful ſufferer. The ſame enquiries, and the ſame anſwers, introduce the great point in diſpute, the integrity of Job; and now it might be expected, that on the iſſue of his own propoſal he would own God's character of Job juſt, and take ſhame for his infamous inſinuation concerning his hypocriſy; ſeeing, ſaith God, *he ſtill holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without cauſe:* he riſes higher under every preſſure, and gains in true greatneſs by his loſſes.

2. With perſevering accuſation this enemy dares ſupport his plea, and, though baffled, pretends that it was more owing to the inſufficiency of the teſt, than the integrity of Job, that he had not made good his allegation. *Skin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life:* whilſt he himſelf reſts in a whole ſkin, he can ſit calm under the other loſſes; *but put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh,* torture him with pain, or afflict him with ſickneſs, *and* then *he will curſe thee to thy face. Note,* Bodily torture is indeed the ſevereſt trial of human patience.

3. God conſents he ſhall make the experiment; reſerving only Job's life, he is at liberty to afflict him to the uttermoſt: thus purpoſing ultimately to make a more glorious diſplay of the power of his grace; to preſerve to future ages an eminent monument of patience under every affliction; with deeper confuſion to cover this accuſer of the brethren, and by theſe works of wickedneſs permit him to fill up the meaſure of his iniquities.

7. ¶ So went Satan forth from the preſence of the LORD, and ſmote Job with ſore boils, [e] from the ſole of his foot unto his crown. 8. [f] And he took him a potſherd to ſcrape himſelf withal: and [g] he ſat down among the aſhes. 9. ¶ Then ſaid [h] his wife unto him, [i] Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? [k] Curſe God and die. 10. But he ſaid unto her, [l] Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh: what? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, [m] and ſhall we not receive evil? [n] In all this did not Job ſin with his lips.

[e] Chap. xix. 20.
[f] Jam. v. 11.
[g] 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Chap. xlii. 6. Mat. xi. 21.
[h] Gen. iii. 6.
[i] Chap. xxi. 15. Mal. iii. 14.
[k] Chap. i. 5.
[l] Mat. xvi. 23.
[m] Chap. i. 21.
[n] Ibid. 22.

v. 7—10. No ſooner is the permiſſion granted, than the devil is impatient to worry his prey; and whilſt every thing Job feels is tormenting, every thing he hears is diſcouraging: thus Satan hoped he ſhould at laſt prevail.

1. Job is ſmitten from head to foot with ſore boils. What was his peculiar diſeaſe, hath occaſioned many conjectures: I ſhould ſuppoſe it was no common caſe, but ſome extraordinary effort of him who hath the power of death, to concenter the force of every diſeaſe in one, uniting the anguiſh, pain, ſickneſs, nauſeouſneſs, reſtleſsneſs, and every other ill that fleſh is heir to; whilſt no comforter was near, no medicine to aſſwage, no oil to ſupple, no rags to cover, not even a dog to lick his ſores. In the aſhes he ſat, a potſherd in his hand, and whilſt with this he ſought to aſſwage the intolerable itching, it ſerved but to aggravate his torment. Yet in this miſerable ſtate no murmuring word is heard; he is dumb before God, and his ſoul deeply abaſed, as his body in the duſt and aſhes that were ſpread under him. *Note,* (1.) How admirable does Job appear! what a leſſon to us in pain or ſickneſs, to keep the door of our lips from impatient complaints! (2.) When our body is humbled with diſeaſe, our ſouls ſhould correſpond with our circumſtances, in deep and lowly abaſement.

2. The wife of his boſom becomes the tempter of his ſoul, and no trials ſo ſevere, as thoſe that come through their hands who are deareſt to us. She cannot with patience ſee her huſband retain ſtill his humble ſubmiſſion to God; *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity?* How uſeleſs; how little doth he deſerve thy ſervice, whoſe cruel hand thus rewards thy fidelity! *Curſe God* and die: blaſpheme his name, and renounce all dependance upon him; get out of his reach, and by death rid thyſelf of thy troubles. Or, as the words will bear a milder ſenſe, *Bleſs God and die:* bleſs him, pray to him to take thee away, as weary of a life now rendered inſupportable. *Note,* (1.) The blackeſt ſuggeſtions of blaſphemy and ſelf-murder have ſometimes attacked the deareſt ſaints of God. (2.) They are bad judges of true religion, who look no farther than this preſent world: had we hope here only, we ſhould be often miſerable indeed.

3. Job nobly repels this fiery dart thrown at him from Satan's quiver. *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh*; far different language ſhould flow from theſe lips, that have ſo long been taught a wiſer leſſon. Such atheiſtical and blaſphemous words might be expected from the profane idolaters, but the wife of Job had been better taught. *What? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* With indignation he receives the ſuggeſtion: many bleſſings they had received at God's hand; if now he choſe to afflict them, it was what with meekneſs they ſhould prepare to receive, and, under all ſubmiſſive, wait in hope. *Note,* (1.) When we rebuke even great provocations, we ſhould avoid every raſh or haſty expreſſion, and do it calmly and ſeriouſly.

(2.) We muſt never parly with vile ſuggeſtions, but reject them with abhorrence. (3.) In this world, good and evil are ſet over againſt each other; whatever we enjoy of the one, we may not expect exemption from the other; and the latter to a child of God uſually proves the greateſt bleſſing.

4. God bears a freſh teſtimony to Job's integrity, *In all this he ſinned not with his lips*, never yet uttered a murmuring impatient word; and whatever ſtruggle there might be within, hitherto grace had triumphed; and in bridling his tongue, he had maintained the deſerved character of a perfect man.

11. ¶ Now when Job's three [o] friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place: Eliphaz the [p] Temanite, and Bildad the [q] Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to [r] mourn with him, and to comfort him. 12. And when they lift up their eyes afar off, and [s] knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept, and they rent every one his mantle, and [t] ſprinkled duſt upon their heads toward heaven. 13. So they ſat down with him upon the ground ſeven days, and ſeven nights, and none ſpake a word unto him: for [u] they ſaw that *his* grief was very great.

[o] Prov. xvii. 17.
[p] Gen. xxxvi. 11.
[q] Gen. xxv. 2.
[r] Chap. xlii. 11. Rom. xii. 15.
[s] Lam. iv. 8.
[t] Neh. ix. 1. Lam. ii. 10. Ezek. xxvii. 30.
[u] Iſa. xxii. 4.

v. 11—13. The afflictive circumſtances of ſo great a man's fall and ſufferings ſoon ſpread abroad; his enemies rejoiced, but his friends mourned. We have here,

1. An appointment made by three of them to come and condole with him, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, generally ſuppoſed deſcendants from Abraham, by the ſons of Keturah or Eſau; *See Gen.* xxxvi. 11. *Gen.* xxv. 2. men of deep knowledge and experience. They had known Job in the days of his greatneſs, and were not like many others, who left him when brought low, but thought themſelves then eſpecially bound to teſtify their regard; and by ſympathetic tears, to alleviate the ſorrows of the mourner. *Note*, (1.) A true friend is known in adverſity, and ſuch may be juſtly eſteemed among the chief bleſſings of this life. (2.) The houſe of mourning will be frequented by the wiſe and gracious, both in charity to ſupport others, and as a ſchool to learn themſelves.

2. Their aſtoniſhment, grief, and anguiſh is painted in the ſtrongeſt colours. When *afar off, they lift up their eyes*: ſo changed was his countenance, ſo disfigured his body, ſo wretched his appearance, that they at firſt *knew him not*; but ſoon diſcovering through the dark veil the miſerable ſufferer, a burſt of tears and cries teſtified their deep affliction; *they rent every one his mantle, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads towards heaven, the tokens of expreſſive ſorrow; ſo they ſat down with him upon the ground ſeven days and ſeven nights*, probably never ſtirred, and in bitterneſs ate the bread of mourners, and mingled their drink with weeping: or at leaſt each day and part of the night they ſpent with him, however painful and grievous the ſcene; and *none ſpake a word unto him*. In ſilence overwhelmed with ſuch ſtupendous woe, too big for utterance; *for they ſaw that his grief was very great*. *Note*, (1.) Diſeaſe makes frightful changes; the dear loved countenance will ſoon be horrid ghaſtly: let us remember what vile bodies we have, and be abaſed. (2.) They who haſte from the chamber of diſeaſe, and are glad to fly from the melancholy door, ſhew themſelves ſtrangers to true friendſhip, as well as unmindful of, and unprepared for the evil days they muſt ſhortly ſee. (3.) When we perceive the grief ſo great, as to be incapable of admitting immediate conſolation, we muſt wait till an opening offers, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon.

CHAP. III.

Hitherto Job had born up nobly: here his impatience prevails, and though he doth not curſe God, 1. *He curſes the day of his birth*, ver. 1—10. 2. *He complains that he did not die as ſoon as he was born*, ver. 11—19. 3. *He grieves that his life was now continued under ſuch miſery*, ver. 20—26. *In this it muſt be owned that Job ſinned with his lips, and it is written not for our imitation, but our admonition, that he who thinks he ſtands may take heed leſt he fall.*

1. AFTER this Job opened his mouth, and [a] curſed his day. 2. And Job ſpake and ſaid, 3. [b] Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was ſaid, there is a man-child conceived. 4. Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light ſhine upon it. 5. Let darkneſs and [c] the ſhadow of death ſtain it, let a cloud dwell upon it, † let the blackneſs of the day terrify it. 6. *As for* that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not ‡ be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months. 7. Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein. 8. Let them curſe it [d] that curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up their mourning. 9. Let the ſtars of the twilight thereof be dark, let it look for light, but *have* none, neither let it ſee the ‖ dawning of the day: 10. Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes.

[a] Jer. xx. 14.
[b] Chap. x. 18. Jer. xv. 10. & xx. 14.
[c] Chap. xvi. 16. Pſal. xxiii. 4.
† Or let thoſe that have a bitter day terrify it. Amos viii. 10.
‡ Or rejoice among, &c.
[d] 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. Jer. ix. 17. Amos v. 16.
‖ Heb. The eyelids of the morning. Chap. xli. 18.

v. 1—10. At laſt the ſolemn ſilence breaks. Big ſorrows flow into his lips, and feeling his wretchedneſs, *Job curſed the day* that firſt brought into life a miſerable being, doomed to ſuch tormenting anguiſh. Herein corruption prevailed; he ſtumbled, yet not ſo as to fall. In general he ſtill appears our admiration, and we ſhall ſee him recovering his reſignation; his ſin pardoned, his ſoul reſtored, and Satan's accuſation of him as a hypocrite clearly confuted; and though compaſſed with infirmities, in the main he is found faithful and upright, and fixed in his adherence to God.

With a variety of ſtrong and ſtriking expreſſions, he brands the day of his unhappy birth, wiſhes its memorial were for ever cancelled; that darkneſs, diſmal as death, might thicken around it, and no joyful ſound be heard, to chear the dreadful gloom; that God would never favour it with one pleaſing event, but let melancholy reign, and ſtamp it with wretchedneſs, that no voice but mourning and woe may be ever uttered therein, and curſes perpetual reſt upon it; whilſt every one who lamented the dead, ſhould mention this hated birth-day, with that which wakened up their ſorrows: and this becauſe it ſhut not up his mother's womb, but gave unwelcome light to thoſe eyes, that opened only to behold miſery. A deſire fooliſh, cruel, and perverſe, which he lived to condemn, and be aſhamed of having uttered. *Note*, The day of our birth need be kept with humiliation, when we remember the ſin of our conception, and the evil of our years; but ſhould never be curſt, ſince there is ſo bleſſed a hope ſet before us, in that child that to us is born, and through whom we have now a proſpect of endleſs glory. If we look indeed no farther than the grave, and full in view behold thoſe miſeries that fleſh is heir to, it might lead us to join Job's imprecation; but beyond the grave, the proſpect brightens to the eye of faith, and enables the ſoul amidſt its ſorrows to rejoice in hope.

11. [e] Why died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly? 12. Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breaſts that I ſhould ſuck? 13. For now ſhould I have lien ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then had I been at reſt; 14. With kings and counſellors of the earth, [f] which built deſolate places for themſelves: 15. Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houſes with ſilver: 16. Or [g] as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants *which* never ſaw light. 17. There the wicked ceaſe *from* troubling; and there the weary [h] be at reſt. 18. *There* the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the oppreſſor. 19. The ſmall and great are there, and the ſervant *is* free from his maſter.

[e] Chap. x. 18.
[f] Ibid. xv. 28.
[g] Pſal. lviii. 8.
[h] Heb. iv. 9. Rev. xiv. 13.

v. 11—19. 1. Tired of life, in love with death, impatiently Job expoſtulates, Why he died not, as an abortion, or ſurvived the hour of his birth? Why the knees ſupported him, the breaſts ſuckled him, and robbed him of an infant grave? *Note*, (1.) Man is of all creatures born the moſt helpleſs, and without the tendereſt care and kind providence, could never ſurvive the days of helpleſs infancy. (2.) To quarrel with the life God beſtows, is to ſin againſt our own mercies; and if ever in hell we curſe the day of our birth, we ſhall have none but ourſelves to blame. (3.) Fretfulneſs and impatience at our lot, is fooliſh as well as ſinful, and can only aggravate, inſtead of alleviating our burdens. (4.) To deſire death to be with Chriſt, and delivered from ſin is commendable; but to be tired of the burdens of mortality, and in haſte to be gone, is ſelfiſh and evil.

2. He ſpeaks of the grave, as the deſirable aſylum for the wretched. There he ſhould have enjoyed reſt and eaſe, and in his bed of duſt, ſlept, as he could not now, through raging anguiſh, on a bed of down. There he ſhould have lain down with kings and counſellors, no longer diſtinguiſhed in this cold manſion, *unleſs by the deſolate habitations*, thoſe ſepulchral monuments *they built for themſelves*; and with princes, whoſe riches and pomp could not deſcend with them into the grave. There, like an untimely birth, or the ſtill-born infant, carried from the womb to the grave, he ſhould know no ſorrow: *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling*, Satan no more tempts, nor wicked men vex and perſecute: there the *weary* pilgrim repoſes in eternal reſt: the priſoners there are at eaſe, nor hear the clamorous voice of their oppreſſor or creditor; and the ſlave ceaſes his labour, free from his cruel maſter's yoke: the ſmall and great are there mixed promiſcuouſly, and no diſtinction marks the wiſe man from

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the fool. *Note*, (1.) Though the troubles of life muſt not make us impatient under them, the ſhadows of death will be welcome to the afflicted believer. (2.) Death is the terror of the great, becauſe their honours cannot follow them: happy only and truly great are they, that after death expect their crown. (3.) It is a comfort to the holy ſoul that dwells in this diſordered world, vexed as righteous Lot with the filthy communication of the wicked, that yet a moment, and they will for ever ceaſe from troubling.

20. Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter *in* ſoul? 21. Which [i] long for death, but it *cometh* not, and dig for it more than for hid treaſures? 22. Which rejoice exceedingly, *and* are glad when they can find the grave? 23. *Why is light given* to a man [k] whoſe way is hid, and [l] whom God hath hedged in? 24. For my ſighing cometh [m] before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters. 25. For † the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me. 26. I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, neither was I quiet: yet trouble came.

i Rev. ix. 6.
k Iſa. xl. 27.
l Chap. xix. 8. Lam. iii. 7. Hoſ. ii. 6.
m Chap. vii. 10.
† Heb. I feared a fear and it came upon me.

v. 20—26. Job continues his impatient expoſtulation, and grieves that a life of miſery ſhould be longer continued to thoſe whoſe bitterneſs of ſoul makes death eagerly longed for, who dig for the grave as for hid treaſure; and exult with tranſport when their diſmiſſion from the burdens of mortality arrives: and in his own caſe, he particularly thinks himſelf hardly dealt with, *his way is hid*, there is no door of eſcape, hedged in with the thorns of affliction on every ſide: ſo conſtantly in pain and anguiſh, that his appetite was palled with ſorrow, and his pangs ſo acute, that he roared aloud like the noiſe of mighty waters falling. His fears were now all come upon him: in the beginning of his trouble, he had entertained the moſt grievous apprehenſions, and under the firſt ſtrokes of providence began to totter, and inwardly loſt his wonted repoſe; but then he hoped for a little reſpite, *yet trouble came* upon trouble; ſtill darker clouds thickened over him, till he ſeemed overwhelmed with wretchedneſs. *Note*, (1.) To reflect on God's providence, is tacitly to caſt blame on himſelf. (2.) Though impatient anguiſh eagerly calls for death, did they who often ſo deſire its approach look beyond the grave, they would more eagerly ſtart back, and welcome life with all its miſeries. (3.) Our time is in God's hands; happy for us it is ſo; elſe we might bitterly repent our raſhneſs. (4.) The more this life is irkſome, the more ſollicitous let it make us to prepare for a better. (5.) They are only fit to die who are content to live, and ſatisfied under every burthen wait chearfully the Lord's leiſure.

CHAP. IV.

Job's impatient expoſtulations give an opening for thoſe ſuggeſtions of his three friends, which on the review of his caſe aroſe. Probably they had mentioned between themſelves their ſuſpicions, and from his ſufferings, concluded him a hypocrite. Thus Satan found them his ſeconds, and they with warmth and cruelty plead againſt Job; whilſt conſcious of integrity, he vindicates himſelf from their aſperſions. Thus the diſpute begins, and Eliphaz, as moſt diſtinguiſhed, or the eldeſt perſon, firſt replies, 1. *He beſpeaks a patient hearing*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He concludes him an hypocrite, becauſe the conſolation he adminiſtred to others, could not ſupport himſelf*, ver. 3—6. 3. *He maintains that man's wickedneſs is that which always brings God's judgments*, ver. 7—11. 4. *He corroborates his aſſertion by a viſion of his, in which he was minded of the inconteſtible purity and juſtice of God, and of the weakneſs and ſinfulneſs of man*, ver. 12—21. *By all this he aims to humble Job's ſpirit, and to make him both penitent and patient under his afflictions.*

1. THEN Eliphaz the Temanite anſwered and ſaid, 2. *If* we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking? 3. Behold, [a] thou haſt inſtructed many, and [b] thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands. 4. Thy words have upholden [c] him that was falling, and thou haſt ſtrengthned [d] the feeble knees. 5. But now it is come upon thee, and thou † fainteſt: it [e] toucheth thee, and thou art troubled. 6. *Is* not *this* [f] thy fear, [g] thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightneſs of thy ways?

a Gen. xviii. 19.
b Iſa. xxxv. 3.
c Gal. vi. 1.
d Heb. xii. 12.
† Or art weary.
e Chap. i. 11.
f Ibid. 1.
g Prov. iii. 26.

v. 1—6. Having heard Job's impatient complaint, Eliphaz can no longer keep ſilence.

1. He apologizes for the part he was about to take, but hopes Job will not be offended if he and his friends eſſay to apply ſome remedy to his diſeaſe; and as they apprehended his wound needed to be laid open, he begs he will not think that unkindneſs, but friendſhip dictates his diſcourſe. He would not willingly grieve him, but in this caſe he intimates ſilence would be criminal, and that God's glory, as well as Job's good, required them to deal with him faithfully. *Note*, (1.) In difficult caſes, in the multitude of counſellors there is ſafety. (2.) When we have reproof to give, the gentleneſs of our manner ſhould gild the bitter pill. (3.) It is a cruel kindneſs and vile ſelfiſhneſs, for fear of offending, to ſuffer ſin upon our brother.

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2. He ſuggeſts the unbecomingneſs of his conduct under his preſent trials, ſo contrary to the advice himſelf had often given to others. Thou *haſt inſtructed many* how they ſhould walk before God, and taught them the ſubmiſſion due to his holy will: *thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands* that hung down as ready to faint, under the preſſure of heavy afflictions: *thy words have upholden him that was falling*, either by temptation into ſin, or by trouble into deſpair; *and thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees*, encouraged them to ſupport their burdens, and helped them with good advice, and kind conſolation; *but now it is come upon thee*, the ſame trials which he had taught others how to bear; and *thou fainteſt*, or *art weary*, ſinking under the burden as inſupportable; *it toucheth thee*, as if Job's preſent griefs were but light afflictions, but a ſlight ſtroke of correction; *and thou art troubled*, like the raging ſea that cannot reſt, and as a man at his wits end. Hence he ſeems to intimate, that as his preſent behaviour ſo little correſponded to his own advice, it was to be feared that his former conduct had been inſincere. *Note*, (1.) Though a man be not called to the miniſtry, every one is bound to improve the talents God hath given him in his own family and neighbourhood, by warning the unruly, ſupporting the weak, and comforting the feeble-minded. (2.) It is too true, that good counſel is eaſier given than taken; though that will in no wiſe prove the hypocriſy of the adviſer, but only ſhews the weakneſs and corruption of our nature. (3.) To make light of others trials, and to exaggerate their impatience under them, ſhews the abſence of the ſpirit of love, that would be glad to plead the excuſe of the tempted, and from their circumſtances engage us to make the moſt candid allowances.

3. He charges him with hypocriſy in his former profeſſions; *that his fear* of God, *his confidence* in his regard, *his hope* of things unſeen, and the *uprightneſs of his ways*, however exemplary they might have ſeemed, were but appearances; that at bottom there was nothing in them; and this his preſent ſtate, as he concludes, evidently proved, ſince God would not afflict a truly righteous man, nor would he be thus impatient in his trouble. *Note*, (1.) The charge of hypocriſy is one that is the ofteneſt laid againſt God's people, and among the foreſt to be born. (2.) A cenſorious ſpirit is exceeding ſinful; they will have judgment without mercy, who have ſhewed no mercy. (3.) We muſt not judge of a man's ſtate from a particular failing. He may be truly faithful at bottom, who on a violent temptation may yet be moved from his own ſtedfaſtneſs.

7. Remember, I pray thee, [h] who *ever* periſhed being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? 8. Even as I have ſeen [i] they that plow iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame. 9. By the blaſt of God they periſh, and by † the breath of his noſtrils are they conſumed. 10. The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and [k] the teeth of the young lions are broken. 11. [l] The old lion periſheth for lack of prey, and the ſtout lion's whelps are ſcattered abroad.

h Gen. iv. 8.
i Pſal. vii. 14. Prov. xxii. 8. Hoſ. x. 13. Gal. vi. 7, 8.
† i. e. his anger. Iſa. xxx. 33. Exod. xv. 8. Chap. xv. 30. Iſa. xi. 4. 2 Theſ. ii. 8.
k Pſal. lviii. 6.
l Ibid. xxxiv. 40.

v. 7—11. Two poſitions he here lays down in ſupport of his former charge, that Job muſt be a hypocrite becauſe of his afflictions.

1. That the innocent and righteous never periſh under ſuch heavy viſitations; but his caſe appeared deſperate, therefore he was not innocent or righteous, as he pretended. He is right reſpecting eternal perdition, but elſe Job, to whoſe experience he appealed, might eaſily confute him with the death of Abel, the heavy loſſes of Lot, and the ſufferings of Jacob: beſides that, whilſt there was life, ſtill there was hope, that all Job's preſent evils might end in bleſſings. *Note*, The concluſions of the revilers of God's people, are uſually drawn from premiſes as weak and inſufficient to ſupport them.

2. That wickedneſs was ever attended with temporal puniſhment; and for this he vouches his own experience, in the caſe of ſinners in general; who, ſowing iniquity, and expecting to reap comfort, find the harveſt miſery; their crop blaſted with the Divine diſpleaſure, and conſumed as corn rooted up by the whirlwind: and in particular he had ſeen the proud oppreſſors thus periſh; who, ravening like lions, fierce and greedy of prey, filled their houſes with ſpoil; but ſoon by God's judgment, their teeth were broken, the old lion was famiſhed with hunger, and their whelps, their families, were ſcattered abroad. Tho' he ſpeaks of the caſe of others, there ſeems to be an oblique glance to Job's ſituation, as if like this old lion, he had by extortion filled his den, but now was ready to periſh for want, and

his children had been ſlain by the breath of God. Hence he would infer his wickedneſs as the cauſe of his ſufferings; but whatever the experience of Eliphaz might be, greater and more numerous inſtances were eaſy to be collected, where the wicked proſpered long, perhaps died in plenty, and ſaw no bitterneſs. Such was profane Eſau's caſe, and Lamech ſeems a ſtill more daring and proſperous ſinner.

12. Now a † thing was ſecretly brought to me, and
mine ear received [m] a little thereof. 13. In thoughts
from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth
on men, 14. [n] Fear came upon me, and trembling,
which made all my bones to ſhake. 15. Then a ſpirit
paſſed before my face, the hair of my fleſh ſtood up.
16. It ſtood ſtill, but I could not diſcern the form thereof:
an image *was* before mine eyes, ‡ *there was* ſilence,
and I heard a voice, *ſaying*, 17. Shall mortal man be
‖ more juſt than God? ſhall a man be more pure than
his maker? 18. Behold, [o] he put no truſt in his ſervants;
and § his angels he charged with folly: 19. [p] How much
leſs *on* them [q] that dwell in houſes of clay, whoſe foundation
is in the duſt, *which* are cruſhed before the
moth? 20. [r] They are † deſtroyed from morning to
evening: they periſh for ever without any regarding *it*.
21. [s] Doth not their excellency *which is* in them go away?
[t] they die, even without wiſdom.

† Or word.
m Chap. xxvi. 14. 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
n Gen. xv. 12. Hab. iii. 16.
‡ Or I heard a ſtill voice. 1 Kings xix. 12.
‖ Or juſt before God? and pure before his Maker? Eccleſ. vii. 20.
o Chap. xv. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 4.
§ Or, nor in his angels, in whom he put light.
p Chap. xv. 16.
q 2 Cor. v. 1.
r Pſal. xc. 5. Iſa. lviii. 12.
† Or beaten in pieces.
s Pſal. xxxix. 11. & xlix. 14.
t Chap. xxxvi. 12.

v. 12—21. To reprove Job's impatient complaints, Eliphaz proceeds to relate a viſion from God, which probably was given him ſome time in the paſt ſeven days. The purport of it is from the view of the frailty, folly, and ſinfulneſs of mortal man, to ſilence every murmur againſt his diſpenſations, and to lead his friend to more humble thoughts of himſelf.

1. He deſcribes the manner of this revelation made to him: *A thing*, or *a word* of Divine wiſdom *was ſecretly brought to me*, ſtole upon me unawares, *and mine ear received a little thereof*; either his capacity was too weak to retain the whole, or what was revealed was but a ſmall portion of the will of God. *In thoughts* of deep and ſerious meditation *from viſions of the night*, which were vouchſafed him, *when deep ſleep falleth upon men*, to whoſe ſpirit nevertheleſs God hath acceſs, *fear came upon me, and trembling*; an awful ſenſe of the Divine Majeſty affected his mind, and communicated to his very body a ſacred tremor, *which made all my bones to ſhake*, as if each ſinew was unſtrung, and every joint looſened. *Note*, (1.) God hath ſecret ways of acceſs to the ſouls of men; his people know it to their comfort, his enemies feel it to their terror. (2.) Our higheſt attainments are poor and inconſiderable; we know but a part, a very little part of God's ways. (3.) When we lie down with good thoughts, we may hope our very dreams ſhall be holy. (4.) Though moſt viſions of the night are vain, incoherent, and to be troubled by them would be ſuperſtitious folly; yet there are ſome, I doubt not, that bear the mark of God's hand, and deſerve our ſolemn attention.

2. The meſſenger who brought it: *A ſpirit*, one of thoſe bright angelic hoſts, who miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation, *paſſed before my face*; ſtruck with ſurprize and dread, *the hair of my head ſtood up*, erect as the briſtles of the porcupine. *It ſtood ſtill*, as if prepared to ſpeak, *but I could not diſcern the form thereof*, perhaps the brightneſs of the ſurrounding glory prevented him: *an image was before mine eyes*, terrible to behold; *there was ſilence*, an awful pauſe, *and* then *I heard a voice* diſtinct and audible. *Note*, (1.) Though apparitions in general are the creatures of fear and folly, yet that God may on important occaſions thus ſend from the world of ſpirits, why ſhould it be thought incredible? (2.) The weakneſs of our nature ſhudders, and the conſciouſneſs of guilt terrifies us at the apprehenſion of a viſit from the unſeen world. (3.) When God is about to ſpeak, ſilence and attention become our proſtrate ſouls before him.

3. The meſſage is weighty and important: *Shall mortal man*, ſinful, and therefore weak and frail, *be more juſt than God*, or rather *be juſt before God*, pretend to affect innocence, or ſtand at his bar as righteous? *ſhall a man*, the greateſt and beſt of men, *be more pure than his maker*, or *pure before his maker*, or in his ſight dare to appear as ſinleſs? *Behold*, note it with deep attention, *He put no truſt in his ſervants, his angels*; did not truſt them with their own ſtability, but ſecured them in Chriſt Jeſus; did not reveal to them his ſecrets, *Mat.* xxiv. 36. did not place his confidence in them, as in any meaſure ſupporting the glory of his throne; he wanted them not. Nay, *he chargeth* them *with folly*; compared with himſelf, their wiſdom is fooliſhneſs; and left to themſelves, they were liable to fall, as man, in innocence. *How much leſs in them that dwell in houſes of clay*, in man, a worm, whoſe body is but a veſſel of finer clay, *whoſe foundation is in the duſt*, weak and tottering before every blaſt of diſeaſe or accident, *which are cruſhed before the moth*; if but ſuch a weak worm, ſo feeble is the ſtructure, puſh againſt it, the houſe is broken through, or more eaſily cruſhed than the ſoft moth between our fingers. *They are deſtroyed from morning to evening*, thouſands dying daily and continually, or every day their bodies haſten to their diſſolution; *they periſh for ever*, are cut off from the land of the living, no more to return, *without any regarding it*; they themſelves little expecting it, and the living uſually lay it not to heart. *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away*, or *with them?* all the endowments of their mind, the beauty, health, and ſtrength of their bodies, and all their pomp, greatneſs, and affluence vaniſh as the cloud of the morning; *they die even without wiſdom*, it periſhes with them; or forgetting to conſider their latter end, they die unprepared. Now if God puts no truſt in the angels, and chargeth them with folly, how much leſs dependance can be placed on miſerable, weak, and ſinful man; and how much more chargeable is he with folly and frailty, therefore can in no wiſe arrogate to himſelf a wiſdom and righteouſneſs beyond his maker, or think of appearing juſtified in the eyes of his purity. *Note*, (1.) Diſcontent with the diſpenſations of God's providence, is in fact to impeach his wiſdom, juſtice, and goodneſs, as inferior to our own. (2.) If the angels are in God's ſight thus weak and imperfect, and he places no confidence in them, what folly for man to make them the objects of worſhip, or to direct his prayer unto them? (3.) The more we conſider the vanity and frailty of our life, and the nearneſs and certainty of death, the lowlier thoughts of ourſelves it will beget in us. (4.) It were the heighth of folly, nay of madneſs, for a ſinful dying worm to plead before God his worth and excellence. (5.) It is among the ſtrong proofs of the inſenſibility and thoughtleſſneſs bound up in the heart of a ſinner, that amidſt ſuch daily warnings around him, and ſuch frequent notices within him, he lives ſo careleſs, and leaves death, with all its awful conſequences, far out of his ſight.

CHAP. V.

Eliphaz proceeds to confirm what he had before advanced, that only the wicked are wholly conſumed, as he appeared to be. 1. *He appeals to all the ſaints, in proof of this poſition*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Produces his own experience*, ver. 2—5. 3. *He allows affliction is the common lot*, ver. 6, 7. *But*, 4. *ſhews how righteous men demean themſelves*, ver. 8—16. 5. *That their afflictions always end well; therefore he adviſes Job to humble himſelf, pray, and hope in God's mercy*, ver. 17—27.

1. CALL now, if there be any that will anſwer thee,
and to which of the † ſaints wilt thou ‡ turn?
2. For wrath killeth the fooliſh man, and [a] ‖ envy ſlayeth
the ſilly one. 3. I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root:
but ſuddenly [b] I curſed his habitation. 4. His children
[c] are far from ſafety, and they are cruſhed in the gate,
[d] neither *is there* any to deliver *them*. 5. Whoſe harveſt
the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns,
and [e] the § robber ſwalloweth up their ſubſtance.

† Or holy ones.
‡ Or look.
a Gen. xxx. 1.
‖ Or zeal, or indignation.
b Jer. xii. 3.
c Pſal. cxix. 155.
d Ibid. cix. 12, 13.
e Chap. xviii. 9.
§ Or thirſty one.

v. 1—5. Eliphaz, confident in the goodneſs of his cauſe, tauntingly defies Job to contradict his aſſertions.

1. He bids him appeal to God or man, and he will be ſilenced; *call now* to God, *if there be any that will anſwer thee*, and ſee if he will confute the viſion I have related; or *call now* to all the holy men of old, if there be any whoſe caſe correſponds with thine, ſo afflicted and yet innocent, and not a parallel will be found. *And to which of the ſaints*, or *holy ones*, *wilt thou turn*, either the divine perſons in the godhead, who would reject his appeal of integrity, or the ſaints upon earth, among whom he would not find one advocate, or whoſe circumſtances and ſentiments reſembled his own: therefore the charge he brought muſt be true, that his inſincerity was the cauſe of his ſufferings. *Note*, (1.) They can have little confidence to approach God, whoſe own conſciences condemn their hypocriſy. (2.) There are in every age ſome living ſaints, ſanctified by God's word and ſpirit; and though the world uſe the word as a term of deriſion, it is a title of the higheſt honour, and true of every real believer who is called to be a ſaint, as much as Paul or John. (3.) It were indeed a ſtrong proof of the badneſs of our ſtate and temper, if we had the experience of all God's ſaints againſt us; but the experience of the ſaints is often pleaded by thoſe who have it leaſt on their ſide.

2. He aſſerts the ruin of the wicked as a truth himſelf had often been witneſs to. *Wrath killeth the fooliſh* or wicked *man*; the wrath of God is revealed againſt him, or his own haſty ſpirit urges him on to his ruin, and *envy* at the proſperity of others, or *zeal*, God's diſpleaſure againſt iniquity, *deſtroyeth the ſilly one*, the ſinner who is void of underſtanding, ſo that he pines away often under his own vexations; and this notwithſtanding his momentary proſperity, *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root ſuddenly*, but deſtruction awaited him. *I curſed his habitation*, not wiſhed him evil, but foreſaw the curſe impending over his devoted palace: *his children*, the ſtaff of his age, *are far from ſafety, and they are cruſhed in the gate*, buried in the ruins of their deſolate

houſes, *neither is there any to deliver them*, neither God or man intereſt themſelves in their behalf; *whoſe harveſt the hungry eateth up*, ſo that their ſubſtance is conſumed, and *taketh it even out of the thorns*, leaves none behind, even ſo much as a handful at the hedge-ſide; or though fenced in with thorns, break through and plunder it, and *the robber ſwalloweth up their ſubſtance.* And in this deſcription of the ruin of the fooliſh man, there is an evident invidious parallel drawn with Job's caſe, whoſe ſudden afflictions, the death of his children, and the ruin of his ſubſtance by the robbers, Eliphaz would inſinuate as a proof, that he ſhared with the wicked in their afflictions, becauſe he had joined them in their ſins. *Note*, (1.) The indulgence of bur vile paſſions prove often fatal to ourſelves. (2.) The wrath of God, in time and eternity, aſſuredly reſts on the ſinner's head, however proſperous his circumſtances may appear. (3.) The wicked man muſt be a ſilly one; how could he elſe for the ſake of a momentary pleaſure, ruſh into everlaſting pain.

6. Although [f] affliction cometh not forth of the duſt,
neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground: 7.
† Yet man is born unto trouble, as ‡ the ſparks fly up-
ward. 8. ‖ I would ſeek unto God, and unto God
would I commit my cauſe: 9. [g] Which doth great
things, and unſearchable: marvellous things without
number. 10. [h] Who giveth rain upon the earth, and
ſendeth waters upon the fields: 11. [i] To ſet up on high
thoſe that be low; that thoſe which mourn may be ex-
alted to ſafety. 12. [k] He diſappointeth the devices of
the crafty, ſo that [l] their hands cannot perform *their* en-
terpriſe. 13. [m] He taketh the wiſe in their own crafti-
neſs: and the counſel of the froward is carried headlong.
14. [n] They meet with darkneſs in the day-time, and
grope in the noon day as in the night. 15. But [o] he
ſaveth the poor from the ſword, from their mouth, and
from the hand of the mighty. 16. So the poor hath
hope, and [p] iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.

[f] Amos iii. 6.
† Or, but.
‡ Heb. The ſons of the burning coal lift up to fly.
‖ Or I do ſeek unto God, and unto God I turn my ſpeech.
[g] Chap. ix. 10. Pſal. xl. 5. Rom. xi. 33.
[h] Jer. v. 24.
[i] 1 Sam. ii. 7. Pſal. cxiii. 7.
[k] Neh. iv. 15. Pſal. xxxiii. 10. Iſa. viii. 10.
[l] Pſal. lxxvi. 5.
[m] 1 Cor. iii. 19.
[n] Deut. xxviii. 29. Iſa. lix. 10. Amos viii. 9.
[o] Pſal. lxxii. 4.
[p] Ibid. cvii. 42.

v. 6—16. It was the intention of Eliphaz not to ſink Job into deſpair, but firſt to lay bare his wound, and then apply the healing balm, ſuggeſting arguments for reſignation, and how to bear his burden profitably.

1. He directs him to the origin and cauſe of all his trouble: *Although affliction cometh not forth of the duſt*, *neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*, as things fortuitous and accidental, or owing to ſecond cauſes, operating independant of God's agency or direction, but all is fixed by unalterable decree, and no creature acts but by his guidance, and under his over-ruling power. *Yet*, or *but*, *man is born to trouble*; ſince ſin entered, the curſe entered, and cloſe as our ſhadow afflictions follow us, *as the ſparks fly upwards*, numerous as theſe, and the natural conſequence of our fallen ſtate; and this ſhould reconcile us to ſuffering, and engage us to be humble for the ſin which is the cauſe of it. *Note*, (1.) Fortune and chance are the creatures of heatheniſm and infidelity: we are aſſured in God's word that not a hair of our heads falls to the ground without Divine direction. (2.) The more we are acquainted with the ſinfulneſs of our nature, the leſs reaſon ſhall we have to murmur under any affliction, ſince we muſt then acknowledge it to be leſs than our iniquity deſerves.

2. He gives him advice how to behave himſelf: *I would ſeek unto God*, or *doubtleſs I do ſeek unto God*; it is the method I myſelf take in my trials, and would recommend to you as doubtleſs the moſt proper and ſeaſonable: *and unto God I would*, or *I do commit my cauſe*, in humble prayer and patient reſignation, and then reſt in hope. *Note*, We may ſafely commend what we have proved good by experience, and the people of every age have always found that patient hope and believing prayer, will not fail at laſt of bringing an anſwer of peace.

3. He enforces his admonition, by conſiderations drawn from God's ſovereign dominion, power, and equity: *Which doth great things* in the works of creation and providence; *and unſearchable*, beyond the deepeſt penetration of the wiſeſt ſages; *marvellous things* that excite our aſtoniſhment, and exceed our comprehenſion; and theſe, *without number*; earth, air, and ſea teem with wonders, and every day new works of Providence awaken our admiration; and the more we attempt to reaſon, the more we are loſt in depths of wiſdom unfathomable. How fooliſh then to diſpute againſt God, and how much wiſer to refer ourſelves to him, who can do ſuch wonders, and will do ever wiſely. By his gracious providence, he ſendeth the rain to water the earth, *v.* 10. the poor and mourners, whoſe faces were black, as it were, with famine, ſee plenty reſtored, and themſelves exalted from their low eſtate, *v.* 11. ſuch merciful aſſiſtance may they expect who wait upon him. But the crafty are diſappointed in their ſchemes, their enterprizes prove abortive, their own ſnares entangle them, as birds in an evil net, and their precipitate counſels hurry them on to ruin, *v.* 12, 13. In the plaineſt circumſtances they become infatuated, and fall from the meridian of proſperity, into the deepeſt darkneſs of affliction, *v.* 14. whilſt the helpleſs ſervants of God, againſt whom their tongues were maliciouſly let looſe, and whom their arm cruelly oppreſſed, are delivered, to the great diſappointment of iniquity, and to the encouragement of the hope of the poor, who never truſt on him and are confounded. The inference Eliphaz would draw from hence is evident, that if Job thus humbly truſted upon God, he would experience a like deliverance. *Note*, (1.) The wiſeſt become fools, when they turn from God to truſt on their own underſtanding. (2.) The deepeſt laid plots of men or devils need not trouble God's people, there is one who ſitteth in the heavens who laughs them to ſcorn. (3.) They who have their tempers in lowlineſs conformed to their circumſtances, will find him near at hand who will lift them up, and reſtore comfort to the mourners. (4.) In the worſt of times we ſhould never quit our hope in God, for he is faithful that hath promiſed. (5.) Though the mouth of malignity is now open, and the hand of the oppreſſors heavy on God's people, their arm ſhall ſoon be broken, and their lips ſealed up in everlaſting ſilence.

17. Behold, [q] happy is the man whom God correcteth:
therefore [r] deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Al-
mighty: 18. For [s] he maketh ſore, and bindeth up:
he woundeth, and his hands make whole. 19. [t] He ſhall
deliver thee in ſix troubles: yea, in ſeven there ſhall no
evil touch thee. 20. [u] In famine he ſhall redeem thee
from death; and in war, from the power of the ſword.
21. [x] Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the tongue;
neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction when it cometh.
22. At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh: [y] neither
ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the earth. 23. For
thou *ſhalt be* in league with the ſtones of the field; and
[z] the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee.
24. And thou ſhalt know that † thy tabernacle *ſhall be* in
peace; and thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not
‡ ſin. 25. Thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed *ſhall be*
great, and thine offſpring as the graſs of the earth. 26.
Thou ſhalt come to *thy* grave in [a] full age, like as a
ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon. 27. Lo this,
we have ſearched it, ſo it *is*; hear it, and [b] know thou *it*
for ‖ thy good.

[q] Pſal. xciv. 12. Prov. iii. 12. Jam. i. 12. Rev. iii. 19.
[r] Heb. xii. 5.
[s] Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Hoſ. vi. 1.
[t] Pſal. xci. 3. Prov. xxiv. 16.
[u] Pſal. xxxiii. 19. & xxxvii. 19.
[x] Ibid. xxxi. 20.
[y] Iſa. xi. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 25.
[z] Hoſ. ii. 18.
† Or peace is thy tabernacle.
‡ Or err.
[a] Prov. x. 27.
[b] Ibid. ix. 12.
‖ Heb. Thyſelf.

v. 17—27. Eliphaz draws his ſpeech to a concluſion, and cloſes it with a view of the great and precious promiſes which would attend Job, if his mind were but conformed to his circumſtances.

1. He warns him *not to deſpiſe the chaſtning of the Almighty*; though the draught be bitter, it muſt not be rejected, becauſe it is the means of health: it is the rod of the Almighty, before which he may not proudly diſdain to bow: it is lifted up with the moſt gracious deſign of fatherly correction, therefore not to be ſlighted, but ſubmitted to with patience, heard with reverence, *Micah* vi. 9. and the cup of affliction to be drank with chearfulneſs. *Note*, In every affliction, our chief concern ſhould be not the removal, but the due improvement of it.

2. He ſupports his advice with the bleſſed effects which would flow from it. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth* by his word, or providences; it is the proof of his regard, and deſigned to work eminently for our good; it ſerves to wean the heart from earth, and urge the ſoul to ſeek more diligently the true and abiding joys of glory. The ſame hand alſo that wounds can heal, and will, no doubt, when the deſign of his viſitation is anſwered, *v.* 18. The length or repetition of our troubles ſhould not diſcourage us, for out of them all God will deliver his ſervants; and in them preſerve the ſouls of his ſaints from evil, that the wicked one toucheth them not. Though famine pale ſtalk ghaſtly through the land, or horrid war with garments rolled in blood ſpread deſolations around; though wild beaſts of the deſert howl and threaten to devour, or men more ſavage than theſe beaſts, bite with malignant teeth, and with the ſcourge of the tongue, poiſonous as the ſerpent's ſting, ſtrive to infuſe their baneful calumnies, God will preſerve his choſen; they ſhall be fed in the time of dearth, covered from danger under the wing of the Almighty, the creatures ſhall be in league with them not to hurt them, and ſecure they ſhall mock at the impotent malice of their foes: their houſes ſhall be in peace, their families united in love, and defended from the evil of ſin and trouble; they ſhall go in and out under the Divine bleſſing, and piety and proſperity crown all their labours; their poſterity ſhall be great and numerous, and after beholding them fixed in comfort and affluence, they ſhall go down to their graves crowned with length of days, riches and honour, and, ripe for glory as the ſheaf in the day of harveſt, be gathered into the boſom of God's everlaſting love. *Note*, (1.) When God wounds his people, he heals, binds up their hearts with preſent divine conſolations, and opens a way for them to eſcape out of every temptation; no wound ſo deep which he cannot cure. (2.) They who have God for their confidence, may defy their

foes, and triumph even in the jaws of death. (3.) A peaceable abode is a ſignal mercy, but the diſtinguiſhed bleſſing is to be kept from ſin. (4.) It is a comfort to gracious parents, to ſee their children's proſperity in the world, but moſt of all to behold their piety, for that alone can enſure the abiding good. (5.) Age is ripening us for the grave, are we alſo ripening for glory? filled with grace as with years, full of good fruits, and bending with chearfulneſs into the hands of the harveſt-man, as ready for the ſtorehouſe of God.

3. He begs Job's ſerious conſideration: *Lo!* attend to what I have ſpoken, as the reſult of ſound and deep experience; *this we have ſearched*, it is our joint ſentiments, *and ſo it is approved* by the concurring teſtimony of all God's people: *hear it then* with reverence and ſubmiſſion, *and know thou it for thy good*, or *thyſelf*, apply it to thy own caſe, and receive the bleſſing this diſcourſe was intended to convey. *Note*, Great truths deſerve ſolemn attention, and from every ſermon we hear, our future conduct ſhould make our profiting appear.

CHAP. VI.

Eliphaz concluded his diſcourſe with an air of aſſurance, as if what he had ſaid was ſo plain and pertinent, that nothing could be objected in anſwer to it. But Job, diſſatisfied with all he had ſaid, ſtill juſtifies himſelf in his complaints, and condemns him for the weakneſs of his arguing. 1. *He ſhews that he had juſt cauſe to complain*, ver. 1—7. 2. *He continues his paſſionate wiſh, to be eaſed of all his miſeries by death*, ver. 8—13. 3. *He reproves his friends for their uncharitable cenſures of him, and the unkind treatment they gave him*, ver. 14—30. *It muſt be owned that Job in all this ſpoke a deal of reaſon, but with a mixture of paſſion and human infirmity: And in this conteſt, as indeed in moſt conteſts, there was fault on both ſides.*

1. BUT Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity † laid in the balances together! 3. For now [a] it would be heavier than the ſand of the ſea: therefore [b] my words are ‡ ſwallowed up. 4. For [c] the arrows of the Almighty *are* within me, the poiſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit: [d] the terrors of God do ſet themſelves in aray againſt me. 5. Doth the wild aſs bray when he hath graſs? or loweth the ox over his fodder? 6. Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt? or is there *any* taſte in the white of an egg? 7. [e] The things *that* my ſoul refuſed to touch *are* as my ſorrowful meat.

† Heb. Lifted up.
[a] Prov. xxvii. 3.
[b] Pſal. lxxvii. 4.
‡ Or boil up.
[c] Deut. xxxii. 23. Pſal. xxxviii. 2.
[d] Ibid. lxxxviii. 15, 16.
[e] Lam. iv. 5.

v. 1—7. Having heard with patient attention the diſcourſe of Eliphaz, however piercing and unjuſt ſome of the reflections muſt appear, Job, far from being convinced by his reaſoning, replies with warmth to his arguments.

1. He wiſhes for a more impartial balance than his cenſorious friends ſeemed inclined to afford him; who ſlighted the weight of thoſe calamities they did not feel, and blamed him as aggravating his troubles, the heavineſs of which, words were wanting to expreſs, and the half of it he could not tell, whilſt ſighing and tears ſtopped his utterance, or as the expreſſion, *v.* 3. may be rendered, *therefore my words boil up*, through the anguiſh he felt within. *Note*, (1.) They who are at eaſe themſelves, are often partial judges of others complaints. (2.) We recommend that advice as eaſy and obvious to others, that, if in their caſe, we might ourſelves find exceeding difficult, if not impracticable.

2. He complains of what they could not ſee, *v.* 4. the inward anguiſh of his ſoul. His outward trials were heavy as the ſand, and as numerous, but his inward pangs far more deadly. Like poiſoned arrows, the wrath of God, which he read in theſe afflictions, *drank up his ſpirit*, and ſunk him almoſt into deſpair, whilſt what he feared added to what he felt; he ſaw God marſhalling his terrors againſt him, and who could tell where they would end. *Note*, (1.) Of all our evils, a ſenſe of God's wrath is moſt intolerable: a wounded ſpirit who can bear? (2.) If in the agonies of pain a haſty expreſſion may not be juſtified, they ſhould plead with us its excuſe.

3. He vindicates himſelf in his complaints; under which, to be ſilent, would prove him more inſenſible than the moſt ſtupid animals. *Doth the wild aſs bray when he hath graſs? or loweth the ox over his fodder?* no; but when deprived of theſe, the very beaſts will complain. Now all his comforts were periſhed; the food that in time paſt he would not have deigned to touch, was become his ſorrowful meat, inſipid, without a grain of ſalt, and taſteleſs as the *white of an egg*, or *his ſpittle*; or more probably he means, the admonitions and reproof of Eliphaz were as nauſeous to him, as the bitter morſel he loathed; and more unſavoury than the moſt inſipid food, being no way ſuited to his caſe and condition, and therefore diſreliſhed and rejected. *Note*, (1.) There is no virtue in inſenſibility. (2.) When we know not to what ſtraits we may be reduced, it is good betimes to avoid all nicety of diet, which tends only to pamper the appetite, and will add peculiar bitterneſs in any day of future want.

8. O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant *me* † the thing that I long for! 9. Even [f] that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me; that he would let looſe his hand and cut me off. 10. Then ſhould I yet have comfort, yea, ‡ I would harden myſelf in ſorrow; let him not ſpare, for [g] I have not concealed the words of the holy One. 11. What *is* my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope? and what *is* mine end, that I ſhould prolong my life? 12. [h] *Is* my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones? or *is* my fleſh of braſs? 13. *Is* not my ‖ help in me? and is wiſdom driven quite from me?

† Heb. My expectation.
[f] 1 Kings xix. 4.
‡ Or though I ſhould be burnt with pain.
[g] Acts xx. 27.
[h] Pſal. ciii. 14, 15.
‖ Or defence.

v. 8—13. Theſe are among the words that Job will wiſh unſaid, and deſerve all the rebuke of impatience that Eliphaz hath beſtowed: ſo hard it is, when the ſpirit is ruffled, for a good man to refrain from the ſpeech of perverſeneſs. We have here,

1. Job's impatient wiſh and prayer for his immediate diſſolution, *O that I might have my requeſt!* as if the boon was wondrous great; and what is this thing he longs for? why, that God would make an end of him, let looſe his arm, and by one ſtroke put a period to his days of miſery: a bad wiſh, and a worſe prayer; but God is kinder to us than we are to ourſelves, and therefore mercifully refuſes to grant our ſinful and haſty requeſts. *Note*, (1.) However irkſome our preſent ſtate may be, we may not think of ridding ourſelves of our troubles, but wait till our change comes. (2.) Through our folly at times, our very prayers are turned into ſin.

2. Though he is wrong in his raſh deſire, he expreſſes a gracious hope in death, *Then ſhould I have comfort*, the proſpect of its approach ſhould be my joy, and after death I ſhould enter into everlaſting felicity. *Yea*, could I ſee this wiſhed-for hour, though death approached with all its terrors, *I would harden myſelf in ſorrow*, and ſtand unmoved under the ſhock; or as the words may be rendered, *though I ſhould be burnt with pain*, and every boil burſt forth into a flame to conſume me, *let him not ſpare*; ſo he ſlay me, I am content to ſuffer every excruciating pang of torment: ſurely this alſo is his infirmity. His faith in the proſpect of death is commendable; his defiance of ſuffering, and hardening himſelf in ſorrow, is blameable: thus corruption is apt to mix with all we ſay and do. *Note*, (1.) Death to a believer is a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed for; only though willing to be gone, let him contentedly wait the Lord's leiſure. (2.) To harden ourſelves againſt affliction, is to diſappoint the deſign of God's corrections, and would prove not our fortitude but obſtinacy.

3. He produceth the reaſon why he wiſhed to die: *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*; far from being conſcious of unfaithfulneſs or hypocriſy, as was ſuggeſted, his conſcience bore him witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt, that he had ever embraced, profeſſed, and propagated, even in the midſt of that idolatrous generation, thoſe doctrines of truth which God had revealed to him, and therefore he dared appear at his bar, unterrified at the fears of judgment, and humbly confident of gracious acceptance. *Note*, (1.) A good conſcience gives boldneſs in the day of judgment. (2.) The truths we know and believe, we muſt profeſs, own, and ſeek to inculcate, however ſuch profeſſion and zeal for God may make us obnoxious to a wicked world.

4. He rejects the conſolations Eliphaz propoſed to him, as what in his preſent ſtate were vain chimæras; *what is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope* to ſee a reſtoration of my health and vigour? or *what is my end*, what purpoſe would it anſwer, now all my comforts are gone, *that I ſhould prolong my life? Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones, or is my fleſh braſs?* to bear up under a weight of troubles ſo numerous, and inſupportably heavy. *Note*, (1.) Dejected hearts are ready to preach to themſelves deſpair, and refuſe to be comforted. (2.) Though our own ſtrength is very weakneſs, yet there is help laid on one mighty to ſave, and we can do or ſuffer all things, Chriſt ſtrengthening us. (3.) Whilſt God is pleaſed to prolong our lives, we may be aſſured he hath ſome end for his own glory to anſwer, though we may think ourſelves uſeleſs.

5. He deſires them not to deſpiſe his reaſonings, as if his misfortunes had affected his underſtanding: *Is not my help in me, or defence?* am I not ſtill able to maintain my cauſe? *and is wiſdom driven quite from me?* No: Though my body ſuffers, my faculties are unimpaired, and I can ſupport myſelf in the conſciouſneſs, that reaſon and argument are on my ſide. *Note*, It is a mercy under every affliction, that our underſtanding continues unclouded.

14. [i] To him that † is afflicted pity *ſhould be ſhewed* from his friend; but he forſaketh the fear of the Almighty. 15. My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, *and* [k] as the ſtream of brooks they paſs away:

16. Which

[i] Prov. xvii. 17. 2 Cor. xi. 29.
† Heb. Melteth.
[k] Jer. xv. 18.

‡ Heb. Are cut off.
§ Heb. Extinguiſhed.
l Gen. xxv. 15.
m Jer. xiv. 3.
‖ Heb. Ye are like to it.

16. Which are blackiſh by reaſon of the ice, *and* wherein the ſnow is hid: 17. What time they wax warm, they ‡ vaniſh: when it is hot, they are § conſumed out of their place. 18. The paths of their way are turned aſide; they go to nothing, and periſh. 19. [l] The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them. 20. [m] They were confounded becauſe they had hoped; they came thither and were aſhamed. 21. For now ‖ ye are nothing; ye ſee *my* caſting down, and are afraid.

v. 14—21. Eliphaz, in the name of the reſt, had accuſed him of hypocriſy: with greater evidence he retorts the charge, from their cruel conduct, who, inſtead of friendly comforters, had turned accuſers and tormenters.

1. He pleads his juſt expectations from them. Pity, at leaſt, he might have expected; and if they could not remove his ſorrows, their friendly compaſſions, in ſympathiſing with his griefs, ſhould have ſought at leaſt to alleviate them. *Note*, The boſom of true friendſhip is the ſeat of tenderneſs. Though relief is not in our power, the kind enquiry, the ſollicitous attention, the ſoft look of pity, and the ſympathetic tear, ſpeak the deſires of the faithful heart.

2. He charges Eliphaz and his abettors with cruel unkindneſs, and diſappointing his juſt expectations, wherein they ſhewed as much diſregard to the fear of God, as faithleſsneſs to their friend. Like brooks ſwoln by the melted ſnow and ice in winter, their profeſſions in the days of his proſperity were great; but now the ſcorching ſun is riſen, their ſtreams deceitfully diſappear. The travellers that eyed before the rolling flood, came, heated with journeying, eager to quench their raging thirſt: the troops of Tema and Sheba, the caravans of merchants, expected with earneſt ſollicitude to diſcover the welcome river, and waited patiently, in hope that there at leaſt they ſhould find water for themſelves and fainting camels: but lo! their hope is vaniſhed; no drop remains amidſt the burning ſands; the brook is dry, and terrible diſappointment covers them. Such were the friends of Job, failing him when he wanted their kind help, and deceitful as theſe vaniſhing ſtreams. *For now ye are nothing*, afford me not the leaſt relief in my diſtreſs: *ye ſee my caſting down* under theſe afflictions, *and are afraid* to patronize my cauſe, as if theſe ſtrokes beſpoke the judgments of the Almighty; or that he ſhould burthen them for a maintenance, or ſhould infect them with his diſeaſe, or offend them with its nauſeous ſmell. *Note*, (1.) It is a bitter trial to find a friend, on whom we depended, faithleſs. (2.) The world is full of diſappointments; the more we ceaſe from man, and expect our whole comfort from the friend of ſinners, the ſurer will be our portion. (3.) We ſhall, ſooner or later, find all creature-confidence nothing, yea, leſs than nothing, and vanity; and when we are thus aſſured, what folly to place our hope on any thing below!

n 1 Sam. xii. 3.
o Jam. i. 19.
† Or, that the ſpeeches of one that is but of hope are wind?
‡ Or, cauſe to fall upon.
p Chap. xvii. 10.
§ Or, There is no iniquity.
‖ Heb. Palate.

22. [n] Did I ſay, Bring unto me? or give a reward for me of your ſubſtance? 23. Or deliver me from the enemies hand? or redeem me from the hand of the mighty? 24. [o] Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred. 25. How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove? 26. Do ye imagine to reprove words, and † the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind? 27. Yea, ye ‡ overwhelm the fatherleſs, and you dig *a pit* for your friend. 28. Now therefore be content, look upon me, for *it is* evident unto you, if I lie. 29. [p] Return, I pray you, § let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteouſneſs *is* in it. 30. Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my ‖ taſte diſcern perverſe things?

v. 22—30. Job goes on to vindicate himſelf, and to upbraid the unkindneſs of his friends.

1. Reduced as he was, he had not been troubleſome or importunate with them, either to relieve him out of their abundance, or to vindicate his conduct, or to make repriſals for him on the Sabæans and Chaldeans; and having given no provocations to uſe him ill, their accuſations were the more aggravated. *Note*, (1.) The importunity of want often provokes the abuſe of the uncharitable. (2.) Though a good man, when God ſo pleaſes to reduce him, is not too proud to beg, yet, whilſt he is able to work, or a pittance remains, he will not be burdenſome, and rather will decline the proffers of his friends, than weary out their generoſity.

2. Though he could not call folly wiſdom, he profeſſes himſelf, however unkindly treated, open to conviction if he had erred, *v.* 24. and humbly ready in ſilence to attend the force of right words; but theirs were neither right nor forcible, nor did their arguing fix on him reproof or conviction: their ſuppoſitions were groundleſs, and their concluſions falſe. *Note*, (1.) They are the truly wiſe, who are open to reaſon, and are not aſhamed to ſee wherein they have erred. (2.) It is a bad cauſe that needs abuſe to ſupport it; and it weakens a good one, to uſe heat or ill language. Arguments clothed with kindneſs, like the razor ſet in oil, cut deepeſt with leaſt pain.

3. He urges the cruelty of catching at a paſſionate word, which in his preſent deſperate ſituation might drop from him, yet was far from proving him inſincere or wicked. In his deſolate ſituation they not only bore him down, already as the fatherleſs overwhelmed with ſorrow, but digged a pit for their friend; pretended to come to comfort him, and ſeemed to labour only to entangle him in his talk, and to watch for a raſh expreſſion, on which to ſpend their unkind reproofs. *Note*, (1.) We muſt make allowances for a man's ſituation, and not be ſevere cenſurers of every haſty word, or wrong ſtep. (2.) To add oppreſſion and inſult to the afflictions of the poor, is doubly criminal.

4. He maintains warmly his integrity, to his vindication of which he begs them to give a patient hearing. *Be content* to ſtay a moment; *look upon me*; does my countenance betray the conſciouſneſs of ſhame, or bluſh of guilt? *for it is evident to you, if I lie*; you would ſoon diſcover it, if it were ſo. *Return, I pray you*, to kinder ſentiments of me; or perhaps they roſe to depart, and he begs a patient audience: *let it not be iniquity*, or, *there is no iniquity*, none ſuch as they charged him with; *yea, return again, my righteouſneſs is in it*. In the whole of his cauſe, and the preſent controverſy, he doubted not but to prove himſelf blameleſs of every accuſation. *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* No; I have ſpoken the truth. *Cannot my taſte diſcern perverſe things?* Yes; he had the cleareſt exerciſe of his reaſon, was able to maintain his uprightneſs, and diſcover the fallacy of their arguments. *Note*, (1.) We are bound to give every man a patient hearing. (2.) Truth is a mighty weapon, when weilded by the weakeſt arm. (3.) They who have a good cauſe will never ſhun the light, but court enquiry.

CHAP. VII.

Job goes on to juſtify himſelf in his deſire of death. 1. He complains of his troubles, ver. 1—6. 2. *He begs God to remember the vanity of his life*, ver. 7—10. 3. *He complains of the miſerable condition he was now in*, ver. 11—16. 4. *He wonders why God will thus contend with him, and begs for the pardon of his ſins, and a ſpeedy releaſe out of his miſeries*, ver. 17—21.

a Chap. xiv. 14. Pſal. xxxix. 4.
† Or, a warfare.
‡ Heb. Gapeth after.
b Chap. xxix. 2.
c Deut. xxviii. 67. Chap. xvii. 12.
d Iſa. xiv. 11.
e Chap. ix. 25. Pſ. cii. 11. & ciii. 15. & cxliv. 4. Jam. iv. 14.

1. IS *there* not [a] an † appointed time to man upon earth? *are not* his days alſo like the days of an hireling? 2. As a ſervant ‡ earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow, and as an hireling looketh for *the reward of* his work: 3. So am I made to poſſeſs [b] months of vanity, and weariſome nights are appointed to me. 4. When I lie down, I ſay, [c] When ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone? and I am full of toſſings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. 5. [d] My fleſh is clothed with worms and clods of duſt, my ſkin is broken, and become lothſome. 6. [e] My days are ſwifter than a weaver's ſhuttle, and are ſpent without hope.

v. 1—6. Job proceeds to juſtify his deſire of death, as the period to the miſeries he underwent. *Is there not an appointed time*, ſet by divine decree, or *a warfare to man upon earth*, where he muſt conflict with variety of evils, till by death he receives his diſcharge? *Are not his days alſo like the days of an hireling*, fixed and determined, and full of toil and labour? *As a ſervant earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow*, wearied with the toils of the day, and longing for repoſe, *and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work*, *ſo* do I long for death to relieve me of my miſeries, and bring me to that reward which God hath promiſed to beſtow in mercy on every man according as his work is. *I am made to poſſeſs*, as if this was the only portion he was heir to, *months of vanity*, or *empty* ones, deſtitute of all joy, comfort, and uſefulneſs, *and weariſome nights are appointed me*. Reſtleſs upon his bed, no ſweet repoſe cloſed his eyes, to ſooth his pains; or, if he ſlumbered, viſions of the night ſcared and terrified him. *When I lie down, I ſay, When ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone*, or *meaſured?* when ſhall the welcome day return, and theſe lingring hours be paſt? *and I am full of toſſings to and fro unto the dawning of the day*. I turn, and turn again; every poſture is uneaſy, and tired out upon my bed, I watch for break of day. *My fleſh is clothed with worms*, that bred in his ulcers, *and clods of duſt*, from the aſhes in which he ſat. *My ſkin is broken, and become loathſome*, with the ſtench of his ſores. *My days are ſwifter than a weaver's ſhuttle*, haſtening to their end, *and are ſpent without hope* of any recovery of his former proſperity. So that it need not be wondered that he courted death, overwhelmed as he was with ſuch miſeries, without the proſpect of relief. *Note*, (1.) Our lives are fixed by an unalterable decree, and beyond theſe bounds we cannot paſs. (2.) If we awake refreſhed from beds of ſleep, let us thankfully acknowledge

knowledge to whom we owe it. (3.) Our vile bodies ſhould ever humble us: one ſtroke of diſeaſe may make them loathſome to others, and a burden to ourſelves. (4.) Are our days inceſſantly haſtening to an end, how diligent ſhould we be to improve them, that, when the thread of life is cut, we may not die without hope.

7. O remember that [f] my life *is* wind: mine eye † ſhall no more ſee good. 8. [g] The eye of him that hath ſeen me, ſhall ſee me no *more:* thine eyes *are* upon me, and I *am* not. 9. *As* the cloud is conſumed, and vaniſheth away: ſo [h] he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no *more.* 10. He ſhall return no more to his houſe, [i] neither ſhall his place know him any more. 11. Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul. 12. *Am* I a ſea, or a whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me? 13. [k] When I ſay, My bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint: 14. Then thou ſcareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me through viſions. 15. So that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling, *and* death rather than my ‡ life. 16. [l] I loath *it*, I would not live alway: [m] let me alone, for [n] my days *are* vanity.

[f] Pſ. lxxviii. 39. & lxxxix. 47.
† Heb. Shall not return to ſee, &c.
[g] Chap. xx. 9.
[h] 2 Sam. xii. 23.
[i] Chap. viii. 18. & xx. 9. Pſ. ciii. 16.
[k] Chap. ix. 27, 28.
‡ Heb. Bones.
[l] Chap. x. 1.
[m] Ibid. 20. & xiv. 6. Pſ. xxxix. 13.
[n] Pſ. lxii. 9.

v. 7—16. Job here directs his diſcourſe to God. If his friends care not for him, he hopes God will remember him, either to eaſe or releaſe him.

1. He begs him to remember the vanity of his life, hanging upon the breath in his noſtrils, and paſſing as the wind. He deſpairs of ſeeing any more proſperity upon earth: hid in the grave, *v.* 8. he ſhould no longer afford this ſpectacle of woe; and one glance of God's eye were enough to bring him thither. There all his ſorrows would end, and, once removed, he ſhould return to this miſerable world no more, *v.* 9, 10. vaniſhed as the cloud, and forgotten. *Note,* (1.) Our life is vaniſhing as a cloud, and paſſing as the wind; and when we lie down in the duſt, there is no returning to redeem or amend the days that are fled. (2.) If we muſt ſhortly take our leave of a vain world, it highly becomes us to have our affections weaned from it, that we may with readineſs wait our great change, and caſt no lingring look behind.

2. He pours forth his paſſionate complaint: in anguiſh, in bitterneſs he expoſtulates with God on his afflictions. *Am I a ſea,* proud and raging, *or a whale,* ravenous and oppreſſive, *that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?* hemming me in with ſore afflictions, and preventing my eſcape by death, which I long for, *v.* 15. Nor can it be thought ſtrange I ſhould thus eagerly court it, when, riſing up, and lying down, miſery purſues me cloſer than my ſhadow. Terrified with fearful dreams, my bed, inſtead of eaſe, aggravates my complaint: my life is become inſupportable; *I lothe it,* or *am become lothſome;* the moſt tormenting death is preferable to my preſent ſufferings, *v.* 15. *Let me* then *alone,* that I may cloſe theſe wretched eyes in the duſt. *I would not* wiſh to *live alway* in the moſt proſperous condition, how much leſs thus afflicted, where *my days* all of them *are vanity,* full of evil, miſery, and woe. Surely this alſo is his infirmity; how merciful is God to diſappoint his wiſhes, and refuſe an anſwer to his prayers! *Note,* (1.) Tho' to depart and be with Chriſt makes death deſirable to the believer in his beſt eſtate, yet he is not unwilling to wait, in the midſt of torture, till God is pleaſed to give him his diſmiſſion. (2.) Aſleep or awake, God can reach our ſpirits, and on our beds make us a terror to ourſelves.

17. [o] What *is* man, that thou ſhouldſt † magnify him? and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart ‡ upon him? 18. And *that* thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning, *and* try him every moment? 19. [p] How long wilt thou not depart from me? nor let me alone, till I ſwallow down my ſpittle? 20. I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, [q] O thou § preſerver of men? why [r] haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to myſelf? 21. And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity? for now [s] ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I *ſhall* not *be.*

[o] Pſ. viii. 4. & cxliv. 3.
† Or, wreſtle with him.
‡ Or, againſt.
[p] Pſ. xxxix. 10.
[q] Pſ. xxxvi. 6.
§ Or, Obſerver.
[r] Chap. xvi. 12. Pſ. xxi. 12. Lam. iii. 12.
[s] Iſa. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2.

v. 17—21. We have here,

1. Job fooliſhly expoſtulating with God, *What is man, that thou ſhouldſt magnify him?* which God ſeemed to do, by entering the liſts as an adverſary, *to wreſtle* with him, as the word may be rendered, a foe ſo unequal, and beneath his notice; *and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart upon him,* or *againſt him,* as an enemy? *and that thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning,* with repeated ſtrokes of affliction, *and try him every moment,* giving him no reſpite from ſufferings. *How long wilt thou not depart from me,* or *look off from me?* turn away thy frowning face, or eye me not ſo fiercely as a contending wreſtler; *nor let me alone till I ſwallow down my ſpittle?* Take thy hand off for a moment at leaſt, juſt whilſt I draw breath. *Note,* (1.) If God contends with us, it is in mercy, becauſe our way is perverſe. (2.) The trials we ſuffer here are deſigned as the furnace for gold, to purge our droſs, and brighten our graces; therefore we ought not to murmur under them, but ſeek to anſwer their deſign.

2. Wiſely confeſſing his ſins, and pleading for pardon and reconciliation. *I have ſinned;* though, reſpecting the charges laid by his cenſorious friends, he maintained his integrity, yet before God he was ready to acknowledge himſelf a ſinner, and therefore unable to contend with him. *What ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men,* or *ſaviour of men?* Fain would I obtain thy favour, and avoid thy diſpleaſure, that now ſo heavily oppreſſeth me. *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee,* or, *appointed me to meet thee* in the liſts? Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me *ſo* ſorely, *that I am a burden to myſelf? And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity?* that the cauſe of all my evils being removed, the dire effects of them may ceaſe. *For now,* if thou wilt grant me this, *I ſhall ſleep in the duſt* in peace, when my iniquity is forgiven; *and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, and I ſhall not be:* like a kind friend coming to enquire in the morning after him, and lo, he is happily releaſed from his miſery. *Note,* (1.) The moſt perfect man need confeſs himſelf a ſinner: though ſincere, he is not ſinleſs. (2.) A humbling ſenſe of ſin will ſerve exceedingly to ſilence every complaint in our afflictions. (3.) The great concern under our ſevereſt ſufferings, is not ſo much to obtain eaſe for our bodies, as reſt for our ſouls, in the pardon of our ſins. (4.) If we aſk, what a ſinner muſt do? the anſwer is, Apply to the ſinner's friend, the ſaviour of men, and none go from him with a repulſe. (5.) When our ſouls are at peace with God, we can comfortably commit our bodies to the duſt, and take our leave of the world with as much calmneſs and ſatisfaction, as when we bid good night to our friends on retiring to repoſe. (6.) If in the morning our ſpirit ſhould be fled, and the corpſe alone remains, let not weeping friends complain, that we have ſo eaſily and ſuddenly eſcaped the pains of dying.

CHAP. VIII.

Job's friends are like Job's meſſengers: Bildad takes up the diſpute, as ſecond to Eliphaz, and in the ſame ſtrain. He endeavours to convince Job, 1. *That he had ſpoken too paſſionately,* ver. 2. 2. *That he and his children had ſuffered juſtly,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *That if he were a true penitent, God would ſoon turn his captivity,* ver. 5—7. 4. *That it was a uſual thing for Providence to extinguiſh the joys and hopes of wicked men, as his were extinguiſhed, and therefore they had reaſon to ſuſpect him for an hypocrite,* ver. 8—19. 5. *That they ſhould be abundantly confirmed in their ſuſpicion, unleſs God did ſpeedily appear for his relief,* ver. 20—22.

1. THEN anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid, 2. How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe *things?* and *how long ſhall* the words of thy mouth *be like* a ſtrong wind? 3. [a] Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice? 4. If thy children have ſinned againſt him, and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion: 5. [b] If thou wouldſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty; 6. If thou *wert* pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous. 7. [c] Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe.

[a] Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Chap. xxxiv. 17. Rom. iii. 5.
[b] Chap. v. 8. & xi. 13. & xxii. 23.
[c] Zech. iv. 10. Mat. xiii. 12.

v. 1—7. We have here,

1. Bildad's haſty reproof of Job: *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* impatient in thy complaints, obſtinate in ſelf-vindication, diſregarding the good advice that was given thee, and charging God fooliſhly. *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?* rude to thy friends, and inſolent againſt the almighty. *Note,* Reviling language proves both a bad diſputant, and a weak cauſe.

2. His vindication of God. *Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?* No; the Judge of all the earth muſt do right. So far the truth was evident, and none would diſpute it; but he was greatly miſtaken,

3. In the application. He ſuppoſes Job's children wicked, and himſelf a hypocrite; and intimates, that the awful providences upon him were the conſequences thereof. *If thy children have ſinned againſt him,* which he concludes from their ſudden death, *and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion,* it was an act of juſtice. *If thou wouldſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty,* notwithſtanding all theſe heavy viſitations, *if thou wert pure and upright,* as thou pretendeſt to be, *ſurely now,* without delay, would God appear to comfort

and reſtore thee: *he would awake for thee*, to rebuke thy afflictions, *and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs*, in which thou maintaineſt thyſelf, *proſperous*; which would be the ſure evidence of his approbation; then, *though thy beginning were ſmall*, reduced as thou now art, *yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe*. He ſeems to adviſe him as a friend, but inſinuates a ſtrong ſuſpicion of his hypocriſy, and makes two ſuppoſitions, [1.] That extraordinary afflictions are always the puniſhment of extraordinary ſins. [2.] That righteouſneſs was always bleſſed with outward proſperity: both which are falſe, and yet God's judgments and juſtice in no wiſe impeached thereby. *Note*, (1.) In every affliction it is good advice to fly to God for help. (2.) We can have no good hope he will anſwer us, if we are conſcious of our own hypocriſy before him. (3.) God's bleſſing can ſoon make a little afford a great increaſe. (4.) Though men call us hypocrites, if God knows our ſimplicity, it need little move us.

8. For [d] inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and
prepare thyſelf to the ſearch of their fathers. 9. (For
[e] we *are but of* yeſterday, and know nothing, becauſe
our days upon earth *are* a ſhadow). 10. Shall not
[f] they teach thee, *and* tell thee, and utter words out of
their heart? 11. Can the ruſh grow up without mire?
can the flag grow without water? 12. [g] Whilſt it *is*
yet in his greenneſs, *and* not cut down, it withereth
before any other herb. 13. So *are* the paths of all that
forget God, and [h] the hypocrite's hope ſhall periſh:
14. Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe truſt *ſhall
be* a ſpider's † web. 15. [i] He ſhall lean upon his houſe,
but it ſhall not ſtand: he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall
not endure. 16. [k] He *is* green before the ſun, and his
branch ſhooteth forth in his garden. 17. His roots
are wrapped about the heap, *and* ſeeth the place of
ſtones. 18. [l] If he deſtroy him from his place, then *it*
ſhall deny him, *ſaying*, I have not ſeen thee. 19. Behold,
this *is* the joy of his way, and out of the earth
ſhall others grow.

[d] Deut. iv. 32. Chap. xv. 18. Rom. xv. 4.
[e] 1 Chron. xxix. 15. Pſ. xxxix. 5. & cxliv. 4.
[f] Heb. xi. 4.
[g] Pſ. cxxix. 6. Jer. xvii. 6.
[h] Chap. xi. 20. & xviii. 14. Pſ. cxii. 10. Prov. x. 28.
† Heb. Houſe. Iſa. lix. 5.
[i] Chap. xxvii. 18.
[k] Pſ. xxxvii. 35, &c.
[l] Chap. vii. 10. Pſal. xxxvii. 36.

v. 8—19. From the miſerable diſappointment and end of the hypocrite and ungodly, Bildad goes on to infer, that the ſimilar effects in Job's caſe proceeded from a ſimilar cauſe.

1. He appeals to the experience of former ages for the truth of what he was advancing, and bids Job ſearch the traditions of the antient fathers in proof of his argument, as he wiſhed not to reſt the matter on their own authority, who, though men of age and experience, were *but of yeſterday*, creatures of a day, compared with the age of thoſe who had gone before, *and knew nothing*, comparatively ſpeaking, *becauſe their days upon earth were a ſhadow*, ſo ſoon gone, and afforded leſs time for the improvement of knowledge, and opportunity for obſervation. But if he would be at the pains to enquire of theſe impartial judges, he would doubtleſs receive ſatisfaction. *Note*, (1.) The experience of God's ſaints of old, recorded in the word of truth, ſhould be diligently enquired into, and applied to our own caſe. (2.) We are not now, through mercy, left to precarious tradition, but have God's infallible oracles to guide us. (3.) There is a great deference due to age and experience, and in general, to conſult with theſe is to be wiſe.

2. He illuſtrates his main poſition by a variety of ſimilitudes. *Can the ruſh grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?* theſe are their nouriſhment and ſupport. *Whilſt it is yet in its greenneſs*, ſeems moſt flouriſhing, *and not cut down* by the ſcythe, of its own accord *it withereth before any other herb*, or in their preſence, they looking on, and deriding its fall. *So are the paths of all that forget God.* Though planted in earth, and fed with the mire of ſenſual indulgencies, proſperous for a while, and flouriſhing; yet at beſt they are hollow and uſeleſs, and in a moment they wither under the blaſts of God's diſpleaſure; *and the hypocrite's hope periſheth.* Fair as their profeſſion ſeemed, and well-grounded as their hope appeared, a day of trial, like the ſcorching ſun, exhales the water, and their worldly ſupports being withdrawn, they apoſtatize, and periſh, *whoſe hope ſhall be cut off* in black deſpair, *and whoſe truſt ſhall be as the ſpider's web*, or houſe, ſpun from their own bowels of ſelf-ſufficient righteouſneſs, too weak to make a cable for hope's anchor, and too thin for garments to hide the ſhame of their nakedneſs; ſwept away without reſiſtance with the beſom of deſtruction, and affording no more ſhelter for the ſoul againſt divine juſtice, than the hole of the ſpider. *He ſhall lean upon his houſe*, his proſperity, his religious profeſſion, his moral duties, his external worſhip and ſervices, *but it ſhall not ſtand*; tottering on the ſandy foundation, it can yield the hypocrite no ſupport: *he ſhall hold it faſt*, cling to it, as the ſpider to her web, refuſing to be beat out of his vain confidence and ſelf-dependance, *but it ſhall not endure*; his proſperity ſhall fail, and his falſe profeſſions be detected. *He is green before the ſun*, like a flouriſhing tree, whilſt the world ſmiles; or in the eyes of men he appears eminently pious and bleſt, *and his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden*, ſtrong and vigorous, and fenced on every ſide. *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, ſtrike deep, *and he ſeeth the place of ſtones*, or *houſe of ſtones*, grows ſo high as to overlook the ſtatelieſt building. Such is the appearance often of proſperous iniquity, and ſo high the hypocrite lifts his head. *If he deſtroy him from his place*, as God aſſuredly will, *then it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee*: ſo utter will be the extirpation, that neither root nor branch will be left. *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, ſpoken ironically, this is what it comes to at laſt; *and out of the earth ſhall others grow*; either hypocrites, like them, who take no warning by their end; or good men, for whom the wealth of the ſinner is laid up. *Note*, (1.) Hypocriſy among profeſſors is the moſt common and deadly weed that grows in the church and garden of God upon earth. (2.) Forgetfulneſs of God is at the bottom of all iniquity. (3.) The ſelf-righteous formaliſt, fair as he may appear without, hath his ſpider's poiſon within; and though he prides himſelf in his works and duties, they will be found as unable to bear the ſeverity of God's juſtice, as the ſpider's web to bind Leviathan. (4.) Though worldly proſperity continue long with ſinners, even until death, yet then at leaſt the ax will be laid to the root of the tree, and all their hopes periſh.

20. Behold, [m] God will not caſt away a perfect *man*,
neither will he † help the evil doers: 21. Till he fill
thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with ‡ rejoicing.
22. They that hate thee [n] ſhall be clothed with
ſhame, and the dwelling-place of the wicked § ſhall
come to nought.

[m] Iſa. iii. 10.
† Heb. Take the ungodly by the hand.
‡ Heb. Shouting for joy.
[n] Pſ. cxxxii. 18.
§ Heb. Shall not be.

v. 20—22. Bildad here ſums up his diſcourſe, confident that every man would receive from God according to his work; but as he looked no farther than temporal rewards and puniſhments, and extended no view to eternal ones, his inference was utterly defective.

1. The perfect man, or ſincere, God will not caſt away: however great his diſtreſs might be for a ſeaſon, joy and gladneſs would again return, and peace and plenty crown his head, to the confuſion of all that hated him.

2. The evil doers God never will help out of the pit into which they are fallen, but their dwelling-place ſhall be covered with perpetual deſolations. Hence he puts the iſſue of the controverſy on the return of Job's proſperity; inſinuating, that the continuance of his afflictions, from which there now appeared no proſpect of deliverance, would be a full evidence of his inſincerity and iniquity. *Note*, (1.) Though here the ſame event cometh alike to all, it is a bleſſed and comfortable truth, that in eternity God's juſtice ſhall be vindicated in the everlaſting ſalvation of the righteous, and the eternal condemnation of the wicked. (2.) Till this great day comes, we may not conclude from men's outward circumſtances either God's love or hatred, but muſt wait patiently, to know the true characters of men, and judge nothing before the time, when every man ſhall receive according as his work is.

CHAP. IX.

We have here Job's anſwer to Bildad's diſcourſe, wherein he ſpeaks honourably of God, humbly of himſelf, and feelingly of his troubles. 1. *He lays down the doctrine of God's juſtice*, ver. 2. 2. *He proves it, from his wiſdom, power, and ſovereignty*, ver. 3—13. 3. *He acknowledges himſelf unable to contend with God*, ver. 14—21. 4. *He maintains, that we cannot judge of men's characters by their outward condition*, ver. 22—24. 5. *He complains of the greatneſs of his troubles, the confuſion he was in, and the loſs he was at what to ſay or do*, ver. 25—35.

1. THEN Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. I know *it is*
ſo of a truth: but how ſhould man [a] be juſt
† with God? 3. If he will contend with him, he cannot
anſwer him one of a thouſand. 4. [b] *He is* wiſe in
heart, and mighty in ſtrength: [c] who hath hardned *himſelf*
againſt him, and hath proſpered? 5. [d] Which removeth
the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth
them in his anger. 6. Which ſhaketh the earth
out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. 7.
Which commandeth the ſun, and it riſeth not: and
ſealeth up the ſtars. 8. [e] Which alone ſpreadeth out
the heavens, and [f] treadeth upon the waves of the ſea.
9. [g] Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and
the chambers of the ſouth. 10. [h] Which doth great
things paſt finding out, yea, and wonders without number.
11. Lo, [i] he goeth by me, and I ſee *him* not:
he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not. 12. [k] Behold,
he taketh away, who can ‡ hinder him? who will

[a] Pſ. cxliii. 2.
† Or, before.
[b] Chap. xxxvi. 5.
[c] Iſa. xxvii. 4. 1 Cor. x. 22.
[d] Pſ. lxviii. 8. & cxiv. 4. Hab. iii. 6.
[e] Gen. i. 6. Pſ. civ. 2, 3.
[f] Hab. iii. 15. Mark vi. 48.
[g] Chap. xxxviii. 31. Amos v. 8.
[h] Chap. v. 9. Pſ. lxxi. 15. Rom. xi. 33.
[i] Chap. xxiii. 8, 9. & xxxv. 14.
[k] Iſa. xlv. 9. Jer. xviii. 6. Rom. ix. 20.
‡ Or, turn him away? or make him reſtore?

knowledge to whom we owe it. (3.) Our vile bodies ſhould ever humble us: one ſtroke of diſeaſe may make them loathſome to others, and a burden to ourſelves. (4.) Are our days inceſſantly haſtening to an end, how diligent ſhould we be to improve them, that, when the thread of life is cut, we may not die without hope.

7. O remember that [f] my life *is* wind: mine eye † ſhall no more ſee good. 8. [g] The eye of him that hath ſeen me, ſhall ſee me no *more:* thine eyes *are* upon me, and I *am* not. 9. *As* the cloud is conſumed, and vaniſheth away: ſo [h] he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no *more.* 10. He ſhall return no more to his houſe, [i] neither ſhall his place know him any more. 11. Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul. 12. *Am* I a ſea, or a whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me? 13. [k] When I ſay, My bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint: 14. Then thou ſcareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me through viſions. 15. So that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling, *and* death rather than my ‡ life. 16. [l] I loath *it*, I would not live alway: [m] let me alone, for [n] my days *are* vanity.

[f] Pſ. lxxviii. 39. & lxxxix. 47.
† Heb. Shall not return to ſee, &c.
[g] Chap. xx. 9.
[h] 2 Sam. xii. 23.
[i] Chap. viii. 18. & xx. 9. Pſ. ciii. 16.
[k] Chap. ix. 27, 28.
‡ Heb. Bones.
[l] Chap. x. 1.
[m] Ibid. 20. & xiv. 6. Pſ. xxxix. 13.
[n] Pſ. lxii. 9.

v. 7—16. Job here directs his diſcourſe to God. If his friends care not for him, he hopes God will remember him, either to eaſe or releaſe him.

1. He begs him to remember the vanity of his life, hanging upon the breath in his noſtrils, and paſſing as the wind. He deſpairs of ſeeing any more proſperity upon earth: hid in the grave, *v.* 8. he ſhould no longer afford this ſpectacle of woe; and one glance of God's eye were enough to bring him thither. There all his ſorrows would end, and, once removed, he ſhould return to this miſerable world no more, *v.* 9, 10. vaniſhed as the cloud, and forgotten. *Note*, (1.) Our life is vaniſhing as a cloud, and paſſing as the wind; and when we lie down in the duſt, there is no returning to redeem or amend the days that are fled. (2.) If we muſt ſhortly take our leave of a vain world, it highly becomes us to have our affections weaned from it, that we may with readineſs wait our great change, and caſt no lingring look behind.

2. He pours forth his paſſionate complaint: in anguiſh, in bitterneſs he expoſtulates with God on his afflictions. *Am I a ſea*, proud and raging, *or a whale*, ravenous and oppreſſive, *that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?* hemming me in with ſore afflictions, and preventing my eſcape by death, which I long for, *v.* 15. Nor can it be thought ſtrange I ſhould thus eagerly court it, when, riſing up, and lying down, miſery purſues me cloſer than my ſhadow. Terrified with fearful dreams, my bed, inſtead of eaſe, aggravates my complaint: my life is become inſupportable; *I lothe it*, or *am become lothſome*; the moſt tormenting death is preferable to my preſent ſufferings, *v.* 15. *Let me* then *alone*, that I may cloſe theſe wretched eyes in the duſt. *I would not* wiſh to *live alway* in the moſt proſperous condition, how much leſs thus afflicted, where *my days* all of them *are vanity*, full of evil, miſery, and woe. Surely this alſo is his infirmity; how merciful is God to diſappoint his wiſhes, and refuſe an anſwer to his prayers! *Note*, (1.) Tho' to depart and be with Chriſt makes death deſirable to the believer in his beſt eſtate, yet he is not unwilling to wait, in the midſt of torture, till God is pleaſed to give him his diſmiſſion. (2.) Aſleep or awake, God can reach our ſpirits, and on our beds make us a terror to ourſelves.

17. [o] What *is* man, that thou ſhouldſt † magnify him? and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart ‡ upon him? 18. And *that* thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning, *and* try him every moment? 19. [p] How long wilt thou not depart from me? nor let me alone, till I ſwallow down my ſpittle? 20. I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, [q] O thou § preſerver of men? why [r] haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to myſelf? 21. And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity? for now [s] ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I *ſhall* not *be.*

[o] Pſ. viii. 4. & cxliv. 3.
† Or, wreſtle with him.
‡ Or, againſt.
[p] Pſ. xxxix. 10.
[q] Pſ. xxxvi. 6.
§ Or, Obſerver.
[r] Chap. xvi. 12. Pſ. xxi. 12. Lam. iii. 12.
[s] Iſa. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2.

v. 17—21. We have here,

1. Job fooliſhly expoſtulating with God, *What is man, that thou ſhouldſt magnify him?* which God ſeemed to do, by entering the liſts as an adverſary, *to wreſtle* with him, as the word may be rendered, a foe ſo unequal, and beneath his notice; *and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart upon him*, or *againſt him*, as an enemy? *and that thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning*, with repeated ſtrokes of affliction, *and try him every moment*, giving him no reſpite from ſufferings. *How long wilt thou not depart from me*, or *look off from me?* turn away thy frowning face, or eye me not ſo fiercely as a contending wreſtler; *nor let me alone till I ſwallow down my ſpittle?* Take thy hand off for a moment at leaſt, juſt whilſt I draw breath. *Note*, (1.) If God contends with us, it is in mercy, becauſe our way is perverſe. (2.) The trials we ſuffer here are deſigned as the furnace for gold, to purge our droſs, and brighten our graces; therefore we ought not to murmur under them, but ſeek to anſwer their deſign.

2. Wiſely confeſſing his ſins, and pleading for pardon and reconciliation. *I have ſinned*; though, reſpecting the charges laid by his cenſorious friends, he maintained his integrity, yet before God he was ready to acknowledge himſelf a ſinner, and therefore unable to contend with him. *What ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men*, or *ſaviour of men?* Fain would I obtain thy favour, and avoid thy diſpleaſure, that now ſo heavily oppreſſeth me. *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee*, or, *appointed me to meet thee* in the liſts? Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me *ſo* ſorely, *that I am a burden to myſelf? And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity?* that the cauſe of all my evils being removed, the dire effects of them may ceaſe. *For now*, if thou wilt grant me this, *I ſhall ſleep in the duſt* in peace, when my iniquity is forgiven; *and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning*, *and I ſhall not be:* like a kind friend coming to enquire in the morning after him, and lo, he is happily releaſed from his miſery. *Note*, (1.) The moſt perfect man need confeſs himſelf a ſinner: though ſincere, he is not ſinleſs. (2.) A humbling ſenſe of ſin will ſerve exceedingly to ſilence every complaint in our afflictions. (3.) The great concern under our ſevereſt ſufferings, is not ſo much to obtain eaſe for our bodies, as reſt for our ſouls, in the pardon of our ſins. (4.) If we aſk, what a ſinner muſt do? the anſwer is, Apply to the ſinner's friend, the ſaviour of men, and none go from him with a repulſe. (5.) When our ſouls are at peace with God, we can comfortably commit our bodies to the duſt, and take our leave of the world with as much calmneſs and ſatisfaction, as when we bid good night to our friends on retiring to repoſe. (6.) If in the morning our ſpirit ſhould be fled, and the corpſe alone remains, let not weeping friends complain, that we have ſo eaſily and ſuddenly eſcaped the pains of dying.

CHAP. VIII.

Job's friends are like Job's meſſengers: Bildad takes up the diſpute, as ſecond to Eliphaz, and in the ſame ſtrain. He endeavours to convince Job, 1. *That he had ſpoken too paſſionately,* ver. 2. 2. *That he and his children had ſuffered juſtly,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *That if he were a true penitent, God would ſoon turn his captivity,* ver. 5—7. 4. *That it was a uſual thing for Providence to extinguiſh the joys and hopes of wicked men, as his were extinguiſhed, and therefore they had reaſon to ſuſpect him for an hypocrite,* ver. 8—19. 5. *That they ſhould be abundantly confirmed in their ſuſpicion, unleſs God did ſpeedily appear for his relief,* ver. 20—22.

1. THEN anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid, 2. How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe *things?* and *how long ſhall* the words of thy mouth *be like* a ſtrong wind? 3. [a] Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice? 4. If thy children have ſinned againſt him, and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion: 5. [b] If thou wouldſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty; 6. If thou *wert* pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous. 7. [c] Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe.

[a] Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Chap. xxxiv. 17. Rom. iii. 5.
[b] Chap. v. 8. & xi. 13. & xxii. 23.
[c] Zech. iv. 10. Mat. xiii. 12.

v. 1—7. We have here,

1. Bildad's haſty reproof of Job: *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* impatient in thy complaints, obſtinate in ſelf-vindication, diſregarding the good advice that was given thee, and charging God fooliſhly. *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?* rude to thy friends, and inſolent againſt the almighty. *Note*, Reviling language proves both a bad diſputant, and a weak cauſe.

2. His vindication of God. *Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?* No; the Judge of all the earth muſt do right. So far the truth was evident, and none would diſpute it; but he was greatly miſtaken,

3. In the application. He ſuppoſes Job's children wicked, and himſelf a hypocrite; and intimates, that the awful providences upon him were the conſequences thereof. *If thy children have ſinned againſt him*, which he concludes from their ſudden death, *and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion*, it was an act of juſtice. *If thou wouldſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty*, notwithſtanding all theſe heavy viſitations, *if thou wert pure and upright*, as thou pretendeſt to be, *ſurely now*, without delay, would God appear to comfort

and reſtore thee: *he would awake for thee*, to rebuke thy afflictions, *and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs*, in which thou maintaineſt thyſelf, *proſperous*; which would be the ſure evidence of his approbation; then, *though thy beginning were ſmall*, reduced as thou now art, *yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe*. He ſeems to adviſe him as a friend, but inſinuates a ſtrong ſuſpicion of his hypocriſy, and makes two ſuppoſitions, [1.] That extraordinary afflictions are always the puniſhment of extraordinary ſins. [2.] That righteouſneſs was always bleſſed with outward proſperity: both which are falſe, and yet God's judgments and juſtice in no wiſe impeached thereby. *Note*, (1.) In every affliction it is good advice to fly to God for help. (2.) We can have no good hope he will anſwer us, if we are conſcious of our own hypocriſy before him. (3.) God's bleſſing can ſoon make a little afford a great increaſe. (4.) Though men call us hypocrites, if God knows our ſimplicity, it need little move us.

8. For [d] inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and
prepare thyſelf to the ſearch of their fathers. 9. (For
[e] we *are but of* yeſterday, and know nothing, becauſe
our days upon earth *are* a ſhadow). 10. Shall not
[f] they teach thee, *and* tell thee, and utter words out of
their heart? 11. Can the ruſh grow up without mire?
can the flag grow without water? 12. [g] Whilſt it *is*
yet in his greenneſs, *and* not cut down, it withereth
before any other herb. 13. So *are* the paths of all that
forget God, and [h] the hypocrite's hope ſhall periſh:
14. Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe truſt *ſhall*
be a ſpider's † web. 15. [i] He ſhall lean upon his houſe,
but it ſhall not ſtand: he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall
not endure. 16. [k] He *is* green before the ſun, and his
branch ſhooteth forth in his garden. 17. His roots
are wrapped about the heap, *and* ſeeth the place of
ſtones. 18. [l] If he deſtroy him from his place, then *it*
ſhall deny him, *ſaying*, I have not ſeen thee. 19. Behold, this *is* the joy of his way, and out of the earth
ſhall others grow.

d Deut. iv. 32. Chap. xv. 18. Rom. xv. 4.
e 1 Chron. xxix. 15. Pſ. xxxix. 5. & cxliv. 4.
f Heb. xi. 4.
g Pſ. cxxix. 6. Jer. xvii. 6.
h Chap. xi. 20. & xviii. 14. Pſ. cxii. 10. Prov. x. 28.
† Heb. Houſe. Iſa. lix. 5.
i Chap. xxvii. 18.
k Pſ. xxxvii. 35, &c.
l Chap. vii. 10. Pſal. xxxvii. 36.

v. 8—19. From the miſerable diſappointment and end of the hypocrite and ungodly, Bildad goes on to infer, that the ſimilar effects in Job's caſe proceeded from a ſimilar cauſe.

1. He appeals to the experience of former ages for the truth of what he was advancing, and bids Job ſearch the traditions of the antient fathers in proof of his argument, as he wiſhed not to reſt the matter on their own authority, who, though men of age and experience, were *but of yeſterday*, creatures of a day, compared with the age of thoſe who had gone before, *and knew nothing*, comparatively ſpeaking, *becauſe their days upon earth were a ſhadow*, ſo ſoon gone, and afforded leſs time for the improvement of knowledge, and opportunity for obſervation. But if he would be at the pains to enquire of theſe impartial judges, he would doubtleſs receive ſatisfaction. *Note*, (1.) The experience of God's ſaints of old, recorded in the word of truth, ſhould be diligently enquired into, and applied to our own caſe. (2.) We are not now, through mercy, left to precarious tradition, but have God's infallible oracles to guide us. (3.) There is a great deference due to age and experience, and in general, to conſult with theſe is to be wiſe.

2. He illuſtrates his main poſition by a variety of ſimilitudes. *Can the ruſh grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?* theſe are their nouriſhment and ſupport. *Whilſt it is yet in its greenneſs*, ſeems moſt flouriſhing, *and not cut down* by the ſcythe, of its own accord *it withereth before any other herb*, or in their preſence, they looking on, and deriding its fall. *So are the paths of all that forget God.* Though planted in earth, and fed with the mire of ſenſual indulgencies, proſperous for a while, and flouriſhing; yet at beſt they are hollow and uſeleſs, and in a moment they wither under the blaſts of God's diſpleaſure; *and the hypocrite's hope periſheth.* Fair as their profeſſion ſeemed, and well-grounded as their hope appeared, a day of trial, like the ſcorching ſun, exhales the water, and their worldly ſupports being withdrawn, they apoſtatize, and periſh, *whoſe hope ſhall be cut off* in black deſpair, *and whoſe truſt ſhall be as the ſpider's web*, or houſe, ſpun from their own bowels of ſelf-ſufficient righteouſneſs, too weak to make a cable for hope's anchor, and too thin for garments to hide the ſhame of their nakedneſs; ſwept away without reſiſtance with the beſom of deſtruction, and affording no more ſhelter for the ſoul againſt divine juſtice, than the hole of the ſpider. *He ſhall lean upon his houſe*, his proſperity, his religious profeſſion, his moral duties, his external worſhip and ſervices, *but it ſhall not ſtand*; tottering on the ſandy foundation, it can yield the hypocrite no ſupport: *he ſhall hold it faſt*, cling to it, as the ſpider to her web, refuſing to be beat out of his vain confidence and ſelf-dependance, *but it ſhall not endure*; his proſperity ſhall fail, and his falſe profeſſions be detected. *He is green before the ſun*, like a flouriſhing tree, whilſt the world ſmiles; or in the eyes of men he appears eminently pious and bleſt, *and his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden*, ſtrong and vigorous, and fenced on every ſide. *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, ſtrike deep, *and he ſeeth the place of ſtones*, or *houſe of ſtones*, grows ſo high as to overlook the ſtatelieſt building. Such is the appearance often of proſperous iniquity, and ſo high the hypocrite lifts his head. *If he deſtroy him from his place*, as God aſſuredly will, *then it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee*: ſo utter will be the extirpation, that neither root nor branch will be left. *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, ſpoken ironically, this is what it comes to at laſt; *and out of the earth ſhall others grow*; either hypocrites, like them, who take no warning by their end; or good men, for whom the wealth of the ſinner is laid up. *Note*, (1.) Hypocriſy among profeſſors is the moſt common and deadly weed that grows in the church and garden of God upon earth. (2.) Forgetfulneſs of God is at the bottom of all iniquity. (3.) The ſelf-righteous formaliſt, fair as he may appear without, hath his ſpider's poiſon within; and though he prides himſelf in his works and duties, they will be found as unable to bear the ſeverity of God's juſtice, as the ſpider's web to bind Leviathan. (4.) Though worldly proſperity continue long with ſinners, even until death, yet then at leaſt the ax will be laid to the root of the tree, and all their hopes periſh.

20. Behold, [m] God will not caſt away a perfect *man*,
neither will he † help the evil doers: 21. Till he fill
thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with ‡ rejoicing. 22. They that hate thee [n] ſhall be clothed with
ſhame, and the dwelling-place of the wicked § ſhall
come to nought.

m Iſa. iii. 10.
† Heb. Take the ungodly by the hand.
‡ Heb. Shouting for joy.
n Pſ. cxxxii. 18.
§ Heb. Shall not be.

v. 20—22. Bildad here ſums up his diſcourſe, confident that every man would receive from God according to his work; but as he looked no farther than temporal rewards and puniſhments, and extended no view to eternal ones, his inference was utterly defective.

1. The perfect man, or ſincere, God will not caſt away: however great his diſtreſs might be for a ſeaſon, joy and gladneſs would again return, and peace and plenty crown his head, to the confuſion of all that hated him.

2. The evil doers God never will help out of the pit into which they are fallen, but their dwelling-place ſhall be covered with perpetual deſolations. Hence he puts the iſſue of the controverſy on the return of Job's proſperity; inſinuating, that the continuance of his afflictions, from which there now appeared no proſpect of deliverance, would be a full evidence of his inſincerity and iniquity. *Note*, (1.) Though here the ſame event cometh alike to all, it is a bleſſed and comfortable truth, that in eternity God's juſtice ſhall be vindicated in the everlaſting ſalvation of the righteous, and the eternal condemnation of the wicked. (2.) Till this great day comes, we may not conclude from men's outward circumſtances either God's love or hatred, but muſt wait patiently, to know the true characters of men, and judge nothing before the time, when every man ſhall receive according as his work is.

CHAP. IX.

We have here Job's anſwer to Bildad's diſcourſe, wherein he ſpeaks honourably of God, humbly of himſelf, and feelingly of his troubles. 1. *He lays down the doctrine of God's juſtice*, ver. 2. 2. *He proves it, from his wiſdom, power, and ſovereignty*, ver. 3—13. 3. *He acknowledges himſelf unable to contend with God*, ver. 14—21. 4. *He maintains, that we cannot judge of men's characters by their outward condition*, ver. 22—24. 5. *He complains of the greatneſs of his troubles, the confuſion he was in, and the loſs he was at what to ſay or do*, ver. 25—35.

1. THEN Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. I know *it is*
ſo of a truth: but how ſhould man [a] be juſt
† with God? 3. If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand. 4. [b] *He is* wiſe in
heart, and mighty in ſtrength: [c] who hath hardned *himſelf* againſt him, and hath proſpered? 5. [d] Which removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger. 6. Which ſhaketh the earth
out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. 7.
Which commandeth the ſun, and it riſeth not: and
ſealeth up the ſtars. 8. [e] Which alone ſpreadeth out
the heavens, and [f] treadeth upon the waves of the ſea.
9. [g] Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and
the chambers of the ſouth. 10. [h] Which doth great
things paſt finding out, yea, and wonders without number. 11. Lo, [i] he goeth by me, and I ſee *him* not:
he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not. 12. [k] Behold, he taketh away, who can ‡ hinder him? who will
ſay

a Pſ. cxliii. 2.
† Or, before.
b Chap. xxxvi. 5.
c Iſa. xxvii. 4. 1 Cor. x. 22.
d Pſ. lxviii. 8. & cxiv. 4. Hab. iii. 6.
e Gen. i. 6. Pſ. civ. 2, 3.
f Hab. iii. 15. Mark vi. 48.
g Chap. xxxviii. 31. Amos v. 8.
h Chap. v. 9. Pſ. lxxi. 15. Rom. xi. 33.
i Chap. xxiii. 8, 9. & xxxv. 14.
k Iſa. xlv. 9. Jer. xviii. 6. Rom. ix. 20.
‡ Or, turn him away? or make him reſtore?

ſay unto him, What doſt thou? 13. *If* God will not withdraw his anger, [l] the § proud helpers do ſtoop under him.

[l] Chap. xxvi. 12.
§ Heb. Helpers of pride.

v. 1—13. Without a reflection on the inſinuations of his unkind friend, Job enters directly into the argument.

1. He admits God's juſtice as a ſure truth, nor dared to queſtion how unequal a match he was for his maker. Unable to ſtand before his bar, ſinful man could not anſwer to one of a thouſand of the charges God could bring againſt him, but muſt plead guilty; nor can he reſiſt the execution of his deſerved ſentence. Should he dare to plead for himſelf, *God is wiſe in heart*, and would detect the folly, and ſilence the ſophiſtry of his arguments: ſhould he dare to reſiſt, *God is mighty in power*, yea, almighty to put his ſentence in force, and every ſtruggle is vain; *for who* ever *hardened himſelf againſt him*, in ſelf-juſtification, or impious oppoſition, *and proſpered? Note*, (1.) The knowledge of our own ſinfulneſs, and particularly of our fallen nature, will ſilence all ſelf-dependance, and bring us before God ſpeechleſs with guilt, to look up for a better righteouſneſs than our own, in order to juſtification unto life. (2.) Though wicked men and devils harden themſelves in rebellion againſt God, as if he was weak to puniſh them, or negligent about their iniquity, a few ſhort days will detect their folly, and lay them trembling under the rod of judgment in the belly of hell.

2. He expatiates on the glorious evidences of God's wiſdom and power: ſo far was he from curſing God, he could, in the midſt of his pains, delight to dwell on the contemplation of his divine perfections. [1.] His *power*, how amazing! At his word the mountains leap from their rooted baſes, and they know not whither they are hurled: if his anger burns, they are overturned as the mole-hill. Shook by his arm, earth's looſened pillars tremble, and all the cumberous load thereon ſuſtained ſhakes like the leaf, and is as eaſily removed. The ſun, that roſe in glory at his word, ſhall, at his will, ſink back into primæval darkneſs, or ſtanding ſtill in its courſe, withdraw from one hemiſphere the light of day. Black with thick tempeſts, the louring ſky veils the bright ſtars, and their light is ſealed up in darkneſs. Such works of wonder God hath wrought, when in the deluge the powers of earth and heaven were ſhaken; and ſuch, whenever he pleaſes, he can ſtill repeat, to ſcourge guilty mortals, and make his power to be known. [2.] His *wiſdom*, how great! He alone ſpread over us the heavens with ſuch admirable contrivance, and the waves of the ſea beneath his feet retire to their appointed deep: yea, though they lift high their curling heads, their boundary is fixed, which they cannot paſs. Each conſtellation moves in its appointed order, and the ſouthern ſtars, unſeen by us in this hemiſphere, riſe and ſet in regular ſucceſſion, as we return to, and go forth from, our chambers. *Note*, The heavens are an expanded volume, the ſtars legible characters, where man ſhould read the wiſdom, power, and glory of God. [3.] *His agency is inviſible*, and his works unſearchable. We cannot comprehend their number, nor fathom his myſterious ways. He paſſes by us, and we ſee him not. The effects of his wiſdom and power are evident, whilſt himſelf, his counſels, his agency, are hid and ſecret. [4.] *His ſovereignty is uncontroulable.* Whatever he pleaſes, he doth, in the hoſts of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. If he take away every gift he had beſtowed, *who can hinder him*, or *make him reſtore* it again? who dares plead with him, and *ſay, What doſt thou?* may he not do what he will with his own? [5.] *His anger is terrible: if God will not withdraw it, the proud helpers*, or *the helpers of pride*, the ſtouteſt ſinner, the moſt exalted of the ſons of pride, can neither ſupport themſelves, nor afford others the leaſt ſuccour: *they do ſtoop under him*, ſinking down to the earth in affliction, or lower, cruſhed into hell under the inſupportable load of his wrath. *Note*, How ſhould we then fear to offend him, if ſuch is the power of his anger?

14. [m] How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, *and* chooſe out my words *to reaſon* with him? 15. Whom, though I were righteous, [n] *yet* would I not anſwer, *but* I would make ſupplication to my judge. 16. If I had called, and he had anſwered me; *yet* would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice. 17. For he breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplieth my wounds [o] without cauſe. 18. He will not ſuffer me to take my breath, but [p] filleth me with bitterneſs. 19. If *I ſpeak* of ſtrength, lo, *he is* ſtrong, and if of judgment, who ſhall ſet me a time *to plead?* 20. If I juſtify myſelf, mine own mouth ſhall condemn me: *if I ſay*, I *am* perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe. 21. † *Though* I *were* perfect, *yet* would I not know my ſoul: I would deſpiſe my life.

[m] Chap. xl. 5.
[n] Chap. x. 5. Rom. iii. 19. 1 Cor. iv. 4.
[o] Chap. ii. 3. & xxxiv. 6.
[p] Lam. iii. 15.
† Or, I perfect? if I ſaid ſo, I ſhould not know my ſoul.

v. 14—21. Job applies to his own caſe the views of God's perfections he had deſcribed, as a ground of ſelf-abaſement before him. However he could maintain his cauſe before man, as in no wiſe a hypocrite, as he was accuſed, he could not vindicate himſelf before God, as free from ſin.

1. He owns his inability to ſtand the conteſt with God: He is too wiſe for man to plead with him; of purer eyes, than that ſinful man ſhould preſume to appear righteous before him; too mighty to be reſiſted; and from his judgment no appeal can lie to any ſuperior court, *v.* 19. *Note*, There is no ſtanding before God on the footing of our own deſerts. In a covenant of grace, not of works, can the ſinner alone be juſtified. Therefore,

2. However righteous he was as a magiſtrate, and ſincere in profeſſion as a good man, he reſolves rather to cry for mercy, than to plead his merits, *v.* 15. not that he expected to be heard for his prayer's ſake, but, if anſwered, he ſhould aſcribe it ſolely to God's rich grace, and not to the worth of his own ſupplications, *v.* 16. *Note*, Mercy, not deſert, muſt be our plea; nor can our beſt prayers make God our debtor: nay, ſo much infirmity is mixed with them, that we are undone, if he pardons not the iniquity of our holy things.

3. Job had ſpoken right things hitherto, but his infirmity now appears in the concluſion he draws, that whilſt his afflictions were not removed, his prayers could not be anſwered; and tho' acknowledging himſelf a ſinner, he ſeems to think his ſufferings exceeded his deſerts. *He breaketh me with a tempeſt* of afflictions, *and multiplieth my wounds without cauſe*, any ſuch cauſe at leaſt as his cenſorious friends had ſuggeſted. *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath*, I can ſcarce pray or ſpeak, through the violence of my diſeaſe; *but* he *filleth me with bitterneſs. Note*, We may not judge our prayers rejected, becauſe our ſufferings remain: though we cannot now ſee why God thus dealeth with us, we ſhall be convinced by and by, that the greateſt kindneſs God could do us, was the continuance of our affliction.

4. He repeats his renunciation of ſelf-juſtification before God: the attempt would prove his perverſeneſs. If he ſaid he was perfect, he ſhould deceive himſelf: nay, though he were, he ſhould not dare to inſiſt upon it before God, in whoſe preſence all creature-perfection is imperfection; or, as the words may be rendered, *I perfect?* no; if I entertained ſuch an imagination, *I ſhould not know my ſoul*, ſhould prove myſelf ignorant of my own heart: *I would deſpiſe my life*, not think it worth pleading for; or, though perfect, wiſh for its continuance here below. *Note*, (1.) Conceit of ſinleſs perfection can only ariſe from ignorance of ourſelves, of God, and of the ſpirituality of his law. (2.) Self-juſtifiers will out of their own mouth be condemned.

22. This *is* one *thing*, therefore I ſaid *it*, [q] he deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. 23. If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent. 24. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked; [r] he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where *and* who *is* he?

[q] Eccleſ. ix. 2. Ezek. xxi. 3.
[r] Jer. 14. 4.

v. 22—24. The grand point in diſpute is, Whether the wicked are always miſerable, and the innocent proſperous. This his friends affirm, he as reſolutely denies. *This is one thing*, ſingular as it may appear to you, yet certain and ſure, and which from the fulleſt conviction I advance, *God deſtroyeth the righteous and the wicked*; eternally indeed the righteous cannot periſh, and ſometimes there may have been peculiar interpoſitions of God in their behalf; but, in general, they fall in the promiſcuous ruin, when deſolating judgments ariſe; and *if the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.* Not that God delights in the miſeries of his people, but if he ſeems unconcerned for their ſufferings, or takes even pleaſure in them, 'tis becauſe he intends their trials for the increaſe of their graces, and the brightning their crown. *The earth*, in general, *is given into the hand of the wicked*; they proſper, have dominion, and bear the ſway. *He covereth the faces of the judges thereof*; gives them up to blindneſs of heart, and leaves them to execute their unrighteous decrees, to the oppreſſion of the innocent: *if not*, if this be not fact and truth, *where and who is he* that can confute me? or, if this be not God's doing, whoſe is it? He hath the government of the world, and theſe things cannot be done but by his permiſſion: ſufferings therefore are no proof of his anger, nor proſperity, of his favour. *Note*, (1.) Though the righteous here ſuffer *with* the wicked, they ſuffer not *as* the wicked; their afflictions are merciful corrections, not angry judgments, and the end of them not their ruin, but more abundant glory. (2.) It muſt ſilence our complaints under oppreſſion, and ſuppreſs all envy at the proſperity of the wicked, that it is God's doing, permitted for wiſe ends, which, though we know not now, we ſhall know hereafter.

25. Now [s] my days are ſwifter than a poſt: they flee away, they ſee no good. 26. They are paſſed away as the † ſwift ſhips: [t] as the eagle *that* haſteth to the prey. 27. [u] If I ſay, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off

[s] Chap. vii. 6.
† Heb. Ships of deſire.
[t] Hab. i. 8.
[u] Chap. vii. 13.

off my heavineſs, and comfort *myſelf* : 28. [x] I am afraid
of all my ſorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me
innocent. 29. *If* I be wicked, why then labour I in
vain ? 30. [y] If I waſh myſelf with ſnow-water, and
make my hands never ſo clean ; 31. Yet ſhalt thou
plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes ſhall
‡ abhor me. 32. For [z] *he is* not a man, as I *am*, *that* I
ſhould anſwer him, *and* we ſhould come together in
judgment : 33. Neither is there any ‖ days-man betwixt
us, *that* might lay his hand upon us both. 34.
[a] Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his
fear terrify me. 35. *Then* would I ſpeak, and not fear
him ; † but *it is* not ſo with me.

[x] Pſ. cxix. 120.
[y] Jer. ii.22.
‡ Or, make me to be abhorred.
[z] Eccleſ. vi. 10. Iſa. xlv. 9. Jer. xlix. 19. Rom. ix. 20.
‖ Or, alike, or umpire, or arbitrator.
[a] Chap. xiii. 21. & xxxiii. 7.
† Heb. But I am not ſo with myſelf.

v. 25—35. His complaints mingle with his arguments.

1. He bewails his paſt proſperity fled, his preſent ſorrows incurable. Swifter than a poſt on full ſpeed his days of joys were hurried by, and now are ſucceeded by days of miſery, which made the former forgotten, as if they had never been : they are gone, like ſhips that ſkim before the wind, and, as if labouring for expreſſion to expreſs their velocity, fled as the eagle, when darting on his prey. In vain he ſought to recover a glimpſe of former comfort, or to compoſe himſelf under preſent afflictions ; *If I ſay, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heavineſs, and comfort myſelf*, the attempt were fruitleſs ; ſorrows followed him cloſe as his ſhadow, and he feared they would overwhelm him at laſt. *Note*, (1.) Time is rapid, our day expiring, all temporal good tranſitory ; let us be wiſe then to redeem it, that when the preſent moment is loſt in eternity, as the drop in the boundleſs ocean, our happy portion there may be ſecured. (2.) It is eaſier to know we ought to ſubmit, and to bid the miſerable forget their complaints, than to exerciſe that ſilent reſignation, which is ſo evidently our bounden duty.

2. He deſpairs of being able to plead with God : either it is the language of humility, expreſſive of his ſinfulneſs and worthleſſneſs, or of his impatience, and hard thoughts of God, as if he had cleanſed his hands in vain. *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent*, I begin to deſpair of recovery, and expect, in the continuance of my afflictions, to be treated as *if I be wicked*, which will be believed without doubt if I periſh in my ſuffering. *Why then labour I in vain*, to clear myſelf, when the calamities I ſuffer will plead againſt me, in the eyes of the world, ſtronger than any arguments I can urge will vindicate me. *If I waſh myſelf with ſnow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean*, uſe every effort to maintain my innocence, and ſhew my converſation never ſo blameleſs, *thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch* of deep afflictions, *and my own cloaths ſhall abhor me* ; my deareſt friends will conſtrue my caſe abominable, and my ſufferings will make me a burden to myſelf. Or theſe words may alſo expreſs his ſenſe of ſin ; I acknowledge my guilt, I am wicked, though not as my friends ſuggeſt, yet ſo as to be unable to bear the ſeverity of thy judgment ; nor can I cleanſe myſelf from my ſins by any attempts of my own ; though I try every expedient, I ſhould ſtill be loathſome, as one plunged in the mire, and my beſt righteouſneſs would be like his filthy rags. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of men have the loweſt thoughts of their own goodneſs. (2.) The more a ſinner goeth about to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſs, inſtead of ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God, the more deſperate his caſe grows. (3.) Though we may be never ſo clean from the groſſer pollutions that are in the world thro' luſt, there is corruption enough in every man's heart, to make him loathſome in the eyes of a holy God.

3. He complains of the unequal conteſt. *He is not a man, as I am* ; the potſherds may ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth, but impoſſible it is, *that I*, a worm, *ſhould anſwer him*, the glorious and infinite God, *and* that *we ſhould come together to judgment*, or *alike*, on equal terms. He can have no ſuperior, nor is there any court where the cauſe can be tried ; *neither is there any days-man*, or *arbitrator*, to whom the cauſe can be referred, and by whoſe deciſions we muſt abide. Or it may be rendered, *O that there were a mediator*, *that might lay his hand upon us both*, ſo as effectually to ſettle and adjuſt the diſpute. *Note*, The days-man Job wanted, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt appears to be : his hand is laid on both, to bring an offended God near in mercy to ſinful man, and to incline man, a ſinner, to return in humiliation to a pardoning God.

4. He wiſhes for a ſhort reſpite, that he might ſpeak for himſelf. *Let him take his rod away from me*, of chaſtiſement that oppreſſed him, *and let not his fear terrify me*, that dread of his awful majeſty which now overwhelmed him ; *then would I ſpeak*, in prayer and ſupplication, or plead for himſelf, *and not fear him*, as in his preſent ſtate he did, God appearing as an enemy ; or perhaps, daring as the challenge was, he would then maintain his cauſe without fear, and, though a ſinner confeſſed, yet reaſon with him on the exceeding greatneſs of his ſufferings ; *but it is not ſo with me*, I am diſabled by his terrors to ſpeak before him, and I have no days-man ; or, *I am not ſo with myſelf*, ſo maſter of himſelf, as to be able, in his diſordered ſtate, to maintain his cauſe aright. *Note*, Even truly good men, under ſore trials, have ſpoken unadviſedly with their lips ; therefore we need ever pray, that we may not be led into temptation.

CHAP. X.

Job owns that he is full of confuſion, ver. 15. *and as he is, ſo is his diſcourſe.* 1. *He complains of his hardſhips*, ver. 1—7. *And then comforts himſelf that he was in the hand of the God that made him*, ver. 8—13. 2. *He complains again of the ſeverity of God's dealings with him.* ver. 14—17. *and then comforts himſelf, that death would put an end to his troubles*, ver. 18—22.

1. MY ſoul is [a] weary of my life, I will leave my
complaint upon myſelf ; I will ſpeak in the
bitterneſs of my ſoul. 2. I will ſay unto God, Do not
condemn me ; ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with
me. 3. *Is it* good unto thee, that thou ſhouldſt oppreſs
? that thou ſhouldſt deſpiſe [b] the work of thine
hands, and ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked ? 4.
Haſt thou eyes of fleſh ? or [c] ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth ?
5. *Are* thy days as the days of man ? *are* thy years as
man's days, 6. That thou enquireſt after mine iniquity,
and ſearcheſt after my ſin ? 7. Thou knoweſt
that [d] I am not wicked, and *there is* none that can deliver
out of thine hand.

[a] 1 Kings xix. 4. Chap. vii. 16.
[b] Pſal. cxxxviii. 8.
[c] 1 Sam. xvi. 7.
[d] Pſ. xxvi.4.

v. 1—7. Though in general Job acknowledged himſelf a ſinner, and unable to ſtand the ſeverity of God's judgment, yet, when he conſidered his own integrity in general, and the uncommon weight of his afflictions, he ſeemed to feel an argument for impatient complaint, and charges God fooliſhly.

1. He repeats his paſſionate wiſh for death ; *My ſoul is weary of my life*, burdened with afflictions, and longing to be rid of them in the grave. *I will leave my complaint upon myſelf* ; I muſt complain, though I lay the blame on myſelf : ſuch anguiſh cannot be ſuppreſſed, *I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.* *Note*, To be weary of life before God ſends a diſcharge, is to be unfaithful to the poſt he hath given us to maintain.

2. He reſolves to enquire of God the cauſe of his ſufferings. *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me*, or *account me wicked*, deal with him as if he really was ſuch as his friends ſuggeſted, and who, whilſt his troubles continued, would be confirmed in their ſuſpicions. *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me* ; conſcious he was not of having wilfully offended, and therefore fain would know the deſign God propoſed in the heavineſs and continuance of his calamities. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us in ſuffering times to enquire into their cauſe, that we may anſwer their end. *Tho' we may know nothing of ourſelves*, particularly to condemn us, *he that judgeth us is the Lord*, who ſees what we overlook, and whoſe ways and thoughts are as much above ours, as the heaven is higher than the earth. (2.) When we ſuffer the rod of correction, we need eſpecially pray to be ſaved from the condemnation of ſin. Every other burden is ſupportable, that intolerable.

3. He preſumes to expoſtulate with God on his caſe. *Is it good unto thee, that thou ſhouldſt oppreſs ?* can it be agreeable to thy perfections to take pleaſure in tormenting me ? *that thou ſhouldſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands*, and be indifferent to my ſorrows, though thy creature by nature, by grace thy ſervant too ? *and ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked*, proſper their devices againſt the righteous, or, by the continuance of his afflictions, ſeem to approve the hard cenſures of the world and his friends. *Haſt thou eyes of fleſh ? or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth ?* Looking no farther than outward appearances, they condemn me ; wilt thou do like them, who ſeeſt the ſecrets of the heart, and knoweſt my innocence ? or doſt thou regard me with an evil eye, envying my proſperity, as the world did ? *Are thy days as the days of man*, whoſe life is ſhort, his purpoſes mutable, and his reſearches after truth, through the imperfection of his faculties, tedious ? *that thou enquireſt after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt after my ſin ?* continuing his anguiſh, as if to draw out of him a confeſſion of his guilt, as from a perſon under the torture ; which ſeemed to Job ſevere and needleſs, perſuaded of God's all-ſeeing eye, and unerring wiſdom, and aſſured of his own uprightneſs before him. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, chargeable with open or allowed iniquity, nor hypocritical in my profeſſions ; *and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.* No power could reſcue him from God's hand, and therefore he need not be bound with theſe cords of affliction, as if to prevent his eſcape. *Note*, (1.) It is difficult under extraordinary troubles to be ſilent, and not impeach, by murmuring, God's goodneſs or his righteouſneſs. (2.) The ſenſe of God's omniſcience ſhould ever fill our minds with reverence and godly fear before him. Who will not dread the ſin that darkneſs promiſes to cover, when God's eye

is there? (3.) Reſiſtance againſt God is vain; to ſtruggle againſt his corrections, is but to torment our own ſouls.

8. [e] Thine hands have † made me, and faſhioned me together round about; yet thou doſt deſtroy me. 9. Remember, I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me [f] as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into duſt again? 10. [g] Haſt thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheeſe? 11. Thou haſt clothed me with ſkin and fleſh, and haſt ‡ fenced me with bones and ſinews. 12. Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit. 13. And theſe *things* haſt thou hid in thine heart: I know that this *is* with thee.

[e] Pſal. cxix. 73.
† Heb. Took pains about me.
[f] 2 Cor. v. 1.
[g] Pſal. cxxxix. 14, &c.
‡ Heb. Hedged.

v. 8—13. Having called himſelf the work *of God's hands*, ver. 3. he here enlarges on that conſideration; begs God to remember his own paſt favours and his frailty, as a reaſon againſt the ſeverity of thoſe ſufferings which threatned to deſtroy him. *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me together round about, yet thou doſt deſtroy me*, for under theſe troubles I muſt quickly ſink. *Remember, I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay*, thou art my potter, I am moulded at thy will, brittle as the clay, remember it, for I cannot ſtand under ſuch ſtrokes of correction, but muſt be broken to pieces. *And wilt thou bring me to the duſt again?* delight to make and unmake me, give me a momentary exiſtence, only to bring me to a miſerable end? eſpecially after being ſo fearfully and wonderfully made. *Haſt thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me as cheeſe?* when at my conception in the womb the embryo firſt appeared: *thou haſt clothed me with ſkin and fleſh*, and *fenced me with bones and ſinews*, carried on the formation of my body till I breathed vital air: *thou haſt granted me life*, and with it numberleſs mercies *and favour*, thy gifts of nature, and the better portion of thy grace: and *thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit*, kept me long amidſt the dangers that ſurrounded me, and ſupported and preſerved the life thou didſt beſtow; *and theſe things haſt thou hid in thine heart*; amidſt all the apparent mercies in thy ſecret counſels lay concealed the miſeries to which I was ordained. *I know that this is with thee*, thou alone canſt account for the reaſons of thy conduct, which to me appears ſtrange and myſterious, or I know that this was thy eternal purpoſe thus to afflict me. *Note*, (1.) The curious ſtructure and formation of the human body, ſhould lead us to an admiration of the hand that made it. (2.) All our mercies of nature, providence, and grace, are derived from God, and he ſhould be acknowledged by us in all with thankfulneſs, and the grateful return made to him in bounden love and ſervice. (3.) Though ſometimes we cannot reconcile God's former dealings or his promiſes with our preſent afflictive diſpenſation, he will appear at laſt righteous in his word, and juſt in all his works.

14. If I ſin, then [h] thou markeſt me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. 15. [i] If I be wicked, woe unto me; and [k] *if* I be righteous, *yet* will I not lift up my head: *I am* full of confuſion, therefore [l] ſee thou mine affliction. 16. For it increaſeth: [m] thou hunteſt me as a fierce lion; and again thou ſheweſt thyſelf marvellous upon me. 17. Thou reneweſt † thy witneſſes againſt me, and increaſeſt thine indignation upon me: changes and war *are* againſt me. 18. [n] Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb? O that I had given up the ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me! 19. I ſhould have been as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave. 20. [o] *Are* not my days few? ceaſe *then*, *and* [p] let me alone, that I may take comfort a little: 21. Before I go *whence* I ſhall not return, *even* to [q] the land of darkneſs, and [r] the ſhadow of death; 22. A land of darkneſs, as darkneſs *itſelf*, *and* of the ſhadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light *is* as darkneſs.

[h] Pſal. cxxxix. 1.
[i] Iſa. iii. 11.
[k] Chap. ix. 20, 21.
[l] Exod. iii. 7.
[m] Iſa. xxxviii. 13. Lam. iii. 10.
† i. e. Thy plagues.
[n] Chap. iii. 11.
[o] Ibid. vii. 6. & viii. 9.
[p] Chap. vii. 16. Pſal. xxxix. 13.
[q] Pſal. lxxxviii.
[r] Ibid. xxiii. 4.

v. 14—22. The more Job went on to complain, the warmer his words grow.

1. He reflects upon the ſeverity of God's enquiry, and the rigour of his ſentence. If he took one falſe ſtep, it was marked as if God's eye was over him for evil, and the continuance of his trouble he regarded as the ſign his iniquity was unpardoned. He acknowledges if he were wicked, that then he could expect nothing but woe; and though righteous, as he ſeemed to be, conſcious he was he would not, or dared not lift up his head before the holy majeſty of heaven. Full of confuſion through his anguiſh, he knew ſcarce what or how to ſpeak, and therefore begs God to look upon his affliction in mercy, before it quite overwhelmed it; for inſtead of abating, the waters of trouble ſwelled daily higher: he was hunted with afflictions, as the fierce lion purſues his prey; and theſe ſo repeated and ſtrange, that he was an aſtoniſhment to others, and a wonder to himſelf. Every day freſh calamities, as new evidences, aroſe to teſtify his guilt, and the increaſing indignation againſt him; his changes were only from evil to worſe, and war from heaven, earth, and hell ſeemed to aſſault him. *Note*, (1.) If God be ſtrict to mark what is amiſs, who may abide it? (2.) Wo to the wicked! whether proſperity or adverſity attend them here, miſery, intolerable as eternal, muſt be their portion hereafter. (3.) Though afflictions may be the ſtrokes of God's indignation, yet all the fruit of them is to take away our ſin. (4.) If a child of God ſeem ſunk in uncommon calamities, let him not deſpair; though the diſpenſation is grievous, it is for the trial of his faith. (5.) Reflections upon God as hard and ſevere, are very ſinful, and ſhow an unhumbled ſpirit.

2. He renews his impatient deſire of death; begs at leaſt that God would give him ſome ſhort reſpite from his afflictions before he dropped into the grave. He expoſtulates with God, why he ſo unkindly drew him into a world ſo miſerable, *v.* 18. wiſhes as before, *chap.* iii. 11. to have died from the womb, that no eye might have ſeen his miſery, and that he might have departed as one that had never been. He urges the ſhortneſs of his days, as a plea for ſome moment's comfort, before death ſhould cloſe his eyes in darkneſs, and lay him in the grave, whence there could be no return to earth again; where no ſucceſſion of days and years cheared the melancholy ſcene, no diſtinction of age, ſex, or ſtation appeared, no beam of light ever pierced the dreadful gloom, but ſhadows of death, dark and diſmal, were perpetually extended over it. *Note*, (1.) Every moment's reſpite and eaſe we enjoy here, ſhould be regarded as a mercy from God. (2.) The ſhorter our days are, the more we need to improve them. (3.) The moment God allots us here, is in order to prepare for our great change. (4.) The grave to ſenſe affords a very melancholy proſpect; but to the righteous there ariſeth up light in the darkneſs, and faith can look thro' the thick cloud, and behold thoſe glories beyond, in proſpect of which we can ſay, though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil.

CHAP. XI.

Zophar here takes up the argument, and applies not balm, but corroſives to Job's bleeding wounds. 1. *He condemns Job, as proud and falſe in juſtifying himſelf*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He begs God to convince him*, ver. 5. (1.) *Of his unerring wiſdom, and inviolable juſtice*, ver. 6. (2.) *Of his unſearchable perfections*, ver. 7—9. 3. *Of his inconteſtable ſovereignty, and uncontroulable power*, ver. 10. 4. *Of the cognizance he takes of the children of men*, ver. 11, 12. (3.) *He aſſures him, that upon his repentance and reformation*, ver. 13, 14. *God would reſtore him to his former proſperity and ſafety*, ver. 15—19. *But if he were wicked, it was in vain to expect it*, ver. 20.

1. THEN anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid, 2. Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? and ſhould † a man full of talk be juſtified? 3. Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed? 4. For [a] thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine *is* pure, and [b] I am clean in thine eyes. 5. But, O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee; 6. And that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that *they are* double to that which is! know therefore, that [c] God exacteth of thee *leſs* than thine iniquity *deſerveth*.

† Heb. A man of lips.
[a] Chap. vi. 30.
[b] Ibid. x. 7.
[c] Ezra ix. 13.

v. 1—6. With eyes ſparkling with indignation, at ſeeing all the former arguments ſlighted and ineffectual, Zophar the third replies,

1. He opens with much inſolence and abuſe. Far from admitting any thing of Job's vindication of himſelf to be either true or pertinent, he treats him as a mere talkative, that pretended by a multitude of words to make a ſhew of wiſdom; gives the lie to his aſſertions of his integrity, and brands him as mocking God in ſuch appeals to his omniſcience. *Note*, (1.) Controverſy uſually produces unbecoming warmth, but in religious controverſy to be abuſive and paſſionate, is, though too common, eſpecially indecent and ſinful. (2.) When there is a diſpoſition to find fault, the moſt inoffenſive words, the moſt reaſonable diſcourſe, will afford a handle for malevolence. (3.) We need not count it ſtrange to be treated unmercifully, when we ſee ſo good a man thus abuſed by his neareſt friends. (4.) Though ſome may be ſo rude as to give us the lie, and others ſo wicked as to brand thoſe with meanneſs, who do not ſhew their reſentment, the grace of God teaches a different leſſon, and bids us overcome evil with good.

2. Zophar had called Job liar, and lo! his firſt charge againſt him appears a falſhood; ſo ſure it is, that the firſt to give the lie is uſually the moſt guilty, and abuſe a ſad ſymptom of a bad cauſe. Job had maintained his integrity; but had acknowledged withal, that though no hypocrite, or wicked man, he had ſin in him, which in God's ſight would condemn him. Zophar interprets all his pleas of ſincerity as pretences to perfection:

fection: ſo eaſy it is by a wrong conſtruction of our meaning, to draw inferences utterly oppoſite to our ſentiments.

3. He wiſhes God to take up the controverſy, ſince their arguments ſeemed fruitleſs, concluding that he muſt be on their ſide; though alas! they who moſt ſolemnly appeal to him, are often very far from being moſt in the right. Of two things Zophar wiſhed God to convince Job, 1. *The unſearchable depths of his wiſdom*, that they are double to that which is in man, who ſhews only his own weakneſs and wickedneſs, when he attempts to arraign what he cannot comprehend. 2. *The unexceptionable equity of his procedure*, far from exacting more than our iniquity deſerves, his chaſtiſements are leſs than our provocations. *Note*, (1.) Men may ſpeak great truths, though they may draw very wrong inferences from them. (2.) A ſenſe of our own blindneſs ſhould ever make us ſilent under God's afflictive diſpenſations; though we know not how, there is wiſdom, yea and mercy in them. (3.) It is certain that every man, whilſt he is out of hell, hath leſs than his iniquities deſerve; and cauſe therefore to praiſe God for his mercy, and chearfully to ſubmit to whatever burden is laid upon him.

7. [d] Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? 8. *It is* as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper than hell, what canſt thou know? 9. The meaſure thereof *is* longer than the earth, and broader than the ſea. 10. If he cut off, and ſhut up, or gather together, then [e] who can hinder him? 11. For he knoweth vain men: he ſeeth wickedneſs alſo; will he not then conſider *it?* 12. For [f] vain man would be wiſe, [g] though man be born *like* a wild aſs's colt.

[d] Eccleſ. iii. 11. Rom. xi. 35.
[e] Chap. ix. 12.
[f] Rom. i. 22.
[g] Pſal. lxxiii. 22. Eccleſ. iii. 18.

v. 7—12. In our preſent fallen ſtate we can comprehend ſo little, either of the Divine perfections or providence, that to pretend to find fault with them, were the arrogance of folly. Zophar here,

1. Diſplays God's incomprehenſibility, ſovereignty, and omniſcience, as arguments to ſilence Job's plea before him. His infinite perfections, *v.* 7—9. are beyond our moſt enlarged and perſevering reſearches; the more we labour to comprehend of his immenſity, eternity, &c. the more we ſhall be loſt in the contemplation, and forced to cry, *O the depth*, &c. *Rom.* xi. 33. His ſovereignty, *v.* 10. who ſhall controul: if he cut off by death and judgments, or make a change in his dealings with any perſon or family, as in Job's caſe; yea, ſhould he reduce to its primitive nothing the whole created univerſe, who can ſay unto him, what doſt thou? not that God merely to diſplay his ſovereignty makes his creatures miſerable: infinite wiſdom and juſtice mark all his ways, *v.* 11. *He knoweth vain men, he ſeeth wickedneſs*; however cloſely covered or concealed, he detects the vain pretence; *Will he not then conſider it?* yes, and viſit ſuch perſons with the judgments they have provoked. *Note*, (1.) Every view of the Divine perfections ſhould humble us before God. (2.) From him nothing is hid or ſecret: how ſhould the conſideration engage our watchfulneſs againſt the moſt ſecret deſire of evil within our hearts?

2. He repreſents man as *vain* in his imaginations, affecting to be wiſe, though born ſtupid as the wild aſs's colt, and like it ſtubborn and untractable. *Note*, (1.) Man is by nature proud, and wiſe in his own conceits; ever ſince the firſt man, by affecting forbidden wiſdom, fell, all his poſterity have not ceaſed to imitate his ſin. (2.) Pride ever makes a man intractable; they who have a high opinion of themſelves, are uſually above advice.

13. If [h] thou prepare thine heart, and [i] ſtretch out thine hands towards him; 14. If [k] iniquity *be* in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacles. 15. For then [l] ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot, yea, [m] thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt, and ſhalt not fear: 16. Becauſe [n] thou ſhalt forget *thy* miſery, *and* remember *it* as waters *that* paſs away: 17. And *thine* age [o] ſhall † be clearer than the noon day: thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning. 18. And thou ſhalt be ſecure, becauſe there is hope; yea, thou ſhalt dig *about thee*, *and* [p] thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety. 19. Alſo thou ſhalt lie down, and none ſhall make *thee* afraid; yea, many ſhall make ſuit unto thee. 20. But [q] the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and ‡ they ſhall not eſcape, and [r] their hope *ſhall be as* ‖ the giving up of the ghoſt.

[h] Chap. v. 8. & xxii. 21.
[i] Pſal. cxliii. 6.
[k] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[l] Chap. xxii. 26. Pſal. cxx. 6.
[m] 1 John iii. 21.
[n] Iſa. lxv. 16.
[o] Pſal. xxxvii. 6. & cxii. 4. Iſa. lviii. 8.
† Or riſe above.
[p] Lev. xxvi. 5, 6. Pſal. iv. 8. Prov. iii. 24.
[q] Lev. xxvi. 16.
‡ Heb. Flight ſhall periſh from them. Amos ii. 14. & ix. 1.
[r] Chap. viii. 14. & xviii. 14.
‖ Or a puff of breath.

v. 13—20. Zophar concludes his ſpeech with ſound advice, but evidently intimates his ſenſe of Job's afflictions, as proceeding from his ſecret ſins, which, if not parted with, muſt provoke his utter ruin.

1. His advice is, to *prepare his heart* by ſerious reflection, and ſetting before himſelf the humbling views of his ſin, *to ſtretch out his hands* in penitent prayer for mercy, *to put away iniquity from his hand*, allowed ſin, or the gains of oppreſſion and fraud, *and to purge out wickedneſs from his tabernacles*, which he ſeems to intimate he had allowed, or connived at in his family. *Note*, (1.) They who deſire to return to God's favour, muſt reſtore their ill gotten gains, however painful and ſhameful ſuch reſtitution may be. (2.) The ſins of his houſhold are chargeable on the negligent maſter, and God will require them at his hands.

2. He ſupports his counſel by a variety of conſiderations evidencing the comfort which would accrue to him from following it; *For then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot* before God and man, who will regard him with favour, *thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt*, fixed in proſperity, *and ſhalt not fear* ſuch awful changes, as of late he had beheld. *Becauſe thou ſhalt forget thy miſery*, the comforts reſtored will obliterate the remembrance of paſt calamities, and *remember it as waters that paſs away*; if they are reflected upon, they vaniſh as the brook dried up in ſummer; or, like the flood of Noah, he may be aſſured that they ſhall no more return: and *thine age ſhall be clearer than the noon day, thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning*; though clouds and darkneſs of affliction had covered him, theſe in his age ſhould be diſpelled, comfort and joy, as the light at noon, chear his future day, and his evening ſun ſhine bright as the ſplendor of the morning. And *thou ſhalt be ſecure* from future calamity, *becauſe there is hope* of God's returning favour. *Yea, thou ſhalt dig about thee*, and fix a durable manſion, or find wells of water for his cattle, or as in entrenchment ſecured; *and thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety*, no danger being near to terrify or diſturb: *thou ſhalt lie down, and none ſhall make thee afraid*; *yea, many ſhall make ſuit to thee*, thou ſhalt be more honoured and courted, than now thou art ſlighted and deſpiſed. *Note*, (1.) When we have returned to God in faith and humble prayer, we may be confident of his favour. (2.) If God eſtabliſhes us, we ſhall not fail, nor need fear what all the powers of evil can do againſt us. (3.) Though the faithful here below, by temptation or affliction, may ſuffer a ſhort eclipſe, the day is near when they will ſhine without ſpot, brighter than the ſun for ever and ever. (4.) If we caſt the anchor of hope on the ſure bottom of God's faithfulneſs, no ſtorms can hurt or endanger our ſecurity.

3. He deſcribes the miſerable end of the ungodly: *The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail*, whilſt looking after relief in vain, *and they ſhall not eſcape* from the hand of God's judgments, *and their hope ſhall be* deſperate, and the diſappointment terrible, *as the giving up the ghoſt*. And ſuch he ſeems to inſinuate would be Job's caſe, if he rejected the admonitions of his friends; and whilſt his ſins remained, continued proudly and falſely to vindicate himſelf. *Note*, (1.) If not before, in death at leaſt, the vain confidence of the wicked and ſelf-righteous expires, (2.) There is no eſcaping God's judgments; they who will not turn, muſt burn.

CHAP. XII.

In this and the two following chapters Job replies to Zophar's diſcourſe. In this addreſſing himſelf to his friends, He, 1. *ſhews that his wiſdom is not inferior to theirs*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He proves that the wicked often proſper*, ver. 4—11. 3. *He conſents to what they had ſaid of the wiſdom and power, and ſovereignty of God*, ver. 12—25.

1. AND Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. No doubt but [a] ye *are* the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you. 3. But [b] I have underſtanding as well as you; [c] † I *am* not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe? 4. [d] I am *as* one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he anſwereth him: the juſt upright *man is* laughed to ſcorn. 5. He that is [e] ready to ſlip with *his* feet, *is as* a lamp [f] deſpiſed in the thought of him that is at eaſe.

[a] Prov. xxviii. 11.
[b] Chap. xiii. 2.
[c] 2 Cor. xi. 5.
† Or I do not fall before you.
[d] Chap. xvi. 10. & xvii. 2. & xxx. 1.
[e] Pſal. xxxviii. 17. Jer. xx. 10.
[f] Prov. xiv. 2.

v. 1—5. Exaſperated by ſuch treatment and inſinuations, Job replies with equal ſeverity, and returns the more juſtly deſerved rebuke.

1. He ridicules their arrogance, in conceiting themſelves the only living oracles: *No doubt but you are the people*, ironically admitting their pretenſions, as the only wiſe men in the world, compared with whom, Job and others were as the wild aſs, ignorant and ſtupid, *and wiſdom ſhall die with you*; to be ſure, when you are gone the world will, for want of ſuch inſtructions, ſoon grow brutiſh. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is more diſguſting and offenſive, than the boaſts of vanity. (2.) A high conceit of our own importance, is as fooliſh as it is ſinful.

2. He pleads a right to the exerciſe of reaſon, as well as they: *But I have underſtanding as well as you*; my natural faculties are unimpaired; and if I claim equality with you, I may do it without preſumption, for *I am not inferior to you*, in parts or knowledge; or *falling before you*, as one vanquiſhed; or *more*

than you, an apoſtate from God, as was ſuggeſted. *Yea, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* What they had diſcourſed of the wiſdom, juſtice, power, and ſovereignty of God, were ſubjects he was equally acquainted with, and which others could ſpeak of as knowingly as they had done; therefore they need not, on that account, think ſo highly of themſelves, *Note,* (1.) Tho' a wiſe man never chuſes to ſpeak in his own praiſe, there may be times when ſelf-vindication may oblige us, as it may ſeem, to boaſt ourſelves a little, 2 *Cor.* xi. 6. (2.) When we differ from others in ſentiment, it becomes us neither to be overbearing, or to deſpiſe them, however clear the argument may appear to us: they are men as well as we, and may be endued with equal, perhaps ſuperior underſtanding.

3. He complains of their inſolent uſage. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour*, for ſo it appeared to him, who expected comfort from his friends, and found nothing but railing accuſation; and this was the more cruel from a profeſſor of religion, ſuch as each of them appeared, *who calleth upon God, and he anſwereth him*; or he means himſelf, who, though they inſinuated his neglect of prayer, continued ceaſeleſs at a throne of grace. *Note,* (1.) It is a ſore trial to be trodden upon in our afflictions, eſpecially by thoſe from whom we might have hoped for kinder treatment. (2.) When we are reduced in our circumſtances, we are apt to be over jealous, to conſtrue every inattention a deſigned ſlight, and in trouble to account every word of reproof a reproach and cruel. (3.) It is a comfort amidſt all the cenſures of men, even ſometimes of good men, that we have a throne of judgment open, and are there ſure to be heard with impartiality.

4. He proceeds to confute their ſuggeſtion, that the righteous were always externally happy. *The juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn*; it was not merely his own caſe, but the general lot of the faithful: thus Noah, Lot, and others, fared from wicked men. *He that is ready to ſlip with his feet*, the righteous in affliction, *is as a lamp deſpiſed in the thought of him that is at eaſe:* the ſinners in affluence deſpiſe his troubles, and he appears like the lamp ready to go out, the ſnuff of which is diſagreeable and nauſeous. *Note,* (1.) Religion, and the faithful profeſſors of it, were the objects of mockery and ſcorn in every age: let it not then appear ſtrange, if we ſhare in their reproach. (2.) It is too common to ſee poverty ſlighted and ſcorned by thoſe who are at eaſe; but the portion of Lazarus at the gate, is ſtill infinitely preferable to Dives at the table.

6. [g] The tabernacles of robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure; into whoſe hand God bringeth *abundantly*. 7. But [h] aſk now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they ſhall tell thee: 8. Or ſpeak to the earth, and it ſhall teach thee; and the fiſhes of the ſea ſhall declare unto thee. 9. Who knoweth not in all theſe, that [i] the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? 10 [k] In whoſe hand *is* the ſoul of every living thing, and the breath of † all mankind: 11. [l] Doth not the ear try words? and the ‡ mouth taſte his meat?

[g] Chap. xxi. 7. Pſal. xxxvii. 35. & xcii. 7. Jer. xii. 1. Mal. iii. 15.
[h] Prov. vi. 6. Jer. viii. 7. Rom. i. 20.
[i] Heb. i. 10.
[k] Num. xvi. 22. Dan. v. 23.
† Heb. All fleſh of man.
[l] Chap. xxxiv. 3. 1 Cor. x. 15.
‡ Heb. Palate. Chap. vi. 30.

v. 6—11. The two grand poſitions Job's friends laid down, he effectually controverts. Before he affirms the ſufferings of the upright, he here remarks the proſperity of the wicked.

1. *The tabernacles of robbers proſper*, ſuch as the Sabæans, who plundered his ſubſtance, and many other wicked men who build up their houſes by oppreſſion and fraud; and *they that provoke God* by open and daring iniquities, *are ſecure*, and in this world live in affluence and at eaſe: *into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly* of every temporal bleſſing; ſo far are they from diſtinguiſhed afflictions, that they are not plagued like other men. *Note,* (1.) They who abuſe God's gifts, or by diſhoneſt gain enrich themſelves, however fair their character may appear among men, they will be counted robbers in the day of God. (2.) Many have a rich portion in this life, who have none in another.

2. He appeals for the truth he advances to all the creatures, among whom in general the moſt innocent are the prey to the moſt rapacious; or rather he bids them obſerve the flocks and herds of the wicked, their tables covered with fiſh and fowl, and every delicacy, and then they will be convinced whether they are moſt affluent who are moſt pious. Or this is urged as an anſwer to what Zophar had advanced, of the wiſdom, power, and dominion of God, in which there was no ſuch myſtery as he ſeemed to intimate, *chap.* xi. 7. but it might all be read, even in the brute creation. They were the work of the hands of Jehovah (which name of God only here occurs in the whole book); they ſubſiſted by his care, and were at his ſovereign diſpoſal; truths clear and evident to enlightened reaſon, as ſounds to the attentive ear, or different ſavours to the palate; or he intimates, *v.* 11. that if any unprejudiced ear heard their diſpute, he would as eaſily diſcover the perverſeneſs of their arguments, and the ſolidity of his own, as the taſte diſcerned between ſweet and bitter. *Note,* The fallen underſtanding is like a vitiated palate, unable rightly to taſte or reliſh, but when God gives the hearing ear, then we are enabled to prove all things, and to hold faſt that which is good.

12. [m] With the ancient *is* wiſdom, and in length of days underſtanding. 13. With † him *is* [n] wiſdom and ſtrength, he hath counſel and underſtanding. 14. Behold, [o] he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: [p] he ſhutteth up a man, and there can be no opening. 15. Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: alſo [q] he ſendeth them out, and they overturn the earth. 16. [r] With him *is* ſtrength and wiſdom: the deceived and the deceiver *are* his. 17. He leadeth counſellors away ſpoiled, and [s] maketh the judges fools. 18. [t] He looſeth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle. 19. He leadeth princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. 20. [u] He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty, and [x] taketh away the underſtanding of the aged. 21. [y] He poureth contempt upon princes, and ‡ weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty. 22. [z] He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs, and bringeth out to light the ſhadow of death. 23. [a] He increaſeth the nations, and deſtroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and ‖ ſtraitneth them *again*. 24. He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and [b] cauſeth them to wander in a wilderneſs *where there is* no way. 25. [c] They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to § ſtagger like *a* drunken *man*.

[m] Chap. xxxii. 7.
† i. e. God.
[n] Chap. xxxvi. 5.
[o] Ibid. ix. 12. & xi. 10.
[p] Iſa. xxii. 22. Rev. iii. 7.
[q] Gen. vii. 11.
[r] Ver. 13.
[s] 2 Sam. xv. 31. & xvii. 14. Iſa. xix. 2. 1 Cor. i. 19.
[t] Dan. ii. 21.
[u] Chap. xxxii. 9. Iſa. iii. 2, 3.
[x] 2 Sam. xv. 31.
[y] Pſal. cvii. 40. Dan. ii. 21.
‡ Or looſeth the girdle of the ſtrong.
[z] Dan. ii. 22. Mat. x. 26. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
[a] Pſal. cvii. 38.
‖ Heb. Leadeth in.
[b] Pſal. cvii. iv, 40.
[c] Gen. xix. 11.
§ Heb. Wander.

v. 12—25. Job had aſſerted, he was not inferior to his friends in underſtanding, and he ſhews it,

1. By exalting the wiſdom and power of God as much as they had done. However wiſe the ancients were, and however deep ſkilled by long experience any man might appear, he was nothing compared with God, *the Antient of Days*, whoſe wiſdom is infinite, his counſels and underſtanding deep and unfathomable, and his ſtrength almighty and irreſiſtible. *Note,* If fierce diſputants would lay aſide the weapons of controverſy, and deſire to improve the undiſputed and glorious truths both ſides admitted, how much more would it be to their own and others edification and comfort?

2. He mentions a variety of inſtances, wherein this wiſdom and power of God appeared in the various diſpenſations of his providence in the world. [1.] There is no building up what he makes deſolate, *v.* 14. as the cities of Sodom, nor any poſſibility of delivering his priſoners, whether incloſed with the bands of affliction, or ſhut up more terribly in the dungeon of hell, where there is a great gulph fixed, ſo that none once entered, can ever paſs from thence. [2.] He hath different engines, able to act either way for the puniſhment of the ſinner, when he pleaſes, *v.* 15. If he binds up the clouds, drought and famine conſume the earth; if he opens the windows of heaven, a deluge, as in the days of Noah, ſweeps away the world of the ungodly. *Note,* If God withholds the rain of Divine influence from a ſoul, it muſt quickly wither, or if he pour forth the flood of his wrath upon us, who may abide it? [3.] From him is derived all the wiſdom of man, *the deceived, and the deceiver are his*, ver. 16. He beſtows wiſdom on the one, which he abuſes, and withholds it from the other, and both are in his hand; ſo that the crafty can proceed no farther than his permiſſion: and as he pleaſes he can counteract and diſappoint all their deep devices, and make them ſubſervient to the purpoſes of his own glory. *Note,* Though all the evil in the world proceeds from the abuſe of what God beſtows, and can proceed no farther than he pleaſes, yet is he in no wiſe to be charged as the author of the evil, which is wholly man's own work. [4.] As an evidence of what was aſſerted, *v.* 16. a proof is added, *v.* 17. in the infatuation God is pleaſed to put on the counſels of the wiſe, as in the caſe of Ahitophel, he maketh even thoſe, who as moſt eminent for underſtanding, were created judges in the land, fooliſh in their determinations. [5.] The greateſt are equally under his dominion with the loweſt, *v.* 18, 19, 21. Kings are not too high for him to humble; he can looſe their bonds, the tyrannical oppreſſions they laid on their ſubjects; or their girdles, the enſigns of royalty, ſtrip them off, reduce them to badges of ſervitude, ſo that their honour fades into contempt, and all their might affords them no protection. *Note,* No might of body, no advancement of ſtation, not even the thrones of kings, is the leaſt ſecurity, when God pleaſes to lay men's honour in the duſt, and to tread on princes as mortar: let kings and mighty men then fear to offend this Almighty God, leaſt they feel the power of his arm. [6.] The perſuaſive orator, entruſted with the concerns of ſtate, that had words at will, heſitates, and is confuſed, if God withholds his help; and the aged ſenator, renowned for wiſdom, becomes fooliſh, *v.* 20. Have we ready utterance, or ſolid underſtanding? Be it remembered who made man's mouth, and teacheth him knowledge, leaſt abuſing theſe gifts to miniſter

to our pride, confuſion and folly ſhould be our righteous puniſhment? [7.] The deep-laid plots of men his eye ſees, his providence unfolds, *v.* 21. the ſins covered with darkneſs, thick as the ſhadow of death, are unveiled to their perpetual ſhame. *Note*, Let no ſinner promiſe himſelf ſecrecy or impunity; there is an eye that pierces the darkneſs, from which no workers of iniquity can hide themſelves. [8.] Nations are increaſed or diminiſhed at his will, *v.* 22. They proſper by his arm, and that withdrawn, ruſh into ruin. *Note*, National ſtrength is from God; if he is provoked, when at the ſummit of proſperity, by undiſcerned means he can quickly breed diviſion, and the diſjointed ſtructure falls by its own weight. [9.] The greateſt generals and wiſeſt commanders, deprived by him of valour and counſel, loſe their courage, are ſunk with panic fear, utterly at a loſs how to act, and by miſtakes groſs as darkneſs, ſtumble and loſe the power of reſiſtance, as a drunken man: ſo weak are the wiſeſt and greateſt without God; and ſo ſure it is that wiſdom and power alone belong unto the Lord, and can only be derived from him.

CHAP. XIII.

In this chapter, 1. *Job concludes himſelf their equal in wiſdom*, ver. 1, 2. *and condemns their partiality and deceitfulneſs, under colour of pleading God's cauſe*, ver. 4—8. *threatens them with the judgments of God*, ver. 9—12. *deſires them to be ſilent*, ver. 5, 13, 17. *and then turns from them to God*, ver. 3. 2. *He profeſſes his confidence in God*, ver. 15, 16, 18. 3. *He expoſtulates with God concerning his deplorable condition*, ver. 14—19, &c. *complains of the confuſion he was in*, ver. 20—22. *and of the rigour of God's proceedings againſt him*, ver. 23—28.

1. LO, mine eye hath ſeen all *this*, mine ear hath heard and underſtood it. 2. [a] What ye know, *the ſame* do I know alſo: I *am* not inferior unto you. 3. [b] Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God. 4. But ye *are* forgers of lies, [c] ye *are* all phyſicians of no value. 5. O that you would altogether hold your peace, and [d] it ſhould be your wiſdom. 6. Hear now my reaſoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips. 7. [e] Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? 8. Will ye accept his perſon? [f] will ye contend for God? 9. Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye *ſo* mock him? 10. [g] He will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons. 11. Shall not his † excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you? 12. Your remembrances *are* like unto aſhes, your bodies to bodies of clay.

[a] Chap. xii. 3.
[b] Ibid. xxiii. 3. & xxxi. 35.
[c] 1 Tim. i. 7.
[d] Prov. xvii. 28.
[e] Chap. iv. 7. & viii. 6, 20.
[f] Judg. vi. 31.
[g] Chap. xlii. 7.
† Or height or greatneſs.

v. 1—12. In vindicating his cauſe againſt his unkind friends, ſome ſeverity mixes with his juſt ſelf-defence.

1. He deſires them to weigh what he had ſaid, that they might be convinced he was not ſo weak as they would inſinuate, he ſpoke from experience and obſervation, and he was aſſured that both would corroborate his ſentiments, and prove him at leaſt their equal in underſtanding. *Note*, We ſhould well weigh before we condemn; raſh cenſures ſhew only the folly of thoſe who beſtow them.

2. He wiſhes the cauſe might be brought before God, *v.* 3. either to reaſon with him as a diſputant, or as the umpire between him and his friends: could this be granted, he feared not to carry the point. *Note*, Conſcious ſimplicity fears not the eye of piercing truth.

3. He ſharply upbraids their cruel treatment of him: *Ye are forgers of lies*, contriving and publiſhing poſitions contrary to the truth of God, and highly injurious to the character of their neighbour; that God never afflicted the righteous, and that Job's ſufferings were on account of his wickedneſs: *ye are all phyſicians of no value*, *idol-phyſicians*, pretenders to ſcience, but ignorant both of the cauſe of his maladies, and the method of cure, deceiving his hopes, and as uſeleſs as the idol ſtock or ſtone. *Note*, (1.) A deliberate lye is a crying ſin; againſt ſuch falſe tongues no innocence can protect. (2.) Whatever here below the awakened ſinner flies to, for help and healing, will make him worſe rather than better: none can cure the miſeries of a fallen ſpirit, but that great phyſician, who hath the balm of life and grace to miniſter to the ſin-ſick ſoul.

4. He begs them to hold their peace, *v.* 5. rather than ſpeak ſuch words as wound, inſtead of healing; and that their wiſdom would better appear in ſilence, than in arguments ſo weak, and urged with ſuch unkindneſs. He earneſtly entreats them to hear his reaſoning, and not be inattentive to, or diſregard his pleadings, as they ſeemed to do. *Note*, (1.) Haſtineſs to ſpeak, and raſhneſs to utter without mature deliberation, expoſes the folly, inſtead of diſplaying the wiſdom of a diſputant. (2.) Truth needs only a fair hearing, but prejudice is deaf, and the beſt of men often ſuffer unheard, or unnoticed.

5. He expoſtulates with them on the folly, ſin, and danger of their conduct; who whilſt they pretended to plead the cauſe of God and truth, diſhonoured him by falſhood, and miſrepreſented his diſpenſations: *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God?* in condemning a righteous man as a hypocrite, *and talk deceitfully for him*, by pretending to vindicate his juſtice at the expence of his truth. *Will ye accept his perſon*, according to human partiality, and conſtruing his afflictions into ſigns of guilt, refuſe to examine my caſe, and judge me unheard? *Will ye contend for God?* does his cauſe need ſuch advocates? or will your pretext to plead for him excuſe the falſhood of your principles, or the raſh cenſure of your concluſions? *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?* would he not then detect the evil of your principles, and the cruelty of your conduct? *or as one man mocketh another, do ye ſo mock him?* pretending to be on his ſide, yet ſpeaking to his diſhonour. *He will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons*; however you may deceive yourſelves with imaginations of zeal for the honour of his perfections, he will reſent your accuſations of an upright man, condemned unjuſtly by you: *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* or *his heighth*, his glorious perfections of power, holineſs, truth, &c. *and his dread fall upon you*, as falſe witneſſes for him, doing ſo bad a thing, under a pretence of zeal for his glory. *Your remembrances are like unto aſhes, your bodies to bodies of clay*, your arguments are light as aſhes, and as weak as a fortification compoſed of *eminences of clay*; or he ſuggeſts their weak and mortal ſtate, as a reaſon why they ſhould be afraid to provoke the holy and avenging God. *Note*, (1.) A good intention will not excuſe, much leſs juſtify an ill thing. (2.) They who plead for God, need be ſerious enquirers after truth themſelves, and neither wilfully or wickedly condemn thoſe whom God hath not condemned. (3.) Whatever deceit we may put on others, or ourſelves, God is not mocked; he ſearcheth the heart, is no reſpecter of perſons, and will aſſuredly reprove the evil he diſcerns, however ſecretly concealed, or coloured over with whatever pious pretext. (4.) The conſideration of God's excellency and our meanneſs, his perfections and our vanity, ſhould awaken in our mind a holy awe, and make us afraid to provoke his diſpleaſure.

13. Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may ſpeak, and [h] let come on me what *will*. 14. Wherefore do [i] I take my fleſh in my teeth, and [k] put my life in mine hand? 15. [l] Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him: but [m] I will † maintain mine own ways before him. 16. He alſo *ſhall be* my ſalvation: ‡ for an hypocrite ſhall not come before him. 17. Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration with your ears. 18. Behold now, I have ordered *my* cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified. 19. [n] Who *is* he *that* will plead with me? for now [o] if I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt. 20. [p] Only do not two *things* unto me: then will I not hide myſelf from thee. 21. Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid. 22. Then [q] call thou, and I will anſwer: or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.

[h] Prov. xxviii. 1.
[i] Chap. xviii. 4.
[k] 1 Sam. xxviii. 21. Pſal. cxix. 109.
[l] Pſal. xxiii. 4. Prov. xiv. 32. or Rom. iv. 18.
[m] Chap. xxvii. 5.
† Heb. Prove, or argue.
‡ Or but.
[n] Rom. viii. 33.
[o] Chap. xxxii. 19. Jer. xx. 9.
[p] Chap. ix. 34. & xxxiii. 7.
[q] Pſal. cxliii. 2.

v. 13—22. Full of matter, he reſolved to utter his ſpeech, and begs a moment's diligent attention, *v.* 17. to the declaration he was going to make.

1. Whatever became of him, whatever cenſures his friends laid on him, or whatever troubles from the hand of God, ſpeak he muſt; he would not ſmother the proteſtations of his innocence, nor pine to death in ſilent vexation, *v.* 14. for to hold his tongue under ſuch circumſtances of ſuffering and wrong, would be to burſt with grief and expire: or, as ſome render the words, *v.* 14. *At all events I will take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in my hand*, come what will come, I will maintain my integrity. *Note*, (1.) If we have the teſtimony of a good conſcience, we need fear no evil. (2.) It is a relief to ſpeak; to be condemned to ſilence under oppreſſion and wrong, is doubly hard to be born.

2. He ſtrongly maintains his ſimplicity before God. *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him:* the ſeverity of my trials ſhall not make me quit my dependance on him, and the conſciouſneſs of my integrity till death will I never renounce. *I will maintain mine own ways before him*, that I have walked in truth and all good conſcience. Not that herein he placed his hope of ſalvation; no; *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation*, in his ſaving and ſovereign grace is my truſt, whatever becomes of me here below; but this he never could hope to partake of, if allowed guile had been chargeable upon him; *for an hypocrite ſhall not come before him:* this he was fully aſſured of, and as ſure this character was not applicable to himſelf, as his friends had inſinuated. *Behold, now I have ordered my cauſe*, am ready to maintain it againſt every accuſer; *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*,

from the malicious accuſations of men, from the ſin he had confeſſed, and in his own heart enjoy the conſciouſneſs of his acceptance before God. *Who is he that will plead with me?* let him appear, and I am prepared to anſwer every allegation. *Note,* (1.) Whatever diſcouragements are in our way, confidence in God is our great duty and ſupport. (2.) They who plead the ſalvation of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall find no charge capable of lying againſt them in the court of heaven. (3.) Though ſincerity is neither our perfection nor juſtification before God, it is a comfortable evidence to our own ſouls, of an intereſt in his ſalvation, whilſt hypocriſy gives the lie to every hope.

3. He turns from his friends, to make his addreſs to God. Two things he deſires, and then he will undertake to open his cauſe: [1.] That his afflictions be removed, or ſuſpended; and [2.] That the terror of the Divine Majeſty be withdrawn, and that ſuch a manifeſtation of his preſence might be made, as would not confound and diſmay him: then as defendant he would anſwer, or as plaintiff interrogate, and reaſon with God on his dealings with him. A daring propoſal, for which he was afterwards by Elihu, and God himſelf, juſtly cenſured. *Note,* (1.) In our diſtreſs we are too apt to utter what, on reflection, we deeply condemn. (2.). When we ſee a perfect man ſo imperfect, it ſhould teach us what a fallen creature is in his beſt eſtate, how ignorant, and, in many inſtances, how perverſe ſtill before God.

23. [r] How many *are* mine iniquities and ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion, and my ſin. 24. Wherefore [s] hideſt thou thy face, and [t] holdeſt me for thine enemy? 25. [u] Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? And wilt thou purſue the dry ſtubble? 26. For thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and [x] makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth. 27. [y] Thou putteſt my feet alſo in the ſtocks, and † lookeſt narrowly unto all my paths; thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet. 28. And [z] he, as a rotten thing conſumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

[r] Pſ. xix. 12.
[s] Deut. xxxii. 20. Pſ. xiii. 1. Iſa. viii. 17.
[t] Chap. xvi. 9. & xix. 11. & xxxiii. 10. Lam. ii. 5.
[u] Iſa. xlii. 3.
[x] Chap. xx. 11. Jer. xxxi. 19.
[y] Chap. xxxiii. 11.
† Heb. Obſerveſt.
[z] Pſ. xxxix. 11. Hoſ. v. 12.

v. 23—28. Having propoſed a fair trial, Job here,

1. Begs to be informed of the number and nature of his ſins, *v.* 23. being confeſſedly a ſinner, though not chargeable with any groſſer crime. Some underſtand this as the language of humility, others, as a complaint of hard meaſure, to ſuffer without knowing the cauſe, or being conſcious of having given any particular provocation: the latter ſenſe ſeems moſt to correſpond with the following expoſtulations. *Note,* (1.) Who can underſtand his errors? they who know moſt, know but a little of the evil they ſtand chargeable with before God. (2.) They who ſearch moſt into their own hearts, will daily ſee growing cauſe of ſhame and confuſion before God.

2. He grieves bitterly at the abſence of a ſenſe of God's favour, a more afflictive burden than all his other loſſes, and cannot bear the thought of having the God he loved treat him as an enemy, and frown on him in diſpleaſure. *Note,* (1.) Thoſe alone who have enjoyed communion with God, know the miſery of darkneſs, and diſtance from him. (2.) An apprehenſion of God's wrath is a kind of hell upon earth. (3.) When God ſeems to depart from us, we need ſee what hath provoked him, for ſurely there is a cauſe.

3. He expoſtulates with God on his treatment of him, as beneath his majeſty to cruſh a worm, as unable to reſiſt him, as the ſtubble the furious whirlwind: perhaps he meant it to move his commiſeration. He complains of the hard meaſure he endured, for which the iniquities of his youth were raked up againſt him, as thoſe that afforded moſt cauſe for condemnation; and intimates God's ſeverity in putting him into ſuch a ſtate of ſuffering, marking every falſe ſtep, as if ſollicitous to catch at the leaſt infirmity to vindicate his procedure, and to increaſe his anguiſh, under which already he pined away, as a corpſe turning to putrefaction, and as a garment moth-eaten; under ſuch miſery to add to his ſufferings, ſeemed bitter, not to ſay cruel. *Note,* (1.) They have ſadly-miſtaken notions of the divine compaſſions, who can entertain a thought of his breaking with his wrath the heart that is bleeding in humiliation. (2.) Youthful ſins, however light they may be made of, God remembers, and will, ſooner or later, make his ſervants poſſeſs the bitter remembrance of them. (3.) They who think God too ſtrict and ſevere, prove both their own ignorance of themſelves and him. Were one of our days but brought to a rigid ſcrutiny, long ſince we muſt have been undone for ever. (4.) Man is a periſhing worm, and even above ground often becomes loathſome. How vile doth diſeaſe make our bodies! but how much more odious hath ſin made our ſouls! What a bleſſed hope to be delivered for ever from both in a reſurrection day!

CHAP. XIV.

Having mentioned his periſhing body, Job, in conſideration thereof, pleads for a reſpite. He here ſpeaks, 1. *Of man's life, as ſhort,* ver. 1. *Sorrowful,* ver. 1. *Sinful,* ver. 4. *Stinted,* ver. 5, 14. 2. *Of man's death, as the period of our preſent exiſtence,* ver. 7—12. *As what delivers us from our calamities,* ver. 13. *Deſtroys our hopes of life,* ver. 18, 19. *and ſhuts out the knowledge of every thing here below,* ver. 20—22. 3. *This he pleads with God, who he thought was too ſevere with him,* ver. 16, 17. *begging that he would not contend with him,* ver. 3. *but grant him a little reſpite,* ver. 6. 4. *He engages to prepare for death,* ver. 14. *and comforts himſelf in the hope that it will prove his gain,* ver. 15.

1. MAN *that is* born of a woman, *is* of [a] few days, and [b] full of trouble. 2. [c] He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not. 3. And doſt thou open thine eyes upon ſuch an one, and bringeſt me into judgment with thee? 4. [d] Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one. 5. Seeing [e] his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſs. 6. [f] Turn from him, that he may reſt till he ſhall accompliſh, [g] as an hireling, his day.

[a] Gen. xlvii. 9.
[b] Eccleſ. ii. 23.
[c] Chap. viii. 9. Pſ. xc. 5, 9. & cii. 11. & ciii. 15. Iſa. xl. 6. Jam. iv. 14.
[d] Gen. v. 3. Pſ. li. 5. John iii. 6. Rom. v. 12. Eph. ii. 3.
[e] Chap. vii. 1.
[f] Chap. vii. 16, 19. & x. 20. Pſ. xxxix. 13.
[g] Chap. vii. 1.

v. 1—6. We have here,

1. A lively and affecting deſcription of miſerable *man, who is born of a woman,* a dying worm, ſprung from dying worms. He *is of few days,* ſo ſhort his paſſing exiſtence, that years, or months, are too long to reckon by: he is the creature of a day, at fartheſt, a *few* ſhort days terminate his mortal being, *and full of trouble* withal. From the hour that in cries he firſt bemoaned his entrance into a wretched world, ſorrow is his portion; infancy, youth, manhood, age, have their attendant diſeaſes, griefs, vexations, cares, and fears, till death, the king of terrors, cloſes the ſcene. In his beſt eſtate, *he cometh forth as a flower,* which of itſelf would quickly fade, but is ſeldom left to ſuch a gradual decay; *he is cut down,* by the ſtroke of diſeaſe or accident, as graſs before the mower's ſcythe: ſo tranſitory is all his excellence. *He fleeth alſo as a ſhadow*; there is no more ſubſtantial good in his ſhort-lived enjoyments, than there is ſolidity in a ſhadow; *and,* what makes them ſtill more vain, he *continueth not,* but haſtens from life to death, as the ſhadow of the flying bird: withal full of ſin as of ſorrow, and indeed thence all his ſorrow flows. He came a corrupted creature into the world, a child of fallen man, begotten in his image, *for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* or, from ſuch a ſinful original, what but evil can be the natural fruit? *Not one* is born but in this ſtate; not one is found, who is not a tranſgreſſor from the womb. Now ſin and death are twin-ſiſters; *ſeeing* man is thus corrupt, *his days are determined* by a divine and unalterable decree. *The number of his months are with thee,* known and fixed; *thou haſt appointed his bounds, which he cannot paſs,* when every effort to preſerve the departing ſpirit will be in vain, and friends or phyſicians be unable to avert or ſuſpend the execution of that awful ſentence, *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return.* *Note,* (1.) A humbling ſenſe of original ſin is the foundation of all true humiliation. (2.) The vanity and ſhortneſs of our preſent life ſhould quicken us to greater diligence in ſecuring an eternity of ſubſtantial bliſs. (3.) Though our death is fixed in God's decree, we, who know not his ſecrets, are bound to uſe all thoſe means he hath appointed for the preſervation of our lives, and leave the event with him.

2. Job expoſtulates with God, why, as a creature ſo weak, corrupt, and worthleſs, he ſhould ſo ſtrictly eye his ways, and ſo rigorouſly ſevere call him to his bar, *v.* 3. He begs a moment's reſpite, *v.* 6. that God would turn his frowning face away, and ſuffer him as a hireling to accompliſh his day, with ſome little intermiſſions from ceaſeleſs toil, and bring him at laſt to that ſleep in death, which would be to him ſweeter than reſt to the weary labourer. *Note,* (1.) Life is a day of toil, but, bleſſed be God, there remaineth a reſt for his people, eternal in the heavens. (2.) We have a God who knows our frailty, and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; it is good in prayer to ſpread our caſe before him.

7. For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, [h] that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not ceaſe. 8. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the ſtock thereof die in the ground: 9. *Yet* through the ſcent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. 10. But man dieth, and waſteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghoſt, and [i] where *is* he? 11. *As* the waters fail from the ſea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: 12. So man lieth down, and riſeth not till [k] the heavens *be* no more, they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their ſleep. 13. O that thou wouldſt hide me in the grave, that thou wouldſt keep me ſecret, until thy wrath be paſt, that thou wouldſt appoint

[h] Ver. 14.
[i] Chap. xix. 26.
[k] Iſa. li. 6. & lxv. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10. Rev. xx. 11. & xxi. 1.

appoint me a ſet time, and remember me! 14. If a
man die, [l] ſhall he live *again?* all the days of my ap-
pointed time [m] will I wait, till my change come. 15.
[n] Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer thee: thou wilt have
a deſire to the work of thine hands.

[l] Chap. xix. 26. Dan. xii. 2.
[m] Chap. xiii. 15.
[n] John v. 28.

v. 7—15. Having pathetically deſcribed the miſeries of life, he paſſes on to the conſideration of death, where his fleſh might reſt in hope; though not of proſperity on earth, yet of a joyful reſurrection.

1. At death, man's hope in this world finally periſhes. A tree cut down will ſprout again; and though the ſtock be dead, fibres from the root will put forth new ſuckers: the waters exhaled from the ſea, fall down again in ſhowers; and winter's floods, though dried up by the ſcorching ſun, at the returning ſeaſon riſe as before. But man's waſte is irreparable, and when at death he gives up the ghoſt, as ſoon he muſt, he is gone for ever: no ſhoot ſhall ſpring, no flood of life return; where he lieth down he muſt abide, *till the heavens are no more*, never to return to life below: or perhaps intimating, that in another world only, when the heavens ſhould be wrapped together as a ſcroll, he might expect to riſe again, *chap.* xix. 26. *Note*, (1.) Though man's body dies, his ſoul periſhes not with it, but lives in the world of ſpirits. (2.) Since there is no return hither to correct what hath been amiſs, great need have we to improve that preſent moment on which eternity depends.

2. As he had hope in his death, he longs for its arrival; *O that thou wouldſt hide me in the grave*, from all the miſeries and ſorrows he endured, and from the ſtrife of tongues; *that thou wouldſt keep me ſecret*, where no eye ſhould ſee him, *until thy wrath be paſt*, the effects of which he apprehended would never remove till he was returned to the duſt, and waited a reſurrection day. *That thou wouldſt appoint me a ſet time*, to diſcharge me from the labours of life, or to reſcue me from the duſt of death, *and remember me!* think upon my ſorrows to end them, or on my ſleeping aſhes to raiſe them once more from the grave. *Note*, (1.) Till the body ſleeps in death, we cannot be hid from troubles; but there at leaſt they will end. (2.) The duſt of God's ſaints is precious to him, he doth not forget them; the time is fixed for their glorious reſtitution, and herein they can rejoice.

3. He reſolves in patient hope to wait God's appointed time. *If a man die*, as ſurely he muſt, *ſhall he live again*, to amend any thing that is paſt? no; therefore let me with patience bear my preſent burden. Or, *ſhall he live again?* yes; though his body lie down in the duſt, he ſhall riſe again: therefore *all the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change come.* This expectation ſhall reconcile me to my preſent afflictions: a change will come, a glorious change; the time is fixed; O come the welcome day. *Then thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer thee*, ready for the arms of death, or from the duſt, joyful to hear the trump that awakes the dead. *Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thine hands*; the curious fabric of my body, which thy hands have faſhioned, thou wilt reſtore, no more to taſte of death, or ſee corruption. *Note*, (1.) The hope of a glorious reſurrection is the great ſupport under every human miſery. (2.) Death hath changed its nature, when grace hath changed our hearts; it then becomes our privilege to die.

16. For now [o] thou numbreſt my ſteps, doſt thou not
watch over my ſin? 17. [p] My tranſgreſſion *is* ſealed up
in a bag, and thou ſeweſt up mine iniquity. 18. And
ſurely the mountain falling, † cometh to nought: and
the rock is removed out of his place. 19. The waters
wear the ſtones: thou ‡ waſheſt away the things which
grow *out* of the duſt of the earth, § and thou deſtroyeſt
the hope of man. 20. Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt
him, and he paſſeth: thou changeſt his countenance,
and ſendeſt him away. 21. His ſons come to honour,
and [q] he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low,
but he perceiveth *it* not of them. 22. But ‖ his fleſh
upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall
mourn.

[o] Chap. xxxiv. 21. Pſ. lvi. 8. & cxxxix. 2, 3. Prov. v. 21.
[p] Deut. xxxii. 34. Hoſ. xiii. 12.
† Heb. Fadeth.
‡ Heb. Overfloweſt.
§ Or, ſo.
[q] Eccleſ. ix. 5.
‖ Or, Whilſt his fleſh is upon him, he ſhall have pain, and whilſt, &c.

v. 16—22. Job returns to his ſad complaints,

1. Of God's rigour. He had no hope of reſt on this ſide the grave, whilſt God ſeemed to mark with curious eye each ſtep, to minute the leaſt tranſgreſſions, and ſeal them up, as indictments ready to be produced in court againſt him. *Note*, (1.) Hard thoughts of God are as bitter to ourſelves, as diſhonourable to him. (2.) It is the want of a due ſenſe of the evil of ſin, that leads us to complain.

2. Of man's waſting and irreparable condition. The mountains moulder; the rocks are removed by floods, or earthquakes; the ſtones, by continual dropping, are hollowed out; and floods ſweep away the productions of the earth. Theſe waſtes none can repair; the mountains cannot grow again, nor the rocks return; the hollow of the ſtone is never filled up, nor the deſolations of the flood repaired; *and*, or *ſo*, *thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man*, who, once removed by death, never returns to his place again: *thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him*, contention is vain, diſeaſe and death cannot be reſiſted; *and he paſſeth*, as a wind from the face of the earth. *Thou changeſt his countenance*; the ſtroke of ſickneſs covers the blooming face with livid paleneſs, and death makes it ghaſtly and frightful, *and ſendeſt him away* into the grave. There, inſenſible of all that paſſes here below, *his ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not*; *and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain*, in the dying hour, or when in the grave, figuratively ſpeaking, his body ſhall ſee corruption, *and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn* at the bitterneſs of death. *Note*, (1.) This is a periſhing world, we and it conſume together; how vain then to place our confidence on any thing here below. (2.) Death makes ſtrange alterations; proud beauty ſhould look in that glaſs, to humble its ſelf-idolatry. (3.) It is to nature a bitter thing to die, and expiring groans are often full of anguiſh: to a ſinner they are but the beginning of ſorrows, to a ſaint they are his farewel to pain and grief for ever.

CHAP. XV.

Job's arguments little avail. Eliphaz ſtill ſticks cloſe to the principles upon which he had condemned Job, and, 1. *He reproves him for juſtifying himſelf, and charges him with many things which he unfairly inferred from his diſcourſe*, ver. 2—13. 2. *He perſuades him to humble himſelf before God*, ver. 14—16. 3. *He tells him of the woful eſtate of the wicked, that harden their hearts againſt God*, ver. 17—35.

1. THEN anſwered Eliphaz the Temanite, and
ſaid, 2. Should a wiſe man utter † vain know-
ledge, and fill his belly with the eaſt wind? 3. Should
he reaſon with [a] unprofitable talk? or with ſpeeches
wherewith he can do no good? 4. Yea, thou ‡ caſteſt
off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God. 5. For
[b] thy mouth § uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooſeſt
the tongue of the crafty. 6. Thine own mouth con-
demneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips teſtify
againſt thee. 7. *Art* thou the firſt man *that* was born?
or [c] waſt thou made before the hills? 8. [d] Haſt thou
heard the ſecret of God? and doſt thou reſtrain wiſdom
to thyſelf? 9. [e] What knoweſt thou that we know not?
[f] *what* underſtandeſt thou, which *is* not in us? 10.
With us *are* both the gray-headed, and very aged men,
much elder than thy father. 11. *Are* the conſolations
of God ſmall with thee? is there any ſecret thing with
thee? 12. Why doth thine heart carry thee away?
and what do thine eyes wink at, 13. That thou turn-
eſt thy ſpirit againſt God, and letteſt [g] ſuch words go
out of thy mouth? 14. [h] What *is* man that he ſhould
be clean? and *he which is* born of a woman, that he
ſhould be righteous? 15. Behold, [i] he putteth no truſt
in his ſaints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his ſight.
16. [k] How much more abominable and filthy *is* man,
[l] which drinketh iniquity like water?

† Heb. Knowledge of wind.
[a] Mat. xii. 36, 37. Col. iv. 6.
‡ Or, makeſt void.
[b] Chap. ix. 22, &c. & xii. 4, 6.
§ Heb. Teacheth.
[c] Pſ. xc. 2. Prov. viii. 25.
[d] Rom. xi. 34.
[e] Chap. xiii. 5.
[f] Chap. xxxii. 7.
[g] Chap. xiii. 13, 15, 22.
[h] 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chron. vi. 36. Chap. xiv. 4. Pſ. xiv. 3. Prov. xx. 9. Eccleſ. vii. 20 1 John i. 8, 10.
[i] Chap. iv. 18. & xxv. 5.
[k] Chap. iv. 19. Pſ. xiv. 3. & liii. 3.
[l] Chap. xxxiv. 7. Prov. xix. 28.

v. 1—16. Job's friends had all ſpoken in turn, and Eliphaz, who had opened the diſpute, undertakes again to reply, much offended that Job preſumed to controvert their arguments, and from his own words endeavouring to produce ſundry accuſations, in confirmation of the point he ſo ſtrenuouſly denied.

1. He reproaches him with folly and emptineſs in his arguments, whereby he had for ever forfeited the character of a wiſe man, *v.* 2, 3. His reaſonings were vain, and his words bluſtering as the eaſt wind, yet without ſolidity, unprofitable, and uſeleſs. *Note*, (1.) It is much eaſier to treat an adverſary with contempt, than to anſwer him. (2.) Unprofitable talk deſerves cenſure: they that muſt give an account of every idle word, need keep well the door of their lips.

2. He charges him with great impiety, as caſting off the fear of God, and reſtraining prayer before him, *v.* 4. ſince the principles he advanced, according to Eliphaz's opinion, made all religion void. *If the tabernacles of robbers proſpered, if juſt men were laughed to ſcorn, and God deſtroys the perfect and the wicked*, then, ſaith he, what uſe is it to fear him, or to pray to him, who *laugheth at the trial of the innocent?* Such ſpeeches Eliphaz regards as deep iniquity, and the crafty gloſſes of piety, *v.* 5. with which Job covered his words, but could not conceal the hypocriſy within. His own lips, *v.* 7. ſpoke his condemnation, and no need was there for further proof. *Note*, (1.) It is too common for angry diſputants to diſtort the arguments of their adverſaries, and to charge them with inferences from them, not only never dreamt of, but utterly abhorred. (2.) They that caſt off God's fear, will not think of prayer; and they who reſtrain prayer, can have no fear of God before them;

and ſuch a prayerleſs and careleſs ſtate is the ſure proof of a man's impiety, and the forerunner of eternal ruin.

3. He arraigns him of arrogance and ſelf-conceit, as if his claim to an equality of underſtanding, *chap*. xiii. 2. was to be interpreted a monopoly of wiſdom. *Art thou the firſt man that was born ?* or *before Adam ?* that all knowledge and experience muſt center in thee ? Yea, art thou wiſe as God, pretending to be from everlaſting ? *Waſt thou made before the hills ?* or, did God conſult with thee in his glorious works, and communicate to thee his great deſigns ? *Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God ?* and *doſt thou* arrogate and *reſtrain wiſdom to thyſelf ? What knoweſt thou that we know not ?* reſpecting age, thine elders ; reſpecting numbers, and the current of antiquity, all are on our ſide : *with us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder than thy father. Note*, (1.) Nothing is eaſier than to triumph over our adverſary, by making him ſpeak what he never meant, and then confuting our own ſuppoſitions. (2.) There are ſecret things which belong unto God, to pretend to fathom which, proves not our wiſdom, but our pride and folly. (3.) Many appeal to antiquity, who would find it often hard to ſupport their pretenſions ; not that error ſupported by antiquity is a bit the better for being the older : God's word is the only ſure guide. (4.) Grey heads are not always oracles : whatever veneration is due to them, truth is too great a ſacrifice to make to any man.

4. He accuſes him of contemning the counſels of his friends, and the conſolations of God, when thoſe were the very things he wanted, and for want of which his complaint was bitter ; but becauſe he declared them miſerable comforters, they would infer, as they ſpoke for God, that it was a ſlight put upon him. *Are the conſolations of God ſmall with thee ?* deſpiſed and ſlighted. *Is there any ſecret thing with thee ?* any charm that others know not of, to ſupport thee ; or any ſecret ſin, that, being indulged, prevents the entrance of divine comforts ? *Note*, (1.) Many ſpeak in God's name, whom he never ſent, and would intereſt him in their quarrel, though he diſowns any relation to them. (2.) The conſolations of God are what an afflicted ſoul values above all things ; with theſe every trial is lightened ; without them, every burden grievous. (3.) Allowed ſin neceſſarily cuts off the ſources of true comfort.

5. He charges upon him inſolence againſt God. *Why doth thine heart carry thee away ?* like an unruly horſe, that refuſes bit or bridle ; *and what do thine eyes wink at ?* Why ſo contemptuous of us ? Or what is thy aim and intention in thoſe hard ſpeeches of thine, *that thou turneſt thy ſpirit againſt God*, as if daring to contend with him, *and letteſt ſuch words go out of thy mouth ?* arraigning his wiſdom, juſtice, and providence. It muſt be owned, Job had given ſome handle for this charge, *chap*. ix. 12. x. 3. xiii. 22—27. but Eliphaz draws a ſudden temptation into a ſettled enmity and oppoſition againſt God, exaggerates the evil, and makes no allowance for his heavy afflictions, nor any account of the expreſſions of unfeigned piety, which he conſtantly mingles with his moſt impatient complaints.

6. He inſinuates, that he juſtified himſelf as a man of ſinleſs perfection, than which, nothing was farther from Job's thoughts, *ſee chap*. xiv. 4. and therefore, from the glaring proof of man's corruption, would infer Job's falſhood in his ſelf-vindication. *What is man that he ſhould be clean ? and he which is born of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous ?* If the ſaints in glory are in his ſight imperfect, and the bright heavens, and the hoſts that inhabit them, are not clean in his ſight, *how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water ?* as naturally diſpoſed to it, as the appetite craves for food, and ſwallows it as greedily and plentiful, as thoſe who are parched with thirſt do the cooling draught. *Note*, (1.) Man is naturally diſpoſed to evil, and only evil, and that continually. (2.) Indulgence in ſin makes our beſtial appetites only the more craving. (3.) As both our nature and our ways are unclean before God, we can never in his ſight preſume to be juſtified. (4.) Sin is the abominable thing God hates, and will aſſuredly puniſh, unleſs the ſoul be waſhed in that blood of Jeſus, which alone can make us clean.

17. I will ſhew thee, hear me, and that *which I* have ſeen, I will declare, 18. Which wiſe men have told [m] from their fathers, and have not hid *it* : 19. Unto whom alone the earth was given, and [n] no ſtranger paſſed among them. 20. The wicked man travelleth with pain all *his* days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppreſſor. 21. [o] † A dreadful ſound *is* in his ears ; [p] in proſperity the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him. 22. He believeth not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs, and he is waited for of the ſword. 23. [q] He wandreth abroad for bread, *ſaying*, Where *is it ?* he knoweth that [r] the day of darkneſs is ready at his hand. 24. Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid ; they ſhall prevail againſt him, as a king ready to the battle. 25. For [s] he ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God, and ſtrengthneth himſelf againſt the Almighty. 26. He runneth upon him, *even* on *his* neck, upon the thick boſſes of his bucklers : 27. Becauſe [t] he covereth his face with fatneſs, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks. 28. And he dwelleth in deſolate cities, *and* in houſes which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps. 29. He ſhall not be rich, neither ſhall his ſubſtance continue, neither ſhall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth. 30. He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs, the flame ſhall dry up his branches, and [u] by the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away. 31. Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity : for vanity ſhall be his recompence. 32. It ſhall be accompliſhed [x] before his time, and his branch ſhall not be green. 33. He ſhall ſhake off his unripe grape as the vine, and ſhall caſt off his flower as the olive. 34. For the congregation of hypocrites *ſhall be* deſolate, and fire ſhall conſume the tabernacles of bribery. 35. [y] They conceive miſchief, and bring forth ‡ vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

[m] Gen. xviii. 19.
[n] Joel iii. 17.
[o] Lev. xxvi. 36.
† Heb. A ſound of fears.
[p] 1 Theſ. v. 5.
[q] Gen. iv. 12. Pſ. lix. 15. & cix. 10.
[r] Chap. xviii. 12.
[s] Mal. iii. 13.
[t] Pſ. xvii. 10.
[u] Chap. iv. 9. 2 Theſ. ii. 8.
[x] Chap. xxii. 16. Pſ. lv. 23.
[y] Pſ. vii. 14. Iſa. lix. 4. Hoſ. x. 13.
‡ Or, iniquity.

v. 17—35. Eliphaz proceeds with his arguments, which are as weak as his reproaches were unjuſt. He inſiſts the wicked are always miſerable, and Job's ſufferings therefore are a ſufficient proof of his guilt.

1. He beſpeaks Job's attention ; *I will ſhew thee, hear me*, ſomething worth notice, and not ſuch unprofitable talk as he had declared his to be, *v.* 3. He had claimed antiquity for his voucher, *v.* 10. and profeſſes to ſpeak not more his own ſentiments, than the traditions of the wiſeſt and beſt of men, who were great as they were good, *v.* 19. *and no ſtranger paſſed among them*, either to ſhare their bleſſings, or, as robbers, to plunder them ; but their proſperity, the reward of their piety, was uninterrupted : in which he ſeems to glance at Job, unlike them in proſperity, and therefore unlike them in piety. *Note*, Experience is the wiſeſt teacher.

2. He deſcribes the wicked man, and his conſtant miſery, wherein, though he ſpeaks in a third perſon throughout, it is eaſy to ſee the application is deſigned for Job himſelf. He draws the character of the wicked man, *v.* 25—28. as daring in iniquity, fearleſs of God's threatnings, mocking at his wrath as a bugbear, and, as a combatant in arms, ruſhing on the thick boſſes of his buckler, as if defying his power, *v.* 25, 26. In eaſe and luxury he riots, fed to the full, fattened as an ox in a rich paſture, gratifying every luſt, and miniſtring to the cravings of a pampered appetite, *v.* 27. By oppreſſion he enlarges his habitation, and having ſeized the houſes of others, makes deſolations around him, as if he would dwell alone in the earth, to enjoy the fruits of his ill-gotten abundance, *v.* 28—35. *Note*, (1.) God is patient towards daring ſinners, but their time of ruin is at hand. (2.) Senſual appetite is the ſoul's ruin, and fleſhly indulgence ſtupifies the conſcience againſt all fear of God, or ſenſe of danger.

3. The miſery of the wicked man is largely deſcribed. His miſchievous devices coſt him much painful thought, his conſcience feels at times the pangs of guilt, and ſhort is the reign of iniquity, *v.* 20. Terror haunts him, a dreadful ſound is in his ears, a fearful looking for of judgment. In the midſt of his proſperity, ſome calamity ſweeps away his wealth, diſeaſe embitters all his portion, or death ſeizes him as his prey, *v.* 21. In his afflictions he ſinks under deſpair, and in hell it will be the conſummation of his miſery. The ſword of vengeance hangs terrible over him, threatning each moment to fall, *v.* 22. Reduced to beggary, he wanders, famiſhed with hunger, and none give unto him. The day of death approaching ſcares him, and ſtill more the dreadful darkneſs that obſcures his proſpect beyond the grave, *v.* 23. Increaſing troubles expected diſtreſs him, eternal anguiſh in his view diſmays him, and unable to reſiſt, as a man before an armed hoſt, he falls a prey to his own fears, *v.* 24. Poor in the midſt of his abundance, his covetouſneſs and carking care with-holds from him enjoyment ; or, conſumed on his luſts, he waſtes quickly his ill-gotten wealth : at leaſt, his poſſeſſions are tranſitory and vaniſhing as a dream, *v.* 29. His afflictive diſpenſations are without any proſpect of an end ; his children, like withered branches ſtruck with lightning, die around him ; and, at laſt, himſelf is cut off by the blaſts of God's diſpleaſure, *v.* 30. Deceived by Satan to truſt in preſent vanities, he finds a lie in his right hand : let others ſee and dread ſuch fatal deluſion, *v.* 31. An immature death ſhall ſeize him, before the time his vain hope ſuggeſted ; and, like a dry ſtick, all his wealth, family, and friends, ſhall periſh before him, or forſake him, *v.* 32. Stripped by the tempeſt of wrath, like the unripe grape, or the flower of the olive, he ſhall ſee the deſolation of all that was dear to him, *v.* 33. Though hand join in hand, the congregation of the hypocrites ſhall be deſolate : vain will be their pretexts of religion, when God comes to detect and puniſh them ; his fire will conſume the tabernacles of the wicked magiſtrates, where bribery and corruption dwelt, *v.* 34. Thus ſhall the miſchief, craft, and falſhood of the wicked return upon his own head,

and vanity, vexation, and ruin be his only portion, *v.* 35. Throughout all this deſcription he ſeems to keep Job in his eyes; whoſe loſſes, calamities, afflictions in his children, family, ſubſtance and perſon, he would intimate proved him to be this wicked man, this oppreſſor and hypocrite. *Note,* (1.) It is true the curſe of God is upon the houſes of the wicked, and ſometimes, though not always, viſible in this world. (2.) The happieſt ſinner has inward terrors, which all his enjoyments cannot ſooth or chaſe away. (3.) A dying hour, and judgment day at fartheſt, will verify all that is here aſſerted of the wicked, and more.

CHAP. XVI.

This chapter begins Job's reply to the diſcourſe of Eliphaz, 1. *He upbraids his friends with their unkind uſage of him,* ver. 1—5. 2. *He repreſents his own caſe as very deplorable upon all accounts,* ver. 6—16. 3. *He ſtill holds faſt his integrity, concerning which he appeals to God's righteous judgment, from the unrighteous cenſures of his friends,* ver. 17—22.

1. THEN Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. I have heard many ſuch things: [a] miſerable comforters *are* ye all. 3. Shall † vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou anſwereſt? 4. I alſo could ſpeak as ye *do:* if your ſoul were in my ſoul's ſtead, I could heap up words againſt you, and [b] ſhake mine head at you. 5. *But* [c] I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage *your grief.*

[a] Chap. xiii. 4.
† Heb. Words of wind. Chap. xv. 2.
[b] Pſal. xxii. 7. & cix. 25. Lam. ii. 15.
[c] Gal. vi. 1.

v. 1—5. Such arguing as Eliphaz offered, produced little conviction and leſs comfort; no wonder therefore Job, inſulted and afflicted, retorts ſharply the charges his opponent had caſt upon him. It was as hard to be patient under ſuch provocation, as to be ſilent under his ſufferings.

1. He is tired of ſuch vain repetition. It was *crambe repetita,* the ſame jarring ſtring ſtruck with the ſame rough hand. He complains of them all, as miſerable comforters, that heightened his anguiſh by unjuſt reproaches, inſtead of pouring in the kind balm of friendly ſympathy. He thought it high time for ſuch vain talkers to have done, and counts it inſolent and provoking, to have ſuch anſwers obtruded upon him. *Note,* (1.) They who ſend wounded conſciences to better obedience, and their own duties for a cure, like Job's comforters, but exaſperate the pain. (2.) All creatures can afford no ſatisfaction to the ſoul under a ſenſe of ſin, till God ſpeak the pardoning word. (3.) To cenſure men for ſins we cannot prove, and perſiſt in repeating accuſations which have been confuted and anſwered, deſerves a ſharp rebuke.

2. He ſuggeſts to them how different a conduct he would have ſhewn them, had they been in his circumſtances; and therein juſtly upbraids their cruelty and unkindneſs. *I alſo could ſpeak,* or *ought I to ſpeak? ought I to heap up words againſt you, and ſhake mine head at you,* if you were under my calamities? No: far other ſhould be my conduct. 'Twere eaſy indeed, as you do, to trample on the miſerable, and inſult the afflicted, *but I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth,* ſuggeſting every kind alleviation, miniſtring the ſoft balm of friendly ſympathy and conſolation, *and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief. Note,* (1.) Though we cannot remove the afflictions of our friends, we may kindly ſuggeſt to them arguments to ſupport them, and by tender ſenſibility with them, alleviate their ſorrows. (2.) If we placed our ſouls in other's ſtead, under their temptations and afflictions, it would teach us both to judge of them more favourably, and to treat them with greater tenderneſs.

6. Though I ſpeak, my grief is not aſſwaged: and *though* I forbear, what am I eaſed? 7. But now [d] he hath made me weary: thou haſt made deſolate all my company. 8. And thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, *which* is a witneſs *againſt me:* and my leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face. 9. [e] He teareth *me* in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnaſheth upon me with his teeth: [f] mine enemy ſharpeneth his eyes upon me. 10. They have [g] gaped upon me with their mouth, they [h] have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themſelves together againſt me. 11. [i] God hath † delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked. 12. [k] I was at eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder: he hath alſo taken *me* by my neck, and ſhaken me to pieces, and [l] ſet me up for his mark. 13. His archers compaſs me round about, he cleaveth my reins aſunder, and doth not ſpare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. 14. He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a giant. 15. I have ſewed ſackcloth upon my ſkin, and [m] defiled my horn in the duſt. 16. My face is [n] foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids *is* the ſhadow of death:

[d] Pſal. lxxxviii. 15.
[e] Chap. x. 16, 17. Lam. iii. 10.
[f] Chap. xiii. 24.
[g] Pſal. xxii. 13.
[h] Lam. iii. 30. Mic. v. 1.
[i] Chap. i. 15, 17.
† Heb. Shut me up.
[k] Chap. i. 3.
[l] Ibid. vii. 20. Lam. iii. 12.
[m] Chap. xxx. 9. Pſal. vii. 5.
[n] Lam. ii. 11.

v. 6—16. Job's complaints are ſtill uppermoſt, and all methods to aſſwage them are vain: whether he ſpoke, or was ſilent, he got no eaſe from God or man; his prayers returned unanſwered: his friends miſconſtrued his words into paſſion, and ſeem diſpoſed to call his ſilence ſullenneſs. He therefore ſpeaks in the bitterneſs of his ſoul.

1. He was weary of his life, deprived now of every comfort, deſolate and ſolitary, bereaved of his family, and forſaken of all thoſe who uſed to aſſemble at his houſe for the worſhip of God, and his hand evident in his ſuffering, added bitterneſs to the cup, *v.* 7.

2. His body, emaciated with pain and grief, looked like decrepit age, and he appeared a kind of living ſkeleton; witneſſes theſe of his deep affliction, but cruelly pleaded againſt him, as proofs of guilt and ſin.

3. His enemy, who hated him, with piercing eyes obſerved him, full of indignation, and tearing him in fury. This enemy may be underſtood of Eliphaz, or Satan, or as the context ſeems beſt to ſuit, of God himſelf, who appeared in ſuch a terrible character, and of whom he was ready to entertain ſuch hard thoughts. *Note,* They who have God indeed for their enemy, will be torn in pieces whilſt there is none to deliver them.

4. He was become the object of ſcorn and contempt, *v.* 10. and herein a type of Jeſus. But though like him in ſcorn, how inferior to him in reſignation!

5. He was delivered into the hands of the wicked; the Chaldeans, who robbed him; and his friends, who ſeemed ſo ſet againſt him; or the wicked one, the devil, whoſe power to torment him, appeared ſo abſolute.

6. The wrath of God ſeemed let looſe upon him. When at eaſe a little moment, again ſudden the ſtroke broke into ſhivers all his comforts; ſeized as a child in a giant's arms, and ſhook limb from limb; ſet up as the butt of God's poiſoned arrows, and the mark for the world's enmity; tormented with the moſt acute pains, and no intermiſſion of his agonies; living as in the pangs of death, pierced through the liver with a ſword, and the gall flowing through the wound; and daily aggravated, and increaſing troubles ſucceeding as breach upon breach, whilſt with a giant's fury, reſiſtleſs and cruel, God appeared to delight in cruſhing him under his feet: ſuch ſad thoughts his afflicted heart ſuggeſted.

7. His humiliation was deep as his affliction; ſackcloth was his garb, his glory all departed, his horn in the duſt, and tears night and day flowed, till his eyes grew dim with ſorrow, as if the ſhadow of death hung on his eyelids. *Note,* (1.) It becomes us to humble ourſelves, when God's heavy hand is upon us. (2.) Though we ſow in tears as the ſhowers in ſeed-time, the harveſt of patient ſuffering ſhall be joy.

17. [o] Not for *any* injuſtice in mine hands: alſo my prayer *is* pure. 18. O earth, [p] cover not thou my blood, and [q] let my cry have no place. 19. Alſo now, behold, my witneſs *is* in heaven, and my record *is* on high. 20. My friends † ſcorn me: *but* mine eye poureth out *tears* unto God. 21. [r] O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man *pleadeth* for his neighbour. 22. When ‡ a few years are come, then [s] I ſhall go the way *whence* I ſhall not return.

[o] Chap. xxxi. 13.
[p] Gen. iv. 10.
[q] Chap. xxvii. 9. Pſal. lxvi. 18.
† Heb. My ſcorners.
[r] Chap. xxxi. 35. Eccleſ. vi. 10. Iſa. xlv. 9. Rom. ix. 20.
‡ Heb. Years of number.
[s] Eccleſ. xii. 5.

v. 17—22. Though his paſſionate expreſſions are to be condemned, Job's uprightneſs in general deſerves the higheſt approbation.

1. He can appeal to God that theſe afflictions came not upon him for any injuſtice in his hands, as his friends ſuggeſted; or for any impiety, in reſtraining prayer before him, for God knew his integrity to man, as alſo the purity of his intentions, and the fervency of his devotions, *v.* 17—19. *Note,* It is an unſpeakable comfort, whatever we ſuffer, if we can ſtill keep a clear conſcience, and take God to record the ſimplicity of our ſouls before him.

2. He ſupports his appeal to God, by a ſolemn imprecation: If what I ſay be not true, *O earth, cover not thou my blood,* let it be ſhed for dogs to lick; or if there be any ſecret crime, let it be laid open to the day; and let my cry have no place with God or man. I am content to be condemned of both without mercy.

3. He makes God his recourſe in his afflictions, *v.* 20: amidſt the ſcorn and inſult of his friends, he poured out tears unto him; tears that beſpoke his compaſſions, tears that pleaded againſt the unkindneſs of his accuſers. *Note,* The tears of God's people are not forgotten, and they who cruelly cauſed theſe tears to fall, ſhall be recompenſed.

4. He longs to have an opportunity to plead his cauſe before God, without dread of the Divine Majeſty, *as a man pleads for his neighbour,* with freedom and unreſerve; then he doubted not

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he ſhould obtain a verdict in his favour, and ſilence his cenſorious friends.

5. He comforts himſelf that the time is ſhort, *v.* 22. and however now unjuſtly cenſured, his character would by and by be cleared up: when the few years of life ended, he ſhould go the way whence he ſhould not return, never come back again to a miſerable world, nor be expoſed to any of thoſe calamities under which he now groaned. *Note,* (1.) Death is a journey into a far country, whence we are no more to return; the moment we depart from earth, our eternity is determined for hell or heaven. (2.) The time here is ſhort; happy they who employ it in getting ready for their removal, that when the hour comes, they may have nothing to do but to die.

CHAP. XVII.

In this chapter, 1. *Job, as a dying man,* ver. 1. *appeals to God for ſpeedy redreſs of the wrongs of his friends,* ver. 2—7. *and hopes though it be a ſurpriſe, it will be no ſtumbling-block to good people to ſee him thus abuſed,* ver. 8, 9. 2. *He reflects upon the vain hopes they had fed him with, expecting nothing but approaching death,* ver. 10—16.

1. † MY breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, [a] the
graves *are ready* for me. 2. [b] *Are there* not
mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in
their provocation? 3. Lay down now, ‡ put me in a
ſurety with thee; [c] who *is* he *that* will ſtrike hands with
me? 4. For [d] thou haſt hid their heart from under-
ſtanding: therefore ſhalt thou not exalt *them.* 5. He
that ſpeaketh flattery to *his* friends, even the eyes of his
children ſhall fail. 6. He hath made me alſo [e] a by-
word of the people, and ‖ aforetime I was as a tabret.
7. [f] Mine eye alſo is dim by reaſon of ſorrow, and all
my members *are* as a ſhadow. 8. Upright *men* ſhall be
aſtoniſhed at this, and the innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf
againſt the hypocrite. 9. The righteous alſo ſhall hold
on his way, and he that hath clean hands [g] ſhall § be
ſtronger and ſtronger.

† Or my ſpirit is ſpent.
a Pſal. lxxxviii. 4.
b Chap. xiii. 9.
‡ Or appoint my ſurety with thee. Heb. vii. 22.
c Rom. viii. 33.
d Mat. xi. 25.
e Chap. xxx. 9. Pſal. xliv. 13, 14.
‖ Or before them.
f Pſal. vi. 7.
g 2 Sam. iii. 1.
§ Heb. Add ſtrength.

v. 1—9. Job wiſhed for a fair trial of his caſe, but it muſt be ſoon, or death would prevent him.

1. He ſpeaks of himſelf, as one at the point to die, *v.* 1. His breath corrupt through his diſeaſe, and drawn with difficulty; his days extinct, the laſt of them juſt at their end, and the graves of his fathers open, as ready for his reception. *Note,* (1.) Though the breath of natural life will quickly expire, if God hath breathed ſpiritual life into us, then can we never die. (2.) The days of time are drawing to their period; what folly then to ſeek our portion here, inſtead of ſecuring a part in that eternity, where time will be loſt as a drop in the ocean. (3.) If the grave is ready for us, highly it imports us to be ready for the grave; then come death, and welcome.

2. He complains of his friends, as mockers, that inſulted him with abuſe, and deceived his expectations, *v.* 2. provoking him continually, ſo that neither day or night his eyes could cloſe. *Note,* (1.) It is cruel to mock at any man's calamities. (2.) An exaſperated ſpirit drives ſleep from the eyelids.

3. He longs that God would hear the cauſe. *Lay down now* ſome pledge of appearing, *put me in a ſurety with thee,* let me have aſſurance that the cauſe ſhall be heard, or *appoint my ſurety with thee,* my Divine Redeemer, who will undertake to plead my cauſe for me, and then I am ſure of ſucceſs. *Who is he that will ſtrike hands with me,* and lay any thing to my charge? I ſhall then have an advocate to anſwer for me. *Note,* (1.) They who have Chriſt for their ſurety, may appear with boldneſs at God's bar. (2.) We may be aſſured of being accounted righteous before God, notwithſtanding any accuſations, when we have this righteous One for our advocate.

4. He imputes the charges of his friends to a judgment of infatuation upon them from God, and concludes thence their unfitneſs to be exalted as umpires in the diſpute, *v.* 4. *Note,* (1.) Wiſdom is God's gift, and when the wiſe abuſe their talent, he can infatuate and confound them. (2.) They ſhall not be exalted, but be caſt down into the pit of miſery, who employ the wiſdom God hath given them againſt the cauſe and people of God.

5. He denounces a curſe upon flatterers, ſuch as were his friends, who pretended to ſpeak for God, and to give him great expectations of proſperity, *The eyes of his children ſhall fail,* his family be deſolate, and find no kindneſs in their diſtreſſes. *Note,* Flattery is abominable, and what every wiſe and good man abhors.

6. He laments that he was now deſpiſed, though once the darling of his friends and the people. His poverty became a proverb, and his wickedneſs univerſally eſteemed the cauſe of it, *v.* 6. *Note,* (1.) We muſt place little confidence on men's regard: love and loathing, honour and infamy are often ſucceſſive. (2.) Every one is the great man's admirer; but is he reduced, how deſpicable doth he in poverty appear? It is well if we have one friend who is not ſo changeable.

7. Bitter ſorrow dimmed his eye, and continual tears wore him to a ſkeleton, *v.* 7. ſo deeply doth the body uſually partake in the anguiſh of the ſoul. Let us fear inordinate grief, leſt it make us ſelf-murtherers.

8. He declares what effect his ſufferings and his friends behaviour would have upon the righteous. They would be aſtoniſhed at his ſorrows and their cruelty, and riſe up with indignation to reprove the hypocriſy of ſuch as pretended to ſanctity, yet were ſo raſh in their cenſure of the innocent. Far from being diſcouraged by ſuch a dark diſpenſation, or the fear of the like uſage, they would hold on their way in purity, ſimplicity, and integrity; and inſtead of fainting, grow ſtronger and ſtronger. Perhaps he expreſſes his own confidence of doing ſo, notwithſtanding their revilings, conſcious of his righteouſneſs, and the cleanneſs of his ways before God. *Note,* (1.) A good man may ſee things he cannot account for in God's dealings, but he ſtaggers not through unbelief. (2.) They who are faithful to God, are zealous for him, and dare vindicate his oppreſſed cauſe and people. (3.) The bittereſt abuſe God's people ſuſtain, is uſually from formal and hypocritical profeſſors. (4.) They who are brought once into God's way, never faint nor fail, difficulties and oppoſition quicken and ſtrengthen them.

10. But as for you all, [h] do you return, and come now:
for I [i] cannot find *one* wiſe *man* among you. 11. [k] My
days are paſt, my purpoſes are broken off, *even* the
thoughts of my heart. 12. [l] They change the night into
day: the light *is* † ſhort becauſe of darkneſs. 13. If I
wait, the grave *is* mine houſe: I have made my bed in
the darkneſs. 14. I have ſaid to corruption, Thou *art*
my father: to the worm, *Thou art* my mother, and my
ſiſter. 15. And where *is* now my hope? as for my
hope, who ſhall ſee it? 16. They ſhall go down [m] to the
bars of the pit, when [n] *our* reſt together *is* in the duſt.

h Chap. vi. 29.
i 1 Cor. vi. 5.
k Chap. vii. 6. & ix. 25.
l Deut. xxviii. 67.
† Heb. Near.
m Chap. xviii. 13.
n Ibid. iii. 18. & xxi. 23.

v. 10—16. From ſad experience convinced now, how little expectation he could entertain from his friends,

1. He profeſſes his deſpair of being eaſed by their counſels, in which no traces of wiſdom appeared, and unleſs they returned to a better mind, and came with more unprejudiced tempers to hear his defence, he could hope for little good from their conference, *v.* 10. *Note,* Many are wiſe in their own eyes, who in conference, are found to add nothing unto thoſe they pretend to inſtruct.

2. He concludes it folly to flatter himſelf with the hope of good days, *v.* 11. They are paſſed, no more to return; all his gracious purpoſes of the employment of his affluence for the good of mankind are fruſtrated, and the thoughts of his heart are ready to periſh with his body in the grave: they are ſo bitter, that they change night into day, giving him no reſt, *and the light is ſhort, becauſe of the darkneſs,* v. 12. the days of proſperity ſeemed but like a flaſh of paſſing light, ſucceeded by thick darkneſs; or the day obſcured with his ſorrows drew to an end, and ſcarce afforded a beam of welcome light. *Note,* (1.) Death will put an end to all our purpoſes, therefore what now thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. (2.) The night is tireſome to the ſleepleſs eye, and the day dark to the ſorrowful; let us bleſs God if we ſleep in peace, and wake up chearful to meet the morning ſun.

3. His approaching end made it vain to expect a change; he looked for no houſe but the grave, no bed of laſting repoſe but the duſt, no more dear relatives but worms and corruption; his hope was gone of earthly bleſſings, which neither he nor they would live to ſee reſtored. One proſpect only was before him, *They muſt go down to the bars of the pit, and reſt together there.* *Note,* (1.) We are too apt to faint in adverſity, and when perplexed, to be in deſpair. Job little thought what good things yet awaited him. (2.) It is wiſe to keep death in our view, to make the grave familiar to us as our houſe, and every night ere we ſleep on our pillow, to remember our bed of duſt. To a gracious ſoul, death hath loſt its terror. Since Jeſus ſlept in the grave, it is but our houſe of paſſage, as travellers from time to eternity, from life to immortality. (3.) It little becomes thoſe to be proud, who are ſo nearly related to worms and corruption. (4.) They who could obtain no reſt before, in death will find it; there at leaſt fierce diſputes and animoſities will have an end.

CHAP. XVIII.

In this chapter Bildad makes a ſecond aſſault upon Job. 1. *He reproves him as talkative and paſſionate,* ver. 1—4. 2. *He enlargeth upon the doctrine he had before maintained, concerning the miſery of wicked people, and the ruin that attends them,* ver. 5—21. *with an evident application to Job's caſe.*

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1. THEN anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid, 2. How long *will it be*, [a] *ere* you make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak. 3. Wherefore are [b] we counted as beaſts, *and* reputed vile in your ſight? 4. [c] He teareth † himſelf in his anger: ſhall the earth be forſaken for thee? and ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?

[a] Chap. xi. 2.
[b] Ibid. xvii. 4, 10. Pſal. lxxiii. 22.
[c] Chap. xiii. 14.
† Heb. His ſoul.

v. 1—4. Sharply Bildad takes up the diſcourſe, and ſeems the more exaſperated at Job's preſumption and obſtinacy.

1. He charges him with impertinent talkativeneſs, *v.* 2. as if he took pleaſure in hearing his own voice, and would never have done with his idle words, (arguments or reaſon he will not call them) as if they were mere empty ſound, *Vox et præterea nihil.* *Note*, (1.) They that engroſs the converſation, and withal ſay nothing worth hearing, deſerve rebuke. (2.) It is too common with diſputants to treat each other with contempt and rudeneſs, but abuſe is not argument.

2. He intimates that he was inattentive to their ſound reaſonings, and that it was vain to ſpeak, unleſs he would pay ſome greater regard to their diſcourſe, *v.* 2. *Note*, It is endleſs ſpeaking to thoſe who will not hear.

3. He regards himſelf and his friends, as highly inſulted, *v.* 3. becauſe Job had, *chap.* xvii. 4. ſpoken of them as wanting underſtanding; and *chap.* xii. 7. referred them to the beaſts for wiſdom: he would infer, that he eſteemed them as brutiſh and vile. *Note*, Many people are apt to ſuſpect affronts that were never intended.

4. He accuſes him of mad rage. He had ſaid, *chap.* xvi. 9. he teareth me in his anger: No, ſays Bildad, you are your own tormentor, your paſſions are your plague. *Note*, Unmortified paſſions bring their curſe and puniſhment along with them.

5. He charges him with inſolent expectation, to change the ſettled order of providence: *Shall the earth be forſaken becauſe of thee?* ſhall God invert his method of government, and for thy ſake ceaſe to puniſh the wicked, and bleſs the righteous? and *ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?* the unchangeable God alter his purpoſes, and no longer give to a man according to his works? No: the ſuppoſition is preſumptuous and arrogant. He firſt takes it for granted, that Job's ſufferings were the puniſhment of his iniquity, and founds on them this heavy charge.

5. Yea, [d] the light of the wicked ſhall be put out, and the ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine. 6. The light ſhall be dark in his tabernacle, and [e] his † candle ſhall be put out with him. 7. The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitned, and [f] his own counſel ſhall caſt him down. 8. For [g] he is caſt into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a ſnare. 9. The gin ſhall take *him* by the heel, *and* [h] the robber ſhall prevail againſt him. 10. The ſnare *is* ‡ laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way. 11. [i] Terrors ſhall make him afraid on every ſide, and ſhall drive him to his feet. 12. His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten, and [k] deſtruction *ſhall be* ready at his ſide. 13. It ſhall devour the || ſtrength of his ſkin: *even* the firſt-born of death ſhall devour his ſtrength. 14. [l] His confidence ſhall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it ſhall bring him to [m] the king of terrors. 15. It ſhall dwell in his tabernacle, becauſe *it is* none of his: [n] brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation. 16. [o] His roots ſhall be dried up beneath, and above ſhall his branch be cut off. 17. [p] His remembrance ſhall periſh from the earth, and he ſhall have no name in the ſtreet. 18. He ſhall be driven from light into darkneſs, and chaſed out of the world. 19. [q] He ſhall neither have ſon nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings. 20. They that come after *him*, ſhall be aſtoniſhed at his day, as they that § went before were affrighted. 21. Surely ſuch *are* the dwellings of the wicked, and this *is* the place *of him* [r] *that* knoweth not God.

[d] Prov. xiii. 9. & xx. 20.
[e] Chap. xxi. 17.
† Or lamp.
[f] Eſth. vii. 9. Chap. v. 12, 13.
[g] Prov. v. 22.
[h] Chap. v. 5.
‡ Heb. Hidden.
[i] Chap. xv. 21. Jer. vi. 25. & xx. 4. & xlvi. 5.
[k] Chap. xv. 23.
|| Heb. Bars.
[l] Chap. viii. 14. & xi. 20. Pſal. cxii. 10. Prov. x. 28.
[m] Heb. ii. 15.
[n] Iſa. xiii. 19.
[o] Ibid. v. 24. Amos ii. 9. Mal. iv. 1.
[p] Pſal. cix. 13. Prov. ii. 22. & x. 7.
[q] Iſa. xiv. 22. Jer. xxii. 30.
§ Or lived with him.
[r] Pſal. lxxix. 6. 2 Theſ. i. 8. Tit. i. 16.

v. 5—21. Bildad here largely deſcribes the miſery of the wicked, and this with a view to Job's caſe; but he greatly erred from the mark. For though all he can ſay of a ſinful ſtate, reſpecting its puniſhment and wretchedneſs is true, yet it doth not always appear in this world; for neither are all who are ſinful outwardly afflicted and miſerable, nor do the greateſt ſufferings at all prove the want of the moſt ſolid piety.

1. Darkneſs ſhall overwhelm the wicked man. His light of proſperity ſhall be quickly extinguiſhed, the ſparks of worldly comforts he rejoiced in ſhall be quenched, his family ſhall be reduced to deep diſtreſs, and he ſhall go down to his grave in darkneſs and miſery, *v.* 5. 6. *Note*, (1.) The joys of a wicked man are but as the ſparks from a furnace, ſo quickly will they be fled and gone. (2.) There is a curſe upon the houſe of the ungodly; and as his ill example ſways thoſe who belong to him, they periſh together.

2. He ſhall be enſnared and enſlaved by afflictions; his ſtrong ſteps of health ſhall be ſtraitned by ſickneſs; or his large poſſeſſions round which he ſtalked in pride, ſhall be cut ſhort, *v.* 7. His craft ſhall entangle him, and be his ruin; the net he ſpread for others ſhall take his own feet, and wherever he walks, the ſnare of ſin, and conſequently miſery, is at his heels; he ſhall be caught without power to eſcape, and the robber ſhall ſpoil him, unable to make reſiſtance: hidden dangers ſurround his ſteps, and ſudden deſtruction is ready to fall on him, *v.* 8, 10. *Note*, (1.) Satan lays firſt the ſnare of ſin, and if once the ſoul cometh into his net, he will be as ſurely a tormentor as he hath been the tempter. (2.) When God leaves a wicked man to his own counſels, he ruſhes headlong into ruin.

3. Terrors make him afraid on every ſide, *v.* 11. within, an accuſing conſcience, before him death looks ghaſtly, the grave yawns, an offended God frowns, hell opens. He would take to his feet, but whither can he run to fly from God, or from himſelf. *Note*, Many a wretched ſoul flies to amuſements, cares, and diſſipations for eaſe, but vain the attempt: *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.*

4. Famine and deſtruction ſhall come upon him, *v.* 12. devour him to his very ſkin, and the moſt terrible of deaths bring him down to his grave, *v.* 13. All his confidences ſhall fail him, he ſhall be rooted out of his tabernacle, after beholding the deſolations ſpread around it, and no one comfort remaining; and at laſt, as a malefactor reluctantly dragged to execution, he ſhall be brought to the King of Terrors, terrors unſpeakable, before death, in death, after death. *Note*, (1.) Death is terrible to nature, till grace hath diſarmed him of his mortal ſting, but to the impenitent ſinner he continues a King of Terrors, the moſt terrible of all terribles. (2.) When God ſtrikes, vain are friends and phyſicians, and every human ſupport. In that hour, the moſt infatuated ſoul will feel every creature-comfort and confidence to be vanity of vanities.

5. His family will fall with him. Death will erect his throne in the ſinner's tabernacle, nor leave it till ruin, like that which was poured on Sodom, hath utterly laid it waſte; becauſe it is none of his, being gotten by fraud and oppreſſion, or by his abuſe juſtly forfeited, *v.* 15. Neither root nor branch ſhall remain; ſtruck, as with the lightning's blaſt, no heir ſhall inherit his eſtate, neither ſon nor nephew; nor ſo much as a creature be left in his deſolate habitation, *v.* 19.

6. His memory ſhall periſh. He thought to perpetuate a great name in the earth, but the remembrance of it ſhall be blotted from the annals of time, *v.* 17. Darkneſs, utter and eternal, muſt receive him; driven from his proſperity reluctant and chaſed out of the world as a ſavage beaſt, whoſe death is a deliverance to the country, *v.* 18. *Note*, However great and honourable among men the proſperous ſinner appears, his end will be to lie down in ſhame and everlaſting contempt.

7. His cotemporaries, amazed at God's judgments, ſhall hear of his fall, and poſterity be aſtoniſhed at the relation, *v.* 20.

8. Bildad ſums up his ſpeech, with confidence of the truth of what he had ſpoken: *Surely, ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked*, as above deſcribed; *and this is the place*, the miſerable lot aſſigned the reprobate ſoul *of him that knoweth not God*; for ignorance of God is at the bottom of all ſin, and ruin eternal the wages of it.

In all this deſcription of a wicked man's ſufferings, there is an evident alluſion to Job's caſe; afflicted in his perſon, his family, robbed and ſpoiled, ſeeing the deſolations of his houſe, acknowledging the terrors he felt, and bemoaning his hopeleſs wretchedneſs: and hence Bildad would infer, that being like the wicked in his ſufferings, he muſt have reſembled them in his ſins.

CHAP. XIX.

This chapter contains Job's anſwer to Bildad's diſcourſe, in which, 1. *He complains,* (1.) *That his comforters had added to his afflictions,* ver. 2—7. (2.) *That God was the author of them,* ver. 8—12. (3.) *That his relations and friends were ſtrange to him under them,* ver. 13—19. (4.) *That he had no pity ſhewed him,* ver. 20—22. 2. *He profeſſes his belief of a reſurrection, and his hopes of happineſs in it,* ver. 23—27. 3. *He cautions his friends againſt their hard cenſures of him,* ver. 28, 29.

1. THEN Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. How long [a] will ye vex my ſoul, and break me in pieces with words? 3. Theſe ten times have ye reproached me: you are not aſhamed *that* you † make yourſelves ſtrange to me. 4. And be it indeed *that* I have erred, mine error remaineth with myſelf. 5. If indeed [b] you will magnify *your ſelves* againſt me, and plead againſt my reproach: 6. Know now that God hath overthrown me, and [c] hath compaſſed me with his net. 7. Behold,

[a] Pſal. xlii. 10.
† Or harden yourſelves againſt me.
[b] Pſal. xxxviii. 16.
[c] Lam. i. 13 Hoſ. vii. 12.

I cry out of ‡ wrong, but [d] I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there is* no judgment.

‡ Or violence. Jer. xx 8.
[d] Jam. iv. 3.

v. 1—7. Severe and cutting were theſe harſh cenſures that Bildad laid upon this man of ſorrows. With juſt indignation therefore,

1. He complains of the cruel uſage he met with; *They vexed his ſoul*, added gall to his cup, attempted to rob him of his only remaining comfort, his integrity; and exaſperated his ſpirit by provocations, more than man could bear. *They broke him in pieces with words*, every one had a ſtone to throw at him: *they reproached him* as a wicked hypocrite, *they were not aſhamed to make themſelves ſtrange to him*, however zealouſly attached to him before; his afflictions had made them ſhy of him, and they bluſhed not at the baſeneſs of their conduct. *They magnified themſelves againſt him*, looked down upon, and inſulted him: *they pleaded againſt him his reproach*, turned his ſufferings into an argument of his hypocriſy and iniquity; and this they perſiſted in, notwithſtanding all his remonſtrances, and *ten times*, or ſeveral times, (a certain number for an uncertain) repeated their cruel reflections and unkindneſs. *Note*, (1.) Inward vexation is among the foreſt trials. (2.) Reproach hath been the portion of many a good man. (3.) Falſe friends diſcover themſelves in adverſity. (4.) They that are down, are generally trampled upon. (5.) It needs great patience to ſuſtain repeated inſult.

2. He makes a conceſſion for argument's ſake, *v.* 4. *Be it indeed that I have erred*, who is infallible? and errors of judgment deſerved not ſuch rough treatment. Beſides, *mine error remaineth with myſelf*; if what I hold concerning God's diſpenſations be wrong, I am only chargeable with it, and anſwerable for it: or rather I muſt remain in what you call an error, receiving not the leaſt conviction from your diſcourſes. *Note*, (1.) It were the heighth of folly to conceit ourſelves infallible. (2.) Truth is not the leſs precious, becauſe proud and worldly-wiſe men ſtamp it with the brand of error.

3. He warns them not raſhly to impute to God motives for his conduct he would diſavow. His ſufferings were from his hand alone; he was compaſſed with his net of afflictions, *v.* 6. He cried out for judgment againſt his plunderers, but was not yet heard: yea, though he cried aloud, and wiſhed the whole of his caſe might appear before God, no court was appointed for hearing it, nor judgment given, *v.* 7. but God knew wherefore he withheld the anſwer to his prayer, without admitting their concluſion that he was a wicked man. *Note*, (1.) Though our prayers may ſeem to be repulſed, we muſt not faint. (2.) Sooner or later every man's cauſe will be heard, and the righteous ſentence paſs thereon.

8. [e] He hath fenced up my way that I cannot paſs, and he hath ſet darkneſs in my paths. 9. He hath ſtript me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head. 10. He hath deſtroyed me on every ſide, and I am gone: and [f] mine hope hath he removed like a tree. 11. He hath alſo kindled his wrath againſt me, and [g] he counteth me unto him as *one of* his enemies. 12. His troops come [h] together, and [i] raiſe up their way againſt me, and encamp round about my tabernacle. 13. [k] He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me. 14. My kinsfolk have failed, and my [l] familiar friends have forgotten me. 15. They that dwell in mine houſe, and my maids, count me for a ſtranger: I am an aliant in their ſight. 16. I called my ſervant, and he gave *me* no anſwer: I intreated him with my mouth. 17. [m] My breath is ſtrange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's *ſake* of mine own body. 18. Yea, [n] † young children deſpiſed me: I aroſe, and they ſpake againſt me. 19. [o] All ‡ my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned againſt me. 20. [p] My bone cleaveth to my ſkin, ‖ and to my fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the ſkin of my teeth. 21. [q] Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for [r] the hand of God hath touched me. 22. Why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?

[e] Chap. iii. 23. Lam. iii. 7.
[f] Chap. xvii. 15.
[g] Ibid. xiii. 24. Lam. ii. 5.
[h] Pſal. xxxiv. 19.
[i] Chap. xxx. 12.
[k] Pſal. xxxi. 11. & xxxviii. 11. & lxix. 8. & lxxxviii. 8, 18.
[l] Mic. vii. 5.
[m] Chap. xvii. 1.
[n] 2 Kings ii. 23.
† Or the wicked.
[o] Pſal. xli. 9. & lv. 13, 14, 20.
‡ Heb. The men of my ſecret.
[p] Chap. xxx. 30. Pſal. cii. 5. Lam. iv. 8.
‖ Or as to my fleſh.
[q] Heb. xiii. 2.
[r] Chap. i. 11. Pſal. xxxviii. 2.

v. 8—22. Job acknowledged the hand of God in his afflictions, and here,

1. Complains of the diſpleaſure of God therein manifeſted. Like a benighted traveller in a wood, with briars and thorns God had hedged up his way, *v.* 8. and he could ſee no path out of his troubles. As one ſeized by robbers he had loſt his all, ſtripped of his earthly comforts, children, honours, and eſtate, *v.* 9. deſtroyed on every ſide, his hope was gone, as a tree rooted up and dry, that never can revive again, *v.* 10. more bitter than any thing beſide, God's wrath appeared kindled againſt him, and he ſeemed to treat him as an enemy, compaſſing him with legions of afflictions, and ſore preſſing him on every ſide like a beſieged city, *v.* 11, 12. *Note*, (1.) The people of God are apt to write bitter things againſt themſelves, and to miſtake the rod of love for the ſcourge of ruin. (2.) Hope is the laſt ſupport of the miſerable; when that is gone, the caſe is deplorable indeed. (3.) Though we may ſee no way to eſcape out of temptation, he who laid the trial upon us, knows how to bring us through it with ſafety.

2. He laments the unkindneſs of his friends and acquaintance, wherein alſo he ſees God's afflicting hand, *His brethren he had put far from him.* It was their ſin that they were ſo faithleſs to him, but it was of God who ſuffered them. His relations failed him, his acquaintance ſhunned him, his familiar friends forſook him, *v.* 13, 14. his very domeſtics ſlighted him, and would not vouchſafe him an anſwer, though he called and entreated, *v.* 15, 16. yea, the wife of his boſom cared not to come near him, and ſhunned his breath, as if infectious; and though he beſought her by every endearing tie of conjugal affection, ſhe paid no regard to his entreaty, *v.* 17. Even the children in the ſtreets had learned of their ungodly parents to mock at him; and as he went, or aroſe to correct and ſilence them, they continued to revile him, *v.* 18. nay, his boſom friends, whom he loved as his own ſoul, not only forſook but abhorred him; not only as loathſome, but as a wicked hypocrite, *v.* 19. and to juſtify their own perfidy, turned againſt him with the moſt virulent abuſe. *Note*, (1.) They who are under frowning Providences, will often ſee cauſe of complaint againſt man's baſeneſs and ingratitude. (2.) The nearer the relation, the greater our love, and juſt expectations of a due return, the bitterer will be the diſappointment.

3. He bemoans the painful and diſeaſed condition of his miſerable body, *v.* 20. reduced and emaciated by his ſores and ſorrows, till his bones appeared ready to ſtart through his ſkin, and that all over ulcerated, except his gums or lips; Satan leaving him the uſe of ſpeech, not out of compaſſion, but that he might curſe God.

4. He entreats, on this repreſentation of his caſe, the pity of his friends, *v.* 21: if they would grant him nothing more, his very miſeries deſerved that at leaſt: and upbraids them with the ſavage cruelty of perſecuting thus him whom God had ſmitten, as if in his ſtead, and veſted with his authority, not content with all the miſeries he had already ſuffered, and ſtriving to fill to the brim the cup of his afflictions, *v.* 22. *Note*, (1.) The leaſt we owe to human woe is pity; a friend will do more, he will partake in it, and labour to relieve, or alleviate the ſorrows of the afflicted. (2.) It is doubly grievous where God hath wounded, inſtead of binding up the broken-hearted, to aggravate their pains.

23. Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! 24. That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever! 25. † For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* [s] he ſhall ſtand at the latter *day* ‡ upon the earth. 26. ‖ And *though* after my ſkin, *worms* deſtroy this *body*, yet in my fleſh [t] ſhall I ſee God: 27. Whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not § another; † *though* my reins be conſumed within me. 28. But ye ſhould ſay, [u] Why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me? 29. Be ye afraid of the ſword: for wrath *bringeth* the puniſhments of the ſword, [x] that ye may know *there is* a judgment.

† Or namely.
[s] Dan. vii. 9. Mat. xxvi. 64. Rev. i. 6.
‡ Or above.
‖ Or after I awake, tho' this body be deſtroyed, yet, &c.
[t] Pſal. xvii. 15. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2.
§ Heb. A ſtranger.
† Heb. My reins are conſumed in my boſom.
[u] Ver. 22.
[x] Mat. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13.

v. 23—29. We have here the glorious confeſſion of Job's faith, as his great and only ſupport, when all beſide ſeemed deſperate. His friends might be convinced hereby he was neither infidel nor wicked; he believed in a Divine Redeemer, and expected with confidence a judgment day; when, if not before, all their unjuſt accuſations would be confuted and confounded: and this is to all unjuſtly aſperſed by calumny, and oppreſſed by the world, an encouraging expectation. Some have explained this remarkable ſcripture away as relative only to a temporal reſtitution, but it is evident, *v.* 10. this he utterly deſpaired of; and *chap.* xxiii. 8, 9. xxx. 23. it appears he had not the leaſt hope of proſperity returning in this world, and therefore he looked beyond the grave, into a better, where his ſoul had caſt anchor within the vail.

1. He prefaces his expectation with an earneſt wiſh, that the words he was now about to ſay, might be perpetuated to all ages, as a ſtanding monument of his faith and hope, graven in the rock with an iron pen, and filled up with lead: perhaps he wiſhed this inſcription might be written on his tomb-ſtone, to teſtify when he was dead, the ſentiments he entertained when alive. *Note*, It is for the glory of God, and the good of poſterity, to leave behind us teſtimonies of our faith and hope; that in their works and writings, good men, like Job and Abel, (though dead) might ſtill ſpeak.

2. His confeſſion deſerves to be written, not merely in letters of lead on the rock, but on tables of gold, or rather on fleſhly tables of our hearts for ever. *For*, or *namely*, this is what I would have inſcribed on the rock, *I know that my redeemer liveth*,

my divine Goel, to whom the right of redemption belongs; he lives from everlaſting to everlaſting, *and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth*, when he appears incarnate for his people's ſalvation; or rather *above the earth*, when he ſhall come in the clouds of heaven to judgment, with power and great glory, and all nations ſhall be aſſembled before him to receive their final doom: *and though after my ſkin, worms deſtroy this body* in the grave, and corruption utter and univerſal conſume this mortal tabernacle, *yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.* In the reſurrection day, when, reſcued from the duſt my fleſh ſhall be reſtored, and with my bodily eyes ſhall I behold God manifeſt in the perſon of my Redeemer, *whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf*, with joy unutterable, *and mine eyes*, theſe eyes now dim with tears, *ſhall behold* his glory, *and not another*, or *a ſtranger*, an ungodly man, ſhall have no ſuch delight or comfort in meeting him. *Though my reins*, (or better without the *Though*) *My reins are conſumed within me*, or *in my boſom*; my ſoul is conſumed with eager longing for this day of my Redeemer's appearance and glory. *Note*, (1.) The faith in an incarnate Redeemer was the only ſupport of the ſaints of God in every age. (2.) The Lord Jeſus hath offered himſelf to redeem for fallen man God's forfeited favour, and the heavenly inheritance, and in him our right to both is reſtored. (3.) He ever liveth, therefore his people cannot periſh, for his advocacy is all-prevailing for them, and his grace all-ſufficient in them. (4.) A comfortable certainty of his intereſt in the Redeemer's regard, is the believer's privilege: he may ſay, *He is mine*, and add, *I know it*, by bleſſed and delightful experience. (5.) The hope of a judgment-day is the ſupport of God's ſuffering ſaints. (6.) Tho' our bodies return to the duſt, they are not loſt in the grave, but every particle locked up as in a treaſure-houſe, and preſerved againſt the reſurrection-day. (7.) In the viſion of the ever bleſſed God conſiſts the glorious happineſs of the redeemed. (8.) Every day which brings us nearer to our laſt day, our deſires ſhould be more enlarged, and our longings for it more eager, whilſt we ceaſe not to pray, Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.

3. He intimates the effect his declaration ſhould have upon them. Inſtead of uſing him as they did, they ſhould rather ſay, *Why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is in him?* He is ſound in the faith, and appears to be no hypocrite. At leaſt, they ought to tremble for the conſequences, if they perſevered to ill-uſe him. *Be ye afraid of the ſword* of divine juſtice, *for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword*; an offended God will draw it from the ſcabbard, *that ye may know there is a judgment*, and woe unto you if he ſet his face againſt you. *Note*, (1.) If a man have the root of the matter in him, and is ſound in fundamentals, leſſer differences ſhould be overlooked. (2.) All perſecution for conſcience-ſake is deteſtable; and how eſpecially guilty muſt it be, to oppreſs thoſe who hold one faith, one hope, one God, one Redeemer with us, merely becauſe they will not ſquare every opinion to our own, or, however weak their objections, diſlike our form of worſhip, dreſs, or ceremonies. (3.) In a day of judgment, bigotry and cenſoriouſneſs towards our brethren will be remembered, and if it deſtroy not our hope, it will tarniſh our crown.

CHAP. XX.

One would have thought that ſuch an excellent confeſſion of faith as Job made in the cloſe of the foregoing chapter, ſhould have ſatisfied his friends, or at leaſt have mollified them; but they ſeem deaf to all his pleas. Zophar in turn immediately riſes up to reply. 1. *With warmth he introduces his diſcourſe*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The ſubject of it is nothing new, but Bildad's arguments expreſſed in lofty language*, ver. 4—29. *This was all they could ſay, and this they reſolved never to deſiſt from, that he was miſerably afflicted, and therefore muſt be vilely wicked; as if, however God may ſometimes viſit the ungodly here below, he never varied this method of his providence.*

1. THEN anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid, 2. Therefore do my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for *this* I make haſte. 3. I have heard [a] the check of my reproach, and the ſpirit of my underſtanding cauſeth me to anſwer.

[a] Chap. xix. 29.

v. 1—3. Zophar in haſte riſes to vindicate himſelf and friends from the unjuſt aſperſions, as he imagined, of cruelty and perſecution, which Job caſt upon them. Big with matter, his thoughts ſwelled in his boſom, and forced a vent at his lips. He interprets what he had heard as an high provocation, and, confident that reaſon was on their ſide, and ſolid underſtanding only with them, he ſpeaks as under the influence of the ſpirit of wiſdom, and demands therefore attention. *Note*, (1.) They who are moſt confident, are ſeldom moſt in the right. (2.) Prejudice and pride make men interpret the kindeſt warning into an affront, and return it with inſolence. (3.) The dictates of paſſion often paſs for the voice of reaſon; ſo partial is every man apt to be in his own cauſe.

4. Knoweſt thou *not* this of old, ſince man was placed upon earth, 5. That [b] the triumphing of the wicked *is* ſhort, and the joy of the hypocrite *but* for a moment? 6. [c] Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds: 7. *Yet* he ſhall periſh for ever, like his own dung: [d] they which have ſeen him, ſhall ſay, Where *is* he? 8. He ſhall fly away [e] as a dream, and ſhall not be found: yea, he ſhall be chaſed away as a viſion of the night. 9. [f] The eye alſo *which* ſaw him, ſhall *ſee him* no more; neither ſhall his place any more behold him.

[b] Pſ. xxxvii. 35, 36. Dan. iv. 31. Acts xii. 23.
[c] Iſa. xiv. 13, 14. Obad. 4.
[d] Pſ. xxxvii. 36.
[e] Pſ. lxxiii. 20. & xc. 5.
[f] Chap. vii. 8, 10. & viii. 18. Pſ. xxxvii. 36. & ciii. 16.

v. 4—9. He here opens his argument. The deſtruction of the wicked is ſpeedy and certain, and therefore, from Job's afflictions this character muſt needs belong to him. He appeals to all antiquity, in proof of the doctrine he was about to advance, *v.* 4. Since the day *Adam was placed on the earth*, the miſery of the wicked had been uniform and perpetual; witneſs Cain, the flood, the deſtruction of Sodom, &c. The triumphing of the wicked was ever ſhort, and the hypocrite's joy momentary. Whether their character was abandoned wickedneſs or hypocritical profeſſion, avowed irreligion or the form of godlineſs without the power of it, their damnation ſlumbered not, *v.* 5. Though for a while indeed iniquity might be triumphant, and hypocriſy undetected, *v.* 6. yet ruin final and eternal awaited them, *v.* 7. Their proſperity ſhall be paſſing as the dream, unſubſtantial as the forms of fancy in the viſions of the night, *v.* 8, and they ſhall be loathſome as their own dung, *v.* 7. With ſurprize they who paſſed by them in their exaltation, ſhall, at their return, enquire what is become of all their greatneſs, *v.* 7. now buried with them in the grave, where no eye ſhall any more behold them, *v.* 9. *Note*, (1.) However long a wicked man's proſperity, or a hypocrite's profeſſion, laſts in this world, it may well be counted ſhort and momentary, compared with the eternity which approaches. (2.) Sin and ruin, though not always in this life, ſhall, in the next, appear certainly inſeparable. (3.) They who lift their heads to the clouds in ſinful proſperity, or proud ſelf-righteouſneſs, are only thus ſuffered to mount, in order to fall deeper into the pit of deſtruction, where, of all others, the hypocrite's portion will be moſt terrible, *See Mat.* xxiv. 51.

10. † His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor, and his hands [g] ſhall reſtore their goods. 11. His bones are [h] full *of the ſin* of his youth, [i] which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt. 12. Though wickedneſs be [k] ſweet in his mouth, *though* he hide it under his tongue; 13. *Though* he ſpare it, and forſake it not: but keep it ſtill ‡ within his mouth: 14. *Yet* his meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* the gall of aſps within him. 15. He hath ſwallowed down riches, and [l] he ſhall vomit them up again: God ſhall caſt them out of his belly. 16. He ſhall ſuck the poiſon of aſps: the viper's tongue ſhall ſlay him. 17. [m] He ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. 18. That which he laboured for, [n] ſhall he reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow *it* down: according to *his* ſubſtance *ſhall* the reſtitution *be*, and he ſhall not rejoice *therein*. 19. Becauſe he hath § oppreſſed, *and* [o] hath forſaken the poor; *becauſe* he hath violently taken away an houſe which he builded not. 20. [p] Surely he ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly, he ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired. 21. ‖ There ſhall none of his meat be left; therefore ſhall no man look for his goods.

† Or, the poor ſhall oppreſs his children.
[g] Ver. 18.
[h] Chap. xiii. 26.
[i] Chap. xxi. 20.
[k] Prov. ix. 17.
‡ Heb. In the midſt of his palate.
[l] Mat. xxvii. 3, 4.
[m] 2 Kings vii. 2. Jer. xvii. 6.
[n] Ver. 10.
§ Heb. Cruſhed.
[o] Mat. xxv. 42. Jam. ii. 13.
[p] Ecclef. v. 13, 14.
‖ Or, there ſhall be none left for his meat. Jer. xvii. 11.

v. 10—21. In a variety of inſtances Zophar expatiates on the miſery of the wicked in this world. *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*, or, *being poor, ſhall pleaſe.* Men will take pleaſure to ſee them reduced, and the ill-gotten gain vaniſhed, which by force their father ſhall be compelled to reſtore, *v.* 10. Full of the ſins of youth, luſt, drunkenneſs, gluttony, quarrels, his bones ſhall be rotten with diſeaſes, and they ſhall not only bring him to the grave, but the curſe of ſin for ever reſt upon him dead as alive, *v.* 11. Sweet as the draughts were of pleaſurable iniquity, and delightful as the indulgence of his appetites; cheriſhed as his luſts were in his boſom, and concealed to ſave his character and credit among men, *v.* 12, 13. yet ſhall thoſe acts of ſin, that ſeemed ſo ſweet in the proſpect, and ſo tranſporting in the enjoyment, breed afterwards loathing, and pangs within ſucceed, bitter as gall to the conſcience, and poiſonous to the ſoul as the venom of the aſp, *v.* 14. The fruits of his inſatiate covetouſneſs, which he ſwallowed as a hungry man his food, he ſhall diſgorge, either by his own terrified conſcience compelling him to reſtitution, or by God's Providence reſtoring to the right owner the ſpoils of wickedneſs, *v.* 15. Diſeaſe, fatal as the poiſon of aſps, and painful as the viper's bite, ſhall ſeize him, as the juſt wages of his iniquity, *v.* 16.

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v. 16. His affluence, in which he once gloried, and for which he laboured ſo long and unweariedly, *v.* 17. ſhall fail him, like the ſtreams of a brook dried up. When each one hath got their own, *v.* 18. nothing ſhall be left to comfort him. Becauſe of his oppreſſion, he ſhall carry about with him a tormented conſcience, *v.* 20. and ſhall ſave not the ſmalleſt portion of all his deſireable acquiſitions. He ſhall be reduced to pining hunger, *v.* 21. and not the leaſt pittance be left for his heirs: ſo univerſal ſhall be his deſolations. *Note*, (1.) Youthful ſins, however lightly accounted of, have terrible conſequences. (2.) God often makes men's iniquities their preſent plague; and diſeaſe, deformity, pain, contempt, and loathing, are ſeen in this world to be the wages of ſin. (3.) The ſweeteſt ſins produce the moſt bitter remembrances, both now in the pangs of conſcience, and hereafter in hell, where the worm never dies. (4.) They purchaſe preſent pleaſure and greatneſs dear, who, for the ſake of theſe, expoſe themſelves to everlaſting pain and contempt. (5.) The gains of covetouſneſs and oppreſſion are often ſhort-lived: what is gotten by wickedneſs, is uſually ſquandered in profuſion.

22. In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits: every hand of the † wicked ſhall come upon him. 23. [q] *When* he is about to fill his belly, *God* ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath upon him, and ſhall rain *it* upon him, while he is eating. 24. [r] He ſhall flee from the iron weapon, *and* the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through. 25. It is drawn and cometh out of the body; yea, [s] the gliſtering ſword cometh out of his gall; [t] terrors *are* upon him. 26. All darkneſs *ſhall be* hid in his ſecret places: [u] a fire not blown ſhall conſume him; it ſhall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle. 27. The heaven ſhall reveal his iniquity: and [x] the earth ſhall riſe up againſt him. 28. [y] The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, *and his goods* ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath. 29. [z] This *is* the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage ‡ appointed unto him by God.

† Or, troubleſome.
q Num. xi. 33.
r Iſa. xxiv. 18. Jer. xlviii. 43. Amos v. 19.
s Chap. xvi. 13.
t Chap. xviii. 11.
u Heb. xii. 29.
x Iſa. xxvi. 21.
y Rev. xviii. 17.
z Chap. xxvii. 13. & xxxi. 2. Mat. xxiv. 31.
‡ Heb. Of his decree from God.

v. 22—29. We have here the wicked man brought to his final exit.

In the midſt of his ſufficiency and abundance, the fears of want ſhall make him poor, and prevent him from the uſe of what he hath; or his deſtruction ſhall then ſuddenly deſcend upon him, and the wicked ſpoil him, as the Chaldeans had done to Job, *v.* 22. Whilſt the meat is yet in his mouth, and he is in the mid-purſuit of his luſts and covetouſneſs, the wrath of an offended God, furious as the whirlwind, ſhall be hurled upon him, to cruſh him under the intolerable weight; and miſeries, like a deluge of rain, beat upon him, *v.* 23. When God purſues, flight will be vain: judgment upon judgment, terrible to feel, as unavoidable to eſcape, ſhall light upon him; the barbed arrow pierces him, the glittering ſword ſtrikes him through the liver; mortally wounded he falls; the terrors of death ſeize him, convulſive agonies of body, tormenting pangs of conſcience, horrible the preſent anguiſh, but more intolerable the fears of futurity, *v.* 24, 25. Darkneſs utter and eternal awaits him, reſerved for him among God's treaſures of vengeance; the fire of hell unquenchable, which God himſelf hath kindled, ſhall conſume him, *v.* 26. Miſery and ruin ſhall be entailed upon his poſterity: his ſins, however ſecret, ſhall be brought to light; or judgments immediately from God, as the burning of Sodom, ſhall proclaim his atrocious guilt, and all the powers of nature appear armed againſt him in God's quarrel, *v.* 27. In this day of wrath his deſolations ſhall be accompliſhed, and all he hath ſhall finally periſh with him, *v.* 28. *Such is the portion of the wicked man*, deſcending to him as ſurely as the inheritance to the heir, *and the heritage appointed unto him by God*, by that divine decree, which cannot fail of its accompliſhment. *Note*, (1.) The wrath of God aſſuredly abides on the moſt joyous ſinner, and he will ſhortly make him feel its fury. (2.) How terrible will be the hypocrite's diſappointment, that lies down dreaming of happineſs, and awakes in hell! (3.) There is no eſcaping from God's purſuit: they who will not flee to him for mercy, cannot fly from him in judgment. (4. If wicked men would but conſider their latter end, it would give a check to their revels, and awaken ſome ſalutary concern about eſcaping the wrath to come. (5.) The moſt ſecret ſins cannot be long concealed; a judgment-day will unveil every man's heart and ways. (6.) The portion of the wicked is this certain, terrible, inevitable ruin; though not in time, yet, what is infinitely worſe, in eternity.

The diſcourſe of Zophar thus affords awakening truths, and though, levelled againſt Job, it was groſsly miſapplied, yet may miniſter abundant inſtruction, when conſidered as a warning againſt the ways and miſerable end of the ungodly and the hypocrite.

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CHAP. XXI.

We have here, Job's reply to Zophar's diſcourſe, diveſted much of former paſſionate complaints, and chiefly employed on the topic in diſpute. 1. *He begs them to weigh his words, and conſider his ſufferings*, ver. 1—6. 2. *He deſcribes the proſperity of the wicked*, 7—13. *and their impiety*, ver. 14—16. *Then foretels their ruin*, ver. 17—21. *But though allowing ſuch examples are ſometimes made, yet God's diſpenſations even to them are different, many living and dying in eaſe and affluence*, ver. 22—26. *and that it was in the next world only, where their recompenſe awaited them; and therefore their concluſions againſt him were wrong*, ver. 27—34. *and herein he hath evidently truth and experience on his ſide.*

1. BUT Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolations. 3. Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after that I have ſpoken, [a] mock on. 4. As for me, *is* my complaint to man? and if *it were ſo*, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled? 5. † Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed, and [b] lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth. 6. Even when I remember, [c] I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my fleſh.

a Chap. xvi. 10. & xvii. 2.
† Heb. Look unto, or upon me.
b Judg. xviii. 19. Chap. xxix. 9. & xl. 4. Pſ. xxxix. 9.
c Pſ. cxix. 120. Hab. iii. 16.

v. 1—6. Before Job enters on the point in hand, he begs,

1. An attentive hearing, and that pride and prejudice might not reject the conviction of the truths he urged. *Hear diligently my ſpeech*, as thoſe who deſire ſimply to inveſtigate the truth, and wiſhed, if miſtaken, to be undeceived; *and this ſhall be your conſolations*; you will yourſelf find the comfort of having uſed all proper means of coming to the knowledge of the truth; or this is all the conſolation I expect from you, a fair and candid hearing. *Suffer me that I may ſpeak*, without interruption, *and after that I have ſpoken, mock on*, continue to inſult me, if this be your reſolution, in ſpite of all my arguments. *Note*, A patient hearing, at leaſt, is due to every man. It is high injuſtice to condemn without permitting the accuſed to ſpeak in their own defence.

2. It was not to them he at firſt complained, nor would they be his judges, and therefore they need not have taken up the matter ſo hardly againſt him. *Is my complaint to man?* no; but to God, who knew the bitterneſs of his ſufferings, and from whom alone he could hope for redreſs; *and if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?* when all his prayers and tears had yet met no relief, but rather provoked the raſh cenſures of his friends, who condemned him for a hypocrite. *Note*, If God were not kinder to us than our deareſt friends, we ſhould ſometimes have hard meaſure.

3 He bids them behold his caſe, and ſurely it deſerved their pity. *Mark me*, my words, my ſufferings, *and be aſtoniſhed* at the ſtrangeneſs of my afflictions; *and lay your hand upon your mouth*, pretend not to fathom the ways of God's unſearchable providence, and forbear to judge of men's characters by their outward lot in this world. *Even when I remember* the days that are paſt, the afflictions that had befallen himſelf, or the inſtances of the proſperity of the wicked he was about to mention, *I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my fleſh.* What I feel, though it ſhakes not my confidence of my integrity, greatly diſtreſſes me; and what I ſee of the ways of God's providence with the wicked, aſtoniſhes me. I wonder and adore, waiting in affecting ſuſpenſe the awful iſſue. *Note*, (1.) There are myſterious diſpenſations of providence, that ſtagger ſometimes the faith and hope of good men. (2.) We muſt wait till the great day of God for the final vindication of his ways to man.

7. Wherefore do [d] the wicked live, become old, yea, [e] are mighty in power? 8. Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. 9. Their houſes *are* ſafe from fear, [f] neither *is* the rod of God upon them. 10. Their bull gendereth and faileth not, their cow calveth and caſteth not her calf. 11. They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. 12. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the ſound of the organ. 13. [g] They ſpend their days in † wealth, and [h] in a moment go down to the grave. 14. Therefore they ſay unto God, [i] Depart from us; for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways. 15. [k] What *is* the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? and [l] what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him? 16. Lo, ‡ their good *is* not in their hand: [m] the counſel of the wicked is far from me.

d Chap. xii. 6. Pſ. xvii. 10. & lxxiii. 3, 12. Jer. xii. 1. Hab. i. 16.
e Rev. xiii. 4. & xvii. 4.
f Pſ. lxxiii. 5.
g Chap. xxxvi. 11.
† Or mirth.
Luke xii. 19.
h Mat. xxiv. 38.
i Chap. xxii. 17. Luke xix. 14.
k Exod. v. 2. Chap. xxxiv. 9.
l Chap. xxxv. 3. Mal. iii. 14.
‡ Or, Is not their good in their hand?
Chap. xxii. 18. Pſ. xvii. 14. Luke vi. 24.
m Gen. xlix. 6. Pſ. i. 1.

v. 7—16. Job's friends had inſiſted upon it, that there was no ſuch thing as proſperous iniquity; at leaſt, that it was momentary. Experience, ſays Job, contradicts your aſſertion; the wicked live and die in eaſe and affluence, yea, are hardened by it; yet this God often permits, without being either chargeable with want of wiſdom or juſtice in his government of the world.

1. He deſcribes their proſperity. *Wherefore do the wicked live*, if it be as you ſay? how do they *become old*, and are not cut off with any remarkable judgments, *yea, are mighty in power?* ſo far from being deſtitute or deſolate, they bear the ſway in the world. How is this conſiſtent with your aſſertions? yet there are undeniable inſtances of what I advance. Their families are built up, and they live to ſee them well ſettled. Their ſubſtance is protected, *v.* 8. and no rod of affliction upon them. *v.* 9. Their worldly affairs in the minuteſt inſtances proſper, *v.* 10. Their children are numerous as a flock, their houſes are full of joy and mirth, and they devote to dance and ſong the jocund day, *v.* 11, 12. The hours paſs along in pleaſure and ſenſual indulgence, and without a groan they go down to the grave, *in a moment*, without any of the miſeries Zophar had deſcribed; or *quietly* ſtupid and inſenſible, without apparent fear or terror, *v.* 13. *Note*, (1.) No man is to be judged of by his outward proſperity; we muſt take in eternity to make a right eſtimate of man's eſtate. *Nemo felix ante obitum.* (2.) Worldly wealth abuſed to gratify ſenſual appetite, is a curſe inſtead of a bleſſing.

2. He ſuggeſts the ill effect of their proſperity; it hardened their hearts againſt God, and led them to infidelity. *Therefore*, becauſe poſſeſſed of ſuch wealth, and living, in conſequence thereof, in a round of vanity and worldly luſts, *they ſay unto God, Depart from us*; they wiſh to leave him far above out of their ſight, and that no remembrance of him ſhould diſturb their conſcience, and interrupt their joys; *for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways.* The paths of godlineſs appear forbidding and melancholy, compared with pleaſure's flowery way; and they wiſh for no unwelcome interruption, from grave leſſons and religion's needful reſtraints. Their lives make it their intereſt that God ſhould not interfere with the concerns of men; and therefore, tho' perhaps not in words expreſſed, yet the ſentiments of their hearts are, *What is the Almighty?* or *who is* he, *that we ſhould ſerve him?* Perhaps there is no God; or, if there be, he careth not about the petty affairs of men: the terrors of his arm are but the bugbears of prieſts, to frighten the mind of the ſuperſtitious; *and what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him?* a taſk uſeleſs and unneceſſary, whence nothing can be got. So thinks the blinded ſinner, loſt in indulgence, and enſlaved by diverſe fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in perdition and deſtruction. *Note*, (1.) A pleaſure-loving world is ever jealous of the incroachments of religion, and wiſhes to be ignorant, leſt, coming for a moment to the light, they ſhould not be able, with ſuch quietneſs of conſcience, to return to the purſuit of their vanities. (2.) Irreligion is the parent of infidelity: we eaſily perſuade ourſelves what we deſire to believe. (3.) Though a wicked and careleſs world ſees no profit in prayer, a child of God by bleſſed experience finds his richeſt acquiſitions are got upon his knees.

3. Job puts in a caveat, not to be miſinterpreted, as if in this deſcription of the wicked he concurred with, or approved of, their ways. No; he knew their ſlippery ſteps. *Lo, their good is not in their hand*; what they enjoy is tranſitory and fading; or, *is it not in their hand?* They have their portion in this life alone, and no hope hereafter; but *the counſel of the wicked is far from me*; I neither ſay as they ſay, nor do as they do. *Note*, When we are ſpeaking with thoſe we know to be captious, we need be the more explicit, that we may not be miſunderſtood.

17. [n] How oft is the † candle of the wicked put out? and *how oft* cometh their deſtruction upon them? *God* diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger. 18. [o] They are as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaff that the ſtorm carrieth away. 19. God layeth up his iniquity [p] for his children: [q] he rewardeth him, and he ſhall know *it.* 20. His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and [r] he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. 21. For what pleaſure *hath* he in his houſe after him, when the number of his months is cut off [s] in the midſt? 22. [t] Shall *any* teach God knowledge? ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high. 23. One dieth in ‡ his full ſtrength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet. 24. His breaſts are full of milk, and his bones are moiſtened with marrow. 25. And another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eateth with pleaſure. 26. They ſhall lie down § alike in the duſt, and [u] the worms ſhall cover them.

[n] Chap. xviii. 6.
† Or lamp.
[o] Pſ. i. 4. & xxxv. 5. Iſa. xvii. 13. & xxix. 5. Hoſ. xiii. 3.
[p] Exod. xx. 5.
[q] Rev. xviii. 6.
[r] Pſ. lxxv. 8. Jer. xxv. 15. Rev. xiv. 10. & xx. 15.
[s] Pſ. lv. 23.
[t] Iſa. xl. 13. & xlv. 9. Rom. xi. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 16.
‡ Heb. His very perfection.
§ Or together. Chap. iii. 18.
[u] Iſa. xiv. 11.

v. 17—26. Having deſcribed the proſperity of the ungodly, he maintains,

1. The continuance of it. *How oft is the candle of the wicked*, his proſperity, *put out?* doth it not often burn to the laſt? *How oft cometh deſtruction upon them?* is not the very contrary ſeen to be the caſe? Doth *God diſtribute ſorrows in his anger?* no; he lives at eaſe, and knows no affliction. How oft, as his friends had ſuggeſted, *are they as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaff that the ſtorm carrieth away?* experience ſhews the reverſe to be true. *Note*, Though ſome inſtances of God's interpoſition againſt the wicked appear, more commonly they live and die undiſturbed in their poſſeſſions.

2. He anſwers an objection, that though themſelves do not ſuffer, *God layeth up iniquity for his children*; but admitting it, that would not at all prove the concluſions Job's friends would draw; for they require, that *God ſhould reward him* in this life, *and he ſhould know it. His eyes ſhould ſee the deſtruction, and he ſhould drink of the wrath of the Almighty*, in his own perſon, according to their principles; for elſe, *what pleaſure*, or *what buſineſs hath he in his houſe after him?* after death, when their joys or ſorrows cannot affect him, when *the number of his months is cut off in the midſt*, and he goes down to the grave.

Perhaps this whole paſſage may bear a different view, as a conceſſion, that oftentimes the wicked might ſuffer, but it was not always the caſe, and that were ſufficient to invalidate their arguments. *Note*, (1.) A wicked parent entails the curſe of God upon his family. (2.) There is a cup of trembling filled with the wine of the wrath of God, that will ſhortly be put into the hand of the ungodly.

3. He maintains the ſovereignty of God in all theſe diſpenſations, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* pretend to direct his procedure, *ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high*, who muſt ſhortly appear at his bar, when righteous judgment will be adminiſtered. Till then it were preſumption to judge of men's character by their outward circumſtances; for here men equally wicked have very different ends: one in the midſt of proſperity, eaſe, and affluence, goes down to the grave; another, after long lingering in miſery. Or it may intimate the different kinds of death men meet; ſome by a ſudden and unexpected ſtroke, others waſted by ſickneſs and long decay: but in the duſt all difference will be at an end, and the worms alike cover them. *Note*, (1.) God is ſovereign and juſt; he doth indeed what he will, but what he wills is always holy, juſt, and good. (2.) The ſtrongeſt health is no protection from the ſtroke of ſudden death: it becomes us each moment to be prepared. (3.) If we have eaſe and appetite, whilſt others groan in pain, and loath their food, let us be thankful, and improve the mercy before the evil days come. (4.) However the wicked die, they will meet in one place; whether they go from the palace or the dunghil, they will lie down in flames, and the worm that never dies ſhall alike prey upon them.

27. Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine againſt me. 28. For ye ſay, Where *is* the houſe of the prince? and where *are* † the dwelling-places of the wicked? 29. Have ye not aſked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens? 30. That [y] the wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the day of ‡ wrath. 31. Who ſhall declare his way to his face? and who ſhall repay him *what* he hath done? 32. § Yet ſhall he be brought to the grave, and ſhall ‖ remain in the tomb. 33. The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet unto him, and [z] every man ſhall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him. 34. How then comfort ye me in vain, ſeeing in your anſwers there remaineth † falſhood?

[x] Chap. i. 19.
† Heb. The tent of the tabernacles of the wicked.
[y] Prov. xvi. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
‡ Heb. Wraths.
§ Or, At length he is brought.
‖ Heb. Watch in the heap.
[z] Heb. ix. 27.
† Heb. Tranſgreſſion.

v. 27—34.

1. Job intimates his thorough knowledge of his friends deſign in their former ſpeeches. He ſaw they concluded him a hypocrite, though wrongfully, and that merely becauſe his dwelling was deſolate, as they argued was the conſtant caſe with the wicked, *v.* 28. *Note*, Men's looks and inuendoes ſpeak as plain as any language can.

2. He refers them to any traveller for confutation of their aſſertions, who could give them ſure proofs and tokens, that wicked men were generally in proſperity. This is not the place of recompence, but the next world; there they will receive according to their deeds, and every good man, a traveller to glory, would inform them, if they aſked, *that the wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath*; certain and eternal ruin is their portion hereafter, though now they are great and proſper. Here they are too high to be reproved, and too mighty to be reſtrained by the arm of human juſtice, *v.* 31. but there they will be convicted and condemned, without the power of reſiſtance. Here, notwithſtanding their wickedneſs, they go in pomp to the grave, a gorgeous ſepulchral monument, and attendant crowds do them honour even in the duſt, to make the clods of the valley ſweet unto them, *v.* 32. but they ſhall awake to ſhame and everlaſting

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contempt. And thus, in death at leaſt, which is the common lot, the wicked will meet their deſert, and *every man muſt draw after him, as there are innumerable before him. Note,* Death is a beaten road, where, ſooner or later, every man muſt tread. *Semel calcanda eſt via Lethi.*

3. He concludes from hence the futility and falſhood of their anſwers, and the vanity of their pretended conſolations, *v.* 34. They accuſed him as a hypocrite, and promiſed him comfort on his repentance, as if his ſufferings, the effect of his ſins, would be then removed; whereas he hath proved, that ſufferings are not the preſent puniſhment of guilt, ſeeing the wicked generally proſper; nor was he conſcious of the leaſt of thoſe accuſations they ſuggeſted.

CHAP. XXII.

Eliphaz the third time riſes to the charge, and perverts what Job had urged as a myſterious diſpenſation, into a reflection upon Providence. 1. *He ſhews that our duties are no way profitable to God,* ver. 2—4. 2. *He charges him with many crimes in general, but particularly with oppreſſion, uncharitableneſs, and infidelity,* ver. 5—9. & 12—14. 3. *He inſiſts on it, that this is the cauſe of his ſufferings,* ver. 10, 11. 4. *He compares his caſe to that of the old world,* ver. 15—20. 5. *He exhorts him to repentance, and thereupon promiſes him great proſperity,* ver. 21—30.

1. THEN Eliphaz the Temanite anſwered and ſaid, 2. [a] Can a man be profitable unto God, † as [b] he that is wiſe may be profitable unto himſelf? 3. *Is it* any pleaſure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it* gain *to him*, that thou makeſt thy ways perfect? 4. Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?

a Chap. xxxv. 7. Pſ. xvi. 2. Luke xvii. 10.
† Or, but.
b Prov. ix. 12.

v. 1—4. It is Job's hard caſe to have all he can urge miſunderſtood, and ſome ill meaning drawn from the diſtortion of his arguments. Becauſe he maintained his integrity, as being no hypocrite, Eliphaz would infer, that he pretended to make God his debtor; and thereupon he argues, that his goodneſs could neither profit him, nor his iniquity hurt him.

1. Our goodneſs cannot profit God, nor merit any thing at his hands. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable unto himſelf?* no; though religion is our wiſdom, and the advantages of it to us unſpeakably great, in preſent poſſeſſion, and future expectation; yet our goodneſs extendeth not to God. He is far exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe; we receive all from him, but can add nothing to him, compleatly happy in his own all-ſufficient fulneſs. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makeſt thy ways perfect?* No; though he takes pleaſure in the proſperity of his ſervants, and is glorified in their ſervices, yet, had there never been man or angel created, his infinite ſelf-complacence, and the inexpreſſible riches of his glory, had been the ſame. It is his condeſcenſion that he accepts our ſervices, the pleaſure and the gain of them is our own alone, not his.

2. Our iniquity cannot hurt him. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* leſt, if left to proſper, thou ſhouldſt grow above his government. *Will he enter with thee into judgment?* condemn thee for thy ſins, as they deſerve? aſſuredly he will. *Note,* None are too great for God to humble: if he ſpares the wicked, it is not for fear of them, but in patient pity towards them.

5. *Is* not thy wickedneſs great? and thine iniquities infinite? 6. For [c] thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their clothing. 7. Thou haſt not given water to the weary to drink, and [d] thou haſt withholden bread from the hungry. 8. But *as for* the mighty man, [e] he had the earth, and † the honourable man dwelt in it. 9. Thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and [f] the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken. 10. Therefore [g] ſnares *are* round about thee, and ſudden fear troubleth thee; 11. Or darkneſs *that* thou canſt not ſee, and [h] abundance of waters cover thee. 12. [i] *Is* not God in the height of heaven? and behold ‡ the height of the ſtars, how high they are! 13. And thou ſayeſt, [k] § How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud? 14. [l] Thick clouds *are* a covering to him that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

c Exod. xxii. 26, 27. Deut. xxiv. 10, &c.
d Prov. xxv. 21. Iſa. lviii. 7.
e Pſ. xii. 8.
† Heb. The accepted for countenance.
f Chap. xxxi. 21.
g Chap. xviii. 10, 11. & xix. 6.
h Pſ. xxxii. 6.
i Pſ. cxv. 3.
‡ Heb. The head.
k Pſ. lxxiii. 11. & xciv. 7.
§ Or, what.
l Pſ. cxxxix. 12.

v. 5—14. His friends had repeatedly condemned Job by inſinuations, and inferences, and compariſon of his caſe with wicked men; but as that had no effect, Eliphaz takes a large ſtep farther, and, right or wrong, reſolves to lay on him crimes enough. If half of them could but be proved, Job would have been a bad man indeed. It is common in the world to ſay, Abuſe confidently and abundantly, and ſome of the lies will be believed.

1. In general he charges him with great wickedneſs, and infinite crimes, as if what he was about to advance were but a ſmall part of the black catalogue. *Note,* The beſt of men have been the moſt foully aſperſed by lying tongues.

2. He proceeds to the particular accuſations, and they are many and grievous. [1.] Great oppreſſion, *v.* 6. For a trifling loan he had ſecured a pledge of much ſuperior value, or *thou haſt taken thy brother for a pledge,* arreſted him for an inconſiderable debt; and when the poor were almoſt naked, had ſtripped them of the little raiment they had left. [2.] Cruel uncharitableneſs, *v.* 6, 9. The hungry and thirſty were left to faint and famiſh, and a cup of cold water denied them, whilſt he rioted in affluence; yea, even the afflicted widow, whoſe poverty ſwelled the meaſure of her griefs, was ſent away empty from his door. [3.] Vile partiality, *v.* 9. Before him, as a magiſtrate, the greateſt ever carried the cauſe: the mighty man, who oppreſſed the poor, was ſure to have judgment in his favour, and be confirmed in the poſſeſſion of what he had ſeized; whilſt *the arms of the fatherleſs were broken,* ruined without redreſs by their richer neighbours. And, no leſs deſtitute of piety towards God, than charity towards man, he charges him, [4.] With avowed infidelity, *v.* 12—14. as if God, in the height of heaven, either could not ſee through the dark cloud that interpoſed, or left men at large, whilſt he paraded through his own ſuperior manſions, careleſs about the inſignificant concerns of little mortals. *Note,* (1.) Though fooliſh and wicked men ſay God hath forſaken the earth, yet he heareth the cry of oppreſſion and wrong. Tho' heaven is his throne, he filleth all things, and is as much preſent beneath the thick clouds, as above them. (2.) Abominable in the ſight of the righteous Judge is the acceptance of men's perſons: he will quickly appear the patron and awful avenger of the injured.

3. He aſcribes Job's preſent ſufferings to his atrocious ſins; for thus he reaſoned. Becauſe his ſufferings are great, his ſins muſt be great, and in exact proportion to them; therefore ſnares compaſſed him about; health, wealth, and children were loſt together; terrors had ſeized his conſcience, which they interpreted the ſigns of conſcious guilt, *v.* 10. and darkneſs had inveloped all his hopes; whilſt, like a drowning man in the midſt of boiſterous waves, deſperate and undone, he ſeemed ready to ſink in eternal ruin, the juſt puniſhment of his ſuppoſed crimes, *v.* 11. *Note,* (1.) He that condemneth the righteous is an abomination to the Lord. (2.) We may not wonder if the moſt malignant interpretations are put on our providential afflictions: better men than we have ſuffered more ſeverely before us.

15. Haſt thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? 16. [m] Which were cut down out of time, [n] † whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood. 17. Which ſaid unto God, [o] Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do ‡ for them? 18. Yet [p] he filled their houſes with good *things*: but [q] the counſel of the wicked is far from me. 19. [r] The righteous ſee *it*, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to ſcorn. 20. Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down, but [s] the remnant of them the fire conſumeth.

m Chap. xv. 32. Pſ. lv. 23. & cii. 24. Eccleſ. vii. 17.
n 2 Pet. ii. 5.
† Or, their foundation a flood poured out.
o Chap. xxi. 14.
‡ Or, to them.
p Pſ. xvii. 14.
q Chap. xxi. 16.
r Pſ. lviii. 10. & cvii. 42. Rev. xix. 1, 2.
s 2 Pet. ii. 6, 7.

v. 15—20. Job had pleaded the experience of all ages, to teſtify the proſperity of many wicked men. Eliphaz thinks he hath an irrefragable argument to confute him in the flood, brought on the world of the ungodly; and whilſt he inſinuates ſuch were his ſins as theirs, he bids him take warning by their puniſhment.

1. He deſcribes their wickedneſs, and uſes the very words Job had ſpoken concerning the wicked who proſpered, *chap.* xxi. 14. as a confutation of what he there advanced. *They ſaid unto the Almighty, Depart from us;* we renounce his government, worſhip, and ways: *and what can the Almighty do for them?* as if they neither expected any good, nor feared any evil at his hands. *Yet,* which was a great aggravation of their wickedneſs, *he filled their houſes with good things. Note,* (1.) Impiety is the parent of infidelity. (2.) Ingratitude to God is among the ſinner's blackeſt crimes. (3.) They are ſtill poor in the worſt ſenſe, who, though their houſes are full of goods, have their hearts empty of divine grace.

2. He profeſſes his abhorrence of ſuch principles and practice: *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.* So Job had declared, and Eliphaz thinks with much greater reaſon he may aſſert.

3. He relates their deſtruction. Though it was *the old way,* and the general way, it was not a whit the ſafer for that. *They were cut down* by the divine judgment, *out of time,* and removed into an eternity of miſery, and this before they had filled the number of their years, ſurprized with ſudden deſtruction; *whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood;* all their confidences periſhed with them, and they ſunk as lead in the mighty waters.

Note, (1.) When we remember what the water hath once done, we ſhould think what the more devouring element of fire will ſhortly do, conſuming for ever the earth, and all that is therein. (2.) The hypocrite and ſinner's hope is on a ſandy foundation: when the floods of wrath deſcend, ruin, terrible as inevitable, ſhall overwhelm them.

4. He teſtifies the joy of the righteous, either Noah and his family, or godly men in all ages, on ſeeing the vengeance, *v.* 19. not that they take pleaſure in men's miſery, but they rejoice to ſee God glorified in his judgments. With theſe, Eliphaz and his friends joined, happy now, as theſe of old to perceive themſelves diſtinguiſhed with God's protection, and therefore concluding the goodneſs of their ſtate and cauſe, *whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down, but* theirs was; and *the remnant of them the fire conſumed*, which ſome refer to the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, but more probably is deſigned to point at Job's caſe, whoſe cattle and ſervants the lightning had conſumed; and thence he would infer that *they* were righteous, but *he* condemned and made to ſuffer, as one of the ungodly.

21. Acquaint now thyſelf with him, and [t] be at peace: [u] thereby good ſhall come unto thee. 22. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and [x] lay up his words in thine heart. 23. [y] If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. 24. Then ſhalt thou [z] lay up gold as duſt, and the *gold* of Ophir as the ſtones of the brooks. 25. Yea, the Almighty ſhall be thy † defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver. 26. For then [a] ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and [b] ſhall lift up thy face unto God. 27. [c] Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy vows. 28. Thou ſhalt alſo decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee: and the light ſhall ſhine upon thy ways. 29. When *men* are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay, ‡ *There is* lifting up: and [d] he ſhall ſave || the humble perſon. 30. § He ſhall deliver the iſland of the innocent: and it is delivered by [e] the pureneſs of thine hands.

t Iſa. xxvii. 5.
u Mat. vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
x Pſal. cxix. 11. Prov. iv. 21. Luke i. 66. & ii. 19, 51.
y Chap. viii. 5, 6. & xi. 13, &c.
z 1 Chron. i. 15.
† Or gold.
a Cant. ii. 3.
b Chap. xi. 15.
c Pſal. l. 15. Iſa. lviii. 9.
‡ Or let there be lifting up.
d Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.
|| Heb. Him that hath low eyes.
§ Or the innocent man ſhall deliver the iſland. Eccleſ. ix. 15.
e 1 Tim. ii. 8.

v. 21—30. On the ſuppoſition that Job was a wicked man, Eliphaz had warned him of the great danger to which he was expoſed with the ſinners of old: yet, not to reduce him to deſpair, but to lead him to repentance, he gives him excellent counſel and encouragement, which ſhews, however miſtaken he was in Job's particular caſe, that he was well verſed in the ways of God, and at bottom a man of ſound piety. There may be ſomething, yea ſometimes much to condemn even in truly good men; to whom notwithſtanding, we cannot refuſe our general approbation of their conduct.

1. His counſel is a humble and ſpeedy return to God: *Acquaint thyſelf now with God: now*, whilſt yet there is life and hope; without delay, acquaint thyſelf with his perfections and providences, *and be at peace*, ſilent and ſubmiſſive before him, acquieſcing in all his diſpenſations; and inſtead of fighting againſt him, lay down thine arms, and ſeek pardon and peace with him: *thereby good ſhall come unto thee*, his merciful favour ſhall be reſtored. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth*, ſubmit to his government, and yield thyſelf up to his holy will, and *lay up his word in thy heart* as the choiceſt treaſure, and thy counſellor and guide in every time of difficulty. *Note*, (1.) Acquaintance with God is the way to be at peace with him; till we know his holineſs we have offended, and his love we have ſlighted, we can never in real penitence return to him. (2.) Peace with God is the moſt invaluable of all bleſſings. (3.) If God in our divine redeemer Jeſus, hath been pleaſed to reſtore our ſouls to his favour, let it be our care henceforward, to yield up ourſelves to be guided by his holy word and will. (4.) They who know the value of the ſcriptures, eſteem them above mines of gold, and daily labouring therein, ſtore their hearts with the richeſt treaſures of divine counſel and conſolations.

2. He promiſes him the beſt of bleſſings, as the conſequence of ſuch an humble return to the Almighty, from his ſtate of eſtrangement and rebellion againſt him; and theſe precious promiſes are the moſt effectual means to engage the ſinner's heart to God. All the terrors of hell will never drive the ſinner ſo effectually, as the goodneſs of God ſweetly leads and conſtrains him to repentance.

[1.] His evils ſhould be removed, and his loſt proſperity be reſtored. *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up*, the deſolations of thy houſe and family ſhall be repaired; *thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles*, thou wilt be careful to remove every evil, and no more commit, or connive at it; and then thy ſufferings, that are the effects of thy iniquity, God will put far away from thee. *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as duſt, and the gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the brook*, in ſuch abundance ſhall thy riches increaſe; ſecure alſo as well as affluent, no robbers ſhall any more plunder, or judgments ſpread deſolation. *Yea, the Almighty ſhall be thy defence*, He, on thy repentance, will become thy friend, and preſerve thy goods in ſafety: or, *he ſhall be thy choice gold*, better to thee than all thy other riches, *and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver*. *Note*, (1.) The beſt riches are God's grace and love. (2.) What God gives of this world, wears well, and what he keeps, is ſafe and ſecure to us.

[2.] He ſhould enjoy communion with God, and be happy in the ſenſe of his favour: *for then ſhall thou have thy delight in the Almighty*, he ſhall be thy happineſs and joy, *and ſhall lift up thy face unto God*, with holy confidence in him, and boldneſs to approach him. *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him*, aſſured of a ſpeedy anſwer of peace, *and he ſhalt hear thee*, whilſt thou art ſpeaking, and grant thy requeſts; *and* in grateful acknowledgment of his mercies received, *thou ſhalt pay thy vows*, conſtant in praiſe as prayer. *Note*, (1.) They who have ever taſted the happineſs of communion with God, and known the bitterneſs of diſtance from him, as Job had, will count the reſtoration to a ſenſe of his love the moſt ineſtimable bleſſing. (2.) When we are at peace with God, we may approach him with confidence, knowing we ſhall receive the petitions we require of him. (3.) For the bleſſings received in prayer, we owe the conſtant grateful return of praiſe.

[3.] All his deſigns ſhould ſucceed, and a bleſſing be upon all his labour: *Thou ſhalt decree a thing*, reſolve under the Divine aſſiſtance ſo to act, *and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee*, God will confirm thy purpoſe, and crown the iſſue with ſucceſs: *and the light ſhall ſhine upon thy ways*, no ſuch darkneſs as now ſurrounds thee ſhall remain; but thy path ſhall be clear as the day, and the ſun of proſperity ſhine upon thee on every ſide. *Note*, (1.) The ſucceſs of all our purpoſes, whether reſpecting ſpiritual or temporal good, comes from God alone. (2.) They who are at peace with God, will enjoy the light of his countenance as their preſent comfort, and look to the light of eternal glory as their expected happy portion.

[4.] His prayers ſhould be heard in behalf of others, as well as himſelf. *When men are caſt down*, and under their diſtreſs apply to thee, *thou ſhalt ſay* to encourage them, there is lifting up, or in prayer to God for them, *let there be lifting up, and he ſhall ſave the humble perſon*, and lift him out of the pit of affliction at thy requeſt. *He ſhall deliver the iſland of the innocent*, ſave them at thy deſire; or *the innocent*, the one good man, *ſhall deliver the iſland*, or *he ſhall deliver thoſe who are not innocent*; not only the humble ſhall receive a bleſſing from thy prayers, but even the wicked ſhall enjoy reſpite, and ſome temporal good from them. *And it is* (the iſland,) or *he is* (the perſon prayed for,) *delivered by the pureneſs of thine hand*, God having ſuch reſpect to thy petitions, when thou ſtretcheſt forth thine hands to him in the heavens. *Note*, (1.) Great is the power of a good man's prayers, and we ſhould earneſtly deſire to have an intereſt in them. (2.) Though God's praying people are often the ridicule of the world, it is through them the iſland is preſerved. (3.) There is one innocent and holy interceſſor in heaven, for whoſe ſake, God's humble people partake of his ſalvation.

CHAP. XXIII.

This chapter begins Job's reply to Eliphaz. 1. *He complains bitterly, and wiſhes to plead his cauſe before God*, ver. 2—5. *as confident of ſucceſs from God's mercy*, ver. 6, 7. *and his own integrity*, ver. 10—12. 2. *He could not find out the deſign of his ſufferings*, ver. 8, 9. *nor gain any hope of their relief*, ver. 13, 14. 3. *This heightened his trouble*, ver. 15—17.

1. THEN Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. Even to day [a] *is* my complaint bitter: my ſtroke is heavier than my groaning. 3. [b] O that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his ſeat! 4. I would order *my* cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. 5. I would know the words *which* he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me. 6. [c] Will he plead againſt me with *his* great power? No; but he would put *ſtrength* in me. 7. There [d] the righteous might diſpute with him; ſo ſhould I be delivered for ever from my judge.

a Lam. iii. 19, 20.
b Chap. xiii. 3. & xvi. 21.
c Iſa. xxvii. 4, 8. Jer. x. 24.
d Heb. x. 22.

v. 1—7. Job ſeems to think it in vain to reaſon with his friends, reſolved to condemn him ſo unreaſonably and cruelly, and therefore rather turns to God, in his anſwer to the accuſations of Eliphaz.

1. He juſtifies his complaints from the bitterneſs of his anguiſh, which all their counſels tended nothing to alleviate; or *even to day is my complaint rebellion*, ſo accounted by his cenſorious friends; but ſo far were his complaints from exceeding his ſufferings, that his ſtroke was heavier than his groaning. *Note*, (1.) They who know not what others feel, are too apt, when at eaſe themſelves, to condemn them for inordinate ſorrow. (2.) Though God forbids us not to complain, yet we need fear, leſt we murmur under our afflictions, which were to rebel againſt his government.

2. He longs to appear before God, and plead his cauſe; *O that I knew where I might find him*, where at his tribunal I might ſtand, *I would order my cauſe before him*, *I would fill my mouth with arguments*, I would direct my prayer to him, and plead the prevailing arguments of his grace and righteouſneſs in a Redeemer; or I would produce the moſt unexceptionable evidences, how unjuſtly I am condemned by my friends. *I would know the words that he would anſwer me*, far from deſiring the darkneſs to hide me, as ſuggeſted, *chap.* xxii. 14. I ſhould long for his ſentence to come forth, *and* to *underſtand what he would ſay unto me*, who would judge according to truth, and not condemn me unjuſtly as you do. *Note*, (1.) A ſoul under deſertion cries after God, O that I knew where I might find him, and ſuch complaints ſhall not be long unanſwered; he will be found in mercy of thoſe who ſeek him. (2.) It is a comfort, that whatever others anſwer us, or however they judge, we expect to appear before him, whoſe deciſions will be according to truth.

3. He expreſſes his confidence in the iſſue of ſuch a trial. *Would He*, God, *plead againſt me with his great power*, to cruſh and oppreſs me as you do? *No: He would put ſtrength in me*, encourage me to bear up under every preſſure. *There the righteous*, ſuch as I am, *might diſpute with him*, not againſt him as an adverſary, but before him as their judge, *ſo ſhould I be delivered for ever from my judge*, from your cenſures, which, as judges of my caſe, you have ſo raſhly pronounced; or rather he who is my judge, would declare my integrity, and deliver me from preſent and eternal condemnation. *Note*, (1.) They who fly to God in their diſtreſs, to pray and plead with him, ſhall find their ſtrength increaſe with every application to him. (2.) If God acquit us, we need neither fear nor care whoſe anathemas are upon us.

8. [e] Behold, I go forward, but he *is* not *there*; and
backward, but I cannot perceive him: 9. On the left
hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him*: [f]
he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee
him. 10. But he knoweth the way that I take; *when* [g]
he hath tried me, [h] I ſhall come forth as gold. 11. My
foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept, and [i] not
declined. 12. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips, [k] I have eſteemed the words of his
mouth, more than my † neceſſary *food*.

e Chap. ix. 11.
f Pſal. xliv. 24.
g Pſal. xvii. 3. & lxvi. 10.
h Iſa xlviii. Mal. iii. 3.
i 2 Tim. iv. 10.
k Pſal. cxix. 72. John iv. 34.
† Or appointed portion.

v. 8—12. Job had ſaid, O that I knew where I might find him; and his were not empty wiſhes, but earneſt labours. Here,

1. He laments his diſappointment; on every ſide he turned his thoughts, deeply revolved in mind his ſufferings, and ſought to find out their cauſe, and to acquaint himſelf with God's deſigns in them; but darkneſs was in all his path, and he was as much as ever at a loſs to account for the very ſingular circumſtances of his afflictions, and wherefore God thus viſited him, *v.* 8. *Note*, The moſt beloved ſaints of God have been exerciſed with great darkneſs of ſoul, as well as great anguiſh of body; which however grievous for the time, work bleſſed fruits in the end.

2. He was conſcious of his own integrity, and ſatisfied in the divine Omniſcience, *v.* 10. and therefore concludes, that when he had been tried, he ſhould come forth from the furnace as gold, the brighter for the torture. *My foot hath held his ſteps*, I have ſought to conform ſtep by ſtep with his word and providences; *his way have I kept*, his worſhip I have maintained, and his will obeyed in ſimplicity, *and not declined* from it, in any known inſtance, or by allowed guile; *neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips*, as a backſlider, or an apoſtate, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth*, *more than my neceſſary food*, more delightful to my ſoul, and judged them more neceſſary for it, than even food for my body. *Note*, (1.) It is a comfort God knows our ways, and our ſimplicity before him. (2.) The trials of the faithful are ſure to iſſue to their honour and advantage. (3.) The word of God is the believer's daily bread, and he feeds upon it, to the comforting and ſtrengthening of his ſoul.

13. But he *is* in one *mind*, and [l] who can turn him? and
[m] *what* his ſoul deſireth, even *that* he doth. 14. For he
performeth *the thing* [n] *that is* appointed for me: and many
ſuch things *are* with him. 15. Therefore [o] am I troubled
at his preſence: when I conſider, I am afraid of him.
16. For God [p] maketh my heart ſoft, and the Almighty
troubleth me: 17. † Becauſe I was not cut off before
the darkneſs, *neither* hath he covered the darkneſs from
my face.

l Chap. ix. 12, 13. & xii. 14.
m Pſal. cxv. 3.
n 1 Theſ. iii. 3.
o Hab. iii. 16.
p Pſal. xxii. 14.
† Or why was I not cut off by darkneſs? or why hath he covered, &c.

v. 13—17. Though he was conſcious of his uprightneſs, and hoped the iſſue of his trials ſhould be peace, they were hard to be born, though bear them he muſt.

1. It was in vain to think of changing the purpoſes of the immutable God. *He is in one mind*, unalterable his counſels, *and who can turn him* from executing his decrees? *and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth*, without controul, or poſſibility of reſiſtance. *He performeth the thing that is appointed for me*, according to his eternal mind and will, *and many ſuch things are with him*; many diſpenſations of his providence, abſtruſe and unaccountable by mortal worms; or he feared more troubles were in his hand, as if his meaſure of ſuffering was not yet full. *Note*, Though God doth what he will, he cannot but do what is right; and therefore we are ever bound to acquieſce, and ſeeing his hand in our afflictions, to be dumb, and not to open our mouth.

2. Though Job quitted not his hope, yet at times his fears prevailed: *Therefore am I troubled at his preſence*; *when I conſider, I am afraid*; the ſovereignty of God's diſpenſations, and the immutability of his counſels, compared with what he had already ſuffered, made him apprehenſive leaſt worſe was in ſtore for him, and that quite melted him down: *for God maketh my heart ſoft, and the Almighty troubleth me*, the fear of his impending viſitations, as well as the ſenſe of preſent anguiſh; *becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs* of affliction came, as if he was marked out to ſuffer: or it may be conſtrued as an expoſtulation, *Why was I not cut off before*, or *by darkneſs*, by death, from beholding theſe miſeries? *neither hath he covered the darkneſs from my face*, which, had I been hid in the grave, I had not ſeen: or without the word *neither*, *He hath covered the darkneſs from my face*, refuſes me the comfort of departing, or ſuffers me to ſee no end of my afflictions. *Note*, (1.) The conſideration of God's perfections out of a redeemer are big with terror to the ſoul, but in him our fears remove. (2.) We ſhould not be in ſuch haſte to be gone from our troubles into the darkneſs of death, when we know not how ſoon the ſcene may change, and that life which was our burden, be made comfortable to ourſelves, and ſerviceable to the cauſe of God.

CHAP. XXIV.

Job here more immediately enters on the point in diſpute, and ſhews (1.) That in this world oppreſſors are not always reckoned with, ver. 2—12. *however barbarous they may be*, ver. 21, 22. (2.) *That ſuch often go undiſcovered and unpuniſhed*, ver. 13—17. *But*, 3. *That God puniſhes them by ſecret judgments, or reſerves them for future ones*, ver. 18—20. *and* ver. 23—25. *So that upon the whole we cannot ſay, that all that are in trouble are wicked; nor that all that are in proſperity are righteous.*

1. WHY, ſeeing [a] times are not hidden from the
Almighty, do they that know him, not ſee his
Days? 2. *Some* [b] remove the land-marks; they violently
take away flocks, and feed *thereof*. 3. They drive away
the aſs of the fatherleſs, [c] they take the widow's ox for a
pledge. 4. They turn the needy out of the way: [d] the
poor of the earth hide themſelves together. 5. Behold,
as wild aſſes in the deſert, go they forth to their work,
[e] riſing betimes for a prey: the wilderneſs *yieldeth* food for
them *and* for *their* children. 6. They reap *every one* his
corn in the field: and † they gather the vintage of
the wicked. 7. They cauſe the naked to lodge without
cloathing, that *they have* no covering in the cold.
8. They are wet with the ſhowers of the mountains,
and [f] embrace the rock for want of a ſhelter. 9. They
pluck the fatherleſs from the breaſt, and take ‡ a pledge
of the poor. 10. They cauſe *him* to go naked without
cloathing, and [g] they take away the ſheaf *from* the hungry. 11. *Which* make oil within their walls, *and* tread
their wine-preſſes, and [h] ſuffer thirſt. 12. Men groan
from out of the city, and the ſoul of the wounded crieth
out: [i] yet God layeth not folly to *them*.

a Acts i. 7.
b Deut. xix. 14. & xxvii. 17. Prov. xxii. 28. & xxiii. 10.
c Deut. xxiv. 6, 10, 12, 17. Chap. xxii. 6.
d Prov. xxviii. 28.
e Ibid. iv. 16.
† Heb. The wicked gather the vintage.
f Lam. iv. 5. Heb. xi. 38.
‡ Heb. Or the poor for a pledge.
g Deut. xxv. 4. Jam. v. 4.
h Jer. xxii. 13.
i Pſal. l. 21.

v. 1—12. The argument in diſpute is, whether the wicked were not always purſued with marks of Divine diſpleaſure in this world. Job conſtantly denies the aſſertion.

1. He begins with an inference drawn from the cloſe of the former chapter, *v.* 14. *Why, ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty*, whoſe all-capacious mind comprehends in one view the paſt, the preſent, and the future, and according to whoſe will, all events are directed; Why, if as you aſſert, the wicked are always miſerable, *do they that know him*, that are acquainted with his will and ways, and favoured with his love, *not ſee his days* of executing judgment in this life on the ungodly? which they certainly would, if, as you affirm, they were always puniſhed here, whereas the very contrary is evident. *Note*, Whatever ſtrange diſpenſations of Providence appear, we may be aſſured God hath not forſaken the earth: he ſees and orders all with infinite wiſdom, and at laſt we ſhall adore, and wonder, and praiſe him, when we ſhall ſee his great deſigns laid open to our view.

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2. He proves in a variety of inſtances, the proſperity of the wicked; who, though the moſt unjuſt and cruel oppreſſors, go on with impunity. They rob men of their eſtates, and plunder them of their cattle, *v.* 21. If the poor have but a ſingle beaſt, they make a prey of it, and heed not the cries of the widow or fatherleſs, *v.* 3. inſolent and over-bearing, it is dangerous but to ſtand in their way, and the poor are forced to hide themſelves for ſafety, *v.* 4. Intractable and wanton as the wild aſſes, they make plunder their trade, and riſing early purſue their prey, living upon the fruits of their robbery, *v.* 5. The corn which others ſowed they reap, and gather the vintage of the wicked, devouring even one another, *v.* 6. or *the wicked gather the vintage* of the juſt, oppreſſed by them. The almoſt naked are ſtripped of the few rags which covered them, and mercileſs, they leave them in cold and hunger to pine and ſhiver on the barren mountain, or under the dreary rock, *v.* 7, 8. Even the fatherleſs babe they pluck from the breaſt, to ſell as a ſlave, and take the pledge of the poor, or *the poor for a pledge*, ſeize them for debt, and make them their bondmen, *v.* 9. they have no pity on the naked to cover them, and if he hath gleaned but one ſheaf of corn, to ſatisfy his hunger, even that they violently take from him, *v.* 10. Impriſoned within their walls, and doomed to hard ſervitude, the poor are compelled to make their oil, and tread their wine-preſſes, yet dare not quench their thirſt with the juice of the grape, *v.* 11. Under ſuch oppreſſion, even in the cities as well as the country, men groan without redreſs; and the ſoul of the wounded ſtruck and hurt, for daring perhaps to complain, crieth out, but in vain; *yet God layeth not folly to them*, ſuffers all this ſcene of grievous rapine and cruelty, and interpoſes not with any diſtinguiſhed judgments. *Note*, (1.) God takes notice of the ſinner's wickedneſs, though he, from his ſucceſs, promiſes himſelf impunity. (2.) It is doubly cruel to injure the fatherleſs and widow. (3.) They are wicked and hard hearted maſters, whoſe ſervants are ſcarce ſuffered to live by their labour, and there is a maſter in heaven, who will right them ſhortly.

13. They are of thoſe [k] that rebel againſt the light,
they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths
thereof. 14. [l] The murderer riſing with the light, kil-
leth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.
15. [m] The eye alſo of the adulterer waiteth for the twi-
light, [n] ſaying, No eye ſhall ſee me: and diſguiſeth *his*
face. 16. In the dark they dig through houſes, *which*
they had marked for themſelves in the day-time: [o] they
know not the light. 17. For the morning *is* to them
even as the ſhadow of death: if *one* know *them*, *they are*
in the terrors of the ſhadow of death.

[k] John iii. 20.
[l] Pſal. x. 8. Mic. ii. 1.
[m] Prov. vii. 9.
[n] Pſal. x. 11.
[o] John iii. 20.

v. 13—17. Like Ezekiel's chambers of imagery, Job goes on to deſcribe greater abominations that paſs in this world often with impunity. *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light*, reſiſt the remonſtrances of conſcience, and wilfully and deliberately plunge themſelves into the groſſeſt crimes; *they know not the ways thereof*, they refuſe to know, and ſhun the light of truth, *nor abide in the paths thereof*, preferring the dark ways of wickedneſs before it: or literally, the day-light is odious to them; they chuſe the darkneſs, if poſſible, to hide their guilty deeds. Vain attempt! whilſt God's eye, clearer than the ſun, pierces the thickeſt ſhades, and the night to him is as bright as the day. We have,

1. Their ſins—murder, adultery, and houſe-breaking. Riſing with the light, the murderer ſeizes the early traveller, and tho' poor and needy, and little to be got from him, yet killeth him, as if thirſting for blood, and at night is as a thief, robbing whatever he can ſeize, *v.* 14. The adulterer, aſhamed to perpetrate his deſigns publicly, waiteth for the night, and ſtill in fear of diſcovery, diſguiſeth his face; and tempted by the falſe hope of ſecreſy, ruſhes to the horrid deed, *v.* 15. The robber in the day prowls in queſt of prey, and having marked the place and houſe, at night breaks through and ſteals. *Note*, (1.) Though blood be here never diſcovered, the day will come when it will cry for vengeance. (2.) However ſecret the adulterer's crime be kept, his ſhame ſhall not be covered, when in a judgment-day the maſk is plucked away.

2. Though they ſucceed in their enterpriſes, they carry about them continual terror. *They know not the light*, dare not be ſeen in it, are afraid of diſcovery. *The morning is to them as the ſhadow of death*, ſo unwelcome; *if one know them*, guilt flaſhes in their faces, and dread of deſerved ſhame and puniſhment ſeizes them, *they are* like men juſt expiring *in the terrors of the ſhadow of death*. *Note*, A ſtate of wickedneſs is a ſtate of trembling; however pleaſurable or profitable the ſin, the continual alarm through fear of diſcovery, embitters all.

18. He *is* ſwift † as the waters, their portion is curſed
in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.
19. Drought and heat conſume the ſnow-waters: [p] *ſo doth*
the grave *thoſe which* have ſinned. 20. The womb ſhall
forget him, the worm ſhall feed ſweetly on him, [q] he
ſhall be no more remembered, and wickedneſs ſhall be
broken as a tree. 21. He evil entreateth the barren
that beareth not: and doth not good to the widow:
22. [r] He draweth alſo the mighty with his power: he
riſeth up, and no *man* is ſure of life. 23. ‡ *Though* it be
given him *to be* in ſafety, whereon he reſteth; yet [s] his
eyes *are* upon their ways. 24. [t] They are exalted for a
little while, but ‖ are gone, and brought low, they are
taken out of the way, as all *other*, and cut off as the
tops of the ears of corn. 25. And if *it be* not ſo now,
who will make me a liar, and make my ſpeech nothing
worth?

† Or on.
[p] Pſal. xlix. 14.
[q] Eccleſ. viii. 10.
[r] Eſth. iii. 9, 10. Rev. xvii. 2.
‡ Or it is given him to be in ſafety, and he reſteth on it, though his (God's) eyes, &c.
[s] Pſal. xi. 4.
[t] Ibid. xxxvii. 7—10.
‖ Heb. Are not.

v. 18—25. We have here,

1. The farther character of the wicked, *v.* 21, 22. He afflicts the barren with reproach, oppreſſes the widow, not even the mighty are ſafe; ſo daring is he, that when he riſeth up, no man's life is ſecure.

2. Notwithſtanding all his complicated ſins, *it is given him to be in ſafety*, v. 23. and inſtead of being affected with God's patience and repenting, *he reſteth thereon*, promiſing himſelf continual impunity. Yea, he is exalted, *v.* 24. ſo far from undergoing any preſent diſtinguiſhed ſuffering, he rears his head high, and if not beloved, is feared and obeyed. *Note*, Proſperity often hardens the ſinner, but he is leaſt ſafe when moſt ſecure. For,

3. The time of recompenſe will come, though not here, yet in death at leaſt. Short-lived is his joy, *v.* 24. though it endure to the laſt gaſp, for ſwift as water his days are hurrying by, *v.* 18. and however happy he appears, the curſe of God is upon him; and when he is gone, he ſhall no more behold the poſſeſſions in which he gloried, *v.* 18. His remembrance ſhall be blotted from his parent earth, *v.* 20. Broken down as a tree, the worms ſhall feed upon his carcaſe in the duſt: ſecure as he was, God's eye ſtill marked his winding way, *v.* 23. and as wicked men before him were, he ſhall be ſwept away from the earth, when the meaſure of his iniquities is full, as the ears of ripe corn are cut down, *v.* 24. In the grave he ſhall be conſumed, and there all his glory ſhall periſh with him, as the ſnow is melted before the ſcorching ſun, *v.* 19. *Note*, Though vengeance be ſlow, it is ſure: the longeſt period of a ſinner's reign is a few ſhort days, a fleeting moment of life.

4. He challenges them to confute the truths he had advanced, to prove him a liar, or invalidate his arguments; elſe muſt they quit the field, and own the proſperity of the wicked, and that not here but hereafter their recompenſe from God awaited them, and conſequently that their judgment was raſh and cenſorious who concluded him a wicked man, merely becauſe of his afflictions.

CHAP. XXV.

Bildad here makes a ſhort reply to Job's laſt diſcourſe. He drops the main queſtion concerning the proſperity of the wicked, as if unable to anſwer the proofs Job had brought: but becauſe he thought Job had made too bold an appeal to the Divine tribunal, chap. xxiii. *he in a few words ſhews the infinite diſtance there is between God and man, teaching us,* 1. *To think highly of God,* ver. 2, 3, 5. *and,* 2. *Meanly of ourſelves,* ver. 4, 6. *which are two good leſſons for us all to learn.*

1. THEN anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid,
2. [a] Dominion and fear *are* with him, he maketh
peace in his high places. 3. [b] Is there any number of
his armies? and upon whom doth not his light ariſe?
4. [c] How then can man be juſtified with God? or how
can he be clean [d] *that is* born of a woman? 5. Behold
even to the moon, and it ſhineth not; yea, [e] the ſtars
are not pure in his ſight. 6. How much leſs man [f] *that*
is a worm: and the ſon of man *which is* a worm?

[a] Dan. iv. 34.
[b] Ibid. vii. 10.
[c] Chap. iv. 17, &c. & xv. 14, &c. Pſal. cxxx. 3. & cxliii. 2.
[d] Pſal. li. 5.
[e] Chap. xv. 15.
[f] Pſal. xxii. 6.

v. 1—6. Bildad, either convinced by Job's arguments of the proſperity of the wicked, was unable to reply, or ſeeing him obſtinate in his opinion, thinks it uſeleſs to attempt his conviction. One thing however he cannot but urge, and therein he is right, the majeſty and holineſs of God, as an argument to deter Job from his repeated appeal to him, and eagerneſs to plead for himſelf at his bar.

1. He would have Job obſerve how great and glorious God is. *Dominion and fear are with him*, his kingdom abſolute and univerſal, and reverence and godly fear are the bounden duty of every creature before the eternal majeſty. *He maketh peace in his high places*, no jarring diſcord diſturbs the repoſe of that bright world where he dwells. *Is there any number of his armies?* when all the hoſts of heaven and earth, the elements, and all the powers of nature ſtand ready to execute his commands, *and*

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upon whom doth not his light ariſe? his providential care, extenſive as the ſun's bright beams, fills the earth with his goodneſs. Therefore Job's noiſy clamour is as unreaſonable, as his deſire to plead with ſuch an Almighty and holy God is preſumptuous.

2. How vile man is. *How can man be juſtified before God, and how can he be clean that is born of a woman?* his nature is corrupt, his ways perverſe; and therefore what folly, what madneſs to pretend to appear at his righteous bar. *Behold to the moon, and it ſhineth not, and the ſtars are not pure in his ſight*; his piercing eye can deſcry ſpots in the brighteſt luminaries of heaven; *how much leſs* then can *man that is a worm*, dare ſtand in his preſence as perfect, or *the ſon of man*, the corrupted offspring of a fallen parent, *that is a worm*, a dying worm, and ſhortly to be food for worms, preſume to vindicate himſelf. *Note*, (1.) A ſenſe of our meanneſs as mortal worms, and our ſinfulneſs as fallen creatures, ſhould ever humble us low in the duſt before God. (2.) Man is as unfit for communion with God, through his corruption, as unable to ſtand before him by reaſon of his guilt; woe were unto us, if we ſhould, unpardoned and unholy, be called to his bar. (3.) It is a mark of the amazing love and condeſcenſion of God, that notwithſtanding our vileneſs and ſinfulneſs, he hath in mercy had reſpect unto us, and ſent his ſon to waſh us in his blood, and his ſpirit to renew our hearts, that we might be enabled to appear righteous in his ſight, and be made meet for the enjoyment of his bleſſed ſelf.

CHAP. XXVI.

This is Job's ſhort reply to Bildad's diſcourſe, 1. *He ridicules it as foreign to the point in diſpute,* ver. 2—4. 2. *He profeſſes to ſpeak greater things of God's power and greatneſs, and therefore he might ſave himſelf the trouble of proving what none controverted,* ver. 5—13. 3. *He declares this ſubject to be inexhauſtible,* ver. 14.

1. BUT Job anſwered and ſaid, 2. How haſt thou helped *him that is* without power? *how* ſaveſt thou the arm *that hath* no ſtrength? 3. How haſt thou counſelled *him that hath* no wiſdom? and *how* haſt thou plentifully declared the thing, as it is? 4. [a] To whom haſt thou uttered words? and whoſe ſpirit came from thee?

[a] Chap. xii. 3.

v. 1—4. Pained as Job is, in every part, he cannot help rallying Bildad on the impertinence of his pompous oration.

How haſt thou helped him that is without power? how ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength? If this be referred to God, it is an ironical ſarcaſm, on Bildad's pretending to lift his feeble arm in ſupport of the Almighty and his cauſe; or if it be ſpoken of Job, as ſeems moſt natural, it expreſſes his contempt of a diſcourſe ſo foreign to the purpoſe, and ſo little ſuited to miniſter ſtrength or help to him. *How haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdom?* ridiculing the folly of his affecting the part of a counſellor, and regarding his opponent, as if he was deſtitute of underſtanding: *And how haſt thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?* ſet forth the matter in diſpute in a copious and convincing manner, when in fact he had not ſpoken one word to the purpoſe, reſpecting the grand point in debate. *To whom haſt thou uttered words,* To me? as if I were ignorant of ſuch knowledge, and withal ſo foreign to the caſe. *And whoſe ſpirit came from thee?* in thy conceit, the ſpirit of wiſdom and eloquence; in my apprehenſion, the ſpirit of folly and affectation. *Note*, (1.) When perſons conceited and wedded to their own opinions, aſſume a ſuperiority in diſpute, without producing any juſt claim to it, they deſerve the ridicule they provoke. (2.) It is not ſufficient that what we ſay is true; it muſt be pertinent, and applicable to the caſe in hand, or elſe it is unprofitable and vain. (3.) Afflicted ſouls have need not to have diſplays of majeſty and terror ſet before them, but of mercy and grace in Chriſt, poured in as balm into their wounds.

5. † Dead *things* ‡ are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof. 6. [b] Hell *is* naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering. 7. [c] He ſtretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing. 8. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. 9. He holdeth back the face of [d] *his* throne, *and* ſpreadeth his cloud upon it. 10. [e] He hath compaſſed the waters with bounds, ‖ until the day and night come to an end. 11. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at [f] his reproof. 12. [g] He divideth the ſea with his power, and by his underſtanding [h] he ſmiteth through § the proud. 13. [i] By his ſpirit he hath garniſhed the heavens; his hand hath formed [k] the crooked ſerpent. 14. Lo, theſe *are* † parts of his ways, but [l] how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can underſtand?

† Heb. Giants.
‡ Or groan under the waters with, &c.
[b] Pſal. cxxxix. 8. Prov. xv. 11. Heb. iv. 13.
[c] Chap. ix. 8. Pſal. civ. 2, &c.
[d] Iſa. lxvi. 1.
[e] Chap. xxxviii. 8. Pſal. xxxiii. 7. & civ. 9. Prov. viii. 21. Jer. v. 22.
‖ Heb. Until the end of light and darkneſs.
[f] Pſal. civ. 7.
[g] Iſa. li. 15.
[h] Pſ. lxxxix. 9. & civ. 3.
§ Heb. Pride.
[i] Pſal. xxxiii. 6.
[k] Iſa. xxvii. 1.
† Or the ſkirts.
[l] 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

Before Chriſt 1520.

v. 5—14. The point in debate is dropped here, and ſince Bildad ſeemed to triumph in ſetting forth the power and greatneſs of God; Job, ſo far from diſputing it, heartily joins with him, yea, exceeds him. It were happy for us, in all our religious differences, if we would wave diſputes about opinions allowedly not eſſential to ſalvation, and, content to differ about the more aſtruſe and minuter points of doctrine, unite in the great and glorious truths, which both ſides heartily embrace.

1. The power and glory of God appears in hell beneath, ſunk as ſtones in the mighty waters, and groaning in miſery; the Rephaim, the giants of enormous ſize, ſwept away by the devouring deluge with all the multitude, are ſhut up in chains of darkneſs, under the great abyſs, unto the judgment of the great day, *v.* 14. for ſo the words may ſignify. *Behold, the giants groan under the waters, with the inhabitants thereof,* the world of the ungodly. *Hell is naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering*; he ſees each atom of the ſleeping dead, wherever diſperſed in earth, fire, air, or water: yea, the place of the damned is open before him, hell itſelf excludes not his preſence; how then ſhould the ſinner be hid, when even death and hell are without covering?

2. From things beneath, he aſcends to things around us, in the earth and ſea, *He hangs the earth upon nothing,* v. 7. poiſed in the vaſt expanſe, and held together by ſtrange magnetic virtue. Shut up in the boſom of the vaſt abyſs, the mighty waters know thoſe bounds they cannot paſs, till time ſhall be no more, *v.* 10. The ſtormy billows roar and laſh the echoing ſhores; the waves lift up their heads, as if they had forſaken the deep, and threatned to mount the ſkies; the pillars of heaven, the ſtrong mountains tremble, and ſtand aſtoniſhed at his reproof, when tempeſts and mighty thundring are ſtirred up round about them; then at his word *he ſmiteth through the proud* waves, the ſtorm is huſhed, the billows ſubſide, and creep in gentle murmurs to the ſhore, *v.* 11, 12.

3. From objects around us on earth, he riſes to the viſible glories above us, that bear the ſtrong and legible characters of his eternal power and godhead, who faſhioned them. The vaſt expanſe of firmament is ſtretched over us, *v.* 7. where float thoſe clouds, in which, by mechaniſm wonderful, the waters exhaled from the ſea are ſuſpended, *v.* 8. nor, rent with the weight, pour down in torrents their collected ſtores, but with gentle ſhowers refreſh, inſtead of deluging the earth, *v.* 8. hid by the dark veil between, the brightneſs of his radiant throne in the higheſt heavens is concealed, *v.* 9. garniſhed by his ſpirit, the ætherial ſky, bright with ſun, moon, and ſtars, diſplays the wonders of his tranſcendant greatneſs, *v.* 13. *and his hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent,* either ſome bright conſtellation in the heavens, or that wonder of God's works upon earth, Leviathan, *Iſa.* xxvii. 1.; yet ſurpaſſing marvellous as theſe his works appear, *lo, theſe are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him?* how little do we know, compared with what is unſeen; and even in what is viſible, how ſmall a part can we comprehend of the depths of the wiſdom, knowledge, and glory of God therein manifeſted. *But the thunder of his power,* the amazing greatneſs of it, *who can underſtand?* it infinitely tranſcends all human faculties, and leaves us far behind, loſt in wonder and admiration.

CHAP. XXVII.

Job's friends, now ſilent through conviction, or deſpair of ſucceſs, no more reply, and therefore he proceeds in his diſcourſe. 1. *He begins with a ſolemn proteſtation of his integrity, and of his reſolution to hold it faſt,* ver. 2—6. 2. *He expreſſeth the dread he had of that hypocriſy they charged him with,* ver. 7—10. 3. *He ſhews the miſerable end of wicked people, notwithſtanding their long proſperity, and the curſe that attends them, and is entailed upon their families,* ver. 11—23.

1. MOreover, Job † continued his parable, and ſaid, 2. *As* God liveth, [a] *who* hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty, *who* hath ‡ vexed my ſoul; 3. All the while my breath *is* in me, and the § ſpirit of God *is* in my noſtrils; 4. My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor my tongue utter deceit. 5. God forbid that I ſhould juſtify you: till I die, [b] I will not remove my integrity from me. 6. My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go: [c] my heart ſhall not reproach *me* ſo long as I live.

† Heb. Added to take up.
[a] Chap. xxxiv. 5.
‡ Heb. Made it bitter, 2 Kings iv. 27.
§ i. e. The breath which God gave him. Gen. ii. 7. Iſa. ii. 22.
[b] Chap. ii. 9. & xiii. 15.
[c] Acts xxiv. 16.

v. 1—6. Though his friends are ſilent, Job continues his diſcourſe; a parable 'tis called, as full of deep and weighty matter, or as abounding with metaphors and allegories.

He ſolemnly appeals to God, as the everliving God, and almighty Governor of the world, for his integrity, though he had afflicted his ſoul, and *taken away his judgment*, *v.* 2, refuſed to appear to vindicate him, and continued his troubles; (a raſh expreſſion, for which Elihu reproved him, *chap.* xxxiv. 3.) Whilſt life and breath endured, *v.* 3. he reſolved nothing ſhould make him wickedly and falſely confeſs himſelf guilty, when his conſcience bore him witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt he was ſincere before God, *v.* 4. Far therefore from juſtifying them in their charges, by acknowledging the truth of them, he rejects with indignation the thought, reſolved till death to maintain his paſt integrity, *v.* 5. and, notwithſtanding all he ſuffers, to cleave ſtedfaſtly unto God, and never quit his plea of the juſtice of his cauſe, nor ſuffer his heart to reproach him, by yielding to their cruel ſuggeſtions, *v.* 6. *Note,* (1.) An oath is an appeal to the heart-ſearching God; and, as we muſt ſwear by no other, when we ſwear by him, we cannot be too circumſpect, that we ſpeak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Prevarication, or concealment, is as much perjury in the eye of God, as direct falſhood aſſerted. (2.) We are too apt to charge God fooliſhly, to faint under his corrections, and to call that his vexation, which flows only from our own impatience. (3.) Whatever circumſtances we are in, it is a wiſe and holy purpoſe, to hold faſt till death in our dependance on God, and unſhaken ſteadineſs in the profeſſion of the true religion. (4.) Whilſt we are careful to keep a conſcience void of offence, we are in duty bound to turn a deaf ear to Satan's ſuggeſtions that we are hypocrites, and not children of God, and to be unmoved by any cenſures of perverſe and uncharitable men. *If our conſcience condemns us not, then have we confidence towards God.*

7. Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me, as the unrighteous. 8. For [d] what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his ſoul? 9. [e] Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? 10. Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? will he [f] always call upon God?

[d] Mat. xvi. 26. Luke xii. 20.
[e] Chap. xxxv. 12. Pſ. xviii. 41. Prov. i. 28. & xxviii. 9. Iſa. i. 15. Ezek. viii. 18. Mic. iii. 4.
[f] Pſ. lxxviii. 34, &c.

v. 7—10. It had been ſuggeſted by his friends, that he was a wicked man, or a hypocrite. No, ſays he, I know the evil and danger of their ſtate too well. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked.* If it were permitted him to wiſh the greateſt evil to his enemy, he could not think of any thing ſo terrible as his ſharing with the wicked: not that a good man, as Job, would wiſh evil to any; but it is expreſſive of his ſenſe of the dreadfully dangerous and ruinous eſtate of the ungodly. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained,* ſucceeding in his ſchemes of worldly advantage, and ſecuring praiſe and honour among men? How vain and wretched! what a deluſion will it appear, *when God taketh away his ſoul?* A dying hour, or at fartheſt, a judgment day, will terribly undeceive him, and all his profeſſions and outward performances ſtand him in no ſtead at God's bar. *Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him?* Either the troubles of life, or the fearfulneſs that at death, or after death, will ſeize him, will God regard his prayer? No; whilſt inward hypocriſy remains, prayer is an abomination; and in the day of vengeance, inflexible juſtice can be prevailed upon by no importunity to reverſe the ſentence. *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty?* No; his religion is a burden, a taſk; not a pleaſure, nor his choice. *Will he always call upon God?* No; he prays only by fits and ſtarts. When he can get nothing by it, or muſt ſuſtain damage from his profeſſion of religion, the maſk is immediately removed. Now Job ſuggeſts, that the very contrary of this was his character, and therefore he was no hypocrite. *Note,* (1.) Miſerable is the condition of the hypocrite: we need take heed we deceive not ourſelves, but prove our own ſelves, whether Jeſus Chriſt indeed be formed in us. (2.) Many groan and cry under their troubles, whoſe prayer, as it proceeds not from a humbling ſenſe of ſin, but from mere anguiſh of pain, returns unanſwered. (3.) They who neglected prayer, or uſed it in mere formality, will ſhortly cry out in real deſire, when the door is ſhut, and it is too late to knock. (4.) The religion of hypocrites conſiſts in profeſſion, the performance of ſome outward ceremonies, and a deſire to appear righteous before men; but the heart is unchanged. They know no delight in God; their taſk of formal duties is irkſome; and an excuſe for omitting them, or hurrying them haſtily over, is eaſily admitted. Nor would they pray, or ſerve God at all, if the fear of hell, or their character in the world, did not more influence them, than any pleaſure in his ſervice, or real love to him in their ſouls.

11. I will teach you † by the hand of God: *that* which *is* with the Almighty will I not conceal. 12. Behold, all ye yourſelves have ſeen *it,* why then are ye thus altogether vain? 13. [g] This *is* the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppreſſors, *which* they ſhall receive of the Almighty. 14. [h] If his children be multiplied, *it is* for the ſword: and his offſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread. 15. Thoſe that remain of him ſhall be buried in death: and [i] his widows ſhall not weep. 16. Though he heap up ſilver as the duſt, and prepare raiment as the clay; 17. He may prepare *it,* [k] but the juſt ſhall put *it* on, and the innocent ſhall divide the ſilver. 18. He buildeth his houſe as a moth, and [l] as a booth *that* the keeper maketh. 19. The rich man ſhall lie down, but he ſhall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he *is* not. 20. [m] Terrors take hold on him as waters, [n] a tempeſt ſtealeth him away in the night. 21. [o] The eaſt wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a ſtorm hurleth him out of his place. 22. For *God* ſhall caſt upon him, and not ſpare: ‡ he would fain flee out of his hand. 23. [p] *Men* ſhall clap their hands at him, and ſhall hiſs him out of his place.

† Or, of the hand.
[g] Chap. xx. 29.
[h] Deut. xxviii. 41. Eſth. ix. 10. Hoſ. ix. 13.
[i] Pſ. lxxviii. 64.
[k] Prov. xiii. 22. & xxviii. 8. Eccleſ ii. 26.
[l] Iſa. i. 8. Lam. ii. 6.
[m] Chap. xviii. 11.
[n] Exod. xii. 29. Iſa. xv. 1. Dan. v. 30.
[o] Hoſ. xiii. 15.
‡ Heb. In fleeing he would flee. Exod. xiv. 25. Judg. iv. 17.
[p] 1 Kings ix. 8. Lam. ii. 15. Rev. xviii. 20.

v. 11—22. That the wicked are certainly miſerable, Job will readily allow; the queſtion only is, Where? not always viſibly in this life, though that may be ſometimes the caſe, but aſſuredly after death the curſe will overtake them. This he here undertakes to teach his friends, under the good hand of God, if they deſire to learn; and theſe diſpenſations of the Almighty's providence he would unfold, *v.* 11. which themſelves muſt needs have obſerved and ſeen, and therefore the more blameable their cenſures in condemning him for a hypocrite. The portion of the ungodly and oppreſſor then is ſure deſtruction, deſcending to them as an heritage; and though in this life they may proſper, they ſhall receive it from the hand of the Almighty in eternity, *v.* 13.

1. Their families, whom they leave behind them, and in whom they hope to perpetuate their name and glory, ſhall be cut off by the ſword, *v.* 14. by famine; and if any yet remain, the peſtilence, *v.* 15. ſhall ſweep them away, hurried to the grave, without a tear dropt over them: either they ſhall have no widows to lament them, or they ſhall be ſo odious to the wife of their boſom, that they will rather rejoice at their departure.

2. The wealth of the ſinner, which with ſuch aſſiduous care and toil he collected, ſhall be diſſipated through God's overruling providence. The juſt ſhall poſſeſs the wardrobes he hath filled, and the innocent divide the ſilver he hath accumulated, who will make a better uſe of the unrighteous Mammon, *v.* 17. His ſtately palace ſhall moulder into duſt, as the feeble houſe the moth erects, and be of as ſhort continuance as the ſhepherd's booth. *Note,* (1.) When men are dead, their riches ſtrangely vaniſh: could they look out of their graves, their miſery to ſee how they are diſpoſed of, would be greater even than the anxiety and care with which they ſcraped them together. (2.) The only durable houſe we can build, is that not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

3. They themſelves ſhall meet a miſerable death, and a more terrible eternity. *The rich man ſhall lie down* in the duſt of death, *but he ſhall not be gathered* to the ſepulchre of his fathers, or the congregation of the righteous. *He openeth his eyes,* which he cloſed upon his bed, and lo *he is not* any longer numbered with the living, but cut off by a ſudden ſtroke, and lifting up his eyes in torment. *Terrors take hold on him,* reſiſtleſs *as* the torrent of *waters,* and *a tempeſt* of divine wrath, little expected as the approach of the thief, *ſtealeth him away in the night,* juſt when he had been ſaying, Soul, take thine eaſe. *The eaſt wind carrieth him away, and he departeth* into the regions of eternal darkneſs; *and as a ſtorm,* the vengeance of God *hurleth him out of his place,* from his palace upon earth, down into the horrid caverns of Tophet; *for God ſhall caſt upon him* the fierceneſs of his wrath, tribulation, and anguiſh, *and ſpare not*; his puniſhment will be without meaſure, and without end, where, though *he would fain flee out of all his hand,* reſiſtance is vain, and the great gulph fixed prevents all eſcape. *Men ſhall clap their hands at him,* or, *hands ſhall clap at him*; the righteous on earth, on being delivered from their oppreſſor, and ſaints and angels in heaven magnifying God for his righteous judgments, *and ſhall hiſs him out of his place,* treating his memory with contempt on earth, or expreſſing their abhorrence of his crimes, when he is driven from God's tribunal into everlaſting puniſhment. *Note,* (1.) They who lie down on their beds, know not whether they ſhall ever awake again among the living. Are we ready then for a ſudden ſummons? (2.) The death-bed of the rich is often a ſcene of tempeſt, when they muſt leave a beloved world, to go where dreadful darkneſs hides the proſpect, and conſcious guilt begets a fearful looking-for of judgment. (3.) If once the ſinner be ingulphed in the belly of hell, then black deſpair will add the ſummit of miſery to the intolerable and everlaſting burnings.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Job had ſhewed that ſome wicked men live and die in proſperity, while others are arreſted by the judgments of God: but if any aſk the reaſon, why ſome are puniſhed in this world, and not others, they muſt be told it is a queſtion that cannot be reſolved. There *are myſteries in nature as well as providence, unſearchable by the deepeſt philoſopher. If we are careful to ſearch for the true wiſdom, we may know enough to be wiſe unto ſalvation, and more we need not deſire. Job ſpeaks here,* 1. *Concerning worldly wealth, how induſtriouſly it is ſought for,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Concerning wiſdom,* ver. 12. *How ineſtimable its value is,* ver. 15—19. *How ſecret its place,* ver. 14, 20, 22. *In particular, that there is a wiſdom which is hid in God,* ver. 23—27. *And a wiſdom which is revealed to man,* ver. 28. *Our enquiries into the former muſt be checked, into the latter muſt be quickned, for that is it which is our concern.*

† Or, mine. 1. SURELY there is a † vein for the ſilver, and a
place for gold *where* they fine *it.* 2. Iron is taken
‡ Or, ore. out of the earth, and braſs *is* molten *out of* the ‡ ſtone.
[a] Eccleſ. i. 13. 3. He ſetteth an end to darkneſs, and [a] ſearcheth out all
perfection: the ſtones of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of
death. 4. The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant;
even the waters forgotten of the foot; they are dried up,
they are gone away from men. 5. *As for* the earth, out
of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up at it were
fire. 6. The ſtones of it *are* the place of ſapphires: and
§ Or, gold-ore. it hath § duſt of gold. 7. *There is* a path which no fowl
knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not ſeen. 8.
The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion
paſſed by it. 9. He putteth forth his hand upon the
[b] Prov. ii. 4. rock; [b] he ‖ overturneth the mountains by the roots.
‖ Or, turneth it up from the roots of mountains. 10. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks, and his eye
ſeeth every precious thing. 11. He bindeth the floods
from overflowing, and *the thing that is* hid, bringeth he
forth to light.

v. 1—11. Riches is the grand object which men covet: to obtain them, no labour, contrivance, or induſtry are ſpared. By indefatigable purſuit and toil the mine is exhauſted of its ſtore; but the ſecrets of heaven, with all our ſtudy, cannot be penetrated as the bowels of the earth. The ſilver from the vein, and gold from the mine or the ſand, is collected and purified in the fire; and iron and braſs dug out of the earth, and molten in the furnace, *v.* 2. The ſame ſpot that above produces bread for man's food, beneath contains the hidden treaſures of gold and precious ſtones, ſparkling as fire, *v.* 5, 6. Man, in purſuit of theſe, opens the mine, and introduces the light, where, from the creation, darkneſs reigned, *v.* 3. He ſearcheth out all perfection, contrives variety of inſtruments to extract theſe ſubterranean treaſures, and brings to the ſurface the ſtores of ore that lay concealed as in the ſhadow of death. When guſhing waters hid in the bowels of the earth break forth, waters that never foot before had touched, by levels cut through the rocks, *v.* 10. or engines, he drains the overflowing flood, *v.* 4, 11. No rock, no mountain, can reſiſt his reſearches, *v.* 10. He carries on his traverſes, and brings forth to the light the precious things that were hid, *v.* 11. Secret paths are hollowed out, which neither the moſt ſharp-ſighted bird hath ſeen, nor have been trodden by the ſtrongeſt beaſts which roam the wilderneſs in ſearch of prey, *v.* 7, 8. *Note,* (1.) Shall gold thus engage man's inceſſant toil? and ſhall the riches of God's grace, infinitely more precious, be neglected? (2.) They who would be wiſe unto ſalvation, muſt in the mine of God's word dig for the ſacred treaſures there contained. The earth often diſappoints men's reſearches, but thoſe whom God by his grace engages to ſeek his true riches, never ſeek in vain. (3.) Deep is the mine, but deeper far, and more unſearchable, the diſpenſations of providence and grace: the keeneſt eye is here often at a loſs, and the ſtrongeſt reaſoner, after all his reſearches, is forced to cry, *O the depth!*

[c] Ver. 20. Eccleſ. vii. 24. 12. [c] But where ſhall wiſdom be found? and where *is*
the place of underſtanding? 13. Man knoweth not the
price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the
[d] Rom. xi. 33, 34. living. 14. [d] The depth ſaith, It *is* not in me: and the
† Heb. Fine gold ſhall not be given for it. Prov. iii. 13, 14. & viii. 11, 19. & xvi. 16. ſea ſaith, *It is* not with me. 15. † It cannot be gotten
for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed *for* the price
thereof. 16. It cannot be valued with the gold of
Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the ſapphire. 17.
The gold and the cryſtal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *ſhall not be for* ‡ jewels of fine gold. 18.
‡ Or veſſels. No mention ſhall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the
price of wiſdom *is* above rubies. 19. The topaz of
Ethiopia ſhall not equal it, neither ſhall it be valued
with pure gold.

v. 12—19. Gold and precious ſtones are valuable acquiſitions, but Job ſuggeſts a far more worthy purſuit, and which will more amply repay the pains, and that is wiſdom, the knowledge of and acquaintance with God and his ways.

1. This is the ineſtimable gain, which man knoweth not how to value; and whilſt engroſſed with earthly cares how to be rich, ſeldom concerns himſelf how to be wiſe. Yet, compared with this, all the moſt admired and precious ſtores that ever earth diſcloſed, are lighter upon the balances than vanity itſelf. One grain of grace is a more ſubſtantial good, than if the earth were one ſolid maſs of gold, and the whole property our own.

2. This is the hid treaſure which man knoweth not where to find. The miner ſaith, it is not in his dark cavern; the mariner ſaith, the merchandize of the ſea cannot procure it; the deepeſt reſearches of the wiſeſt philoſophers are unſatisfactory, and they grope for the wall as the blind. *Where then ſhall wiſdom be found?* no-where, but in him who is the wiſdom of God, and hath brought life and immortality to light in the goſpel, and in his word hath bid us ſearch after him that we may find him, and in him all the hid treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge. *Note,* (1.) The truths of the goſpel known and believed, make a man more truly wiſe, than the deepeſt acquaintance with the arcana of nature, or the moſt diſtinct underſtanding of the abſtruſeſt parts of the mathematics. (2.) Moſt people are eager enough, yea too eager, after riches; here no pains diſcourage their purſuit; but the treaſures of grace they deſpiſe and neglect, and count them not worth the ſeeking. Fooliſh preference! to be more ſollicitous about a periſhing world, than an immortal ſoul, and more anxious to ſecure a portion in time, than in eternity.

20. [e] Whence then cometh wiſdom? and where *is* [e] Ver. 12.
the place of underſtanding? 21. Seeing it is [f] hid [f] Mat. xiii. 44.
from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the
fowls of the air. 22. [g] Deſtruction and death ſay, We [g] Ver. 14.
have heard the fame thereof with our ears. 23. [h] God [h] Acts xv. 18.
underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place
thereof. 24. For he looketh to the ends of the earth,
and [i] ſeeth under the whole heaven. 25. [k] To make the [i] Prov. xv. 3. Heb. iv. 13.
weight for the winds, and he weigheth the water by
meaſure. 26. When [l] he made a decree for the rain, [k] Pſ. cxxxv. 7.
and a way for the lightning of the thunder: 27. Then [l] Am. iv. 7.
did he ſee it, and † declare it, he prepared it, yea, and † Or number.
ſearched it out. 28. And [m] unto man he ſaid, Behold, [m] Deut. xxix. 29.
[n] the fear of the Lord, that *is* wiſdom, and to depart [n] Ibid. iv. 6. Pſ. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7. & ix. 10. Eccleſ. xii. 13.
from evil *is* underſtanding.

v. 20—28. When we have begun to enquire as Pilate, *John* xviii. 38. *What is truth?* we muſt not haſtily depart without an anſwer. Job repeats the important queſtion, *Whence then cometh wiſdom?* he reſolves the queſtion by a two-fold conſideration of it, as *ſecret with God,* or *revealed to man.*

1. Secret things belong unto God; known unto him are the ſprings and reaſons of all his diſpenſations, whether of providence or grace. They who ſoar the higheſt cannot pry into them, *v.* 21. and they who ſink the deepeſt, find the ſhallow line of human underſtanding unable to fathom the abyſs of wiſdom, *v.* 22. Could even the dead come back to inform us what they know, they could report but the fame of it, that ſuch wiſdom is in God, but what it is neither ſpirits of men nor angels comprehend. *God* alone *underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.* The reſidence of wiſdom is in his own boſom, and all his purpoſes, planned with exact deſign, are executed in regular and uninterrupted order, though to us his paths are in the great waters, and his footſteps are not known. [1.] *His eye overlooks all;* at one view all nature is open to him; the paſt, the preſent, the future, know no ſucceſſion in his all-comprehending mind. [2.] *His power doth all;* the very winds are poiſed in his balance, laid up in his treaſures, directed to what point to blow, how long, how violent, and when to return. The waters are meaſured by him in exact proportion; the ſea to reach its banks, not overflow; the rivers to run perpetual, whilſt he maintains their inexhauſtible ſource, *v.* 25. [3.] *His decree fixes all.* Not a drop of rain falls, or a beam of lightning flaſhes from the cloud, but according to his eternal appointment, *v.* 26. Every circumſtance of the minuteſt event was fore-ordained, from eternity diſpoſed, and prepared in the moſt exact order. He alone beholds his own decrees, and declares them to us in their operations and iſſues, to diſplay his own glory, *v.* 27. *Note,* A real faith in Divine Providence will reconcile us to every event. *It is thy doing,* and that is enough to engage our perfect acquieſcence in the wiſdom, equity, and mercy of the diſpenſation.

2. Man's duty and wiſdom is revealed to him. *And unto man,* Adam, at firſt, and to all his ſons, *he ſaid, Behold,* attend with ſolemn reverence the great and important leſſon, *the fear of the Lord,* that filial fear which proceeds from the knowledge and love of him as revealed, *this is wiſdom,* the moſt valuable attainment, and infinitely ſurpaſſing the higheſt flights of philoſophic attainments; *and to depart from evil,* ſin of every kind, the effect of ſuch fear of God, *is underſtanding.* And with this Job ſuggeſts his friends ſhould have been ſatisfied, and not pretend to dive into the ſecrets of God, and condemn him for a hypocrite, by miſinterpreting the deſigns of his providence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

After a ſolemn pauſe, that they might weigh his words, and he might conſider what important matter he had yet to utter, on perceiving his friends ſilent, Job continues his diſcourſe, and ſhews, 1. *What comfort he formerly had in God and his family*, ver. 1—6. 2. *What reſpect was paid him by all ſorts of people*, ver. 7—10. 3. *What good he did as a magiſtrate*, ver. 11—17. 4. *What proſpect he had of the continuance of his comfort at home*, ver. 18—20. *And of his intereſt abroad*, ver. 21—25.

1. MOREOVER, Job [a] continued his parable, and ſaid, 2. Oh that I were as *in* months paſt, as *in* the days *when* God preſerved me: 3. When his † candle ſhined upon my head, *and when* by his light I walked *through* darkneſs: 4. As I was in the days of my youth, when [b] the ſecret of God *was* upon my tabernacle: 5. When [c] the Almighty *was* yet with me, *when* my children *were* about me: 6. When [d] I waſhed my ſteps with butter, and [e] the rock poured me out rivers of oil:

[a] Chap. xxvii. 1.
† Or lamp. Pſ. xviii. 28.
[b] Pſ. xxv. 14.
[c] Judg. vi. 12.
[d] Deut. xxxii. 13. & xxxiii. 24. Chap. xx. 17.
[e] Pſ. lxxxi. 16.

v. 1—6. Reflections upon his former proſperous ſtate, contraſted againſt his preſent wretchedneſs, draw forth the deep ſigh from his boſom; and though no proſpect of a change appears, he cannot but wiſh the return of happier days. *Oh that I were as in months paſt*, enjoying ſuch outward bleſſings, or rather ſuch communion with God, as even then was his greateſt joy. *Note*, (1.) God forbids us not to pray for the reſtoration of health, eaſe, and worldly good, whilſt we in ſubmiſſion reſign ourſelves to his will. (2.) A godly man longs more for the light of God's countenance, than for any bleſſing this world can afford.

Job mentions two things eſpecially, that made him wiſh for the months that were paſt: the comfort he had in God, and in his family.

1. In God; when *he preſerved me* from all evil, *when his candle ſhined upon my head*, the bright communications of his favour were my delight and glory; *and when by his light I walked thro' darkneſs*, and every trouble was made eaſy by the preſence, light, and love of God. *As I was in the days of my youth*, when he enjoyed a lively ſenſe of the divine regard, *when the ſecret of God was upon my tabernacle*, and he manifeſted himſelf to me, as he doth not to the world; *when the Almighty was yet with me*, ſhowering down mercy ſpiritual and temporal upon me. *Note*, (1.) They are ſafe whom God preſerves, and they only. (2.) The light of God's love will refreſh the ſoul amidſt the darkeſt diſpenſations. (3.) It is a bleſſed thing, when in our youthful days we are acquainted with the ſecret of God.

2. In his family. *When my children*, thoſe deareſt and moſt valuable earthly bleſſings, *were with me*, my comfort and joy: *when I waſhed my ſteps with butter*, ſo plentifully did the kine ſupply him, *and the rock poured me out rivers of oil*; his olive-yards ſo fruitful, that the ſtreams of oil guſhed out, as ſprings of water from beneath the rock. *Note*, Children are God's gift; whilſt we thankfully enjoy them, let us not by idolatrous affection tempt God to take them away.

7. When I went out to [f] the gate, through the city, *when* I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet. 8. The young men ſaw me, and hid themſelves: and the aged aroſe, *and* ſtood up. 9, The princes refrained talking, and [g] laid *their* hand on their mouth. 10. The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. 11. When the ear heard *me*, then it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw *me*, it gave witneſs to me: 12. Becauſe [h] I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherleſs, and *him that had* none to help him. 13. The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me: and I cauſed the widow's heart to ſing for joy. 14. [i] I put on righteouſneſs, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem. 15. I *was* eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame. 16. I *was* a father to the poor: and [k] the cauſe *which* I knew not, I ſearched out. 17. And I [l] brake the jaws of the wicked, and pluckt the ſpoil out of his teeth.

[f] Jer. xxxviii. 7.
[g] Judg. xviii. 19. Chap. xxi. 5.
[h] Pſ. lxxii. 12. Prov. xxi. 13. & xxiv. 11.
[i] Deut. xxiv. 13. Pſal. cxxxii. 9. Iſa. lix. 17. Eph. vi. 14.
[k] Prov. xxix. 7. & xxxi. 8.
[l] Pſ. lviii. 6. Prov. xxx. 14.

v. 7—17. Job's friends had treated him with inſolence, and accuſed him of being an oppreſſive magiſtrate, as well as a bad man. But how differently had he uſed to be regarded, and what teſtimonies could he not produce of his integrity? He here declares,

1. What high reſpect had formerly been paid him from the leaſt to the greateſt. When as a magiſtrate he went to the place of judgment, which was uſually held in the gate, or where the greateſt concourſe of people was, that all might hear and have free acceſs, the young men with veneration gave way, and the aged roſe up with deep reſpect, and ſtood till he was ſeated, *v.* 8. The princes and nobles, the chief magiſtrates who were on the bench with him, conſcious of his ſuperior abilities, heard him as their oracle: they ſealed up their lips before him, and waited for his opinion of the caſe, fully aſſured, from the depth of his penetration, and the integrity of his heart, that his deciſions would be the voice of truth and juſtice, *v.* 9, 10. Every hearer applauded his ſentence, and every beholder witneſſed to the gravity, wiſdom, and uprightneſs of his conduct, *v.* 11. *Note*, (1.) Modeſty in youth, and reſpect for the aged, is moſt amiable and becoming. (2.) A wiſe and upright judge is worthy to be had in honour, as the moſt uſeful member of the community. (3.) It is a mark of true wiſdom to know when to be ſilent.

2. What he did to deſerve this reſpect. He was the friend of the poor and fatherleſs, eſpouſing their cauſe, and redreſſing their complaints, *v.* 12. Thoſe who were ready to periſh, thro' want or oppreſſion, experienced his generous ſupport; and the widows hearts were made to exult in the kind care he ſhewed for them and their intereſts, *v.* 13. Bleſſings were ſhowered down upon his head, the voice of gratitude; and daily prayers went up to God for him, the beſt recompence the poor can make their benevolent friend, and which Job eſteemed the moſt valuable return. Clothed with righteouſneſs, no reſpect of perſons ever biaſſed his determinations; and the ornament he valued more than the purple robe or the diadem, which, as a magiſtrate, perhaps he wore, was that judgment, that principle of equity and uprightneſs, which ever influenced him, *v.* 14. The ignorant, who could not plead for themſelves, and the helpleſs, who had neither friends nor money to proſecute their juſt rights, he freely and effectually aſſiſted, *v.* 15. and the poor found in him a father, ever ready to vindicate their wrongs, *v.* 16. If difficulties occurred in any cauſe, with cloſe application he ſet himſelf to unravel the truth, which cunning, fraud, or falſhood had perplexed, *v.* 16. and the wicked, convicted by his wiſdom, and condemned by his righteous ſentence, unable, as when the jaw-bone is broken, to hold their prey, were compelled with ſhame and grief to reſtore the fruits of their oppreſſion, *v.* 17. *Note*, (1.) They are truly great, whoſe will to do good is equal to their ability. (2.) Gratitude and prayer are returns the pooreſt can make; theſe then ſhould never be forgotten. (3.) An heart filled with the love of juſtice, an head bleſſed with ſound underſtanding, an ear patiently attentive to the longeſt evidence, and an hand firm in the execution of condign puniſhment on the wicked, theſe conſtitute a righteous judge.

18. [m] Then I ſaid, I ſhall die in my neſt, and I ſhall multiply *my* days as the ſand. 19. My root *was* ſpread out [n] by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. 20. My glory *was* † freſh in me, and [o] my bow was [p] renewed in my hand. 21. Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept ſilence at my counſel. 22. After my words they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them. 23. And they waited for me, [q] as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide, *as* for the latter rain. 24. *If* I laughed on them, they believed *it* not, and the light of my countenance they caſt not down. 25. I choſe out their way, and ſat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one *that* comforteth the mourners.

[m] Pſ. xxx. 6.
[n] Pſ. i. 3. Jer. xvii. 8.
† Heb. New.
[o] Gen. xlix. 24.
[p] Iſa. xl. 31.
[q] Pſ. lxxii. 6.

v. 18—25. From all appearances, and according to human foreſight, no man's proſperity appeared of ſurer continuance than Job's; no wonder therefore,

1. That he promiſed himſelf good days. *Then I ſaid*, when every thing without was ſo fair, and within conſcious integrity, *I ſhall die in my neſt.* Die he knew he muſt, and never in his greateſt proſperity forgot to prepare for his departure hence; but he hoped it would be in peace, amidſt his kind friends ſurrounding his bed, and children, the heirs of his virtue, as well as affluence, with filial piety cloſing his dying eyes. *I ſhall multiply as the ſand my days*, and late return unto the tomb, full of years, riches, and honours. *Note*, (1.) When things go ſmoothly, we are too apt to count upon their continuance; but how often do we ſee a quick tranſition, and our hopes diſappointed? (2.) A long life is a deſirable bleſſing, when employed for the glory of God, and the good of mankind.

2. He thought he had great grounds for his hope. Rooted as a tree, his worldly proſperity ſeemed fixed on a durable baſis, and his vital ſtamina ſound and vigorous. Watered continually by providential care, he grew and increaſed; the dew of heavenly influences reſted upon him, and all his concerns, ſpiritual or temporal, flouriſhed, *v.* 19. His glory was freſh, never withering, ever blooming, whilſt each day added new luſtre to his eſtate, and his bow was renewed in his hand; ſo that he appeared to have nothing to apprehend from any adverſary. When he ſpoke, attention ſat mute, and on his lips the audience hung: the ear delighted, was never weary, and his diſcourſe, as gentle

ſhowers deſcending to refreſh the parched ground, ſunk deep into the heart. All heard with ſilent wonder his words, as the voice of wiſdom, and with ſubmiſſion received his counſels, as oracular, *v.* 21—23. If he ſmiled graciouſly, ſo great they eſteemed the honour, they ſcarce could believe themſelves the objects of his regard; and, far from preſuming on his familiar condeſcenſion, were awed by his majeſty, and paid him no leſs reſpect and reverence, *v* 24. As a counſellor, all who conſulted him acquieſced in his advice. As a teacher of divine truth, he pointed out their way, and they followed him. In public aſſemblies he had the ſeat of honour; in the congregation of the faithful he preſided, and led their devotions. As a king in his army he was honoured and obeyed; and as one that comforteth the mourners, ready to fly to the relief of the afflicted, and to pour the balm of conſolation into the wounded ſpirit, *v.* 25. *Note,* (1.) If we proſper in body or ſoul, be it ever remembered who it is that watereth us every moment, whoſe influences with-held, we wither, droop, and die. (2.) Superiors ſhould be condeſcending, yet in their freedoms maintain their dignity. (3.) They who have comforted others, find themſelvs often unable to receive in their afflictions the conſolations they have adminiſtered.

CHAP. XXX.

Job's preſent deep adverſity is here deſcribed, and looks the darker, contraſted with his former great proſperity. 1. *He was now as much deſpiſed, as before exalted,* ver. 1—14. 2. *His terror and ſorrow were in full meaſure with, or exceeded, his former conſolation,* ver. 15, 16, 26—28, & 31. 3. *His health is changed into pain and ſickneſs,* ver. 17—19, 29, 30. 4. *His former ſweet communication with God is cut off,* ver. 20—22. 5. *Inſtead of his expected long life, death is at the door,* ver. 23. *But,* 6. *two things gave him ſome relief;* (1.) *That his troubles would not follow him to the grave,* ver. 24. (2.) *That in his proſperity he had ſympathized with thoſe that were in miſery,* ver. 25.

1. BUT now [a] *they that are* younger than I, have me in deriſion, whoſe fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the dogs of my flock. 2. Yea, whereto *might* the ſtrength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was periſhed? 3. [b] For want and famine *they were* ſolitary: fleeing into the wilderneſs, in former time deſolate and waſte: 4. Who cut up mallows by the buſhes, and juniper-roots *for* their meat. 5. They were driven forth from among *men,* (they cried after them, as *after* a thief) 6. To dwell in the clifts of the valleys, *in* caves of the earth, and *in* the rocks. 7. Among the buſhes [c] they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together. 8. *They were* children of fools, yea, children of † baſe men: they were viler than the earth. 9. And now [d] am I their ſong, yea, I am their by-word. 10. They abhor me, they flee far from me, and ſpare not [e] to ſpit in my face. 11. Becauſe [f] he hath looſed my cord, and afflicted me, they have alſo let looſe the bridle before me. 12. Upon *my* right *hand* riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they [g] raiſe up againſt me the ways of their deſtruction. 13. They mar my path, [h] they ſet forward my calamity, ‡ they *have* no helper. 14. They came *upon me,* as a wide breaking in *of waters:* in the deſolation they rolled themſelves *upon me.*

[a] Chap. xix. 18.
[b] Prov. xxiii. 21.
[c] Chap. vi. 5.
† Heb. Men of no name.
[d] Chap. xvii. 6. Pſ. xxxv. 15. & lxix. 12. Lam. iii. 14, 63.
[e] Iſa. l. 6. Mat. xxvi. 67. & xxvii. 30.
[f] Chap. xviii.
[g] Chap. xix. 12.
[h] Zech. i. 15.
‡ Or, there is no helper againſt them.

v. 1—14. We have here a long account of Job's diſtreſſes; among the chief of which, he reckons the inſults he ſuſtained from the vileſt abjects around him.

1. He deſcribes them as younger than himſelf, perſons of the meaneſt extraction, whoſe parents were ſo deſpicable, that they were unworthy to be ſet over the dogs of his flock; yea, ſcarce fit company for them, *v.* 1. ſo ſlothful, that they were uſeleſs cumberers of the ground: ſo battered with vices, that they never reached old age: or ſo fooliſh, that all the wiſdom which uſually attends long life was periſhed in them, *v.* 2. Poor as idle, famine came upon them; and whilſt they refuſed to work, to ſuch ſturdy beggars none cared to give; ſo that their diſtreſſes drove them to the deſerts, living upon roots, and fruits that grew wild *upon the buſhes, v.* 3, 4. Vagabonds on the earth, and plagues of their country, for their crimes they were driven from the ſociety of men, and every body was glad to be rid of them, *v.* 5. Under the rocks and in caves they hid themſelves, like wild aſſes; famiſhed, they brayed for hunger; and *under the nettles,* or *thorn hedges, were gathered together, v.* 6, 7. a generation of folly and infamy, the very ſcum of the earth, *v.* 8. *Note,* (1.) They who will not work, have no right to eat. (2.) It is a relief to ſociety, when the idle vagrants, the peſts of ſociety, are driven from the hive. (3.) This beggarly world is full of the devil's poor, whoſe vices and ſloth concur to make their being as miſerable to themſelves, as their ſins render them odious to God and man.

2. Even theſe dared ſhew their inſolence and abuſe to this afflicted man. They derided him, *v.* 1. made him the ſubject of their ballads, perhaps turned his name into a proverb for hypocriſy and wickedneſs, *v.* 9. They abhorred him for the vigilance with which, as a magiſtrate, he had animadverted upon them; ſhunned him as a plague, and if they came near, it was but to add the vileſt inſults to him, to ſpit in his face, or trip up his heels, that they might ſport themſelves at his fall, *v.* 10, 12. Becauſe God had afflicted him, and looſed his cord, his power as a magiſtrate to puniſh them, they caſt off all reverence and reſtraint, *v.* 11. The very children roſe up to mock at his calamities, taught by their ungodly parents, *v.* 12. They imputed to him the cauſe of all their ſufferings, and ſought to revenge themſelves upon him in his deſtruction. They obſtructed him in the exerciſes of devotion, or treated his holy walk with contempt: they added bitterneſs to his affliction, and *they have no helper,* or *no helper is againſt them,* none to take my part, *v.* 13. Like the waters, when the mound is broken down, or a beſieging army, when the breach is opened in the wall, they came rolling themſelves, as if to overwhelm him in his preſent deſolations, taking advantage of his weakneſs, and eager to make an utter end of him. *Note,* (1.) Inſult is what generous ſpirits can moſt difficultly brook. (2.) The beſt of men have ſuffered the moſt contempt and ridicule from an ungodly world; we may not think it ſtrange therefore if we ſhare with them. (3.) They who in their proſperity were almoſt adored, in adverſity will often be trampled upon by every foot. (4.) Thus was the greater than Job treated in his diſtreſſes, mocked, ſpit upon, puſhed at in ſport, and abhorred; yet never appeared greater in the eyes of God, than when moſt deſpiſed and rejected of men.

15. [i] Terrors are turned upon me: they purſue my ſoul as the wind: and my welfare paſſeth away as a cloud. 16. And now [k] my ſoul is poured out upon me: the days of affliction have taken hold upon me. 17. My bones are pierced in me in the night-ſeaſon: and my ſinews take no reſt. 18. By the great force *of my diſeaſe* is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat. 19. He hath caſt me [l] into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes. 20. I cry unto thee, [m] and thou doſt not hear me: I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me *not.* 21. [n] Thou art become cruel to me: with † thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thyſelf againſt me. 22. Thou lifteſt me up to the wind: thou cauſeſt me to ride *upon it,* and diſſolveſt my ‡ ſubſtance. 23. For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and [o] *to* the houſe [p] appointed for all living. 24. Howbeit he will not ſtretch out *his* hand to the § grave, though they cry in his deſtruction. 25. [q] Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? ‖ was *not* my ſoul grieved for the poor? 26. When [r] I looked for good, then evil came *unto me:* and when I waited for light, there came darkneſs. 27. My bowels boiled, and reſted not: the days of affliction prevented me. 28. [s] I went mourning without the ſun: I ſtood up, *and* I cried in the congregation. 29. [t] I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to † owls. 30. [u] My ſkin is black upon me, and [x] my bones are burnt with heat. 31. My harp alſo is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

[i] Jer. xvii. 17.
[k] 1 Sam. i. 15. Pſ. xlii. 4.
[l] Pſ. xl. 2.
[m] Pſ. xxii. 2. Lam. iii. 44.
[n] Jer. xxx. 14.
† Heb. The ſtrength of thy hand.
‡ Or wiſdom.
[o] Eccleſ. xii. 5.
[p] Heb. ix. 27.
§ Heb. Heap. So Chap. xxi. 32.
[q] Pſ. xxxv. 13, 14. Rom. xii. 15.
‖ Or, did not my ſoul burn for, &c. 2 Cor. xi. 29.
[r] Jer. viii. 15.
[s] Pſ. xxxviii. 6. & xlii. 9.
[t] Pſ. cii. 6. Mic. i. 8.
† Or oſtriches.
[u] Pſ. cxix. 83. Lam. iv. 8. & v. 10.
[x] Pſ. cii. 3.

v. 15—31. Many and grievous were the tribulations Job endured both in body and mind, of which he here feelingly complains.

Internal terrors fixed on his ſpirit, from the apprehenſion of God as an enemy; and as the wind, ſwift in ſucceſſion and reſiſtleſs, they purſued him. His *welfare,* or *ſalvation,* his proſperity paſſed away as the cloud vaniſhes, *v.* 16. Diſſolved with anguiſh, his ſoul melted within him, and affliction had ſeized on him as its prey, *v.* 17. His body tortured with pains, his bones aching, and his ſinew as if ſtretched upon the rack, prevented ſleep from cloſing his weary eyes, *v.* 13. The purulent diſcharge from his boils diſcoloured and ſtiffned his very garments, ſo that they were not only noiſome, but preſſed hard and painfully on his inflamed ulcers, *v.* 18. Like one caſt in the mire, ſo loathſome he appeared; and as more than half dead, his fleſh ſeemed already turned to corruption, and fit only for the grave, *v.* 19. Vain were his prayers, his tears; God gave him no anſwer, as if diſregarding his requeſt, *v.* 20. Yea, worſe, God dealt with him as a cruel enemy; and, as if armed with omnipotence, oppoſed him on every ſide, *v.* 21. Caught up, as the ſtubble before the wind, he thought God ſported with his miſery, and by the blaſts of his diſpleaſure, diſſipated all his ſubſtance, *v.* 22. No proſpect of relief appeared; but, wretched as he was, he expected to be brought to the grave, the houſe appointed for all the living, by Divine decree, ſince ſin entered, and death followed at its heels, *v.* 23. Yea, even the death he was appointed unto was delayed, and he was kept in torment; or God would not reſcue him from going down to the pit, notwithſtanding the prayers and interceſſion of thoſe who intereſted themſelves for him, in his preſent ruinous and miſerable eſtate, *v.* 24. His compaſſions to the poor and afflicted had been tender and conſtant, *v.* 25. and he might hope to have met with like compaſſion from God; but how greatly was he diſappointed, when, inſtead of the good he looked for, evil came upon him; and, inſtead of light and comfort in his troubles, darkneſs, and deſpair of their end, had compaſſed him about, *v.* 26. A burning fever ſcorched him up within, and days of anguiſh ruſhed on him as an enemy, and ſurprized him as a thief in the night, *v.* 27. No gleam of ſun-ſhine lightened up the dark valley of affliction; even amidſt the greateſt concourſe of thoſe who aſſembled for worſhip, or gathered round him, he roared out in his pains, *v.* 28. Deſolate and wailing, as the dragons and the owls, and finding none to pity him, *v.* 29. His ſkin was black with his diſeaſe, and it burnt to the very bones and marrow, *v.* 30. The voice of joy was fled, his harp and organ lay neglected by, unable now to reliſh the ſwelling notes, when weeping and mourning were the melancholy diſcordant ſounds that ever grated in his ears, *v.* 31. *Note*, (1.) They who dwell in corruptible bodies muſt expect often to feel ſickneſs and pain, the preludes of death. (2.) It is folly as well as ſin, to be proud of that body which the ſtroke of diſeaſe can make ſo loathſome. (3.) Whatever houſes men build for themſelves, let them remember, there is one dwelling prepared for them, where they muſt make their longeſt abode. (4.) Bodily trials are heavy, but a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, and a wounded ſpirit, is the bittereſt of all our burdens. (5.) Muſic is a pleaſing entertainment, but diſeaſe untunes the nerves, and looſens the ſilver cord, and then the ſounds of harmony can delight no longer.

CHAP. XXXI.

Many had been the ſevere accuſations laid upon Job, though none of them ſupported by the leaſt evidence. He here enters into a particular vindication of himſelf upon oath, and appears not only far from a wicked man, or hypocrite, but influenced by the nobleſt principles of piety, purity, charity, and equity. The particular ſins he diſclaims are, 1. *Wantonneſs and uncleanneſs of heart*, ver. 1—4. 2. *Fraud and injuſtice in commerce*, ver. 4—8. 3. *Adultery*, ver. 9—12. 4. *Haughtineſs and ſeverity towards his ſervants*, ver. 13—15. 5. *Unmercifulneſs to the poor, the widows, and the fatherleſs*, ver. 16—23. 6. *Confidence in his worldly wealth*, ver. 24, 25. 7. *Idolatry*, ver. 26—28. 8. *Revenge*, ver. 29—31. 9. *Neglect of poor ſtrangers*, ver. 32. 10. *Hypocriſy in concealing his own ſins, and cowardice in conniving at the ſins of others*, ver. 33, 34. 11. *Oppreſſion*, ver. 38—40. *Towards the cloſe he appeals to God's judgment, concerning his integrity*, ver. 35—37.

1. I Made a covenant with mine [a] eyes; why then ſhould I think upon a maid? 2. For [b] what portion of God *is there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high? 3. *Is* not deſtruction to the wicked? and [c] a ſtrange *puniſhment* to the workers of iniquity? 4. [d] Doth not he ſee my ways, and count all my ſteps? 5. If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit; 6. [e] Let me be weighed in an † even balance, that God may know mine integrity. 7. If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and [f] mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands: 8. *Then* [g] let me ſow, and let another eat: yea, let my offſpring be rooted out.

[a] Mat. v. 28.
[b] Chap. xx. 29. & xxvii. 13.
[c] Iſa. xxviii. 21. Jude 7.
[d] 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Chap. xxxiv. 21. Prov. v. 21. & xv. 3. Jer. xxxii. 19.
[e] Pſ. xxvi. 1.
† Heb. Balances of juſtice.
[f] Num. xv. 39. Ezek. vi. 9. Mat. v. 28.
[g] Lev. xxvi. 16. Deut. xxviii. 30. &c.

v. 1—8. Two of the moſt common and moſt beſetting ſins are lewdneſs and inordinate love of the world; of both Job proteſts his innocence.

1. Of lewdneſs. So far was he from every groſſer indulgence, that his eyes, the inlets of beauty's beams, thro' which, like the rays collected in the burning-glaſs, the fire of impure deſires is kindled in the heart; theſe were kept from wandering on forbidden objects: nor in his ſecret thoughts did he ever harbour or cheriſh the fancies of an unchaſte imagination, *v.* 1. Nor was he thus circumſpect becauſe of the ſhame or inconvenience which might enſue from indulgence; no; it was the fear of God that reſtrained him: he knew uncleanneſs muſt exclude him from the regard and favour of God, *v.* 2. muſt expoſe him to the terrors of divine vengeance, to ſtrange diſeaſes here, and eternal ſufferings hereafter, *v.* 3. Nor could he hope for concealment in his moſt ſecret ſins, even in thought, fully perſuaded of God's all-ſeeing eye, from which nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret. *v.* 4. *Note*, (1.) Fleſhly luſts are the moſt dangerous enemies of the ſoul, and call for eſpecial watchfulneſs. (2.) They who would keep their hearts pure, muſt keep their eye ſingle: the leaſt impure indulgencies allowed, lay open the ſoul to the deluge of iniquity. None who once ſlacken the rein, know where they ſhall ſtop. (3.) However unexceptionable our outward conduct appears, there is a God who marks our ſecret ſteps, is with us amidſt the darkneſs, and ſees the hidden thoughts of our minds; let us remember then continually his eye is upon us. (4.) Impurity of temper, and the enjoyment of God, are incompatible: into the new Jeruſalem the defiled and unclean cannot enter. (5.) It ſhould deter us from the thought of ſin, to look forward to its puniſhment: the higheſt indulgence of corrupt appetite will miſerably repay us for devouring fire and everlaſting burnings.

2. Of inordinate love of the world. No vanity nor deceit were in his walk or converſation: he never told a lie to make a good bargain; unreaſonably commended his own wares, or decried his neighbour's, as they who are in haſte to be rich ſtick not at doing, *v.* 5. His ſtep turned not from the path of juſtice, warped by ſelf-love and partiality from the rule of truth and uprightneſs; nor did he covet what he ſaw, or uſe any illicit method to procure, as Achan did, the tempting bait. No blot cleaved to him, not merely of outward crimes, for which men could accuſe him, but his heart was reſtrained from the deſires of inordinate concupiſcence, *v.* 7. ſo that he could be content God ſhould weigh him in the balances of his righteouſneſs, conſcious of his integrity, *v.* 6. and readily reſted his all upon the trial, content, if guilty, to ſuffer the loſs of ſubſtance, family, children, and all, as the juſt puniſhment of his tranſgreſſion. *Note*, (1.) A truly honeſt man is a living prodigy. (2.) They who are full of talk in their worldly dealings, are to be ſuſpected as full of fraud. Honeſty needs no varniſh. (3.) The gain of covetouſneſs, however fair our character, will leave a blot in the ſight of God, which nothing but atoning blood can waſh away. (4.) The fruits of injuſtice muſt be reſtored, or in the day of judgment they will be caſt into the oppoſite ſcale, and when we are weighed we ſhall be found wanting. (5.) They who are conſcious of integrity never ſhun a ſcrutiny.

9. If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or *if* [h] I have laid wait at my neighbour's door: 10. *Then* let my wife grind unto another, and [i] let others bow down upon her. 11. For this *is* an hainous crime, yea, [k] it *is* an iniquity *to be puniſhed by* the judges. 12. For [l] it *is* a fire *that* conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all mine increaſe. 13. If [m] I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me: 14. What then ſhall I do when [n] God riſeth up? and [o] when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him? 15. [p] Did not he that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one faſhion us in the womb?

[h] Jer. v. 8.
[i] 2 Sam. xii. 11.
[k] Gen. xxxviii. 24. Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22.
[l] Prov. vi. 27, &c.
[m] Eph. vi. 9. Col. iv. 1.
[n] Pſ. xliv. 21.
[o] Iſa. x. 3.
[p] Chap. xxxiv. 19. Prov. xiv. 31. & xxii. 2. Mal. ii. 10.

v. 9—15. Two other inſtances of Job's integrity are produced.

1. He abhorred adultery. His neighbour's wife never enticed his heart: he neither yielded to her ſollicitations or allurements, or ſpread the net of ſeduction, or watched the unguarded moment to rob her of her honour, *v.* 9. He imprecates the moſt dreaded of evils, acknowledges himſelf worthy to ſuffer the deepeſt ſhame and diſhonour, and deſerving to be puniſhed in kind, if ſuch guilt were found in him, *v.* 10. But a variety of conſiderations made him deteſt the thought: [1.] The hainous nature of the crime, an injury to his neighbour the moſt irreparable, and to his own ſoul the moſt deſtructive, *v.* 11. [2.] The juſt judgment he might expect from man, even death, to which in the earlieſt ages adulterers were doomed, *v.* 11. And ſurely how much more deſerving is he of death, who ſteals from a man that moſt precious jewel his wife, his honour, than he who robs his houſe, or takes his purſe? [3.] A fire it would now kindle in his conſcience to torment him, of God's wrath in eternity to conſume him, and of preſent judgments, ſuch as fell on Sodom, to mark God's abhorrence of ſuch hateful deeds. *Note*, (1.) Adultery is amongſt the moſt crying ſins. (2.) The deceitfulneſs of ſin is great: they who think to take ſome undue liberties, and reſt there, know not how unable they are to refrain from the greateſt lengths of lewdneſs, if once they enter into temptation. (3.) Though our laws have no longer numbered adultery among the capital crimes, and ſo ſecret may the ſin be kept, that human ſuſpicion never reached it, yet, whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

2. He ſhewed to his ſervants the greateſt equity and tenderneſs. He did not condemn them unheard, or, if they complained, ſlight their expoſtulations, but examined their remonſtrance without being offended, and gave them whatever redreſs their juſt grievance called for, *v.* 13. and this, on theſe great conſiderations, [1.] That he conſidered he had a maſter in heaven, with whom was no reſpect of perſons, and to whom he muſt give an account, *v.* 14. [2.] That, however exalted his ſtation above them, they were made of the ſame clay, par-

takers of the ſame human nature, and faſhioned by the ſame hand, *v.* 15. *Note,* (1.) A good man will be a kind maſter, and *not a lion in his houſe, and frantic among his ſervants.* (2.) If our ſervants are perverſe or faulty, it becomes us not to be harſh or inexorable, leaſt we ſhould find as little mercy and kindneſs from our maſter in heaven, as we ſhew to them. (3.) It ſhould ſerve to humble the higheſt, and keep them from valuing themſelves, as if creatures of a different ſpecies from their inferiors, to remember the common womb from whence they came, and the ſame grave to which they go.

16. If I have withheld the poor from [q] *their* deſire, or have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail: 17. Or [r] have eaten my morſel myſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof: 18. (For from my youth [s] he was brought up with me as *with* a father, and I have guided † her from my mother's womb) 19. If [t] I have ſeen any periſh for want of cloathing, or any poor without covering: 20. If his loins [u] have not bleſſed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my ſheep: 21. [x] If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate: 22. *Then* let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. 23. For deſtruction *from* [y] God *was* a terror to me, and by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.

[q] Luke xvi. 21.
[r] Rom. xii. 13.
[s] Jam. i. 27.
† i. e. Widow.
[t] Mat. xxv. 36.
[u] Deut. xxiv. 13.
[x] Iſa. lviii. 6.
[y] Gen. xxxix. 9. Neh. v. 15.

v. 16—23. Accuſed as Job had been, with cruel unmercifulneſs, it appears the charge was not only utterly groundleſs, but his character the very reverſe from his earlieſt days.

1. He deſcribes the attention and regard he ever paid the poor, the fatherleſs, and the widow. The poor never preſented his ſupplication unheard, nor was grieved with the denial of any reaſonable requeſt. The widow's eyes did not fail, either through the delay of her petition, or inattention to her ſpeaking looks, when ſhe knew not how to aſk, *v.* 16. Alone he had never eaten his morſel, the fatherleſs was not only fed at his table, but honoured with his preſence, *v.* 17. Mercy in the womb had been woven into his frame; and from his youth he was the father of the orphan, and the huſband of the widow, to counſel, guide, and protect them, *v.* 18. Never did the poor want covering, or the naked go ſhivering from his door; his fleece cloathed them, and, warmed by his charitable gifts, they bleſſed his bounty, and prayed to God to reward him, *v.* 19, 20. In the gate, no frowns or menace diſcouraged the fatherleſs, not a finger was ever lifted againſt them, though had he been diſpoſed to oppreſſion, ſo great was his influence, he might have done it with impunity, *v.* 21. *Note,* (1.) Kindneſs to the poor is not only highly acceptable to God, but brings with it in the ſecret ſatisfaction it miniſters an abundant reward. (2.) The poor need cloaths as much as meat, and we muſt not forget all their wants. (3.) Reſpect ſhewn to thoſe, who through poverty are too commonly deſpiſed, is a cheap, yet moſt grateful kindneſs. (4.) The more power we have to do ill, the more careful ſhould we be never to abuſe it.

2. He imprecates vengeance upon himſelf, if ever he had done as Eliphaz ſuggeſted, *chap.* xxii. 9. even that his arm might drop from his ſhoulder, or be broken from the bone, *v.* 23. *Note,* Though the uſe of imprecations upon ourſelves in general, is ſinful and evil, yet in a ſolemn clearing of ourſelves, like an oath, they may be uſed to God's glory.

3. He mentions the reſtraints which withheld him from all uncharitableneſs and unkindneſs. He feared to provoke that holy God, who is the avenger of the injured, and the guardian of the poor. He knew the terror of the moſt high, and how little he could endure his judgments, ſhould he provoke him by ſuch diſpleaſing conduct, *v.* 24. *Note,* (1.) The higheſt muſt remember there is one higher than they, to whom they muſt give an account. (2.) Holy fear of God is a needful reſtraint from ſin.

24. [z] If I have made gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine gold, [a] *Thou art* my confidence: 25. [b] If I rejoiced becauſe my wealth *was* great, and becauſe mine hand had gotten much: 26. [c] If I beheld the ſun when it ſhined, or the moon walking *in* brightneſs: 27. And my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath [d] kiſſed my hand: 28. This alſo *were* [e] an iniquity *to be puniſhed by* the judge: for [f] I ſhould have denied the God *that is* above. 29. [g] If I rejoiced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or lift up myſelf when evil found him: 30. (Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin, by [h] wiſhing a curſe to his ſoul) 31. If the men of my tabernacle ſaid not, Oh that we had of his fleſh! we cannot be ſatisfied. 32. [i] The ſtranger did not lodge in the ſtreet: *but* I opened my doors to † the traveller.

[z] Pſal. lii. 7. Mar. x. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
[a] Prov. x. 15.
[b] Pſal. lxii. 10. Luke xii. 19. Jam. v. 5.
[c] Deut. iv. 19. & xvii. 3.
[d] Hoſ. xiii. 2.
[e] Ver. 11.
[f] Mat. iv. 10.
[g] Prov. xvii. 5.
[h] Mat. v. 44. Rom. xii. 14.
[i] Rom. xii. 13. Heb. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 9.
† Or the way.

v. 24—32. Compelled to commend himſelf, in vindication of his character from the moſt unjuſt aſperſions, Job proceeds to other inſtances of his ſimplicity before God and man.

1. This world never engaged his heart with idolatrous affection; he never placed his hope in the purſuit of gold, nor his confidence on what he poſſeſſed; his gain gave him no joy, comparable with his God; he received it as God's gift, and employed it to God's glory, *v.* 24, 25. *Note,* (1.) Covetouſneſs is idolatry. The affection of the heart ſet on gold, and our joy and confidence placed on the creature, are equally criminal with the knee bent to the ſtock or ſtone. (2.) Riches are very apt to ſteal away the ſoul into inordinate love of them, hence ſo few rich men enter the kingdom of heaven.

2. He renounces all idolatrous worſhip paid to the luminaries of heaven. Theſe probably were the firſt of all the Pagan deities, which obtained Divine honours. In the time of Job, this worſhip began to grow in vogue; but far, very far was he from joining in the abominable ſervice, ſecretly or openly. When he went forth, and beheld the ſun in its meridian ſplendor, or in the clear night ſaw in her ſilver orb the moon diffuſing grateful light to the benighted earth, *v.* 26. his heart was never ſeduced to adoration, nor bowing kiſſed he his hand before them, the uſual method of worſhip, in token of Divine honours, *v.* 27. He regarded idolatry, as a crime deſerving the moſt condign puniſhment from the magiſtrate, and more deteſted it as the higheſt affront to God, who will not give his glory to another, and regards the worſhip of other gods as the denial of himſelf, *v.* 28.

3. No revenge, even to his bittereſt enemy, when in his power, found a place in his boſom: ſo far from doing him an injury, he never rejoiced when miſchief befel him, *v.* 29. never ſuffered his lips to ſpeak a word of imprecation, or his heart to harbour a wiſh of malevolence againſt him: nay, when thoſe of his houſe, his friends, or ſervants, urged him to reſent the wrongs done him, and wiſhed for the fleſh of thoſe who hated him, that they might avenge their maſter's cauſe, he neither attended to their inſtigations, nor ſuffered them to ſhew their reſentment, *v.* 31. *Note,* (1.) Among the hardeſt taſks, a chriſtian finds the forgiveneſs of injuries, and the love of our enemies. (2.) Joy in the fall of an enemy, is malice and murder in the heart. (3.) The greateſt provocation will never juſtify our revenge. (4.) There are ſeldom wanting thoſe, who are ready to blow the coals of contention; to ſuch, the wiſe will turn a deaf ear.

4. He declares the hoſpitable entertainment every traveller met with; which, when yet there were no public inns, was more eſpecially needful. His door was ever open to the traveller, or *to the way,* his houſe by the way ſide, that the weary might turn in thither, and find refreſhment; repoſe in ſafety under his roof, and not lodge in the ſtreet, expoſed to the inclement ſky.

33. [k] If I covered my tranſgreſſions, [l] † as Adam: by hiding mine iniquity in my boſom: 34. Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me: that I kept ſilence, *and* went not out of the door? 35. [m] O that one would hear me! behold, my deſire *is* [n] *that* the Almighty would anſwer me, and *that* mine adverſary had written a book. 36. Surely I would take it upon my ſhoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me. 37. [o] I would declare unto him the number of my ſteps, as a prince would I go near unto him. 38. [p] If my land cry againſt me, or that the furrows likewiſe thereof ‡ complain: 39. [q] If I have eaten the ‖ fruits thereof without money, or have cauſed § the owners thereof to loſe their life: 40. Let thiſtles grow inſtead of wheat, and † cockle inſtead of barley. The words of Job are ended.

[k] Prov. xxviii. 13.
[l] Gen. iii. 8, 12.
† Or after the manner of men. Hoſ. vi. 7.
[m] Chap. xxxiii. 6.
[n] Ibid. xix. 22.
[o] 1 Pet. iii. 15.
[p] Hab. ii. 11.
‡ Heb. Weep.
[q] Jam. v. 4.
‖ Heb. Strength.
§ Heb. The ſoul of the owners thereof, to expire or breath out.
† Or noiſome weeds.

v. 33—40. We have here Job proſecuting his proteſtations of his ſincerity, and concluding with his appeal to God.

1. He proteſts his ſincerity.

[1.] He never concealed his iniquity, as Adam, or as men in general do, deſiring to find excuſe, and to lay the blame on others. He acknowledged himſelf a ſinner, many tranſgreſſions he was chargeable with, for who liveth and ſinneth not? but no wickedneſs, no hypocriſy, contradictory to his profeſſion as a good man, was chargeable upon him; all he knew, he freely owned, and deſired to be humbled for before God, *v.* 33. *Note,* (1.) Hypocritically to excuſe, palliate, or conceal our ſins, is only to deceive and deſtroy our own ſouls. (2.) Humble confeſſion is the ſure way to inſtant pardon.

[2.] No fear of man intimidated him from his duty, as a chriſtian or a magiſtrate; he was not aſhamed of his religion, or any ridicule to which it might expoſe him; he paid no regard to perſons in judgment; the quality of the party never influenced his deciſions, nor could he ever be prevailed upon to ſit ſilent by, whilſt truth and juſtice were oppreſſed, but openly remonſtrated againſt it, unconcerned who were diſpleaſed or offended; alike indifferent to the clamours of the vulgar, as unmoved

moved with the contempt of the great, *v.* 34. *Note*, (1.) The fear of man is a great ſnare, it requires much chriſtian fortitude to get above it. (2.) They who hear a good cauſe run down, or ſee injuſtice committed, without vindicating the one, and remonſtrating againſt the other, become criminal by their ſilence and connivance.

[3.] His poſſeſſions were honeſtly come by; his land had no accuſation againſt him for oppreſſion; the wages of the labourer kept back, never cried againſt him; nor did his hard hand ſqueeze his tenants, or his unreaſonable demands of work beyond their ſtrength endanger the lives of his ſervants; land, tenants, or labourers, never had reaſon to complain. With a ſolemn imprecation he binds his judgment upon him, if he falſified in his evidence, and wiſhes barrenneſs and the curſe might deſolate his fields, inſtead of plenty crowning the year with increaſe, *v.* 38, 39, 40. *Note*, Ill-gotten eſtates are often untoward poſſeſſions, and diſappoint the hopes of the unjuſt.

2. He once more renews his appeal to God, and his eager deſire to have his cauſe heard at his bar. *O that one would hear me*, that he might have a judge appointed, before whom he could plead his cauſe. *Behold*, let it ſtand upon record as the thing, which, ſo far from fearing as a hypocrite, I long for; *my deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me*, a raſh wiſh, if he meant that God would enter the liſts in judgment againſt him, allowable if he deſired only to plead his cauſe, in oppoſition to his friends before him; *and that mine adverſary had written a book*, a bill of indictment, containing the charges to be heard at the bar of God, unleſs it be thought that he regarded God as his adverſary, and deſired to know wherein he had offended, as if he dared even then to plead for himſelf. *Surely I would take it upon my ſhoulder*, ſo confident was he that he could vindicate his cauſe from every accuſation; far from fearing to be cruſhed by it, he would carry it off in triumph; *and bind it as a crown to me*, his righteouſneſs ſhould ſhine the brighter, the more it was examined, and the impeachment of his integrity ſhould iſſue to his more diſtinguiſhed honour. *I would declare to him the number of my ſteps*, truth needs no diſguiſe; he would lay bare his boſom and every ſecret ſtep, nor dreaded the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny: *and as a prince would I go near to him*, not trembling as a criminal, and keeping at a diſtance, but with confidence and majeſty boldly advancing to the judgment-ſeat, without a fear that his cauſe ſhould miſcarry. *Note*, (1.) Conſciouſneſs of innocence longs for the trial. (2.) They who have now God's verdict in their favour, will, in a judgment-day, ſurround his throne as princes, yea, as aſſeſſors with him.

Thus the words of Job are ended. If this be not thought convincing by his friends, it would be vain to multiply arguments, and in ſelf-vindication he will add no more.

CHAP. XXXII.

Job and his friends having finiſhed what they had to ſay, Elihu riſes as umpire of the diſpute. In this chapter, 1. *A ſhort account is given of his parentage and ſentiments on the ſubject of their diſpute*, ver. 1—5. 2. *He apologizes for preſuming to ſpeak after his elders, though he had not the experience of an old man, yet God had inſpired him with underſtanding*, ver. 6—10. 3. *They had in vain attempted to convince Job*, ver. 11—13. 4. *He had ſomething new to offer*, ver. 14—17. 5. *His mind was full of matter, and it would be a refreſhment to give it vent*, ver. 18—20. 6. *He was reſolved to ſpeak impartially*, ver. 21, 22.

1. SO theſe three men ceaſed to anſwer Job, becauſe [a] he *was* righteous in his own eyes. 2. Then [b] was kindled the wrath of Elihu the ſon of Barachel [c] the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: againſt Job was his wrath kindled, becauſe [d] he juſtified himſelf rather than God. 3. Alſo againſt his three friends was his wrath kindled, becauſe they had found no anſwer, and *yet* had condemned Job. 4. Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken, becauſe they *were* † elder than he. 5. When Elihu ſaw that *there was* no anſwer in the mouth of *theſe* three men, then his wrath was kindled.

[a] Prov. xxx. 12. Luke xvi. 15.
[b] Gal. iv. 18.
[c] Gen. xxii. 21.
[d] Chap. xxxiv. 5.
† Heb. Elder for days.

v. 1—5. The warm diſpute is cloſed. A ſilent pauſe enſued; either convinced of Job's integrity, his friends ceaſed to anſwer, or counting him obſtinate to conviction, and righteous in his own eyes, they forebore to reply: but now a new perſonage appears. With ſilence he had liſtened to the knotty controverſy, perceived the fallacy and falſhood of the arguments on the one ſide, and the raſhneſs and impatience on the other; and therefore riſing with warmth, he prepares to reprove both for their perverſeneſs; Job's friends, that they condemned him without evidence, and Job himſelf, that he juſtified himſelf rather than God; was more careful about his own reputation than God's glory, and ſeemed more ſollicitous to vindicate himſelf than juſtify God, in the diſpenſations of his providence. *Note*, (1.) In angry diſputes, uſually there is much to reprove on both ſides. (2.) When we have fault to find, it ſhould be done to men's faces, and not behind their backs. (3.) A gracious heart is jealous for the honour of God, and cannot, unmoved, ſee him ſlighted. (4.) A holy indignation againſt evil, and warmth in the cauſe of truth, is ſo far from being condemnable, that it is highly commendable. We have here,

1. The name and family of this moderator, Elihu, *My God is he*. Hence ſome have ſuppoſed him to be Chriſt, the ſon of Barachel, *the bleſſed of God*, of the kindred of Ram, *the high and lofty one*, the Buzite, *deſpiſed* and rejected of men; and to him other things in his ſpeech and character may be applicable: but more generally he is ſuppoſed to be a deſcendant of Buz, the ſon of Nahor, Abraham's brother, *Gen.* xxii. 21.

2. He was a young man, had ſat ſilent by till his elders had ſpoken, and waited till none made any farther reply. *Note*, Young men owe their elders deference, and though they may not yield implicit faith, or ſacrifice truth to any difference of years, yet they will wait reſpectfully, till with propriety they may ſtate their objections.

6. And Elihu the ſon of Barachel the Buzite anſwered and ſaid, I *am* † young, and [e] ye *are* very old; wherefore I [f] was afraid, and durſt not ſhew you mine opinion. 7. I ſaid, [g] Days ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom. 8. But *there is* a ſpirit in man: and [h] the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding. 9. [i] Great men are not *always* wiſe: neither do the aged underſtand judgment. 10. Therefore I ſaid, Hearken to me, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion. 11. Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reaſons, whilſt you ſearched out what to ſay. 12. Yea, I attended unto you: and behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that anſwered his words: 13. [k] Leſt ye ſhould ſay, We have found out wiſdom: God thruſteth him down, not man. 14. Now he hath not directed *his* words againſt me: neither will I anſwer him with your ſpeeches.

† Heb. Few of days.
[e] Chap. xv. 10.
[f] Jam. i. 19.
[g] Chap. xii. 12.
[h] Ibid. xxxviii. 36. Prov. ii. 6. Eccleſ. ii. 26. Dan. i. 17. & ii. 21. Jam. i. 5.
[i] 1 Cor. i. 26.
[k] Jer. ix. 23.

v. 6—14. Elihu having taken up the cauſe,

1. With great humility and modeſty prefaces his diſcourſe. He ſpeaks of himſelf as diffident, becauſe of his youth, and afraid to ſpeak before his elders, *v.* 6, 7. He had attentively heard them out, in hopes that every new ſpeech would throw light on the argument, and rectify the miſtakes of the former; but he owns he was diſappointed, *v.* 11, 12. and therefore he hopes he may, without preſumption, beg an audience, and venture to ſpeak his opinion on the ſubject, *v.* 10. *Note*, (1.) In matters of doubtful diſputation, it becomes us to be diffident of our opinion, and more ready to hear the ſentiments of our elders, than forwardly broach our own. (2.) Byſtanders that hear, cool and unprejudiced, ſee farther often than thoſe, who in the heat of diſpute, have their judgment blinded by paſſion. (3.) If we have given others a long and patient hearing, it is but reaſonable we ſhould be heard in our turn.

2. He mentions ſeveral reaſons why he was emboldened now to ſpeak, [1.] Becauſe there is a ſpirit in man, a rational ſpirit, capable of judging and thinking, or rather that God puts his ſpirit in man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth him underſtanding, and then the youngeſt may be wiſer than the aged, *v.* 8. *Note*, (1.) Since we have a rational ſoul, the greater obligation lies on us to cultivate this diſtinguiſhing privilege. (2.) The wiſdom of fallen man in ſpiritual matters, is darkneſs, till the Spirt of God enlightens his underſtanding. [2.] Becauſe neither greatneſs nor grey hairs are always repoſitories of wiſdom: it is right they ſhould be, but we ſee they are not. [3.] Becauſe as the matter ſtood, the diſpute was as perplexed as ever, and their conceit of their wiſe arguments groundleſs; for though what they pleaded was allowed to be true, *God thruſteth him down, not man:* yet it would not at all be evident from thence, that Job was a wicked man, or a hypocrite, as they inferred. *Note*, They who call God to patronize the concluſions of their folly or cenſoriouſneſs, deſerve a ſharp rebuke. [4.] Becauſe he came cool and unprejudiced to the diſpute, Job's ſpeeches were not directed againſt him; neither was he partial to either, but ſpake ſimply, with a view to the glory of God, and the elucidation of the truth. In order to which, he would not anſwer him with their inconcluſive arguments, accuſing him as wicked, or pleading his ſufferings as a proof of guilt, but admitting his claim, and preſuming his integrity, he intended to ſhew how unbecomingly he had ſpoken of God, and how unjuſtifiable were his complaints and hard ſpeeches, which reflected upon the mercy, juſtice, and providence of God, *v.* 14. *Note*, They have a right to ſpeak, who can ſet the cauſe of truth in a light more convincing and ſtriking, than thoſe who have gone before. Be it our care, that as Elihu, we do not diſappoint the expectations we have raiſed.

15. They were amazed, they anſwered no more: they left off ſpeaking. 16. When I had waited, (for they ſpake not, but ſtood ſtill, *and* anſwered no more) 17. *I ſaid*, I will anſwer alſo my part, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion. 18. For I am full of matter, [l] the ſpirit † within me conſtraineth me. 19. Behold, my belly *is* as wine *which* ‡ hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles. 20. I will ſpeak, that I may be refreſhed: I will open my lips, and anſwer. 21. [m] Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's perſon, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. 22. For [n] I know not to give flattering titles, [o] *in ſo doing* my maker would ſoon take me away.

[l] Pſal. xxxix. 3. Jer. xx. 9.
† Heb. Of my belly.
‡ Heb. Is not opened.
[m] Lev. xix. 15.
[n] Mat. xxii. 16.
[o] Pſal. xii. 3.

v. 15—22. Silent with amaze, Job's friends attempted not to ſpeak; attentive to what ſo young an orator could offer, when their ſtore of argument was exhauſted, whilſt he, after waiting a while, proceeded,

1. To declare how full he was of the ſubject; as wine fermenting, he muſt ſpeak or burſt. Much he had to ſay; it was a burden to him to be longer ſilent, and for the relief of his own ſpirit, as well as their conviction, he was compelled to open his mouth, *v.* 17, 20. *Note*, They who ſpeak for God, ſhould be earneſt in their diſcourſes, out of a heart big with zeal for God's glory, and the good of men's ſouls.

2. He profeſſes to ſpeak with impartial freedom, not ſacrificing truth to compliment; neither becauſe of Job's diſtreſs, through falſe compaſſion dealing unfaithfully with him, nor becauſe of his friends greatneſs, fearing to blame what was blameworthy in them: and thus he reſolves to act with an eye to God, who hates falſehood and flattery. *Note*, (1.) The fear of God will ſet us above the fear of man. (2.) Compaſſion for the poor muſt no more influence us to be partial to them, than reſpect for the rich. Truth and juſtice muſt ever be the great conſideration.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Elihu here, 1. *Beſpeaks Job's favourable acceptance of what he ſhould ſay, and offers himſelf, as he had wiſhed in God's behalf, to receive his plea, and anſwer it*, ver. 1—7. 2. *He charges him with the hard words he had ſpoken againſt God*, ver. 8—11. 3. *He endeavours to convince him of his fault herein, by ſhewing him*, (1.) *God's ſovereign dominion over man*, ver. 12, 13. (2.) *The gracious purpoſe and deſign, for which many of our dreams are vouchſafed*, ver. 15—18. (3.) *The benefit that is or might be derived from our ſufferings*, ver. 19—30. 4. *He begs of Job either to anſwer him, or give him leave to proceed*, ver. 31—33.

1. WHerefore Job, I pray thee, hear my ſpeeches, and hearken to all my words. 2. Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my † mouth. 3. [a] My words *ſhall be of* the uprightneſs of my heart; and my lips ſhall utter knowledge ‡ clearly. 4. [b] The ſpirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. 5. If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet *thy words* in order before me, ſtand up. 6. Behold, [c] I *am* according to thy wiſh [d] in God's ſtead: I alſo am formed out of the clay. 7. Behold, [e] my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.

† Heb. Palate.
[a] 1 Theſ. ii. 3, 4.
‡ Heb. Purely.
[b] Gen. ii. 7.
[c] Chap. xxxi. 35.
[d] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[e] Chap. ix. 34. & xiii. 21.

v. 1—7. Elihu opens his diſcourſe with an application to Job by name, whom his friends had never thus addreſſed. He begs a favourable hearing, and that he would weigh his arguments entire, *v.* 1. They were the product of mature deliberation, *v.* 2. and flowed from the ſincerity of his ſoul: he hoped to ſpeak clearly to his underſtanding, and convincingly to his conſcience, *v.* 3. Endued with a reaſonable ſoul as a man, and renewed in the ſpirit of his mind as a gracious man, he might expect attention, *v.* 4. and was ready to hear in return whatever Job could farther ſay for himſelf, *v.* 5. He had deſired one on the behalf of God, that he might plead with him: Lo! he is here, one in his own nature, faſhioned from the ſame clay, *v.* 6. whoſe terror would not ſcare him, as if God himſelf appeared, nor his hand be heavy on him; he would bring no ſuch railing accuſation as his friends had done: he propoſes to convince him by the weight of his arguments, not run him down by the violence of his arguing. *Note*, (1.) We are bound to hear a diſcourſe entire, before we form a judgment upon it. (2.) They who ſpeak for God, need deep and ſerious deliberation: and ſhould be more ſollicitous to ſpeak plain, ſo as to be underſtood, than fine, that they may be admired.

8. Surely thou haſt ſpoken in mine † hearing, and I have heard the voice of *thy* words, *ſaying*, 9. [f] I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I *am* innocent; neither *is there* iniquity in me. 10. Behold, [g] he findeth occaſions againſt me, [h] he counteth me for his enemy. 11. [i] He putteth my feet in the ſtocks, he marketh all my paths. 12. Behold, [k] *in* this thou art not juſt: I will anſwer thee, that God is greater than man. 13. [l] Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

† Heb. Ears.
[f] Chap. x. 7. & xvi. 17. & xxvii. 5, 6. & xxix. 14.
[g] Chap. xiv. 16.
[h] Ibid. xiii. 24. & xvi. 9. & xix. 11.
[i] Chap. xiii. 27.
[k] Jam. iii. 2.
[l] Iſa. xlv. 9. Rom. ix. 20.

v. 8—13. Job had boaſted, *chap.* xxxi. 36. how eaſily he would take every indictment which could be brought againſt him on his ſhoulder, but Elihu will convince him the burden is heavier than he is aware.

1. He opens his charge againſt Job for words ſpoken openly and publickly, to the diſhonour of God, and reflecting on his adorable perfections; and againſt ſuch, every hearer is ever bound to bear a public teſtimony.

[1.] He had ſaid, *I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me*: this might be collected from *chap.* x. 6, 7. xiii. 2, 3. xxvii. 5, 6. or perhaps in expreſs words Job might have aſſerted it, though not recorded in the controverſy; not that he pleaded he was ſinleſs, but he had too high an opinion of his integrity, inſiſted upon it too much, and thereby drew unjuſt reflections on God, for afflicting a perſon ſo righteous as he conceived himſelf to be.

[2.] He had repreſented God as ſevere and cruel, ſeeking occaſion to quarrel with him, and without cauſe treating him as an enemy, *v.* 10, 11. expreſſions highly irreverent, and deſerving juſt cenſure. *See chap.* xiv. 16, 17. xiii. 24, 27. xix. 11. for theſe things therefore,

2. Elihu propoſes to plead with Job. *Behold*, take notice of it as an important truth, *in this thou art not juſt*: however upright in general, he allowed his conduct to have been, here it was indefenſibly culpable. Therefore, *I will anſwer thee*, confute theſe bold aſſertions, and this on the cleareſt principles, (1.) *That God is greater than man*, and therefore it is both fooliſh and arrogant to find fault with him; *why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* whoſe wiſdom, power, juſtice and truth, is not only above compariſon, but above our comprehenſion. *Note*, This one conſideration ſhould for ever ſilence every murmur againſt God's ways and providences. (2.) He is ſovereign in his diſpenſations, *for he giveth not account of any of his matters*: Who ſhall queſtion the Eternal Majeſty, and ſay to him, what doſt thou? or as others interpret the words, *he giveth not an account of all his matters*; there are ſecrets of Providence which he reſerves to himſelf, and which it were preſumption but to pretend to pry into.

14. For [m] God ſpeaketh once, † yea, twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not. 15. [n] In a dream, in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men, in ſlumbrings upon the bed: 16. Then [o] he ‡ openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction, 17. That he may withdraw man *from his* purpoſe, and [p] hide pride from man. 18. He keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.

[m] Pſal. lxii. 11.
† Or a ſecond time he doth not reviſe it.
[n] Gen. xx. 3. & xxxi. 24. Dan. iv. 5.
[o] Chap. xxx. 10, 15.
‡ Heb. Revealeth, or uncovereth.
[p] 2 Cor. xii. 7.

v. 14—18. Though God is not obliged to give any account of his matters, yet he never deals with men ſo unreaſonably as Job ſuggeſted; but if we attend to his notices, we may perceive his deſigns towards us. *For God ſpeaks once, yea, twice*, repeats his admonitions, and in a variety of ways, by ſecret remonſtrances with our conſciences from his word and ſpirit, by his afflictive providences, and by his miniſters, *but man perceiveth it not*, negligent or perverſe, he regards not the inward admonition, nor adverts to the chaſtening rod, nor hears the voice of the wiſe: or the words may be rendered, *a ſecond time he doth not reviſe it*, the words *but man*, being not in the original: having once decreed, his counſels never alter, nor need a ſecond thought. All is planned with perfection of wiſdom and juſtice, and therefore to be ſubmitted to with implicit reſignation.

1. He ſpeaks to men *in a dream*, which before there was any written word, was frequently the method God took to convey the notices of his will. *See Gen.* xx. 3. xxxi. 24. *in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon man, in ſlumberings on the bed: Then*, when the ſenſes are locked up in repoſe, *he openeth the ears of men*, not of the body, but of the ſoul, *and ſealeth their inſtruction* or *chaſtiſement*; conveys admonitions to their conſcience, and aſſures them of the certainty of his chaſtiſements, if they take not warning: and when they wake, the dream is not forgotten, but the lively traces of it remain, as wax bears the impreſſion of the ſeal. *Note*, (1.) God can in ſleep give us warnings, which to diſregard, is to ruſh on our ruin. (2.) Unleſs God openeth man's deaf ears, he never can be wiſe unto ſalvation.

2. He hath deſigns of mercy in theſe notices he gives. (1.) *That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe*, prevent him from the ſin into which he was ready to ruſh, and work a divine

change on his temper and diſpoſition. (2.) *And hide pride from man*, by reſtraining the proud from their purpoſes, or that he may humble and ſubdue the ſpirit of his own people, too reluctant in their ſubmiſſion to his providential will. (3.) *He keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword*; when he was on the brink of preſent and eternal ruin, he is warned, and plucked as a brand from the burning. *Note*, (1.) Proud reſiſtance againſt the ſecret admonitions of God, is wilful rebellion, and will end in reprobacy. (2.) It is an unſpeakable mercy to be viſited with notices of our danger, and to have a faithful monitor within. (3.) The ſoul who periſhes will only have himſelf to blame, for God can ſay, *I would have gathered you, and ye would not.*

19. He is chaſtned alſo with pain upon his bed, and
the multitude of his bones with ſtrong *pain*: 20 [q] So
that his life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat.
21. [r] His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeen,
and his bones *that* were not ſeen, ſtick out. 22. Yea,
his ſoul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to
the deſtroyers. 23. If there be [s] a meſſenger with him, [t]
an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man
his uprightneſs: 24. Then he is gracious unto him,
and ſaith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I
have found † a ranſom. 25. His fleſh ſhall be freſher
than a child's: he ſhall return [u] to the days of his youth.
26. [x] He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable
unto him, and [y] he ſhall ſee his face with joy: for he
will render unto man his righteouſneſs. 27. ‡ He looketh
upon men, and [z] *if any* ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted
that which was right, and [a] it profited me not;
28. ‖ He will deliver his ſoul from going into [b] the pit,
and his life ſhall ſee the light.

[q] Pſal. cvii. 18.
[r] Ibid. cii. 5.
[s] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[t] Mat. xiii. 52.
† Or an atonement. Rom. iii. 24, 25.
[u] Pſal. ciii. 5.
[x] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13.
[y] Pſal. iv. 6.
‡ Or he ſhall look upon men, and ſay, I have ſinned.
[z] 2 Sam. xii. 13.
[a] Rom. vi. 21.
‖ Or he hath delivered my ſoul, &c. and my life.
[b] Iſa. xxxviii. 17.

v. 19—28. Various ways hath God to ſpeak to the ſouls of men, as here by his word and providences.

1. He afflicts man with diſeaſe; pain, univerſal as acute, ſeizes the body, *v.* 19. The appetite is loſt, *v.* 20. Pining waſte conſumes him to a ſkeleton, *v.* 21. Death appears in full view, and the grave opens to receive him, *v.* 22. *Note*, (1.) How ſoon may the ſofteſt pillow no longer afford repoſe to the throbbing head? (2.) If we are able to reliſh our food, let us acknowledge the mercy, and not abuſe it to luxury, leaſt God, as a juſt puniſhment, ſhould bring us to loath even dainty meat. (3.) The ſtrongeſt conſtitution is a feeble barrier againſt the waſtes diſeaſe will make. Let not the ſtrong man glory in his ſtrength.

2. When affliction is laid on the body, God ſends inſtruction to the ſoul. *If there be a meſſenger with him*, a godly miniſter, or rather that divine meſſenger ſent from heaven, on purpoſe to teach men the way of ſalvation, *an interpreter*, able to expound the deſign of dark providences, and to open the ſcriptures with clearneſs and conviction to the conſcience; *one among a thouſand*, as ſuch an able teacher may juſtly be reckoned; or it peculiarly refers to the great prophet, the chief of ten thouſand, *to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs*; either the uprightneſs of God in afflicting him, or the path of duty proper for his preſent condition, in order to the right improvement of the affliction, or, which is moſt preferable, the perfection of righteouſneſs which is in him, who is the ſinner's ſubſtitute, Chriſt Jeſus: the faith of which is the moſt ſolid ſupport againſt all the fears of death, and the ſureſt means of comfort and ſafety. *Note*, (1.) Moſt people in ſickneſs are much readier to ſend for the phyſician for their body, than the miniſter of God for their ſoul. (2.) The great endeavour of a wiſe interpreter is to lead the afflicted to a humbling acknowledgment of the righteouſneſs of God in their ſufferings, and to point the troubled ſoul to the tranſcendently glorious righteouſneſs of Jeſus, as their only hope againſt the condemnation of their ſins.

3. The gracious effect which thereupon enſues, 1. To the ſoul pardon and redemption; *Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down to the pit*, the pit of death, and hell the wages of ſin, for *I have found a ranſom*, have accepted the offering of the Redeemer in the ſinner's ſtead. 2. To the body the reſtoration of health and eaſe; *his fleſh ſhall be freſher than a child's*, as if his life were again renewed; *he ſhall return to the days of youth*, become healthy, vigorous, and ſtrong. *Note*, (1.) None ever make the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus their plea, but find preſent and eternal redemption to their ſouls. (2.) There is a ranſom paid and accepted for God's people, with which he declares himſelf well pleaſed and ſatisfied. (3.) When God's chaſtiſements have anſwered their end, he is pleaſed often in mercy to remove them, and give health of body, as well as ſoul, to the believer.

4. The grateful returns ſuch a perſon makes for the mercies he hath received, 1. In prayer and thankſgiving. *He ſhall pray unto God* for the continuance of his mercy and grace, and praiſe him for what he hath experienced, *and he will be favourable unto him*; will hear and anſwer him, and perfect the begun bleſſing; *and he ſhall ſee his face with joy*, God will lift up the light of his countenance, and fill the ſoul with divine conſolations, *for he will render unto man his righteouſneſs*, reſtore the comfort of an intereſt in the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, or deal with the perſon recovered according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, and as accepted in Jeſus Chriſt the righteous. 2. He will give glory to God, by humble confeſſion of his ſins. *He looketh upon men*, and will juſtify God's afflicting hand upon him, *and will ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right*, have juſtly offended the eternal Majeſty, and *it profited me not*, I found no advantage nor comfort in the way of evil, therefore I will return to him from whom I have ſo greatly departed. *Note*, (1.) Sin is not only rebellion againſt God, but an offence againſt ſound reaſon, as tending to our eternal ruin. (2.) They who are truly turned to God, will not be aſhamed to acknowledge their ſins before men. (3.) Every ſinner will find the ways of iniquity utterly unprofitable; they neither bring him preſent peace, nor can ſecure for him the leaſt ſupport againſt a day of evil. 3. He encourages others by his own experience, to make their application to God, and expect the like mercy: *He will deliver his ſoul from going down into the pit*, or as the textual reading is, *He hath delivered my ſoul from going down to the pit*, hath ſaved me from death and hell, *and his life*, or *my life*, *ſhall ſee the light*, preſent proſperity and comfort, and eternal bleſſedneſs and glory. *Note*, (1.) We are bound for others good, as well as in gratitude to God, to ſpeak of the things he hath done for our ſouls. (2.) They who have taſted that the Lord is gracious, cannot but become advocates for him with others, to come and experience with them, how good the Lord is, and how bleſſed the man who putteth his truſt in him.

Theſe verſes 27, 28. may alſo be interpreted of God's regard to other ſinners, in a like ſtate of affliction, who, on their humble confeſſion, are reſtored, and made to partake of his favour and regard.

29. Lo, all theſe *things* worketh God † oftentimes with
man, 30. [c] To bring back his ſoul from the pit, to be
[d] enlightned with the light of the living. 31. Mark well,
O Job, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I will
ſpeak. 32. If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me:
ſpeak, for I deſire to juſtify thee. 33. If not, [e] hearken
unto me; hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdom.

† Heb. Twice and thrice.
[c] Pſal. lvi. 13.
[d] Ibid. cvi. 9.
[e] Ibid. xxxiv. 11.

v. 29—33. Elihu having ſhewn how God ſpeaketh to man, here ſums up the great purpoſe of all theſe diſpenſations.

1. They are all deſigned for man's good, *to bring back his ſoul* from the paths of ſin and ignorance, and thereby to reſcue him *from the pit* of eternal miſery; *to be enlightened with the light of the living*, to partake of the preſent bleſſings of Divine teaching and grace, in order to the better and more valuable poſſeſſions of the eternal inheritance among the ſaints in light. *Note*, (1.) Departure from God neceſſarily iſſues in eternal ruin, if we are not recovered. (2.) God leaves no man without admonition; if men periſh, their ruin lieth at their own door. (3.) If any ſinner's ſoul be recovered from the paths of the deſtroyer, he will wholly aſcribe it to the ſovereign and ſaving grace of God.

2. He concludes with a deſire Job ſhould mark well what he had ſaid. He is ready to hear, if he hath ought to reply, and would take more pleaſure in juſtifying than condemning him; but if he acknowledged the truth of what he had urged, he would proceed with his diſcourſe; and doubted not but his attention to it would be repaid with wiſdom and inſtruction, *v.* 31, 33. *Note*, (1.) A faithful friend never loves to find fault, and is happy to be undeceived, if he hath been miſtaken or miſinformed. (2.) The wiſeſt men are always the moſt willing to learn. Superficial attainments puff up, but ſolid wiſdom humbles.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Elihu, after pauſing, reſumes his diſcourſe. 1. *He beſpeaks not only the audience, but the aſſiſtance of the company*, ver. 2—4. 2. *He chargeth Job with other indecent expreſſions*, ver. 5—9. 3. *He undertakes to convince him that he had ſpoken amiſs, by ſhewing very fully*, (1.) *God's inconteſtible juſtice*, ver. 10, 12, 17, 19, 23. (2.) *His ſovereign dominion*, ver. 13—15. (3.) *His Almighty power*, ver. 20, 24. (4.) *His omniſcience*, ver. 21, 22, 25. (5.) *His ſeverity againſt ſinners.* ver. 26—28. (6.) *His over-ruling providence*, ver. 29, 30. 4. *He teacheth him what he ſhould ſay*, ver. 31, 32. 5. *He appeals to Job and men of underſtanding, for the truth of what he had ſaid, and then reproves him for his peeviſhneſs and diſcontent*, ver. 33—37.

1. Furthermore Elihu anſwered and ſaid, 2. [a] Hear my words, O ye wiſe *men*, and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge. 3. For [b] the ear trieth words, as the † mouth taſteth meat. 4. Let us chooſe to us judgment: let us know among ourſelves what *is* good. 5. For Job hath ſaid, [c] I am righteous: and God [d] hath taken away my judgment. 6. [e] Should I lie againſt my right? ‡ my wound *is* incurable without tranſgreſſion. 7. What man *is* like Job, [f] *who* drinketh up ſcorning like water? 8. Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men. 9. For he hath ſaid, [g] It profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.

[a] Prov. i. 5.
[b] Chap. vi. 30. & xii. 11.
† Or, Palate.
[c] Chap. xxxiii. 9.
[d] Ibid. xxvii. 2.
[e] Ibid. ix. 17.
‡ Heb. mine arrow, Chap. vi. 4. & xvi. 13.
[f] Chap. xv. 16.
[g] See Chap. ix. 22. Mal. iii. 14.

v. 1—9. Elihu, by Job's ſilence, encouraged to proceed, reſumes his diſcourſe.

1. He addreſſes the audience. Probably the important debate had been attended by others, beſides Job's friends; or though in the preſent caſe they erred greatly, yet might they be, in the general, both wiſe and good men. He deſired to be judged by their wiſdom, perſuaded his arguments would bear the teſt; and thoſe whoſe taſte was moſt judicious, would beſt reliſh them. He propoſes therefore to proceed with the ſubject, that they might come to a right judgment of Job's caſe, and conſult what were the beſt advice to give him under his preſent diſtreſs, *v.* 1—4. *Note*, Mutual aſſiſtance is the means of mutual improvement.

2. He recites the charge which he draws from Job's aſſertion. *Job hath ſaid, I am righteous*; not indeed perfectly, but ſo as not to deſerve (he thought) ſo heavy viſitations, *chap.* xxvii. *v.* 6. *And God hath taken away my judgment*, chap. xxvii. 2. becauſe he had not appeared to remove his afflictions, or ſilence the accuſations of his friends. *Should I lie againſt my right? my wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion*, chap. ix. 17. xvi. 17—20. *He hath ſaid, It profiteth a man nothing he ſhould delight himſelf in God.* Not expreſſly indeed; but Elihu infers it as the conſequence of his reaſoning, *chap.* ix. 22. xxi. 14—15. not that Job really thought ſo; but in the raſhneſs of diſpute, unguarded expreſſions give a juſt handle for rebuke.

3. He expreſſes his aſtoniſhment, that ſo good a man as Job ſhould ſay or inſinuate ſuch ill things. *What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water?* Either lays himſelf open by ſuch words to the ſcorn and contempt of the enemies of religion, or is ſo free in his reflections upon God, and ſo liberal of ridicule and contempt on his friends, *See chap.* xi. 3. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* Not in his conduct indeed, but by uttering ſuch ſpeeches, as ſeemed to countenance and encourage them in their iniquities. *Note*, It is a grief to good men when the conduct or converſation of profeſſors gives occaſion to the adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully, or to the wicked an argument to harden themſelves ſin.

10. Therefore, hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding: [h] far be it from God, *that he ſhould do* wickedneſs, and *from* the Almighty, *that he ſhould commit* iniquity. 11. For [i] the work of a man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every man to find according to *his* ways. 12. Yea, ſurely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment. 13. [k] Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed the whole world? 14. [l] If he ſet his heart upon man, *if* he gather unto himſelf his ſpirit and his breath; 15. [m] All fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall turn again unto duſt.

[h] Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Chap. viii. 3. Pſ. xcii. 15.
[i] Pſ. lxii. 12. Prov. xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Ezek. xxxiii. 20. Mat. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 Pet. i. 17. Rev. xxii. 12.
[k] 1 Chron. xxix. 11.
[l] Pſ. civ. 29.
[m] Gen. iii. 19. Eccleſ. xii. 7.

v. 10—16. Elihu had proved, that God in afflicting men deſigned their good. Here he vindicates him from the charge of wrong, directing his diſcourſe to the company, who, if Job would not hear, might bear teſtimony to the truth of what he advanced.

1. He aſſerts that God neither can, or will, do an injury to any man; nor, though ſovereign and Almighty, abuſe his power by a capricious uſe of it, but with infinite juſtice deal with every man, giving them according to their works, and rejects the very ſuggeſtion of the contrary with the greateſt abhorrence, *v.* 10.—12. *Note*, (1.) As long as a ſinner is out of hell, he is bound to lay his hand on his mouth, before a righteous God, and own he hath received leſs than his iniquity deſerves. (2.) Though God's juſtice doth not here always evidently appear, the day is at hand when he ſhall be acknowledged juſt in all his judgments.

2. He proves this by arguments drawn from the ſovereign dominion, and irreſiſtible power of God. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth?* He hath no ſuperior whom he ſhould fear and be influenced by to do iniquity: Or, *who hath given man a charge over the earth?* hath not God? And can it be ſuppoſed, after being ſo beneficent, he would become unjuſt? aſſuredly not: *Or, who hath diſpoſed the whole world?* with ſuch order and regularity, and filled it with ſuch variety of bleſſings? How abſurd then the thought, that he ſhould do wickedly who filleth the whole earth with his goodneſs. *If he ſet his heart upon man*, either as an enemy to viſit him, or in ſtrict juſtice to enter into judgment; *if*, as he might, *he ſhould gather unto himſelf his ſpirit and breath*, which once he gave, the conſequence would be, that *all fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man*, even the whole human race, *ſhall return again unto duſt.* As we are creatures, he who made may unmake us when he pleaſes; it is but to withdraw his ſupport, and we breathe our laſt; and as we are ſinners, he would appear righteous if he conſumed the earth: But he ſpares us, and thereby ſhows how far he is from doing man any injuſtice, when daily we hold our all, though forfeited, through his mercy.

16. [n] If now *thou haſt* underſtanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words. 17. [o] Shall even he that hateth right, govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt? 18. *Is it fit* to ſay to a king, *Thou art* wicked? *and* to princes, *Ye are* ungodly? 19. *How much leſs to him* [p] that accepteth not the perſon of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for [q] they all *are* the work of his hands. 20. In a moment ſhall they die, and the people ſhall be troubled [r] at midnight, and paſs away: and the mighty ſhall be taken away [s] without hand. 21. For [t] his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings. 22. [u] *There is* no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves. 23. For he will not lay upon man [x] more *than right*; that he ſhould enter into judgment with God. 24. He ſhall break in pieces mighty men without number, and [y] ſet others in their ſtead. 25. Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* in the night, ſo that they are deſtroyed. 25. He ſtriketh them as wicked men in the open ſight of others: 27. Becauſe they turned back from him, and [z] would not conſider any of his ways. 28. So that they cauſed the cry of the poor to come unto him, and [a] he heareth the cry of the afflicted. 29. [b] When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth *his* face, who then can behold him? whether *it be done* againſt a nation, or againſt a man only: 30. That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared.

[n] 1 Cor. x. 15.
[o] Gen. xviii. 25. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.
[p] Deut. x. 17. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Acts x. 34. Rom. ii. 11. Gal. ii. 6. Eph. vi. 9. Col. iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17.
[q] Chap. xxxi. 15.
[r] Ex. xii. 29.
[s] Dan. ii. 45.
[t] 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Chap. xxxi. 4. Pſ. xxxiv. 15. Prov. v. 21. & xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. & xxxii. 19.
[u] Pſ. cxxxix. 12. Am. ix. 2—3. Heb. iv. 13.
[x] Ezra. ix. 13.
[y] Dan. ii. 21.
[z] Pſ. xxviii. 5. Iſa. v. 12.
[a] Ex. ii. 24. Pſ. xii. 5.
[b] Iſa. xxvi. 3.

v. 16—30. Elihu appeals to Job, *if*, or *ſeeing*, he was a man of underſtanding, for the abſurdity of his poſitions. He admitted God's government, yet complained he was oppreſſed; condemning thereby the moſt Juſt, *v.* 17. Even to man that is a worm, if placed of God on a throne, it were inſolent, and highly improper, though there were foundation for the charge, to call him ſon of Belial: And rudely to accuſe princes or magiſtrates of oppreſſion and injuſtice, to whom reſpect is due from their very ſtation, *v.* 18. How much more then muſt it appear preſumptuous to lay ſuch a charge againſt the king of kings, who regardeth no man's perſon, but with the ſtricteſt juſtice and impartiality, conſidering all men alike the work of his hands, pronounces ſentence, and executes judgment upon them. *Note*, Great and poor muſt ſhortly ſtand before the ſame judge, where the greatneſs of the one, or the poverty of the other, will be no plea for favour or compaſſion, but every man ſhall receive according as his work is. To beget therefore in Job higher, and more worthy thoughts of God, and a more humble and lowly ſenſe of his own deſerts, he ſuggeſts the following conſiderations;

1. God's omnipotence. The mightieſt men are unable to ſtand before him; death, ſudden as terrible, ſhall overtake them: At midnight there ſhall be a cry of deſtruction; and with ſtrokes of judgment inviſible, but irreſiſtible, they fall, *v.* 20. Let the loftieſt tremble; they are as eaſily brought down, and as unable to grapple with the arm of death, as the meaneſt creature they may deſpiſe.

2. His omniſcience. As none are above his judgment, ſo can none eſcape his notice. Naked and open before him are all the ways of men; he obſerves and minutes even the ſecrets of their ſouls, *v.* 21. Though darkneſs, thick as the ſhadow of death, be ſought to conceal their ſins from his all-ſeeing eye, they are not hid; or though wrapped up within the cloſeſt cells of a corrupted heart, there is not a thought paſſes there but he knoweth it altogether, *v.* 22. As, therefore, he will not be unjuſt, through want of power; ſo neither can he be through error or miſtake. *Note*, (1.) It is the folly of ſinners, that they think to hide their ſins, as if by concealing them from the eyes of men, they could elude the ſcrutiny of God. (2). There is not a more awakening conſideration, which ſhould affect the ſinner's ſoul, than that the eye of God is conſtantly obſerving his heart, and all his ways.

3. His juſtice. He never will give any man cauſe to complain of him. When he viſits for iniquity, he will not lay a heavier burden than the ſin deſerves, *v.* 23. And therefore, as there is no appeal from his bar, nor poſſibility of altering the ſentence of the moſt Juſt, it were the higheſt folly to demand a freſh trial, when the reſult muſt neceſſarily be the confirmation of the unchangeable decree.

4. He illuſtrates this juſtice, power, and omniſcience in his dealings with men. The wicked, though never ſo numerous or great, are broken in pieces, and better men riſe up in their ſtead, *v.* 24. He knows their works, and brings their deſtruction upon them unawares, when, in the night aſleep and ſecure, they dream of no danger near, *v.* 25. He makes his vengeance viſible, that others may ſee and take warning by the ruin of theſe ſinners, whoſe iniquities always juſtify God in his puniſhments, *v.* 27. Becauſe they rejected his government, and would pay no regard to his will and ways, *v.* 26. But by oppreſſion extorted the cries of the afflicted and needy; therefore doth vengeance, terrible as righteous, come upon them, *v.* 28. *Note,* (1.) They who will not be guided by God's word, will aſſuredly be ſmitten with his rod of judgment, and broken in pieces as a potter's veſſel. (2.) Rejection of God's warnings, and obſtinate diſregard of his will and ways, fill up the meaſure of men's iniquities. (3.) The groanings of the poor againſt the hard-hearted; and of the oppreſſed againſt the unjuſt, are heard by the righteous and compaſſionate God, and he will ſhortly recompence them.

5. God's dealings are irreſiſtible. *When he giveth quietneſs,* whether to communities, in peace and ſafety protecting them from their enemies; or to individuals, proſpering their worldly affairs, eſpecially filling their ſouls with ſpiritual peace and joy in believing; *who then can make trouble?* and interrupt or diſturb them in the enjoyment of the quietneſs he beſtows? *And when he hideth his face* in anger, *then who can behold him,* or appear before an offended God, *whether it be done againſt a nation, or againſt a man only?* None can reſcue a devoted people from their deſtruction; nor can any bear up under a ſenſe of God's wrath, or relieve the diſtreſſes of the ſoul he hath wounded. *Note,* (1.) National peace and ſecurity is from God alone. (2.) If a ſoul enjoys a ſenſe of the divine favour through faith in Jeſus, no accuſations of ſin, nor fears of death or hell, can any longer diſturb him. (3.) When God is our enemy, the whole world, and all that is in it, cannot procure us one helper to protect us from the frowns of his diſpleaſure.

6. He watcheth over the welfare of kingdoms, *That the hypocrite reign not,* who by craft and fraud ſought to ſtep into the throne, and tyrannize over the people he had deluded: But God diſappoints his devices, *leſt the people be enſnared. Note,* (1.) Ambition often creeps in order to climb. (2.) When religion hath been made the uſurper's pretext, good men have been ready to fall into the ſnare. (3.) Deliverance from hypocritical and wicked rulers, is a ſignal mercy to any people.

31. Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born *chaſtiſement,* [c] I will not offend *any more.* 32. *That which* I ſee not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more. 33. *Should it be* according to thy mind? he will recompenſe it, whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chooſe, and not I: therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt. 34. Let men † of underſtanding tell me, and let a wiſe man hearken unto me. 35. [d] Job hath ſpoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wiſdom. 36. ‡ My deſire *is that* Job may be tried unto the end, becauſe of *his* anſwers for wicked men. 37. For he addeth rebellion unto his ſin, [e] he clappeth *his hands* amongſt us, and multiplieth his words againſt God.

[c] Chap. xl. 5.
† Heb. of heart, ver. 10.
[d] Chap. xxxv. 16.
‡ Or, My father, let Job be tried.
[e] Chap. xxvii. 23.

v. 31—37. Elihu means not to leave the conviction of what is wrong to grieve him, without the direction how to behave, that he may be extricated from his diſtreſs.

1. He ſuggeſts to him what in his caſe was proper to be ſaid and done. *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement,* and deſire to ſubmit chearfully, patiently, and wait the Lord's leiſure for its removal. *I will not offend any more,* by charging God fooliſhly, as ſevere or unjuſt. *That which I ſee not, teach thou me:* I ſee much evil that deſerves puniſhment, yet I ſee but a part: Who can underſtand his errors? Open my eyes, and make my conſcience tender and ſenſible: *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more,* the paſt ſufficeth; henceforward, through divine grace, I hope to walk more holily and humbly than I have hitherto done. *Note,* (1.) They who are humbled for ſin, will never complain againſt God for what they ſuffer. (2.) When we are afflicted, we are eſpecially called upon to enquire after the cauſe. (3.) The beſt of men will be moſt conſcious how ignorant they are of the depth of iniquity in their fallen ſpirit. (4.) When we turn to God, we muſt reſolutely turn from ſin, Chriſt and Belial cannot agree.

2. He reproves him for his waywardneſs. *Should it be according to thy mind?* It were highly unreaſonable, the creature's will ſhould prevail againſt his creator and governor: Beſide, *He will recompenſe it, whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chooſe:* And therefore it is vain to ſtruggle againſt his decree. But if thou ſhouldſt perſiſt, thou muſt bear the blame, *and not I:* never will I object to any of his diſpenſations, which are all holy, and juſt, and good: *therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt,* if it appear a wiſer method of proceeding than that I have ſuggeſted. *Note,* (1.) He who knows what is moſt for our good, and deſigns that in all he doth, muſt needs do well; and it is the heighth of folly to object. (2.) To ſtruggle againſt God, or find fault, is as uſeleſs as it is fooliſh and ſinful.

3. He appeals for the reaſonableneſs of what he had advanced, to all men of wiſdom and godlineſs, *v.* 34. However wiſe Job might be, in the preſent caſe he apprehends he had betrayed want of underſtanding, as well as piety, *v.* 35. And he wiſhed heartily the company would weigh Job's words, as well as his anſwer, as he diſputed not for victory but truth. Some render the words, *My deſire,* &c. *My father, let Job be tried;* and deduce thence a proof that the redeemer ſpeaks in the perſon of Elihu. Three reaſons he gives for wiſhing Job's caſe thoroughly tried, (1.) Becauſe he apprehended his ſpeeches had a tendency to ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, *v.* 36. (2.) That he had appeared haſtily to triumph in his defence, when in fact he was juſtly to be blamed, though clear of ſome particulars which his friends had ſuggeſted. (3.) That to his impatience under reproof, he had added rebellion againſt God; and by continued ſelf-vindication, accuſed him as unrighteous, *v.* 37. *Note,* (1.) Great men, and good men, are ſtill ſinful men, and will ſee daily cauſe to acknowledge their offences. (2.) The kindeſt office of chriſtian friendſhip, is to reprove, and lead us to a right and humbling view of ourſelves.

CHAP. XXXV.

Elihu proceeds to fix on Job a conviction of his hard ſpeeches. 1. *He had repreſented religion as an unprofitable thing, which God enjoins for his own ſake, not for ours; the contrary to which Elihu makes out,* ver. 1.—8. 2. *He had complained of God as deaf to the cries of the oppreſſed; againſt which imputation Elihu here juſtifies God,* ver. 9—13. 3. *He had deſpaired of the return of God's favour to him, becauſe it was ſo long deferred, but Elihu ſhews him the true cauſe of the delay,* ver. 14—16.

1. ELIHU ſpake moreover, and ſaid, 2. Thinkeſt thou this to be right, *that* thou ſaidſt, [a] My righteouſneſs *is* more than God's? 3. For thou ſaidſt, [b] What advantage will it be unto thee, *and,* What profit ſhall I have † *if I be cleanſed* from my ſin? 4. I will anſwer thee, and thy companions with thee. 5. [c] Look unto the heavens, and ſee and behold the clouds [d] *which* are higher than thou. 6. [e] If thou ſinneſt, what doſt [e] thou againſt him? or *if* thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him? 7. [f] If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him? or [g] what receiveth he of thine hand? 8. [h] Thy wickedneſs *may hurt* a man as thou *art,* and thy righteouſneſs *may profit* the ſon of man.

[a] Chap. xxxiii. 9. & xxxiv. 5.
[b] Chap. xxxiv. 9.
† Or, by it more than by my ſin.
[c] Pſ. viii. 3.
[d] Chap. xxii. 12.
[e] Jer vi. 19.
[f] Chap. xxii. 2—3. Pſ. xvi. 2. Prov. ix. 2. Rom. xi. 35.
[g] 1 Chron. xxix. 14.
[h] Eccleſ. ix. 18.

v. 1—8. Job had laid himſelf open to reproof; and Elihu fails not to point out to him various particulars in which he had erred; and he had ſo good an opinion of him, that when he had reconſidered them, he would own he had ſpoken amiſs. *Note,* A good man may err, but he is open to conviction, and not aſhamed to own either his ignorance or his ſin. *Errare poſſum hereticus eſſe nolo.*

1. The accuſation here laid, is, (1.) His preſumption in ſaying, *My righteouſneſs is more than God's.* Not that he pretended to perfection before God, or that his moral righteouſneſs was greater than his; but that he ſeemed more ſollicitous to juſtify himſelf than God, and complained as if his goodneſs had made him his debtor, and that he was not rewarded as he had a right to expect; and this moſt juſtly deſerved rebuke. (2.) The diſhonourable idea he had given of true religion, *chap.* ix. 22. x. 15. as if it were of no advantage to ſerve God; and that he had cleanſed his hands from iniquity in vain, whilſt his troubles were ſo uncommon, and his judgment taken away. *Note,* (1.) God never can be our debtor; the beſt we do is unworthy of him, and he ever chaſtiſes us leſs than we deſerve. (2.) Though we may find no preſent outward advantage; yea, much loſs and ſuffering for the ſake of God and his cauſe, we ſhall find religion no unprofitable ſervice at laſt.

2. The confutation of Job's aſſertions, is drawn from the greatneſs and glory of God; and this Job, and all who joined him, might be convinced of, if they looked to the heavens; for they would teach them how tranſcendantly God is exalted above man: our ſins may hurt worms like ourſelves, and our goodneſs extend to our fellow mortals, *v.* 8. But with reſpect to him,

the malice of the moſt daring ſinners is impotent: they cannot deſtroy his government, diſturb his peace, defeat his counſels, or tarniſh his glory, any more than they can blot out the ſun. Though they oppoſe him, and break his law, they cannot fly from his arm, and muſt glorify him in their puniſhment, *v.* 6. On the other hand, our goodneſs extendeth not to him; he needeth not our ſervice; we can add nothing to his ſelf-ſufficient bleſſedneſs; nay, all we render to him, we muſt firſt receive from him; and ſo far from making him our debtor, the obligation is our own, that we are permitted and enabled to ſerve him, and that he condeſcends to accept the worſhip we offer, and the bounden duty we deſire to pay him, *v.* 7.

9. By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions they make *the oppreſſed* to cry: they cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty. 10. But none ſaith, Where *is* God my † maker, [i] who giveth ſongs in the night? 11. Who teacheth us more than the beaſts of the earth, and maketh us wiſer than the fowls of heaven. 12. There they cry (but [k] none giveth anſwer) becauſe of the pride of evil men. 13. Surely [l] God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

† Heb. Makers. Gen. i. 26.
[i] Pſ. xlii. 8. & cxlix. 5. Acts xvi. 25.
[k] Prov. i. 28.
[l] Chap. xxvii. 9. Prov. i. 28. Iſa. i. 15. Jer. xi. 11.

v. 9—13. We have here another complaint of Job's, ſilenced.

1. He had reflected upon God, as not hearing and relieving the prayers of the afflicted and oppreſſed, *chap.* xix. 7. xxiv. 12. xxx. 20. Hereto Elihu anſwers,

2. That if they receive not an anſwer of mercy, it is becauſe themſelves are to blame. [1.] As only anxious to be delivered from their ſufferings, and making no ſpiritual improvement of them to their humiliation, and greater acquaintance with God their Maker, or *Makers*, as in the original, expreſſive of the perſons in the Godhead, who ſaid, Let *us* make man. *Note*, (1.) Many groan under trouble, and complain of their miſeries, who never ſhew any humiliation for ſin, or deſire after God. (2.) Irreligious poverty and ſuffering is, of all eſtates of human miſery, the moſt miſerable. (3.) Selfiſh prayers, the cries of mere diſtreſs, without any regard to God's glory, or our ſoul's good, can expect no help from God. [2.] As being impatient under their ſufferings, and unthankful for the mercies they enjoy. They look not for ſupport from inward conſolations, deſiring to wait God's leiſure, who, under the ſevereſt preſſures of affliction, can make the heart glad, *and giveth ſongs in the night*, when the darkeſt troubles ſurround his faithful people. Nor, though endued with underſtanding, and a capacity to know God above the beaſts, do they make any uſe of it under their ſufferings, nor differ in their prayers from the mere cry of the brutes, who roar becauſe of their anguiſh. *Note*, (1.) They who are inſenſible of the undeſerved and diſtinguiſhing mercies they enjoy, have no reaſon to expect deliverance from the evils they feel. (2.) God can give joys that overbalance all our ſorrows; and, when our tribulations moſt abound, make our conſolations through Chriſt the more abound alſo. (3.) The diſtinguiſhing difference between a man and a beaſt lies not ſo much in reaſon as religion. Many beaſts ſhew amazing inſtances of memory, reaſoning, &c. but the dignity of man lies in his capacity for the knowledge, ſervice, and enjoyment of God. [3.] Their cry is the cry of vanity; they are only ſollicitous about the periſhing things of time, for their bodies, not their ſouls, merely becauſe of the oppreſſions they ſuffer under the proud. Or this may be connected with the words incloſed in a parentheſis, as the reaſon why God giveth them no anſwer; not only becauſe their prayers are vain, or inſincere, but alſo becauſe of the unhumbled pride of their hearts. They are evil men, their ſufferings are the effects of their ſins, and yet they do not repent of the one, whilſt they cry to be delivered from the other. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt the deſign of our afflictions is not anſwered, it is mercy in God to deny our prayer for their removal. (2.) An unhumbled heart may howl upon his bed, but cannot offer that ſacrifice which, through the Mediator, is as the grateful incenſe, and returns fraught with bleſſings from above.

14. Although [m] thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, *yet* [n] judgment *is* before him, therefore † truſt thou in him. 15. But now becauſe *it is* not *ſo*, ‡ he hath viſited in his anger, yet § he knoweth *it* not in great extremity: 16. Therefore doth [o] Job open his mouth in vain: he multiplieth words without knowledge.

[m] Chap. ix. 11. & xxiii. 8, 9.
[n] Pſ. xxxvii. 6.
† Or, wait upon him.
‡ i. e. God.
§ i. e. Job.
[o] Chap. xxxiv. 35.

v. 14—16. We have here the laſt charge he brings againſt Job for his haſty expreſſions; and this is,

1. That he deſpaired of God's ever appearing for him, either to vindicate him from the unjuſt aſperſions caſt upon him, or to deliver him from the miſeries he ſuffered, *chap.* ix. 32—35. xxiii. 4—7. xxxi. 35—37. *Note*, When God corrects us for our humiliation, Satan is ever ready to drive us to deſperation.

2. Elihu rebukes his deſpondence, and ſhews him both the path of duty, and the reaſon why his deliverance was delayed. *Judgment is before him*; he will certainly appear to vindicate the cauſe of his people, and then every dark diſpenſation ſhall be unfolded: *therefore truſt thou in him*, or *wait upon him*; truſt in his promiſes, and patiently expect their fulfilment. Had this been the caſe, ere this his anguiſh had been relieved. *But now, becauſe it is not ſo*, becauſe this faith, patience, hope, and reſignation hath not been exerciſed, *he hath viſited in his anger*, diſpleaſed with Job for his miſimprovement of the mercy intended him in his affliction, and therefore he felt that rod in anger, which was at firſt lifted up in love. *Yet he knoweth it not in great extremity*: the greatneſs of his ſufferings made him overlook his unbelief, impatience, and raſhneſs; and thereby he loſt both the comfort, and deferred the removal of them. *Note*, (1.) Deſpair of relief is a high reflection upon God's power and grace, as impatience is on his goodneſs and wiſdom. (2.) Faith in God is the only clue that can guide us through every labyrinth of temptation. (3.) If our troubles are not removed, but increaſed, it becomes us to look well if we have not provoked God by our behaviour under them.

3. He concludes from the whole, *Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain*, in undue complaints of his ſufferings, in unjuſt reflections upon the Lord, and too eager vindication of himſelf. *He multiplieth words without knowledge*, appears ignorant of the deſert of ſin, the perfections of God, and the path of duty.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Elihu having reproved Job's raſhneſs, endeavours to engage him to patient ſubmiſſion, the want of which, and not his hypocriſy, as his friends ſuggeſted, had prolonged his afflictions. Here we have, 1. *His preface,* ver. 2—4. 2. *His account of the methods of God's providences towards the children of men, according as they carry themſelves,* ver. 5—15. 3. *The fair warning and good counſel he gives Job thereupon,* ver. 16—21. 4. *His demonſtration of God's ſovereignty and omnipotence,* ver. 22, 23.

1. ELIHU alſo proceeded, and ſaid, 2. Suffer me a little and I will ſhew thee, that † *I have* yet to ſpeak on God's behalf. 3. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will aſcribe [a] righteouſneſs to my maker. 4. For truly, [b] my words *ſhall* not *be* falſe: he that is perfect in knowledge *is* with thee.

† Heb. There are yet words for God.
[a] Deut. xxxii. 4.
[b] 2 Cor. ii. 17.

v. 1—4. As the general ſilence ſeemed to give approbation to what was ſaid, Elihu, after a ſhort pauſe, reſumes his diſcourſe, with an apology for treſpaſſing a little longer on their patience, for what he had now to ſay would be ſhort, yet important. He was ſpeaking in God's behalf, *v.* 2. therefore might claim attention. It was no common ſubject he treated, but his knowledge was fetched from afar, the reſult of long reſearches, and concerning the deep things of God, *v.* 3. His deſign was to vindicate the ways of Ged to man, and aſcribe righteouſneſs to his Maker in all the diſpenſations of his providence, *v.* 3. And in doing this he reſolved to uſe the greateſt impartiality and ſincerity, ſpeaking the truth in love; and he preſumed he was ſo thoroughly acquainted with his ſubject, and his intention ſo upright, that they would acknowledge their regard juſtly due to his diſquiſition, unleſs we ſuppoſe, *he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee*, be taken literally, as ſpoken by Chriſt in the perſon of Elihu, in whom dwelt all the fulneſs of wiſdom and knowledge, and whoſe words all men are bound to hear and obſerve. *Note*, (1.) They who ſpeak for God in ſimplicity, will, by the importance of their diſcourſe, engage attention. (2.) A faithful ſoul is jealous for God's honour, and riſes up to vindicate his diſpenſations from the fooliſh and ſinful aſperſions of thoſe murmurers and complainers, who charge God fooliſhly. (3.) Truth and plainneſs of ſpeech eſpecially become thoſe who profeſs themſelves teachers of the good ways of God.

5. Behold, God *is* mighty, and [c] deſpiſeth not *any*: [d] *he is* mighty in ſtrength, *and* † wiſdom. 6. He preſerveth not the life of the wicked: but [e] giveth right to the poor. 7. [f] He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but [g] with kings *are they* on the throne, yea, he doth eſtabliſh them for ever, and they are exalted. 8. And [h] if *they be* bound in fetters, *and* be holden in cords of affliction: 9. Then [i] he ſheweth them their work, and their tranſgreſſions that they have exceeded. 10. [k] He openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. 11. [l] If they obey and ſerve *him*, they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures. 12. But if they obey not, they ſhall periſh by the ſword, and they ſhall die without knowledge. 13. But [m] the hypocrites in heart [n] heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them

[c] Chap. x. 3.
[d] Chap. ix. 4. & xii. 13, 16. & xxxvii. 23.
† Heb. Heart.
[e] Pſ. ix. 4.
[f] Pſ. xxxiii. 18. & xxxiv. 15.
[g] Pſ. cxiii. 8.
[h] Pſ. cvii. 10.
[i] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12.
[k] Chap. xxxiii. 16.
[l] Iſa. i. 19.
[m] Mat. xxiii. 27.
[n] Rom. ii. 5.

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them. 14. [o] They die in youth, and their life *is* among the ‡ unclean.

[o] Chap. xv. 32. & xxii. 16. Pſ. lv. 23.
‡ Or, Sodomites

v. 5—14. Elihu, in the behalf of God, proceeds, as he propoſed, to vindicate God's righteous government.

1. The meaneſt of his ſubjects are not deſpiſed by him, *v.* 5. He is mighty to redreſs their grievances, and wiſe in all his diſpenſations towards them. *Note,* If God deſpiſeth not any, ſurely much leſs ought we.

2. He miniſters impartial juſtice. The greateſt, if wicked, feel his vengeance; cut off, even here oftentimes, by his righteous judgment; or, if their life be prolonged, they are only reſerved for the wrath to come: whilſt the cauſe of the poor that were wronged God eſpouſes, *v.* 6. and his eyes are upon them for good. They are exalted to honour in this world, or, what is infinitely better, they are eſtabliſhed in his grace and love, and for ever appointed to reign with him in glory everlaſting, *v.* 7. *Note,* (1.) The day is near, when the oppreſſor and the oppreſſed will meet at the righteous bar of God. (2.) However low God's people may be reduced, they are a royal ſeed, and there is a kingdom prepared for them.

3. If God afflicts his people, it is purely with a deſign to do them good, *v.* 8. to humble them under the views of paſt iniquities, to turn them from the perverſeneſs of the ways they may have choſen, to open their ears to that inſtruction, to which, except under the rod, they would have been inattentive, and to ſhew them the path of duty, as the ſure way of deliverance from the cords of affliction. *Note,* (1.) A ſenſe of God's purpoſe in our chaſtiſements, ſhould make us not only reſigned, but thankful. (2.) Whatever brings us to humbler views of ourſelves, and more unreſerved dependance on God, is to be reckoned among our chief mercies. (3.) Afflictions only anſwer their deſign, when God openeth the ear to diſcipline; elſe they but harden inſtead of humbling. (4.) It is a bleſſed fruit of afflictions, when we leave the droſs of ſin in the furnace, and come forth purified as ſilver from the fire.

4. When the end of the correction is anſwered, the rod will not only be removed, but the bleſſedneſs of it appear. *If they obey and ſerve him,* in conſequence of his gracious chaſtiſement, then *they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures*; for godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life which now is, and ever brings that beſt portion, contentment; but eſpecially in their ſouls they ſhall proſper, taſte the more ſubſtantial pleaſures of religion, and that not only through the days of time, but the years of eternity.

5. Where a hypocrite ſuffers, far different is the iſſue. As they obey not the divine admonitions, but by their impatient and unhumbled ſpirit heap up wrath; and inſtead of crying to God in their diſtreſs, are ſtupid and hardened under it; deſtruction then awaits them, they ſhall periſh under the judgment, and, what is far worſe, ſhall die impenitent. In youth they ſhall be cut off, and their portion in eternity be appointed them among the unclean, whoſe worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, *v.* 12—14. *Note,* (1.) They who die ſtupid and unconcerned, are in a much more deſperate eſtate, than they who depart in the greateſt agonies of remorſe. (2.) Hypocrites in heart will be detected; however fair a ſhew they make in the fleſh, there is one that ſeeth and judgeth (3.) They who, truſting on their own righteouſneſs, are heaping up their works as their confidence againſt a judgment-day, will be terribly diſappointed to find that they have only heaped up wrath. (4.) Many now proudly deſpiſe the open ſinner, the profane and unclean, and ſay to them, Stand by thyſelf, I am more holy than thou, who yet ſhall have their portion with them in the burning lake.

15. [p] He delivereth the † poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppreſſion. 16. Even ſo would he have removed thee out of the ſtrait [q] *into* a broad place, where *there is* no ſtraitneſs, and [r] that which ſhould be ſet on thy table, *ſhould be* full of fatneſs. 17. But thou haſt fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and juſtice take hold *on thee.* 18. Becauſe *there is* wrath, *beware* leſt he take thee away with *his* ſtroke: then [s] a great ranſom cannot deliver thee. 19. Will he eſteem [t] thy riches? *no* not gold, nor all the forces of ſtrength. 20. [u] Deſire not the night, when people are cut off in their place. 21. Take heed, [x] regard not iniquity: for this haſt thou choſen rather than affliction. 22. Behold, God exalteth by his power: [y] who teacheth like him? 23. [z] Who hath enjoined him his way? or [a] who can ſay, Thou haſt wrought iniquity?

[p] Pſ. lxxii. 4.
† Or afflicted. So ver. 6.
[q] Pſ. xviii. 19.
[r] Ibid. xxiii. 5.
[s] Ibid. xlix. 7.
[t] Prov. xi. 4.
[u] Chap. xxxiv. 22.
[x] Pſ. lxvi. 18.
[y] Iſa. xl. 13, 14. Rom. xi. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 16.
[z] Chap. xxxiv. 13.
[a] Ibid. 10.

v. 15—23. Elihu here applies what he had ſaid to Job's caſe.

1. Had he been humbled, God would have dealt thus graciouſly with him; but his conduct under his affliction continued the ſcourge upon him. It is God's conſtant method of procedure, to deliver the poor, to ſupport, comfort, ſtrengthen him, and, when it is fit, to open a door of eſcape for him. Mean time, he conveys his inſtructive leſſons, and whiſpers his kind conſolations to the ſoul, amidſt all his ſorrows and oppreſſion; and this Job would, ere this, have experienced, had he been patiently ſubmiſſive; his path had not been then, as now, ſtraitned, nor his wants ſo diſtreſſing; he would have been freed from his diſtreſſes, and his table crowned with plenty: but ſince, by a behaviour like that of wicked men, and pleas that gave them countenance in their iniquities, he had offended, therefore in juſt judgment his corrections were continued, till his heart was brought to bow in ſilent humiliation, and to give God his due glory in the acknowledgment of his righteouſneſs, *v.* 15—17. *Note,* (1.) If our afflictions are long and heavy, ſurely we have only ourſelves to blame for them. (2.) When the chaſtiſement hath anſwered its end, it will aſſuredly be removed, for God doth not willingly afflict the children of men. (3.) They who plead the cauſe of the wicked, muſt not wonder if they ſuffer with them.

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2. He warns him of the danger of perſevering in obſtinate ſelf-vindication. There was danger leſt God in wrath ſhould reſent his injurious aſperſions on his government; and if he ſhould riſe up to avenge his own quarrel, woe to the ſoul againſt whom he lifts up the ſword, *v.* 18. No ranſom can redeem him, no might reſcue him, no darkneſs conceal him; no, not even the grave, which Job had ſo impatiently deſired. The darkneſs hath no covering before God, and in death, their appointed place, the wrath of God purſues the ſinners, *v.* 19, 20. *Note,* (1.) Though a truly good man ſhall not periſh eternally, yet it is by working out his ſalvation with fear and trembling only that it can be ſecured. (2.) Riches profit not in a day of wrath. (3.) No darkneſs can hide, no ſhadow of rock or mountain cover the ſinner from the ſtroke of God.

3. He cautions him to regard iniquity no longer, not to perſevere in his charges againſt God, or ſo impatiently to deſire death, to be rid of his afflictions, rather than humbly reſigned to wait God's leiſure and time for his deliverance, *v.* 21. *Note,* The greateſt ſufferings are preferable to the leaſt ſins.

4. He bids him obſerve God's power, wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, to engage his unreſerved ſubmiſſion to his will. *He exalteth by his power,* himſelf the ſource of all power; and, according to his own will, exalting whom he pleaſes. None teaches like him, ſo wiſe or able to direct: he needs no adviſer; his ways, word, and providences are all perfect in wiſdom; and it were as falſe as fooliſh to charge him with iniquity, whoſe boſom is the ſeat of juſtice, and whoſe glorious prerogative it is, from the eſſential rectitude of his nature, that he can do no wrong. *Note,* The more we know of God, the more we ſhall be ſilenced and confounded before him, nor dare compare our wiſdom, power, and righteouſneſs with his, or complain of any thing he ordains, which muſt be always wiſe as righteous.

24. Remember that thou [b] magnify his work, which men behold. 25. Every man may ſee it, man may behold *it* afar off. 26. Behold, God *is* great, and we know *him* not, [c] neither can the number of his years be ſearched out. 27. For he maketh ſmall the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: 28. Which the clouds do drop, *and* diſtil upon man abundantly. 29. Alſo can *any* underſtand the ſpreadings of the clouds, *or* [d] the noiſe of his tabernacle? 30. Behold, he ſpreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the ſea. 31. For [e] by them judgeth he the people, [f] he giveth meat in abundance. 32. With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to ſhine,* † by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt. 33. The noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it, the cattle alſo concerning ‡ the vapour.

[b] Rev. xv. 3.
[c] Pſ. xc. 2. & cii. 24, 27. Heb. i. 12.
[d] Pſ. xviii. 13. & civ. 7.
[e] Chap. xxxvii. 13. & xxxviii. 23.
[f] Acts xiv. 17.
† Heb. By that which cometh between.
‡ Heb. That which goeth up.

v. 24—33. From the view of the glorious works of God, his unſearchable perfections, and wonders in the adminiſtration of the kingdom of providence, Elihu would affect Job with humbler thoughts of himſelf, and higher apprehenſions of God and his ways.

1. He is worthy to be magnified for the works he hath wrought viſible to every eye: the heavens above, the earth around us, proclaim the glory of the Creator; and ſince in them his univerſal goodneſs as well as greatneſs appears, we may aſſuredly conclude, that in his works of providence, reſpecting us in particular, he deſerves equally to be magnified and adored, *v.* 24, 25.

2. Though we ſee and know a part of his excellence, yet his perfections are unſearchable, and the myſteries of his works paſt finding out. If we cannot then comprehend his ſurpaſſing greatneſs, it were folly to arraign his proceedings, and to ſpeak evil of what we know not; and if we cannot account for the diviſion of the drops of rain, or for the moſt common appearances in nature, it were highly abſurd to quarrel with his providences,

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providences, becauſe we do not clearly ſee the reaſons of his conduct.

[1.] *God is great, and we know him not*, cannot fathom his immenſity, or comprehend his eternity; *neither can the number of his years be ſearched*, who was from everlaſting to everlaſting; and here all our ideas are loſt.

[2.] As unſearchable are his works. That the drops of dew deſcend, and from the clouds the rain pours down, we ſee, *v.* 27, 28. but how this wonder is performed, is yet a myſtery. A little we know; but in a thouſand enquiries into the nature and cauſes of things, we are enveloped with darkneſs; for who *can underſtand the ſpreading of the clouds?* how poiſed in air they float; how from the ſmalleſt appearances they quickly darken the ſky; how they collect their ſtores, or diſpenſe them; *or the noiſe of his tabernacle*, the ſtormy winds that blow under heaven, or the thunders that utter their voices from the clouds. *Behold, he ſpreadeth his light upon it*, on the clouds his tabernacle; the light of the ſun that ſhines when the rain is blown over, or the lightning which flaſhes from it, *and covereth the bottom of the ſea* with waters, thence to be raiſed, by the action of the ſun and wind, into the clouds, as the vapour in the alembic. *For by them judgeth he the people:* he can, when he pleaſes, make them the inſtruments of his vengeance, as in the flood; or, when in ſeaſon and meaſure they gently water the earth, *he giveth meat in abundance. With clouds he covereth the light*, either ſhading the ſultry beams of the ſun, or with thick tempeſt in the ſky, turning the day into night; *and commandeth it not to ſhine, by the cloud*, or without this ſupplement to the text, *by that* which *cometh betwixt*, as in eclipſes, when, by the interpoſition of the moon, the ſun is darkned, or the earth intercepts the ſun-beams, whilſt the moon paſſes through her ſhadow. *The noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it*, the whiſtling wind, or thunder, prognoſticate the approaching rain; *the cattle alſo*, furniſhed with ſtrange inſtinct, give tokens *concerning the vapour*, when the gathering ſtorm approaches. In all which we ſee God's wondrous working, and are bound to magnify and praiſe him, whoſe wiſdom is infinite, and his ways paſt finding out; and therefore in all his providences ſilent ſubmiſſion becomes our bounden duty.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Elihu here goes on to extol the wonderful power of God in the meteors and the changes of the weather. 1. *In thunder and lightning*, ver. 1—5. 2. *In froſt, ſnow, rains, and wind*, ver. 6—13. 3. *He challenges Job to ſolve theſe phænomena of nature, that confeſſing his ignorance in them, he might own himſelf an incompetent judge in the proceedings of Divine Providence*, ver. 14—22. 4. *He concludes with the principle which he undertook to prove, that God is great, and greatly to be feared*, v. 23, 24.

1. AT this alſo my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place. 2. † Hear attentively the noiſe of his voice, and the ſound *that* goeth out of his mouth. 3. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his ‡ lightning unto the § ends of the earth. 4. After it [a] a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency, and he will not ſtay them when his voice is heard. 5. God thundreth marvellouſly with his voice; [b] great things doth he, [c] which we cannot comprehend.

† Heb. Hearing, hear.

‡ Heb. Light.
§ Heb. Wings. So Chap. xxxviii. 13.
a Pſ. xxix. 3. & lxviii. 33.
b Chap. v. 9. & ix. 10. Rev. xv. 3.
c Pſ. lxxvii. 19.

v. 1—5. If, as is by ſome ſuggeſted, at this time the rolling thunders were at a diſtance heard, with lightnings flaſhing round, and thickning clouds portending the approaching ſtorm, there will be ſomething more peculiarly beautiful and applicable in this deſcription of Elihu.

1. He profeſſes his own reverential fear at the awful ſcene, and addreſſes Job to pay attention to the voice which theſe mighty thunders uttered, *v.* 2. *Note*, There is ſomething in thunder inexpreſſibly awful, and ſhould remind us ever of that glorious God who maketh the thunder.

2. He deſcribes the tremendous appearances. God himſelf directs the ſtorm, bids the lightnings flaſh, the thunders roll, and points the mark againſt which theſe inſtruments of deſtruction are levelled; and in every nation this voice is heard. The flaſh precedes, and gives the warning of the terrible exploſion; and the interval is, according to the diſtance of the cloud, proportionably longer or ſhorter, the motion of light being ſo much ſwifter than of ſound. *And he will not ſtay them when his voice is heard*, torrents of rain uſually ſucceeding. Thus doth God ſpeak to the aſtoniſhed world, marvellous in his works, and above our comprehenſion; and how little need we wonder then, if in his providence myſteries appear which we cannot fathom?

d Pſ. cxlvii. 16.
† Heb. To the ſhower of rain, and to the ſhowers of the rain, &c.

6. For [d] he ſaith to the ſnow, Be thou *on* the earth; likewiſe † to the ſmall rain, and to the great rain of his ſtrength. 7. He ſealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work. 8. Then the beaſts go into dens, and remain in their places. 9. ‡ Out of the ſouth cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the § north. 10. [e] By the breath of God, froſt is given: and the breadth of the waters is ſtraitned. 11. Alſo by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he ſcattereth his bright cloud. 12. And it is turned round about by his counſels: that they may do whatſoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. 13. [f] He cauſeth it to come, whether for correction, or [g] for his land, or [h] for mercy.

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‡ Or, from his chamber.
§ Heb. ſcattering winds.
e Chap. xxxviii. 29. Pſ. cxlvii. 16, 17.
f Exod. ix. 18, 23. 1 Sam. xii. 18, 19. Ezra x. 9. Chap. xxxvi. 31.
g Chap. xxxviii. 26, 27.
h 2 Sam. xxi. 10. 1 Kings xviii. 45.

v. 6—13. Elihu here recounts other inſtances of the wonders God works deep and unſearchable. At his word the ſnow covers the earth; the rain, obedient to his will, deſcends in gentle dews, or dreadful cataracts, *v.* 6. Driven from the plough, and the road, the traveller ſeeks the covert, and the labourer retires, *v.* 7. Yea, the very beaſts fly to their dens, till the tempeſt be overpaſt, *v.* 8. *From the ſouth*, or *from his chamber*, the reſiſtleſs whirlwind ruſhes, and bleak northern blaſts bring winter's cold, *v.* 9. The ſtraitned waters feel the freezing breath of God, and bound in chryſtal fetters ceaſe to flow, *v.* 10. Thick clouds ariſe, when the diſſolving froſt emits more copious vapours, and in vaſt bodies the collected waters float on air, till, wearied with watering, exhauſted of their ſtores in winter ſhowers, they are diſſipated before the vernal ſun, *v.* 11. Then bright clouds appear, not charged with ſtorm or rain, but ſcattered light over the blue expanſe, *v.* 12. and all theſe things are ordered by his counſels, and come and go at his pleaſure, *v.* 12. The inſtruments of mercy or judgment in his hands, ſometimes for correction ſent, when inclement ſeaſons, black with famine, ſpread their baneful influence, and inundations riſing, threaten a returning deluge. Sometimes on his land for mercy, when ſun and clouds, and rain and ſnow, conſpire to fertilize the ſoil, and crown the happy ſpot on which his favour reſts, with overflowing vats of wine and oil, or vallies thick with corn. *Note*, (1.) Since every kind of weather receives direction from unerring wiſdom, it is ſinful to complain. (2.) Shall beaſts be wiſe to fly for ſhelter againſt the ſtorm, and ſhall not man, a ſinner, more provident, ſeek under the ſhadow of Jeſus, a covert from the deluge of divine wrath? (3.) Do all the creatures, thus obedient to his will, fulfil his pleaſure, and ſhall we be the only rebels in the creation, and refuſe his government and guidance? (4.) If fruitful ſeaſons glad the year, may we never abuſe the plenty, but in the gifts behold the giver. If for correction the heavens are made as braſs over us, and the earth as iron beneath us refuſes to yield its increaſe, *let us hear the rod, and who hath appointed it.*

14. Hearken unto this, O Job: ſtand ſtill, and [i] conſider the wondrous works of God. 15. Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them, and cauſed the light of the cloud to ſhine? 16. Doſt thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him [k] which is perfect in knowledge? 17. How thy garments *are* warm, when he quieteth the earth by the ſouth-*wind?* 18. [l] Haſt thou with him ſpread out the ſky, *which is* ſtrong, *and* as a molten looking-glaſs? 19. [m] Teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him; *for* we cannot order *our ſpeech* by reaſon of darkneſs. 20. Shall it be told him that I ſpeak? if a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.

i Pſ. cxi. 2.
k Chap. xxxvi. 4.
l Iſa. xliv. 24.
m Chap. xiii. 3.

v. 14—20. Elihu calls upon Job to attend diligently his ſpeech, and with ſolemn conſideration to weigh well what he had ſpoken of theſe wondrous works of God, as an argument for ſubmiſſion to every diſpenſation, which, however ſtrange to us, is ordered by him whoſe underſtanding is infinite, *v.* 14. God alone is all-wiſe, and perfect in knowledge; whilſt we, even the wiſeſt, how ſmall a part of his ways can we underſtand? When God filled the air with his ſtores of rain, or ſnow, or vapours; when or where they ſhall deſcend; how the rays of light became ſo beautifully painted on the cloud in the rainbow, by the different refrangibility of their colours, *v.* 15. by what mechaniſm theſe floating bodies are ſuſpended, nor ruſh at once in cataracts to the earth, *v.* 16. how our garments are warm, when, after winter's cold, the milder breath of ſummer ſtills the earth, *v.* 17. theſe, with innumerable other things, however obvious in their effects, have myſteries in them that no human wiſdom can unfold: and as none can comprehend theſe wonders, none can pretend to have ſhared with God in any of his works. *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the ſky, which is ſtrong*, firm, and permanent, *and as a molten looking-glaſs*, bright and clear, without a flaw, reflecting the glory of the great Creator, *v.* 18. Loſt in the immenſity and unfathomable abyſs of God's wondrous works, he bids Job ſpeak, if he dared pretend a knowledge of theſe myſteries, where wiſdom groped for the wall as blind, and *we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs*. Both darkneſs of the fallen mind within, and darkneſs in the myſterious ſubject without, prevents our conceiving or expreſſing ourſelves with any preciſion or clearneſs on the ſubject, *v.* 19. Far therefore from wiſhing that God ſhould be told how well he had ſpoken, he trembles for himſelf, conſcious how inſufficient the beſt he could ſay muſt appear, where the depth of the matter ſwallowed up the ſpeaker, *v.* 20. Or this laſt verſe declares his diſclaiming all attempt to vindicate Job's cauſe, where the wiſeſt advocate muſt be immediately confounded. *Note*, When we ſpeak of God, his being and perfections, we are loſt in aſtoniſhment; if we contemplate his works of creation or providence, our ſhallow line is quickly run out; if we look into his myſteries of grace, and attempt to ſpeak of them, we find a height and length, and breadth and depth, that paſſeth created knowledge.

21. And now *men* ſee not the bright light which *is* in the clouds: but the wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them. 22. † Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God *is* terrible majeſty. 23. *Touching* the Almighty, [n] we cannot find him out: [o] *he is* excellent in power and in judgment, and in plenty of juſtice: he will not afflict. 24. [p] Men do therefore fear him: he reſpecteth not any *that are* wiſe of heart.

† Heb. Gold.
[n] 1 Tim. vi. 16.
[o] Chap. ix. 4. & xii. 13. & xxxvi. 5.
[p] Mat. x. 28.

v. 21—24. Perceiving the appearance probably of the glorious God, inveloped with dark clouds of the ſky, and cloathed with the whirlwind, Elihu haſtens to conclude.

1. He obſerves the ſun is darkned with clouds, but they do not ever lour, *v.* 21. the wind diſperſes them, and from the north cometh fair weather, *v.* 22. So, though God approached in terrible majeſty, the ſtorm would blow over, and Job's afflictions iſſue in the ſun-ſhine of proſperity.

2. He ſhuts up his diſcourſe with ſome ſhort but weighty conſiderations. God's glory is infinite, *v.* 22. his perfections unſearchable; his power, almighty; his judgments, righteous; and all his diſpenſations diſplay plenty of juſtice: ſo that none hath the leaſt reaſon of complaint. He delights not in man's ſufferings, will never afflict beyond his deſerts, and ever with a deſign to do him good, *v.* 23. moſt juſtly therefore do good men reverence, fear, and ſubmit to him. *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart*, who, inſtead of humble ſubmiſſion, indulge their proud reaſonings: their cenſures he diſregards, and, inſtead of altering his procedure, they may expect to be continued under the marks of his diſpleaſure.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

As all ſides had been deſiring God would appear to decide the controverſy, lo, he is here; and, taking up the thread of Elihu's diſcourſe, calls awfully to Job to prepare his anſwer, ſince this he deſired, to the following queſtions: 1. *Concerning the earth, and the fabric of it*, ver. 1—7. 2. *Concerning the ſea*, ver. 8—11. 3. *Concerning the morning light*, ver. 12—15. 4. *Concerning the fountains of the deep, or the dark receſſes of the earth*, ver. 16—21. 5. *Concerning the meteors, ſnow, rain, thunder, lightning, and the ſtars*, ver. 22—38. 6. *Concerning the proviſion made for beaſts and birds*, ver. 39—41. *And if he appeared ignorant in theſe common things, how could he preſume to judge of the counſels of God's government?*

1. THEN [a] the LORD anſwered Job [b] out of the whirlwind, and ſaid, 2. [c] Who *is* this that darkneth counſel by words without knowledge? 3. [d] Gird up now thy loins like a man; [e] for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.

[a] Chap. ix. 35.
[b] Exod. xix. 16, 18. 1 Kings xix. 11. Ezek. i. 4. Nah. i. 3.
[c] Chap. xxxiv. 35. & xlii. 3.
[d] Chap. xl. 7.
[e] Chap. xiii. 22.

v. 1—3. Behold the preſent Deity! what mortal but muſt tremble before him, with deep ſilence bow into the duſt, and hear with ſolemn attention what God is about to ſpeak.

1. The perſon who appears is the almighty Jehovah, probably the eternal Son, viſible in human form. *See chap.* xlii. 5. Out of the whirlwind in terrible majeſty he utters his voice, and, as he had ſo earneſtly requeſted, directs his ſpeech to Job. *Note*, (1.) God hath various ways of ſpeaking to the ſouls of his people; ſometimes in the ſmall ſtill voice of ſecret conſolations, ſometimes in the awfully-diſtreſſing thunders of heart rending convictions; yet in both it is alike the voice of mercy. (2.) They who contend againſt God muſt be made to know at laſt, how vain their ſtruggle againſt him, who, when he judgeth, will overcome.

2. The charge laid againſt Job: *Who is this that darkneth counſel by words without knowledge?* Shall a worm dare preſume to judge of God's perfections? Shall Job, the righteous Job, object to his wiſdom and goodneſs? Shall he by ſpeeches of folly darken and miſrepreſent the counſels of providence? How inſolent, as well as ignorant, the attempt! *Note*, To diſpute with warmth about decrees, foreknowledge, predeſtination; to pretend an explanation clear, diſtinct, and demonſtrative, of theſe unſearchable ſecrets, betrays the preſumption rather than the wiſdom of the diſputant.

3. God challenges him to anſwer, ſince that he ſo eagerly deſired; bids him gird up his loins as a man of war, and produce his ſtrong reaſons, or anſwer his queſtions concerning things natural and obvious, before he dared pretend to fathom the ſecrets of providence.

4. Where waſt thou when [f] I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou haſt underſtanding. 5. Who hath laid the meaſures thereof, if thou knoweſt? or who hath ſtretched the line upon it? 6. Whereupon are the † foundations thereof ‡ faſtned? or who laid the corner-ſtone thereof? 7. When [g] the morning-ſtars ſang together, and all [h] the ſons of God ſhouted for joy. 8. Or [i] *who* ſhut up the ſea with doors, when it brake forth *as if* it had iſſued out of the womb? 9. When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkneſs a ſwaddling-band for it, 10. And § brake up for it my decreed *place*, and [k] ſet bars and doors. 11. And ſaid, Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further: and here [l] ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.

[f] Pſ. civ. 5. Prov. viii. 29. & xxx. 4.
† Heb. Sockets.
‡ Heb. Made to ſink.
[g] Pſ. cxlviii. 3.
[h] Chap. i. 6.
[i] Gen. i. 9. Pſ. civ. 9. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22.
§ Or, eſtabliſhed my decree upon it.
[k] Chap. xxvi. 10.
[l] Pſ. lxxxviii. 9. & xciii. 4.

v. 4—11. With what majeſty! with what unutterable dignity, doth God deſcribe his own glorious works! and how can Job pretend to diſpute with him, when he is unable to anſwer one of a thouſand of his enquiries.

1. Where was he, when God, alone exiſting from eternity, began his wonders of creation, and laid the ſtrong foundations of the earth? *v.* 4. Was he preſent, or his wiſdom conſulted, in proportioning the quantity of matter to be conſolidated; or fitting in exact proportion the ſeveral parts, to compoſe the exquiſite machine? *v.* 5. Could he explain the cauſes of attraction and gravitation; how the parts cohere; by what baſes ſupported; or by what corner-ſtone the glorious fabric was held together? *v.* 6. How unthought of, without a being, was he, when on the riſing glories of creation, the morning ſtars, ſpoke into being at God's word, ſhone forth his praiſes; or rather, bright angelic hoſts beheld with enraptured admiration the teeming womb of nature, and heaven's high arch reſounded with ſhouts of joy, and ſongs of ſeraphic ſpirits adoring the great Creator, *v.* 7. *Note*, (1.) God alone is the great author of all; and he who made all with ſuch conſummate wiſdom, muſt needs beſt know how to govern. (2.) If angels in heaven are adoring, ſhould man be ſilent, to whom the earth is given, and for whoſe ſake it was formed? (3.) In heaven no diſcord is heard; there they all unite in the great congregation. When ſhall the ſons of God on earth reſemble them; divided no more by ſchiſms, ſects, and parties; but with one heart and one mouth unite together in univerſal love, and worſhip God in the ſame beauty of holineſs!

2. He knew no more concerning the limiting the ſea with bounds, than about the creation of the earth. It was God alone, without his help or conſultation, who from the embrio of matter firſt ſeparated the ſwelling floods, that burſt forth at his word, as waters from the travailing womb, *v.* 8. Then by his ſpirit moving on the face of the deep, the ſeparation firſt was made, and the dry land aroſe: the ocean retired to its appointed place, *v.* 10. laid as a babe in the cradle, and wrapped with ſwaddling bands of darkneſs, when light had not yet a being, *v.* 9. There, though the billows rage, and lift their curling heads on high, his decree hath fixed their limits, more firm than bars of adamant; *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further; and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.*

12. [m] Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days? *and* cauſed the day-ſpring to know his place, 13. That it might take hold of the † ends of the earth, that the wicked might be ſhaken out of it? 14. It is turned as clay *to* the ſeal, and they ſtand as a garment. 15. And [n] from the wicked their light is withholden, and [o] the high arm ſhall be broken. 16. Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of the ſea? or haſt thou walked in the ſearch of the depth? 17. Have [p] the gates of death been opened unto thee? or haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of death? 18. Haſt thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare, if thou knoweſt it all. 19. [q] Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkneſs, where *is* the place thereof, 20. That thou ſhouldſt take it ‡ to the bound thereof, and that thou ſhouldſt know the paths *to* the houſe thereof? 21. Knoweſt thou *it*, becauſe thou waſt then born? or *becauſe* the number of thy days *is* great; 22. Haſt thou entred into [r] the treaſures of the ſnow? or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail, 23. [s] Which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battle and war? 24. By what way is the

[m] Pſ. lxxiv. 16.
† Heb. Wings. Chap. xxxvii. 3.
[n] Chap. xviii. 5.
[o] Pſ. x. 15.
[p] Ibid. ix. 13.
[q] John iii. 8.
‡ Or, at.
[r] Pſ. cxxxv. 7.
[s] Exod. ix. 18. Joſh. x. 11. Iſa. xxx. 30.

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the light parted, *which* ſcattereth the eaſt-wind upon the earth ?

v. 12—24. God proceeds to confound Job with queſtions infinitely above mortal underſtanding, and therein to teach him his folly in arraigning any of his works and ways.

1. Reſpecting the light of the morning. *Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days?* to break ſooner, or retard the dawn beyond its appointed moment ; and *cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place?* when or where to ariſe ? Never : how then could he pretend to alter the diſpenſations of providence, fixed as the ordinances of day and night. Swift the morning beam darts to earth's fartheſt verge, bringing unwelcome light to deeds of darkneſs ; then the wicked are diſcovered and ſeized, and ſhaken out of the world, *v.* 13. Turning to the ſun, as clay to the ſeal, the enlightened hemiſphere, that before was darkneſs and confuſion, now appears beautifully illuminated with the beams of day, and all its verdant beauties, trees, plants, herbs, and flowers, like garments cloath and adorn it on every ſide, *v.* 14. But though the light of day returns, ſpiritual darkneſs is ſtill ſpread upon the ſinner's ſoul, and eternal darkneſs awaits him ; or, confined for his crimes in dungeons, he ſees no chearing beam, and the arm he lifted high in iniquity, is broken by juſt judgment, *v.* 15. *Note,* Like the morning light did Chriſt, the day-ſtar, ariſe, and his bright truth hath been diffuſed to the ends of the earth ; and though wicked men chuſe darkneſs rather, and hate this goſpel-day, they ſhall be ſeized, convicted, condemned, and executed, doomed to that outer darkneſs, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth.

2. As ignorant was he, [1.] Of the ſprings of the ſea ; what fed it in ſuch exact proportion, that it ſhould not be exhauſted by the vapour ariſing from it, nor ſwoln beyond its limits by the rivers which flow into it ; and of its depth, which is unfathomable, or its treaſures, which are unſearchable, *v.* 16. [2.] Of the ſtate of the dead, by what diſeaſes or accidents men ſhall come to the grave ; how the union of body and ſoul is diſſolved ; by what path we go into the unſeen world ; in what place the ſoul remains ; who in it are happy or miſerable ; and what is there tranſacted, *v.* 17. *Note,* In awful curioſity the ſoul now ſteps ſometimes to the verge of time, and caſts an eye into the boundleſs ocean of eternity ; but ſhadows, clouds, and darkneſs are upon it. Yet, though ſight fails, and reaſon is loſt, faith can pierce through the thick cloud, and dare unterrified launch forth with confidence and comfort into the untried abyſs. [3.] Of the dimenſions of the earth. Who ever made the ſurvey of all its kingdoms, provinces, hills, dales, with the ſeveral meaſures and extent of each ? Where ſo much is yet unknown, after all human reſearches, and of what is diſcovered, how ſmall a part can any one man know by actual ſurvey ? and how much leſs of the breadth and length of the divine counſels ? [4.] Where light and darkneſs dwell ; from whence brought forth at the creation ; how ſtill preſerved ; by what parted ; how in ſucceſſion going and returning, till day and night ſhall have an end. Secrets theſe, into which the deepeſt philoſophic enquiries can never adequately penetrate. [5.] Of the ſnow, hail, and wind. Where the treaſuries for each are placed ; how they are ſent forth in meaſure and duration ; in what manner marſhalled, when God employs them as inſtruments of vengeance to puniſh guilty mortals. In all which points, a worm of yeſterday, as Job was, muſt confeſs his ignorance, and therefore ought in ſilence to adore, without a murmur againſt any thing God doth, all whoſe works ſo far exceed his underſtanding.

25. Who hath divided a water-courſe for the overflowing of waters ? or a way for the lightning of thunder. 26. To cauſe it to rain on the earth, *where* no man *is* ; *on* the wilderneſs wherein *there is* no man ? 27. [t] To ſatisfy the deſolate and waſte *ground,* and to cauſe the bud of the tender herb to ſpring forth ? 28. [u] Hath the rain a father ? or who hath begotten the drops of the dew ? 29. Out of whoſe womb came the ice ? and [x] the hoary froſt of heaven, who hath gendred it ? 30. The waters are hid as *with* a ſtone, and the face of the deep is frozen. 31. Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of † Pleiades, or looſe the bands of ‡ Orion ? 32. Canſt thou bring forth § Mazzaroth in his ſeaſon, or canſt thou guide ‖ Arcturus with his ſons ? 33. Knoweſt thou [y] the ordinances of heaven ? canſt thou ſet the dominion thereof in the earth ? 34. Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee ? 35. Canſt thou ſend lightnings, that they may go, and ſay unto thee, Here we *are?* 36. [z] Who hath put wiſdom in the inward parts ? or who hath given underſtanding to the heart ? 37. Who can number the clouds in wiſdom ? or who can † ſtay the bottles of heaven, 38. When the duſt ‡ groweth into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together ? 39. [a] Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion ? or fill the § appetite of the young lions, 40. When they couch in *their* dens, *and* abide in the covert to lie in wait ? 41. [b] Who provideth for the raven his food ? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

[t] Pſ. cvii. 35.
[u] Jer. xiv. 22.
[x] Pſ. cxlvii. 16.
† Heb. Cimah. Chap. ix. 9. Amos v. 8.
‡ Heb. Ceſil.
§ Or, the twelve ſigns.
‖ Heb. Aſk.
[y] Jer. xxxi. 35.
[z] Chap. xxxii. 8. Pſ. li. 6. Eccleſ. ii. 26.
† Heb. Cauſe to lie down.
‡ Or, is turned into mire.
[a] Pſ. civ. 21.
§ Heb. Life.

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[b] Pſ. cxlvii. 9. Mat. vi. 26.

v. 25—41. How impotent, as well as ignorant, is man, when compared with his maker ! Who can do as God doth ? therefore how dare we contend with him ?

1. From him alone cometh the rain ; each drop falls from the clouds in its appointed place, and in the exact channel formed for it through the air, *v.* 25. The lightning flaſhes not uncircumſcribed, but in the way, extent, and order he preſcribes. The deſolate wilderneſs partakes of the divine care, and herbs and flowers ariſe, where no human footſteps tread ; and the beaſts of the foreſt alone maintain their empire, *v.* 26, 27. Great parent of all, the rain calls him father, and the ſmalleſt drop of dew diſtinct acknowledges him the maker, *v.* 28. The hoary froſt that whitens the earth, he only can produce ; and when he ſends forth his ice, the waters are congealed as the rock, and the face of the deep ſolid as the marble pavement, *v.* 30. *Note,* (1.) Our hearts are like the deſolate and parched ground, till watered with the dew of heavenly grace, but then bring forth fruit unto God. (2.) If the weather be unſeaſonable and ſevere, we ſhould receive it as a deſerved correction from God.

2. God appeals to him for his weakneſs. He can do nothing : the clouds will not drop at his bidding, nor the lightnings execute his commands, *v.* 34, 35. much leſs can he reach the higher regions of the ſtars. He cannot bind the ſweet influences of the Pleiades, which uſher in the genial ſpring, to retard or haſten it ; nor looſe the bands of Orion, whoſe conſtellation reigns during the cold of winter, that the ſtormy winds ſhould not blow, or the froſt harden the earth, *v.* 31. The ſouthern ſtars own not his government, nor do the conſtellations of the north move by his direction, *v.* 32. So far from guiding them, he knew not by what laws they were governed ; and, if their dominion were left to him, confuſion would ſoon enſue, and he be at a loſs to govern the vaſt machine, *v.* 33. The underſtanding man poſſeſſes, of whatever kind in things natural and ſpiritual, is all derived from him, and therefore it were folly to pretend to be wiſe above him, from whom all our wiſdom is derived, *v.* 36. We know little, and can do leſs. Who can number the clouds, or ſtay the bottles of heaven, when by profuſe rain the duſt becomes mire, and cleaves faſt together in clods ? *v.* 37, 38. Therefore with humble acknowledgments of our weakneſs and ignorance, it becomes us to reſign ourſelves and our all to his government, who alone is the all-wiſe director. *Note,* (1.) If ſome pretend to judge of men's fortune by the knowledge of the ſtars, and others credit their aſtrological predictions, we may ſafely conclude the knavery of the one, and the folly of the other. (2.) Since God is the author of our rational ſoul, let us improve the meaſure of knowledge he hath beſtowed on us, not in endleſs reſearches, or vain queſtions, much leſs in finding fault with his ways ; but in meditation on his glory, and reflecting on the arguments for perfect ſubmiſſion under all his diſpenſations, and this ſhall be indeed our wiſdom.

3. God proceeds from the works of his glory above, to his care and providence over the brute creation, in which the next chapter is entirely taken up, and might properly begin here. The lion, as the king of beaſts, is firſt mentioned : man neither can nor durſt provide their prey, nor approach them in their hiding-places ; but God feeds and fills them, *v.* 39, 40. The ravens likewiſe prove his providential care : uſeleſs as they may appear in the creation, their young ones are not ſuffered to periſh for want, but God hears their cry of hunger, and provides for their ſupport *Note,* (1.) Doth the providence of God extend to the fierce lion, and the unclean raven ? ſhall they ſhare his kindneſs, and can his own children have cauſe to complain of his neglect ? No, in no wiſe. (2.) If the cry of the young raven is heard, ſurely the prayers of the poor ſhall not be diſregarded. Whilſt on our knees we beg for daily bread, we ſhall not want it.

CHAP. XXXIX.

God proceeds to diſcourſe farther concerning, 1. *The wild goats and the hinds,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The wild aſs,* ver. 5—8. 3. *The unicorn,* ver. 9—12. 4. *The peacock,* ver. 13. 5. *The oſtrich,* ver. 13—18. 6. *The horſe,* ver. 19—25. 7. *The hawk and the eagle,* ver. 26—30. *In all which, Job's ſcanty knowledge muſt appear, and his duty of ſubmiſſion be evident.*

1. KNOWEST thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth ? *or* canſt thou mark when [a] the hinds do calve ? 2. Canſt thou number the months *that* they fulfil ? or knoweſt thou the time when they bring forth ? 3. They bow themſelves, they bring forth their young ones, they caſt out their ſorrows. 4. Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn : they go forth, and return not unto them. 5. Who hath

[a] Pſ. xxix. 9.

hath ſent out the wild aſs free? or who hath looſed the bands of the wild aſs? 6. [b] Whoſe houſe I have made the wilderneſs, and the † barren land his dwellings. 7. He ſcorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. 8. The range of the mountains *is* his paſture, and he ſearcheth after every green thing. 9. Will ‡ the unicorn be willing to ſerve thee, or abide by thy crib? 10. Canſt thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? 11. Wilt thou truſt him, becauſe his ſtrength *is* great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? 12. Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy ſeed, and gather *it into* thy barn.

[b] Chap. xxiv. 5. Jer. ii. 24. Hoſ. viii. 9.
† Heb. Salt places.
‡ i. e. The Rhinoceros, or the wild bull. Num. xxiii. 22. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Pſal. xcii. 10.

v. 1—12. How little Job's knowledge, how infinite God's, is here manifeſted; and whilſt his tender mercies are ſeen over all his works, how unreaſonable were Job's complaints againſt God, as cruel or unkind?

1. Who knows but God alone, when the wild goats and hinds bring forth, how long they bear their burden, and the hour and moment in which they ſhall be delivered, *v.* 1, 2. Though their travailing pangs are ſharp, they are ſafely preſerved. *v.* 3. Their young ones grow up by their ſides, till able to ſeek their own ſuſtenance: they quit their dam, forgetting and forgotten, *v.* 4.

2. Who gave the wild aſs liberty, and that untameable ſpirit that rejects reſtraint? *v.* 5. God gives each beaſt its ſeveral diſpoſition, and provides for each a ſuitable proviſion and abode. The wilderneſs and barren mountain is his dwelling, *v.* 6. far from the haunts of men; preferring liberty, though with poverty, to ſlavery with plenty: he deſpiſes the multitude that would ſeize him, and no driver urges him on with his cries, *v.* 7. From place to place he roams in ſearch of food, and finds paſture even in the wilderneſs. *Note*, (1.) Liberty is a precious jewel, and they who are free, with noble ſpirit ſhould maintain their happy independance. (2.) Shall man, that cannot give law to the wild aſſes colt, preſume to direct his maker?

3. God bids him try to bind the *Rhem*, which we tranſlate unicorn; though it is much doubted whether there be any ſuch creature as we repreſent him. It is therefore generally rendered the wild bull, which comes in appoſitely after what had been ſpoken of the wild aſs. The tame ox might be brought to the yoke and the crib, but who could make the wild bull ſerviceable, *v.* 9. or break him to the plough or harrow, *v.* 10. Great as his ſtrength is, he is too unruly to be truſted with any labour of the field, and can neither be led nor drove. If he cannot then govern one creature, much more unfit was he to preſide over the world, and direct the ways of Providence. *Note*, It is not ability, but the willingneſs to do good, that makes a man truly valuable.

13. *Gaveſt thou* the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the oſtrich? 14. Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the duſt, 15. And forgetteth that the foot may cruſh them, or that the wild beaſt may break them. 16. [c] She is hardned againſt her young ones, as though *they were* not hers: her labour is in vain without fear; 17. Becauſe God hath deprived her of wiſdom, neither hath he imparted to her underſtanding. 18. What time ſhe lifteth up herſelf on high, ſhe ſcorneth the horſe and his rider.

[c] Lam. iv. 3.

v. 13—18. The oſtrich next is produced, as among the wondrous works of God. *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks*, or rather *oſtriches*, as others tranſlate the word, to which alone the following verſes relate, and whoſe wings are beautiful, whilſt the peacock's have nothing ſingular. She layeth her eggs on the earth; not that, as ſome have ſuggeſted, they are dropped at random, and left to be hatched by the ſun, for ſhe hath a neſt where her eggs are depoſited, yet on the earth, where every foot may cruſh them; and ſo forgetful is ſhe, that when ſhe lights of another neſt, ſhe will ſit and hatch there, leaving her eggs, and hardned againſt her real young, as though they were not hers. Thus her labour is in vain for another, without fear of what will betide her own, *v.* 16. and this becauſe God hath deprived her of wiſdom; from whom alone the different inſtincts of beaſts, as well as reaſon in man, is derived, *v.* 17. But though ſo ſtupid and unnatural in danger, her ſpeed is moſt rapid, raiſing herſelf (though unable to fly) by the aſſiſtance of her wings, ſhe leaves the fleeteſt horſe and its rider far behind. *Note*, (1.) How many ungodly parents, like the cruel oſtrich, are inſenſible to the fruit of their womb, expoſe their children to want by their extravagancies, or their ſouls to ruin by their neglect. (2.) Thus careleſs miniſters deſert their flocks, indifferent what becomes of them; if deceivers ſeduce them, or they periſh for lack of knowledge, they are hardned againſt the loſs. One thing however they forget not; though they refuſe to feed their young, they are abundantly careful to feed themſelves, and will have the fleece, tho' the devil ſeize the fold.

19. Haſt thou given the horſe ſtrength? haſt thou clothed his neck with thunder? 20. Canſt thou make him afraid as a graſhopper? the glory of his noſtrils *is* † terrible. 21. [d] He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* ſtrength: he goeth on to meet ‡ the armed men. 22. He ‖ mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the ſword. 23. The quiver rattleth againſt him, the glittering ſpear and the ſhield. 24. He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage: neither believeth he that *it is* the ſound of the trumpet. 25. He ſaith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he ſmelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the ſhouting.

† Heb. Terrors.
[d] Judg. v. 22.
‡ Heb. The armour.
‖ Heb. Laugheth.

v. 19—25. How inimitably beautiful is this deſcription! Behold the horſe trained for war, ſtrength is in every motion, his riſing neck is cloathed with thunder, from his wide noſtrils iſſues the copious ſteam; pawing in the valley, he ſeems to glory in his might; the armed hoſt and glittering ſpear cannot intimidate him: eager to engage, he ſcarce can bear reſtraint, and prancing fierce, ſeems as if he would ſwallow the ground under his feet; his ears erect, catch with delight the martial trumpet's ſound; he ſnuffs the ſmell of battle from afar, and animated by the ſhout or ſignal for engagement, fearleſs of death or danger, on he ruſhes, defies the ſharp ſword and rattling quiver, and tramples with reſiſtleſs fury on whatever oppoſes him in his courſe. *Note*, Such is the ſinner, *Jer.* viii. 6. hurried on by inordinate appetite, he ruſhes to the gratification of his luſts; no danger, loſs, or ſuffering can reſtrain him; yea, the very terrors of God's wrath he ſcorns, and runs on the thick boſſes of his buckler, till ſmitten through with the ſword of death, he falls, and plunges into that gulph of perdition, he would not be warned to avoid.

26. Doth the hawk fly by thy wiſdom, *and* ſtretch her wings toward the ſouth? 27. Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and [e] make her neſt on high? 28. She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the † crag of the rock and the ſtrong place. 29. From thence ſhe ſeeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off. 30. Her young ones alſo ſuck up blood: and [f] where the ſlain *are*, there *is* ſhe.

[e] Jer. xlix. 16. Obad. iv.
† Heb. Tooth. 1 Sam. xiv. 4.
[f] Mat. xxiv. 28. Luke xvii. 37.

v. 26—30. The hawk and eagle are produced among birds, in proof of the power and providence of God. The hawk, that with ſuch ſagacity purſues her prey ſwift and ſtrong, and from the colder climes at winter's approach, follows the ſouthern ſun: the eagle, that mounts to ſuch a towering height, fixes on the craggy rock her neſt, and makes it her abode; thence darting on her prey, deſcried from afar, ſhe feeds her young with the raw fleſh of ſlaughtered beaſts, or following the battle, waits for the carcaſs of the ſlain. Who taught ſuch wiſdom to the feathered fowl, or directs their flight? not Job: and if he pretended not to challenge theſe, leſs ought he to claim a right to direct the providence of God. *Note*, (1.) Though the ſinner, like the eagle, builds his neſt on the rock, *Jer.* xliv. 16. he that ſet him up on high, can alſo caſt him down. (2.) The greedy eye, ſharp as the eagle's, ever attentive on gain, little cares how it be obtained; whether by ſucking the blood of the oppreſſed, or by practices corrupt as the corpſe of the dead.

CHAP. XL.

Here, 1. *God demands an anſwer to the queſtions he had put to Job in the foregoing chapter,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Job ſubmits in humble ſilence,* ver. 3—5. 3. *God proceeds to fix the conviction by challenging him,* ver. 6, 7. *to vie with him, if he durſt, for juſtice,* ver. 8. *power,* ver. 9. *majeſty,* ver. 10. *and dominion over the proud,* ver. 11—14. *and gives an inſtance of his power in the Behemoth,* ver. 15—24.

1. MOREOVER, the LORD anſwered Job, and ſaid, 2. Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, inſtruct *him?* he that reproveth God, let him anſwer it. 3. ¶ Then Job anſwered the LORD, and ſaid, 4. Behold, [a] I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? [b] I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. 5. Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer: yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.

[a] Chap. xlii. 6. Ezra ix. 6.
[b] Chap. xxix. 9. Pſal. xxxix. 9.

v. 1—5. Confounded in ſilence, Job dares not reply. When after a ſhort pauſe,

1. God farther expoſtulates with him, and from the view of what

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what he had ſpoken, demands an anſwer. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty* (an attempt how inſolent!) *inſtruct him?* can he be taught knowledge? or is every fretful murmurer a proper judge how God ought to direct his providences? ſurely not. Yet this had Job attempted, yea, and blamed God for his diſpenſations, as unjuſt and ſevere. *He that reproveth God, let him anſwer it,* maintain if he can his charge, or confeſs his folly and ſin for having done ſo.

2. Job confeſſes his error, and ſubmits. *He anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, Behold, I am vile,* I acknowledge my ſin, I renounce my former opinion of myſelf, I am abominable in my own eyes, and how much more in thine? *What ſhall I anſwer thee?* I am unable to ſupport the leaſt charge I have advanced againſt thee. *I will lay my hand upon my mouth* in ſilence, and my mouth in the duſt of humiliation. *Once have I ſpoken* in ſelf-vindication, *but I will not anſwer* any more, convinced I played the fool, and erred exceedingly; *yea twice,* repeatedly have I urged my raſh plea, *but I will proceed no further,* I own myſelf miſtaken, and deſire to take ſhame for my perverſeneſs. *Note,* (1.) However high our former apprehenſion of our own goodneſs was, when the ſpirit convinces the ſoul of ſin, we ſhall not have a word to ſay to juſtify ourſelves, but cry for mercy only from our offended God. (2.) The erroneous doctrines they have maintained, or ſinful practices they indulged, are the ſhame and grief of true penitents; and they deſire henceforward to retract, diſclaim, and oppoſe them.

6. ¶ [c] Then anſwered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and ſaid, 7. [d] Gird up thy loins now like a man: [e] I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. 8. [f] Wilt thou alſo diſannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me that thou mayſt be righteous? 9. Haſt thou an arm like God? or canſt thou thunder [g] with a voice like him? 10. [h] Deck thyſelf now *with* majeſty and excellency, and aray thyſelf with glory and beauty. 11. Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one *that is* proud, [i] *and* abaſe him. 12. Look on every one *that is* proud, and bring him low: and tread down the wicked in their place. 13. Hide them in the duſt together, *and* bind their faces in ſecret. 14. Then will I alſo confeſs unto thee, that thine own right hand can ſave thee.

[c] Chap. xxxviii. 1.
[d] Ibid. 3.
[e] Ibid. xlii. 4.
[f] Pſal. li. 4. Rom. iii. 4.
[g] Pſal. xxix. 3, 4.
[h] Pſal. civ. 1.
[i] Dan. iv. 37.

v. 6—14. To fix more deep and laſting on Job's mind the conviction which was begun, God proceeds to renew out of the whirlwind his awful challenges, *v.* 7. *Note,* When our conſciences are firſt alarmed, it is dangerous to heal the hurt ſlightly, and catch at comfort to be rid of our convictions; but we ſhould look farther and deeper, that the diſcovery of greater abominations may produce abiding humiliation.

1. *Wilt thou diſannul my judgment,* alter my decrees, or fruſtrate their execution? *Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous?* accuſe me of injuſtice or ſeverity, in order to ſupport thy character, and maintain thy righteouſneſs before men? how wicked and inſolent muſt ſuch a charge appear? *Note,* If we murmur, the fault is in ourſelves, God's ways are equal, it is our way that is unequal.

2. *Haſt thou an arm like God?* able to contend with the Almighty; *or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?* alas! man is but a worm, his whiſpers cannot be heard amidſt the terrible thunders of God's mighty voice. *Note,* The ſinner who looks biggeſt, and talks loudeſt, muſt be brought low either here in repentance, or hereafter in ruin everlaſting.

3. *Deck thyſelf now with majeſty and excellency,* if thou canſt vie with me, *and aray thyſelf in glory and beauty,* how deſpicable will it appear? not ſo much as the glow-worm's light compared with the meridian ſun. Or it may be ſpoken ironically; take my throne, and try how thou canſt govern the world, that thou mayſt feel how unequal thou art to the taſk.

4. Shew thy univerſal dominion. Put on the monarch's rage and frown, *v.* 10. look ſternly at the proud, if thou can'ſt abaſe him, *v.* 11. tread down the wicked from their heighth, lay them in the duſt of death, lead them forth with their faces covered, to execution, as malefactors, or hide them in the grave as ſlain. Then, when in theſe acts of juſtice, power, majeſty and dominion, he can vie with God, he may be allowed to contend with him, and truſt on his own right hand for ſalvation. But when the contrary was ſo evident, he muſt ſubmit entirely to God's ſovereignty, and expect his ſalvation temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal, from his grace and ſtrength alone.

15. ¶ Behold now † Behemoth, which I made with thee, he eateth graſs as an ox. 16. Lo now, his ſtrength *is* in his loins, and his force *is* in the navel of his belly. 17. He ‡ moveth his tail like a cedar: the ſinews of his ſtones are wrapt together. 18. His bones *are as* ſtrong pieces of braſs, his bones *are* like bars of iron. 19. He *is* the chief of the ways of God: he that made him, can make his ſword to approach *unto him.* 20. Surely the mountains bring him forth [k] food: where all the beaſts of the field play. 21. He lieth under the ſhady trees in the covert of the reed and fens. 22. The ſhady trees cover him *with* their ſhadow: the willows of the brook compaſs him about. 23. Behold, he ‖ drinketh up a river, *and* haſteth not: he truſteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. 24. § He taketh it with his eyes: *his* noſe pierceth through ſnares.

† i. e. The elephant, or the river-horſe.
‡ Or ſetteth up.

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[k] Pſal. civ. 14. & cxlvii. 9.
‖ Heb. Oppreſſeth.
§ Or will any take him in his ſight? or bore his noſe with a gin? Chap. xli. 2.

v. 15—24. To prove his own infinite ſuperiority, God bids him regard Behemoth and Leviathan, theſe wonders of creation; if he cannot contend with theſe, much leſs with their maker.

What beaſt is meant by *Behemoth,* the learned are divided. It ſignifies *Beaſts* in general, but here muſt mean ſome particular ſpecies: two have been ſuggeſted, to which the deſcription may be applicable; the hippopotamus, or river-horſe, and the elephant; the latter is the moſt received opinion. He is deſcribed as feeding on the graſs, as the ox, *v.* 15. amazingly ſtrong, able to carry a wooden turret, crowded with warriors, on his back, *v.* 16—18. No beaſt for bulk equals him, nor for gentleneſs, docility, and ſagacity, *v.* 19. The mountains provide him food, and harmleſs around him the other beaſts feed without moleſtation, *v.* 20. Under ſpreading trees, near rivers banks, is his abode, *v.* 21, 22. Thirſty, the river ſcarce affords a draught, and in his greedy eye, he thinks he can drain it to its ſource, *v.* 23, 24. No fear interrupts him, he haſteth not away: no ſnares, the ſtrongeſt, can bind him; his noſe, his proboſcis, ſtrikes them through. Yet, great and mighty as he is, God made him; his creature he is, as well as man; the work of the ſame hand, and on the ſame day: and terrible as he may appear to us, is cruſhed as the worm, when God cauſes his ſword to approach him. Let man then own his own littleneſs, and humbly yield up himſelf to his Almighty Creator.

CHAP. XLI.

We have here a large deſcription of Leviathan, before whom none can ſafely ſtand, much leſs before God, ver. 1—10. *His ſeveral parts are deſcribed,* ver. 11—24. *The terrible things ſaid of him, and done by him,* ver. 25—34.

1. CANST thou draw out † Leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord *which* thou ‡ letteſt down? 2. Canſt thou put an hook into his noſe? or bore his jaw through with a thorn? 3. Will he make many ſupplications unto thee? will he ſpeak ſoft *words* unto thee? 4. Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a ſervant for ever? 5. Wilt thou play with him, as *with* a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? 6. Shall the companions make a banquet of him? ſhall they part him among the merchants? 7. Canſt thou fill his ſkin with barbed irons? or his head with fiſh-ſpears? 8. Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more. 9. Behold, the hope of him is in vain: ſhall not *one* be caſt down, even at the ſight of him? 10. None *is ſo* fierce that dare ſtir him up: [a] who then is able to ſtand before me?

† i. e. A whale, or crocodile. Pſal. civ. 26. Iſa. xxvii. 1.
‡ Heb. Drowneſt.
[a] Jer. xii. 5.

v. 1—10. The learned are divided about Leviathan, whether the whale or crocodile be meant; ſome parts of the deſcription ſeeming moſt adapted to the one, ſome more peculiar to the other, and ſome appear not to agree with either. The whale in general, indeed ſeems beſt to ſuit the ſubject, being peculiarly mentioned in the creation, as diſplaying his maker's glory, *Gen.* i. 21. and being a ſea animal, *v.* 31. which the crocodile is not. Whatever animal be meant, the deſign is evidently to ſhew Job's weakneſs and God's power. He is repreſented here as not to be caught with a hook or bait, or carried as the other leſſer fiſh, ſtrung on a thorn, *v.* 1, 2. not to be terrified or tamed, *v.* 3, 4, 5. his fleſh unfit for food, *v.* 6. and if the whale be meant, as it then made no part of merchandize, men had not learnt the methods of taking them, that have ſince been diſcovered, and which are ſtill attended with ſo much danger, with barbed irons and ſpears, *v.* 7. It was at his peril who approached him, he would rouſe himſelf for battle, therefore it were wiſe not to meddle with him, *v.* 8. To hope to take him, as a fiſh in a net, were vain; the very ſight of him was terrible, *v.* 9. The boldeſt dare not provoke him; and if a creature thus intimidate us from approaching him, and ſo ſurpaſs our ſtrength, *who then is able to ſtand before God,* to contend with the Almighty, and to impeach his proceedings, or awaken his wrath?

11. [b] Who hath prevented me, that I ſhould repay *him?* [c] *whatſoever is* under the whole heaven is mine. 12. I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his come-

[b] Rom. xi. 35.
[c] Deut. x. 14. Pſal. xxiv. 1. & l. 12. 1 Cor. x. 26.

ly proportion. 13. Who can diſcover the face of his
garment? *or* who can come *to him* † with his double
bridle? 14. Who can open the doors of his face? his
teeth *are* terrible round about. 15. ‡ *His* ſcales *are his*
pride, ſhut up together *as with* a cloſe ſeal. 16. One is
ſo near to another, that no air can come between them.
17. They are joined one to another, they ſtick together,
that they cannot be ſundred. 18. By his neeſings a light
doth ſhine, and his eyes *are* like the eye-lids of the
morning. 19. Out of his mouth go burning lamps,
and ſparks of fire leap out. 20. Out of his noſtrils
goeth ſmoke, as *out* of a ſeething pot or caldron. 21.
His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of
his mouth. 22. In his neck remaineth ſtrength, and
|| ſorrow is turned into joy before him. 23. The flakes
of his fleſh are joined together: they are firm in themſelves,
they cannot be moved. 24. His heart is as firm
as a ſtone, yea, as hard as a piece of the nether *millſtone.*
25. When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are
afraid: by reaſon of breakings [d] they purify themſelves.
26. The ſword of him that layeth at him cannot hold:
the ſpear, the dart, nor § the habergeon. 27. He eſteemeth
iron as ſtraw, *and* braſs as rotten wood. 28.
The arrow cannot make him flee: ſling-ſtones are turned
with him into ſtubble. 29. Darts are counted as
ſtubble: he laugheth at the ſhaking of a ſpear. 30.
† Sharp ſtones *are* under him: he ſpreadeth ſharp pointed
things upon the mire. 31. He maketh the deep to
boil like a pot: he maketh the ſea like a pot of ointment.
32. He maketh a path to ſhine after him: *one*
would think the deep *to be* hoary. 33. Upon earth
there is not his like: who is made without fear. 34.
He beholdeth all high *things:* he *is* a king over all the
children of ‡ pride.

† Or within.
‡ Heb. Strong pieces of ſhields.
|| Heb. Sorrow rejoiceth.
d Pſal. cvii. 23. Jonah i. 5.
§ Or breaſt-plate.
† Heb. Sharp pieces of the potſherd.
‡ Or fierceneſs.

v. 11—34. 1. God challenges the univerſal property of all things; none ever made him their debtor, whilſt every creature receives from him life and breath, and every thing conducive to the comfort or preſervation of it. *Note,* (1.) The beſt ſervices we can render God, lay no obligation on him; the favour is done us, that he enables us to ſerve him, or accepts our humble duty. (2.) If God giveth not an account to us of his matters, have we the ſhadow of right to queſtion him? may he not do what he will with his own?

2. He deſcribes the ſeveral parts of this terrible animal leviathan. None dare approach him, to flea his ſkin, or open thoſe devouring jaws, to look on which only, were enough to make the beholder tremble, *v.* 13, 14. His ſcales, which are his ſtrength and pride, like a coat of mail, ſhut cloſe over each other, to defend him, *v.* 15. and are ſo near each other, that even the air cannot come between, *v.* 16, 17. This, ſome interpret the teeth, inſtead of ſcales, which the whale has not; but there is one ſpecies of them furniſhed with teeth, that ſhut cloſe in correſponding cavities, in the upper jaw. From his neeſing, a light ſhines, and his eyes are bright and ſparkling as the eyelids of the morning, *v.* 17. His breath is like the ſmoke of the furnace, and hot, like the ſteam of the boiling caldron; coals are ready to kindle from his noſtrils, *v.* 19—21. Strong and fierce, he fears no ſorrow, *v.* 22. His fleſh, firm as a rock, defies all the inſtruments of death, *v.* 24, 26—29. When he lifts up himſelf, in terrors the mighty purify themſelves, as dying men fly to their prayers, *v.* 25. He makes his bed on the hard ſharp pointed ſtones, *v.* 30. Before him the boiling deep ſmoaks; behind him, the white foam marks his ſhining path, as if the ocean was hoary-headed grown, *v.* 31, 32. Upon earth there is not his equal, fearleſs of danger, *v.* 33. With contempt he beholds the veſſels ſailing by, *v.* 34. and is a king over the children of pride, greater than the greateſt of them, in magnitude and bodily ſtrength. Or this is ſpoken of God, who beholdeth all theſe ſtupendous creatures; and all the children of pride, whether devils, men, or the moſt lawleſs animals, muſt ſubmit to his government. Highly then it becomes Job to bow, to humble himſelf under God's mighty hand, and own the tranſcendent glory, greatneſs, and unſearchableneſs of all his works and ways.

C H A P. XLII.

We are come now to the moſt pleaſing part of Job's hiſtory; and notwithſtanding all the dark clouds we have ſeen, the evening crowns the day. 1. *In the duſt, Job repents and humbles himſelf,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The difference is made up between him and his friends, God accepts Job's interceſſion for them, and they join in worſhip and ſacrifice,* ver. 7—9. 3. *Job's miſeries vaniſh; his proſperity, like the ſwelling tide, returns, and he appears greater than ever,* ver. 10—17. *and all this is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the ſcripture, whatever our trials are, may have hope.*

1. THEN Job anſwered the LORD, and ſaid,
2. I know that [a] thou canſt *do* every *thing,* and
that [b] † no thought can be withholden from thee. 3.
[c] Who *is* he that hideth counſel without knowledge?
therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not, [d] things
too wonderful for me, which I knew not. 4. Hear, I
beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak: [e] I will demand of thee,
and declare thou unto me. 5. I have heard of thee by
the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye ſeeth thee.
6. [f] Wherefore [g] I abhor *myſelf,* and repent in duſt and
aſhes.

a Gen. xviii. 14.
b Pſal. cxxxix. 2. Heb. iv. 13.
† Or no thought of thine can be hindered.
c Chap. xxxviii. 2.
d Pſal. xl. 5. & cxxxi. 1. & cxxxix. 6.
e Chap. xxxviii. 3. & xl. 7.
f Iſa. vi. 5.
g Chap. xl. 4.

v. 1—6. Job had begun his humbling acknowledgments, *chap.* xl. 4, 5. but now his convictions, much deeper and ſtronger, produce lowlier abaſement before God.

1. He ſubmits himſelf entirely to God. *I know thou canſt do every thing,* theſe wonderous inſtances of thy power convince me, that it is madneſs to contend with the Almighty, and folly to deſpair of what his power can do: none are ſo high he cannot abaſe, none ſo low he cannot reſtore and exalt; *and that no thought can be withholden from thee,* the ſecrets of the ſoul are known to him; not a corrupt, fretful, or unbelieving thought riſes without his notice; or God's own thoughts and deſigns neceſſarily produce their effects, whether he pleaſes to correct with afflictions, or reſtore the loſt proſperity; none can ſtay the performance of his purpoſes.

2. He confeſſes his ignorance, ſin, and folly. *Who is he that hideth counſel without knowledge?* pretends to be wiſe above God. Let him take warning, and be admoniſhed by me; it hath been my caſe, with ſhame I acknowledge it: *therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not,* I have had neither a right knowledge of God's purity, nor my own pollution; of his power, or my own weakneſs; of his wiſdom, nor my own ignorance: *things too wonderful for me, which I knew not,* have I ſpoken concerning the diſpenſations of his providence, and the myſteries of his government, miſtaking his deſigns, and finding fault with God fooliſhly; in which my preſumption, wilfulneſs, and pride, have appeared to my guilt and confuſion.

3. He reſolves now to change his tone, and turn the voice of contention into the language of prayer, as his only proper method of approaching God. *Hear, I beſeech thee,* though I own myſelf undeſerving thy notice and regard, *and I will ſpeak;* not in ſelf-defence, but in humbling confeſſion; *I will demand of thee,* or *make my requeſt to thee, and declare thou unto me,* anſwer my petition in pardoning my ſin, and inſtruct me in the right way, that I may not err again.

4. He feels and owns the deep ſenſe he had of his ſinfulneſs. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;* his parents and teachers had given him good inſtructions, concerning the perfections of God, and he had probably received revelations from him; but *now mine eye ſeeth thee,* never before was ſuch a diſcovery made to his mind, of the ſovereignty, power, wiſdom, and juſtice of God, in all his providential diſpenſations. Probably now alſo in the human form God appeared viſible, whilſt he opened Job's underſtanding to a clear view of his nature, glory, and infinite perfections, and manifeſted them to him in the perſon of an incarnate redeemer. *Wherefore I abhor myſelf,* and all the hard ſpeeches I have ſpoken, *and repent in duſt and aſhes,* deſiring to teſtify my grief and ſhame, and renounce henceforward every thought and deed, contrary to thy holy will. Thus muſt every real penitent return to God, (1.) Under a divine conviction, which no human arguments can produce, but God's ſpirit alone in his word, or by his providences. (2.) This ſenſe of ſin will be deep and laſting, yea, increaſing continually, with clearer views of God's purity, and our pollution and imperfection. (3.) We muſt come with heart-felt anguiſh for the diſhonour we have brought on God, and heart-felt ſhame and ſelf-loathing, which are the genuine expreſſions of true repentance. (4.) With a humble hope, that vile and loathſome as we are, God will not reject us, but pity and pardon us, through the Redeemer of loſt ſouls.

7. ¶ And it was *ſo* that after the LORD had ſpoken
theſe words unto Job, the LORD ſaid to Eliphaz the
Temanite, My wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt
thy two friends: for ye have not ſpoken of me *the thing*
that is right, as my ſervant Job *hath.* 8. Therefore take
unto you now ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and [h] go
to my ſervant Job, and offer up for yourſelves a burnt-offering,
and [i] my ſervant Job ſhall pray for you, for †
him will I accept: leſt I deal with you *after your* folly,
in that ye have not ſpoken of me *the thing which is* right,
like my ſervant Job. 9. So Eliphaz the Temanite, and
Bildad the Shuhite, *and* Zophar the Naamathite went,

h Mat. v. 24.
i Gen. xx. 17. Jam. v. 14, 15.
† Heb. His face, or perſon. Ver. 9.

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and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD alſo accepted Job.

v. 7—9. We muſt not think becauſe Job is firſt rebuked, that the cauſe is given againſt him, and his accuſers juſtified, no. Though he deſerved reproof, they deſerved it more. God, whilſt he brings him to acknowledge what he had ſpoken amiſs, will juſtify him from their unjuſt aſperſions, and cover them with confuſion.

1. Job is exalted. *After the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto Job*, convinced and humbled him, pardoned and accepted him, then he appears to juſtify and honour him. [1.] He acknowledges him his ſervant, repeatedly calling him by this reſpectable title, as a teſtimony of his fidelity in the main, though through temptation and infirmity, he had erred and ſpoken unadviſedly. [2.] He declares, that in the controverſy, Job had come neareſt to the truth, and ſpoken more wiſely and honourably of him and his providences, than his friends; in denying that proſperity was the criterion of godlineſs, or affliction of hypocriſy and wickedneſs in this world, but extending his views to a future ſtate, where the retribution of every man's work was to be expected. [3.] He appoints him to be their advocate and prieſt; putting this honour upon him, well knowing the ſpirit of charity in his heart, and how ready he would be to pray for his perſecutors. *Note*, (1.) Whom God pardons, he delights to honour, and their ſins are no more mentioned. (2.) A faithful ſervant of Chriſt may err, or be overtaken with a fault, but God, who ſees the heart, knows the root of matter is in him, and will not diſclaim his relation to him. (3.) Where there is much wrong mixed with what is right, we muſt not condemn the whole for a part, any more than we ſhould caſt away the ore, becauſe it comes from the earth mixed with droſs. (4.) They who have taſted God's pardoning love to their own ſouls, will think no injury too great to be forgiven or forgotten; nor refuſe to open the arms of love to their bittereſt enemy. (5.) Job was herein a lively figure of the Saviour of ſinners, who alone could offer the ſacrifice God would accept, in his deepeſt diſtreſs prayed for his murderers, and ever lives to intercede for the tranſgreſſors.

2. Job's friends are caſt, and brought to his feet in abaſement. Perhaps whilſt they heard God addreſs Job alone out of the whirlwind, they thought the verdict was for them; but now God would make them know, that though Job had offended, they had exceeded. He had ſpoken ſome things wrong, but they many more; laying down falſe hypotheſes of his general dealings with men; condemning the righteous unjuſtly; and miſinterpreting the rod of love into the ſtroke of judgment, making him ſad, whom they ſhould have comforted. For this, God's wrath was kindled againſt them, and though they were good men, in this they had deſerved to periſh, and therefore they muſt bring a ſacrifice of atonement, as the expiation of their guilt. They muſt humble themſelves, not only before God, but before Job, acknowledging their evil, deſiring his prayers, and bringing their ſacrifices to him, whoſe offering for them ſhould be alone accepted. *Note*, (1.) It is a dangerous thing to judge raſhly of men's ſpiritual ſtate, and a high provocation againſt God, as well as an injury to our brethren. (2.) The beſt of God's ſaints are expoſed to the ſevereſt cenſures, and even good men will be ſometimes criminally ſevere. (3.) Though the ſins of the faithful are not puniſhed with deſtruction, they ſhall ſmart for them, and be made to own how juſtly they deſerved to periſh. (4.) We may not expect forgiveneſs from God, unleſs we have, to the uttermoſt, made our brother ſatisfaction for the injuries we have done him. (5.) It is a mercy we have one advocate to go to, who, highly as we have offended him, never rejects the ſuit of the humbled ſoul.

3. We ſee all happily reconciled. Job's friends, without delay, ſubmit to the divine injunction: he heartily forgives them, and prays for them. They who were late ſo ſharp in contention, together now lift up the voice of humble ſupplication, and united in love ſurround a throne of grace, God well pleaſed accepts the offering, and perfect reconciliation enſues on every ſide. *Note*, (1.) It is a bleſſed thing to ſee differences thus ended; and friends ſeparated by miſtakes or folly, forgetting, forgiving, and embracing. (2.) How much more agreeable were it, inſtead of the warmth of theological diſpute about opinions, allowedly not eſſential to ſalvation, to unite in love, where all true chriſtians are agreed, in prayer and praiſe, and labour to walk more holily and humbly before God. (3.) There is but one way of reconciliation for the ſinner, the blood of atonement; unleſs we plead that, we muſt be undone. (4.) Whilſt we are waiting on God, in his inſtituted ways, we may take the comfort of our ſervices, and rejoice in our acceptance, through the ſacrifice and interceſſion of our adored Jeſus.

Before Chriſt 1520.

10. And [k] the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: alſo the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his ſiſters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his houſe: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man alſo gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold. 12. So [l] the LORD bleſſed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thouſand ſheep, and ſix thouſand camels, and a thouſand yoke of oxen, and a thouſand ſhe-aſſes. 13. He had alſo ſeven ſons, and three daughters. 14. And he called the name of the firſt, † Jemima, and the name of the ſecond, ‡ Kezia, and the name of the third, ‖ Keren-happuch. 15. And in all the land were no women found *ſo* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. 16. After this lived Job [m] an hundred and forty years, and [n] ſaw his ſons, and his ſon's ſons, *even* four generations. 17. So Job died, *being* old, and [o] full of days.

[k] Pſal. xiv. 7. & cxxvi. 1.

[l] Jam. v. 11.

† i. e. The day.

‡ i. e. Caſſia.

‖ i. e. The horn of beauty.

[m] Prov. iii. 16.

[n] Pſal. cxxviii. 6.

[o] Chap. v. 26.

v. 10—17. *Better*, ſays Solomon, *is the end of a thing, than its beginning*, and we ſee it in Job's caſe abundantly verified. The reſtoration and increaſe of his proſperity were as aſtoniſhing as the ſuddenneſs and depth of his afflictions.

1. God eminently appeared for him. When he prayed for his friends, bleſſings came upon his own head; the Lord turned his captivity, reſtored his body from Satan's bands, and his mind from the terrors and diſtreſs with which it had been agitated; and withal, doubled the poſſeſſions of which he had been deprived. Thus his fidelity was rewarded in this life, his credit reſtored in the eyes of men, and his comforts ſecured on a more ſolid baſis than before. *Note*, Though this life to a believer may often be compared to Job's dark days, we expect a deliverance from our captivity, where our proſperity will be beyond even Job's here, unſpeakable and eternal.

2. His friends and acquaintance who had been eſtranged from him, returned to viſit and to comfort him, ſympathizing in his affliction; and not content with empty pity, each, according to their ability, made him handſome preſents. God now inclined their hearts to aſſiſt him; probably the approbation God had given of his character, removed their ſuſpicions of his integrity, that had led them to neglect him; and the fear of God's diſpleaſure teſtified againſt his three friends, who had been ſo ſevere upon him, made them deſirous of an intereſt in Job's prayers for them alſo. *Note*, (1.) God has all men's hearts in his hands, and can ſtrangely incline them to execute his deſigns. (2.) True charity and friendſhip will not merely bring the kind wiſh, but the ready generous aſſiſtance.

3. A remarkable increaſe attended him. His cattle, from the ſtock with which his friends furniſhed him, ſoon doubled the number he had loſt; and above all his riches, the bleſſing of God upon them, made them eſpecially valuable. And thus his latter end was greater than his beginning; more wealthy, more reſpected, and more happy. *Note*, (1.) God's bleſſing upon honeſt endeavours, will make a little to afford great increaſe. (2.) Reſpecting outward proſperity, a good man often finds a proviſion made for him in his aged days, beyond the moſt ſanguine expectations of his youth; whilſt his ſoul alſo, fraught with the riches of Divine grace, which are the beſt portion, ſhines brighter as he draws to his end, till his glorious inheritance comes, and he leaves a periſhing world for an everlaſting kingdom.

4. His family was wonderfully reſtored; he had the ſame number of ſons and daughters as before. The names of the latter are recorded: Jemima, the day; Kezia, a fragrant ſpice; Keren-happuch, the horn of paint. It is remarked of them, that they were perſons of ſingular beauty, like their names; fair as the day, fragrant as caſſia, and blooming brighter in their native hue, than the tint of vermillion. And we may preſume, their mental accompliſhments, and the exemplarineſs of their piety, were equal to the exquiſiteneſs of their form, from the honourable diſtinction ſhewn them, in appointing them an inheritance with their brethren.

5. He enjoyed a long life, crowned with mercies. He ſaw his children to the fourth generation; an hundred and forty years he lived in a courſe of uninterrupted proſperity, and then gently bending to the grave, as the ripe corn in the time of harveſt, he departed full of days, ſatisfied with life, and willing to exchange his poſſeſſions on earth, for more enduring riches in the better world of glory.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
PSALMS.

WE are now entering upon one of the moſt profitable and delightful parts of the ſacred Writings. Like diamonds, all the words of ſcripture are pure words, but ſome ſhine with a brighter luſtre than others.

The title given theſe divine compoſitions, is the Book of Pſalms, or Hymns. They are compoſed chiefly by David, the ſweet ſinger of Iſrael, whoſe name the whole collection generally bears; though ſome of them appear to have been written by other hands, before and after his time, as the xc. *by Moſes, and the* cxxvi. *and the* cxxxvii. *during the Babyloniſh captivity, as well as many others, by his cotemporaries, Heman, Aſaph, &c. who are ſuppoſed to be the authors of thoſe, to which their names are prefixed,* 2 Chron. xxix. 30. *It is generally allowed that they were written in metre, though the knowledge of the nature of the ſacred poetry hath been long ſince loſt.*

The great deſign of them is,

1. *To deſcribe the glory of our Immanuel; his perſon, offices, character; his incarnation, ſufferings, reſurrection, aſcenſion, and everlaſting rule at the right hand of God. Some of them are quoted in the New Teſtament, expreſly as referring to him, as their grand ſubject. And many good men have been of opinion, that there is not one of them, in which ſome prophecy, deſcription, or circumſtances peculiar to him, may not be found; ſo that here we may emphatically ſay, Chriſt is all and in all.*

2. *To open a rich mine of Evangelical truth and chriſtian experience, from whence the church in all ages, and every believer in all ſtates, conditions, difficulties, and temptations, may derive ſpiritual inſtruction, ſupport, and conſolation, as we can be under no circumſtances of diſtreſs and trial, but we ſhall find here ſome correſpondent experience applicable to our caſe.*

3. *To enliven our devotions both in prayer and praiſe. The warmeſt and moſt animated expreſſions may be hence collected, words big with ſenſe and feeling, ſuch as the Holy Ghoſt dictates; and when our hearts are brought in any meaſure to a correſpondence with the Pſalmiſt's temper, and to taſte the ſweets of communion with God, then will theſe ſongs of David, like the vibrations of a ſtring in uniſon, affect our hearts with the tendereſt ſenſibility, and we ſhall echo back the ſound. May ſuch be the bleſſed influence of them on each of my reader's hearts.*

PSALM I.

This pſalm deſcribes the true bleſſedneſs of man. The perfect character here ſpoken of, moſt aptly belongs to Chriſt; and in a meaſure to all his ſpiritual ſeed, who ſtand contraſted againſt the world that lieth in wickedneſs. The diviſion of the children of men into ſaints and ſinners, the children of God and the children of the wicked one, is as ancient as the day when enmity was put between the ſeed of the woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent; and it will laſt as long as the countleſs ages of eternity. This pſalm ſhews us, 1. *The holineſs and happineſs of a godly man,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The ſinfulneſs and miſery of a wicked man,* ver. 4, 5. 3. *The ground and reaſon of both,* ver. 6.

1. BLeſſed *is* the man [a] that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly, nor ſtandeth in the way of ſinners, [b] nor ſitteth in the ſeat of the ſcornful. 2. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, [c] and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3. † And he ſhall be like a tree [d] planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth [e] ſhall proſper.

[a] Prov. iv. 14, 15.
[b] Pſal. xxvi. 4. Jer. xv. 17.
[c] Joſh. i. 8. Pſal. cxix. 97.
† Or then.
[d] Jer. xvii. 8. Ezek. xlvii 2.
[e] Pſal. cxxviii. 2.

v. 1—3. This pſalm opens with the deſcription of the holy and truly happy man, *v.* 1. *Bleſſed is the man*, or *O the bleſſedneſs of the man*, how great, how unutterable, in time and eternity. His character is ſtrongly marked; and by his fruits he may be known. *He walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly*; does not take his maxims from the world, that lieth in wickedneſs, nor faſhion his conduct after their deſtructive ways; *nor ſtandeth in the way of ſinners*, though himſelf was once ſuch; yet, like Lot, he hath left the city, and deſires no more to fix his abode among the unholy and profane; *nor ſitteth in the ſeat of the ſcornful*; however high their pretences to ſuperior wiſdom, and however much they affect to treat with contempt the revealed will of God: ſuch children of pride ſhall not have his ear for a moment; their company he will ſhun as a plague, and their breath as infectious. *Note*, (1.) The company of wicked men is dangerous, we muſt be ſeparate from them, if we would avoid their ruin. (2.) The progreſs of ſin is headlong; they who walk in the way of ſinners, will ſoon ſit in the ſeat of the ſcornful: determined iniquity makes way for daring infidelity, *v.* 2. *But his delight is in the law of the Lord.* The ſafety of our walk depends upon the way which we have choſen: if we are led by that word which is appointed for a light unto our feet, we ſhall be guided into the paths of everlaſting peace. This ſacred clue, therefore, the man of God with delight follows; *and in this law doth he meditate day and night:* His bible is his companion, he wiſhes no better entertainment; the glorious truths engage his deep meditation, are the matter of his daily converſe; and if by night his eyes are kept waking, his thoughts are pleaſingly occupied in God's word: In this bleſt courſe his ſoul proſpers in every divine diſpoſition, and conſequently partakes of true and laſting felicity, for holineſs and happineſs are inſeparable, *v.* 3. *And he ſhall be*, or *then ſhall he be, like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon.* When by divine grace he is thus enabled to delight and meditate in God's word, the gracious effects of it will be evident; his leaf of profeſſion continues green and flouriſhing, and his holy fruits of righteouſneſs abound. The Lord, whoſe planting he is, waters him every moment; conveys to his ſoul the living ſtreams of divine grace, from Jeſus the living fountain; and thus he grows tall as the cedar, and fruitful as the vine: nor is his ſtate fading or changeable, his leaves withering, or his fruit blaſted like the untimely figs: no, *His leaf alſo ſhall not wither*. Preſerved by Almighty grace, decay ſhall not tarniſh his beauty, nor apoſtacy lay the axe to the root; but *whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper*; every prayer ſhall receive an anſwer of peace; every labour ſhall be attended with ſucceſs; every providence be ſanctified; and, in ſhort, all things work together for his good. Such is the bleſſed, holy, happy man. May my ſoul bear the divine impreſſion, and correſpond more to this amiable character!

4. [f] The ungodly *are* not ſo: but *are* [g] like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5. Therefore [h] the ungodly ſhall not ſtand in the judgment, nor ſinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6. For [i] the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but [k] the way of the ungodly ſhall periſh.

[f] Iſa. iii. 11.
[g] Job xxi. 18. Pſ. xxxv. 5. Iſa. xvii. 13. & xxix. 5. Hoſ. xiii. 3.
[h] Mat. xiii. 49.
[i] Nah. i. 7. Joh. x. 14.
[k] Prov. xi. 7.

v. 4—6. The very contraſt to thoſe above deſcribed, is the character of *the ungodly*; they *are not ſo*, ſin is their way; the company they keep is like themſelves, ungodly; their opinions are erroneous as their practice is perverſe. They abide in the paths of wickedneſs, and ſit down content with their own deceivings; negligent of God's word, never conſulting it in ſecret, and if they ſit under it, what a wearineſs is it? Their thoughts diſſipated in purſuits of worldly vanity, or fleſhly indulgences, never fix on the ſacred volume; nor day nor night are they occupied therein. Like a blaſted tree their leaf is withered, and inſtead of fruit, only fit fuel for the flames: the curſe of God is upon them in all the labour of their hands, and miſery follows them cloſer than their ſhadow: *They are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.* Vanity is ſtamped on all their enjoyments; driven before the breath of every temptation; light and deſpicable, in God's account, as the duſt of the balance, and ready to ſuffer the eternal blaſting of the breath of his diſpleaſure; when, with his fan in his hand, he ſhall thoroughly purge his floor, and the chaff be burnt with fire unquenchable. *Therefore the ungodly ſhall not ſtand in the judgment*: in that dreadful day, when God ſhall ſummons to his bar the guilty ſons of Adam, to receive their eternal doom, then ſhall confuſion cover them, every plea be ſilenced, every mouth be ſtopped. Though with hypocriſy, perhaps, they once joined in the aſſembly of God's ſaints, their place ſhall be no more found; *nor ſinners in the congregation of the righteous*: an awful, an eternal ſeparation ſhall be made; theſe ſhall go into everlaſting puniſhment, but the righteous into life eternal: *For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; they walk by faith in Chriſt the living way, and they are accounted righteous, as accepted in him, and derive alſo a divine nature from him; God knows them, ſees and approves the way in which they go, and will ſhortly everlaſtingly reward them. *But the way of the ungodly ſhall periſh*: they have choſen their deluſions, and muſt periſh in their own deceiving; their way is always grievous, and the end thereof is miſery and death eternal. Lord ſhut not up my ſoul with ſinners!

Let the righteous rejoice; let the ſinner tremble. In a moment this dread eternity opens, and their everlaſting ſtate is determined: Oh that it might awaken the fears of the ungodly, and quicken the diligence of the faithful.

PSALM II.

The preſent diſpoſition of the pſalms appears to be of great antiquity, even as old as the apoſtle's days. See Acts xiii. 33. *The whole of this pſalm relates to the Meſſiah. See* Acts iv. 25. Heb. i. 5. *We have here*, 1. *The oppoſition that ſhould be given to his kingdom*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The baffling and chaſtiſing of that oppoſition*, ver. 4, 5. 3. *The ſetting up of the kingdom of Chriſt notwithſtanding*, ver. 6. 4. *The eſtabliſhment of it*, ver. 7. 5. *A promiſe of its enlargement*, ver. 8, 9. 6. *An exhortation to kings and princes to yield obedience to him*, ver. 10—12.

1. [a] WHY do the heathen [b] † rage, and the people ‡ imagine a vain thing? 2. The kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take counſel together againſt the LORD, and againſt [c] his Anointed, *ſaying*, 3. [d] Let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us. 4. He that ſitteth in the heavens [e] ſhall laugh: the LORD ſhall have them in deriſion. 5. Then ſhall he ſpeak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure. 6. Yet have I § ſet [f] my king upon [g] my holy hill of Zion.

About 1047.
[a] Acts iv. 25.
[b] Pſ. xlvi. 6.
† Or, tumultuouſly aſſemble.
‡ Heb. meditate.
[c] Pſ. xlv. 7. Joh. i. 41.
[d] Jer. v. 5. Luke xix. 14.
[e] Pſ. xxxvii. 13. & lix. 8. Prov. i. 26.
§ Heb. anointed.
[f] Dan. vii. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[g] Pſ. xvi. 1.

v. 1—6. Since the day that, after war in heaven, rebellion began on earth, at the inſtigation of the old ſerpent caſt out from his place in glory, the fierce conteſt and ſtruggle hath continued between the ſeed of the ſerpent and the ſeed of the woman: and this, with eſpecial bitterneſs, was renewed when the bruiſer of his head appeared incarnate, to deſtroy him and all his hated works. We have here,

1. This furious oppoſition to Chriſt and his kingdom deſcribed. Though he appeared as the prince of peace, came diffuſing bleſſings on every ſide, brought the moſt welcome tidings, ſpake as never man ſpake, and in his life appeared the pattern of every thing great and excellent; yet againſt him is the fierceſt rage of earth and hell levelled. (1.) The inſtruments employed are the heathen, the Roman governor and ſoldiery, and the people, the peculiar people, the Jews: their kings and governors head the riotous aſſembly; and Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the whole ſanhedrim, unite for the deſtruction of the divine Meſſiah. Vainly promiſing themſelves a temporal king, they cannot bear the pretenſions of the lowly Jeſus; and confounded by his juſt and ſevere rebukes, they gnaſh upon him with indignation, perſecute him with the moſt deliberate and unrelenting enmity; and, laying aſide every quarrel among themſelves, are joined in ſtricteſt league to ſuppreſs his riſing kingdom among men. *Note*, (1.) The cauſe of Jeſus is ever a ſuffering one; they who embark in it muſt begin with taking up the croſs. (2.) The religion of Jeſus hath often groundleſsly excited the jealouſy of earthly princes; his kingdom is not of this world. (3.) They who were at enmity, as great as was between Jew and Gentile, Scribe and Phariſee, will readily conſent to drop all their differences, when the cauſe of Jeſus is to be run down, and cordially unite againſt him and his. (4.) The enmity of the heart againſt the religion of Jeſus, is unſpeakably more bitter and inveterate than againſt any thing beſide; nor will the greateſt harmleſſneſs of conduct, or purity of manners, ſooth the rage of perſecutors. (5.) It is our comfort, that however mighty our enemies, or however politic their contrivances, they imagine a vain thing; the church, and every believer, is fixed upon a rock, againſt which the powers of earth, and the gates of hell, cannot prevail. (2.) The occaſion of this fury is obſerved, *v.* 3. They cannot endure the government of the Lord's Anointed, nor bear him in any of his characters as prophet, prieſt, or king. Wiſe in their own conceit, they will not ſubmit as little children to learn his heavenly doctrine: proud on their own ſufficiency, and truſting on their own righteouſneſs, they cannot ſtoop, as miſerable and periſhing ſinners, to ſeek his atoning blood, and juſtifying obedience, as the only foundation of their acceptance before God: and, hating the holy ways of this heavenly king, their ſtubborn hearts reject his rule, and that internal ſpiritual kingdom which he erects in the ſoul, mortifying every earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh temper; this they cannot endure. *Note*, None can be the ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom, who do not renounce their own wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and ſtrength, and come to Jeſus, to teach, atone for, and rule in and over them.

2. As the conteſt is highly unequal, the ruin of the enemy is ſure. How vain for worms to oppoſe the mighty God? for duſt of the earth to riſe up againſt him who ſitteth in the heavens? how fooliſh that ſecret counſel, which cannot be hid from his all-ſeeing eye? and how mad the attempt to dethrone Omnipo-

tence itſelf ? (1.) God derides the impotent menaces of his foes; he ſits ſecure againſt their rage, ſerene and undiſturbed with their tumults; and looks down with ſcorn on their vain imaginations. (2.) His indignation riſes at their wickedneſs, and at laſt he breaks the ſilence he had kept, ſpeaking to them in the awful ſtrokes of providential judgments, and vexing them in his ſore diſpleaſure; filling their hearts with inward miſery, and quickly about to pour out upon them wrath unto the uttermoſt. (3.) With triumph the king, Meſſiah, is exalted in ſpite of all his foes: *Yet have I ſet*, or, *Behold I have ſet*, &c. As mediator he is inveſted with a delegated rule and authority, and given to be head of his church, the ſpiritual mount Zion; and to his ſceptre all muſt bow as willing ſubjects, or break under the rod of his indignation, as obſtinate rebels. *Note*, (1.) The wrath of an offended God is very terrible; wo to the ſoul againſt whom it awakes. (2.) Chriſt, as mediator, hath a peculiar kingdom aſſigned him in the world; in which reſpect he is inferior to him who appointed him, without diminution of that eſſential and eternal power and Godhead, in which he is equal with the Father. (3.) It is the comfort of God's people that their Lord and king is exalted; and therefore his Zion ſhall enjoy his happy rule, in ſpite of all the malice of her inveterate foes. (4.) Though their impotent attempts are long born with, their utter deſtruction is near, when this king ſhall ſit on the throne of judgment, and *everlaſting deſtruction* fall upon them *from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

7. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath ſaid unto me, [h] Thou *art* my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 8. Aſk of me, and [i] I ſhall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth *for* thy poſſeſſion. 9. [k] Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel.

[h] Acts xiii. 33 Heb. i. 5. & v. 5.
[i] Pſ. xxii. 27. & lxxii. 8. & lxxxix. 27. Dan. vii. 13, 14.
[k] Pſ. lxxxix. 23. Rev. ii. 27. & xix. 15.

v. 7—9. Chriſt being here exalted to the mediatorial throne, ſpeaks in own perſon: *I will declare the decree*, either *that eternal covenant* of redemption, which was entered into between the Father and Son; in virtue of which he was appointed heir of all things, and head of the church, in conſideration of his obedience unto death in behalf of his people; or *that doctrine* which he profeſſes to have received from the Father, *John* xii. 49. concerning the wonderous deſigns of God's grace and mercy to the ſinful ſons of men, of which he was the great apoſtle and preacher. (1.) His title to the throne is here produced: *The Lord hath ſaid unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Which ſome interpret of the eternal generation of the Son of God, and aſcribe to his perſon as begotten, though of the ſame ſubſtance with the Father, co-exiſtent and co-eternal. I rather incline to refer it to him as mediator, and ſpoken either when the eternal purpoſes of God's grace to man were firſt declared in heaven, and the exalted Jeſus in this divine character received the worſhip of adoring angels; or when, at his incarnation, his baptiſm, and moſt eminently at his reſurrection and aſcenſion, *he was declared to be the Son of God with power*, Rom. i. 4. (2.) His influence, in virtue of this advancement, is deſcribed, *v.* 8, 9. Being exalted to the throne of majeſty on high in virtue of his ſufferings, according to the conditions of the covenant of redemption, all power is given him in heaven and in earth. His interceſſion is now effectual; the Father always heareth him, and his requeſts are ſure of being granted, when the language of them is, *Father I will.* Two things are promiſed him at his requeſt: (1.) *The hearts* of his people. *I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.* Thus we ſee the goſpel of Jeſus hath already gone forth unto the ends of the earth, and reached even to us. Multitudes of the various nations of the world have yielded themſelves up through Almighty grace to his happy government; and we are ſtill expecting, in virtue of this promiſe, the more extenſive ſpread of the Redeemer's influence, *when the kingdoms of the world ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt.* Our bleſt iſland, in profeſſion, already owns his ſway; happy for us if our inmoſt ſouls actually enjoyed his government, and he reigned Lord of every motion there! *Note*, (1.) It is the work of God's almighty grace, which can alone ſubdue the heart to Chriſt, as it is an act of ſovereign favour to be given to him as his poſſeſſion. (2.) Since we have ſuch a prevailing advocate with the Father, who is our friend and king, let us come boldly to a throne of grace, and truſt the all-prevailing efficacy of his interceſſion for us. (2.) The necks of his enemies. *Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel.* They who refuſe the Saviour's gentle ſway, muſt feel his heavy hand: the Jews, who rejected him, were firſt broken in pieces and diſperſed: the heathen Rome, where the blood of his martyrs was ſhed, is long ſince deſtroyed; and it remains that Rome papal as well as pagan, ſtill red with the blood of the ſaints, receive the ſame terrible doom, with all the other anti-chriſtian powers, whether Jewiſh, Mahometan, or heathen; whoſe deſolations are determined, when the Lord ſhall take his great power and reign, and his foes be made his foot-ſtool. Sinner, whoever thou art, tremble at that day, when if thou art found an enemy and rebel againſt Jeſus and his government, thy final and eternal overthrow will be compleated; and thou as unable to reſiſt as a potter's veſſel before an iron rod, and thy ruin as irreparable as theſe ſhreds that never more can be united.

10. Be wiſe now therefore, O ye kings: be inſtructed, ye judges of the earth. 11. [l] Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12. [m] Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh † *from* the way, [n] when his wrath is kindled but a little: [o] bleſſed *are* all they that put their truſt in him.

[l] Heb. xii. 28.
[m] 1 Sam. x. 1. Or, 1 Kin xix. 18. Hoſ. xiii. 2.
† Or, In.
[n] See Rev. vi. 16.
[o] Pſ. xxxiv. 8. Prov. xvi. 20. Iſa. xxx. 18. Jer. xvii. 7. Rom. ix. 33. & x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6.

v. 10—12. *Here is wiſdom.* Since Jeſus is exalted king in Zion, and oppoſition vain, it is moſt highly our intereſt to court his favour, as it is our bounden duty to ſubmit to his government. *Note*, True religion is the moſt reaſonable ſervice.

1. The addreſs is directed to the kings and judges of the earth. Thoſe who, as moſt exalted, will be moſt apt to ſay, Who is Lord over us? Let them know there is one that is higher than they, with whom is no reſpect of perſons; and in whoſe ſight they ſtand undiſtinguiſhed from, and equally accountable with their meaneſt ſubjects: and as their ſtation and influence is great, from them eſpecially the Lord requires obedience, that they may ſet an example to thoſe who are committed to their charge. *Note*, If great men are not good men, they ſhall receive the greater damnation.

2. The exhortation directed to them, is, (1.) *To ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoice before him with trembling.* The ſervice of Jehovah, is the duty and happineſs of every creature: his will muſt be our rule, his worſhip our daily exerciſe, his glory our conſtant aim. To rejoice in him is both our privilege and duty, as our reconciled God in Chriſt, as our beſt portion in time, and our exceeding great reward in eternity: yet, with fear and trembling we are commanded to ſerve him, and rejoice before him; knowing the corruption and deceitfulneſs of our hearts, the ſnares of the enemy, and the dangers with which we are encompaſſed; and eſpecially need we fear the workings of pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs, which are ſo apt to creep in, and turn our eyes off the Lord Chriſt and our rejoicing in him, to have confidence in the fleſh, and rejoice in our own vile and worthleſs ſervices. *Note*, Holy jealouſy and filial fear are moſt conſiſtent with, yea, moſt productive of the moſt ſubſtantial and abiding joy. (2.) *To kiſs the Son.* God wills that all ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. The kiſs was expreſſive, (1.) *Of adoration*, Hoſ. xiii. 2. Chriſt is our Lord God, and we are commanded to worſhip him. (2.) *Of affection*, Luke vii. 38. He is the bridegroom of our ſouls; and therefore our tendereſt love, and warmeſt attachments muſt fix on him. (3.) *Of loyalty*, 1 Sam. x. 1. For we are called to ſerve him as our maſter, with unſhaken conſtancy to ſubmit to his will, and every providential diſpenſation and affliction, and zealouſly to maintain the intereſts of his kingdom, though expoſed to priſon or to death.

3. This exhortation is enforced by a twofold powerful argument. (1.) *Leſt he be angry*; for though he ſits on his throne, meek and gentle as a lamb to thoſe who come to him as humble ſupplicants, he will roar as a lion againſt the obſtinately impenitent, and tear them in pieces, whilſt their is none to deliver them. *Leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way*; that is, by leaving the way of righteouſneſs, and turning to the paths of ſin and death: or, *in the way*, being cut off in the midſt of your iniquities; or, *ſuddenly*, as the word may be rendered, by ſome divine judgment ſtopping the ſinner ſhort in his career of wickedneſs. *When his wrath is kindled but a little*, the leaſt ſin provokes it, and the leaſt meaſure of his wrath is intolerable; and therefore, how ſhould we fear to offend? (2.) *Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* The pleaſantneſs of Chriſt's yoke ſhould engage us to yield our necks to it, as the terrors of his wrath ſhould lead us to avoid it. They who truſt in him are bleſſed; they *now* enjoy his favour and regard, peace in their conſcience, reviving confidence of his protection, and tranſporting hope of the glory which ſhall be revealed; and *hereafter* how unutterably more bleſſed will they appear when this king in Zion ſhall ſit on the mount in judgment, place them at his right hand, welcome them to his preſence, ſeat them on his throne; and whilſt their enemies and his are gnawing their tongues with pain, and doomed to dwell in everlaſting burnings, they ſhall be filled with everlaſting conſolations, and ſpend a glorious eternity in adoration, love, and praiſe. Lord, may my happy lot be there!

PSALM III.

David, as the title informs us, compoſed this pſalm when he fled from Abſalom. 1. *He complains of his enemies*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Encourages himſelf in God*, ver. 3. 3. *Recollects his former experience of God's goodneſs to him*, ver. 4, 5. 4. *Triumphs over* *his fears*, ver. 6. *And over his enemies, againſt whom he prays*, ver. 7. 5. *Gives God the glory, and takes to himſelf the comfort of his ſalvation*, ver. 8. *Herein he was an eminent type of Chriſt, thus betrayed, caſt out of Jeruſalem, aſcending the mount of Olives; and of the ſufferings he there endured, with his triumphant reſurrection, which followed. And the whole is univerſally applicable alſo to the people of God, whoſe troubles and trials, however great, yet out of them all the Lord delivereth them; and therefore, what the ſaints of God have of old experienced, ſhould ſtrengthen and encourage our faith.*

[a] 2 Sam. xv. 16, &c. 1023.

¶ A pſalm of David, [a] when he fled from Abſalom his ſon.

[b] 2 Sam. xv. 12.
[c] 2 Sam. xvi. 8 Pſ. lxxi. 11.
[d] Gen. xv. 1.
† Or, About.
[e] Iſa. lx. 19.

1. LORD, [b] how are they increaſed that trouble me? many *are* they that riſe up againſt me. 2. Many *there be* which ſay of my ſoul, [c] *There is* no help for him in God. Selah. 3. But thou, O LORD, *art* [d] a ſhield † for me; [e] my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

v. 1—3. David, in deep diſtreſs, is here flying from his unnatural ſon; and as human help failed him, his heart looks up to God: the greatneſs of his trials could not ſo diſcompoſe his ſpirit, as to interrupt his communion with the Father; nor his danger, however imminent, ſink him into deſpair. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt trials ariſe to us often from our own houſe. (2.) No diſtreſs ſhould unfit us for the exerciſes of devotion. (3.) Whilſt the ſoul flies to God under its afflictions, though they may be heavy, we ſhall not ſink under them. We have in theſe verſes,

1. The complaint of the ſuffering David, poured forth into the boſom of the compaſſionate God: not that he wants our prayers to inform him, but he will be thus enquired of. Many were his foes; the revolt was general, and he a fugitive, driven from his capital; his cauſe, to appearance, deſperate; and his enemies triumphant and inſulting, as if God had forſaken him; and either, as they blaſphemouſly ſuggeſted, could not, or would not ſuccour him. The ſufferings of the Son of David, in the ſame place, were greater ſtill; betrayed by one diſciple, denied by another, forſaken by all; the multitude thirſting for his blood; ſeized, condemned, inſulted, mocked, ſcourged, crucified; and whilſt upon the bloody tree he hung, he heard the blaſphemy of the multitude, deriding his confidence, as utterly forſaken of his God. Such enemies alſo every faithful follower of Jeſus muſt expect; many within, many without, ſeeking to trouble his repoſe, and ſhake his confidence in God: a frowning world will threaten, a tempting devil ſuggeſt diſtreſſing doubts and fears, and an unbelieving heart be ready to deſpond: but, through Divine grace, he riſes ſuperior to his fears, rejects the diſhonourable thought, and reſts his hope ſecure upon the Divine protection. *Selah.* Very uncertain are the conjectures about this word; ſome conceive it to mean ſome change of the muſic; others a pauſe; others interpret it as an affirmation, *verily*; ſome tranſlate it *for ever*; and one learned man hath ſought to prove it a name of God.

2. The pſalmiſt profeſſes his unſhaken confidence in God, notwithſtanding all his foes: the higher the ſtorm of temptation blew, the deeper his faith took root on the unchangeable God. *Thou art a ſhield for me*, to protect me from the impending danger, to quench the fiery darts my inſulting foes hurl againſt me, and ſafe under thy ſhadow I ſhall reſt from fear of evil. *My glory*; the author of all the greatneſs to which he had been advanced; and ſtill, in his low eſtate, in God's ſalvation he would glory, confident of his reſtoration: *and the lifter up of mine head*, though now bowed down through outward troubles, and inwardly afflicted with the ſenſe of his ſins, which had provoked them, yet not ſunk irrecoverably, again God would lift up his horn of majeſty, and ſet up his throne on high. Thus Jeſus, covered with the ſhield of the Almighty, was reſcued from the hand of his perſecutors; foiled the temptations of the wicked one; roſe ſuperior to all his ſufferings; glorified by his Father in his reſurrection, aſcenſion, and ſeſſion at the right hand of Majeſty on high; and now is lifted up above all his enemies, to reign till they are for ever put under his feet: and as the head is, ſo are the members, ſafe in a covenant of everlaſting love; glorious in the eyes of the Lord, amidſt all their ſufferings; and though oftentimes in heavineſs, through manifold temptations, yet doth God lift up the heads, that in ſorrow for ſin, and under ſuffering, hang down as the bulruſh; and ſays, Peace, be ſtill, to the ſtorms and billows which go over them: and as he fills the heart with preſent peace and joy in believing, ſo will he aſſuredly, ſhortly lift up our heads above all our foes, and our ſins and ſorrows together ſhall for ever flee away. O haſten, Lord, this happy time!

[f] Pſ. iv. 8. Prov. iii. 24.
[g] Pſ. xxvii. 1—3.
[h] Ibid. lviii. 6. See Job xvi. 10. 1 Lam. iii. 30.

4. I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. 5. [f] I laid me down and ſlept; I awaked, for the LORD ſuſtained me. 6. [g] I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of people, that have ſet *themſelves* againſt me round about. 7. Ariſe, O LORD, ſave me, O my God; for [h] thou haſt ſmitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek-bone: thou haſt broken the teeth of the ungodly. 8. [i] Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: [k] thy bleſſing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

[i] Prov. xxi. 31. Iſa. xliii. 11. Jer. iii. 23. Hoſ. xiii. 4. Jona. ii. 9. Rev. vii. 10.
[k] Eph. i. 3.

v. 4—8. The pſalmiſt had often ſweet experience, how good it was for him to draw near unto God, for he ever heareth the prayer of the poor deſtitute; and as faith encourages the voice of prayer, prayer reciprocally confirms and ſtrengthens our confidence in God. We have here,

1. The application David made to God, and the anſwer of peace he received: *I cried unto God with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill.* The eagerneſs of his cry ſpoke the fervour of his heart; and God heard him with favourable acceptance, out of his holy hill, the mount Sion, where he had choſen his reſidence: Thither the ark had been ſent by David on his flight, 2 *Sam.* xv. 25. But the God of the ark was with him, to hear and help him. The great Redeemer thus, in the days of his fleſh, with ſtrong crying and tears, preſented his ſupplications, and was ſtrengthened; and every faithful ſoul hath a thouſand times experienced the ſupport derived from effectual fervent prayer, and known by unqueſtionable evidence, that there is a God who heareth prayer.

2. The effect of the divine anſwer from God, was reſt and peace. Though in the midſt of danger from open enemies and ſuſpected friends, *I laid me down and ſlept, I awaked, for the Lord ſuſtained me.* No terrors diſturbed his repoſe; that guardian whom he truſted ſweetly cloſed his eyes, and he awaked ſafe and refreſhed, to ſee the welcome light of the returning morn. Thus Jeſus ſlept in the grave; and, after a ſhort night, awaked on the morning of the reſurrection-day, as a giant refreſhed with wine: and doth not every believer experience the ſame divine protection? having commended himſelf into the arms of Jeſus, he lays in peace his head upon his pillow; whilſt conſcious terrors haunt the boſom of the guilty, and trouble their repoſe, his ſleep is ſweet unto him, and he awakes, refreſhed and comforted, ready for the duties of the returning day, thankful for his mercies, and, from what he hath already received, encouraged to truſt for what is yet to come. May I ever ſo lie down, O Lord, in peace and prayer; and when I wake up, may I be ſtill with thee!

3. He expreſſes his confident truſt in God. *I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of the people, that have ſet themſelves againſt me round about.* His enemies were on every ſide; his forces few; himſelf eſpecially ſtruck at, and for his blood they thirſted: but ſince faith hath ſeen a covenant God, fear is ſilenced; and his prayers are the more earneſt, *v.* 7. for his faith did not ſuperſede his ſupplications, but encourage them. And as God had ſo often *ſmitten his enemies upon the cheek-bone; and broken the teeth of the ungodly*; both covered them with reproach, and diſabled them from hurting him, he doubted not but the ſame mercy ſhould follow him. The ſon of David exerciſed ſtill greater faith, and fearleſsly met his more furious foes, confounded their devices, and turned them to their own deſtruction. By dying he deſtroyed death, and him that had the power of it, that is the devil: and in him, and by him, his people alſo are made more than conquerors; whilſt all the combined powers of Satan, the world and ſin, are kept from hurting them; and, as the anſwer of their repeated prayers, they behold the ſalvation of God.

4. The pſalmiſt gratefully aſcribes the praiſe of all to God: *ſalvation* of every kind, temporal or ſpiritual, *belongeth unto the Lord*; he is the great author and finiſher of it, and to him alone the glory is due. *And thy bleſſing is upon thy people. Selah.* He is willing as he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt; and his promiſes have bound him to them in every time of need; for he hath ſaid, I will never leave nor forſake thee: bleſſed then ſurely are the people that are in ſuch a caſe.

PSALM IV.

In this pſalm, 1. *David begins with a ſhort prayer*, ver. 1. 2. *He expoſtulates with his enemies*, ver. 2. 3. *He points out the happineſs of God's people*, ver. 3. 4. *He calls upon the ſons of men to conſider their ways*, ver. 4. 5. *He exhorts them to ſerve God*, ver. 5. 6. *He tells us what joy and ſecurity he found in his favour*, ver. 6—8.

† Or, overſeer.
[a] Iſa. xxxviii. 20. Hab. iii. 19.

¶ To the † chief muſician [a] on Neginoth.

A pſalm of David.

‡ Or, be gracious unto me.
§ Or, a lie.
[b] Ex. xxxiii. 16.
[c] Eph. iv. 26.

1. HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteouſneſs: thou haſt enlarged me *when I was* in diſtreſs, ‡ have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. 2. O ye ſons of men, how long *will ye turn* my glory into ſhame? *how long* will ye love vanity, *and* ſeek after § leaſing? Selah. 3. But know that [b] the LORD hath ſet apart him that is godly, for himſelf: the LORD will hear when I call unto him. 4. [c] Stand in awe, and ſin not: com-

[d] commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be ſtill. Selah. 5. Offer [e] the ſacrifices of righteouſneſs: and put your truſt in the LORD.

d Pſ. lxxvii. 6.
e Deut. xxxiii. 19. Pſ. xv. 19.

v. 1—5. Neither the title of this pſalm, nor the matter of it, directs us to any particular occaſion, on which it was compoſed, tho' probably ſoon after the former, with which ſome of the ſentiments correſpond: it is directed to the chief muſician, (who led the band,) on Neginoth, generally ſuppoſed to be the ſtringed inſtruments which were to accompany it. David opens this pſalm,

1. With earneſt prayer to God. *Hear me when I call.* We have no demands on God for attention; nor can make him our debtor by waiting upon him: it is a mercy, an unſpeakable mercy, if he condeſcends to hear our prayers. *O God of my righteouſneſs. My righteous* God, who will do me right reſpecting my enemies; or, the *vindicator of my righteouſneſs*, which men traduce and malign; or the God on whom I depend for righteouſneſs, renouncing all truſt in myſelf, and my own doings and deſerts. *Thou haſt enlarged me when I was in diſtreſs*; many a time have I experienced thy kind interpoſition, therefore I am ſtill encouraged to hope for the repetition of the ſame mercy. And every true believer may adopt his words, acknowledging how often God hath enlarged his heart, when ſtraitned with temptations and beſet with trials, and ſet his feet at liberty. *Note*, (1.) In every diſtreſs God is a ſure refuge, let us fly to him. (2.) Paſt experience ſhould engage preſent confidence.

2. He expoſtulates with his enemies, in order to their conviction and converſion: *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into ſhame*; as the chiefs of Iſrael, who joined his rebellious ſon, ſought to do: and as the high-prieſt and people of the Jews, when they reviled, inſulted, and mocked the Lamb of God, and ridiculed the glory he aſſumed as king of Iſrael, degrading him to the condition of a malefactor, and making him die the death of a ſlave. In like manner do wicked men ſeek to reproach the faithful, brand them as hypocrites and deceivers, and ridicule their holy peculiarities. *How long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* or *a lie*. Such was Abſalom, whom they had anointed king, and thought to eſtabliſh his throne; but muſt find, to their coſt, how deceitful their hope. And equally vain will be all the attempts of Satan and his emiſſaries, againſt Chriſt and his people: though they ſealed him up in the grave, and concluded they had triumphed, his reſurrection proved there was a lie in their right hand; and tho' they daily fight and trouble his ſervants, ſeeking to corrupt them with heretical opinions, or to debauch them to evil practices, their attempts are alike vain, and their wickedneſs will recoil upon themſelves.

3. He produces the reaſon why their attempts muſt be abortive. *Know that the Lord hath ſet apart him that is godly, for himſelf*: which reſpects David himſelf, whoſe conduct God approved, and whoſe kingdom he would eſtabliſh, in ſpite of all his foes. Equally applicable is it to the Meſſiah, that elect in whom God's ſoul delighteth; and more generally it muſt be applied to every one whom God calls, according to the purpoſe of his will: he is ſet apart in the Divine counſel; ſeparated by effectual grace from the world, which lieth in wickedneſs; kept in the arms of everlaſting love, and none can pluck him thence; *for the Lord will hear when I call unto him*; and therefore every device muſt be baffled. *Note*, (1.) If ſuch be the bleſſedneſs and ſecurity of God's people, and he makes us know it in his word of promiſe, how earneſt ought we to be to obtain his favour, and have our portion among his ſeparated ones? (2.) *The godly* is a term of reproach in the world, but it is the higheſt title of honour before God.

4. He warns them of their danger, and the way of eſcaping it. *Stand in awe* of the judgments of God, threatened againſt tranſgreſſors; *and ſin not*, to provoke it againſt you. Many verſions read, *Be angry, and ſin not*, according to the apoſtle, *Eph.* iv. 26. There is an anger not ſinful, when it is directed againſt the evils we ſee in ourſelves and others, and leads us to zeal for their good, and God's glory. *Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be ſtill. Selah.* Conſider your ways, ſeriouſly examine them by the rule of God's laws; ſearch out your manifold offences; bring forth the awful ſentence, which is the appointed wages of ſin, and ſuffer no avocation to divert your thoughts from this important ſubject: retire to your cloſet often, or on your bed think of theſe things; and let conſcience faithfully do her office, that ſelf-condemned, and humbled under the ſenſe of ſin, your hearts may be laid in the duſt, to ſeek mercy with an offended God. Then *offer unto God the ſacrifice of righteouſneſs.* The ſacrifice of God's appointment, which pointed to the atoning blood of the great Redeemer; *and put your truſt in the Lord*, renouncing yourſelf as a vile ſinner, and looking for the mercy of God in Jeſus Chriſt, as your only ſoul-ſupporting hope: and this will produce ſacrifices of praiſe to God for redeeming grace, with which he hath declared himſelf to be well-pleaſed. Thus may all the evil the ſinner fears be averted, and all the felicity of God's choſen become his happy portion. *O that men were wiſe, that they underſtood theſe things!*

6. *There be* many that ſay, Who will ſhew us *any* good? [f] LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. 7. Thou haſt put [g] gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increaſed. 8. [h] I will both lay me down in peace, and ſleep: for thou LORD only makeſt me dwell [i] in ſafety.

f Num. vi. 26. Pſ. lxxx. 3. & cxix. 135.
g 1 Pet. i. 8.
h Job xi. 18, 19. Pſ. iii. 5.
i Lev. xxv. 18. & xxvi. 5. Deut. xii. 10.

v. 6—8. Having exhorted men to ſeek the favour of a gracious God, David proceeds to ſhow the excellency of his regard beyond every earthly acquiſition.

1. *There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us any good?* Fooliſh worldings, who place their chief happineſs in the periſhing enjoyments of preſent vanities; ſeeking their portion on earth, and graſping at this ſhadow, inſtead of God, the only author of true and abiding joy. *Note*, (1.) Senſe governs moſt men, and their purſuits after happineſs, ſcarce riſe to objects higher than thoſe the beaſts enjoy in common with them. (2.) They who, with a rational and immortal ſoul, ſeek their reſt in ſublunary enjoyments, muſt ever, like the prodigal ſon, find them as huſks, incapable of ſatisfying their hunger. (3.) They who take up with their portion in time, can have none in eternity, *Luke* xvi. 25.

2. The pſalmiſt, and all, whoſe hearts like his divine grace hath wrought upon, ſeek a nobler, and more ſatisfying poſſeſſion. *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*; give us a ſenſe of thy favour, the comforts of thy ſpirit, and the experience of thy love ſhed abroad in our hearts: this is the only ſatisfying portion an immortal ſoul can enjoy; and all the wealth of the world, compared with this, is dung and loſs. *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increaſed.* A worldly ſpirit exults to ſee his barns full, and his vats overflow with wine: but how much greater the joy, to experience the riches of Divine grace, and to be filled with all the fullneſs of God? Or it may be rendered, *from the time that their corn and wine increaſed*; intimating, that far from envying the proſperity of his enemies, he rejoiced in it; and beſpeaks the bleſſed temper to which Divine grace had brought him. *Note*, They are wofully miſtaken, who count God's ſervants unhappy, and the ways of godlineſs melancholy: out of them there is no true joy, and *the end of all other mirth is heavineſs.*

3. With this gladneſs of heart, which a ſenſe of the Divine favour miniſtered, he forgot his troubles, and reſted in peace and comfort. *I will both lay me down in peace, and ſleep*: no fears ſhall diſturb, nor diſappointment break my reſt; if thou art with me, I have all that heart can wiſh: *for thou Lord only makeſt me dwell in ſafety.* Though other refuge I have none, the ſhadow of thy wings is ſufficient ſecurity; my ſoul reſts in thy love, my body under thy care, and both are everlaſtingly ſafe. *Note*, Every believer may with delight adopt theſe expreſſions of dependance upon God: he can ſleep with peace on his bed, for God is there; he can lay with confidence his body in the duſt, and ſleep the ſleep of death, for even in the grave he is ſafe: and having committed his all into the hands of a faithful guardian, he is aſſured, that whether for time or eternity, all is well, a ſafe abode on earth, or an undiſturbed and eternal reſt in heaven, is his aſſured portion.

PSALM V.

David's days were full of trouble, but he had a gracious God to fly to, who heard and helped him. 1. *To God he directs his prayer*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He aſcribes holineſs to God, and an irreconcileable hatred of ſin*, ver. 4—6. 3. *He reſolves to adhere to the public worſhip of God*, ver. 7. 4. *He prays*, (1.) *For himſelf, that God would guide him*, ver. 8. (2.) *Againſt his enemies, that God would deſtroy them*, ver. 9, 10. (3.) *For the people of God, that he would give them joy, and keep them ſafe* ver. 11, 12.

¶ To the chief muſician upon Nehiloth.

A Pſalm of David.

1. GIVE ear to my words, O LORD, conſider my meditation. 2. Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God: for unto thee will I pray. 3. [a] My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I † direct *my prayer* unto thee, and [b] will ‡ look up. 4. For thou *art* not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs: [c] neither ſhall evil dwell with thee. 5. [d] The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight: thou hateſt all workers of iniquity. 6. [e] Thou ſhalt deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing: [f] the LORD will abhor § the bloody and deceitful man.

a Pſal. lxxxviii. 13. & cxxx. 6.
† Heb. Set in order.
b Pſ. lxxxv. 8.
‡ Or, look out. Hab. ii. 1.
c Pſ. xciv. 20.
d Hab. i. 13.
e Rev. xxi. 8. & xxii. 15.
f Pſ. lv. 23.
§ Heb. The man of bloods and deceit.

The particular occaſion of this pſalm is not obſerved, only in tenor it reſembles the foregoing, and may be ſuppoſed to be wrote on a like affliction, ſuch as the rebellion of Sheba, 2 *Sam.*

xx. *Nehiloth* is uſually thought to mean the wind-inſtruments, which were to accompany the voice.

v. 1—6. The cries of his people are ever pleaſing to the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and he will hear and help them. This David knew, and therefore lifts up his heart and voice to God. *Give ear to my words, O Lord, conſider my meditation.* His lips were not haſty to ſpeak; he firſt deeply pondered his wants, and then he uttered his petition. *Hearken unto the voice of my cry*; as his diſtreſs was urgent, his importunity was great. *Note*, Fervor is the life of prayer; cold and negligent requeſts ſhew a heart dead to God. The arguments he uſes, as a plea for being heard, are,

1. The relation he ſtood in to God. My *King, and* my *God*; thou art not only all-ſufficient to help me, as the almighty King and eternal God, but bound to help me, as I am thy ſubject and ſervant. *Note*, A believing view of God as our God, is the great encouragement to pray.

2. The conſtant ſervice he reſolved to pay him. *For unto thee will I pray*, as the only object of my worſhip, and with ceaſeleſs attendance. *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord:* no ſooner ſhall my eyes behold the returning light, than early will I offer unto thee the grateful acknowledgment of protection received, and put my body and ſoul anew under thy care, to be kept from the dangers of the day. *Note*, The morning is the fitteſt time to ſpend with God in prayer, and our firſt moments ſhould ever be conſecrated to the ſervice of that God who wakeneth us morning by morning. *In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up*, or *out*. As when a meſſenger is diſpatched on ſome important errand, the eye is eager to catch the diſtant glimpſe of his return; ſo doth the ſoul, that ſends to heaven his ſupplications and prayers, wait with earneſtneſs the returning anſwer of peace. For want of this, how many prayers become fruitleſs, becauſe formal!

3. He mentions God's purity, as a foundation of his hope, conſcious of his own ſimplicity, and convinced of the wickedneſs of his troublers. *For thou art not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs, neither ſhall evil dwell with thee.* Sin is the abominable thing God hates; it is contrary to his nature, and therefore all who love, delight in, and ſerve ſin, muſt be the objects of his abhorrence, excluded for ever from his preſence in heaven, and thruſt down into hell. *The fooliſh*, or wicked, for wickedneſs is the height of folly, theſe *ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight*, ſhall be unable to bear his preſence in the day of judgment, driven out with indignation, ſaying, *Depart, accurſed*, &c. *Thou hateſt all workers of iniquity*; not all that have been workers of it; for when we were yet ſinners God commended his love towards us, and ſent his Son to die for the ungodly; but all who, rejecting the grace of a Redeemer, perſiſt in their impenitence, and work iniquity as their practice and delight, theſe the holy God hates. *Thou ſhalt deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing*, or *a lie*; the broachers of lying doctrines, or the forgers and propagators of falſe reports to hurt and defame. *The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man*, the implacable and unmerciful. Theſe are the characters marked for vengeance, not only in David's day, but in every age and place. Such enemies of Chriſt and his people, fooliſh, wicked, malicious, falſe, blood-thirſty men, ſhall be deſtroyed with an everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and the glory of his power. Lord, gather not my ſoul with theſe ſinners!

7. But [g] as for me, I will come into thy houſe in the
multitude of thy mercy: *and* [h] in thy fear will I worſhip
[i] toward thy holy temple. 8. [k] Lead me, O LORD,
in thy righteouſneſs, becauſe of † mine enemies; [l] make
thy way ‡ ſtrait before my face, 9. For *there is* no
faithfulneſs § in their mouth, their inward part *is* very
wickedneſs; [m] their throat *is* [n] an open ſepulchre, [o] they
flatter with their tongue. 10. ‖ Deſtroy thou them, O
God; let them fall † by their own counſels: caſt them
out in the multitude of their tranſgreſſions, for they have
rebelled againſt thee. 11. But let all thoſe that put their
truſt in thee [p] rejoice: let them ever ſhout for joy, becauſe thou ‡ defendeſt them: let them alſo that love thy
name be joyful in thee. 12. For thou, LORD, wilt bleſs
the righteous, with favour [q] wilt thou § compaſs him as
with a ſhield.

[g] Joſh xxiv. 15.
[h] Heb. xii. 28.
[i] 1 Kings viii. 30. Pſ. cxxxviii. 2.
[k] Pſ. xxv. 5. & cxliii. 8, 10.
† Heb. Thoſe that obſerve me.
[l] Pſ. xxvii. 11.
‡ Or, even.
§ Heb. In his mouth, i. e. in the mouth of any of them.
[m] Rom. iii. 13.
[n] Luke xi. 14.
[o] Pſ. lxii. 4.
‖ Or, make them guilty.
† Or, from.
[p] Iſa. lxv. 13.
‡ Heb. Covereſt, or protecteſt.
[q] Zech. ii. 5.
§ Heb. Crown.

v. 7—12. Having deſcribed the miſerable ways and end of the ungodly, we have,

1. David's reſolution and prayer, that he may take a different courſe. *But as for me, I will come into thy houſe*, to worſhip there, as one of thy devoted ſervants, and publicly to make profeſſion of my bounden duty; not that I am worthy to open my polluted lips, or to mention my worthleſs ſervice, but *in the multitude of thy mercy*, this being the only ground of a ſinner's confidence towards God, the mercy revealed in a covenant of grace through Jeſus Chriſt: *and in thy fear will I worſhip toward thy holy temple*; with reverence adoring the eternal Majeſty, who is ſo greatly to be feared; careful to obſerve his inſtituted ordinances, as well as drawing near through the divinely-appointed medium, the great Mediator between God and man, whom the temple and all its ſervice prefigured. *Note*, (1.) There is no acceſs to, or acceptance with God, but by Jeſus Chriſt. (2.) With ſuch an advocate we may comfortably and confidently approach a throne of grace. To enable him to keep this pious purpoſe, he prays, *Lead me, O God, in thy righteouſneſs*; that is, in a conſtant renunciation of my own, and a dependance upon thine, as my ſure hope: or, *thy righteouſneſs*, may ſignify the ſtatutes in which he would walk, or the faithfulneſs of God engaged to lead him, *becauſe of mine enemies*, or *thoſe that obſerve me*. Many eyes are upon the Chriſtian's walk, curious to obſerve, and cenſorious to condemn; therefore he needs peculiar caution, leſt by his ſins he give the enemy occaſion to blaſpheme. Therefore he prays ever, *Make thy way ſtrait before my face:* enable me to know thy will, to correſpond with thy promiſes, and to walk upright before thee. *Note*, The exemplarineſs of a Chriſtian's converſation is what peculiarly covers his enemies with ſhame and confuſion.

2. Having mentioned his enemies, he gives their character, and foretels their ruin: *For there is no faithfulneſs in their mouth*; their words are falſhood and hypocriſy; even when ſmooth as oil, they are very ſwords, deſigned to hurt and deceive. *Their inward part is very wickedneſs*, and out of the abundance of this wickedneſs their mouth ſpeaketh. From this fruitful ſource, as from a fountain, evil naturally and ceaſeleſsly flows. *Note*, The great evil of ſin is within; outward actions, however vile, are but branches from that root of deſperate wickedneſs, an apoſtate heart. *Their throat is an open ſepulchre*, inſatiate as the grave, in inordinate appetites, and, like it, nauſeous with all manner of corrupt communication, which proceeds out of their mouth. *They flatter with their tongue*; ſpeak fair, whilſt miſchief is in their hearts. Againſt which ſinners the Pſalmiſt prophetically directs his prayer: *Deſtroy them, O God*, or, *make them guilty*; let them be condemned, and *let them fall by their own counſels* into the pit they digged for others; or, *becauſe of them*, receiving the juſt reward of their deeds. *Caſt them out in the multitude of their tranſgreſſions*, from their enjoyments, by afflictive providences, from earth by death, and, after death, into the outer darkneſs, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth; and this will be an act of the moſt righteous judgment, *for they have rebelled againſt thee.* David's enemies had not only caſt off his government, but rejected God; and every ſinner doth the ſame, and ſtands convicted of rebellion againſt the Moſt High. *Note*, Terrible will be the end of the ungodly, and he will be forced to own the judgment juſt.

3. He concludes with a fervent prayer for God's people, and his confidence of the divine care over them. *But let all thoſe who put their truſt in thee*, renouncing every other dependance, *rejoice; let them ever ſhout for joy, becauſe thou defendeſt them*, or *covereſt them*, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. *Let them alſo that love thy name*, which is dear to the faithful ſoul, *be joyful in thee*, daily delighting themſelves in thy ſalvation; *for thou, Lord, wilt bleſs the righteous.* Thoſe who ſtand divinely righteous in their exalted head Jeſus, and compleat in him, the beſt of bleſſings are their portion, of grace here, and glory hereafter; no danger can hurt them, no enemy approach them; *with favour* unchangeable *wilt thou compaſs him as with a ſhield. Note*, (1.) In prayer our brethren ſhould ever have a warm remembrance; and we cannot but deſire, that great grace may be upon them all. (2.) From the prayer of faith we may confidently expect the anſwer of peace.

PSALM VI.

This pſalm was penned on one of David's mournful days, when ſickneſs of body, anguiſh of heart, and the inſults of his enemies, united to afflict him; yet, in the midſt of all, he can confidently truſt in God, and, though ſorrowful, be always rejoicing. 1. *He pours out his complaints before God, deprecates his wrath, and prays for the return of his favour*, ver. 17. 2. *He informs us, that God had, and would, hear and anſwer his petitions*, ver. 8—10.

¶ To the chief muſician on Neginoth [a] upon Sheminith,

A pſalm of David.

1. [b] O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure. 2.
Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for [c] I *am* weak:
O LORD, [d] heal me, for my bones are vexed. 3. My
ſoul is alſo ſore vexed: but thou, O LORD, [e] how
long? 4. Return, O LORD, deliver my ſoul; oh
ſave me for thy mercies ſake. 5. For [f] in death *there is*
no remembrance of thee: in the grave who ſhall give
thee thanks? 6. I am weary with my groaning, † all
the night make I my bed to ſwim: I water my couch
with

[a] 1 Chron. xv. 21. Pſ. xii. tit.
[b] Pſal. xxxviii. 1. Jer. x. 24. & xlvi. 28.
[c] Pſal. xxxviii. 8.
[d] Hoſ. vi. 1.
[e] Pſ. xc. 13.
[f] Pſ. xxx. 9. & lxxxviii. 11. & cxv. 17. Iſa. xxxviii. 18.
† Or, every night.

with my tears. 7. [g] Mine eye is conſumed becauſe of grief; it waxeth old becauſe of all mine enemies.

g Job. xvii. 7. Pſ. xxxi. 9. & xxxviii. 10. Lam. v. 17.

v. 1—7. The direction to the chief muſician is on Neginoth upon Sheminith, which is thought to be a harp of eight ſtrings, and to accompany the voice. The pſalm itſelf opens with a mournful muſe, and beſpeaks the deep affliction of both body and ſoul, and David's humble abaſement before God under his chaſtiſing rod.

1. He repreſents his moving caſe to the Father of mercies, and the God of all conſolation. *I am weak*, worn down with pining ſickneſs; *my bones are vexed* with tormenting pain; and, above all my other griefs, *my ſoul is ſore vexed alſo*, the heavieſt burden under which I groan. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt kings, and the holieſt ſaints of God, are equally expoſed with others to the ſufferings of humanity. (2.) Bodily ſickneſs is doubly afflictive, when attended with a wounded ſpirit. (3.) Whatever our burdens are, it is our wiſdom and only relief to caſt them on the Lord.

2. His ſorrows were as his anguiſh great: his head was waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, which ran down day and night; and when the ſource was exhauſted, and the dry eye-ball ſtiffened in the ſocket, his groaning continued, till, weary and exhauſted with grief, he was ready to pine away. *Note*, (1.) They who have ever felt a conſcience wounded with the ſenſe of ſin, are no ſtrangers to the Pſalmiſt's tears. (2.) When our ſin hath been great, our ſorrow will be great alſo. (3.) The deareſt ſaints of God have been often moſt deeply exerciſed. Let not any faithful ſoul be diſcouraged under his ſuffering, and ſay, Is there any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow? for behold, greater is here.

3. He importunately cries for relief at the hands of his merciful God. *Rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure*: however heavily thou art pleaſed to lay thy hand upon me, let it be a father's rod, and not in wrath, but for correction: all my other anguiſh I can bear, but thy diſpleaſure is intolerable. *Have mercy on me*, forgive all that I have done amiſs; *heal me*, the pain and ſickneſs of my body, but much more the wounds of my ſoul, which ſtink and are corrupt through my fooliſhneſs, with the precious balm of thy grace. *How long, Lord*, ſhall I cry before thou heareſt me? *Return*; thy abſence is more than I can bear; lift up the light of thy countenance to chear my diſconſolate heart. *Deliver my ſoul* from its ſorrow, and all thoſe enemies ſpiritual and temporal that long for my deſtruction. *Oh ſave me*, for thou alone, Lord, art able to help in this my time of greateſt need. I own, I have no title to demand, no deſert to plead, but *for thy mercies ſake*, as an act of ſovereign grace, and undeſerved favour. *Note*, (1.) The removal of a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure for ſin, is much more earneſtly deſired by the humble ſoul, than the abatement or relief of his ſufferings. (2.) If God ever regard us, we muſt remember it is not for any cauſe in us thereunto moving, either our ſufferings or our ſorrows, but purely of his own great mercy in Jeſus Chriſt. (3.) Though we may be with entire reſignation giving ourſelves up to God, we are not forbidden to pray to be healed. (4.) As long as we are encouraged under our moſt acute ſufferings to pray, we are ſure to be ſupported.

4. He ſtrengthens his requeſts with an argument drawn from God's glory, which is the moſt prevailing plea: *In death no man remembereth thee*; *in the grave who ſhall give thee thanks?* I cannot there offer thee praiſe for my recovery, nor encourage others by my experience to truſt upon thee. I can there no more ſerve thee in my generation, or lead the ſong of worſhip in thy ſanctuary. *Note*, Though to depart and be with Chriſt is far better; yet, for God's glory, and the church's good, the ſaints of God who are ripeſt for heaven may deſire to live.

8. [h] Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity: for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping. 9. The LORD hath heard my ſupplication; the LORD will receive my prayer. 10. Let all mine enemies be aſhamed and ſore vexed: [i] let them return *and* be aſhamed ſuddenly.

h Pſ. cxix. 115. Luke xiii. 27.

i Pſ. lvi. 9.

v. 8—10. Whilſt he is ſpeaking, God hears and anſwers; and therefore, ere he riſes from his knees, the language of triumphant faith breaks forth, and, as the ſun diſpels the darkneſs, light and gladneſs return to his afflicted ſoul.

1. He is divinely aſſured, that his prayers and tears had not been diſregarded; that his requeſts are granted; and ſtill a throne of grace open for every farther petition, with full confidence of ſucceſs: *the Lord hath heard* my preſent, *and will hear my* future *prayer*. *Note*, (1.) They who ſow in prayers and tears, will aſſuredly reap in joy. (2.) He who once hath anſwered us, as the God that heareth prayer, we may aſſuredly gather, will be *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever*.

2. He bids the workers of iniquity depart, confounded whilſt they beheld the happy change: or he expreſſes his own holy purpoſe to keep himſelf henceforth from the ways of the deſtroyer, and to have no fellowſhip with the ungodly, *v.* 8. *Note*, (1.) Every mercy we receive from God ſhould engage our hearts nearer to him, and bind us firmer in his bleſſed ſervice. (2.) They who would keep from the ways of evil, muſt ſeparate themſelves from the company of ſinners.

3. He predicts the dreadful and ſudden deſtruction of thoſe who troubled and triumphed over him in his diſtreſs, *v.* 10. Shame at their diſappointment, and vexation at his proſperity, ſhall cover them: they ſhall *return* from perſecuting him, confounded at his deliverance, ſo unlike what they looked for, and ſudden judgment overtake them in this world, or everlaſting confuſion be their portion in the world to come. *Note*, (1.) The devices of the enemies of God's people, ſpiritual and temporal, ſhall be ſurely diſappointed. (2.) They who return not now to God in penitence, muſt ſhortly depart from him into everlaſting burnings.

PSALM VII.

David, under the unjuſt aſperſions of his enemies, lodges here his appeal with God. 1. *He confidently in prayer applies to him*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He maintains his innocence*, ver. 3—5. 3. *He prays to God to plead his cauſe againſt his perſecutors*, ver. 6—9. 4. *He expreſſes his confidence in God that he would do ſo*, ver. 10—16. 5. *He promiſes to give God the glory of his deliverance*, ver. 17. *In this David was a type of Chriſt, who was himſelf, and ſtill is in his members, thus injured, but will certainly be righted at laſt.*

¶ [a] Shiggaion of David, which he ſang unto the LORD, [b] concerning the † words of Cuſh the Benjamite.

a Hab. iii. 1.

b 2 Sam. xvi. 7.

† Or, buſineſs.

1. O LORD my God, in thee do I put my truſt: ſave me from all them that perſecute me, and deliver me. 2. [c] Leſt he tear my ſoul like a lion, renting *it* in pieces, [d] while *there is* none to deliver. 3. O LORD my God, [e] if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands: 4. If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me: (yea, [f] I have delivered him that without cauſe is mine enemy) 5. Let the enemy perſecute my ſoul, and take *it*, yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the duſt. Selah. 6. [g] Ariſe, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyſelf, becauſe of the rage of mine enemies: and [h] awake for me to the judgment *that* thou haſt commanded. 7. So ſhall the congregation of the people compaſs thee about: for their ſakes therefore return thou on high. 8. The LORD ſhall judge the people: [i] judge me, O LORD, [k] according to my righteouſneſs, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me. 9. Oh let the wickedneſs of the wicked come to an end, but eſtabliſh the juſt: for [l] the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

c Iſa. xxxviii. 13.

d Deut. xxxii. 36.

e 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8.

f 1 Sam. xxiv. 7. & xxvi. 9.

g Pſ. xciv. 2.

h Pſ. xliv. 23.

i Pſ. xliii. 1.

k Pſ. xviii. 20. & xxxv. 24.

l 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Pſ. cxxxix. 1. Jer. xi. 20. & xvii. 10. & xx. 12. Rev. ii. 23.

v. 1—9. The perſon on whoſe account this pſalm was penned, is called Cuſh, a Benjamite; probably one of Saul's courtiers, who maligned David to his maſter. Many ſuppoſe Saul himſelf is meant under this name. Shiggaion is variouſly interpreted; from *Hab.* iii. 1. it ſhould ſeem ſome muſical inſtrument, for which this hymn was ſet. The general tenor of it expreſſes David's recourſe to God, under the reviling of his enemies, and the comfort and ſupport thence derived.

1. The pſalm opens with his profeſſed dependance upon God. *O Lord, my God*, in whom I have a ſure intereſt, and who art bound to me in the tendereſt relation, and the ſure bonds of an everlaſting covenant, *in thee do I put my truſt*, at all times, and under all difficulties. *Note*, They who thus make God their refuge, can never be moved.

2. He cries to God to ſave him from the malice of his perſecutors; ſtrong and cruel as a lion, they threatned to tear him in pieces; and he, without help in himſelf, or a friend to protect him. *Note*, When we are weak, then are we ſtrong; the more all human dependance is removed, the more ſhall we be led to truſt on God alone.

3. He appeals to God for the innocence there was in him, reſpecting the things laid to his charge. Far from deſigning Saul's death, when he lived at peace in his court, as he was accuſed, he had ſhown the greateſt tenderneſs for his life, even after Saul's cauſeleſs enmity had appeared, when God delivered him into his hand at the cave of Engedi, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 4. and again, 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 12. evidences of his innocence, which even Saul acknowledged. But if guilt were yet found in him, he imprecates the ſevereſt vengeance from his crueleſt enemies; content that God ſhould give him up into their hand, to ſuffer the loſs of honour, fame, and even life itſelf. *Note*, (1.) It is an unſpeakable comfort, under the world's malignant aſperſions, to be conſcious of our own innocence. (2.) However wicked men may ſtrive to blacken us, we have a God to appeal to, the protector of the injured; and he will make our righteouſneſs

ſhortly appear as the light, and our juſt dealings as the noon day.

4. Having lodged his appeal with God, he looks up to him as the righteous judge, and calls upon him to ariſe in anger againſt the furiouſneſs of his enemies, and enable him to aſcend the throne he had commanded him to fill, to the confuſion of his adverſaries. This requeſt he urges, [1.] For the people's ſake, *v.* 7. who, when his ſufferings ſhould end, his enemies be defeated, and his throne eſtabliſhed, would have the divine worſhip more encouraged among them under his government, and compaſs God's altar with ſongs of praiſe for his deliverance. [2.] For the glory of his own righteouſneſs, *v.* 8. when he ſhould thus appear the condemner of the wicked, and the juſtifier of the upright.

5. He prays, *Oh let the wickedneſs of the wicked come to an end*, either by their converſion, and forſaking their evil ways, or by the final coming of that bleſſed kingdom, where ſin can never enter: *but eſtabliſh the juſt*, or the righteous man, meaning himſelf, and every faithful ſoul, that in the righteouſneſs of his divine ſurety ſtands juſtified before God. He begs that God would eſtabliſh them in every divine and gracious diſpoſition; that they may be ſtrengthened with might in the inner man, and enabled to perſevere unſhaken: and in confidence of this he reſts ſatisfied; *for the righteous God trieth the hearts and the reins*, diſcovers his enemies through every veil of hypocriſy, and knoweth them that are his, though compaſſed with infirmity, and is convinced of their ſimplicity and godly ſincerity before him. *Note*, It is a bleſſed thing when we can with comfort regard the righteous God as the ſearcher of hearts.

10. † My defence *is* of God, which ſaveth the upright
in heart. 11. ‡ God judgeth the righteous, and God is
angry *with the wicked* every day. 12. If he turn not, he
will [m] whet his ſword; he hath bent his bow, and made it
ready. 13. He hath alſo prepared for him the inſtruments of death; [n] he ordaineth his arrows againſt the perſecutors. 14. Behold, [o] he travaileth with iniquity, and
hath conceived miſchief, and brought forth falſhood. 15.
§ He made a pit, and digged it, [p] and is fallen into the
ditch *which* he made. 16. [q] His miſchief ſhall return
upon his own head, and his violent dealing ſhall come
down upon his own pate. 17. [r] I will praiſe the LORD
according to his righteouſneſs: and will ſing praiſe to the
name of the LORD moſt high.

† Heb. My buckler is upon God.
‡ Or, God is a righteous judge.
[m] Deut. xxxii. 41.
[n] Ibid. 23, 42. Pſ. lxiv. 7.
[o] Job xv. 35. Iſa. lix. 4. Jam. i. 15.
§ Heb. He hath digged a pit.
[p] Eſth. vii. 10. Pſ. ix. 15. & xxxv. 8. & xciv. 23. Prov. v. 22. & xxvi. 27.
[q] 1 Kings ii. 32. Eſth. ix. 25.
[r] Rev. xix. 1, 2.

v. 10—17. The Pſalmiſt having committed his cauſe to God, concludes,

1. His ſalvation ſure. *My defence*, ſays he, *is of God*, or, my ſhield is of God: he will cover me as ſafely as under a ſhield from the arrows of my enemies: *which ſaveth the upright*; they are ſure of his protection; and *God judgeth the righteous*, is *a righteous judge*, and therefore they who approve themſelves before him, may be aſſured he will vindicate them from every accuſation. *Note*, (1.) Out of God's favour there is no ſafety; in it, no danger. (2.) Though our uprightneſs is not the cauſe of our ſalvation, yet it is an earneſt of it. (3.) Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that juſtifieth them.

2. His enemies deſtruction is certain, unleſs they repent: for *God is angry with the wicked every day*; he marks their continual provocations, and eſpecially that radical enmity of heart, which is ever working within, to bring forth fruit unto death. *If he turn not, he will whet his ſword*: God delighteth not in the death of a ſinner; he waiteth to be gracious; however great his provocations, when he returns to God, God will turn from the fierceneſs of his wrath againſt him. How ſhould ſuch goodneſs lead us to repentance! But, if he perſiſt, his ruin lieth at his own door; he hath rejected his own mercies, and muſt periſh in his iniquity. God's glittering ſword is whetting for judgment; the arrow of death is fitting to the ſtring; and all his inſtruments of vengeance ready: and ſhall we deſpiſe the long-ſuffering of our God? Sinner, tremble at thy aggravated guilt, and ſeize the moment which mercy prolongs, leſt ſlighted patience provoke implacable vengeance. Let the perſecutors of God's people eſpecially be warned; on them he will empty his quiver.

3. All the miſchievous devices of the ſinner are vain, and can end but in their own ruin: the conceptions of his deviliſh wiſdom will prove abortive; into the pit he dug for others, himſelf will fall; and all the evil he meditated againſt the innocent recoil upon his own head, and overwhelm him with miſery inſupportable.

4. David concludes with his grateful tribute of praiſe due for theſe righteous acts of the Lord. Every inſtance of ſuch divine interpoſition ſhall miniſter to him conſtant matter for a ſong of thankſgiving to the Lord moſt high. *Note*, They who, like David, are kept ever truſting, will be, like him, ever praiſing.

PSALM VIII.

This pſalm is a divine meditation on the glory of Chriſt, who is the ſubject of it, Heb. ii. 6—8. *God diſplays much of his glory in the works of creation and providence; but it is in redemption he appears moſt tranſcendently excellent, and worthy our higheſt adoration. We have here, the glory of God manifeſt*, 1. *In making the weakeſt inſtruments ſerve the grandeſt purpoſes*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *In the works of creation*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *In the incarnation of Jeſus, and the mediatorial kingdom delegated to him*, ver. 5—9.

¶ To the chief muſician [a] upon Gittith,
A pſalm of David.

[a] Pſ. lxxxi. & lxxxiv. tit.

1. O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name
in all the earth! who haſt ſet [b] thy glory above
the heavens. 2. [c] Out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength, becauſe of thine enemies,
that thou mighteſt ſtill [d] the enemy and the avenger.

[b] Pſ. cxiii. 4. & cxlviii. 13.
[c] Mat. xi. 25. & xxi. 16. 1 Cor. i. 27.
[d] Pſ. xliv. 16.

v. 1, 2. Gittith ſeems to be the inſtrument for which this pſalm was ſet. It opens with the Pſalmiſt's high admiration of the glory of God: *O Lord our God.* It is a pleaſing taſk to contemplate the divine excellencies, and his wondrous works, when we can claim an intereſt in him as our God, for *then all things are ours. How excellent is thy name in all the earth!* bright is the diſplay of glory which appears in all the works of creation and providence throughout the earth; but brighter far this glory ſhines in the eternal world, where God hath fixed his radiant throne, and angels and archangels adore him, yet cannot reach his praiſe, who hath *ſet his glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength*: by the weak things of this world, ſuch as were the apoſtles and preachers of the goſpel, whom men deſpiſed as babes and ſucklings, hath God ſent forth his mighty word, which is the power of God unto ſalvation; *becauſe of thine enemies*; either to confound them, as in the temple, when the infants lifted up their voices in Hoſannas to the confuſion and condemnation of the Scribes and Phariſees; or to convert them, when, unable to reſiſt the powerful evidence, they ſhould fall down and give glory to God. *That thou mighteſt ſtill the enemy and the avenger*, or, *cauſe him to ceaſe*; that is to ſay, the power of Satan, and his kingdom upon earth, whoſe arm is broken, and the prey of captive ſouls taken from his priſon, which he can no more recover. *Note*, (1.) The kingdom of Chriſt ſhall finally be triumphant, however deſpicable its profeſſors may now appear in the eyes of a carnal world. (2.) The weaker and more helpleſs we are before our ſpiritual foes, the more is God's glory exalted in bruiſing Satan under our feet, and making us, through faith, more than conquerors.

3. When I [e] conſider thy heavens, the work of thy
fingers, the moon and the ſtars which thou haſt ordained;
4. [f] What *is* man, that thou art mindful of him? and the
ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him? 5. For thou haſt
made him a little lower than the angels, and [g] haſt
crowned him with glory and honour. 6. [h] Thou madeſt
him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
[i] thou haſt put all *things* under his feet: 7. † All ſheep
and oxen, yea, and the beaſts of the field: 8. The
fowl of the air, and the fiſh of the ſea, *and whatſoever*
paſſeth through the paths of the ſeas. 9. O LORD our
Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

[e] Pſ. cxi. 2.
[f] Job vii. 17. Pſ. cxliv. 3. Heb. ii. 6.
[g] Eph. i. 21.
[h] Mat. xxviii. 18.
[i] 1 Cor. xv. 27. Heb. ii. 8.
† Heb. Flocks and oxen, all of them.

v. 3—9. The great condeſcenſions of the Divine Grace to man ſtill further awaken the Pſalmiſt's wonder, love, and praiſe; eſpecially the glories of the man Chriſt Jeſus, ſo highly exalted for us men, and for our ſalvation.

When I conſider the heavens, that ſtupendous frame, *the work of thy fingers*, ſo curiouſly formed, ſo aſtoniſhingly magnificent; *the moon and ſtars*, with all the various bodies, that with ſuch order revolve in their ſeveral ſpheres, *which thou haſt ordained*, or *prepared*, ſuited and admirably diſpoſed to anſwer the uſes for which they were intended; *what is man*, *Enoſh*, miſerable man, *that thou art mindful of him?* either *man in general*, to whom in a ſenſe all that is ſaid may be applicable; for whoſe benefit the heavens are ſpread abroad, the luminaries ſhine; in nature, next to angelical; in dignity, the head of this lower world; to whom all creatures are put in ſubjection, and for whoſe ſupport, uſe, and comfort, they are given. Well might this awaken our admiration, and make us aſtoniſhed at the greatneſs of the gift; but greater far is the glory put upon man, and to which the Apoſtle, *Heb.* ii. 6. applies theſe words. God hath been ſo mindful of man as to take the human nature into an hypoſtatical union with the divine, in the perſon of his own Son, who now is become the *Son of man*, and thou *viſiteſt him* with the moſt unbounded favour and regard, giving the ſpirit without meaſure unto him, and anointing him with oil of gladneſs above his fellows. *For thou haſt made him a little lower than the Elohim*; by the aſſumption of the human nature, Chriſt is inferior to the Father as touching his manhood; or *angels*, as the apoſtle interprets the word, Chriſt having taken that nature, which in excellence is inferior to the angelical, and particularly as ſubject to death and miſery: *a little*, not ſo much reſpecting the degree as the duration; but *a little while*, that is to ſay, during his days of humiliation, eſpecially when he lay in the grave, and experienced that loweſt abaſement of humanity. And all this was God's work, whatever inſtruments were uſed in the humiliation of Jeſus, to ſet forth his own glory, and magnify his grace towards the ſons of men. Thou *haſt crowned him with glory and honour*, by raiſing him from the dead, and ſetting him on the mediatorial throne on high. *Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the work of thy hands*, all things are committed into his hand, in heaven and in earth; and he is above all, King of kings, and Lord of lords. *Thou haſt put all things under his feet*, not only the affairs of this ſublunary world, and the inferior creatures here ſpecified, now again recovered for his people's benefit and uſe, but angels in heaven, and devils in hell, all own his ſovereign ſway; and men, whether his loyal ſubjects, who enjoy his protection, or his enemies, who muſt lick the duſt. Such an exaltation of our divine Lord, fills the heart with the deepeſt acknowledgment to that gracious God, who thus viſited us in our low eſtate, and above all other manifeſtations of his glory and grace, excites our higheſt admiration. *O Lord, our Lord*, now in the incarnate Jeſus eſpecially related to us, *how excellent is thy name in all the earth*. *Note*, (1.) The more we behold of the viſible glories around us, the more ſhould our hearts be led to the contemplation of the glorious author. (2.) Redemption will ever furniſh ſources of wonder and praiſe. Indeed the more we ſearch, the more we ſhall find this ocean unfathomable; and after endleſs ages ſpent in the delightful taſk, ſtill cry, O the length, and breadth, and depth, and heighth of love that paſſeth knowledge.

PSALM IX.

In this pſalm, 1. *David praiſeth God for victory over his enemies*, ver. 16. 2. *He comforts himſelf in the righteous judgment of God, and the protection of his people*, ver. 7—10, 18. 3. *He prays for freſh matter of praiſe*, ver. 13, 14, 19, 20. 4. *He rejoices in the final deſtruction of the ungodly*, ver. 15—17. *And this is very applicable to the kingdom of the Meſſiah, the enemies of which have been in part deſtroyed already, and ſhall be yet more and more, till they all be made his footſtool; which we are to aſſure ourſelves of, that God may have the glory, and we may take the comfort.*

¶ To the chief muſician upon Muth-labben,

A pſalm of David.

1. I WILL praiſe *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart, I will ſhew forth [a] all thy marvellous works. 2. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will ſing praiſe to thy name, O [b] thou moſt High. 3. When mine enemies are turned back, they ſhall fall and periſh at thy preſence. 4. For [c] thou haſt † maintained my right and my cauſe, thou ſatteſt in the throne judging ‡ right. 5. Thou haſt rebuked the heathen, thou haſt deſtroyed the wicked, [d] thou haſt put out their name for ever and ever. 6. ‖ O thou enemy, deſtructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou haſt deſtroyed cities, their memorial is periſhed with them. 7. But [e] the LORD ſhall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. 8. And [f] he ſhall judge the world in righteouſneſs, he ſhall miniſter judgment to the people in uprightneſs. 9. [g] The LORD alſo will be a refuge for the oppreſſed, a refuge [h] in times of trouble. 10. And [i] they that know thy name, will put their truſt in thee: for [k] thou, LORD, haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee.

[a] Rev. xv. 3.
[b] Pſal. lxxxiii. 18. 1 Tim. i. 17.
[c] Luke xviii. 7, 8.
† Heb. Made my judgment.
‡ Heb. In righteouſneſs.
[d] Prov. x. 7.
‖ Or the deſtructions of the enemy are come, &c. and their cities haſt thou, &c.
[e] Pſal. cii. 12.
[f] Ibid. xcvi. 13. & xcviii. 9.
[g] Pſal. xxxvii. 39. & xlvi. 1. & xci. 2. Iſa. iv. 6.
[h] Heb. iv. 16.
[i] 2 Tim. i. 12.
[k] 2 Tim. iv. 17.

v. 1—10. The occaſion of this pſalm ſeems to be ſome victory obtained over his enemies. Muth-labben is probably the muſical inſtrument which accompanied the voice. He begins,

1. With praiſe and joy, *v.* 1, 2. His whole heart was engaged; if not in perfection, yet in ſincerity, to ſhew forth God's marvellous works; and all of them, ſo far as his memory could reach, eſpecially the many and ſignal aſſiſtances the moſt High had given him againſt his numerous foes. *Note*, (1.) In all our ſucceſs, let God have the praiſe. (2.) Whilſt proſperity makes us thankful, our chief joy muſt ſtill be in the God of our mercies. (3.) Since God hath ever proved himſelf the moſt High, no danger ſhould diſtreſs, no enemies diſmay us.

2. He aſcribes the power unto God, *v.* 3. It was not his own arm, but the preſence and power of the Lord that turned back with confuſion his foes, and ſmote them to the ground. Thus the preſence of Jeſus, *John* xviii. 6. confounded the band who approached to ſeize him; and when he ſhall ſit on the throne of judgment, before his preſence the ungodly muſt fall and periſh for ever.

3. God's righteouſneſs was herein manifeſted, *v.* 4. A righteous cauſe God then owned and vindicated; and on this throne of judgment ſtill he ſits, to reſcue thoſe that are oppreſſed with wrong. And hither, under every unjuſt ſentence of man we may ſtill appeal; and though now ſuffering innocence may find no advocate, and unbelief would ſuggeſt that the Lord hath forſaken the earth, the day is at hand when every wrong ſhall be righted, and God appear juſt in his judgments. What a comfort to the ſufferers in the cauſe of God and truth?

4. The triumphs of God over his enemies are recorded; over Goliath and the Philiſtines, whoſe ravages were ſtopped, their army routed, and their cities deſtroyed. And over his ſpiritual foes, *Thou haſt rebuked the heathen*, by that goſpel that confounded the idolatry of the heathen; *thou haſt deſtroyed the wicked*, the perſecuting powers of Rome pagan; and as what is purpoſed in the divine counſels, may be regarded as already compleated, *the enemy*, v. 6. antichriſt, and all his adherents, ſhall periſh together; their ruin ſhall be compleat and final, and their name and memorial be blotted out from under heaven. *Note*, (1.) Though the wicked proſper for a moment, they are marked for deſtruction. (2.) When God begins, he will make an end. (3.) It is matter of triumph to the people of God, when they ſee the powers of antichriſt breaking, and an earneſt of his final and eternal ruin.

5. He takes comfort from the views of the enduring kingdom, and righteous government of God. When all his foes are fallen, *the Lord ſhall endure for ever*; *he hath prepared his throne for judgment*, the great white throne, on which he is ready to appear, and pronounce the eternal ſtate of angels and men. *He ſhall judge the world in righteouſneſs*, for all judgment is committed unto him; and from his deciſions, as there lies no appeal, ſo ſhall the equity of them be acknowledged by the damned themſelves. *The Lord will be a refuge for the oppreſſed, a refuge in times of trouble*, and many are the troubles of the righteous within, from corruption, affliction, temptation, deſertion: without, from the ceaſeleſs enmity of the world that lieth in wickedneſs. But bleſſed be God, we have a refuge to fly to in the arms of Jeſus, who is now our preſent help in every time of trouble; and though he may for a time permit our enemy to oppreſs us, ſoon will he appear as our eternal refuge, to lodge us there where the wicked muſt ceaſe from troubling. *And they that know thy name*, are acquainted experimentally with the gracious promiſes made in the word of truth by Jeſus Chriſt, *will put their truſt in thee*, though long or ſeverely exerciſed with trials and troubles, will patiently wait to ſee the ſalvation of God; and ſuch will never be diſappointed of their hope, *for thou, Lord, haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee*. *Never haſt*, as the experience of all paſt ages teſtifies, never *wilt*, as the immutable promiſes that cannot deceive, aſſure us. Happy therefore is the man that putteth his truſt in thee.

11. Sing praiſes to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion; declare among the people his doings. 12. [l] When he maketh inquiſition for blood, [m] he remembreth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the † humble. 13. Have mercy upon me, O LORD, [n] conſider my trouble *which I ſuffer* of them that hate me, thou [o] that lifteſt me up from the gates of death: 14. That I may ſhew forth all thy praiſe in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy ſalvation. 15. [p] The heathen are ſunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid, is their own foot taken. 16. The LORD is known by the judgment *which* he executeth: the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands. ‡ [q] Higgaion, Selah. 17. The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations [r] that forget God. 18. For [s] the needy ſhall not alway be forgotten; the expectation of the poor ſhall *not* periſh for ever. 19. Ariſe, O LORD, let not man prevail, let the heathen be judged in thy ſight. 20. Put them in fear, O LORD: *that* the nations may know themſelves *to be but* men. Selah.

[l] Gen. ix. 5.
[m] Rev. xvi. 6.
† Or afflicted.
[n] Lam. i. 9.
[o] 2 Cor. i. 10.
[p] Pſal. xvii. 15.
‡ i. e. Meditation.
[q] Pſal. xix. 14. & xcii. 3.
[r] Pſal. l. 22.
[s] Ibid. xii. 5.

v. 11—20. David here proceeds,

1. To engage others with him in the delightful work of praiſe. *Sing praiſes unto the Lord which dwelleth in Zion*, the place where the ſymbols of his conſtant preſence reſted: *declare among the people his doings*, his diſplays of grace, power, and love towards his choſen. *When he maketh inquiſition for blood*, the blood of ſaints, ſpilt by the ungodly, and all the evils inflicted on them, *he remembreth them*; either his ſaints, who, notwithſtanding all their ſufferings, are not forgotten by him, nor a

drop of their blood unnoticed: or the wicked, he remembreth their deeds, and will recompenſe them as they deſerve. *He forgetteth not the cry of the humble*, who, under the chaſtiſing rod, bow down, and renouncing every hope in themſelves, look up to him; though he ſeem not ſometimes to hear their cry, they are not forgotten of him, he will avenge them ſpeedily. Having thus encouraged others to praiſe and truſt him, David,

2. Offers his prayer for the continuance of the mercies he had experienced. His troubles were many; ſometimes he ſeemed brought to the very gates of death, whilſt his enemies purſued him with implacable hatred. And thus ſorely beſet is every faithful ſoul; and often in the apprehenſion of ſenſe, near the borders of the pit, from the prevalence of the powers of darkneſs. But he cries with *David, have mercy upon me*, and then experiences God's ſupporting hand, *thou that lifteſt me up from the gates of death*, haſt done ſo from ſpiritual, and wilt from temporal and eternal death. And this is glorioſly applicable to the great Redeemer, for whom God opened the gates of the grave, and lifted him triumphant from the bed of death, as he will alſo do for every believer in the great reſurrection day.

3. Theſe continued mercies would engage his conſtant praiſe in *the gates of the daughter of* Zion, the church of God, and *I will rejoice in thy ſalvation*, as compleat, final, and eternal: and ſuch is the ſalvation of Jeſus for all his people, and the juſt matter of their never-ending joys.

4. He foreſees, as *Pſal.* v. 11, 15. the deſtruction of the ungodly by their own devices; who, when moſt inveterate againſt him, aſſemble only to be broken to pieces, *Rev.* xvi. 16. xix. 19. At preſent, the wicked often find in the ways of wickedneſs the ruin which attends them, in diſeaſes, poverty, and hereafter hell is ordained for their reception; *where all the nations*, be they ever ſo great or numerous, *who forget God*, which is the cauſe of all other wickedneſs, and the ſummit of it, being the atheiſm of the heart, ſhall have their portion in everlaſting burnings. And *the Lord is known in the judgment he executeth*, the equity of his procedure will be evident, and the multitude of thoſe who periſh will bring no impeachment on his mercy or juſtice, ſince it is *the work of their own hands.* Higgaion, Selah. Let the ſaints of God conſider and praiſe him for his judgments, and when the ſmoak of the ſinner's torment aſcends, ſay Hallelujah! *Rev.* xix. 3, 4.

5. He encourages the poor oppreſſed people of God to wait upon him. They ſhall not be forgotten; and though their expectations be deferred, they ſhall not periſh for ever. Patient hope ſhall ſhortly receive the crown of eternal fruition.

6. He concludes with an urgent call to God, to *ariſe*, and cut ſhort his work in righteouſneſs. *Let not man prevail*, my enemies in general, or the *man of ſin* in particular, Saul; *let the heathen be judged in thy ſight*, brought to the bar, and receive their final doom. *Put them in fear, O Lord*, impreſs thy terrors on their conſcience, that they may repent as thoſe who know themſelves ſinful men; or rather confound them with ſuch a panic, that notwithſtanding all their threatnings, they may feel their weakneſs, and know how unequal the conteſt is between an arm of fleſh, and the ſword of omnipotence. Selah. My ſoul, wait thou ſtill on the Lord, and thou ſhalt ſee the ſalvation of God!

PSALM X.

The Septuagint tranſlation joins this pſalm with the ninth, and makes them but one, as it doth the cxv. *to the* cxiv. *and to compleat the number of* 150. *the* cxvi. *and the* cxlvii. *are each divided into two. In this pſalm, David deſcribes,* 1. *The pride, cruelty, and impiety of the wicked,* ver. 1—11. 2. *He prays in faith to God to appear in behalf of his people,* ver. 12—18. *This deſcription of the man of the earth, may well be ſuppoſed to refer to* the man of ſin, *to whom the characters here mentioned eminently agree, and whoſe deſolations are determined at the appearing of our great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

1. WHY ſtandeſt thou afar off, O LORD? *why*
hideſt thou *thyſelf* in times of trouble? 2.
The wicked [a] in *his* pride doth perſecute the poor: [b] let
them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.
3. For the wicked boaſteth of his heart's deſire, [c] and
† bleſſeth the covetous, *whom* the LORD abhorreth.
4. The wicked through the pride of his countenance [d]
will not ſeek *after God*: ‡ [e] God *is* not in all his thoughts.
5. His ways are always grievous; [f] thy judgments *are*
far above out of his ſight: *as for* all his enemies, [g] he
puffeth at them. 6. He hath ſaid in his heart, [h] I ſhall
not be moved: for I *ſhall* never *be* in adverſity. 7. [i] His
mouth is full of curſing, and deceit, and fraud: under
his tongue *is* miſchief and [k] vanity. 8. He ſitteth in the
lurking-places of the villages: [l] in the ſecret places doth
he murder the innocent: [m] his eyes are privily ſet againſt
the poor. 9. [n] He lieth in wait ſecretly as a lion in his
den: [o] he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch
the poor when he draweth him into his net. 10. He
croucheth *and* humbleth himſelf, that the poor may fall
‖ by his ſtrong ones. 11. He hath ſaid in his heart,
God hath forgotten: [p] he hideth his face, [q] he will never
ſee *it.*

[a] Iſa. x. 13.
[b] Pſal. vii. 15, 16. & ix. 15, 16. Prov. v. 22.
[c] Ibid. xxviii. 4. Rom. i. 32.
† Or the covetous bleſſeth himſelf, he abhors the Lord.
[d] Pſal. xiv. 2.
‡ Or all his thoughts are, there is no God.
[e] Pſal. xiv. 1. & liii. 1.
[f] Prov. xxiv. 7.
[g] Pſal. xii. 5.
[h] Rev. xviii. 7.
[i] Rom. iii. 14.
[k] Pſal. xii. 2.
[l] Hab. iii. 14.
[m] Pſal. xvii. 11.
[n] Ibid. 12.
[o] Mic. vii. 2.
‖ Or in his ſtrong parts.
[p] Job xxii. 13. Pſal. lxxiii. 11. & xciv. 7.
[q] Ezek. viii. 12. & ix. 9.

v. 1—11. Two things the pſalmiſt complains of,

1. The diſtance of God from him, and the hiding of his face in the times of trouble, when moſt he needed the light of his countenance to chear and comfort him. *Note*, (1.) The withdrawing of God's gracious preſence, is one of the heavieſt burdens of a believer's heart. (2.) The greateſt ſaints uſually undergo the ſevereſt exerciſes of their faith; without are fightings, within fears. (3.) If we are at any time left in a ſtate of darkneſs, and deadneſs, it becomes us to enquire if there be not a cauſe, and whether it is not for the correction of our unfaithfulneſs.

2. The prevalence of the wicked, whoſe character in ſtrong and ſtriking colours he ſets forth. Their general character is *The wicked*, and the various branches of it are reckoned up. [1.] He is proud, *v.* 2. this is the fruitful ſtock, from whence all evil ſprings. [2.] A perſecutor: when man vainly conceits himſelf the ſtandard of all that is wiſe, then to diſſent from his opinion becomes a heinous offence, and *the poor* are perſecuted; the poor in ſpirit, as well as thoſe whoſe worldly circumſtances expoſe them more eaſily to oppreſſion: *are burned*, ſo ſome tranſlate it; for thus have many ſaints and martyrs finiſhed their glorious teſtimony. *Let them be taken in the devices they have imagined*, or *they ſhall be taken*, either it is a prayer that the wicked may meet their juſt doom, or an intimation of their ſucceſsful progreſs in perſecuting the ſaints of God, who ſeem for a time given up into their hands. [3.] A boaſter, *v.* 3. becauſe he ſeems for a while to proſper, he impiouſly concludes the day is his own. [4.] Covetous: the friend of the worldling, commending his parſimony as prudence, calling his idolatrous attachment to the world minding the main chance, and counting thoſe happy who have their portion in this life, whom God abhors. [5.] Prayerleſs: *He will not ſeek after God*, which is among the ſureſt marks of an impenitent heart. [6.] Careleſs about God, or religion, leaving him far above out of his ſight, and never concerning himſelf whether he be pleaſed or diſpleaſed, for *God is not in all his thoughts*; or atheiſtical, as it may be rendered; there is *no God, ſay all his thoughts.* [7.] Diſobedient: *His ways are always grievous* to God and man, being a conſtant violation of his duties to both. [8.] Impenitent: *Thy judgments are far above out of his ſight*, he pays no more regard to the ſtrokes of God's vengeance, than to the command of his law. [9.] Inſolent: *as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them*, defying and deſpiſing all his foes, as if able to cruſh them with the breath of his lips, as is ſeen in the anathemas of antichriſt. [10.] Secure: *he hath ſaid in his heart, I ſhall not be moved: for I ſhall never be in adverſity*, notwithſtanding all the Divine threatnings are againſt him, *Rev.* xvii. 7. [11.] Profane: *his mouth is full of curſing*, oaths and blaſphemies are in in his ordinary converſation. [12.] Treacherous: full *of deceit and fraud*, he ſticks at no lie to gain his purpoſe, and lays it down as a maxim, that no faith is to be kept with thoſe he brands as hereticks. [13.] Heretical: *under his tongue is miſchief and vanity*, falſe and damnable doctrines, that, like the ſerpent's poiſon, corrupt the ſoul; whilſt thoſe who follow them are not aware of their vanity, and that there is a lie in their right hand. [14.] Bloody-minded: the innocent are murdered, *v.* 8. for as a lion ſecretly he lies in wait to deſtroy. Thus corrupters ſeek to enſnare the unſuſpicious, and eſpecially the emiſſaries of the man of ſin labour to delude and deſtroy the ſouls of men. [15.] Hypocritical: making the faireſt ſhews of humility and kindneſs, in order, as the crouching lion, to ſeize more ſurely his prey; for there is no meanneſs to which pride will not ſtoop to compaſs its ends. And thus he that calls himſelf *God upon earth*, annexes to his boaſting that humbling title of a *ſervant of ſervants.* [16.] Blaſphemous: *he hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never ſee it*, which is in effect denying God's being, as it robs him of his omniſcience, truth, and holineſs. And this is all the miſerable ſupport, the hopeleſs hope of the wicked; for if there be a God that taketh notice of the concerns of men, then his ruin is certain, and his damnation inevitable. Let theſe characters be well pondered; wherever they are found, there the eternal wrath of God abides.

12. [r] Ariſe, O LORD, O God, lift up thine hand:
forget not the † humble. 13. [s] Wherefore doth the
wicked contemn God? he hath ſaid in his heart, Thou
wilt not require *it.* 14. Thou haſt ſeen *it*, for thou beholdeſt
miſchief and ſpite to requite *it* with thy hand: the
poor [t] committeth himſelf unto thee, [u] thou art the helper
of the fatherleſs. 15. [x] Break thou the arm of the wicked,

[r] Pſal. lxxxii. 8.
† Or afflicted.
[s] Pſal. lxxiv. 10.
[t] 2 Tim. i. 12.
[u] Pſal. lxviii. 5. Hoſ. xiv. 3.
[x] Pſal. xxxvii. 17.

ed, and the evil *man:* ſeek out his wickedneſs *till* thou
find none. 16. [y] The LORD *is* King for ever and ever:
the heathen are periſhed out of his land. 17. LORD,
thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble: [z] thou wilt ‡
prepare their heart, [a] thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear:
18. [b] To judge the fatherleſs and the oppreſſed, that the
man of the earth may no more ‖ oppreſs.

y Pſal. cxlv. 13. & cxlvi. 10. Jer. x. 10. Dan. iv. 34. & vi. 26. 1 Tim. i. 17.
z Prov. xvi. 1.
‡ Or eſtabliſh.
a Iſa. lxv. 24.
b Ver. 14.
‖ Or terrify.

v. 12—18. Having repreſented his own diſtreſs, and the wickedneſs of his enemies, David calls upon God to *ariſe*; not that he ſleeped, and needed to be awaked, but to manifeſt the notice he took of the ungodly, to puniſh them, and the remembrance he had of the humble to protect them. *Lift up thy hand, forget not the poor*, and high time it was to curb the inſolence of the wicked, now exalted to the higheſt pitch, *contemning God*, his threatnings, omniſcience, and judgments; *he hath ſaid in his heart, thou wilt not require it. Note*, Confidence of impunity is the great encouragement to ſin, but how vain is the hope of the hypocrite? *Thou haſt ſeen it*, for from thine all-ſearching eye nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret; nor is there any darkneſs or ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves; *for thou beholdeſt miſchief and ſpite*, their inveterate malice againſt thy people, though but conceived in thought, *to requite it with thy hand*, in puniſhment adequate to their provocations. *The poor committeth himſelf unto thee*, in confidence he ſhall not be diſappointed, whether for body or ſoul, for time or eternity, he leaveth all his cares in the hands of a faithful creator, for *thou art the helper of the fatherleſs*; thoſe who like me are deſtitute, and unable to provide for themſelves, find in thee a guardian and protector. Therefore in anſwer to their humble confidence, *break thou the arm of the wicked and evil*, be they men or devils, diſappoint their devices, and reſtrain their malice; *ſeek out his wickedneſs till thou find none*, make thorough inquiſition, and leave none of his iniquities unpuniſhed. And this the faithful may aſſuredly expect, for *the Lord is king for ever and ever*, to protect his loyal ſubjects, to deſtroy his rebellious foes, and this for ever and ever; his puniſhments and rewards are both everlaſting. Therefore *the heathen are periſhed out of the land*; by David's victories they were expelled from Canaan; by the more glorious victories of the ſon of David, not a Canaanite ſhall be ſhortly left in the believer's heart; and when the Lord Jeſus ſhall appear, to put a final period to the kingdom of antichriſt, and reign over his ſaints gloriouſly, not one ſinner ſhall be ſuffered to have a place in that new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs. *Lord, thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble:* the ſecret prayers, which ariſe inwardly in the heart, God notices before the mouth ſpeaks, and grants the requeſt of the humble. *Thou wilt prepare their heart*, pouring out upon them a ſpirit of ſupplication, and teaching them how to pray; or *confirm their heart*, enable them to truſt, and not be afraid. *Thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear*, thou haſt, and thou wilt continue to do ſo; ever attentive to the prayers of thy people, and ready to give more than they are able to aſk or think. *To judge the fatherleſs and oppreſſed*, to plead their cauſe, and reſcue them from wrong; *that the man of the earth may oppreſs no more*, that wicked men in general, and the perſecuting antichriſtian power alluded to in particular, may be utterly and finally deſtroyed, in the day when the glorious angel ſhall proclaim, Επεσεν επεσε Βαϐυλων, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and Jeſus ſhall compleat the ſalvation of his people, and put all their enemies and his for ever under their feet. Well may every faithful ſoul with eager expectation cry, Lord, how long?

PSALM XI.

David, in this pſalm, repels the temptation which his fearful friends beſet him with, to ſhake his confidence in God, adviſing him to fly his country, to avoid Saul's purſuit. 1. *He tells what the temptation was*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He repels it with the conſideration of God's love to the righteous, and his wrath kept in ſtore for the wicked*, ver. 4—7.

¶ To the chief muſician,

A pſalm of David.

About 1060.

1. IN the LORD put I my truſt: [a] how ſay ye to
my ſoul, Flee *as* a bird † to [b] your mountain. 2.
For lo [c] the wicked bend *their* bow, [d] they make ready
their arrow upon the ſtring: that they may ‡ privily
ſhoot at the upright in heart. 3. If [d] the foundations
be deſtroyed, what can the righteous do?

a 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.
† Or from.
b 1 Sam. xxiii. 14.
c Pſal. lxiv. 3, 4.
‡ Heb. In darkneſs.
d Pſal. lxxv. 3 & lxxxii. 5.

v. 1—3. Temptation and prayer brighten the chriſtian's ſoul; none were ever more exerciſed with the one, or abundant in the other, than the ſon of Jeſſe. We have him here,

1. Expreſſing his confidence in God, as an anſwer to the temptation ſuggeſted to him. *In the Lord put I my truſt*, not in any human contrivances, nor human help, but ſolely on him, whoſe faithfulneſs and truth ſhall be my ſhield and buckler. *Note*, Fixed and abiding faith in God, like an anchor, ſure and ſteadfaſt, keeps the ſoul unmoved in every ſtorm.

2. Repelling the temptation ſuggeſted to him by his fearful friends. *How ſay ye to my ſoul, flee as a bird to your mountain*, to ſome place of ſafety from Saul's attempt, or *from his mountain*, from the mountain where he ſheltered himſelf in Judea, to ſome more diſtant country. *For lo! the wicked bend their bow*, Saul, thy avowed enemy; *they make ready the arrow upon the ſtring, that they may privily ſhoot at the upright in heart*, at thee, innocent as thou art, and thy friends who adhere to thee; and all attempts to plead againſt ſuch unreaſonable men, are vain: for *if the foundations are deſtroyed* of all equity and upright adminiſtration, *what can the righteous do?* there is no hope of redreſs, and innocence muſt ſuffer. *Note*, (1.) Our soreſt temptations come as often from our friends as foes. (2.) Uprightneſs is no protection from perſecution; the moſt blameleſs characters muſt expect in the world to meet the greateſt malignity. No marvel: they teſtify of the world, that its deeds are evil.

4. [e] The LORD *is* in his holy temple; the LORD's
throne *is* in heaven: [f] his eyes behold, [g] his eye-lids try
the children of men. 5. The LORD trieth the righteous:
but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his
ſoul hateth. 6. [h] Upon the wicked he ſhall rain † ſnares,
fire and brimſtone, and an ‡ horrible tempeſt: [i] *this ſhall
be* the portion of their cup. 7. For [k] the righteous
LORD loveth righteouſneſs, his countenance doth behold
the upright.

e Hab. ii. 20.
f Pſal. xxxiv. 15, 16. & lxvi. 7.
g Pſal. vii. 9.
h Gen. xix. 24. Ezek. xxxviii. 22.
† Or quick burning coals.
‡ Or burning.
i Pſal. lxxv. 8. Ezek. xxiii. 33, 34.
k Pſ. xlv. 7.

v. 4—7. The Pſalmiſt ſuggeſts here the ſolid grounds on which his truſt was founded, in oppoſition to all unbelieving fears.

The Lord is in his holy temple, high and lifted up, able to ſee and to defeat the councils of the wicked: *the Lord's throne is in heaven*, a throne of grace for all the needy ſupplicants; a throne of juſtice, for all who are oppreſſed with wrong; a throne of judgment, to condemn and ſentence the wicked to his deſerved puniſhment. *His eyes behold*, he is acquainted with all the difficulties and diſtreſſes of his ſuffering people; *his eyelids try the children of men*, piercing the ſecret receſſes of their boſoms, and beholding every device conceived againſt his choſen ones; and therefore having ſuch a guardian, they may contentedly truſt him. *For the Lord trieth the righteous*, puts them in the furnace of affliction, not to conſume, but purify them, to ſtrengthen their faith, exerciſe their patience, and make his great love more known to them. *But the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his ſoul hateth*; however at preſent they may ſeem proſperous, and not plagued like other men, there is a lowring cloud over their head, ready to burſt in an eternal ſtorm. The day is near, even at the door, when *upon the wicked*, thoſe who perſiſt in their iniquities, and die as they live, ſervants of corruption, *he ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and a horrible tempeſt*; ſudden as a ſnare it ſhall ſeize them, and horrible, yea infinitely more horrible than that ſtorm of vengeance which broke upon the devoted cities of Sodom and Gomorrah ſhall this tempeſt of Divine wrath overtake them; the ſcorching fire conſuming the body, curſt only with immortality to be tormented, and furious blaſts of his diſpleaſure beating upon his guilty ſoul, with anguiſh unutterable and eternal. Read, ſinner, and tremble, for *this is the portion of thy cup*. The ſweet draughts of ſin that now intoxicate thee, will put into thy hand this cup of trembling, to be thy portion for ever and for ever. *For the righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs*, and delights to manifeſt it by ſuch exemplary puniſhment on the ſinner, and protection of thoſe, who from a divine principle of faith and love, walk in holineſs before him. *His countenance doth behold the upright*, he regards them with the tokens of his favour, lifts up now the light of his countenance to comfort and ſupport them, and will bring them to that beatific viſion, where in glory they ſhall ſee him face to face. Happy the people that are in ſuch a caſe!

PSALM XII.

David in this pſalm complains to God of the treachery of his falſe friends, and the inſolence of his ſworn enemies. 1. *He begs God to help him*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He foretells the flatterer's doom*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *He aſſures us that God will preſerve his people in the worſt of times*, ver. 5—8. *And this pſalm, in all bad times, may ſtill afford comfort and ſtrength to every godly man.*

¶ To the chief muſician [a] upon Sheminith,

A pſalm of David.

a Pſal. vi. Title.

1. † HELP, LORD, for [b] the godly man ceaſeth;
for the faithful fail from among the children of
men. 2. [c] They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour:

† Or ſave.
b Iſa. lvii. 1. Mic. vii. 2.
c Pſal. x. 7.

bour: [d] *with* flattering lips, *and* with ‡ a double heart do they ſpeak.

[d] Pſ. xxviii. 3. Jer. ix. 4, 5, 8.
‡ Heb. a heart, and a heart.

v. 1, 2. It hath been the juſt complaint of God's ſaints in every age, how few faithful could be found. David here with deep concern bewails it; and ſince he could find ſo few like-minded with himſelf, whilſt in general all purſued the ways of ſin and vanity, he flies to God for help. *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaſeth*; *for the faithful fail from among the children of men.* Bad times indeed, when piety towards God is decayed, and honeſty to men ceaſes; when all ſeek their own, not the things which be of Jeſus Chriſt. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour*, or lies: *with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they ſpeak.* Hypocrites, who by fair ſpeeches deceive the unwary, profeſſing to ſerve them, but meaning themſelves. Theſe cannot but be perilous days, and we have need earneſtly to cry to God, Save us from the abounding iniquity in the world.

3. The LORD ſhall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue [e] that ſpeaketh proud things. 4. Who have ſaid, With our tongue will we prevail, our lips *are* our own: Who *is* lord over us? 5. For the oppreſſion of the poor, for the ſighing of the needy, [f] now will I ariſe, (ſaith the LORD) I will ſet *him* in ſafety *from him* [g] *that* † puffeth at him. 6. [h] The words of the LORD *are* pure words: [i] *as* ſilver tried in a furnace of earth, purified ſeven times. 7. Thou ſhalt keep them, O LORD, thou ſhalt preſerve ‡ them from this generation for ever. 8. The wicked walk on every ſide, when the vileſt men are exalted.

[e] Dan. vii. 8, 25.
[f] Iſa. xxxiii. 10.
[g] Pſ. x. 5.
† Or lays ſnares for him.
[h] Pſ. xix. 9.
[i] Pſ. xviii. 30. & cxix. 140. Prov. xxx. 5.
‡ Heb. him, i. e. every one of them.

v. 3—8. What David prays for, his faith ſees ready to be accompliſhed. *The Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lips*, by judgments from the earth, and give them ſhortly their portion with liars in the burning lake, and *the tongue that ſpeaketh proud things.* None ſo high but God can humble them, his ſword ſhall ſmite all the children of pride. *Note*, Pride will have a fall; the ſinner muſt either fall low before a throne of grace, to ſupplicate pardon, or deep into the belly of hell, where a drop of water will be wanting to cool a flaming tongue. The character of the proud is here deſcribed, *Who have ſaid, With our tongues will we prevail*; by eloquence carry the cauſe againſt truth and juſtice; or, as if they need but ſpeak the word and it is done. Such high conceits does pride generate. *Our lips are our own: Who is Lord over us?* caſting off the government of God, and deifying themſelves, as if bound to give account of none of their words, and renouncing the authority of the Almighty. But they will be diſappointed, there is one who obſerves all the high imaginations, and hard ſpeeches of ungodly ſinners, and will not ſuffer them to paſs with impunity: for in the heighth of their inſolence, God will make bare his arm, and ſhew them to their coſt who is Lord over them. *For the oppreſſion of the poor*, that groan like Iſrael in Egypt, under the afflictions they endure, and *for the ſighing of the needy, now will I ariſe, ſaith the Lord*, when the arrogance of the proud is at the heighth, and his people's patience ready to fail; in that critical time he will ariſe to confound the one, to reſcue the other; *I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him*, or *breathes* out threatning and ſlaughter as Paul, or *lays ſnares for him*, which ſhall be broken in pieces, and the ſouls of the righteous delivered as a bird from the net of the fowler. *Note*, God's time is the beſt time, and if we have but faith, he will not fail; for *the words of the Lord are pure words*, proceeding from the fountain of purity, and therefore can never diſappoint or deceive thoſe who truſt on them; *as ſilver tried in a furnace of earth, purified ſeven times*, or more precious than the moſt refined ſilver, and pure from all human mixture and adulteration. *Thou ſhalt keep them, O Lord*, as a promiſe; or it may be read, *keep them, O Lord*, as a prayer; to wit, the poor and needy, that truſt in thee, from all the power of evil, from the ſnares of the enemy, and from final and total apoſtacy; *thou ſhalt preſerve them from this generation for ever*; from the wickedneſs of it, that they be not corrupted, and from their perſecutors that they be not deſtroyed, and this for ever; for in all ages, and all places, this promiſe is ſure to all the ſeed. Bleſſed be God we are not in our own keeping, but in ſo much better hands; ſo able to preſerve us falling, and ſo faithful as never to forſake us: we are ſafe therefore, though *the wicked walk on every ſide, when the vileſt of men are exalted*, have the power and dominion here below: or, as the latter clauſe may be rendered, *according to their exaltation ſhall be their vileneſs.* They ſhall fall as low in miſery as they have been exalted in dignity, and gloried in iniquity.

PSALM XIII.

In this pſalm we have the deſerted ſoul's caſe and cure. 1. *David complains of inward deſertion, and outward oppoſition*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He begs of God to conſider his caſe, and comfort him*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *He aſſures himſelf of an anſwer of peace, and therefore concludes the pſalm with joy and triumph, becauſe he foreſees his deliverance as good as wrought*, ver. 5, 6.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. HOW long wilt thou forget me, O LORD, for ever? [a] how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? 2. How long ſhall I take counſel in my ſoul, *having* ſorrow in my heart daily? how long ſhall mine enemy be exalted over me? 3. Conſider, *and* hear me, O LORD my God: [b] lighten mine eyes, [c] leſt I ſleep *the ſleep* of death; 4. [d] Leſt mine enemy ſay, I have prevailed againſt him; *and* thoſe that trouble me, rejoice when I am moved. 5. But I have truſted in thy mercy, my heart ſhall rejoice in thy ſalvation. 6. I will ſing unto the LORD, becauſe [e] he hath dealt bountifully with me.

[a] Deut. xxxi. 17. Pſ. xliv. 24. & lxxxix. 46.
[b] Eph. i. 18.
[c] Jer. li. 39.
[d] Pſ. xxv. 2.
[e] Pſ. cxvi. 7. & cxlii. 7.

v. 1—6. Though caſt down by affliction, whilſt we have a throne of grace open, we never need deſpair. Hither David flies with his complaints and prayers.

1. He bewails his preſent dejected ſtate, and expoſtulates with God on the length and ſeverity of his ſufferings. *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?* Not that God's all-comprehending mind ever forgets, or that his people eſpecially are neglected or forſaken of him; but it is the language of unbelieving fear, by which our fooliſh hearts aggravate their ſorrows. *For ever?* Every moment ſeems long to the afflicted, eſpecially to thoſe, who, as the ſummit of their other griefs, experience darkneſs and deſertion in their ſouls. *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* with this ſupport all other evils would be tolerable, but this withdrawn, adds aggravated weight to the burden. *How long ſhall I take counſel in my ſoul?* uncertain how to act, and filled with anxious care; whilſt, in a labyrinth of trials, no way appears to extricate myſelf from them, *having ſorrow in my heart daily.* *Note*, (1.) Long and daily ſorrows are often the ſevere exerciſe of a chriſtian's faith. (2.) Our anxiety, and vain contrivances to help ourſelves, often add to our burden, and, like birds fluttering in a net, but the more entangle us. *How long ſhall mine enemy be exalted over me?* either Saul or Abſalom, or his ſpiritual enemies; for in our chriſtian warfare, every faithful ſoul ſometimes finds to his bitter grief the prevalence of ſin.

2. In his diſtreſs, when ſore thruſt at, that he ſhould fall, and the length of his trials almoſt overcoming his hopes of relief, he lifts up his heart to God. *Conſider*, look upon my diſtreſſed caſe with concern for my ſuffering; *and hear me* mourn in my prayer, *O Lord my God*, in whom I will ſtill truſt, though thou ſlay me. Thou art my God, and I will never quit my plea of intereſt in thy regard. *Note*, If we can ſay, *my God*, under our deepeſt trials, ſurely there is hope of their end. The matter of his prayer is, *Lighten mine eyes*, dim with ſorrows and fear; ſhine into me to diſpel the clouds of unbelief; guide me in the way, that I may ſee the door of eſcape open; and be refreſhed and comforted after this night of ſpiritual darkneſs, *leſt I ſleep the ſleep of death*, pine away in my body, decay in my ſoul, or periſh in my iniquities. *Note*, Though God's purpoſes are all ſure, and his people cannot periſh finally and eternally; yet they may be tempted to deſpair, and be brought into ſuch circumſtances as will awaken moſt jealous fears for themſelves.

3. He urges the malicious pleaſure his enemies would take in his fall, and the diſhonour conſequently which would be caſt on God. *Leſt mine enemy ſay, I have prevailed againſt him*; for Satan triumphs in the ſucceſs of his devices; *and thoſe that trouble me*, my perſecuting foes, *rejoice when I am moved*; tempted to ſin, or to deſpair under it. *Note*, The world takes a malicious pleaſure in the chriſtian's fall; and men are happy if they can find any thing to make them hope he is no better than themſelves.

4. He expreſſes his humble confidence, that amidſt all he felt, God would ſupport and comfort him. *But I have truſted in thy mercy*; merit I diſclaim, hope or help in myſelf I have none, but in thee I truſt; and therefore *my heart ſhall rejoice in thy ſalvation:* thine, for thou art able to ſave to the uttermoſt; and therefore I will encourage my ſoul in hope. *I will ſing unto the Lord*, the gratitude of my heart ſhall ſpeak in my joyful lips, *becauſe he hath dealt bountifully with me: he hath*, for faith realizes the promiſe, and gives preſent ſubſiſtence to the expected relief. *Note*, (1.) When we come to God in our miſeries, in prayer to pour out our ſouls to him, he will ſend us away rejoicing, and like Hannah, *our countenance ſhall no more be ſad*, 1 Sam. i. 18. (2.) Singing pſalms is the ancient practice of God's ſaints; and wherever there is found a heart to truſt him, there will be a mouth to praiſe him.

PSALM XIV.

This pſalm contains a deſcription of the corruption of mankind in general, as well as David's enemies in particular; in which view *it is quoted*, Rom. iii. 10. *The ſtreams of wickedneſs the former pſalms laid open in the characters of the ungodly; here the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and we are led to ſee the apoſtate nature of man. Here is*, 1. *A charge exhibited againſt a wicked world*, ver. 1. 2. *The proof of the charge*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *A ſerious expoſtulation with ſinners, eſpecially with perſecutors, upon it*, ver. 4—6. 4. *A prayer for Iſrael's ſalvation*, ver. 7.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. [a] THE fool hath ſaid in his heart, *There is* no God: [b] they are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doth good. 2. [c] The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men; to ſee if there were any that did underſtand, *and* ſeek God. 3. They are all gone aſide, [d] they are *all* together become † filthy: *there is* none that doth good, no not one.

[a] Pſ. x. 4. & liii. 1.
[b] Rom. iii. 10, &c.
[c] Pſ. xxxiii. 13, 14. & cii. 19.
[d] Gen. vi. 5.
† Heb. ſtinking.

v. 1—3. However outward ſins may ſhock the conſcience, no man can truly be emptied of himſelf, or be led to ſelf-deſpair, till God opens to him the plague of his heart, and makes him ſee the deſperate wickedneſs of a fallen nature. This is here done.

1. The heart of the fool is laid open. *The fool*, or the ſinner, (for ſin is the fooliſhneſs of folly), *hath ſaid in his heart, There is no God*. Few are abandoned enough to dare avow atheiſm in principle; but every ſinner feels it his intereſt there ſhould be no God, wiſhes there might be none, and would fain perſuade himſelf there is none; no God to judge, no hell to torment. *Note*, (1.) If our thoughts were as open as our countenances, we ſhould ſtartle at each other as monſters. (2.) All ſin in practice, proceeds from a meaſure of atheiſm in principle.

2. The ways of men correſpond to their nature: *corrupt are they*, or *they do corrupt*: they are ſuch in themſelves, their nature utterly defiled, being conceived and born in ſin, and their inward parts very wickedneſs; and they corrupt others, provoke, ſtir up, and draw out the corruption that is in the hearts of ſinners like themſelves. *They have done abominable works, there is none that doth good*; their practice correſponds to their principles; for who can bring *a clean thing out of an unclean?* And,

3. This is the caſe univerſally; not in one place, or one age, but uniformly the ſame in every place, in every man, in every age; ſo God teſtifies on the view of all mankind, when *the Lord looked down from heaven*. The fool ſaid, There is no God, or he careth not for it; he hideth away his face, and will never ſee the evil: but God's eyes are *upon the children of men*, to *ſee if there were any that did underſtand* the ways of truth and righteouſneſs, *and ſeek God*, the knowledge of him and his will. But what a fearful account doth the God of truth, that cannot lie, the God of omniſcience, that cannot err, give of the ſtate of man: *They are all gone aſide* with univerſal apoſtacy; they have forſaken the path of duty and holineſs; *they are all together become filthy*, or *putrid*; loathſome and offenſive to the Divine purity, as a dead carcaſs in our noſtrils. *There is none that doth good, no not one*; not a ſingle exception can be found among all the ſons of men: they are one man's children; and, as deſcendants of a fallen parent, a ſeed of evil doers. *Note*, (1.) By nature there is no difference between one man and another; though in outward tranſgreſſion there may be much, in inward apoſtacy there is none. (2.) If there be any good wrought in us, or done by us, we are indebted for it ſolely to the ſovereign and ſaving grace of God.

4. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? [e] who eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and [f] call not upon the LORD. 5. [g] There † were they in great fear: for God *is* in the generation of the righteous. 6. You have ſhamed the counſel of the poor; becauſe the LORD *is* his refuge. 7. ‡ O that the ſalvation of Iſrael *were come* out of Zion! when [h] the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob ſhall rejoice, *and* Iſrael ſhall be glad.

[e] Am. viii. 4. Mic. iii. 3.
[f] Iſa. lxiv. 7.
[g] Pſ. liii. 5.
† Heb. they feared a fear.
‡ Or, who will give.
[h] Job xlii. 10. Pſ. cxxvi. 1.

v. 4—7. We have here,

1. The Lord expreſſing his admiration at the abounding wickedneſs. *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge* of their ſin and danger? or, as affirming that they have knowledge, and therefore ſtand more inexcuſable in acting againſt it. *Note*, The moſt wicked men find an accuſing conſcience, ſufficient to leave them without excuſe in the day of God.

2. Three things he charges upon them, (1.) Oppreſſion, cruel and malicious. *They eat up my people as they eat bread*; bite and devour them, and with as much pleaſure as the hungry man eateth. (2.) Neglect of prayer: *and call not upon God*: than which there cannot be a ſurer mark of the unſubdued power of corruption in the heart. (3.) Contempt and ridicule of godlineſs in others: *ye have ſhamed the counſel of the poor, becauſe the Lord is his refuge*; have attempted to make him aſhamed of his confidence, and to banter him out of his religion. *Note*, It is an advanced heighth of impiety, when men not only caſt off godlineſs themſelves, but ſet their wits at work to make God's people appear abſurd and fooliſh, and to diſcourage the heart of the poor and humble believer.

3. The terrors of the wicked, notwithſtanding all their bravery and affecting to deſpiſe God's threatnings, will often faſten upon their conſciences; *there were they in great fear*: in the midſt of their career of wickedneſs, deep and pungent remorſe will be felt; *for God is in the generation of the righteous*; their friend to protect them, and confound all that hate them. *Note*, (1.) If God be for us, no matter who are againſt us. (2.) The moſt happy and joyous ſinner has his ſecret pangs, that none know but himſelf.

4. The pſalmiſt concludes with a devout wiſh: *O that the ſalvation of Iſrael were come out of Zion!* eſpecially that Redeemer who ſhould turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob, and bring a cure for the deſperate diſeaſe of human corruption: *when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people* by the powerful agency of his Son, manifeſted to deſtroy the works of the devil, and to ſet the captives of ſin free; then *Jacob ſhall rejoice, and Iſrael ſhall be glad*; his redeemed people ſhall rejoice in their preſent ſalvation begun; and their joy ſhall by and by be full, when he ſhall appear to deſtroy all his enemies and theirs, and complete their final ſalvation in eternal glory.

PSALM XV.

This pſalm may be entitled the ſure guide to heaven; for though Chriſt is our title, holineſs is our way. 1. *We are directed to inquire the way*, ver. 1. 2. *We are directed how to walk in it*, ver. 2—5. 3. *We are told how ſafe we ſhall be if we do*, ver. 5.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. LORD, [a] who ſhall † abide in thy tabernacle? who ſhall dwell in [b] thy holy hill? 2. [c] He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteouſneſs, and [d] ſpeaketh the truth in his heart. 3. *He that* [e] backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, [f] nor ‡ taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour. 4. In whoſe eyes [g] a vile perſon is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD: *he that* ſweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not. 5. [h] *He that* putteth not out his money to uſury, [i] nor taketh reward againſt the innocent. [k] He that doth *theſe* things, ſhall never be moved.

[a] Pſ. xxiv. 3, &c.
† Heb. ſojourn.
[b] Pſ. ii. 6.
[c] Iſa. xxxiii. 15.
[d] Zech. viii. 16.
[e] Lev xix. 16 Pſ. xxxiv. 13.
[f] Ex. xxiii. 1.
‡ Or receiveth.
[g] 2 Kings iii. 14. Eſth. iii. 2. Pſ. ci. 4.
[h] Ex. xxii. 25. Deut. xxiii. 19. Ezek. xviii. 8.
[i] Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19.
[k] 2 Pet. i. 10.

v. 1—5. The former pſalm deſcribed that deſperate corruption of fallen man, which rendered him unfit for communion with God; this deſcribes the character of the redeemed, whoſe captivity to ſin is turned, and who, as bought with the blood of Jeſus, are by his ſpirit made meet for *an inheritance among the ſaints in light*.

1. The pſalmiſt puts an important queſtion: *Lord, who ſhall abide in thy tabernacle?* have a place among the faithful in the church of God; and abide there as living members upon earth, and after death be admitted to thy preſence in glory? *Who ſhall dwell in thy holy hill?* in the heavenly Zion, and the city of the living God? *Note*, (1.) This is a queſtion we ſhould often be making, that we may with ſelf-application ſay, Lord, is it I? (2.) Many have a ſeat in God's tabernacle on earth, who will find no dwelling in his holy hill above. (3.) If we would know our true ſtate, we muſt enquire at God's mouth, and examine and judge of ourſelves, not by the opinions of men, but by his holy word.

2. The queſtion is reſolved, and we muſt apply the character here deſcribed: happy for us if we can find our hearts correſpond thereunto. (1.) *He that walketh uprightly*, or *perfectly*; not abſolutely, in that ſenſe there is not a man that liveth and ſinneth not, but with ſimplicity and godly ſincerity; whoſe prevailing bent is to pleaſe God, and who is without diſſimulation, or allowed guile. (2.) And *worketh righteouſneſs*; believes in, and depends on the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chirſt, which is the great work of God in the ſinner's heart, *John* vi. 29. and acts towards man with integrity in all his dealings. (3.) *And ſpeaketh the truth in his heart*; thinks before he ſpeaks in the preſence of God, that he may not offer the prayer and ſervice of feigned lips; and among men his words are ever the true copy of his heart; nor doth he defraud or go beyond his brother in any matter, making conſcience in all his worldly buſineſs to ſpeak truth with his neighbour. (4.) He deſires in converſation to be harmleſs and inoffenſive; his neighbour's reputation is ſacred, he never ſpeaks evil of him, either with malicious deſign or in common talk; *nor taketh up a reproach againſt them*; is

pleaſed with the tales of ſlander, or encourages them; but contrariwiſe, is ever the advocate of the injured and the abſent, pleading their cauſe, and deſiring to caſt the vail of charity over the multitude of ſins: *nor doth evil to his neighbour*; his deeds correſpond to his words, he doth not ſpeak him fair to his face, and when opportunity offers, make a property of him, or injure him, but ſtudies to advance his intereſts as his own, and to ſerve him with his counſel, purſe, or influence. (5.) He values men not by their outward ſhow, but by their inward piety: *in whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned*, or a wicked man, notwithſtanding he may poſſeſs this world's goods, honours and eſteem, is *contemned*; not that he refuſes to pay him the civil reſpect due to his ſtation, but he judges of him according to God's word, and counts it his duty to avoid all intimate connection with him, and is fearleſs of his frowns, as regardleſs of his favour: *but he honoureth them that fear the Lord*, however poor and deſpicable they may be in the eyes of the world, he regards them as the excellent of the earth, and they are his companions and familiar friends. (6.) His oath is ſacred: *he that ſweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not*, however much prejudice he may ſuſtain, or however imprudent or raſh the engagement was, he fulfils it for his oath's ſake, unleſs releaſed from the obligation. (7.) He is no extortioner, *he that putteth not out his money to uſury*; that is, to take advantage of his neighbour's diſtreſs, to exact unjuſt premiums or intereſt; for a reaſonable recompenſe for the uſe of money, is as lawful before God and man, as the rent of land, or the price of labour; and he often lends where the caſe requires ſuch a charitable help, hoping for nothing again. (8.) No bribe can tempt him to bear a falſe evidence, to engage in a bad cauſe, or pervert judgment; *nor taketh reward againſt the innocent.*

3. *He that doth theſe things*; the man whom this character ſuits, *ſhall never be moved*, ſhall have a place in the church of God, as tried and found faithful, ſhall be enabled to perſevere amidſt all difficulties and dangers, and finally be admitted into God's manſion of glory, as a pillar in the temple of God, to go out no more. May ſuch be our character, then ſuch ſhall be our end!

PSALM XVI.

This pſalm has ſomething of David in it, but much more of Chriſt; to whom alone ſome points of it are applicable, Acts xi. 24.—xiii. 36. *and of whom the whole may be well interpreted.* 1. *It contains the language of pious affection, whether of David or of Chriſt, his delight in God and his people, and thanks for the bleſſings he enjoyed,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The confidence of God's favour in his ſufferings,* ver. 8. 3. *The aſſurance of a ſpeedy and glorious reſurrection,* ver. 9—11.

¶ † Michtam of David.

1. PRESERVE me, O God: [a] for in thee do I put my truſt. 2. *O my ſoul,* thou haſt ſaid unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: [b] my goodneſs *extendeth* not to thee: 3. *But* to the ſaints that *are* in the earth, and *to* [c] the excellent [d] in whom *is* all my delight. 4. Their ſorrows ſhall be multiplied *that* † haſten *after* another *God*: their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, [e] nor take up their names into my lips. 5. [f] The LORD *is* the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintaineſt my lot. 6. The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant *places*; yea, [g] I have a goodly heritage. 7. I will bleſs the LORD, who hath given me counſel: [h] my reins alſo inſtruct me in the night-ſeaſons.

† i. e. Golden, Pſ. lvi. & lvii. & lviii. & lix. & lx. tit.
[a] Pſ. xxv. 20.
[b] Job xxii. 2, 3. & xxxv. 7, 8. Rom. xi. 35.
[c] Prov. xii. 26.
[d] See Prov. viii. 31. & Iſa. lxii. 4.
† Or, give gifts to.
[e] Ex. xxiii. 13 Joſh. xxiii. 7. Hoſ. ii. 17.
[f] Deut. xxxii 9. Pſ. lxxiii. 26. & cxlii. 5. Lam. iii. 24.
[g] Acts xxvi. 18.
[h] Pſ. xvii. 3.

v. 1—7. The title of this pſalm is Michtam, interpreted golden, as containing ſuch diſplays of the ſufferings and glory of Chriſt, as deſerved to be recorded in letters of gold.

1. The pſalm opens with the prayer of faith. *Preſerve me, O God: for in thee do I put my truſt*; as David profeſſes ever to do, in oppoſition to all his enemies; and as the Lord Jeſus did, when *in the days of his fleſh he offered up ſupplications and prayers, and was heard, in that he feared*, and truſted on God, *Heb.* v. 7. *Note*, The prayer of faith is ever effectual.

2. He ſolemnly devotes himſelf to God. *O my ſoul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord*; and therefore as ſuch, there was a ſure foundation for faith: as *our God*, we may ever ſafely truſt him with all the concerns of body and ſoul. This may be well applied to the Redeemer; who, as poſſeſſing a human ſoul, as well as fleſh, is in that reſpect inferior to the Father; and therefore, as mediator, avouches the Lord for his God.

3. He expreſſes his humble ſenſe of his own goodneſs; *it extendeth not to thee*, to make God his debtor, or to add to his happineſs; *but to the ſaints that are in the earth*, who felt the exerciſe of it; and *to the excellent, in whom is all my delight*; and therefore I am deſirous to ſerve them in every good word and work. Of Chriſt this may alſo be ſaid, whoſe obedience and ſufferings, however infinitely extenſive in their bleſſed influence to the ſons of men, added nothing to the ſelf-ſufficient God, to whom the righteouſneſs of his Son brought no gain; nor could our everlaſting ruin have occaſioned any loſs. And though in the mediatorial tranſactions, there is a glorious diſplay made of the wiſdom, grace, and righteouſneſs of God; yet had they never appeared in this way, they would have, notwithſtanding, eternally exiſted the ſame in him; the good will is wholly to us, whom his grace ſanctifies, and in whom he is pleaſed to expreſs his delight. *Note*, (1.) Every redeemed ſoul is a ſaint of God, and bound by his very relation to him, to ſeek to be like him. (2.) They are truly great and excellent, who moſt reſemble the glorious pattern of all greatneſs and excellence. (3.) The higher a ſoul advances in holineſs, the humbler thoughts he hath of himſelf in the views of the pure and all-ſufficient God. (4.) Like loves like; they who delight in God, delight in his image where it appears. (5.) Though we can add nothing to God by our good works, yet they are profitable to men; and when done in faith and love, the Redeemer declares he will accept them as kindneſſes done to himſelf.

4. He declares the miſery of idolaters, and profeſſes his own renunciation of their ways. *Their ſorrows ſhall be multiplied that haſten after another god:* theſe vanities will both diſappoint their hopes, and provoke the indignation of Jehovah. Or the words may be conſidered as applicable to the Jews, who rejected Chriſt, the word *God* being not in the original, *who haſten after another*, rejected the true, and ſo eagerly ſought falſe Meſſiah's, which hath proved the cauſe of ſo much miſery to them. *Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer:* ſuch ſacrifices as bloody men offered; or as the Gentiles, who ſought to placate their deities with human ſacrifices; *nor take their name in my lips*, as abhorring them. Refer it to Chriſt, and it ſignifies the abolition of all the typical ſacrifices, wherein ſo much blood of beaſts was ſhed; now uſeleſs by the oblation of himſelf once for all, and to be no more mentioned or accounted of. *Note*, They who have the blood of Jeſus to plead, need ſeek no other ſacrifice or oblation.

5. He cleaves to God as his happy and enduring portion. *The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup:* his love is my richeſt treaſure, his favour my ſweeteſt enjoyment. *Thou maintaineſt my lot*, makeſt it ſafe and abiding, ſo that the world cannot take it away. Which is alſo moſt applicable to the Redeemer, whoſe meat and drink it was to do the Father's will; happy in conſtant communion with him, and ſure to ſee his lot maintained, his ſaints and redeemed ones preſerved and kept as the travail of his ſoul, in which he ſhould be everlaſtingly ſatisfied. *Note*, (1.) The love of God is the beſt portion; compared with that, all things beſide are dung and loſs. (2.) They who live by faith, find conſolations in their cup, more chearing than wine. (3.) The preſent comfort God beſtows, is an earneſt of the everlaſting bliſs he hath in ſtore for his people. (4.) They who have once truly taken God for their portion, may confidently be aſſured he will keep them from falling, and preſerve them for his everlaſting kingdom.

6. He rejoices in the bleſſed portion God had beſtowed on him. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places*; alluding to the meaſuring of ground; *yea, I have a goodly heritage*, outwardly in temporal bleſſing; but eſpecially in the enjoyment of God, his chief good. Chriſt's ſaints are his glorious heritage, and they are pleaſant in his eyes, beautiful in his blood and righteouſneſs, as *the curtains of Solomon*; and adorned with the graces of his ſpirit, as a robe of wrought gold. *Note*, (1.) If we have God for our portion, we may well be content, nor envy others their greatneſs, power, and affluence, he is far better. (2.) The heritage of the ſaints is fixed not by line, but by the eternal decree of God; and its excellence can only be fully known when we ſhall enter our glorious reſt above: and this, though diſtant, faith brings near, and ſaith, *I have*, becauſe *I believe*.

7. He aſcribes the praiſe of all to God. *I will bleſs the Lord, who hath given me counſel*, to chuſe this happy portion: *my reins alſo inſtruct me in the night-ſeaſons*. His inmoſt thoughts, under the Divine influence, when on his bed, muſe upon God; both inſtructing him in the bleſſing he poſſeſſed, and the obligations thence ariſing to love and ſerve ſo gracious a maſter: on Jeſus *the ſpirit of counſel* Iſa. xi. 2. reſted, and whole nights he ſpent in meditation and prayer to God. May the ſame ſpirit of wiſdom and counſel reſt on my ſoul; and taught by this day and night, may I be led in the way the Lord would have me to go!

8. [i] I have ſet the LORD always before me: becauſe [k] *he is* at my right hand, [l] I ſhall not be moved. 9. Therefore my heart is glad, and [m] my glory rejoiceth: my fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope. 10. For [n] thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thy holy One to ſee corruption. 11. Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life: [o] in thy preſence *is* fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand *there are* pleaſures for evermore.

[i] Acts ii. 25.
[k] Pſ. lxxiii. 23. & cxxi. 5.
[l] Pſ. xvi. 5.
[m] Ibid. xxx. 12. & lvii. 8.
[n] Ibid. xlix. 15 Acts ii. 31. & xiii. 35.
[o] Pſ. xvii. 15. & xxi. 6. 1 Cor. xiii. 9. 1 Joh. iii. 2.

v. 8.—11. If it be aſked, as the eunuch did, of *whom ſpeaketh the prophet, this of himſelf, or of ſome other perſon?* we have an expreſs anſwer, *Acts* xi. 25. where the words are particularly applied to our divine Redeemer.

1. They expreſs his confidence in God, and the ſupport derived from him to go through the arduous taſk aſſigned him: *I have ſet the Lord always before me*; his power and faithfulneſs: *becauſe he is at my right hand* to ſtrengthen me, *I ſhall not be moved*, notwithſtanding all the ſnares of my enemies, the torments before me, at which the humanity ſhudders, and the pains of hell which ſeize my ſoul, whilſt my body agonizes on the tree. Though Jeſus prayed the cup might paſs from him, he was content to drink it, and triumphantly cried, It is finiſhed, when he gave up the ghoſt.

2. They declare his joy in the God of his ſalvation, under the moſt dark and diſmal diſpenſation: when his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death, and his body laid low in the grave, there was reviving hope in the end; *therefore my heart is glad, and my glory*, my tongue, as appears *Acts* xi. 26. *rejoiceth* in hope; in ſure and certain hope of God's glory being diſplayed, and his people's ſalvation accompliſhed by theſe ſufferings in their ſtead. *Note*, When the body is moſt afflicted, believing hope can make the ſoul triumph. *My fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope*, even when my body is lying in the duſt, and my enemies triumphant, as if they had compleated their conqueſt; ſtill I ſhall reſt, find the clods of the valley ſweet unto me, in expectation of the glory which ſhall follow. Two chief cauſes of this joy are here aſſigned: (1.) His victory over death by a ſpeedy and glorious reſurrection. *For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell*: not the place of the damned, for thither Chriſt never went, but that ſtate of death in which he lay; or the place of ſeparate ſpirits, where the ſouls of the faithful abide, as is uſually believed, till the reſurrection-day: *neither ſuffer thy holy One to ſee corruption.* The body of Chriſt being pure as his ſoul, and joined inſeparable with the divine perſon of the Son, was a holy thing; nor ſuffered, as our ſinful bodies, to putrefy in the duſt; for on the morning of the third day he broke the bands of death, of which it was impoſſible he ſhould be holden, and roſe the conqueror of death and hell, to the confuſion of his amazed foes, and to the comfort of his dejected diſciples. (2.) His aſcenſion into heaven, and reigning in glory everlaſting. *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life*; not only raiſe me from death temporal, but exalt me alſo to life eternal: that life in glory, where *in thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* Conſolations unutterable, and dignity tranſcendent, reward the ſufferings of the glorified Jeſus. *Note*, (1.) Where Jeſus found ſupport in his ſufferings, there may we; for every member of his body myſtical can ſay, thy God is my God. (2.) When we are putting off our bodies in the duſt, the reſurrection of Jeſus is the ſupport and comfort of the dying believer; for if we have been planted with him in the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection, and as members of his body becauſe he lives, we ſhall live alſo. (3.) The lively proſpects of approaching glory may well make us ſit looſe to all the joys of ſenſe, and reconcile us to all the ſufferings we may be called to: our light afflictions are but for a moment; but a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory approaches; earthly joys are poor and tranſitory, but the pleaſures at God's right hand are pure without allay, and perpetual as the everlaſting ſpring from whence they flow. Be theſe my happy portion!

PSALM XVII.

David, in great diſtreſs, directs his prayer to God. 1. *He appeals to God concerning his integrity*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He prays to God ſtill to be upheld in it, and preſerved from the malice of his enemies*, ver. 5—8, 13. 3. *He gives a character of his enemies*, ver. 9—12, 14. 4. *He comforts himſelf with the hopes of his future happineſs*, ver. 14. *Thus the perfectly innocent ſon of David ſuffered, and in prayer committed himſelf to him who judgeth righteouſly.*

¶ A Prayer of David.

1. HEAR the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer [a] *that goeth* † not out of feigned lips. 2. Let my ſentence come forth from thy preſence: let thine eyes behold the things that are equal. 3. Thou haſt proved mine heart, [b] thou haſt viſited *me* in the night, [c] thou haſt tried me, *and* ſhalt find nothing: I am purpoſed *that* my mouth ſhall not tranſgreſs. 4. Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips, [d] I have kept *me from* the paths of the deſtroyer. 5. [e] Hold up my goings in thy paths, [f] *that* my footſteps ſlip not. 6. [g] I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and* hear my ſpeech. 7. [h] Shew thy marvellous lovingkindneſs, O thou ‡ that ſaveſt by thy right hand them which put their truſt *in thee*, from thoſe that riſe up *againſt them.*

[a] See Mat. xv. 8.
† Heb. without lips of deceit.
[b] Pſ. xvi. 7.
[c] Job xxiii. 10. Pſ. lxvi. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7.
[d] 1 Joh. v. 18.
[e] Pſ. cxix. 133.
[f] Jer. x. 23.
[g] Pſ. cxvi. 2.
[h] Ibid. xxxi. 21.
‡ Or, that ſaveſt them which truſt in thee from thoſe that riſe up againſt thy right hand.

v. 1—7. This pſalm is a prayer of David, probably when flying for his life from the blood-thirſty Saul, and ready to be ſurrounded and deſtroyed by his numerous forces.

1. He begs a hearing of his righteous cauſe; and as he ſpoke from the ſimplicity of his heart, *v.* 1. he hoped from the heart-ſearching God for an anſwer of peace. *Note*, When our conſcience bears witneſs to our inward ſimplicity, then have we confidence to approach God.

2. He humbly ſues, *v.* 2. for a gracious interpoſition of God in his behalf, that his uprightneſs might be made manifeſt, and by God's providential dealings the ſentence of his juſtice might appear. *Note*, (1.) When we are traduced of men, it is an unſpeakable comfort to have the teſtimony of our conſcience, and boldneſs to look up to the omniſcient God. (2.) God's judgments in favour of injured innocence will appear, ſometimes in manifeſt providential interpoſitions, at leaſt in the great day, when *the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be laid open, and every man* found faithful *have praiſe of God.*

3. He appeals to God, *v.* 3, 4. who had proved him in the furnace of affliction, and comforted him under the darkeſt times of his diſtreſs; that nothing was found in him, no allowed guile, no ſecret malice againſt his bittereſt enemies; and God knew it was his purpoſe both to with-hold his lips from every evil word, and his hands from every evil work; ſo that even when Saul was in his power, he had never entertained the thought of hurting him, keeping from the paths of the deſtroyer, from the ways of iniquity in general, and particularly from avenging himſelf by the death of his enemy; and this, becauſe he made God's word his rule, and ſought continually to conform to his holy precepts. *Note*, (1.) A conſtant ſerious reſpect to God's word, is the great preſervative againſt evil. (2.) The ways of ſin lead down to death; happy the ſoul that is taught by God to avoid theſe deſtructive paths. (3.) We may not only abſtain from acts of violence againſt thoſe who injure us, but our lips muſt be kept with a bridle, that not an unkind reflection may be made on them.

4. He prays for continued ſupport in this holy way, *v.* 5. ſenſible *that it was not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*, and that left but for a moment to himſelf, his feet muſt ſlide. Hitherto God had helped him, *v.* 6. when he called, and therefore he humbly hopes to find the ſame grace miniſtered to him, acknowledging that it would be marvellous loving kindneſs, *v.* 7. yet ſuch as God was ever uſed to manifeſt to the oppreſſed, who, renouncing other help, fled to him alone for ſuccour. *Note*, (1.) We have no fund of grace to ſupport us a moment in ourſelves, unleſs conſtant ſupplies are ſent from the living fountain. (2.) A deep ſenſe of our own weakneſs and inſufficiency, is the ſureſt way to be ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might. (3.) Every chriſtian walks in a ſlippery path, and many wait for his halting; he needs therefore watch and pray that he faint not. (4.) Enemies to God's people, are rebels againſt himſelf, and will be reckoned with accordingly. (5.) In the eyes of a believer, God's loving-kindneſs appears marvellous, not only in his firſt gracious call, when he brought him out of his wretched ſtate of ſin, but eſpecially in his patience, pity, and many recoveries when his feet were well nigh gone; and when he gets to heaven, he will ſtill more wonder at himſelf, and ſtand to all eternity admiring God's amazing love.

8. [i] Keep me as the apple of the eye: [k] hide me under the ſhadow of thy wings, 9. From the wicked that oppreſs me, *from* my deadly enemies, *who* compaſs me about. 10. [l] They are incloſed in their own fat: with their mouth they ſpeak proudly. 11. [m] They have now compaſſed us in our ſteps: [n] they have ſet their eyes bowing down to the earth: 12. [o] Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in ſecret places. 13. Ariſe, O LORD, diſappoint him, caſt him down: deliver my ſoul from the wicked, [p] † *which is* thy ſword: 14. From men *which are* thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, [q] *which have* their portion in *this* life, and whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid *treaſure*: ‡ they are full of children and leave the reſt of their *ſubſtance* to their babes. 15. As for me, [r] I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs: [s] I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy likeneſs.

[i] Deut. xxxii. 10. Zech. ii. 8.
[k] Ruth. ii. 12. Pſ. xxxii. 7. & lvii. 1. & xci. 1, 4. Mat. xxiii. 37.
[l] Deut. xxxii. 15. Job xv. 27. Pſ. lxxiii. 7.
[m] 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.
[n] Pſ. x. 10.
[o] Prov. xxviii. 15.
[p] Iſa. x. 5.
† Or, by thy ſword.
[q] Luke xvi. 25.
‡ Or, their children are full.
[r] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[s] Pſ. iv. 6. & xvi. 11. & lxv. 4. 1 Joh. iii. 2.

v. 8—15. Senſible that his help ſtood only in the Lord, the pſalmiſt redoubles his importunate prayer, *v.* 8. *Keep me as the apple of the eye*: with ſuch care as we guard the coats of that ſenſible organ: *hide me under the ſhadow of thy wings*: with ſuch tenderneſs as the hen gathers her chickens; or in ſuch ſafety as if lodged on the mercy-ſeat under the wings of the cherubim. *Note*, In vain doth Satan rage againſt thoſe whom God ſecures. His enemies, who oppreſſed him, and compaſſed him about, are deſcribed in lively colours beſpeaking their ſenſuality, pride, malice, craft, and cruelty. (1.) *They are incloſed in their own fat*; fed to the full, wallowing in luxury, and rioting in abundance. (2.) *With their mouth they ſpeak proudly*; impiouſly defying God, and breathing out threatnings againſt his people. (3.) *They have compaſſed us in our ſteps*; as Saul often did, and as the chriſtian often feels himſelf beſet from the reſtleſs malice of Satan and his ſervants. (4.) *They have ſet their eyes bowing down to the earth*; intent and eager upon my ruin; or under the modeſt and humble look concealing deep and dark deſigns. (5.) They are cruel as a hungry lion, *v.* 12. and inſidious as the lion's whelp, when lurking ſecretly to ſurprize the unwary traveller. *Note*, When a chriſtian is thus beſet, he need look about him, and above him, if he would be preſerved from falling. In the view of his danger, David cries to God; *Ariſe, O Lord, diſappoint him, and caſt him down: deliver my ſoul from the wicked, which is thy ſword*, the inſtrument God uſes often for correction or judgment; and, however men may purpoſe, they can only move and act as they are permitted by him: *from the men which are thy hand*; held in it, reſtrained by it, or uſed according to God's purpoſes and deſigns. Theſe he deſcribes as *men of the world*, whoſe heads are taken up with worldly ſchemes, and their hearts ſunk in worldly gratifications; *which have their portion in this life*, ſeek no other portion than they can find below, and could they be left to enjoy this world, would gladly quit all expectations of another; *whoſe bellies thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure*; the gold and ſilver which are dug out of the earth: *they are full of children*, who will ſupport and ſtrengthen them; *and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance to their babes*; their children's children, tranſmitting to them their affluence and abundance, and living and dying in the heighth of outward proſperity. From ſuch the pſalmiſt prays to be delivered; from their deſtructive ways, which, notwithſtanding all their worldly ſucceſs, would end in everlaſting miſery; or from their power, which theſe outward advantages gave them over him. *Note*, (1.) God's enemies have in this world uſually the moſt affluent circumſtances, and as they count theſe their good things, they look no farther. (2.) If we receive unkindneſs from man, let us think whoſe hand he is, and though the action in him be evil, juſtify God in his corrections.

Finally, the pſalmiſt concludes with his great hope and joy: not the world, or the things of it, did he graſp after, a nobler ambition filled his heart, even to be like and enjoy the bleſſed God. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs*; either walking now in the ways of God's will and worſhip, and therein enjoying the preſent ſenſe of his favour and love; or, as expecting God's appearing in the great day, when he ſhould be exculpated from every accuſation laid to his charge; or intimating the manner in which he expected to ſee God's face with comfort, as cloathed in the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus: *I ſhall be ſatisfied* with this, and nothing leſs than this, *when I awake in thy likeneſs*, when in the glorious reſurrection-day I ſhall be perfected in holineſs, and made happy in the conſtant viſion and eternal fruition of thy bleſſed ſelf. Oh that ſuch may be our ſentiments, ſuch our deſires, ſuch our prayers, then ſuch as David's will be our portion!

PSALM XVIII.

We met with this pſalm, 2 Sam. xxii. *It is, with ſome ſmall variations, again introduced here: we then applied it to David's caſe, to whom primarily it related; here we ſhall apply it to David's Lord, whoſe troubles and victories are here repreſented, compare* ver. 2. *with* Heb. xi. 13. ver. 49. *with* Rom. xv. 9. *It is full of noble images, and highly ſuited to engage the faith, and enliven the hope of every afflicted believer. Here*, 1. *He triumphs in God*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He magnifies his deliverances in diſtreſs*, ver. 4—19. 3. *He acknowledges that God had rewarded him according to his righteouſneſs*, ver. 20—28. 4. *He gives to God the glory of all his atchievements*, ver. 29—42. 5. *He encourageth himſelf ſtill in God*, ver. 43—50.

¶ To the chief muſician,

[a] *A pſalm* of David, the ſervant of the LORD, who ſpake unto the LORD the words of this [b] ſong, in the day [c] *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he ſaid,

1. [d] I Will love thee, O LORD my ſtrength. 2. The LORD *is* [e] my rock, and my fortreſs, and [f] my deliverer: my God, my ſtrength [g] in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and [h] the horn of my ſalvation, *and* my high tower. 3. I will call upon the LORD, [i] *who is* worthy to be praiſed: [k] ſo ſhall I be ſaved from mine enemies. 4. [l] The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the floods of † ungodly men made me afraid. 5. ‡ The ſorrows of hell compaſſed me about: [m] the ſnares of death prevented me. 6. In my diſtreſs [n] I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: [o] he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears. 7. Then [p] the earth ſhook and trembled; [q] the foundations of the hills moved and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth. 8. There went up a ſmoke out of his noſtrils, and [r] fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. 9. [s] He bowed the heavens alſo, and came down: and darkneſs *was* under his feet. 10. And [t] he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, [u] he did fly upon the wings of the wind. 11. He made darkneſs his ſecret place: [x] his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the ſkies. 12. [y] At the brightneſs *that was* before him, his thick clouds paſſed, hail-*ſtones* and coals of fire. 13. The LORD alſo [z] thundred in the heavens, and the Higheſt gave his voice; hail-*ſtones* and coals of fire. 14. Yea, [a] he ſent out his arrows, and ſcattered them; and he ſhot out lightnings, and diſcomfited them. 15. [b] Then the channels of waters were ſeen, and the foundations of the world were diſcovered: at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blaſt of the breath of thy § noſtrils. 16. [c] He ſent from above, he took me, he drew me out of [d] many waters. 17. He delivered me from [e] my ſtrong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too ſtrong for me. 18. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was [f] my ſtay. 19. [g] He brought me forth alſo into a large place: he delivered me, [h] becauſe he delighted in me.

[a] 2 Sam. xxii. 1, &c.
[b] Ex. xv. 1.
[c] Pſ. xxxiv. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 18.
[d] Pſ. cxvi. 1.
[e] Deut. xxxii. 4. Iſa. xxxii. 2. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[f] Pſ. iii. 8.
[g] Prov. xviii. 10.
[h] Luke i. 69.
[i] Rev. iv. 11.
[k] Rom. 10, 13.
[l] Pſ. cxvi. 3.
† Heb. Belial.
‡ Heb. Cords.
[m] 1 Sam. xviii. 21.
[n] Acts xii. 5.
[o] Ex. ii. 23. Jonah. ii. 2.
[p] Judg. v. 4. Acts iv. 31.
[q] Job xxvi. 11.
[r] Heb. xii. 29.
[s] Pſ. cxliv. 5. Iſa. lxiv. 1.
[t] Pſ. xcix. 1.
[u] Ibid. civ. 3.
[x] Ibid. xcvii. 2.
[y] Ibid. xcvii. 3.
[z] Ibid. xxix. 3.
[a] Joſh. x. 10. Pſ. cxliv. 6. Iſa. xxx. 30.
[b] Ex. xv. 8. Pſ. cvi. 9.
§ Or, anger.
[c] Pſ. cxliv. 7.
[d] Ibid. lxix. 2. Rev. xvii. 15.
[e] Luke xi. 21.
[f] Iſa. l. 10.
[g] Pſal. xxxi. 8. & cxviii. 5.
[h] 2 Sam. xv. 25.

David is here called the ſervant of the Lord, as repreſenting him who took upon himſelf *the form of a ſervant* when he was made in the likeneſs of men, and his dangers were greater, and his deliverances yet more glorious than thoſe the king of Iſrael experienced.

1. The pſalmiſt, in the perſon of the Redeemer, expreſſes his confidence in God, his love to him, and conſtant dependance upon his ſalvation in every time of trouble, *v.* 1—3. *Note*, They who love God, and truſt on him alone, ſhall find ſure help in every time of need.

2. He magnifies the glorious interpoſition he had experienced under the moſt dangerous and threatning circumſtances, when his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful even unto death, when ungodly men, mighty as the ſtormy waves, Jews and heathens, conſpired to deſtroy him, when pains of hell tormented his ſpirit, and death in its moſt horrid ſhapes ſeized on his body; in that hour when the powers of darkneſs ſummoned their collected force to ſhake the confidence of the great Mediator, then, with ſtrong crying and tears, he made ſupplication and was heard, *v.* 6. The trembling earth, and rending rocks, beſpoke the wrath of God againſt the murderers of his Son, and ſwift vengeance ſoon awaked to overtake them, *v.* 8—15. Judgments, ſudden as the lightning, terrible as thunder, and conſuming as fire, fell upon the devoted city and people where he was crucified; the very foundations of their common-wealth were razed, and deſolations ſpread on every ſide. *Note*, More terrible judgments await the ſinner in the day of God; when all who have rejected, like the Jews, his great ſalvation, and by their ſins have crucified the Son of God afreſh, will ſee him bow the heavens and come down to take final and eternal vengeance on his enemies.

3. He ſpeaks with exultation of his deliverance, and the glory to which he was advanced. God drew him from the hands of his enemy, delivered him from the power of Satan, and looſed the bands of death, raiſing him from the grave triumphant, and cauſing him to aſcend to his right hand in glory, becauſe he delighted in him, *v.* 16—19. *Note*, (1.) Though God for a while ſuffer our enemies to be too mighty for us, yet they ſhall not finally prevail. (2.) God delights in his Son, and all who are members of his body myſtical, are intereſted in the ſame divine regard; and however deep the afflictions with which they are now exerciſed, they ſhall ſhortly be exalted with their triumphant Lord and Saviour.

20. The LORD rewarded me [i] according to my righteouſneſs, according to the cleanneſs of my hands hath he recompenſed me. 21. For [k] I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. 22. For [l] all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his ſtatutes from me. 23. [m] I was alſo upright before him: and I kept myſelf from mine iniquity. 24. Therefore hath the LORD recompenſed me according to my righteouſneſs, according to the cleanneſs of my hands in his eyeſight.

[i] Pſ. vii. 8.
[k] Ibid. cxix. 10, 11.
[l] Ibid. cxix. 120.
[m] Ibid. cxix. 7. Luke i. 6.

ſight. 25. [n] With the merciful thou wilt ſhew thyſelf merciful, with an upright man thou wilt ſhew thyſelf upright. 26. With the pure thou wilt ſhew thyſelf pure, and [o] with the froward thou wilt ſhew thyſelf froward. 27. For [p] thou wilt ſave the afflicted people: [q] but wilt bring down high looks.

[n] 1 Kings viii. 32. Mat. v. 7, 8.
[o] Lev. xxvi. 18, &c. Prov. iii. 34.
[p] Pſ. xii. 5.
[q] Ibid. ci. 5. Iſa. ii. 11.

v. 20—27. Though this was in a meaſure true of David, whoſe cauſe was righteous, and his heart ſimple before God; yet moſt eminently it is applicable to the righteous Saviour. His exaltation and glory is the reward of a righteouſneſs abſolutely perfect; for in him was no ſin, nor guile found in his mouth. *Note*, They who have an intereſt in Chriſt, have a right to the reward of righteouſneſs with him, for they are compleat in him: but whilſt the afflicted people are ſaved, and they who ſuffer with Jeſus are glorified together with him, the froward and perverſe, the proud, ſelf-righteous, and unhumbled, ſhall be brought low, and feel the wrath of an offended God, *v.* 26, 27.

28. For [r] thou wilt light my ‡ candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkneſs. 29. For [s] by thee I have † run through a troop: and by my God have I leaped over a wall. 30. *As for* God, [t] his way *is* perfect: [u] the word of the LORD is tried: he *is* a buckler [x] to all thoſe that truſt in him. 31. For [y] who *is* God ſave the LORD? or who *is* a rock ſave our God? 32. *It is* God that girdeth me with ſtrength, and maketh my way perfect. 33. [z] He maketh my feet like hinds *feet*, and [a] ſetteth me upon my high places. 34. [b] He teacheth my hands to war, ſo that a bow of ſteel is broken by mine arms. 35. Thou haſt alſo given me [c] the ſhield of thy ſalvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleneſs hath made me great. 36. Thou haſt enlarged my ſteps under me; [d] that my feet did not ſlip. 37. I have purſued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were conſumed. 38. I have wounded them, that they were not able to riſe: [e] they are fallen under my feet. 39. For thou haſt girded me with ſtrength unto battle: thou haſt ſubdued under me thoſe that roſe up againſt me. 40. Thou haſt alſo given me [f] the necks of mine enemies: that I might deſtroy them that hate me. 41. They cried, but *there was* none to ſave *them*: [g] *even* unto the LORD, but he anſwered them not. 42. [h] Then did I beat them ſmall as the duſt before the wind: I did caſt them out as the dirt in the ſtreets. 43. [i] Thou haſt delivered me from the ſtrivings of the people: [k] *and* thou haſt made me the head of the heathen: [l] a people *whom* I have not known ſhall ſerve me. 44. As ſoon as they hear of me, they ſhall obey me: the ſtrangers [m] ſhall ſubmit themſelves unto me. 45. The ſtrangers ſhall fade away, and [n] be afraid out of their cloſe places. 46. The LORD liveth, and bleſſed *be* my rock: and let the God of my ſalvation be exalted. 47. [o]. *It is* God that avengeth me, and [p] ſubdueth the people under me. 48. He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, [q] thou liftеſt me up above thoſe that riſe up againſt me: thou haſt delivered me from the † violent man. 49. [r] Therefore will I ‡ give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen: and ſing praiſes unto thy name. 50. [s] Great deliverance giveth he to his king: and ſheweth mercy to his anointed, [t] to David, and [u] to his ſeed [x] for evermore.

[r] Pſ. cxix. 105. Prov. vi. 23.
‡ Or, lamp.
Job xxix. 3.
[s] Phil. iv. 13.
† Or, broken.
[t] Deut. xxxii. 4. Dan. iv. 37. Rev. xv. 3.
[u] Pſ. xii. 6. Prov. xxx. 5.
[x] Pſ. xvii. 7.
[y] Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Pſ. lxxxvi. 8.
[z] Hab. iii. 19.
[a] Deut. xxxii. 13. Iſa. xxxiii. 16.
[b] Pſ. cxliv. 1.
[c] Eph. vi. 16.
[d] Prov. iv. 12.
[e] Mal. iv. 3.
[f] Gen. xlix. 8. Joſh. x. 24.
[g] 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. Job xxvii. 9. Prov. i. 28. Iſa. i. 15. Jer. xiv. 11. Ezek. viii. 18. Zech. vii. 13.
[h] Dan. ii. 35.
[i] 2 Sam. iii. 1.
[k] 2 Sam. viii.
[l] Iſa. lv. 5.
[m] 2 Sam. xxii. 45. Pſ. lxvi. 3.
[n] Mic. vii. 17.
[o] Pſ. xciv. 1.
[p] Ibid. xlvii. 3.
[q] Ibid. lix. 1.
† Heb. Man of violence.
[r] Rom. xv. 9.
‡ Or, confeſs.
[s] Pſ. cxliv. 10.
[t] Jer. xxx. 9.
[u] Rom. i. 3. Gal. iii. 16.
[x] 2 Sam. vii. 13.

v. 28—50. David had experienced many dark providences, many dark nights of ſpiritual affliction, and many foes without, as well as fears within; but all vaniſhed when God, his help and ſtrength, lightened his darkneſs, and gave him victory over all his enemies. The Son of David had found deeper diſtreſs, and greater foes; yet, though his eyes were ſealed in death, and his burning light gone out in obſcurity, he awaked, and, like the ſun, ſhone brighter in glory, when the dark cloud had paſſed over him. God helped him, (for, as man, he needed divine ſupport) and none of his enemies could ſtand before him. He aſcended up on high, and led captivity captive, having firſt on his croſs ſpoiled principalities and powers; and now he reigns in glory everlaſting, exalted in the moſt eminent ſenſe to be head of the heathen, all power being given him in heaven and in earth; and in a peculiar manner he is the head of his church, gathered out of all the nations of the world.

In the view of theſe mercies the Pſalmiſt exalts the Divine Majeſty, *v.* 30, 31, 46, 49. bleſſing and praiſing him for ſuch exertions of his power and faithfulneſs. And Jeſus thanked thus his Father, for hearing and helping him; and in his church unceaſing praiſe will be for ever given for this great ſalvation, both of the head and of the ſeveral members, for whom the like mercy is reſerved in ſtore, *v.* 50. as hath been ſhewn to their anointed Lord, in whom their redemption is already *virtually*, and ſhall ſhortly be *actually* compleated, when they ſhall come to be with him in glory, and partake of his eternal triumphs.

PSALM XIX.

This pſalm hath an evident reference to goſpel-times, See Rom. x. 18. *and what the apoſtles thus apply, we may be ſure was the mind of the Spirit in inditing.* 1. *The Pſalmiſt magnifies the glory of God diſplayed in the heavens*, ver. 1—6. 2. *In his word*, ver. 7—11. 3. *He ſhews the need of humiliation before that word*, ver. 12. 4. *Prays for grace to be kept in God's holy ways*, ver. 13, 14.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. [a] THE heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work. 2. Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge. 3. *There is* no ſpeech nor language, † *where* their voice is not heard. 4. [b] Their ‡ line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world: in them hath he ſet a tabernacle for the ſun, 5. Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a ſtrong man to run a race. 6. [c] His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

[a] Gen. i. 6. Rom. i. 20.
† Or, without theſe their voice is heard.
[b] Rom. x. 18.
‡ Or rule, or direction.
[c] Eccleſ. i. 5.

v. 1—6. All things are full of God; and, to a mind diſpoſed to contemplate, every object around him proclaims the glory of the great Creator.

1. The viſible heavens, and the ethereal ſky ſpread over us, declare the power, and diſplay the wiſdom, of the hand that made them. The regular ſucceſſions of night and day ſpeak to every people and language the voice of inſtruction. The glorious ſun that ſhines, proclaims the brighter glory of him that made it, and daily cauſes it to go forth as a bridegroom from his chamber in the morning, to run as a giant to its meridian height, and then at even to appear as if retiring to his reſt in ruddy clouds, the tabernacle pitched for his reception. *Note*, Idolaters and atheiſts are without excuſe. If there were no Bibles, the eternal Power and Godhead are ſufficiently viſible in the works of creation and providence.

2. Spiritual things appear concealed under theſe viſible emblems. The bright heavens repreſent the preachers and apoſtles of the glorious goſpel, raiſed up by divine power, and qualified for their bleſſed work. Faithful to the taſk aſſigned, as the ordinances of day and night, and, like them, perpetual in ſucceſſion, their word is gone out into all lands, and their preaching hath reached the ends of the earth. The glorious ſun in this firmament is Jeſus Chriſt, the Sun of righeouſneſs, ariſen a light to lighten the Gentiles, whoſe warm, invigorating, and chearing beams believers happily experience; and he will, from the beginning to the end of their day of life, continue to enlighten and enliven them, till they ſhall be brought to that heaven of heavens, where their ſun ſhall never go down, but with meridian beams of glory ſhine upon God's choſen for ever and ever.

7. [d] The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the ſoul: [e] the teſtimony of the LORD *is* ſure, making wiſe the ſimple. 8. The ſtatutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: [f] the commandment of the LORD *is* pure enlightning the eyes. 9. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, [g] enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* [h] righteous altogether. 10. More to be deſired *are they* than gold, [i] yea, than much fine gold: [k] ſweeter alſo than honey and † the honey-comb. 11. Moreover, by them is thy ſervant warned: *and* [l] in keeping of them *there is* great reward. 12. [m] Who can underſtand *his* errors? cleanſe thou me from ſecret *faults*. 13. [n] Keep back thy ſervant alſo from preſumptuous *ſins*, [o] let them not have dominion over me: then ſhall I be upright, and I ſhall be innocent from ‡ the great tranſgreſſion. 14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O LORD, my § ſtrength and my redeemer.

[d] See 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.
[e] Pſ. cxi. 7.
[f] Pſ. xii. 6.
[g] Mat. v. 18.
[h] Pſ. cxix. 128.
[i] Ibid. 72, 127. Prov. viii. 11, 19.
[k] Pſ. cxix. 103.
† Heb. The dropping of the honey-combs.
[l] 1 Cor. xv. 58.
[m] Pſ. xl. 12.
[n] Gen. xx. 6.
[o] Pſ. cxix. 133. Rom. vi. 12, 14.
‡ Or much.
§ Heb. Rock.

v. 7—14. However legible the glory of God might be in the works of creation to man in innocence, fallen man muſt have other means to teach him, or he will be brutiſh in his knowledge, and his underſtanding darkened. The book of God is now become more eſſential than the volume of nature.

1. This bleſſed word is here deſcribed under various properties: [1.] *It is perfect, converting the ſoul:* it contains a perfect diſcovery of the will of God; of that compleat ſalvation wrought out by the Redeemer: it is the inſtrument the Spirit makes uſe of to convert the ſinner's heart, and makes thoſe perfect in Chriſt Jeſus, who truly by ſaith truſt upon it. [2.] *It is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple:* being the word of the faithful God, it cannot deceive us; and they who, however ſimple in the eyes of men, are enabled firmly to truſt upon it, are truly wiſe, wiſe unto ſalvation. [3] *The ſtatutes of the Lord are right*; in themſelves direct us in the right way to life and glory, and therefore *rejoice the heart*, which being found in Chriſt the way, and walking in holineſs, rejoices in hope of the glory of God. [4.] *The commandment of the Lord is pure*, from all human mixture and adulteration, and tending to produce purity of heart and life; *enlightening the eyes*, which, without this divine teaching, are cloſed in darkneſs. [5.] *The fear of the Lord*, the doctrine contained in that word which teaches this holy fear of God, *is clean, and endureth for ever*; cleanſes and keeps us clean; ſo that thoſe who have experienced the waſhing of water in the word, are without ſpot, and undefiled. Or, the endurance here ſpoken of may refer to the goſpel diſpenſation, which will never, as the Moſaical inſtitutions, be abrogated. [6.] *The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether:* his deciſions in his word are not only true, and what will infallibly come to paſs, but alſo moſt equitable, and no exception can be made to any of them. [7.] *More to be deſired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:* all the gold that the mines of Peru produce, is not to be compared with one great and precious promiſe of God's word: the one can only make us appear great before men; by the other we become partakers of a divine nature. [8.] *Sweeter alſo than honey and the honeycomb.* None of the delights of ſenſe can at all compare with the conſolations which ariſe from God's word: the one too frequently debaſes men into brutes, the other exalts them to partake of angelic joys. [9.] *Moreover, by them is thy ſervant warned* againſt the ſnares and temptations of ſin and Satan, and directed in the diſcharge of every duty and relation towards God or man. [10.] *And in keeping of them there is great reward*; not of the law, as a covenant of life, for none then would obtain the reward, becauſe none perfectly obey it; but of the goſpel, holding faſt its doctrines, influenced by its principles, and reaching after the accompliſhment of its promiſes: in this way the reward of eternal life may be expected. *Note*, If the word of God in all theſe reſpects hath anſwered its bleſſed end to us, then, through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures, we ſhall have hope.

2. The view of the word of God brought the Pſalmiſt on his knees in the duſt. *Who can underſtand his errors?* how many, how great: *cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults*; not only thoſe I ſee and lament, but thoſe which through blindneſs I cannot ſee, or through careleſsneſs have paſſed unobſerved. *Note*, The more we look into the word of God, the more cauſe we ſhall ſee for humiliation. Though we ſhould ſee no allowed ſin, there are ſecret faults enough to deſtroy us, if God be ſtrict to mark what is amiſs.

3. He prays to be kept from the evil to which he felt himſelf too prone; and eſpecially, that preſumptuous ſins might not diſhonour God, or bring his conſcience under bondage; but that he might be preſerved upright, and kept from apoſtacy. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt ſaints need pray againſt preſumptuous ſins, for without continual ſupport they cannot but fall into them. (2.) Preſumptuous ſins are great tranſgreſſions; and, though they may not utterly caſt us off from God, yet they will deſtroy our comfort, and terribly ſhake our confidence.

4. He concludes with a humble requeſt for God's acceptance. *Let the words of my mouth*, the poor imperfect prayers I offer, *and the meditations of my heart*, my inward thoughts, or deſires, *be acceptable in thy ſight*, meet an anſwer of mercy and peace, that may ſhew they are heard and granted, *O Lord, my ſtrength*, or rock, *and my redeemer*, that haſt ſupported me under all trials, and delivered me from all my enemies, and, I am emboldened to truſt, wilt yet deliver me. *Note*, (1.) Our great concern ſhould be, to have our perſons and ſervices accepted in the Beloved. (2.) When we have the Lord for our ſtrength and redeemer, we need not fear miſcarrying.

PSALM XX.

This pſalm is generally thought to be compoſed as a form of prayer for the king when he went to battle. 1. *They are directed to beg divine help.* ver. 1—4. 2. *They expreſs their confidence of being heard and anſwered*, ver. 5—8. 3. *They cry for audience*, ver. 9. *The whole may be conſidered as relative to Chriſt, and as containing the church's prayer for him, and confidence in his victory.*

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. THE LORD hear thee in the day of trouble,
[a] the name of the God of Jacob † defend thee.
2. Send thee help from the ſanctuary, and ſtrengthen
thee out of Zion. 3. Remember all thy offerings, and
‡ accept thy burnt-ſacrifice. Selah. 4. [b] Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counſel. 5.
We will rejoice in thy ſalvation, and [c] in the name of
our God we will ſet up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil
all thy petitions.

[a] Prov. xviii. 10.
† Heb. Set thee on an high place.
‡ Heb. Turn to aſhes. Lev. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 1 Chron. xxi. 26. 2 Chron. vii. 1.
[b] Pſ. xxi. 2.
[c] Exod. xvii. 15. Pſ. lx. 4.

This is entitled a pſalm of David, his compoſition, or for David, being deſigned as an interceſſion for the king when he went to battle; or rather for the ſpiritual David, the Meſſiah. The prayers of God's church and people are highly deſirable, and a form of ſound words the moſt generally profitable manner of prayer for public worſhip.

v. 1—5. We have here,

1. The matter of their requeſts: That in the day of trouble the Lord would defend their king, whether from ſecret conſpiracies, or open violence; and that Jacob's God, whoſe providential care of him was ſo eminent, would ſhew the ſame tender regard to their ſovereign, ſtrengthening him with ſpiritual might, and from his ſanctuary ſend him forth conquering and to conquer: that all his ſacrifices might be accepted, and his prayers graciouſly anſwered; every deſire crowned with ſucceſs, and every petition granted. *Note*, (1.) The higheſt dignity cannot guard off troubles, and crowns eſpecially are often lined with thorns. (2.) None need our prayers more than thoſe, whoſe height of ſtation expoſes them to ſo many temptations. (3.) When we begin with a ſacrifice of prayer, we may hope to end with ſongs of praiſe.

The King Meſſiah ſaw many days of trouble, from the cradle to the grave, and, when he cried, was heard and holpen. His God ſupported him; angelic hoſts attended to ſtrengthen him; his offering was a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmell, well pleaſing to God; all his heart's deſire, reſpecting his people's ſalvation, was thereupon granted, and the eternal counſels of peace fulfilled.

2. They promiſe hereupon to rejoice before God: *We will*, or *ſo we will*, or *let us rejoice*, when theſe petitions are granted; then the praiſe of all ſhall be aſcribed to the glorious author of the ſalvation, and in his name we will triumphantly ſet up our banners.

The triumphs of Jeſus are matters of greateſt joy to the faithful; in his compleat ſalvation they rejoice, ſee all their foes laid at their feet, and ſet up their triumphant banners. *Death, where is thy ſting? grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; and at his feet the believer's crown will be for ever laid, and ſhouting for joy he will ever cry, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive bleſſing and glory.*

6. Now know I, that the LORD ſaveth his anointed:
he will hear him from his holy heaven, with the ſaving
ſtrength of his right hand. 7. [d] Some *truſt* in chariots,
and ſome in horſes: but [e] we will remember the name
of the LORD our God. 8. They are brought down
and fallen, but we are riſen, and ſtand upright. 9. †
Save, LORD, let the king hear us when we call.

[d] Pſ. xxxiii. 16. Prov. xxi. 31. Iſa. xxxi. 1.
[e] 2 Chron. xxxii. 8.
† Or, Lord ſave the king, and hear.

v. 6—9. We have here,

1. The confident concluſion David draws from the ſucceſs of the people's prayers in his behalf; or rather, the aſſurance he hath of the Meſſiah's victory and glory, in anſwer to the prayers of his church. *Note*, What we pray for in faith, we may aſſuredly conclude will be granted us.

2. Having reſted all their hopes on God, the people diſclaim all human dependance: neither chariot nor horſe is their confidence, but God alone; and the effect of ſuch truſt in him is, that when the chariots and horſes of their enemies are fallen, they who truſt in him riſe victorious. All believers renounce in like manner all human works, all truſt on fleſhly confidences, on privileges, duties, or ſervices; ſeek no juſtifying righteouſneſs, but in their divine head, and deſire to go forth in the name of their Lord God, and to make mention of his righteouſneſs only, fully aſſured, that when all other claims on the divine favour, which the ſelf-righteous and unhumbled make, ſhall be confounded, they ſhall ſtand approved, as compleat in him, and be preſented *as holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in God's ſight.*

3. The pſalm concludes with a fervent prayer for themſelves, the ſubjects of Iſrael's king, or rather the ſervants of Jeſus, who cry continually, *Save, Lord*; *let the King*, Meſſiah, *hear us when we call*; be our advocate and friend, and ſupply us with all that ſpiritual ſtrength, which in our remaining warfare we need. *Note*, They who perſevere in waiting upon God in prayer, ſhall abide in his love, and be aſſured of his protection.

PSALM XXI.

As the former was a prayer for ſupport, this is the grateful thankſgiving for having received it. The people of Iſrael for their king, or rather the redeemed of the Lord, to whom this pſalm is moſt applicable, are taught, 1. *To congratulate his victories,* ver. 1—6. 2. *To confide in the power of God for the compleating of the ruin of the enemies of his kingdom.* ver. 7—13.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. THE king ſhall joy in [a] thy ſtrength, O LORD, and in thy ſalvation how greatly ſhall he rejoice! 2. [b] Thou haſt given him his heart's deſire, and haſt not withholden the requeſt of his lips. Selah. 3. For [c] thou preventeſt him with the bleſſings of goodneſs: thou ſetteſt a crown of pure gold on his head. 4. [d] He aſked life of thee, *and* thou gaveſt *it* him, [e] *even* length of days for ever and ever. 5. His glory *is* great in thy ſalvation, honour and majeſty haſt thou laid upon him. 6. For thou haſt † made him moſt bleſſed for ever: [f] thou haſt made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

a Pſ. xx. 6.
b Ibid. 4, 5.
c 1 Sam. xi. 13.
d Pſ. lxi. 6.
e 2 Sam. vii. 19. Pſ. xci. 16.
† Heb. Set him to be bleſſings. Pſ. lxxii. 17.
f Pſ. xlv. 7.

v. 1—6. David could not experience ſuch wondrous deliverances without deep gratitude; and his people, who prayed for him, were confident that God's ſalvation was the very joy of his heart; and therefore in his behalf they offer to God their ſacrifice of praiſe, for prayers granted; for bleſſings that prevented even deſire; for dignity ſo eminent, to which he was advanced; for length of days in the midſt of danger; and an abiding throne, though ſo often ſhaken; for great glory, honour, and majeſty, beſtowed from on high; for the promiſe of abiding bleſſings, and the experience of preſent exceeding great conſolations.

But more peculiarly applicable are theſe words to the King of Glory, who, in his work of man's redemption, was ſupported by the divine ſtrength to go through the arduous taſk, and in the proſpect of the ſalvation of his people, rejoiced with exceeding great joy in the midſt of all his ſufferings. To him every requeſt was granted, whether for grace or glory, in behalf of his choſen. In him God's preventing bleſſings were wonderfully manifeſted to the ſons of men, without deſert, yea, without deſire. A crown of glory is the reward of his ſufferings, and worthy is he to be thus exalted; death, Satan, and ſin being all ſubdued by him; and angels, principalities, and powers, put under him. The life that for a moment he laid down, is reſtored for ever; Chriſt being raiſed from the dead, dieth no more, and becauſe he lives, we ſhall live alſo. Unutterable is the glory and majeſty he hath received, the government of all things in heaven and earth being committed to him. Moſt bleſſed in himſelf, or as the margin reads it, *thou haſt ſet him to be bleſſings for ever,* to communicate eternal bleſſings to his people, and be himſelf the author, procurer, and beſtower of them; and in conſequence of all theſe things, the ſpirit of gladneſs reſts upon him, and the high approbation of God his Father, in his mediatorial work, is his everlaſting delight. *Note,* Every believer in Jeſus is a king, and ſhall ſhare his triumphs; be ſupported by the ſame ſtrength; find the ſame gracious anſwers to his prayers; experience God's preventing bleſſings; receive at laſt the crown of glory; and reign with his exalted head, happy, eternally and unutterably happy in the light of God's countenance.

7. For the king truſteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the moſt High he ſhall not be moved. 8. Thine hand ſhall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand ſhall find out thoſe that hate thee. 9. [g] Thou ſhalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD ſhall ſwallow them up in his wrath, and [h] the fire ſhall devour them. 10. [i] Their fruit ſhalt thou deſtroy from the earth, and their ſeed from among the children of men. 11. For [k] they intended evil againſt thee: they imagined a miſchievous device, *which* they are not able *to perform.* 12. Therefore ſhalt thou † make them turn their back, *when* [l] thou ſhalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy ſtrings, againſt the face of them. 13. Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own ſtrength: [m] *ſo* will we ſing and praiſe thy power.

g Mal. iv. 1.
h Pſ. xviii. 8.
i Job xviii. 16, 19. Pſ. xxxvii. 28. & cix. 13. Iſa. xiv. 20.
k Pſ. ii. 1, 2.
† Or, Set them as a butt. Job vii. 20. & xvi. 12.
l Pſ. vii. 12, 13.
m Rev. xi. 17.

v. 7—13. Praiſe for paſt mercies encourages confidence of preſent and future bleſſings; the people therefore expreſs their truſt, that no enemies ſhould ever ſhake the ſtability of David's throne; but that vengeance from God ſhould purſue and overtake them to the uttermoſt; and when this divine interpoſition appeared, they promiſe to renew their grateful ſongs of praiſe. But we muſt look farther than David's throne, and the ſubdual of his enemies, to the more enduring dominion of David's Son and Lord.

1. In the Lord he truſted, and ſtill continues to truſt in the fulfilment of the everlaſting covenant of promiſe to him and his ſeed, which the mercy of God ſuggeſted; and the ſame mercy will keep him firmly eſtabliſhed in the diſcharge of his mediatorial character; ſo that his enemies ſhall never be able to fruſtrate his deſigns of grace and love towards his people. *Note,* The ſtability of every believer ſtands upon as ſure a baſis as the throne of the Redeemer; if he cannot be moved, neither ſhall we.

2. His enemies muſt finally and eternally fall before him: wicked men, and wicked devils, who have hated his government, ſhall not eſcape his arm. Their miſchievous devices ſhall not only be diſappointed, whether againſt himſelf or his people, but their malice be viſited in judgments terrible as juſt: wrath to the uttermoſt ſhall overtake them, the furnace of hell be heated for their reception, and that fire, which is ſo intolerably tormenting, as well as eternally enduring, ſhall burn and leave them neither root nor branch; whilſt ſharp arrows within ſhall pierce the conſcience, and waken up the worm which never dies. Sinner, mark the end of the enemies of Chriſt and his kingdom; conſider thy ways, and be wiſe.

3. The whole is aſcribed to the Lord's power; it is he who muſt and will exalt his own glory in the ſalvation of his people, and deſtruction of his enemies; and all our work and buſineſs will be, everlaſtingly to ſing and praiſe him for his compleat redemption.

PSALM XXII.

The Spirit of Chriſt, which was in the prophets, teſtifies in this pſalm, as clearly and fully as any where elſe in all the Old Teſtament, the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow, 1 *Pet.* i. 11. *of him, no doubt, David here ſpeaks, and not of himſelf, or of any other man. Mixing complaints, and prayers, and comforts, he ſpeaks,* 1. *Of the humiliation of Chriſt,* ver. 1—21. 2. *Of the exaltation of Chriſt, that his undertaking ſhould be for the glory of God,* ver. 22—25. *For the ſalvation and joy of his people,* ver. 26—29. *And for the perpetuating of his own kingdom,* ver. 30, 31. *In ſinging this pſalm, we ought to keep our thoughts fixed upon Chriſt, and be ſo affected with his ſufferings, as to experience the fellowſhip of them, and ſo affected with his grace, as to experience the power and influence of it.*

¶ To the chief muſician upon † Aijeleth Shahar,
A pſalm of David.

† Or, the hind of the morning.

1. [a] MY God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? *why art thou ſo* far from ‡ helping me, *and from* the words of my [b] roring? 2. O my God, I cry in the day-time, [c] but thou heareſt not; and in the night-ſeaſon, and am not ſilent. 3. But thou *art* holy, *O thou* [d] that inhabiteſt the praiſes of Iſrael. 4. [e] Our fathers truſted in thee: they truſted, and thou didſt deliver them. 5. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: [f] they truſted in thee, and were not confounded. 6. But *I am* a worm, and no man, [g] a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people. 7. [h] All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn: they ſhoot out the lip, [i] they ſhake the head, *ſaying,* 8. [k] He § truſted on the LORD, *that* he would deliver him: [l] let him deliver him, || ſeeing he delighted in him. 9. But [m] thou *art* he that took me out of the womb; thou didſt † make me hope, *when I was* upon my mother's breaſts. 10. I was caſt upon thee from the womb: [n] thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

a Mat. xxvii. 46. Mark xv. 34.
‡ Heb. My ſalvation.
b Heb. v. 7.
c Lam. iii. 8.
d Deut. x. 21.
e Rom. xv. 4.
f Iſa. xlix. 23. Rom. ix. 33.
g Iſa. liii. 3.
h Mat. xxvii. 39.
i Pſ. cix. 25.
k Mat. xxvii. 43.
§ Heb. Rolled himſelf upon.
l Pſ. xci. 14.
|| Or, if he delight.
m Pſ. lxxi. 6. Iſa. xlix. 1.
† Or, keep me in ſafety.
n Iſa. xlvi. 3.

v. 1—10. The title of this pſalm is to the chief muſician upon Aijeleth Shahar, which ſeveral underſtand of the muſical inſtrument to which it was ſet; others, that it points to Chriſt, the ſubject of it, as *the morning hind,* given up to the toils of the hunters, but glorioſly at laſt eſcaping from their ſnares. We have here,

1. A bitter complaint from a ſenſe of God's abſence from his ſoul. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* withdrawn the ſenſe of thy favour, *and art ſo far from helping me,* when under the bittereſt agonies of ſoul, as well as tormenting pains in my body, *and from the words of my roaring,* when with an exceeding loud and bitter cry I bemoan my wretchedneſs, (*See this fulfilled,* Mat. xxvii. 46.) In the day on the croſs, and in the night, in the garden, inceſſantly he cried; and yet the bitter cup might not paſs from him, and herein God appeared as tho' he heard him not. *Note,* (1.) If God for a time left his own ſon to conflict with ſuch diſtreſs of ſoul, let not any

ſaint of God, in a like caſe, think that a ſtrange thing hath happened unto him. (2.) We may not ceaſe to uſe the language of faith, though oppreſſed with affliction, and dejected with fear: *My God* muſt we ſtill call him. (3.) As long as the ſoul can cry and complain to God, though as it were in dying groans, there is yet life and hope, and he will bring us from the gates of death. (4.) If the exerciſe be long, as well as grievous, and God ſeem not to hear or regard us, yet it becomes us with ceaſeleſs importunity ſtill day and night to cry, if ſo be there may be hope.

2. He encourages his truſt in God, notwithſtanding his miſerable eſtate, [1.] From a ſenſe of the holineſs of God; *Thou art holy*, who, in all the ſufferings the Redeemer endured, deſigned to diſplay his righteouſneſs in the puniſhment of ſin; for having become his people's ſurety, it was juſt he ſhould bear their ſorrows. *O thou that inhabiteſt the praiſes of Iſrael*, art the object of continual praiſe for the wondrous mercies manifeſted in redeeming grace. [2.] From the former experience of the ſaints of God: *Our fathers truſted in thee, &c.* As God, it may be ſaid, Who is his father? As man, he was the ſeed of Abraham, David, *&c.* whoſe troubles were as great, as their deliverances were glorious, and who never ſought God's face in vain. *Note*, (1.) If God's glory be exalted by our ſufferings, it may well reconcile us to them. (2.) The experience of former ages ſtands as a leſſon and encouragement to us, to be followers of thoſe who, through faith and patience, inherit the promiſes.

3. He laments the contempt and reproach caſt upon him: as a worm trodden down by every foot; ſo deſpicable, as if he was no man; below the meaneſt; derided and ſcorned; treated as an impoſtor; executed as a villain and murderer; and, even on the accurſed tree, mockery added to his ſhame and torture; whilſt they who went by literally fulfilled this prophecy, *wagging the head, and ſaying, He truſted in God, that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him.* *Note*, (1.) The moſt honourable character in the ſight of God, is uſually that which man deſpiſeth. (2.) They who will be followers of Chriſt, muſt be content to bear his reproach.

4. Notwithſtanding he truſted in God, whoſe care from tendereſt infancy he had experienced; by wondrous providence, though in a ſtable born, *thou didſt make me hope*, or, *keep me in ſafety*; and, by a miraculous viſion, ſecured him, when a babe at the breaſt, in Egypt from Herod's cruelty. *I was caſt upon thee* from the days of my nativity, and I truſt I ſhall find the ſame protection to the end of my life. *Note*, The mercies of our days of helpleſs infancy ſhould never be forgotten; and he that brought us ſafely from the womb, we are bound to truſt, will carry us comfortably to our grave.

11. Be not far from me, for trouble *is* near; for
[o] *there is* none to help. 12. [p] Many bulls have compaſſed me: ſtrong *bulls* of Baſhan have beſet me round.
13. [q] They gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion. 14. I am poured out like
water, and all my bones are out of joint: [r] my heart is
like wax, it is melted in the midſt of my bowels. 15.
[s] My ſtrength is dried up like a potſherd: and [t] my
tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou haſt brought me
into the duſt of death. 16. For dogs have compaſſed
me, the aſſembly of the wicked have incloſed me: [u] they
pierced my hands and my feet. 17. I may tell all my
bones: [x] they look *and* ſtare upon me. 18. [y] They part
my garments among them, and caſt lots upon my veſture. 19. But be not thou far from me, O LORD;
O my ſtrength, haſte thee to help me. 20. Deliver my
ſoul from the ſword: † my darling from the power of
the dog. 21. Save me from [z] the lion's mouth: for
thou haſt heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

[o] Iſa. lxiii. 5.
[p] Pſ. lxviii. 30. Amos iv. 1.
[q] Job xvi. 10. Lam. ii. 16. & iii. 46.
[r] Job xxiii. 16.
[s] Prov. xvii. 22.
[t] Lam. iv. 4. John xix. 28.
[u] Mat. xxvii. 35.
[x] Luke xxiii. 35.
[y] Ibid. 34. John xix. 24.
† Heb. My only one. Pſ. xxxv. 17.
[z] 1 Pet. v. 8.

v. 11—21. Whither ſhall the afflicted ſufferer fly, but unto the God of his help and his ſalvation? We have here,

1. The ſufferings of Chriſt deſcribed, and with ſuch preciſion, that we cannot but be convinced, that Jeſus is the Chriſt. Troubles like rolling waves, from perfidious friends and open enemies, approached him; *none to help him*; forſaken of all; and left alone to grapple with the united force of earth and hell. Fierce and ſtrong as bulls of Baſhan, his enemies ruſhed upon him; eager as the blood-hound on his prey, they ſeized him; and, cruel as a ravening and roaring lion, ſought to terrify his mind, whilſt they broke him in pieces with their ſavage jaws. His humanity, weak as water; his joints, as if unlooſed; his heart melted as wax, and his ſtrength quite failing him. Compaſſed about by the aſſembly of the wicked, urgent to haſten his miſerable end; nailed to the accurſed tree; hung up in ignominy and torture; his bones diſlocated, and ready to ſtart through his ſkin; his enemies feaſting their eyes with the inhuman ſpectacle; his tongue dry with thirſt, which is inſulted with vinegar mingled with gall; his blood guſhing out as water upon the earth; his ſoul melted as wax with a ſenſe of divine wrath, and death coming to put at laſt a period to his miſeries, and bring him to the duſt. Such things he endured for us men and our ſalvation. Had he not borne theſe torturing pains, we muſt have been eternally tormented: if his ſoul had not felt the wrath, ours muſt have been expoſed to it: but for his thirſt, we muſt have wanted a drop of water to cool a flaming tongue; and if his body had not for a while been laid in the duſt, our bodies and ſouls muſt have for ever lain in the belly of hell. O bleſſed then, for ever bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

2. The minuteſt circumſtances are obſerved, *their dividing his garments, and caſting lots upon his veſture*; and this we find the ſoldiers did, *John* xix. 23, 24. He parted with his ſeamleſs veſture as a prey, that he might obtain for us ſpotleſs garments of everlaſting righteouſneſs.

3. His prayer for help: *Be not thou far from me, O Lord.* As man now ſuffering, God was his refuge: *O my ſtrength*, by which the humanity can be alone ſupported, *haſte thee to help me*; the greatneſs of my trials admits of no delay. *Deliver my ſoul from the ſword*, from the ſenſe of divine wrath, and *my darling*, or *my only one*, or *my ſolitary one*, meaning himſelf, his precious life, *from the power of the dog*, the wicked Caiaphas, unjuſt Pilate, or treacherous Judas. *Save me from the lion's mouth*, from Satan, that, like a ramping and roaring lion, threatened to devour him: *for thou haſt heard me*, and therefore I can truſt the ſame help ſhall be granted, *from the horns of the unicorns*; from my foes, that like unicorns ruſh at me, and between whoſe horns I am ready to periſh. *Note*, (1.) Though God may ſeem to hide himſelf, yet he is not far from his people, and means only to excite their importunity in prayer, and to exerciſe their faith. (2.) Hath God delivered his darling Son from the lion's mouth, and the unicorn's horn; and ſhall he not deliver his darling people alſo? (3.) We can never be caſt ſo low, but there is ſtill ground for truſt and hope in God.

22. [a] I will declare thy name unto [b] my brethren: in
the midſt of the congregation will I praiſe thee. 23.
Ye that fear the LORD, praiſe him; all ye the ſeed of
Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the ſeed of Iſrael. 24. For he hath not deſpiſed, nor abhorred the
affliction of the afflicted: neither hath he hid his face
from him, but when [c] he cried unto him, he heard. 25.
[d] My praiſe *ſhall be* of thee in the great congregation:
[e] I will pay my vows before them that fear him. 26.
The meek [f] ſhall eat and be ſatisfied: they ſhall praiſe
the LORD that ſeek him; your heart ſhall live for ever.
27. [g] All the ends of the world ſhall remember and turn
unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations
ſhall worſhip before thee. 28. For [h] the kingdom *is*
the LORD's: and he *is* the governor among the nations. 29. All *they* [i] *that be* fat upon earth, ſhall eat
and worſhip: all they that go down to the duſt, [k] ſhall
bow before him, and none can keep alive his own ſoul.
30. A ſeed ſhall ſerve him, [l] it ſhall be accounted to the
LORD for a generation. 31. [m] They ſhall come, and
ſhall declare [n] his righteouſneſs unto a people that ſhall
be born, that he hath done *this*.

[a] Heb. ii. 12.
[b] John xx. 17. Rom. viii. 29.
[c] Heb v. 7.
[d] Pſ. xxxv. 18.
[e] Pſ. cxvi. 14.
[f] John vi. 51.
[g] Pſ. ii. 8. & lxxii. 11. & lxxxvi. 9. & xcviii. 3. Iſa. xlix. 6.
[h] Obad. 21. Zech. xiv. 9.
[i] Pſ. xlv. 12.
[k] Phil. ii. 10.
[l] Heb. ii. 13.
[m] Pſ. lxxviii. 6. & cii. 18. Iſa. lx. 3, 4.
[n] Rom. iii. 21, 22. Phil. iii. 9.

v. 22—31. When Jeſus, by the ſufferings of death for a moment, ſeemed to ſink beneath his foes, in ſilent anguiſh his people ſat diſconſolate; but lo! he comes to awaken up their praiſes, and from the duſt to proclaim his finiſhed redemption.

1. He opens the triumphant ſong himſelf: *I will declare thy name*, thy glory, grace, and faithfulneſs, *among my brethren*, the church of the redeemed, whom Chriſt is not aſhamed to call brethren: *in the midſt of the congregation will I praiſe thee*; in the hearts of his militant members on earth, or at the head of his glorified ſaints in heaven.

2. He calls upon his people to join the thankſgiving. The ſpiritual ſeed of Jacob, and the true Iſrael of God, muſt praiſe and glorify him, for his mercy in the Redeemer, whoſe afflictions, far from deſpiſing or abhorring, he was well-pleaſed with, and accepted as the full ſatisfaction for his people's ſins; looked upon him with moſt delightful complacence, even in his agony, and heard and anſwered his cry in the ſalvation vouchſafed to him in the reſurrection-day, and to all his people for his ſake: and herein the Saviour leads the way, *My prayer ſhall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows* of praiſe to God, (*See v.* 21.) or his engagements to his redeemed, whoſe character is given as thoſe that fear God. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is a ſolemn part of divine worſhip, and in it the whole congregation ſhould gladly and devoutly join. (2.) The work of the Redeemer will be the matter of the ſaints praiſes to eternity.

3. In Chriſt are found rich ſupplies for the ſoul's nouriſhment and comfort. *The meek*, thoſe who are lowly in their own eyes, and have learnt of the meek and humble Jeſus, *ſhall eat*, feed upon the fleſh of Chriſt, and all the ſaving benefits thence derived, *and be ſatisfied*, in the perfection of his ſacrifice,

fice, righteouſneſs, and redemption. *They ſhall praiſe the Lord that ſeek him*, who hungring and thirſting after his righteouſneſs, ſeek and find all fulneſs in him; *your heart ſhall live for ever*, the life of grace here, the life of glory hereafter. *Note*, (1.) They who feed on Chriſt by faith, poſſeſs a life in him, which even death cannot deſtroy. (2.) If we would have comfort in Chriſt, we muſt be like him, meek and lowly in heart, and then we ſhall ſurely find reſt unto our ſouls.

4. The extent of Chriſt's kingdom ſhall be univerſal. By the power of Divine grace, the ends of the earth ſhall be called and converted to him, *v.* 27. and come and worſhip before him. The kingdoms of the world ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord, and he ſhall be the governor, to reign in his people's hearts by love, and over his enemies with a rod of iron. High and low, quick and dead, *v.* 29. muſt ſubmit to his government; and whilſt they own that they *cannot keep alive their own ſouls*, ſhall truſt them ſafely in his hands, to keep them againſt the great reſurrection day. *Note*, (1.) However the cauſe of Chriſt in any age may be oppreſſed and brought low, it ſhall be finally triumphant. (2.) When we are going down into the duſt, it is an unſpeakable mercy to know whom we have believed, and to be comfortably ſatisfied concerning our eternal life in glory. For,

5. The kingdom of Chriſt ſhall be eternal, as well as univerſal. *A ſeed ſhall ſerve him*; in every age, to the end of time, there ſhall be a choſen remnant; *it ſhall be accounted to the Lord for a generation*, ſhare his tendereſt regards, and be kept by his paternal care. *They ſhall come* from age to age, *and ſhall declare his righteouſneſs unto a people that ſhall be born, that he hath done this*; ſhall tranſmit to lateſt poſterity the Redeemer's work, and eſpecially his righteouſneſs, the perfection of it, the neceſſity of being found in it, and the ſecurity of thoſe to whom it is imputed. Thus ſhall the memorial of him be kept up, till he ſhall come the ſecond time from heaven, not as a ſuffering Meſſiah, but as the righteous Judge and eternal King, to reign in glory over the election of his grace, and to execute judgment on the neglecters and deſpiſers of his great ſalvation!

PSALM XXIII.

Many of David's pſalms are full of complaints, but this is full of comforts, and may be well adopted by every believer in Jeſus, who, with David, enjoys the guidance and care of the great ſhepherd and biſhop of our ſouls. 1. *The pſalmiſt here claims relation to God as his ſhepherd*, ver. 1. 2. *He recounts the kind things God had done for him as his ſhepherd*, ver. 2, 3, 5. 3. *From hence he infers, that he ſhould want no good*, ver. 1. *That he need fear no evil*, ver. 4. 4. *That the ſame mercy ſhould follow him in time and eternity*, ver. 6.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. THE LORD *is* [a] my ſhepherd, [b] I ſhall not want. 2. [c] He maketh me to lie down in † green paſtures: [d] he leadeth me beſide the ſtill waters. 3. He reſtoreth my ſoul: [e] he leadeth me in the paths of righteouſneſs for his name's ſake. 4. Yea, though [f] I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, [g] I will fear no evil: for [h] thou *art* with me, thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me. 5. [i] Thou prepareſt a table before me in the preſence of mine enemies: thou anointeſt my head with oil, my cup runneth over. 6. Surely goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the houſe of the LORD ‡ for ever.

[a] Iſa. xl. 11. Jer. xxiii. 4. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. John x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 25. Rev. vii. 17.
[b] Phil. iv. 19.
[c] Ezek. xxxiv. 14.
† Heb. Paſtures of tender graſs.
[d] Rev. vii. 17.
[e] Pſal. v. 8. Prov. viii. 20.
[f] Job x. 21, 22.
[g] Pſal. iii. 6. & cxviii. 6.
[h] Iſa. xliii. 2.
[i] John x. 9.
‡ Heb. To length of days.

v. 1—6. The deſign of God's word is to encourage the faith, enliven the hope, and quicken the obedience of his people. In the pſalm before us, he appears in a character moſt amiable and engaging, as feeding the flock of his paſture, whom he firſt bought with his blood. *The Lord is my ſhepherd* may every believer ſay; mine, becauſe I am his, dearly purchaſed and tenderly beloved: *I ſhall not want, or fail*, how can I, when out of his fulneſs I receive, who is able to do exceeding abundantly for me above all I can aſk or think, and whoſe love inclines him to ſupply me according to the exceeding greatneſs of his power. My body he will feed with food convenient for me, my ſoul he will ſupply according to the riches of his grace; and as the ſource of my bleſſings is inexhauſtible, till he fails, I cannot. *He maketh me to lie down in green paſtures*, where faith feeds upon the great and precious promiſes of Jeſus, ever affording the ſweeteſt repaſt; and in his bleſſed ordinances, finds meat to eat the world knows not of. There *he maketh me to lie down*, the work is his own; who, when a wanderer on the world's barren mountains, kindly led me to theſe verdant fields, where now I find a quiet reſting-place, lie down with pleaſing compoſure, becauſe of my ſhepherd's care, and fear no guilt to embitter my portion, no enemy to diſturb my repoſe. *He leadeth me beſide the ſtill waters*, the waters of Shiloah, that go ſoftly, flowing from the rock Chriſt, cooling the thirſt which the remembrance of paſt ſin, or preſent temptation cauſes, and filling the ſoul with conſolations unſpeakable and glorious, as the ſource from whence they flow. *He reſtoreth my ſoul*, when fierce diſeaſe, or deep decay threatens my ruin; or fooliſhly wandering from the ſhepherd's care, my erring footſteps would turn aſide, his watchful eye is over me, his tender hand ſtretched out to ſave me, to heal the ſickneſs of my ſoul, to reſtore the joys I once was wont to find, and with freſh vigour to refreſh my fainting heart. *He leadeth me in paths of righteouſneſs*, points out my way, holds up my goings, and enables me to walk upright before him, in that highway of holineſs which leads to eternal glory; *for his name ſake*, as an act of ſovereign grace and favour, to diſplay in me a ſinner the riches of his glory. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death*, the deepeſt diſtreſſes of afflicting providences, or that unknown dark and dangerous road, at the proſpect of which mortality ſhrinks back, and ſenſe ſhudders, *I will fear no evil*; dark as the ſhadows are ſpread over it, deep as the valley lies, long and terrible as to nature's view the road appears, my faith from far diſcerns the beams of glorious light, my ſoul dares boldly ſtep into the grave, aſſured there to find the golden gates of life and immortality. *For thou art with me*, thou who haſt paſſed before the dreadful ſhade, ſhalt guide me ſafely through; into thy hands with chearful reſignation, I give up my ſoul, my body, they are thine; and as life with all its trials, ſo death with all its terrors, cannot ſeparate me from thy love, or for a moment rob me of thy unceaſing care. *Thy rod*, under which I have paſſed, and been ſealed unto the day of redemption, *and thy ſtaff* of promiſes unchangeable, *they comfort me*, make me more than conqueror over all my fears. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* behold a worm of earth, a ſinful worm of earth braving thy ſtroke, and triumphing in my fall. *Thou prepareſt a table before me*; whilſt here below I ſojourn, I want no manner of thing that is good, either for my body or my ſoul; thy liberal hand opens and fills me with plenteouſneſs, and this even *in the preſence of mine enemies*, who in vain ſeek to diſtreſs or embitter the portion thou doſt beſtow: *thou anointeſt my head with oil*, that oil of gladneſs and joy *a ſtranger intermeddleth not with*; a joy, the earneſt of that bliſs above, when crowned with glory I ſhall ſit down at thy feſtal board in heaven; *and my cup runneth over* with mercies more than I can tell, flowing from the rivers of endleſs bliſs at thy right hand for evermore. *Surely goodneſs and mercy*, ſuch as I have already taſted, goodneſs ſo beyond all deſert, and mercy ſo free and boundleſs, *ſhall follow me all the days of my life*, like thoſe welcome ſtreams, that in the parched deſert followed Iſrael's camp, ſo every morning ſhall new mercies ſurround me; to-morrow ſhall be as to-day; yea, much more abundant, deeper and ſweeter ſhall be the ſtream, the farther on time's rapid wings I am born, till launching forth into the ocean of eternity, my bleſſedneſs ſhall be compleat, and I ſhall be filled with all the fulneſs of God. *And I ſhall dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever*; dwell there, where without a vail, irradiation from the eternal Three ſhall dart unutterable joys into my glorified ſpirit, transformed into the image of the God whom I behold; and near his throne, high and lifted up, whilſt bright angelic hoſts, his train, fill the vaſt temple with his glory, my happy lot ſhall be to dwell, to dwell for ever; his love my all-ſufficient portion, and my happy labour everlaſting praiſe. Be this, Lord, my wiſhed-for reſt for ever; here let me dwell, for I have a delight therein.

PSALM XXIV.

This pſalm relates to the kingdom of Chriſt: 1. *His univerſal government is ſet forth*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The ſubjects of his kingdom are deſcribed*, ver. 3—6. 3. *A ſummons is given to all, to give the king admiſſion*, ver. 7—10. *It is ſuppoſed, that this pſalm was penned upon occaſion of David's bringing up the ark to the place prepared for it; and the intention of it was, to lead the people above the pomp of external ceremonies to faith in Chriſt, of whom the ark was a type.*

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. [a] THE earth *is* the LORD's, and the fulneſs thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein. 2. For [b] he hath founded it upon the ſeas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the floods. 3. [c] Who ſhall aſcend into the hill of the LORD? and who ſhall ſtand in his holy place? 4. [d] He that hath clean hands [e] and a pure heart; who hath not lift up his ſoul unto vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully. 5. † He ſhall receive [f] the bleſſing from the LORD, and righteouſneſs from the God of his ſalvation. 6. [g] This *is* the generation of them that ſeek him, that ſeek thy face, ‡ O Jacob. Selah.

[a] Exod. ix. 29. & xix. 5. Deut. x. 14. Job xli. 11. Pſal. l. 12. 1 Cor. x. 26.
[b] Job xxxviii. 6. Pſal. civ. 5. & cxxxvi. 6. 2 Pet. iii. 5.
[c] Pſal. xv. 1. Mic. vi. 6.
[d] Iſa. xxxiii. 15, 16.
[e] Mat. v. 8.
† Or he who receives.
[f] Eph. i. 3.
[g] John i. 47. Gal. vi. 16.
‡ Or, O God of Jacob.

v. 1—6. We have here,

1. The Lord's univerſal ſovereignty and dominion aſſerted,

and the grounds of his title thereunto indiſputably proved. *The earth is the Lord's*, he is the rightful lord and owner, *and the fulneſs thereof*, whatever lies in the bowels of the earth, or feeds upon its ſurface; whatever flies through the trackleſs air, or makes their path in the great waters, all own him ſovereign, and ſerve his will: *the world, and they that dwell therein*, not only the inanimate creation, not only the living creatures, void of reaſon, but eſpecially men, the inhabitants of the world, are his workmanſhip, and therefore owe him bounden duty and ſervice, contentment with their lot, and a ſanctified uſe of the creatures whom the great Lord of all hath lent for our ſervice, 1 *Cor.* x. 26—28. *For he hath founded it*, and therefore juſtly claims a right over the work of his hands, having produced firſt the matter at his word, faſhioned it for his glory, and ſtill continuing to eſtabliſh and preſerve it, fearfully as it appears ſituated *upon the ſeas, and eſtabliſhed upon the floods.*

2. Though all things are Chriſt's, by virtue of creation, he hath a peculiar property in ſome, by redemption and grace, the members of his church on earth, and deſigned to inherit glory in heaven. This world is a paſſing ſcene, a ſtage, that the hand which formed it will ſhortly ſtrike down; but when theſe heavens are diſſolved, and this earth burnt up, *who ſhall aſcend into the hill of the Lord*, the heavenly Zion, *and who ſhall ſtand in his holy place*, the celeſtial ſanctuary? This is the grand enquiry. The following words deſcribe the character; may we find it applicable to our own ſouls! *He that hath clean hands*, whoſe converſation is exemplary, his hands neither defiled with diſhoneſt gain nor oppreſſion, and lifted up in prayer without wrath or doubting; and this from a principle of divine faith, working by love, and making a *pure heart*, not abſolutely and perfectly ſo, for that is not the lot of man on earth; but free from allowed impurity in our moſt ſecret deſires, and in its bent ſincere and upright before the heart-ſearching God, *who hath not lift up his ſoul unto vanity*, or *ſet his heart upon it*, neither ſeeking inordinately the pleaſures, intereſts, riches, eſteem, or honours of the world, nor placing his happineſs in any of theſe, but in a meaſure crucified to the world, and the world unto him: *nor ſworn deceitfully*, but made conſcience of his words and oaths, and faithfully adhered to them, however diſadvantageous. *He ſhall receive*, or *he who receives the bleſſing from the Lord*, the bleſſing of pardon and grace, as a poor indigent ſinner coming to the Lord, to receive out of his fulneſs, and eſpecially *righteouſneſs from the God of his ſalvation*, that divine and all-perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus, in which alone he can with confidence appear before God, and on which his title to glory ſtands. *This is the generation of them that ſeek him*, in all his holy ways below, and will meet him in his hill of glory above, even *that ſeek thy face, O Jacob*, the God of Jacob, who may be here intended, or the ſpiritual ſeed of Jacob, the church of the redeemed; to join whom, that ſoul will be brought who walks as is above deſcribed, and ſeeks to be found among thoſe faithful few, that ſhall be counted to the Lord for a generation. *Note*, (1.) It behoves us often to examine ourſelves, whether we are in the faith, and to enquire whether Chriſt be formed in us. (2.) They who would reign with Chriſt above, muſt walk with him here below; for without holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord. (3.) Though our hearts muſt be ſincere and without offence unto the day of Chriſt, our title to glory ſtands upon a higher claim than our own obedience, even on the divine righteouſneſs of God manifeſt in the fleſh, which he wrought out for his people's ſalvation.

7. [h] Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting doors, and the King of glory [i] ſhall come in. 8. Who *is* this King of glory? [k] the LORD ſtrong and [l] mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. 9. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift *them* up, ye everlaſting doors, and the King of glory ſhall come in. 10. Who is this king of glory? the LORD of hoſts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

[h] Pſal. cxviii. 10. Iſa. xxvi. 2.
[i] Rev. iii. 20.
[k] Hag. ii. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[l] Rev. xviii. 8.

v. 7—10. If, as is uſually thought, this pſalm was compoſed on the bringing up the ark from Obed-edom to the tabernacle in Zion, theſe verſes contain the alternate queſtions and reſponſes of thoſe who ſtood prepared for its reception within, and thoſe without, who demanded admiſſion for the ark of God they bore; but this triumphant entry into Zion may be regarded as the figure of the more ſplendid and glorious entrance of Jeſus, (1.) Into the believer's heart, and (2.) At the laſt day, with the train of his redeemed, into the manſions of eternal glory.

1. The Lord in his goſpel ſtands at the door and knocks, demanding admiſſion into the hearts of his people, that living temple, where he moſt delights to dwell, and they, with the moſt enlarged affection, are called upon to welcome him in. Do we aſk who is this King of Glory? *He is the Lord*, Jehovah, *ſtrong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle*, coming from the field of ſlaughtered foes, red in his apparel, the conqueror of death, and ſin, and hell; and therefore juſtly claims that dominion over us, to which his victory entitles him. He repeats the call, as urgent for admiſſion: ſuch is the grace of our Redeemer, that with importunity he woes us to be happy under his gentle ſway; and ſhall we not open to him, *who is Lord of hoſts*, able to ſave or to deſtroy, and whoſe kingdom ruleth over all, in glory everlaſting? *Note*, They are truly great, and ſupremely happy, with whom Jeſus condeſcends to take up his abode, and in whoſe hearts he fixes his gracious throne. Well may we cry, come in, dear Lord, to me!

2. When, riſing from his throne of judgment, the hoſts of ſaints and angels, who grace his triumphs, ſhall with him aſcend above the heavens, then ſhall theſe everlaſting doors be opened for his reception; with welcomes of joy tranſporting ſhall the King of Glory enter in, and the remembrance of all his mighty victories afford matter for the unceaſing ſongs of eternity.

PSALM XXV.

This pſalm ſeems to be penned during his troubles, from Abſalom or Sheba. 1. *He prays to be protected, and lead in God's holy way*, ver. 1—5. 2. *That God would be merciful to his ſins*, ver. 6, 7, 11. 3. *He expreſſes his truſt in God*, ver. 8—10, 14. 4. *He lays his diſtreſſed ſituation before God, and prays for help and deliverance*, ver. 15—22.

¶ A Pſalm of David.

1. [a] UNTO thee, O LORD, do I lift up my ſoul. 2. O my God, I [b] truſt in thee, let me not be aſhamed: [c] let not mine enemies triumph over me. 3. Yea, let none that wait on thee be aſhamed; let them be aſhamed which tranſgreſs [d] without cauſe. 4. [e] Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. 5. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my ſalvation, on thee do I wait all the day. 6. Remember, O LORD, [f] thy † tender mercies and thy loving kindneſſes: for they *have been* ever of old. 7. Remember not [g] the ſins of my youth, nor my tranſgreſſions: according to thy mercy remember thou me, [h] for thy goodneſs ſake, O LORD.

[a] Pſal. lxxxvi. 4. & cxliii. 8. Lam. iii. 41.
[b] Pſal. xxii. 5. & xxxi. 8. & xxxiv. 8. Iſa. xxviii. 16. Rom. x. 11.
[c] Pſal. xiii. 4.
[d] Ibid. lix. 4.
[e] Exod. xxxiii. 13. Pſal. xxvii. 11. & lxxxvi. 11. & cxlii. 8.
[f] Pſal. ciii. 17. & cvii. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
† Heb. Bowels.
[g] Job xiii. 26. Jer. iii. 25.
[h] Pſal. li. 1.

v. 1—7. David's troubles always brought him to his knees, and there he ever found a ſure relief. We have him here,

1. Approaching God under his afflictions, of whatever ſort they were, and caſting his care upon him. *Unto thee do I lift up my ſoul* in prayer for ſupport, or as a ſacred depoſit, commend it to his keeping and care. *O my God, I truſt in thee*, fix my anchor within the vail, and amidſt the ſtorm contentedly wait the iſſue; ſince thou art my God, I am ſafe. *Note*, (1.) An intereſt in God's love is a ſure protection from every foe. (2.) The more our hearts are lifted up from earth to heaven, and leaving theſe vanities, we place our ſupreme deſire on the glories above, the more ſure we are our hope ſhall not be diſappointed.

2. He prays for himſelf, and all that like him were afflicted; that neither he nor they might be aſhamed of their confidence, or diſappointed of their hope. *Let not mine enemies triumph over me*, as they ſoon would, if God ſhould withdraw his kind ſupport, but *let them be aſhamed that tranſgreſs without a cauſe* againſt me, who have never provoked them, againſt thee, the God of all mercy. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt we are praying for ourſelves, we muſt not forget our brethren; but be advocates for them, as they are for us. (2.) He that believeth, ſhall not be aſhamed; the God of his confidence never faileth thoſe who ſeek him. (3.) Though tranſgreſſors may appear for a while ſecure and triumphant in their wickedneſs, yet their day is coming, when everlaſting confuſion ſhall cover them.

3. He begs of God to direct and lead him in the right way of duty, to direct him in his worſhip and ſervice, to enlighten his mind with all ſaving truth, and enable him to walk under the influence of it. And for this he pleads, becauſe God is his ſalvation, the author and finiſher of it, on whom his ſoul depends, and becauſe he waited on him all the day, in conſequence of his promiſe, to hear the prayer of his people. *Note*, (1.) We are by nature both blind and impotent, ignorant of God's ways, and unable to walk in them; he muſt therefore teach the ignorant, and help the helpleſs, or we can never walk aright and pleaſe him. (2.) They who wait upon God, as the God of their ſalvation, will never wait in vain.

4. He pleads the grace and everlaſting promiſes of God in Jeſus Chriſt, which former ſaints ever experienced in their days of trouble; and he humbly hopes God will not forget to manifeſt the ſame grace, and fulfil the ſame promiſes to him. *Note*, (1.) The believer's hope fixes on God's everlaſting love, which remains the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever. (2.) What others have proved their ſupport, we are the more encouraged to truſt upon.

5. He begs pardon for tranſgreſſions, which from the womb began in a corrupted nature, and appeared from his youth up;

for which, ſhould God enter into judgment with him, he muſt be utterly condemned: therefore he cries for mercy, and diſclaiming all merit, pleads only God's unbounded grace and goodneſs. *Note*, (1.) The ſins of our youth, though forgiven and forgotten of God, ſhould never be forgotten by us. (2.) The only hope of the ſinner ariſes from God's free grace in a redeemer, without which, every tranſgreſſion muſt ſink us under black deſpair. (3.) They who draw near to God in humble faith, however great or aggravated their ſins, may confidently hope that they ſhall not only be forgiven, but forgotten.

8. Good and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will
he teach ſinners in the way. 9. The meek will he guide
in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. 10.
All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth, unto
ſuch as keep his covenant and his teſtimonies. 11. [i] For
thy names ſake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity, for [k]
it *is* great. 12. What man *is* he that feareth the LORD?
[l] him ſhall he teach in the way *that* he ſhall chooſe. 13.
His ſoul ſhall dwell † at eaſe: and his ſeed ſhall inherit
the earth. 14. [m] The ſecret of the LORD *is* with them
that fear him: and he will ſhew them his covenant.

[i] Pſal. xxxi. 3. Ezek. xx. 9.
[k] Rom. v. 20.
[l] Pſ. xxxvii. 23.
† Or in goodneſs.
[m] Prov. iii. 32. John vii. 17. & xv. 15.

v. 8—14. Having aſked of God direction and ſupport, he here promiſes himſelf that he ſhall find it.

Good and upright is the Lord, kind and gracious to his people, faithful to his promiſes, and equitable in his deciſions, *therefore will he teach ſinners in the way*, though they have offended and provoked him as I have done; yet when they return, he will not reject them, he will ſhew them Chriſt the living way, who came to ſave ſinners, and miniſter to them grace, that they may be enabled to walk in him, as ſouls ranſomed by his blood, and conducting to his glory. *The meek*, the humbled under a ſenſe of ſin, *he will guide in judgment*, giving them an underſtanding to know him that is true, and *teach his way* to them of juſtifying ſinners, through the blood and righteouſneſs of his dear Son. *For all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth*, all his promiſes flow from boundleſs mercy, and are the dictates of eternal truth; and all his providences are deſigned with the moſt gracious intention for his people's good; ſo that they may confidently truſt him, whilſt in the way of duty *they keep his covenant and his teſtimonies*; hold faſt the one as their rock, and follow the other as their holy path of duty, in which they deſire to walk and pleaſe God. Not that any thing they can do, is worthy of God's regard, ſeeing in their beſt eſtate they have need to cry, *For thy name's ſake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great*, much ſin cleaves to all they do, and God, for his name's ſake, will pardon; yea, the very greatneſs of their ſin may be made a plea for forgiveneſs; foraſmuch as God ſhall be more glorified, the more abundantly he pardons. *What man then is he that feareth the Lord?* conſcious of his guilt, and humbly confeſſing it before his offended God, *him ſhall he teach in the way that he ſhall chooſe*; the Lord ſhall order his goings, and his footſteps ſhall not ſlide. His *ſoul ſhall dwell at eaſe*, relieved from every diſtreſſing fear, and enjoying the peace which flows from pardoned ſin, or *in goodneſs*, as the word may be rendered, in the experience of God's love and favour; *and his ſeed ſhall inherit the land*, a ſufficiency here below, and hereafter the promiſed land of eternal reſt, the heavenly Canaan. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, his myſteries of providence and grace are opened to them, they are admitted into that happy communion with him, which is unknown to others, and *he will ſhew them his covenant*, wherein their preſent grace and eternal glory are now ſecured to them in Chriſt, and they ſhall fully ſee the accompliſhment of all that is therein contained, when they come to his preſence above. *Note*, (1.) None can come to God for pardon and grace, but thoſe who feel experimentally their guilt and corruption. (2.) It is the ſame thing with God, to pardon many offences as few; ſo that the ſenſe of the greatneſs of our ſins ſhould never keep us from him, but drive us to him. (3.) They who find mercy with God in Jeſus Chriſt, are bound by every tie of love and duty to fear offending him, and to delight to pleaſe him in his holy ways. (4.) When we are ſo doing, all things ſhall work together for good to us, and ſweet mercies ſpring from the moſt afflictive providencies.

15. [n] Mine eyes *are* ever towards the LORD: for he
ſhall pluck my feet out of the net. 16. Turn thee unto
me, and have mercy upon me: for I *am* deſolate and af-
flicted. 17. The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O
bring thou me out of my diſtreſſes. 18. [o] Look upon
mine affliction and my pain, and forgive all my ſins.
19. Conſider mine enemies, for they are many, and they
hate me with † cruel hatred. 20. O keep my ſoul and
deliver me: let me not be aſhamed, for I put my truſt
in thee. 21. Let integrity and uprightneſs preſerve me:
for I wait on thee. 22. Redeem Iſrael, O God, [p] out of
all his troubles.

[n] Pſ. cxxiii. 1.
[o] Exod. iii. 7.
† Heb. Hatred of violence.
[p] Pſal. xxxiv. 19.

v. 15—22. Encouraged by the views of God's goodneſs he had ſuggeſted, he again renews his complaints and prayers, in hopes of preſent and ſpeedy help.

1. His complaints are many and grievous. *His feet are entangled in the net*; either that which the counſels of Ahitophel and others ſpread for him, or with the ſnares of ſin that had prevailed againſt him; he *is deſolate and afflicted*, or *alone* and *poor*, forſaken of his ſubjects, and deſtitute of neceſſaries, or in his ſpirit grieved with the ſenſe of ſin, which had occaſioned his ſorrows. *The troubles of his heart were enlarged*, both thro' outward trials and inward diſtreſs, whilſt his guilt ſeems to lie heavier on his conſcience, than all the pain of his afflictions. *His enemies were both many* in number, and perſecuted him *with a cruel hatred*, ſo that he had need cry aloud, when thus compaſſed about on every ſide. *Note*, When God brings his people into trouble under his chaſtiſements, Satan uſually takes occaſion to aggravate their ſorrows, with his inward accuſings.

2. Under all, his eye is directed upward, his truſt unſhaken, and his prayer fervent. (1.) His ſin, as his greateſt burden, he prays God to forgive, *v.* 18. for that removed, all other ſufferings will be comparatively light afflictions. (2.) He begs God to bring him out of his diſtreſſes in his own good time and way. *Note*, True reſignation to affliction is not at all inconſiſtent with humble prayer for its removal. (3.) He prays God would conſider his enemies, to break their power, and deliver him from their hands. *Note*, Though we muſt love our enemies, we may ſafely pray againſt their wickedneſs. (4.) He pleads his integrity, *v.* 21. however guilty he ſtood before God, to them he had done no wrong. *Note*, It is a great comfort, when deſpitefully uſed of men, to be conſcious that the injury is unprovoked. (5.) He concludes with a general petition for the whole Iſrael of God, *v.* 22. either particularly for his afflicted kingdom, during his ſon's unnatural uſurpation, or for the ſending that glorious Saviour, who ſhould turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob, or rather more diffuſively that God would ſave his ſpiritual Iſrael from all their troubles, when the days of their warfare ſhall be ended, and in heaven they ſhall find that eternal repoſe, which no enemy without or within ſhall evermore be able to diſturb. Oh come that happy day!

PSALM XXVI.

This pſalm appears to have been penned on occaſion of the malicious aſperſions caſt on David, by his avowed perſecutor, Saul. It contains his appeal to God for his integrity, ver. 1, 2. *for the proof of which he alledges,* 1. *His regard to God and his truth,* ver. 3. 2. *His antipathy to ſin and ſinners,* ver. 4, 5. 3. *His affection to the ordinances of God,* ver. 6, 7, 8. *Having thus proved his integrity,* (1.) *He deprecates the doom of the wicked,* ver. 9, 10. (2.) *He reſolves to hold faſt his integrity, and hope in God,* ver. 11, 12. *Herein David repreſents that innocent Lamb, who ſuffered ſo much from the revilings of men, and committed his cauſe to him who judgeth righteouſly.*

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. [a] JUDGE me, O LORD, for [b] I have walked
in mine integrity: I have truſted alſo in the
LORD: *therefore* I ſhall not ſlide. 2. [c] Examine me,
O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.
3. For thy loving kindneſs *is* before mine eyes: and I
have walked in thy truth. 4. [d] I have not ſat with vain
perſons, neither will I go in with diſſemblers. 5. I have
hated the congregation of evil doers: and will not ſit with
the wicked.

[a] Pſal. vii. 8.
[b] Prov. xx. 7.
[c] Pſal. xvii. 3. & lxvi. 10. & cxxxix. 23.
[d] Pſal. i. 1. Jer. xv. 17.

v. 1—5. The greateſt innocence is no protection from the invenomed tongue of ſlander. It is well there is a day coming that ſhall confute the calumnies of the wicked, and turn them with confuſion on their own heads.

1. David here appeals to God for his integrity. Not as upright in the ſight of God, for there he pretended not to be juſtified; but as innocent of the charges laid againſt him by Saul, reſpecting which, he deſires to ſubmit to the heart-ſearching ſcrutiny of God, and to abide by his judgment, conſcious that there was no juſt occaſion of offence to be found in him; and therefore truſting that God would eſpouſe his righteous quarrel, and preſerve him that he ſhould not ſlide: neither fall before the malignity of his perſecutors, nor be enſnared by the power of evil. *Note*, (1.) Under the baſeſt miſrepreſentations, it is an unſpeakable comfort to poſſeſs conſcious innocence. (2.) They who truſt in God, ſhall never ſlide, at leaſt not ſo as to be caſt away; but are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto ſalvation.

2. In ſupport of his plea, he produces the following evidences. [1.] His regard to God's loving kindneſs, a ſenſe of which upon his heart, reſtrained him from evil. [2.] *That he*

had walked in God's truth, made his word his rule, and ſought to have his actions governed thereby. [3.] His care to abſtain from the company of ſinners. They are called *vain perſons*, addicted to the vanities of this world; or whoſe talk and converſation was light, lewd, or unprofitable. *Diſſemblers*, who flatter with their lips, or lye in wait to deceive; *evil doers*, whoſe words and works are calculated to injure their neighbour; *wicked*, men of profligate lives and converſations, who have caſt off the fear of God: with theſe he never had maintained acquaintance, never choſe to ſit down in their company, he hated their ways, and fully purpoſed never to go unto them as friends, or be connected with them as his familiars. *Note*, (1.) A ſenſe of God's love is the great reſtrainer from ſin. (2.) When God's word is ever conſulted as our guide, then we ſhall walk aright. (3.) Nothing ſo dangerous as fellowſhip with the ungodly. (4.) To ſit long amidſt light, vain, unprofitable diſcourſe, deadens the heart perhaps more than what is flagrantly profane. (5.) Though we muſt needs go out of the world if we would have no communication with the wicked, yet a gracious ſoul will have as little as poſſible.

6. [e] I will waſh mine hands in innocency: ſo will I compaſs thine altar, O LORD. 7. That I may publiſh with the voice of thankſgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. 8. LORD, [f] I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place † where thine honour dwelleth. 9. [g] ‡ Gather not my ſoul with ſinners, nor my life with bloody men: 10. In whoſe hands *is* miſchief: and their right hand is full of bribes. 11. But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me. 12. [h] My foot ſtandeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bleſs the LORD.

e Pſal. lxxiii. 13. Exod. xxx. 19, 20.
f Pſal. xxvii. 4.
† Heb. Of the habitation of thy honour.
g Pſal. xxviii. 3. Gen. xviii. 23. 1 Sam. xv. 6.
‡ Or take not away.
h Pſal. xl. 2.

v. 6—12. We have heard what company David avoided, here we are told what company he delighted in, the worſhippers of God.

1. He declares how he approached the courts of the Lord's houſe. *He waſhed his hands in innocency*, waſhed in the bleſſed fountain, open for ſin and for uncleanneſs, that ſo he might be accounted pure before God; and he kept back no allowed ſin, but with a conſcience void of offence, *compaſſed God's altar*; alluding to the prieſts who went round the altar, ſprinkling the atoning blood on the four corners, ſo would he wait continually upon God, pleading the blood of ſprinkling, and offering the grateful ſacrifice of praiſe. *That I may publiſh with the voice of thankſgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works*, works of mercy and grace ſo aſtoniſhing, that they deſerve to be proclaimed for the comfort of his brethren, and the glory of God. And this was not a mere ſlaviſh duty to ſatisfy conſcience, or ſupport a Phariſaical righteouſneſs, no; it was the very joy of his heart. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe*, there could I with pleaſure ever abide, *and the place where thine honour dwelleth*, where in the divine Shechinah thy glory viſibly appears. *Note*, (1.) In our approaches to God's altar, it becomes us to apply with renewed faith to the fountain of a Saviour's blood, that in him we may appear without ſpot or blemiſh. (2.) They who love God will love his ordinances, and count his ſervice perfect freedom. (3.) In the believer's eyes, all God's works of grace appear wonderful, beyond all he could deſire, and above all he could deſerve.

2. He prays, *Gather not my ſoul with ſinners*, ſuch as are openly profane and profligate, that God would not ſuffer him to walk in their ways, or come to their miſerable end; *nor my life with bloody men*, who are cut off in the midſt of their days: he deſcribes them as men, *in whoſe hand is miſchief, and their right hand is full of bribes*, to pervert judgment, or to gratify the ſinful purpoſes of their hearts. *Redeem me*, deliver me from the company of all ſuch, and from the hand of all my enemies, *and be merciful unto me*; to my ſins, to pardon them, to my ſufferings, to remove them. *Note*, (1.) However now ſinners may be joyous, and walk in proſperous iniquity, the day is near when God ſhall gather in their ſouls as tares, and bind them in bundles for the burning. (2.) They who are delivered from ſinners ways, ſhall eſcape their ruin. (3.) The redemption of our ſouls is by the blood of Jeſus; bleſſed and happy are they, to whom this is by faith applied.

3. He repeats his purpoſe to perſevere as he had done, *v.* 1. in his integrity, and give no juſt cauſe to his enemy to accuſe him. Confident in God's care, who had ſet his foot in *an even* place, from whence he ſhould not be moved, but in the congregations of God's ſaints continue to bleſs the Lord for all his diſpenſations of mercy, grace, and love to his ſoul. *Note*, (1.) When we have run well, it ſhould be an engagement to us to perſevere. (2.) Chriſt is the even place on whom the believer is firmly fixed, and from whoſe love and ſervice no enemy ſhall be able to remove him. (3.) They who ſhare the Redeemer's gracious protection, are bound to render the calves of their lips, and in the congregation of ſaints and angels their work will ſhortly be everlaſting praiſe.

PSALM XXVII.

In what particular trouble David penned this pſalm is uncertain. In it we have, 1. *The ſtrength and confidence of his faith*, ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *The complacency he took in communion with God, and the benefit he experienced by it*, ver. 4, 5, 6. 3. *His deſire towards God, and his grace*, ver. 7—9, 11, 12. 4. *His expectations from God, and the encouragement he gives to others to hope in him*, ver. 10, 13, 14.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. THE LORD *is* [a] my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? [b] the LORD *is* the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid? 2. When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes came upon me, [c] to eat up my fleſh, they ſtumbled and fell. 3. [d] Though an hoſt ſhould encamp againſt me, my heart ſhall not fear: though war ſhould riſe againſt me, in this *will* I *be* confident. 4. [e] One *thing* have I deſired of the LORD, that will I ſeek after, [f] that I may dwell in the houſe of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold [g] the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. 5. For in the time of trouble [h] he ſhall hide me in his pavilion: in the ſecret of his tabernacle ſhall he hide me, he ſhall ſet me up upon a rock. 6. And now [i] ſhall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle ſacrifices of † joy, I will ſing, yea, I will ſing praiſes unto the LORD.

a Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. Iſa. lx. 19. Mic. vii. 8.
b Pſal. cxviii. 6.
c Ibid. xiv. 4.
d Ibid. iii. 6.
e Ibid. xxvi. 8.
f Ibid. xxiii. 6. & lxxxiv. 10.
g Pſal. xcvi. 9.
h Ibid. xxxi. 20. & xci. 1.
i Pſal. iii. 3.
† Heb. Shouting.

v. 1—6. If God be for us, who can be againſt us? if he be our ſalvation, how impotent the malice of every foe? We have here,

1. David's triumph over his enemies, through his intereſt in God's love. *The Lord is my light*, to point out my way, to chear my heart, and to preſerve me from all the darkneſs of evil and of ſin, *and my ſalvation*, whoſe grace watches over me, whoſe power protects me, and in whoſe arms I am ſafe from every danger; *whom ſhall I fear* under ſuch a guardian? *The Lord is the ſtrength of my life*, preſerving me from every deadly blow that is aimed againſt me, by my temporal or ſpiritual foes, and will bring me to his eternal life in glory, *of whom ſhall I be afraid?* who can ſeparate me from his regards, and if ſecure of theſe, all muſt be well. My numerous adverſaries have tried their utmoſt malice, but ſtumbled and fell; and though they ſhould renew their deſperate attacks, no fear ſhall diſmay me: my confidence is placed on him who cannot fail, and will not forſake me. *Note*, (1.) Without the light of God's word and ſpirit, we muſt quickly ſtumble; but if theſe lead us, then ſhall we walk ſafely. (2.) Our fears are often apt to beſet us from the views of the multitude, or greatneſs of our dangers; but if our faith fail not, our fears cannot prevail. (3.) Chriſt is our life; till the well-ſpring that is in him fails, we cannot faint. (4.) It is our duty and comfort to deſpair of ourſelves, and be confident in God.

2. His prayer. *One thing have I deſired of the Lord*, not to return to his own houſe, not to be reinſtated at court, but to be admitted to the more deſirable courts of the Lord's houſe, there he could wiſh for ever to dwell, ſuch delight had he in the ordinances of the ſanctuary; *to behold the beauty of the Lord*, the prieſts in their veſtments, the ſacrifices ſmoaking on the altar, and all the glory of that worldly ſanctuary; and from theſe outward ſymbols to contemplate the glories of the great high-prieſt, and perfect ſacrifice of the Meſſiah, to whom all this ſhadowy ſervice pointed; *and to enquire in his temple*, to aſk direction in every difficulty, and in prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, to make his requeſts known unto God. There he promiſed himſelf ſafety and ſecurity, hid under the ſacred pavilion of the Divine Majeſty, and firmly ſeated, as on a rock, which all his enemies, like boiſterous waves, aſſail in vain. *Therefore*, becauſe of ſuch protection, *will I offer in his tabernacle*, though now abſent from it, yet confident of again returning, *ſacrifices of joy*, the grateful overflowings of a heart filled with the love, and big with the praiſes of a gracious God. *Note*, (1.) God's ſanctuary and ſervice is the believer's delight; he would dwell there now, he hopes to have his abode in it ſhortly for ever. (2.) They who are hid under the wing of Almighty grace, and are bleſt with manifeſtations of the beauty of the Lord as their God and Saviour, are not only ſafe, but happy, amidſt an hoſt of enemies. (3.) Praiſe is the juſt tribute we owe, and ſhould daily render for mercies without number and without end.

7. Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy alſo upon me, and anſwer me. 8. *When*

thou ſaidſt, [k] Seek ye my face: my heart ſaid unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I ſeek. 9. [l] Hide not thy face *far* from me, put not thy ſervant away in anger: thou haſt been my help, leave me not, neither forſake me, O God of my ſalvation. 10. [m] When my father and my mother forſake me, then the LORD will † take me up. 11. [n] Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, becauſe of ‡ mine enemies. 12. [o] Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for falſe witneſſes are riſen up againſt me, and ſuch as breathe out cruelty. 13. *I had fainted*, unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of the LORD [p] in the land of the living. 14. [q] Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart: wait, I ſay, on the LORD.

k Pſ. cv. 4.
l Pſ. lxix. 17.
m Iſa. xlix. 15.
† Heb. gather me.
n Pſ. xxv. 4. & lxxxvi. 11. & cxix. 5.
‡ Heb. thoſe that obſerve me.
o Pſ. xxxv. 25.
p Ibid. lvi. 13. & cxvi. 9.
q Ibid. xxxi. 24. & cxxx. 5. Iſa. xxv. 9. Hab. ii. 3.

v. 7—14. Having engaged to praiſe God on his return to his tabernacle, David enlarges his requeſts, that he may have more abundant matter for praiſe and joy.

1. His requeſts are many: in general he begs that God would hear his voice, ſhew him the mercy he needed for ſoul and body, and anſwer his cry by ſome gracious evidence that his prayer was heard and granted, *v.* 7. In particular, (1.) He deſires God's face may not be hid from him, *v.* 9. i. e. the ſenſe of his favour and regard. (2.) That he may not be turned back in anger, as a ſervant from the preſence of an offended maſter; at leaſt not turned out of his ſervice, though for a little moment his ſins provoked a frown. (3.) That he might never be left a moment to his own heart; nor forſaken of thoſe ſupplies of grace, without which he could in no wiſe ſtand, *v.* 9. (4.) He intreats the Lord to teach him his way, his holy way, that he might know it, and lead him, that he might not ſtumble in it, and that becauſe of his enemies, who would with prying eyes obſerve him, and exult at his halting. (5.) He prays to be delivered from the will of his enemies, who thirſted for his blood; and as they ſtuck at no falſehood to miſrepreſent him, he might expect to feel their cruelty if once given up into their hands. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt ſaints need ever cry for mercy at God's hands. (2.) A ſenſe of God's favour, is the great ſupport under affliction. (3.) We are weak as infancy, and, left to ourſelves, cannot but fall. (4.) The wiſeſt man knows nothing as he ought to know without divine teaching. (5.) Our enemies, as chriſtians, are many, and with malignant eye mark all our ſteps; we need watch and pray, that we may cut off occaſion from thoſe who deſire occaſion againſt us.

2. He prays in faith, as unto the God of his ſalvation, whoſe promiſes encouraged his confidence. God had ſaid unto him, *Seek ye my face:* his heart echoes back the welcome invitation, *Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek*, aſſured I ſhall not ſeek in vain, *v.* 8. The experience alſo of the days paſt, emboldened him to expect preſent ſupport. *Thou haſt been my help*, *v.* 9. and I truſt thou wilt continue the ſame kind aſſiſtance. Therefore, though his neareſt and deareſt friends forſook him, *v.* 10. he could be ſatisfied in the divine care and keeping; and this it was that ever kept his head above water, amidſt ſeas of trouble, *v.* 13. He fainted not, *becauſe he believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living*; to experience his preſent mercy, and to behold his richeſt diſcoveries of grace in the land where life eternal reigns. On the whole, he bids his poor trembling heart to wait ſtill on the Lord; to take courage, and expect Divine ſtrength; and reſt aſſured, that whilſt he continued to wait upon God in faith and prayer, God would watch over him in mercy and love, *v.* 14. *Note*, (1.) If God is ſo condeſcendingly kind as to invite us to come to him, it ſurely becomes us gratefully to receive, and readily to obey the Divine ſummons. (2.) The cauſe of God, ſometimes makes our once deareſt friends our bittereſt enemies; but though all forſake us, if God loves us we have enough. (3.) It is faith alone can keep us from fainting; ſo much corruption within, and ſo many temptations without, would quickly ſink us in deſpair, if our faith fixed not on Jeſus, on his unchangeable regard, and everlaſting promiſes. (4.) From what we have experienced, we ſhould encourage our own ſouls and others, ſtill to take courage, and reſt in aſſured hope of ſeeing the ſalvation of God.

PSALM XXVIII.

The former part of this pſalm is the prayer of a ſaint militant, and now in diſtreſs, ver. 1—3. *to which is added the doom of God's implacable enemies*, ver. 4, 5. *The latter part of the pſalm is the thankſgiving of a ſaint triumphant, and delivered out of his diſtreſſes*, ver. 6—8. *to which is added a prophetical prayer for all God's faithful loyal ſubjects*, ver. 9. *Either David's faith foreſaw the happy iſſue of his trials; or, as a foil to ſet off his mercies, he remembered from whence the Lord had delivered him.*

¶ *A pſalm* of David.

1. UNTO thee will I cry, O LORD my [a] rock, [b] be not ſilent to me: [c] leſt *if* thou be ſilent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit. 2. Hear the voice of my ſupplications, when I cry unto thee: when [d] I lift up my hands [e] toward thy holy oracle. 3. [f] Draw me not away with the wicked and with the workers of iniquity: [g] which ſpeak peace to their neighbours, but miſchief *is* in their hearts. 4. [h] Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedneſs of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands, render to them their deſert. 5. Becauſe [i] they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he ſhall deſtroy them, and not build them up.

a 1 Cor. x. 4.
b Pſ. lxxxiii. 1.
c Ibid. cxliii. 7.
d Ibid. v. 7.
e Ibid. cxxxviii. 2.
f Ibid. xxvi. 9.
g Ibid. xii. 2. & lv. 21. Jer. ix. 8.
h 2 Tim. iv. 14. Rev. xviii. 6.
i Job xxxiv. 27. Iſa. v. 12.

v. 1—5. Whither ſhall the miſerable fly but to the Father of mercies, and the God of all conſolation? To this rock, with fervour and importunity, the pſalmiſt has recourſe, and cries for help and refuge.

1. He pleads his certain and impending ruin, if God did not hear and ſuccour him, his enemies would bring him to the duſt of death; in God's abſence his ſoul would taſte the pains of hell; and if utterly forſaken by him, the dreadful pit would yawn to receive him; but he truſted God would hear *when he lifted up his hands*, which, with ceaſeleſs importunity, he continued to do, *towards his holy oracle*; before the moſt holy place, where the Shechinah reſted, and God's oracles were given; or towards heaven, of which the Holy of Holies was the figure. *Note*, (1.) Deep diſtreſs ſhould awaken ſtrong cries, and there is one who hears, that can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (2.) Chriſt is the true oracle, in whom dwelt all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily, and through him our prayers are ſure to ſpeed.

2. He intreats to be ſaved from the ways and end of the workers of iniquity, *v.* 3. They ſought to entice him with fair words, but miſchief was in their hearts; he knew the evil of their ways, and hated them; he knew the ruin of their end, and would fain avoid it: yet knowing his own weakneſs, and proneneſs to evil, he looks out of himſelf for power, even to him who is mighty to ſave. *Note*, (1.) In the eyes of a child of God, ſin is regarded as the greateſt of evils. (2.) ſeducing ſpirits are ever buſy to deceive in every age. The Lord preſerve us from error! (3.) They who would avoid the ſinners ruin, muſt ſhun their ways.

3. He foretells the miſerable end of the wicked, from whom he prayed to be delivered. *Give them*, not as making it the matter of his prayer out of revenge or ill-will, but as foreſeeing this would be the caſe, and praying that God might be glorified in his judgments, *according to their deeds, and according to the wickedneſs of their endeavours*; for not only outward acts of ſin, but the inward purpoſe of it, is minuted in God's book; not a thought of wickedneſs paſſes unnoticed by him: as their deſerts require, they will receive at God's hands; and becauſe they pay no regard to his word, or the admonitions of his providence, deſtruction to the uttermoſt will overtake them. *Note*, (1.) In a judgment day, when the ſinner's heart is laid open, a ſcene of wickedneſs will be diſcovered, ſuch as the ſun never beheld. (2.) Inattention to God's works, word, and warnings, is one chief cauſe of the ſinner's ruin.

6. Bleſſed *be* the LORD, becauſe he hath heard the voice of my ſupplications. 7. [k] The LORD *is* my ſtrength and my ſhield, my heart truſted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth, and with my ſong will I praiſe him. 8. The LORD *is* their ſtrength, and he *is* the † ſaving ſtrength of his anointed. 9. Save thy people, and bleſs thine inheritance: ‡ feed them alſo, and [l] lift them up for ever.

k Pſ. xviii. 2.
† Heb. ſtrength of ſalvations.
‡ Or, rule.
l Iſa. xiv. 2. Or, Rev. v. 10.

v. 6—9. Who ever truſted in God and was confounded, or called upon his name in vain? The pſalmiſt's praiſes ever ſucceed his prayers.

1. He bleſſes God for the anſwer of peace he had given him: either he had received his requeſt, or faith ſo realized the promiſes, that he reckoned that already beſtowed, which he was aſſured God would grant. *Note*, The mercies faith aſſures us of receiving, are as much the matter of praiſe as thoſe we already enjoy.

2. He profeſſes his firm dependance upon God, and thankful acknowledgment to him, *v.* 7. *The Lord is my ſtrength*, by whoſe everlaſting arms I am and ſhall be upheld; *my ſhield*, conſtantly ſpread over me to protect me from every danger; *my heart truſted in him*, when ſurrounded with enemies, and *I am helped*, experience his promiſe fulfilled; *therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth*; a joy unſpeakable and glorious warmed his inmoſt ſoul, and ſongs of melody and love ſpoke aloud the praiſe he owed to his

deliverer. *Note*, The end of worldly joy is heavineſs; but the more a ſoul rejoiceth in God, the more angelical his ſpirit grows.

3. As intereſted in God's people's proſperity, he rejoices that they have the ſame Almighty Saviour. *The Lord is their ſtrength*, to ſupport them in every time of need, *and he is the ſaving ſtrength of his anointed*; of David, his king; of Meſſiah, the peoples hope, on whom their help is laid; and of every believer who receives an unction from the Holy one, and is conſecrated unto God a king and prieſt. *Note*, (1.) God's people rejoice in each other's happineſs as their own, for they are members of the ſame body. (2.) Every believer hath Almighty grace engaged for him, how then ſhould he miſcarry?

4. He prays for the proſperity and ſalvation of all God's Iſrael, that no enemy might prevail againſt them, that all the bleſſings of providence and grace might deſcend upon them; that he would *feed them* as the dear flock of his paſture, or *rule them* with his gentle ſway, and make them a willing people; and not only lift them up above all their foes on earth, but eternally exalt them to a throne of glory, where all that hate them ſhould be for ever put under their feet. *Note*, (1.) They who love the people of God, will daily make an affectionate remembrance of them in their prayers. (2.) They that are ſaved by grace, fed by God's ordinances, and governed by God's ſpirit, ſhall ſurely reign with him in glory, and none beſide.

PSALM XXIX.

It is the probable conjecture of ſome interpreters, that David penned this pſalm upon occaſion of a great ſtorm of thunder, lightning, and rain. It is good to take occaſion from the ſenſible operations of God's power in the kingdom of nature, to give glory to him. 1. *He calls upon the great ones of the world to give glory to God*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *To convince them of the greatneſs of that God whom they were to adore, he takes notice of his power and terror in the thunder and lightning, and thunder ſhowers*, ver. 3—9. *His ſovereign dominion over the world*, ver. 10. *and his ſpecial favour to his church*, ver. 11. *Many things here contained are alſo very ſuitable to goſpel times.*

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. [a] GIVE unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give
unto the LORD [b] glory and ſtrength. 2.
Give unto the LORD the glory † due unto his name;
worſhip the LORD ‡ in [c] the beauty of holineſs. 3.
The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: [d] the God
of glory thundreth, the LORD *is* upon many waters.
4. The voice of the LORD *is* § powerful; the voice
of the LORD *is* ‖ full of majeſty. 5. The voice of
the LORD breaketh the cedars: yea, the LORD
breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. 6. [e] He maketh them
alſo to ſkip like a calf: Lebanon and [f] Sirion like a
young unicorn. 7. The voice of the LORD † divideth
the flames of fire: 8. The voice of the LORD
ſhaketh the wilderneſs: the LORD ſhaketh the wilderneſs
of Kadeſh. 9. The voice of the LORD
maketh [g] the hinds to ‡ calve, and diſcovereth the foreſts:
and in his temple doth every one ſpeak of *his* glory.
10. The LORD ſitteth upon the flood: yea, [h] the
LORD ſitteth King for ever. 11. [i] The LORD will
give ſtrength unto his people, the LORD will bleſs his
people with peace.

[a] Pſ. xcvi. 7, 8.
[b] Ibid. cxv. 1.
† Heb. of his name.
‡ Or, In his glorious ſanctuary.
[c] 2 Chron. xx. 21.
[d] Job xxxvii. 4, 5.
§ Heb. in power.
‖ Heb. in majeſty.
[e] Pſ. cxiv. 4.
[f] Deut. iii. 9.
† Heb. cutteth out.
[g] Job xxxix. 1, &c.
‡ Or, Be in pain.
[h] Pſ. x. 16. Dan. ii. 44.
[i] Pſ. xxviii. 8.

The pſalm opens,

1. With a ſolemn admonition to all living, to render unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. Let mighty angels bow in heaven, and mighty kings on earth fall proſtrate at his feet, aſcribing to him infinite power and eternal majeſty, and *worſhip the Lord in the beauty of holineſs*: either the tabernacle, where his magnificent and holy worſhip was paid, or with that holineſs of heart and temper which is the beauty of all worſhip. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt are not too high to bow at God's foot-ſtool, kings ſhould ſet their ſubjects the good example. (2.) Repeated calls ſhow our backwardneſs, and the need we have to be urged to the ſervice and worſhip of the bleſſed God. (3.) It is not the formal ceremony of words, but the beauty of holineſs in the heart, that in our worſhip God eſpecially regards.

2. He gives a reaſon why they ſhould worſhip this glorious God: his name is *Jehovah*, which is eighteen times repeated in theſe few verſes, and intimates his ſelf-exiſtent and eternal excellence, which renders him the object of univerſal worſhip and praiſe; and his works declare his majeſty, power, and greatneſs; his voice ſpeaks in mighty thunderings, whilſt dark clouds of the ſky are ſpread under him, the forked lightnings glare around, the earth trembles at the terrible ſhock, and mountains, as affrighted, leap from their wide-ſpread baſes; the cedars of Libanus are ſhivered as the brittle reed, the beaſts that lodge under their branches affrighted caſt their burdens, and gloomy foreſts before the reſiſtleſs ſtorm ſtripped of their verdure, admit the flaſhing beam; whilſt He, the mighty God, with majeſty compoſed ſitteth upon the flood, directs the ſtorm, and, as the eternal King, iſſues his mandate as in the deluge, ſaying, hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further; and every element hears, and inſtantly obeys. *Note*, When God's thunder is near, and his floods of rain, mingled with fire, deſcend, let us think of this dread majeſty, and bow before him; how glorious to have him our friend, how terrible to meet him as our enemy!

The whole may alſo be well applied to Chriſt; his voice, loud as theſe thunders, ſpeaks to many people, kindreds, and nations, powerful to awaken, convince, and convert the ſoul: the proudeſt ſinners, though like cedars of Libanus, are broken before it; and faſt rooted in ſin as the mountain's baſe, yet by Chriſt's glorious word their bands are looſed; piercing and ſtrong as the glaring beams of lightning, his goſpel in the midſt of darkneſs pours a flood of day upon the ſoul, and kindles up a fire of love in the heart that never ſhall be quenched: the wilderneſs of the Gentile world was ſhaken before it, and ſaving diſcoveries made to them of the glory of God; pangs came upon them at firſt, as ſorrows of a woman in travail, but they were ſucceeded with the joys of Chriſt formed in them; he ſitteth now as the king over our hearts, and the hearts of his people for ever; and in the temple of his church on earth, and his more magnificent ſanctuary in heaven, his majeſty and glory ſhall be the matter of everlaſting praiſe.

3. The pſalmiſt concludes with a comfortable proſpect for God's people. He will give them ſtrength againſt every danger; and bleſs them with his peace, which paſſeth all underſtanding; internal peace from a preſent ſenſe of God's favour in Chriſt, and eternal peace, when the floods of wrath and the deluge of fire ſhall ſweep away the world of the ungodly.

PSALM XXX.

This pſalm is ſaid to be penned on occaſion of the dedication of his houſe; whence he takes occaſion to remember his paſt afflicted ſtate, 2 Sam. v. 11. *or it may be it relates to the cleanſing it after Abſalom's inceſt and defilement.* 1. *He praiſes God for the deliverances he had wrought for him*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He calls upon others to praiſe him too, and encourages them to truſt in him*, ver. 4, 5. 3. *He blames himſelf for his former ſecurity*, ver. 6, 7. 4. *He recollects the prayers and complaints he had made in his diſtreſs*, ver. 8—10. *and then thanks God for this preſent comfortable change*, ver. 11, 12.

¶ A pſalm *and* ſong, [a] *at* the dedication of the house of David.

1. I WILL extol thee, O LORD, for thou haſt
lifted me up, and [b] haſt not made my foes to re-
joice over me. 2. O LORD my God, I cried unto
thee: and thou haſt healed me. 3. O LORD, [c] thou
haſt brought up my ſoul from the grave: thou haſt
kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the pit.
4. [d] Sing unto the LORD, O ye ſaints of his, and give
thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs. 5. For [e]
† his anger *endureth but* a moment; [f] in his favour *is*
life: [g] weeping may endure for a night, but ‡ joy *cometh*
in the morning.

[a] Deut. xx. 5. 2 Sam. v. 11.
About 1043.
[b] Pſ. xxv. 2.
[c] Ibid. lxxxvi. 31. So Jonah. ii. 6.
[d] 1 Chron. xvi. 4. Pſ. xcvii. 12.
[e] Pſ. ciii. 9. Iſa. xxvi. 20. & liv. 7, 8. 2 Cor. iv. 17.
† Heb. There is but a moment in his anger.
[f] Pſ. lxiii. 3.
[g] Ibid. cxxvi. 5.
‡ Heb. Singing.

v. 1—5. Every houſe of a child of God will be a ſanctuary, where prayer and praiſe are daily offered.

1. David begins with the voice of thankſgiving for the mercies he had taſted; his foes ſought his ruin, he was ſick perhaps in body, and afflicted in mind; the grave ſeemed to be open to receive him; but he cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles; therefore he well reſolves, *I will extol thee, for thou haſt lifted me up*; will declare thy greatneſs and goodneſs, and aſcribe the whole of my ſalvation to thy power and grace. *Note*, (1.) We brought into the world with us the diſeaſe of mortal corruption; it is matter of unſpeakable joy, if by the blood and grace of Jeſus our dying ſouls are healed. (2.) Recoveries from ſickneſs deſerve ſongs of praiſe; and that the life preſerved by God's mercy, be a-new devoted to his glory. (3.) In all afflicted caſes, whether of body or mind, the prayer of faith availeth much.

2. He calls upon others to join in the ſong of praiſe. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye ſaints of his*: this is the character of God's people, they are ſeparated from ſin, and by divine grace renewed in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, and therefore they *give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs*; pleaſed with beholding this brighteſt attribute of their glorious God; ſatisfied in the righteouſneſs of all his ways, and deriving comfort from the

conſideration that, as in a meaſure they reſemble him now, they ſhall ſhortly awake up in his perfect image. *For his anger endureth but a moment*; not that we are to impute to him any ſuch imperfection, or turbulence in his holy mind as we feel, but according as men chaſtiſe in anger thoſe who offend them, God deals thus with thoſe who ſin againſt him; but to his people, even this is not the ſtroke of an enemy, but the rod of a father, gently correcting us for our good. *In his favour is life*; ſpiritual life, eternal life, which is the ſure portion of his choſen, notwithſtanding momentary afflictions. *Weeping may endure for a night*; and ſome weariſome nights our ſins and folly provoke God to make us feel, when he withdraws, and darkneſs and diſtreſs ſurround us; *but joy cometh in the morning*; the ſeaſon of ſorrow is ſhort, and as the welcome ſun returning diſpels the ſhadows of the night, ſo doth God return to lift up the light of his countenance on his mourning ſaints, and wakens up their joyful praiſes. *Note*, In all our troubles here, we ſhould remember they are light afflictions, but for a moment; the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is to follow, will quickly wipe every tear from our eyes.

6. And [h] in my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved. 7. LORD, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong: [i] thou didſt hide thy face, *and* I was troubled. 8. I cried to thee, O LORD: and unto the LORD I made ſupplication. 9. What profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? [k] ſhall the duſt praiſe thee? ſhall it declare thy truth? 10. Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper. 11. [l] Thou haſt turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou haſt put off my ſackcloth, and girded me with gladneſs: 12. To the end that † *my* glory may ſing praiſe to thee, and not be ſilent: O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

[h] Job xxix. 18.
[i] Pſ. civ. 29.
[k] Pſ. vi. 5. & lxxxviii. 11. & cxv. 17. Iſa. xxxviii. 18.
[l] 2 Sam. vi. 14. Iſa. lxi. 3.
† i. e. My tongue, or, my ſoul. Pſ. xvi. 9. & lvii. 8.

v. 6—12. We are ever apt to be ſwinging to extremes, too elated with comfort, or too dejected in diſtreſs. This was David's caſe:

1. In his proſperity he grew ſecure, confident he ſhould never be moved: his foes all vanquiſhed, and his throne firmly ſettled, he thought himſelf fixed as a mountain; and though he aſcribes it to divine grace, he ſeems to place ſome truſt of his ſtability on himſelf. *Note*, (1.) Worldly proſperity is dangerouſly intoxicating; it is what lulls men in general aſleep, and makes even the ſaints of God to forget that this is a warfare. (2.) God is ſometimes pleaſed to viſit young converts with ſtrong conſolations, and they are ready to conclude it ſhall be always ſo with them; but the feaſt of ſenſe ſeldom laſts long.

2. Trouble overtook him, and dejection of ſoul, from the fear of God's favour being withdrawn, ſunk him low into the duſt, yet not into deſpair, he *cried unto the Lord, and made his ſupplication*; finding his weakneſs, and feeling now where alone his ſtrength lay, he pleads hard therefore for mercy and help in this his time of need; and pleads the loſs which would accrue from his fall: his enemies could render no glory to God for ſhedding his blood; God would be no more praiſed by him in the ſanctuary, nor his cauſe promoted among the living; and eſpecially God's truth would be diſhonoured, if he ſunk under his burdens, *v.* 9. and did not ſurvive to declare his faithfulneſs. *Note*, (1.) In our loweſt frames let nothing drive us from prayer; as long as we have a voice to cry to God, there is hope in our end. (2.) There are ſervices which the ſaints of God can render him on earth, that they cannot even in heaven, and this makes it deſirable to live.

3. Soon the glad change appears; whilſt he is ſpeaking, God anſwers; his ſorrows turn to joy; his mourning is ended, and ſongs of melody and love declare the praiſes of him who brought him out of darkneſs into his marvellous light: ſuch experience engages his glory, his ſoul, his tongue to praiſe God for ever; and theſe lively expreſſions of his gratitude he truſts ſhall laſt not only whilſt life and breath endures below, but be perpetuated through the countleſs ages of eternity. Go thou redeemed ſoul then, and do likewiſe.

PSALM XXXI.

On what occaſion this pſalm was penned is not ſaid; it ſeems probable on ſome of his eſcapes from Saul at Keilah, Maon, or Engedi. 1. *David profeſſeth his chearful confidence in God, and in that confidence prays for deliverance out of his preſent troubles*, ver. 1—8. 2. *He complains of the very deplorable condition he was in, and prays that God would graciouſly appear for him againſt his perſecutors*, ver. 9—18. 3. *He gives glory to God, and encourages himſelf and others to truſt in him*, ver. 19—24.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. [a] IN thee, O LORD, do I put my truſt, let me never be aſhamed: [b] deliver me in thy righteouſneſs. 2. [c] Bow down thine ear to me, deliver me ſpeedily: [d] be thou † my ſtrong rock, for an houſe of defence to ſave me. 3. For thou *art* my rock and my fortreſs: therefore [e] for thy name's ſake lead me, and guide me. 4. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* my ſtrength. 5. [f] Into thine hand I commit my ſpirit: thou haſt redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. 6. I have hated them [g] that regard lying vanities: but I truſt in the LORD. 7. I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou haſt conſidered my trouble; thou haſt known my ſoul in adverſities; 8. And haſt not ſhut me up into the hand of the enemy: [h] thou haſt ſet my feet in a large room.

[a] Pſ. xxii. 5. & xxv. 2. & lxxi. 1. Iſa. xlix. 23.
[b] Pſ. cxliii. 1.
[c] Ibid. lxx. 2.
[d] Ibid. xviii. 2, 31.
† Heb. to me, for a rock of ſtrength.
[e] Pſ. xxiii. 3. & xxv. 11.
[f] Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59.
[g] Jonah. ii. 8.
[h] Pſ. iv. 1. & xviii. 19.

v. 1—8. The greatneſs of our trials need not diſcourage us whilſt we have a great God to ſupport us: to him David has recourſe in all his needs.

1. As uſual, he opens with earneſt and importunate prayer. All his help and hope came from above, thither therefore he directs his ſupplications. (1.) He begs that he might not be aſhamed, either of God his confidence, as failing him, or of the cauſe of God, however it might be vilified or depreſſed. (2.) That God would deliver him in his righteouſneſs, and that ſpeedily, as a righteous judge of thoſe who are oppreſſed with wrong, and a defence againſt the fury of his perſecutors, *v.* 2, 3. (3.) He deſires to be led, and guided aright, that in the path of duty he might find the way of ſafety. (4.) Particularly, he intreats that the preſent ſnare, laid for him, may be broken, and his feet plucked from the net. *Note*, (1.) Fervent prayer will have a ſpeedy anſwer. (2.) They who lodge their cauſe with God, ſhall find a righteous judge, who will give to every man according as his work is. (3.) They who truly deſire to know God's will, and follow it, ſhall ſurely be taught and led in the right way.

2. He profeſſes his fixed dependance upon God. *In thee do I put my truſt*; not in my own righteouſneſs, as deſerving ought at thy hands; not in my own wiſdom, as able to extricate myſelf; not in my own ſtrength, as ſufficient to ſupport me, but in thy wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and ſtrength, as my only refuge; *for thou art my rock*, fixed and immoveable, and *my fortreſs*, impregnable and ſecure: *thou art my ſtrength*, to work for me and in me, and therefore *into thy hands I commit my ſpirit*, to be preſerved in life, amidſt ſurrounding dangers; to be kept from evil, amidſt the ſnares that are laid for me; and to be ſecured for eternity, however thy providence may diſpoſe of me here below: *thou haſt redeemed me*; reſcued my body from many a danger, and by atoning blood delivered my ſoul from hell, *O Lord God of truth*, whoſe promiſes I have ever experienced to be faithful and ſure. *Note*, (1.) They who have God for their rock, need not fear who are their foes. (2.) If our ſpirits are ſafe lodged in the arms of Jeſus, we may quietly wait the iſſue of every affliction, and know the end will be peace. (3.) Thoſe who are redeemed by a Saviour's blood, ſhall be preſerved by the Saviour's grace. (4.) The more we are enabled to truſt on God's promiſe, the ſtronger teſtimony we bear to his faithfulneſs.

3. He renounces all connection with idols, and all reſource to theſe vanities in his diſtreſſes; he hated the ways of all their worſhippers, and cleaved to Jehovah alone. *Note*, God is an all-ſufficient portion, we need look for nothing more to make us ſafe and happy.

4. He rejoices in the mercy of his gracious God. His troubles God had conſidered with tendereſt compaſſion, and in adverſities known his ſoul, approved his temper, and viſited him with notices of kind regard. Eſcaped from the ſpot where he was in danger, he enjoys now a happy deliverance, and walks at large with no foe to moleſt him. *Note*, (1.) Mercies deſerve a conſtant return of praiſe. (2.) Our ſpirit and temper in time of trouble, will beſt ſhew our ſtate towards God. (3.) It is the comfort of God's people in every ſtate, that he knows their ſimplicity, and regards them with his favour.

The words, *v.* 5. being uſed by our divine Lord on the croſs, may well ſupport us in applying the whole to him; whoſe prayer in trouble, unſhaken dependance on God, deliverance from adverſity, and exaltation above his enemies, were more peculiar and diſtinguiſhed than thoſe of his illuſtrious progenitor.

9. Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; [i] mine eye is conſumed with grief, *yea*, my ſoul and my belly. 10. For my life is ſpent with grief, and my years with ſighing: my ſtrength faileth becauſe

[i] Pſ. vi. 7.

becauſe of mine iniquity, and [k] my bones are conſumed. 11. [l] I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but [m] eſpecially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did ſee me without, [n] fled from me. 12. [o] I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken veſſel. 13. For [p] I have heard the ſlander of many, [q] fear *was* on every ſide, while they took counſel together againſt me, they deviſed to take away my life. 14. But I truſted in thee, O LORD: I ſaid, Thou *art* my God. 15. [r] My times *are* in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that perſecute me. 16. [s] Make thy face to ſhine upon thy ſervant: ſave me for thy mercies ſake. 17. [t] Let me not be aſhamed, O LORD, for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be aſhamed, *and* [u] let them be † ſilent in the grave. 18. [x] Let the lying lips be put to ſilence: [y] which ſpeak ‡ grievous things proudly and contemptuouſly againſt the righteous.

[k] Pſal. xxxii. 3. & cii. 3.
[l] Ibid. xli. 8. Iſa. liii. 4. 1 Cor. iv. 13.
[m] Job xix. 13. Pſ. xxxviii. 11. & lxxxviii. 8, 18.
[n] Mat. xxvi. 56.
[o] Pſal. lxxxviii. 4, 5.
[p] Jer. xx. 10.
[q] Ibid. vi. 25. Lam. ii. 22.
[r] See Joh. vii. 30.
[s] Numb. vi. 25. Pſ. iv. 6. & lxvii. 1.
[t] Pſal. xxv. 3.
[u] 1 Sam. ii. 9.
† Or, cut off for the grave.
[x] Pſ. xii. 3.
[y] Pſ. ix. 4. Jude xv.
‡ Heb. A hard thing.

v. 9—18. Swift as Job's meſſengers of evil are the returns of trouble, and therefore call for as repeated application to the God of all grace.

1. David ſpreads before God his bitter ſorrows; with conſtant tears his eyes grew dim, his appetite failed him, his ſtrength decayed, his very bones waſted; and his ſoul, in equal anguiſh with his body, was ready to ſink under its burdens; and this by reaſon of his iniquity, *v.* 10. His other trials were light, compared with theſe: in all his ſufferings from man, he had his integrity to comfort him, but here he ſtood ſelf-condemned, and owns his afflictions leſs than his iniquity deſerved: his acquaintance, who ſhould comfort him, now, as true courtiers, deſert him when under his prince's diſpleaſure; all his paſt kindneſs to them is forgotten, and ſince he can no longer ſerve them, like a broken veſſel, he is thrown by and neglected: his enemies reproach him with every malignant accuſation; and as it was become dangerous to ſhow the leaſt regard to him, as Ahimelech had experienced, his once familiar friends now are afraid to know him, and care not to meet him, leaſt the ſmalleſt civilities ſhould be to their prejudice: he heard the ſlander that was propagated on every ſide, and fear ſeized him when he knew they were plotting to take away his life. *Note,* (1.) The people of God are an afflicted people; but the soreſt of their griefs is the ſenſe of their ſins. (2.) They who place dependance on worldly friendſhips, will uſually, to their ſad diſappointment, find them faithleſs. (3.) Abuſe the moſt malignant and falſe hath been ever the lot of the beſt of men. (4.) They who have taken Chriſt for their maſter, muſt expect to meet with the ſame ſlights and inſults; it is no uncommon caſe then, for our neareſt relations to diſown us, and our once deareſt friends to be aſhamed of us. Welcome reproach! if this be to be vile, let us be viler ſtill. (5.) The Redeemer of ſouls endured all this and more; an outcaſt, deſpiſed, and abhorred, and perſecuted by reſtleſs malice, till in his precious blood his enemies embrued their guilty hands.

2. He places his truſt in God, under every diſcouraging proſpect. *I ſaid, Thou art my God*; and this was enough to quiet every fear, and comfort him in every diſtreſs; for if God were his, then all things muſt work together for his good, and he can quietly reſign up himſelf to him. *My times are in thy hand,* to diſpoſe of me, and do by me as ſhall ſeem beſt in thy ſight; thou knoweſt the propereſt time for my deliverance, my days cannot be ſhortened but at thy will, nor my troubles of body or ſoul continue a moment longer than thou pleaſeſt; and all events concerning me are ſafe, being in thy diſpoſal. *Note,* This is a moſt comfortable and quieting conſideration to every child of God.

3. Whilſt he waits in faith, he prays in hope. Our patient ſubmiſſion forbids not humble prayer; he begs therefore, that God would deliver him from his perſecutors, comfort him with a ſweet ſenſe of his favour, and ſave him for his mercies ſake, the only plea he preſumes to make: he prays to be kept from ſhame, as if his hope was deluſive, or his prayer fruitleſs; and that the wicked, who wiſhed him evil, might be confounded at his deliverance, and laid low in the duſt, that they might no more trouble the ſaints repoſe: and finally, he aſks of God a general requeſt in behalf of all his righteous ones, that the lying lips, who inſolently, contemptuouſly, and cruelly revile them, might be ſealed up in eternal ſilence. *Note,* (1.) A wicked world ſticks at no lyes to hurt God's people. (2.) The moſt reſpectable characters, when engaged in the cauſe of Chriſt, and true religion, muſt expect to meet inſolence and contempt. (3.) The day is coming when ſinners muſt anſwer for all their hard ſpeeches, which cruelly, diſdainfully, and diſpitefully, they have ſpoken againſt the righteous. (4.) Though it is our duty to forgive every inſult and injury, and to pray for our enemies, that God would forgive them too, we may at the ſame time ſafely cry for the coming of Chriſt's glorious kingdom, when the finally impenitent, and deſpiſers of thoſe who are good, will be for ever ſealed up under eternal vengeance.

19. [z] O how great *is* thy goodneſs, [a] which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee, before the ſons of men! 20. [b] Thou ſhalt hide them in the ſecret of thy preſence from the pride of man: [c] thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a pavilion from the ſtrife of tongues. 21. Bleſſed *be* the LORD; for [d] he hath ſhewed me his marvellous kindneſs in a † ſtrong city. 22. For [e] I ſaid in my haſte, [f] I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheleſs thou heardeſt the voice of my ſupplications when I cried unto thee. 23. [g] O love the LORD, all ye his ſaints: *for* the LORD preſerveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. 24. [h] Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

[z] Iſa. lxiv. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 9.
[a] See 2 Tim. iv. 8.
[b] Pſ. xxvii. 5.
[c] Job v. 21.
[d] Pſ. xvii. 7.
† Or fenced.
[e] Pſal. cxvi. 11.
[f] Iſa. xxxviii. 11, 12. Lam. iii. 54. Jonah. ii. 4.
[g] Pſ. xxxiv. 9.
[h] Pſ. xxvii. 14.

v. 19—24. The more we experience of God's grace and mercy towards us, the more ſhall we be filled with wonder, love, and praiſe.

1. The pſalmiſt breaks out into wonder. O how great is thy goodneſs! how tranſcendantly bleſſed its effects! how graciouſly free its communications! and how amazingly extenſive, even to the days of eternity; *laid up* as an invaluable treaſure, and ſecured as a ſacred depoſit *for them that fear thee!* This is a diſtinguiſhing character of God's people; they fear him, and nothing in compariſon with him; let men threaten, or revile, they will not be moved to do evil, and rather would lay down their lives than offend God: and *which thou haſt wrought for thoſe who truſt in thee*; *haſt wrought,* for the redemption is complete, and the work finiſhed; and they truſt it is ſo, and are ſupported by that conſideration: *before the ſons of men*; either God's ſpecial goodneſs to his people is manifeſted to men by his providential care and deliverance of them; or they make public and open profeſſion of their dependance upon him, and glorify God thereby, even amidſt all the threatnings of their adverſaries. *Thou ſhalt hide them,* when hunted by the malice of their foes, *in the ſecret of thy preſence*; ſecure from harm, ſatisfied in thy love, comforted with the light of thy countenance; *from the pride of man,* that would diſcountenance, or trample them under foot: *thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a pavilion from the ſtrife of tongues*; whatever abuſe, rancour, or diſputings of men of perverſe minds may be levelled againſt them, it ſhall neither diſturb nor diſtreſs them. *Note,* (1.) They are well kept whom God keeps. (2.) It may well reconcile us to all the evil we meet with, when we enjoy a preſent ſenſe of Divine favour, an experience of ſupport from above, and a pleaſing proſpect of eternal reſt, where we ſhall be for ever hid from the pride and revilings of men.

2. He bleſſes God for the experience of his mercy towards himſelf, ſo much beyond his hopes: the eſcapes he had were marvellous, and plainly ſpoke God's hand, when in Keilah, he was delivered from being betrayed to his enemies; his fears were ready to ſuggeſt that his caſe was deſperate, but God was unſpeakably better to him than his fears, and heard and anſwered the voice of his ſupplications. *Note,* (1.) We need often deeply reflect upon our unbelieving fears, ſo diſhonourable to God, as well as diſcouraging to ourſelves. (2.) In haſte we are apt to ſpeak raſhly, and lay up matter for leiſurely repentance. (3.) Though for our diſtruſts we deſerve to be forſaken, God dealeth not with us according to our deſerts, but according to his marvellous loving kindneſs.

3. From his own experience he encourages others to love and truſt the bleſſed God. His ſaints ſhould love him; and with good reaſon they ſhould do ſo, when his love to them hath been ſo paſſing ſtrange, and his dealings with them ſo amazingly kind; *for he preſerveth the faithful,* from ſin, from falling, from their enemies, and will preſerve them to his everlaſting kingdom; and therefore how bound to love him! and *plentifully rewardeth the proud doer*; gives them the juſt puniſhment of their iniquities; and therefore he exhorts God's people, in the view of his conſtant care, and righteous judgment, to *be of good courage*; whatever dark providences overtake you, or temptations beſet you, or enemies oppreſs you, faint not, for God is with you, *and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord*; whilſt you hope, he will help; yea, he will give the hope as well as help, that none may be ever able to pluck you out of his hand. *Note,* (1.) The people of God ſhould communicate their experience for mutual comfort and edification. (2.) How greatly do we need to be ſtirred up to love this bleſſed God? who need not complain of the coldneſs of his heart, and the unſuitableneſs of his affections, when he conſiders but a moment the wonders of redeeming grace? (3.) Nothing makes us go on ſo heavily in God's ways as fear of falling; nothing ſo enlivens us to duty as confidence of never failing ſupport. *Truſt then,* my ſoul, *in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength.*

PSALM XXXII.

The apoſtle tells us, that David in this pſalm deſcribes the bleſſedneſs of the man unto whom God imputeth righteouſneſs without works, *Rom.* iv. 6. *He gives us a ſummary,* 1. *Of goſpel grace in the pardon of ſin,* ver. 1, 2. *In divine protection,* ver. 7. *and divine conduct,* ver. 8. 2. *Of goſpel duty; To confeſs ſin,* ver. 3—5. *To pray,* ver. 6. *To govern ourſelves aright,* ver. 9, 10. *And to rejoice in God,* ver. 11.

¶ *A pſalm* of David, † Maſchil.

1.[a] BLESSED *is he* [b] *whoſe* tranſgreſſion *is* forgiven, *whoſe* ſin *is* covered. 2. Bleſſed is the man unto whom the LORD [c] imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit [d] *there is* no guile. 3. When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old; through my roring all the day long. 4. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer. Selah. 5. I acknowledged my ſin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: [e] I ſaid, I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the LORD; [f] and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin. Selah. 6. [g] For this ſhall every one that is godly, [h] pray unto thee, in a time ‡ when thou mayſt be found: ſurely in the floods of great waters, [i] they ſhall not come nigh unto him.

† i. e. Giving inſtruction.
About 1034.
a Rom. iv. 7, 8.
b Pſ. lxxxv. 2.
c 2 Cor. v. 19.
d Joh. i. 47.
e Luke xv. 18.
f Prov. xxviii. 13. Iſa. lxv. 24. 1 Joh. i. 9.
g 1 Tim. i. 16.
h Iſa. lv. 6.
‡ Heb. Of finding.
i Iſa. xliii. 2.

v. 1—6. This pſalm was probably compoſed after Nathan, the meſſenger of God's mercy, had rouſed David from the lethargy of ſin, and brought him at the ſame time the glad tidings of pardoning grace. Its title is Maſchil; ſome ſay it was the muſical inſtrument to which it was ſet; others refer it to the matter of the pſalm, as containing ſound and weighty inſtructions, as the word ſignifies; and indeed, what inſtruction ſo needful for a ſinner, as the knowledge how he may obtain the full and free pardon of his ſins? what ſo comfortable to the miſerable, as to have the way of true, abiding, eternal happineſs opened to them? Hear then and believe, and the bleſſedneſs is thine. We have here,

1. A declaration of the rich grace of God, made to periſhing ſinners in Chriſt, and the bleſſedneſs thence accruing. *Their tranſgreſſion is forgiven,* be it never ſo great, never ſo aggravated, never ſo long continued in; *their ſin is covered;* the blood of Jeſus blots out the dread account; the righteouſneſs of Jeſus covers every ſpot of evil: *their iniquity is not imputed;* it is not their bleſſedneſs that they have no iniquity, for they are full of it, their nature is corrupt, their hearts deſperately wicked, and their ways altogether abominable before God; but when in Chriſt Jeſus they are called and choſen, no charge lieth againſt them, becauſe their ſins have been all imputed to him; and *he, who knew no ſin,* was purely ſpotleſs in himſelf, *hath become ſin for them,* repreſenting their guilty character, and bearing all the wrath, which was the wages of ſin, *that they might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him;* might be, as conſidered in him, complete before God, and treated as righteous perſons, who never had offended: theſe are bleſſed, completely and eternally bleſſed; no terrors of conſcience diſmay them, no fear of death need trouble them, nor any dread of judgment diſtreſs them, for there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus. Such is their privilege, and their practice is anſwerable thereunto: *in their ſpirit there is no guile;* they are not only without ſpot, in virtue of their relation to Jeſus their head, but the ſame grace that juſtifies the guilty, ſanctifies the unholy; they are bleſſed with ſimplicity of heart before God, and yield themſelves up to the guidance of his word and ſpirit.

2. He deſcribes his miſerable ſtate whilſt ſin reigned in him and over him; God's hand was heavy upon him in ſome violent diſeaſe, that parched up his body as the drought in ſummer; and the anguiſh made *his very bones wax old,* he appeared ſo emaciated thereby. *Note,* (1.) Miſerable is the eſtate of the impenitent ſinner. (2.) However ſevere the ſcourge that drives us to God, we have abundant reaſon to kiſs the rod.

3. At laſt his ſilence broke, and he ſpoke with his tongue in penitent confeſſion; with deep and unfeigned humiliation laying bare his boſom before the heart-ſearching God, and deſiring to hide none of his tranſgreſſions. *Note,* (1.) It is a bleſſed ſymptom when the ſinner is brought to his knees. (2.) They who are truly awakened by God's ſpirit, deſire to take ſhame to themſelves; not palliating their offences, but in their aggravated guilt acknowledging and lamenting them.

4. Whilſt he was ſpeaking, yea, before he ſpake, God heard and pardoned. *I ſaid, I will confeſs, &c.* and ere the purpoſe was formed into a prayer, *thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin;* ſealed the pardon to my conſcience, which was before ratified in, and granted to the Redeemer. *Note,* (1.) All who come to God in Chriſt, will find him readier to pardon than we to pray; what an encouragement to the chief of ſinners! (2.) It is not our penitence, nor our prayers, but God's free grace, to which alone we are indebted.

5. He doubts not but his experience would have a gracious effect on others; and ſeeing God ſo ready abundantly to pardon, they would be induced to pray; and every godly man, under a ſenſe of daily tranſgreſſions, would not fail to come to him in the time of need, when God will be ever found of thoſe who ſeek him, and then ſurely, *in the floods of great waters,* whether they be floods of temptation, or affliction, or corruption, *they ſhall not come nigh unto him,* ſo as mortally to hurt him, or finally to ſwallow him up. *Note,* (1.) It is a comfort to a diſtreſſed ſinner, groaning under a ſenſe of guilt, to hear that others, like himſelf, have found mercy. (2.) The moſt godly men need be found daily, as ſinners, at the throne of grace. (3.) They who ſeek God ſhall ſurely find him; the more imminently terrible their danger, the more ſhall God's grace and love be magnified in their ſalvation.

7. [k] Thou *art* my hiding-place, thou ſhalt preſerve me from trouble: thou ſhalt compaſs me about with ſongs of deliverance. Selah. 8. [l] I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou ſhalt go: † I will guide thee with mine eye. 9. [m] Be ye not as the horſe, *or* as the mule *which* have no underſtanding: [n] whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle, leſt they come near unto thee. 10. [o] Many ſorrows *ſhall be* to the wicked: but he that truſteth in the LORD, mercy ſhall compaſs him about. 11. [p] Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice ye righteous: and ſhout for joy all *ye that are* upright in heart.

k Pſal. ix. 9. & xxxi. 20. & cxix. 114.
l Ibid. li. 13.
† Heb. I will counſel thee; mine eye ſhall be upon thee.
m Prov. xxvi. 3.
n Jam. iii. 3.
o Prov. xiii. 21. Rom. ii. 8.
p Pſal. lxiv. 10. & lxviii. 53. Phil. iv. 4.

v. 7—11. They who have found a pardoning God, cannot but rejoice in hope.

1. David profeſſes his confidence in God, and his expectations from him. *Thou,* the bleeding Lamb of God, whoſe wounds are open for me, thou *art my hiding-place,* whither my poor and ſinful ſoul hath fled, and lies ſecure from all the accuſations of conſcience, the charges of Satan, and the fears of wrath: there no trouble can approach, but ſongs of deliverance compaſs me about, for guilt pardoned, for corruption ſubdued, for death deſtroyed, for hell ſhut up, for heaven opened. *Note,* They who have fled to Jeſus for refuge, have found matter for eternal praiſe.

2. By ſweet experience now he can teach others the way to reſt and peace, and pardon and joy unſpeakable. *I will inſtruct thee, &c.* will point the path I myſelf have trod, and in which whoever walks, will find the ſame bleſſedneſs. *Note,* (1.) They who ſpeak from experience, will preach moſt effectually. (2.) A teachable ſpirit is the way to true wiſdom. (3.) God's word and miniſters, under the bleſſing of the ſpirit, are our appointed guides, and we muſt hear them.

3. He warns the obſtinate and incorrigible of their approaching miſery, and cautions them to avoid it. They muſt not, like brute beaſts, be ſlaves to their appetites, nor refractory againſt the Divine word and warnings, for then their ſorrows would be multiplied, and their torments inſupportable and endleſs. *Note,* (1.) It is better to bend before God's warnings, than break beneath his judgments. (2.) Sinners degrade themſelves from men to beaſts; yea, worſe than beaſts, in the abuſe of faculties theſe never poſſeſſed. (3.) To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

4. He encourages the faithful to adhere to God, and rejoice in him; whilſt they truſt in God, his mercy ſhall compaſs, his power guard them. Therefore, *be glad and rejoice ye righteous;* ye that ſtand complete in Chriſt, glory in your privileges; *and ſhout for joy all ye that are upright in heart;* aſcribe the praiſe to him, to whom you are indebted for all the grace beſtowed upon you; and look forward, with holy tranſport, to the kingdom he hath provided for you. Amen! Amen!

PSALM XXXIII.

Though this pſalm hath no title, it is probably David's. In it he calls upon the righteous to praiſe God, ver. 1—3. 1. *For his word and providence,* ver. 4, 5. 2. *For the work of creation,* ver. 6—9. 3. *For his wiſe government of the world,* ver. 10, 11. *and* 13—17. 4. *For his favour to his choſen, which encourageth them to truſt in him,* ver. 12. *and* 18—22.

1.[a] REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous, *for* [b] praiſe is comely for the upright. 2. Praiſe the LORD with harp: [c] ſing unto him with the pſaltery, *and* an inſtrument of ten ſtrings. 3. [d] Sing unto him a new ſong, play ſkilfully with a loud noiſe. 4. For [e] the word of the LORD *is* right: and all his works *are done* in truth. 5. [f] He loveth righteouſneſs

a Pſ. xxxii. 11. & xcvii. 12.
b Ibid. cxlvii. 1.
c Ibid. cxii. 3.
d Ibid. xcvi. 1. & cxliv. 9. Iſa. xlii. 10. Rev. v. 9.
e Pſal. xix. 8.
f Ibid. xlv. 7.

and judgment : [g] the earth is full of the † goodneſs of the LORD. 6. [h] By the word of the LORD were the heavens made : and all the hoſt of them [i] by the breath of his mouth. 7. [k] He gathereth the waters of the ſea together, as an heap : he layeth up the depth in ſtore-houſes. 8. Let all the earth fear the LORD : let all the inhabitants of the world ſtand in awe of him. 9. For [l] he ſpake, and it was *done* ; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt. 10. [m] The LORD bringeth the counſel of the heathen to nought : he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. 11. [n] The counſel of the LORD ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

[g] Pſ. cxix. 64.
† Or mercy.
[h] Gen. i. 6, 7. Heb. xi. 3. John i. 3.
[i] Job xxvi. 13.
[k] Gen. i. 9. Job xxvi. 10. & xxxviii. 8.
[l] Gen. i. 3. Pſ. cxlviii. 5.
[m] Iſa. xix. 3.
[n] Job xxiii. 13. Prov. xix. 21. Iſa. xlvi. 10.

v. 1—11. They who know the happineſs of praiſing God with joyful lips, will be provoking others to the ſame bleſſed work.

1. The pſalmiſt calls upon the righteous to join him in the grateful ſong of praiſe. It is a comely work, moſt juſtly due to God, moſt becoming a ſoul ſo deeply bound in gratitude and love. Renewed mercies call for new ſongs, and every inſtrument of muſic, that may enliven the joy, and warm the ſoul with greater fervor. *Note*, (1.) Muſic, when under the guidance of grace, may be made a help to our devotion. (2.) Praiſe is a noble part of worſhip, in which the heart, affected with the ſenſe of God's love, will be frequently engaged.

2. He ſuggeſts abundant matter for our praiſe. [1.] *For God's pure and perfect word*, which, next to the gift of his Son, may be well reckoned our chief bleſſing, where the paths of truth and holineſs are marked out, and the way to glory made plain before our faces. [2.] *For his providential diſpenſations*, which are righteouſneſs and judgment ; all God's dealing with the ſons of men manifeſting his delight in theſe, and, above all, his goodneſs is ſeen throughout the earth ; goodneſs to all the ſons of men, giving them life, and breath, and all things, and peculiar goodneſs to his people, who ſhare the richer mercies of goſpel grace. [3.] *For the creation*, *v.* 6, 7, 9. riſing at the word of Almighty power, and inſtantly ſtarting into being at the command of God. *By the word of the Lord*, the Logos, his Son, the great agent, *by whom all things were made*, and *by the breath of his mouth*, the powerful operations of his holy Spirit. The heaven, the earth, the ſea, and all that dwell therein, hence derive their original, and, by the ſame omnipotence preſerved, continue ſtedfaſt and unchangeable ; till, by a ſecond mighty word, *the heavens ſhall be wrapped together as a ſcroll, the earth diſſolve, and all the elements melt with fervent heat.* [4.] *For his diſappointing the devices of the wicked*, however craftily laid, or deeply hidden. [5.] *For his own unchangeable decrees* of grace and love towards his people. *Note*, Theſe are not the ſubject of praiſe to any one ſaint merely, but to every righteous man in every age.

3. He infers from all theſe views of God's word, works, and providence, the univerſal obligation to reverence and fear him, who, having all the creatures in his hand, can quickly arm them for our ruin ; and therefore highly is it our intereſt, as well as duty, to pay him our bounden ſervice, and not provoke his indignation.

12. [o] Bleſſed *is* the nation whoſe God *is* the LORD : *and* the people [p] *whom* he hath choſen for his own inheritance. 13. [q] The LORD looketh from heaven : he beholdeth all the ſons of men. 14. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. 15. He faſhioneth their hearts alike : [r] he conſidereth all their works. 16. There is no king ſaved by the multitude of an hoſt : [s] a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength. 17. [t] An horſe *is* a vain thing for ſafety : neither ſhall he deliver *any* by his great ſtrength. 18. Behold, [u] the eye of the LORD *is* [x] upon them that fear him : upon them that hope in his mercy : 19. To deliver their ſoul from death, and [y] to keep them alive in famine. 20. [z] Our ſoul waiteth for the LORD ; [a] he *is* our help and our ſhield. 21. For our hearts ſhall rejoice in him ; [b] becauſe we have truſted in his holy name. 22. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

[o] Pſ. lxv. 4. & cxliv. 15.
[p] Exod. xix. 5.
[q] 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Job xxviii. 24. Pſ. xi. 4. & xiv. 2. Prov. xv. 3.
[r] Job xxxiv. 21. Jer. xxxii. 19.
[s] Eccleſ. ix. 11.
[t] Prov. xxi. 31.
[u] Job xxxvi. 7. Pſ. xxxiv. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
[x] Pſ. cxlvii. 11.
[y] Job v. 20. Pſ. xxxvii. 19. Prov. x. 3.
[z] Pſ. lxii. 1, 5. & cxxx. 6.
[a] Pſ. cxv. 9, &c.
[b] 1 Chron. v. 20.

v. 12—22. We have here,

1. The bleſſedneſs of God's peculiar people, *v.* 12. Their God beholds all the ſons of men, *v.* 13, 14. their thoughts are naked and open before him. Though ſome wickedly ſay, God hath forſaken the earth, his eyes go to and fro in it, and none of the devices of the ungodly are unknown or unnoticed by him. *He faſhioneth their hearts* : as the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, he muſt needs be acquainted with the work of his own hands ; and he over-rules all the imaginations they entertain, directing them all in ſuch a way, as to be ſubſervient to the purpoſes of his own glory ; *and conſidereth all their works*, the deeds of the wicked, to reſerve them for judgment ; and of the righteous, to reward them. Nor can any creature act independently of him, either to ſave or to deſtroy : in which conſideration, God's people may take the greateſt ſatisfaction, *v.* 16, 17. The greateſt kings, with the moſt numerous hoſts, avail nothing, if God proſper them not : the ſtrength of a giant is weakneſs, if God be againſt him, as David had experienced : and all the horſes prepared for battle cannot protect or ſave their riders, if the Lord be not on their ſide : ſo that, whilſt all creature-dependance muſt be renounced by us, all creature-oppoſition need not be feared, if the Lord be our God. And his eyes *are upon them that fear him* ; whilſt in general he regards and governs all the reſt, with peculiar favour he looks upon his choſen, whoſe truſt is placed on his rich mercy in Chriſt, and whoſe fear is, leſt they offend him. Againſt theſe, though kings and armies, and mighty men and horſes of war riſe up, they cannot hurt or deſtroy them : God *will deliver their ſoul from death*, from temporal death, from ſpiritual death, from eternal death. In time of public calamity, when famine ſtalks through the land, they ſhall have bread to eat ; and when the famine of the word prevails, and they are deprived of the miniſtry of the word and ordinances, they ſhall be fed with ſecret ſupplies of grace, and their ſouls ſhall live, *Rev.* xii. 14. *Note*, (1.) They are truly bleſſed and happy, who are God's inheritance, whom he regards with love, and who regard him with confidence, and reverential filial fear. (2.) Whatever thoughts are in a man's heart, the counſel of the Lord, that ſhall ſtand. (3.) The thought of the univerſal power, influence, and operations of God, ſhould ever engage our quiet and contented reſignation of ourſelves into his hands.

2. Having deſcribed the bleſſedneſs of God's choſen, he directs them in their duty. *Our ſoul waiteth for the Lord*, in patient hope, expecting the fulfilment of his promiſes. *He is our help and our ſhield*, the ſtrength on which we depend, and the protection under which we are ſafe. *For our heart ſhall rejoice in him*, as we are bound to do under the rich experience of his grace and love, and in hope of the glory which ſhall be revealed in us ; *becauſe we have truſted in his holy name*, and we know he will not, cannot, fail us. Therefore, *let thy mercy, Lord, be upon us*, as we are ever called to pray, for in this way we muſt expect thoſe gracious ſupplies he hath promiſed, *according as we hope in thee*, renouncing every other hope, and expecting by faith and prayer to be made partakers of thy preſent mercy in every time of need, and of thy eternal mercy, when all our requeſts ſhall be finally and fully accompliſhed.

PSALM XXXIV.

This pſalm was penned upon a particular occaſion, as appears by the title. 1. *He praiſes God for the experience which he had of his goodneſs*, ver. 1—6. 2. *He encourages God's people to truſt in him*, ver. 7—10. 3. *He cautions all to take heed of ſin, and make conſcience of duty*, ver. 11—14. 4. *To enforce this, he ſhews God's favour to the righteous, and his diſpleaſure againſt the wicked*, ver. 15—22.

¶ *A pſalm* of David, when [a] he changed his behaviour before † Abimelech : who drove him away, and he departed.

1. [b] I WILL bleſs the LORD at all times : his praiſe *ſhall* continually *be* in my mouth. 2. My ſoul ſhall [c] make her boaſt in the LORD : [d] the humble ſhall hear *thereof*, and be glad. 3. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. 4. I ſought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5. They ‡ looked unto him, and were lightened : and their faces were not aſhamed. 6. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him* ; and ſaved him out of all his troubles. 7. [e] The angel of the LORD [f] encampeth round about them that fear him, [g] and delivereth them. 8. O [h] taſte, and ſee, that the LORD *is* good : [i] bleſſed *is* the man *that* truſteth in him. 9. [k] O fear the LORD, [l] ye his ſaints : for *there is* no want to them that fear him. 10. [m] The young lions do lack and ſuffer hunger : but they that ſeek the LORD ſhall not want any good thing.

[a] Prov. xxix. 25.
† Or Achiſh, 1 Sam. xxi. 13.
[b] Eph. v. 20. 1 Theſ. v. 18.
[c] 1 Cor. i. 31.
[d] Pſ. cxix. 74. & cxlii. 7.
‡ Or flowed.
[e] Dan. vi. 22. Heb. i. 14.
[f] Gen. xxxii. 2. 2 Kings vi. 17. Zech. ix. 8.
[g] Pſ. xci. 11.
[h] 1 Pet. ii. 3.
[i] Pſ. ii. 12. Jer. xvii. 7.
[k] Heb. xii. 28.
[l] Pſ. xxxi. 23.
[m] Job iv. 11.

v. 1—10. Abimelech was the Philiſtine king called Achiſh, 1 *Sam.* xxi. 10. to whoſe court David, in his deſperate circumſtances, flew for refuge, and there ran the moſt imminent danger of being deſtroyed by the ſuggeſtions of the courtiers. By feigning himſelf an idiot, a device which was not perhaps altogether juſtifiable, he eſcaped ; however, the hand of God was evident, and the deliverance deſerved a ſong of praiſe.

1. He profeſſeth his fixed purpoſe, at all times, and in all places, to be ſhewing forth God's praiſe; both as the grateful tribute he owed, and that other humble men in diſtreſs might hear and be glad, encouraged by his mercies to hope for help and deliverance. *In the Lord he will boaſt*, aſcribing all to him, and counting his intereſt in his favour the greateſt and moſt invaluable acquiſition.

2. He labours to excite others to join him in the work of praiſe, *exalting* and *magnifying* God's holy name. And good reaſon was there for ſo doing: great was his diſtreſs, an exile in an enemy's country; his life in danger; but he could be in no place, where a throne of grace was not open: thither he flies, tells his compaſſionate Lord of all his fears, and is heard and holpen. Nor was his caſe ſingular; multitudes, like himſelf, had prayed, and were lightened, their darkneſs of ſoul diſpelled, and their diſtreſſful circumſtances cleared up: nor did ever God refuſe the meaneſt, who thus were found waiting upon him. *This poor man*, probably he means himſelf, in the abject ſtate to which he was reduced, or ſome other lowly ſaint, *cried*, and inſtant help appeared, *v.* 9. Angelic hoſts diſdain not the employment of miniſtring to the heirs of ſalvation, but, happy in obedience to their Lord's commands, encamp around them. Thus God delivers his people from every danger, and they are bound to bleſs and praiſe him. *Note*, (1.) Though we may ſometimes be in fear, God will not ſuffer us to fall. (2.) God doth, by a ſenſe of his returning favour, brighten up the countenance of the dejected. (3.) None ever waited upon him, and went away from a throne of grace diſappointed. (4.) If angels are our guard, yea, if the God of angels be with us, we need not fear what men or devils can do againſt us.

3. He invites all to *taſte and ſee that the Lord is good*, to come and partake of the riches of his mercy in Chriſt, ſo freely offered, and ſo richly beſtowed on the ſinful ſons of men. *Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him*, accepts the gracious invitation, and reſts on his merciful goodneſs for pardon, grace, and glory.

4. He exhorts his ſaints to fear him, *v.* 9. for his goodneſs ſake, engaged thereby to more dutiful ſubmiſſion and ſervice; and ſurely their intereſt is highly concerned in ſo doing, *for there is no want to them that fear him*. As much of this world's good as is advantageous for them, ſhall be given them; but eſpecially the ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus, in all their rich abundance, ſhall be their happy portion. *Thus, though the lions hunger*, through the ſcarcity of prey; or, figuratively, the covetous and ravenous oppreſſor is reduced to want; God's people ſhall be fed to the full, their ſoul and body both repleniſhed, and nothing wanting to make them truly and abidingly happy.

11. Come ye children, hearken unto me: [n] I will
teach you the fear of the LORD. 12. [o] What man *is*
he that deſireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may
ſee good? 13. [p] Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy
lips from ſpeaking guile. 14. [q] Depart from evil, and
do good: [r] ſeek peace and purſue it. 15. [s] The eyes of
the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open*
unto their cry. 16. [t] The face of the LORD *is* againſt
them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them
from the earth. 17. *The righteous* cry, and the LORD
heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.
18. [u] The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit.
19. [x] Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the
LORD delivereth him out of them all. 20. He keepeth all his bones: [y] not one of them is broken. 21.
[z] Evil ſhall ſlay the wicked: and they that hate the
righteous ſhall be † deſolate. 22. The LORD redeemeth the ſoul of his ſervants: and none of them that truſt
in him ſhall be deſolate.

[n] Eccleſ. xii. 10.
[o] 1 Pet. iii. 10.
[p] Pſ. xxxix. 1.
[q] Ib. xxxvii. 27. Iſa i. 16, 17.
[r] Heb. xii. 14.
[s] Job xxxvi. 7. Pſal. xxxiii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
[t] Lev. xvii. 10. Jer. xliv. 11. Amos ix. 4.
[u] Pſ. li. 17. Iſa. lvii. 15. & lxi. 1. & lxvi. 2.
[x] Acts xiv. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 11, 12.
[y] John xix. 36.
[z] Pſ. xciv. 23.
† Or guilty, or damned.

v. 11—22. David was not only a great king, a mighty warriour, a ſweet muſician, but a holy preacher, and we here enjoy ſome of his divine inſtructions.

1. He begins with the firſt principles for his children's inſtruction, the fear of God, which is the beginning of wiſdom. The children here ſpoken of were his ſubjects, or young perſons in general, or more particularly thoſe, whoſe tractable tempers rendered them attentive to the leſſons he ſhould teach. *Note*, (1.) It is the greateſt mercy, when children from earlieſt infancy are inſtructed in the word of God. (2.) Negligent parents and maſters will have a heavy charge to anſwer in the day of God, if, for lack of knowledge, their children and ſervants periſh.

2. He anſwers the enquirers into the path of life and happineſs, *v.* 12. with full inſtructions, *v.* 13, 14. by obſerving which we may ſecure not only all the comfort that this miſerable world is capable of affording, but infinitely more, even a life of glory and happineſs eternal. *Keep thy tongue from evil*; under the influence of divine grace, let all thy words be directed, that no corrupt communication, nothing profane, lewd, malicious, cenſorious, may proceed out of thy mouth, but ſuch as is good to the uſe of edifying; *and thy lips from ſpeaking guile*: let all your dealings be with integrity, that no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter; and that your ſpeech may be ever the language of your hearts. *Depart from evil*, as the abominable thing which God hates; let no allowed iniquity be indulged; avoid the perſons, and ſhun the places, that would be a ſnare to you; *and do good*, the works of faith, and labours of love, that are truly good, as proceeding from the right principle, guided by God's word, the right rule, and directed to God's glory, the right end. *Seek peace*, in ſuch a kind, affectionate, and obliging temper and conduct, as may juſtly give none offence; *and purſue it*: if, through the pride and perverſeneſs of others, the bond of peace is broken, though offended, be the firſt to ſeek reconciliation, ready to forgive and forget every provocation and injury. Bleſſed and happy are they who have thus their converſation in the world.

3. He enforces the holy ways he recommends by their bleſſed iſſue to thoſe who follow them, and by the miſery of thoſe who forſake them.

[1.] Great is the bleſſedneſs of the righteous. (1.) God takes the greateſt complacency in them, *v.* 15. whilſt cloathed with the righteouſneſs of his dear Son, they appear without ſpot or blemiſh, and adorned with the graces of his holy Spirit, are all glorious within. (2.) He is ever attentive to their prayers. The tendereſt parent never hears the liſpings of his darling ſon with ſuch readineſs to give, or feels ſuch bowels of compaſſion for his moans, when afflicted or hurt, as God does towards his children: no prayer is unnoticed, no groan unheard, no requeſt denied. (3.) He is *nigh to them that are of a broken heart*; whether ſin or ſuffering, or both, be the cauſe, he is near to help and heal them; and *the contrite ſpirit* feels the balm of his grace poured in at every wound. (4.) Though their afflictions be many, *v.* 19. as well as heavy, and ſuch are often the lot of God's deareſt children, yet he never leaves them to ſink under them. Whether they be wants of body, or diſtreſs of ſoul, *the Lord delivereth them out of all*, ſtrangely ſometimes working for them by his providence, and manifeſting more aſtoniſhingly to them the wonders of his grace. (5.) A peculiar care is over the righteous: *not a bone of him ſhall be broken*, which may emphatically be referred to our righteous Head, and, in a more general ſenſe, to every faithful ſoul, whoſe concerns of every ſort are in the hands of a faithful guardian. (6.) Their eternity is ſecured: *The Lord redeemeth the ſouls of his ſervants*; the price is paid in the blood of Jeſus; and whatever diſtreſſes or temptations they may be yet expoſed to, his redemption is eternal, and therefore the reſcue as ſure from the power of corruption, as from the guilt of ſin; *and none that truſt in him ſhall be deſolate*, or *guilty*, or *damned*. God hath juſtified them from all things; they ſhall never enter into condemnation, and therefore no fears of death or judgment need make their ſpirits diſconſolate: no one ſhall be loſt of all the purchaſed remnant, but they ſhall come with Jeſus in the day of his appearing, to grace his triumphs, and to be everlaſting trophies of his victory.

[2.] Deplorable is the end of the ungodly. *The face of the Lord is againſt them that do evil*: his curſe follows them as their ſhadow, embitters all their comforts, takes off their wheels, when moſt eager in their purſuit of carnal joy, and impreſſes a bitterneſs, that only the heart which feels it, knows. The ſtroke of God's judgments purſues them, to *cut off the remembrance of them from the earth*. *Evil ſhall ſlay the wicked*; the ſting of death, the wages of ſin, ſhall pierce them; ſickneſs and pain, beyond the power of medicine to aſſuage, ſhall torment the wretched body; and bitterer anguiſh in their minds, and dark forebodings of approaching judgment, more terribly diſtreſs their ſouls; till the awful hour comes, their eyes are fixed, convulſions ſeize them, and in a groan they expire. Happy for them if death ended there; but *they that hate the righteous ſhall be deſolate*, or *guilty*, or *damned*: as they ſhunned them and their ways on earth, an eternal ſeparation ſhall part them at death. Guilt, with all its horrors, ſhall go down with them into the grave; and at the day when body and ſoul muſt be again united, their damnation ſlumbereth not: eternal deſolations are determined upon them; abandoned of God, and driven from his preſence with wrath intolerable to bear, yet impoſſible to eſcape, into that place of torment, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

If ſuch bleſſedneſs then attends the ways of grace and holineſs; if ſuch miſeries await the paths of evil; ſhall we madly ſpurn our mercies, and court our ruin? God forbid!

PSALM XXXV.

The perſecutions of Saul and his ſervants ſeem to be the ſubject of this pſalm. 1. *He complains, they ſought the ruin of himſelf and friends,* ver. 1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25, 26. 2. *He pleads his innocence, and good deeds towards them,* ver. 7, 19, 12—14. 3. *He prays to God to be his comforter and deliverer,* ver. 1—4, 17, 22, *22, 27, 29.* 4. *He prophecies the deſtruction of his perſecutors,* ver. 4, 5, 6, 8. 5. *He promiſes himſelf that he ſhall yet ſee better days,* ver. 9, 10. *and that he will then attend God with his praiſes,* ver. 18, 28. *Much of this is applicable to Chriſt and his enemies, and to thoſe of his church and people, to the end of time.*

¶ *A pſalm* of David.

1. [a] PLEAD *my cauſe*, O LORD, with them that ſtrive with me: fight againſt them that fight againſt me. 2. Take hold of ſhield and buckler, and ſtand up for mine help. 3. Draw out alſo the ſpear, and ſtop *the way* againſt them that perſecute me: ſay unto my ſoul, I *am* thy ſalvation. 4. † [b] Let them be confounded and put to ſhame that ſeek after my ſoul: let them be turned back and brought to confuſion that deviſe my hurt. 5. [c] Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chaſe *them*. 6. Let [d] their way be dark and ſlippery, and let the angel of the LORD perſecute them. 7. For [e] without cauſe have they hid for me their net, *in* a pit, *which* without cauſe they have digged for my ſoul. 8. Let deſtruction come upon him [f] at unawares, and [g] let his net that he hath hid, catch himſelf: into that very deſtruction let him fall. 9. And my ſoul ſhall be joyful in the LORD: it ſhall rejoice in his ſalvation. 10. [h] All my bones ſhall ſay, LORD, who *is* like unto thee, which delivereſt the poor from him that is too ſtrong for him, yea, the poor and the needy, from him that ſpoileth him.

[a] Pſ. xliii. 1. & cxix. 154. Lam. iii. 58.
† Or, They ſhall be.
[b] Ver. 26. Pſ. xl. 14. & lxx. 3.
[c] Job xxi. 18. Pſ. i. 4. Iſa. xxix. 5. Hoſ. xiii. 3.
[d] Pſ. lxxiii. 18. Prov. iv. 19. Jer. xxiii. 12.
[e] Pſ. vii. 4.
[f] 1 Theſ. v. 3.
[g] Pſal. vii. 15, 16. & lvii. 6. & cxli. 10. Prov. v. 22.
[h] Pſ. li. 8.

v. 1—10. The cauſe of God and truth is here ever under the croſs. We have,

1. David calling upon God to plead his cauſe, and vindicate his injured innocence. His enemies maligned and traduced him; not ſatisfied with plundering him of all, and driving him out as a vagabond in the earth, they thirſted for his precious blood; were ever contriving ſecretly to enſnare, in order to deſtroy him, and openly in arms purſued him; whilſt, both unwilling and unable to contend, he could only commit himſelf to him who judgeth righteouſly, and leave God to ſecure him from the cauſeleſs injuries they wickedly plotted againſt him. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of men have been often perſecuted as the vileſt criminals; and the moſt inoffenſive and peaceable in the land, charged with the blackeſt deſigns of conſpiracy and rebellion. (2.) When we have a good cauſe and a good conſcience, it ſhould make us the more eaſily put up with the revilings of men. (3.) God will one day viſit for oppreſſion and wrong; till then, let us poſſeſs our ſouls in patience.

2. He prays that God would inwardly ſupport him, and outwardly manifeſt his power to his enemies confuſion. [1.] He begs inward ſupport, *v.* 3. *Say unto my ſoul, I am thy ſalvation:* all other trials would ſit light upon him, whilſt he poſſeſſed this conſciouſneſs of God's power and grace engaged for him. *Note*, When the believer's conſcience is aſſured of his part in the almighty Saviour, then all is peace within, and he can defy the glittering ſword without. [2.] He cries for God's appearing to protect him, and confound his enemies; which is not the language of revenge, but ſpoken under the ſpirit of prophecy, as what would ſurely come to paſs, as it may be rendered, *they ſhall be*, inſtead of *let them be*, &c. God's ſhield and buckler ſpread over him, and ſword and ſpear lifted up againſt his perſecutors, will not only ſave him, but deſtroy them. Terrible is the caſe of thoſe, againſt whom the God of war goes forth to fight; ſhame and confuſion muſt cover them, *v.* 4. As chaff before the wind, ſo eaſily ſhall they be diſperſed before the blaſting of the breath of his diſpleaſure, *v.* 5. Unable to eſcape the divine vengeance which purſues them, their way ſhall be dark, that they cannot flee; and ſlippery, that they cannot but fall. Deſtruction, or the ſtorm of wrath, *v.* 8. ſhall overtake *him*, Saul in particular, and every other enemy that dares riſe up againſt God and his people. Intangled in the net he laid, ſhall his foot be ſnared, and the ruin he deſigned for others, return upon his own head. *Note*, (1.) Though we may not indulge private reſentment, or wiſh evil to our worſt enemies, we may ſafely pray for the deliverance of God's ſuffering people, and the confuſion of the enemies of Chriſt and his church. (2.) The ſinner's foot is in a ſlippery place, and through the darkneſs of his fallen mind, he ſees not the dreadful pit juſt before him.

3. He rejoices in the confidence that God would ſave him, *v.* 9. and therefore aſcribes to him the glory. *All my bones*, my ſoul and body, my whole man, *ſhall ſay, Lord, who is like unto thee?* ſo peerleſs in thy own excellencies, ſo condeſcending to thy poor people, ſo good to redeem, ſo great to deliver them from all their mighty adverſaries. *Note*, (1.) They who make the Lord their ſtrength, will find him their joy. (2.) If God be for us, no matter who are againſt us.

11. [i] Falſe witneſſes did riſe up; they laid to my charge *things* that I knew not. 12. [k] They rewarded me evil for good, *to* the † ſpoiling of my ſoul. 13. But as for me, [l] when they were ſick, my cloathing *was* ſackcloth: I ‡ humbled my ſoul with faſting, [m] and my prayer returned into mine own boſom. 14. I behaved myſelf § as though *he had been* my friend, *or* brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for his* mother. 15. But in mine ‖ adverſity they rejoiced, and gathered themſelves together: *yea*, [n] the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me, and I knew *it* not; they did tear *me*, and ceaſed not. 16. With hypocritical mockers in feaſts: [o] they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth.

[i] Mat. xxvi. 59.
[k] Pſ. xxxviii. 20. & cix. 5.
† Heb. Depriving, or bereaving.
[l] Job xxx. 25.
‡ Or, afflicted.
[m] Mat. x. 13.
§ Heb. as a friend, as a brother to me.
‖ Heb. halting. Pſal. xxxviii. 17.
[n] Job xxx. 8.
[o] Pſ. xxxvii. 12. Lam. ii. 16.

v. 11—16. It is not in the power of the moſt harmleſs to ſecure himſelf from falſhood; nor can the kindeſt treatment engage returns from the ungrateful. This David found.

1. *Falſe witneſſes did riſe up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not*; accuſed him of treaſonable deſigns againſt Saul's life and government, which never entered into his thoughts; yea, which his conduct ſo glaringly confuted, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 17, 18. Such perjured wretches likewiſe aroſe againſt the Son of David, *Mat.* xxvi. 60. and how many a time ſince hath the ſame enmity againſt true godlineſs led the ſons of wickedneſs to ſtick at no lies or oaths to blacken the faithful profeſſors of it.

2. They ſhewed the baſeſt ingratitude, *rewarding him evil for good, to the ſpoiling*, or *bereaving of his ſoul*; robbing him of his honour, his good name, his worldly goods, and aiming at his very life. Well had he ever deſerved of the nation, as their champion and deliverer; of Saul, as his moſt faithful and valiant ſoldier and ſervant; of thoſe who maligned him at court, as their affectionate friend. When they were ſick, with tendereſt ſympathy he felt their pain, and ſought with kind ſollicitude to remove it; with ſackcloth of no fictitious grief, he went heavily; his countenance beſpoke the emotions of his fraternal heart; and whilſt for their ſin he humbled his ſoul with faſting, his fervent prayers in their behalf teſtified the deep ſincerity of his regard: but *it returned into his own boſom*, ſlighted and ill-requited by them, though not returned in vain; God's bleſſing, refuſed to them, lighted on his own ſoul. But how different their conduct! how cruel their returns! *In mine adverſity*, or *in mine halting, they rejoiced*; when trouble came upon him, when he was diſgraced at court, and forced to fly as an outlaw; far from commiſerating his ſufferings, or eſpouſing his righteous quarrel, *they gathered themſelves together*, to mock and inſult him: the very abjects, men of the vileſt and meaneſt character, tore his reputation in pieces; he became the ſong of the drunkard, and *in feaſts* at their carouſals, or *for a piece of bread*, to curry favour with his enemies, hypocritical mockers ſet him up as the but of their ridicule and reviling, and *gnaſhed upon him with their teeth*, as if they wiſhed to devour him alive. *Note*, (1.) Baſe ingratitude wounds a generous ſpirit. (2.) The greateſt ſervices often meet an ill requital. (3.) The tendereſt ſenſibility is conſiſtent with the trueſt heroiſm: the truly brave are moſt compaſſionate. (4.) Prayer for us is the beſt mark of friendſhip. (5.) Though our kindneſs may be loſt upon the unthankful, and our prayers ſlighted, they ſhall not return without a bleſſing to ourſelves. (6.) If we, like David, are made the but of ridicule, the ſport of fools, and the ſong of drunkards, let it not be thought ſtrange: Jeſus was thus treated, and the diſciple is not above his maſter.

17. LORD, [o] how long wilt thou look on? reſcue my ſoul from their deſtructions, [p] my darling from the lions. 18. [q] I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praiſe thee among much people. 19. Let not them that are mine enemies † wrongfully rejoice over me: [r] *neither* let them wink with the eye, [s] that hate me without a cauſe. 20. For they ſpeak not peace, but they deviſe deceitful matters againſt *them that are* quiet in the land. 21. Yea, [t] they opened their mouth wide againſt me, *and* ſaid, [u] Aha, aha, our eye hath ſeen *it*. 22. *This* thou haſt ſeen, O LORD, [x] keep not ſilence: O LORD, be not far from me. 23. [y] Stir up thyſelf, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cauſe, my God and my Lord. 24. Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteouſneſs, and let them not rejoice over me. 25. [z] Let them not ſay in their hearts, ‡ Ah, ſo would we have it: let them not ſay, We have ſwallowed him up. 26. [a] Let them be aſhamed and brought to confuſion together, that rejoice

[o] Hab. i. 13.
[p] Pſ. xxii. 20.
[q] Ibid. 25, 31. & xl. 9, 10. & cxi. 1.
† Heb. Falſely.
[r] Prov. vi. 13. & x. 10.
[s] Pſ. lxix. 4. & cix. 3. & cxix. 161. Lam. iii. 52. John xv. 25.
[t] Job xvi. 10.
[u] Pſ. xl. 15. & lxx. 3. Ezek. xxv. 3.
[x] Pſ. lxxxiii. 1.
[y] Ibid. xliv. 23.
[z] Ibid. lxx. 3.
‡ Heb. Ah, ah, our ſoul.
[a] Ver. 4. Pſ. xl. 14.

joice at mine hurt : let them be [b] cloathed with ſhame
and diſhonour, that magnify *themſelves* againſt me. 27.
Let them ſhout for joy, and be glad, that favour my
§ righteous cauſe : yea, [c] let them ſay continually, Let
the LORD be magnified, [d] which hath pleaſure in the
proſperity of his ſervant. 28. And my tongue ſhall
ſpeak of thy righteouſneſs *and* of thy praiſe all the day
long.

[b] Pſ. cix. 29. & cxxxii. 18.
§ Heb. righteouſneſs.
[c] Pſ. lxx. 4.
[d] Ibid. cxlix. 4.

v. 17—28. With eagerneſs the Pſalmiſt calls upon God to appear, not merely as a ſpectator of the injuries done him, but as the righteous judge and avenger. In order whereunto,

1. He deſcribes the character of his enemies. They were as *lions*, *v.* 12. fierce and cruel; their hatred was cauſeleſs, *v.* 19. they could not ſpeak to him with common civility, *v.* 20. they were falſe accuſers of the faithful, who were quiet in the land, and gave no juſt offence to any man : they took a malicious pleaſure in his ſufferings, and inſulted him in his diſtreſs, *v.* 21. Such were the enemies of Jeſus, ravenous, bitter, taunting, inſulting, triumphing in his agony, and mocking him on the croſs : we are by our profeſſion his followers ; may we be content with his reproach.

2. He prays, that God would ariſe to judge : he knew his cauſe was good, and therefore appeals to this high tribunal, *v.* 24. He cries to be delivered from the jaws of theſe lions, *v.* 17. That God would no longer keep ſilence, but pronounce the ſentence of juſt condemnation againſt them, and reſcue his ſoul from ſin and death, to which he was expoſed, *v.* 17. He begs, that their joys in his ſufferings may be ſhort-lived, *v.* 19. and that their proud boaſting may be ſilenced, and ſhame and confuſion cover them ; their projects defeated, and themſelves brought to the duſt. *v.* 26. *Note*, The triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment, and the laughter of fools will ſoon be ſucceeded by everlaſting ſorrow.

3. He expreſſes his ardent deſires, that the faithful ſervants of God, and his true friends, might ſee God's gracious dealings with him, and rejoice in his triumphs, bleſſing God for the vindication of injured innocence, and delighted in his proſperity, as if their own. *Note*, (1.) It is a joy to every faithful follower of the Lamb, to ſee their fellow-members happy and proſperous. (2.) Though for our good God ſees it needful to afflict his ſervants, he takes no pleaſure in their ſufferings, but delights in their proſperity. (3.) All our comforts come from God's hands, and for them he well deſerves to be bleſſed and praiſed.

4. The Pſalmiſt himſelf experiencing ſuch mercy from God, declares he will not fail of telling abroad God's praiſes in the great congregation, *v.* 18. and magnifying his righteouſneſs, *v.* 28. ſo eminently diſplayed in this interpoſition : nor ſhall his gratitude ever be ſilent, but *all the day long*, whilſt life and breath endure, his praiſe ſhall be loud and ceaſeleſs, till the ſongs of time ſhall give place to the never-ending ſongs of eternity.

PSALM XXXVI.

The occaſion of this pſalm appears to be the perſecution of Saul, or Abſalom. We may obſerve in it, 1. *The ſinfulneſs of ſin, and how miſchievous it is,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The goodneſs of God, and how gracious he is,* (1.) *To all his creatures in general,* ver. 5, 6. (2.) *To his own people in particular,* ver. 7—9. *With which the pſalmiſt is encouraged to pray for all ſaints,* ver. 10. *for himſelf in particular, and his own preſervation,* ver. 11. *and to triumph in the certain fall of his enemies,* ver. 12.

¶ To the chief muſician,

A pſalm of David the ſervant of the Lord.

1. THE tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith within my
heart, *that there is* [a] no fear of God before his
eyes. 2. For [b] he flattereth himſelf in his own eyes,
† until his iniquity be found to be hateful. 3. The
words of his mouth *are* iniquity and [c] deceit : he hath
left off [d] to be wiſe, *and* to do good. 4. [e] He deviſeth
‡ miſchief upon his bed, [f] he ſetteth himſelf in a way
that is not good ; he abhorreth not evil.

[a] Rom. iii. 18.
[b] Deut. xxix. 19.
† Heb. to find his iniquity to hate.
[c] Pſ. xii. 2.
[d] Jer. iv. 22.
[e] Prov. iv. 16. Mic. ii. 1.
‡ Or vanity.
[f] Iſa. lxv. 2.

v. 1—4. The higheſt title of the greateſt monarch, or the wiſeſt man, is to be called the ſervant of the Lord ; in this David glories, as his moſt diſtinguiſhed honour. We find him here deſcribing the wickedneſs of the wicked in its true colours, beginning with the root of bitterneſs within, and proceeding to the hateful fruits without.

1. The fear of God is baniſhed from his eyes ; this *the tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith in my heart*. David, by obſerving and marking his conduct, could not but be ſo convinced ; for they who daringly and avowedly continue in the breach of God's laws, muſt needs be deſtitute of his fear. *Note*, It is no charity to deny the evidence of our ſenſes, and to hope well of thoſe who live in open ſin.

2. He cries, Peace, peace to his ſoul ; *he flattereth himſelf in his own eyes*, either that God regardeth it not, or will wink at what he calls the little eſcapes and infirmities of human nature ; that his judgments will not be ſo ſevere as his word ſeems to ſay ; that death is at a diſtance ; that if he muſt repent, it is time enough yet ; and at leaſt he ſhall do as well as thouſands of others, whom God will not be ſo hard as, for a little ſin here, to deſtroy eternally. By theſe and the like vain and infidel reaſonings, his heart is hardened and ſecure, *till his iniquity be found to be hateful*. However men flatter themſelves, the day is near when they muſt be undeceived, and a lie be found in their right hand ; when God ſhall flaſh conviction on the ſelf-deceiver, make his abhorrence of ſin evident, and wrath to the uttermoſt be for ever the portion of the ſinner's cup.

3. Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth ſpeaketh ; corrupt and vile diſcourſe defiles his lips, and, as he deceives himſelf, he ſeeks to impoſe upon others by falſhood and hypocritical profeſſions.

4. Though once he pretended regard to religion, he hath thrown off the maſk, *v.* 3. and caſt the reins upon the neck of folly and ſin. *Note*, None are ſo bad as thoſe who once made a profeſſion of godlineſs, if they depart from it.

5. His thoughts are ever ſet on miſchief ; on his bed he contrives it ; and, when he ariſes, deliberately and reſolutely purſues the ſchemes he hath formed to gratify his luſts, and injure his neighbour. *Note*, (1.) Deliberate ſin ſhews the devil's power in the heart uncontrouled. (2.) They who, awake on their beds, have not their thoughts occupied in God's word, will find a tempter near, who will be buſy to ſuggeſt to them evil.

6. *He abhorreth not evil* ; nothing ſticks with him ; he hath ſilenced remorſe, and takes pleaſure in his abominations. To ſin through temptation is ſinful ; but to take pleaſure in ſin, without fear or reſtraint, is exceeding ſinful.

5. [g] Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens ; *and*
thy faithfulneſs *reacheth* unto the clouds. 6. Thy
righteouſneſs *is* like the † great mountains ; [h] thy judgments
are a great deep : O LORD, thou preſerveſt
man and beaſt. 7. How ‡ excellent *is* thy loving kindneſs,
O God ! therefore the children of men [i] put their
truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings. 8. [k] They ſhall
be abundantly § ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe :
and thou ſhalt make them drink of [l] the river of [m] thy
pleaſures. 9. For [n] with thee *is* the fountain of life :
[o] in thy light ſhall we ſee light. 10. O ‖ continue thy
loving kindneſs unto them that know thee ; and thy
righteouſneſs to [p] the upright in heart. 11. Let not the
foot of pride come againſt me, and let not the hand
of the wicked remove me. 12. There are the workers
of iniquity fallen : [q] they are caſt down, and ſhall not
be able to riſe.

[g] Pſ. lvii. 10. & cviii. 4.
† Heb. Mountains of God.
[h] Job xi. 8. Rom. xi. 33.
‡ Heb. precious.
[i] Ruth ii. 12. Pſ. xvii. 8. & xci. 4.
[k] Pſ. lxv. 4.
§ Heb. Watered.
[l] Rev. xxii. 1.
[m] Pſ. xvi. 11.
[n] Jer. ii. 13.
[o] John viii. 12.
‖ Heb. draw out at length.
[p] Pſ. xv. 2.
[q] Ibid. i. 5.

v. 5—12. The world affords a dark proſpect to the child of God ; he muſt look above him, not around him, if he would be comforted, and there a bleſſed ſcene preſents itſelf in that glorious God, who is the joy of his people, and the portion of their inheritance.

1. He contemplates the bright perfections of the bleſſed God : *Thy mercy is in the heavens*, laid up for thy people, notwithſtanding all the devices of the wicked againſt them ; and as this is now their protection, ſhortly they will be brought to theſe heavens, eternally to enjoy it. To this it is owing alſo, that ſinners are ſo long borne with ; God is merciful, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come unto repentance. *Thy faithfulneſs reacheth to the clouds* : though men are falſe, and turn as the weather-cock, God is faithful, and never changes ; and we may confidently truſt him to fulfil all his promiſes ; nor need think it long that ſinners are born with ; his threatnings will be accompliſhed in their ſeaſon. *Thy righteouſneſs is like the great mountains* ; either that righteouſneſs which is the ſinner's juſtification, ſure and everlaſting ; or thoſe deciſions againſt the impenitent, which are fixed and immoveable. *Thy judgments are a great deep*, unfathomable often by the ſhallow line of human underſtanding, but always directed with infinite wiſdom, and unimpeachable equity.

2. He meditates with delight on his diſpenſations of providence and grace towards his people, in all which his excellent loving kindneſs appears. In general, all creatures partake of his providential care : not only man, the Lord of the creation, but every beaſt, is fed by his bounty, and preſerved by his providence ; whilſt with eſpecial regard he manifeſts his loving kindneſs to thoſe who *put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings*, and fills their hearts with wonder, gratitude, and love. With liberal hand their wants are all ſupplied ; *with the fatneſs of his houſe they are ſatiſfied* : an all-ſufficient God is an all-ſufficient portion. Of earthly bleſſings they ſhall have enough, whilſt

ſweet content makes every meal a feaſt: with ſpiritual communications they ſhall be abundantly repleniſhed; enjoying, in holy ordinances here below, divine fellowſhip with the Father and his Son Jeſus Chriſt; and daily looking for the perfection of happineſs in the full, uninterrupted, and eternal enjoyment of God's preſence and love in his temple of glory above. Even in this vale of tears, *thou ſhalt make them drink of the river of thy pleaſures*; thoſe pure joys, that they who thirſt after righteouſneſs taſte, when coming to Jeſus to drink, they receive out of his fulneſs the abundance of pardon, grace, and conſolations, the foretaſtes of thoſe eternal pleaſures that are at God's right hand for evermore. *For with thee is the well of life*; thou art the living fountain; thy breath firſt animated the lifeleſs clay; but better far, quickened by thy free ſpirit, our ſoul, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, firſt felt new powers infuſed, and truly began to live. With living ſtreams fed from the ſacred fountain, we are enabled daily to increaſe with the increaſe of God, and ſhortly we expect to drink at the fountain-head, and live eternally glorious and happy, like the author of our bleſſed immortality. *In thy light ſhall we ſee light*; without thee all is darkneſs; no ſun to ſhine, no eye to ſee; but when thou doſt ariſe, the Sun of righteouſneſs, then ſtrait our ſightleſs eye-balls meet the welcome day. Before us lies the path of life and glory, and diſtant realms of everlaſting light terminate the proſpect. Thither our willing feet are haſting; and, yet a moment, ſhall arrive at that bright world, where, face to face, we ſhall behold the beatific and transforming viſion, and in the contemplation of God's tranſcendent excellencies, be unutterably and eternally happy.

3. He prays for himſelf and others, that they may be continually bleſſed with the communications of divine grace: that thoſe who know God, may follow on to know him more and more, *v.* 10. ſupported by his loving kindneſs, gaining a more diſtinct view of their divine juſtifying righteouſneſs, and experiencing God's conſtant protection from the power of evil. For himſelf he begs, *that the foot of pride may not come againſt him*, to trample him down, or *the hand of the wicked prevail*, to deſtroy him; that neither his enemies without or within, ſpiritual or temporal, may remove him from his ſtedfaſtneſs. *Note*, Tho' we have aſſured promiſes of being kept, yet muſt we be inceſſant in prayer for their accompliſhment.

4. He foreſees the ruin of the wicked near, certain, and fearful; *fallen* under the ſtroke of death's reſiſtleſs arm; *caſt down* by the juſt ſentence of the eternal judge, into the place of torment, and *never able to riſe* from that bed of death, where the ſufferings are as everlaſting as they are intolerable. O gather not, Lord, my ſoul, with theſe ſinners!

PSALM XXXVII.

This pſalm is a ſermon, full of uſeful inſtruction for the people of God, and a key to the myſteries of providence. 1. *David forbids us to fret at the proſperity of the wicked*, ver. 1, 7, 8. (1.) *Becauſe of the ſcandalous character of the wicked*, ver. 12, 14, 21, 32. *and the honourable character of the righteous*, ver. 21, 26, 30, 31. (2.) *Becauſe of the deſtruction and ruin which the wicked are nigh to*, ver. 2, 9, 10, 20, 35, 36, 38. *and the ſalvation and protection which the righteous are ſure of*, ver. 13, 15, 17, 28, 33, 39, 40. (3.) *Becauſe of the particular mercy God has in ſtore for all his people*, ver. 11, 16, 18, 19, 22—25, 28, 29, 37. 2. *He preſcribes very good remedies againſt it*, ver. 3—6, 27, 34.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. [a] FRET not thyſelf becauſe of evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity. 2. For they ſhall ſoon be cut down like the graſs, and wither as the green herb. 3. Truſt in the LORD, and do good, *ſo* ſhalt thou dwell in the land, and † verily thou ſhalt be fed. 4. [b] Delight thyſelf alſo in the LORD; and he ſhall give thee the deſires of thine heart. 5. ‡ [c] Commit thy way unto the LORD: truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring *it* to paſs. 6. And [d] he ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.

[a] Prov. xxiii. 17. & xxiv. 1, 19. Pſ. lxxiii. 3. Jer. xii. 1.

† Heb. In truth.

[b] 1 Pet. i. 8.

‡ Heb. Roll thy way upon.

[c] Pſ. lv. 22. Prov. xvi. 3. Mat. vi. 25. 1 Pet. v. 7.

[d] Job xi. 17. Mic. vii. 9.

v. 1—6. The way of duty is made very plain, and therefore we are more inexcuſable, if we depart from it.

1. The Pſalmiſt cautions us againſt envy and fretfulneſs becauſe of the proſperity of the wicked. It had been a trial that himſelf had been beſet with, and therefore he ſpeaks from experience, which is the moſt effectual way of preaching. When in the world we ſee the ungodly proſper, and proud oppreſſors glorying in the injuries they inflict on God's perſecuted people, we are too apt to repine at their affluence and influence; to entertain hard thoughts of God; and fret and murmur againſt the diſpenſations of providence; a temper as evil, reſpecting God, as tormenting to ourſelves.

2. He gives a ſtrong argument to ſilence our impatience. The proſperity of the ſinner is ſhort and precarious, as the withering graſs; and God's ſcythe of judgment is whetted to mow them down, and caſt them into the oven as fuel for the flames. Mark his end, and thou ſhalt not envy his way.

3. He preſcribes the good we ſhould follow, as well as the evil we ſhould avoid, and enjoying the better portion in God's favour, have no reaſon to envy any worldling his poſſeſſions. Three things he adviſes, and ſupports each of them with the moſt forcible argument of the bleſſedneſs which would thence ariſe. [1.] *To truſt in the Lord*, on his promiſes for ſupport, and wait the iſſue of his providences; *and do good*, perſevering in the path of duty, however dark and diſcouraging it may appear; and then God will take care, *you ſhall be fed*, and not famiſhed, as you may be ready to fear, if you act with conſcientious integrity, in a world of knavery and ſelfiſhneſs; *and dwell in the land*, if not ſo great as others, yet with a peaceful conſcience, and a contented mind, and that is a higher feaſt than luxury can give. [2.] *To delight in the Lord*, as the moſt bleſſed portion; in his love, as the beſt enjoyment; in his word, as the ſureſt title deeds; and in his promiſed glory, as the beſt inheritance; and *he will give thee the deſires of thine heart*; a renewed ſoul, whoſe delight is in God, can aſk for nothing he will not grant, becauſe the ſum total of all his requeſts is, *thy will be done*. [3.] *To commit thy way unto the Lord*, in prayer for direction, and with quietneſs expecting an anſwer; ſatisfied in every diſpoſal, and aſſured that infinite wiſdom and love will order all things to work for our good: and then, without any ſinful expedients or contrivances of our own, *he will bring it to paſs*; ſo that the event ſhall fully anſwer our expectations; and, however for a time blackened with calumny, raſhly cenſured, or unjuſtly treated, *he will make our righteouſneſs evident as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day*; when, either in time or eternity, he ſhall appear for the vindication of his people from malignant tongues, and the injuſtice of oppreſſors. If we have but faith and patience, the end muſt be glory and honour.

7. [e] † Reſt in the LORD, and [f] wait patiently for him: [g] fret not thyſelf becauſe of him who proſpereth in his way, becauſe of the man who bringeth wicked devices to paſs. 8. [h] Ceaſe from anger, and forſake wrath: fret not thyſelf in any wiſe to do evil. 9. For [i] evil doers ſhall be cut off: but [k] thoſe that wait upon the LORD, they ſhall inherit the earth. 10. For yet a little while, and the wicked *ſhall* not *be*: yea, [l] thou ſhalt diligently conſider his place, and it *ſhall* not *be*. 11. But [m] the meek ſhall inherit the earth: and ſhall delight themſelves in the abundance of peace. 12. The wicked plotteth againſt the juſt, and [n] gnaſheth upon him with his teeth. 13. [o] The LORD ſhall laugh at him, for he ſeeth that his day is coming. 14. The wicked have drawn out the ſword, and have bent their bow, to caſt down the poor and needy, *and* to ſlay ‡ ſuch as be of upright converſation. 15. [p] Their ſword ſhall enter into their own heart, and their bows ſhall be broken. 16. [q] A little that a righteous man hath, *is* better than the riches of many wicked. 17. For [r] the arms of the wicked ſhall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous. 18. The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and [s] their inheritance ſhall be for ever. 19. They ſhall not be aſhamed in the evil time: and [t] in the days of famine they ſhall be ſatisfied. 20. But the wicked ſhall periſh, and the enemies of the LORD *ſhall be* as the § fat of lambs, they ſhall conſume: into ſmoke ſhall they conſume away.

[e] Pſ. lxii. 1.

† Heb. Be ſilent to the Lord. Exod. xiv. 13. 2 Chron. xx. 17. Iſa. xxx. 15.

[f] Lam. iii. 26.

[g] Ver. 1.

[h] Eph. iv. 26.

[i] Job xx. 23—29. Pſ. lv. 23.

[k] Iſa. lvii. 13.

[l] Job vii. 10. & xx. 9.

[m] Mat. v. 5.

[n] Pſ. xxxv. 16.

[o] Ibid. ii. 4.

‡ Heb. The upright of way.

[p] 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. Pſ. vii. 15.

[q] Prov. xvi. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 6.

[r] Job xxxviii. 15. Pſ. x. 15. Ezek. xxx. 21, &c.

[s] Iſa. lx. 21.

[t] Job. v. 20. Pſ. xxxiii. 19.

§ Heb. preciouſneſs.

v. 7—20. The foregoing precepts are here reinforced and enlarged upon, and we have need of line upon line, ſeeing our hearts are ſo corrupt, and our underſtanding ſo darkened.

Abundant reaſons are here urged, why we ſhould *patiently wait upon the Lord*, and without anger, envy, and diſcontent, behold the proſperous ſinner, and bear up under every croſs we may be called to ſuffer from him.

1. A variety of reaſons for our quiet ſubmiſſion is here produced from the miſery of ſinners. [1.] Their ruin is determined, *v.* 9. Though for a while their evil counſels ſeem to ſucceed, *v.* 7. and all goes ſmoothly on, yet they are only raiſed to a higher ſummit, to make their fall more terrible. [2.] Their deſtruction is near, even at the door, *v.* 10. Their career is ſhort; the longeſt life is but a ſtep, and they are often ſurprized in the midſt, and their ſoul required of them. Each moment is uncertain, each breath precarious, and then all their hopes periſh, vaniſhing as the ſmoke from the altar, *v.* 20. [3.] Their own devices ſhall fall upon them, *v.* 12—14. Tho' crafty, cruel, and, in their own apprehenſion, confident of ſucceſs, God mocks at their impotent deſigns, and turns the deſtruction they had prepared for the defenceleſs poor, upon their

own heads. Their day is coming, a terrible day, when the wicked muſt tremble, and at which the righteous ſhould rejoice. [4.] When God ariſes to judgment, they will periſh for ever; his wrath, as the fire of the altar, ſhall burn, and none ſhall quench it: the wicked, as fuel for the flames, ſhall be conſumed, or rather conſuming yet unconſumed, in theſe everlaſting burnings.

2. The unſpeakably happier lot of the righteous, with all their troubles, ſhould repreſs every murmur of diſcontent becauſe of the apparent proſperity of the ungodly. [1.] *They ſhall inherit the earth*, *v.* 9. Their patient waiting ſhall not be diſappointed; the preſent world ſhall afford them a ſufficiency, and in the new earth, where dwelleth righteouſneſs, they have a ſure poſſeſſion. [2.] *They ſhall delight themſelves in the abundance of peace.* Whatever portion, be it leſs or more, they have below, one thing they enjoy better than the wealth of both the Indies, peace with God, and, as the effect of that, peace of conſcience; a delightful peace, that makes even ſufferings light, and adds a double reliſh to every enjoyment: a peace, to which the wicked are ſtrangers; a peace the world cannot give; and, bleſſed be God, cannot take away; and abundance of peace, not only whilſt ſun and moon endureth, or till life ſhall terminate, but permanent as the ages of eternity. [3.] *The little a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked*, *v.* 16. Of this world God's enemies have far the greater ſhare; but without God's bleſſings the ſweeteſt draughts are bitter, and the worm of diſcontent at the root of their gourd makes it wither, when to appearance moſt flouriſhing. But the righteous man's little comes from God's gift, is enjoyed in his love, and improved to God's glory. He hath the great ſeaſoning of contentment in whatſoever ſtate he is, and, ſenſible how unworthy he is of the leaſt, every thing he uſes fills him with thankfulneſs. A dry cruſt, with a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, furniſhes a more delicious meal, than the tables of luxury ever afforded. [4.] *The Lord upholdeth the righteous*; ſo that in all trials and difficulties he is ſupported within; and, as the everlaſting arms are underneath him, he is now and for ever ſafe from fear of evil. [5.] *The Lord knoweth the days of the upright*, *v.* 18. He takes notice of his daily ſervice, faithful to reward him; of his trials, to ſupport him; of his ſorrows, to comfort him; and gives him a ſenſe of his love all the day long. [6.] *Their inheritance ſhall be for ever*, *v.* 18. Their portion, bleſſed as it is, ſhall not be circumſcribed by the narrow bounds of time; but in heaven there is reſerved for them *an inheritance incorruptible*, *undefiled*, *which fadeth not away.* [7.] They ſhall never be aſhamed of their confidence, *v.* 19. In general calamities they ſhall be never deſtitute; in the evil day of death their faith and joy ſhall not fail them; and in the day of judgment they have boldneſs to appear before the awful bar. Such preſent poſſeſſions, ſuch eternal expectations, may well keep down every riſing diſcontent. Why ſhould we envy the ungodly their ſhort-lived, embittered, unſatisfying, periſhing enjoyments, when we have ſuch a ſufficient, ſatisfying, abiding portion here, and ſuch a near proſpect of a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory hereafter?*

21. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again:
but [u] the righteous ſheweth mercy, and giveth. 22. For
[x] *ſuch as be* bleſſed of him ſhall inherit the earth; and
they that be curſed of him ſhall be cut off. 23. [y] The
ſteps of a *good* man are † ordered by the LORD: and
he delighteth in his way. 24. [z] Though he fall, he ſhall
not be utterly caſt down: for [a] the LORD ‡ upholdeth
him with his hand. 25. I have been young, and *now*
am old: yet [b] have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor
his ſeed begging bread. 26. [c] *He is* § ever merciful, and
lendeth: and [d] his ſeed *is* bleſſed. 27. [e] Depart from
evil, and do good: and dwell for evermore. 28. For
the LORD loveth judgment, and forſaketh not his ſaints,
they are preſerved for ever: but [f] the ſeed of the wicked
ſhall be cut off. 29. [g] The righteous ſhall inherit the
land, and dwell therein for ever. 30. [h] The mouth of
the righteous ſpeaketh wiſdom; and his tongue talketh
of judgment. 31. [i] The law of his God *is* in his heart,
none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide. 32. The wicked watcheth
the righteous, and ſeeketh to ſlay him. 33. The LORD
will not leave him in his hand, nor ‖ condemn him when
he is judged.

[u] Pſ. cxii. 5, 9.
[x] Prov. iii. 33.
[y] 1 Sam. ii. 9.
† Or, eſtabliſhed.
[z] Prov. xxiv. 16. Mic. vii. 8. 2 Cor. iv. 9.
[a] Iſa. xli. 10.
‡ Or, upholdeth his hand.
[b] Heb. xiii. 5.
[c] Pſ. cxii. 5, 9.
§ Heb. All the day.
[d] Pſ. cxii. 2.
[e] Ibid. xxxiv. 14.
[f] Ibid. xxi. 10. Iſa. xiv. 20.
[g] Prov. ii. 21.
[h] Mat. xii. 35.
[i] Deut. vi. 6. Pſ. xl. 8. & cxix. 98. Iſa. li. 7.
‖ Or, Suffer him to be condemned. Pſ. cix. 31.

v. 21—23. We have here,

1. The contraſt between the righteous and the wicked in their dealings among men. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again:* knaviſh and unjuſt, they contract debts they are neither able nor deſign to pay: *but the righteous* not only maintains juſtice, but exerciſes mercy, lending to aſſiſt the induſtrious, and giving to relieve the neceſſities of the poor.

2. Their different regards from God, and expected end. The one is *bleſſed* with his favour, enjoys a preſent portion, and is deſigned for his eternal kingdom: the other is the object of his diſpleaſure, under his curſe in this world, and ready to be cut off from the earth, and conſigned to never-ending miſery in the next.

3. A variety of inſtances of God's kindneſs and regard for the righteous are inſiſted upon. [1.] His ways are ordered of the Lord, *v.* 23. His written word is his conſtant rule; his ſpirit of wiſdom enlightens and directs him therein; and by the leadings of his providence he makes his duty plain, when in difficulties about his conduct. [2.] *He delights in his way*; takes a pleaſure to ſee him walk under the influence of his grace. [3.] *Though he fall, he ſhall not be utterly caſt down.* Fall he may, *into ſin*, grievous ſin, through the remaining corruption of his nature; but the Lord will recover him, and not ſuffer him to ſink under guilt and deſpair: or *into affliction*, deep affliction, but he ſhall not be ſwallowed up thereby; God's comforts ſhall ſupport him under them, and God's wiſdom and love open a way for him to eſcape. [4.] He ſhall not want. However he may be reduced, God will ſome way raiſe him up a friend, that he ſhall not be forſaken: and this the Pſalmiſt by long experience could declare, that he had never ſeen the righteous deſtitute, or his ſeed, the followers of his holy ſteps, begging their bread. *Note*, Common beggars uſually owe their neceſſities either to their lazineſs, their extravagance, or their vices, which have diſeaſed and diſabled them. [5.] He ſhall be protected and preſerved through every difficulty. God loveth judgment; he is not unrighteous to forget the works of faith, and labours of love; and in theſe the gracious ſoul exerciſes himſelf. His lips drop wiſdom, *v.* 30. inſtructed of God in the ways of his grace, he labours to ſpread abroad a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt; *and his tongue talketh of judgment*; God's method of dealing with ſaints and ſinners, for the comfort of the one, and the conviction of the other. *The law of his God is in his heart*, written there by almighty grace; and being thus renewed in holineſs, *none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide.* However ſore thruſt at by wicked men, *v.* 32. or tempted by wicked ſpirits, the Lord ſhall preſerve him from every fatal blow, reſcue him from every ſnare, juſtify him from every accuſation of earth or hell, *v.* 33. and preſerve him ſafe to his everlaſting kingdom.

4. When God is ſo rich in mercy, we are ſurely bound to duty. *Depart from evil, and do good:* daily ſeek to be farther removed from ſin, and daily be preſſing after higher meaſures of grace and holineſs; *cleanſing yourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, and perfecting holineſs in the fear of God. And as many as walk after this rule ſhall peace be upon them and mercy, and on the Iſrael of God.*

34. Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he
ſhall exalt thee to inherit the land: [k] when the wicked
are cut off, thou ſhalt ſee *it*. 35. [l] I have ſeen the wicked in great power: and ſpreading himſelf like † a green
bay-tree. 36. Yet he paſſeth away, and lo, he *was*
not: [m] yea, I ſought him, but he could not be found.
37. Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright:
for [n] the ‡ end of *that* man *is* peace. 38. But the
tranſgreſſors ſhall be deſtroyed together, the end of
the wicked ſhall be cut off. 39. But [o] the ſalvation
of the righteous *is* of the LORD, *he is* their ſtrength
in the time of trouble. 40. And [p] the LORD ſhall
help them, and deliver them: he ſhall deliver them
from the wicked, and ſave them, [q] becauſe they truſt
in him.

[k] Pſ. lii. 6. & xci. 8.
[l] Job v. 3.
† Or, A green tree that groweth in his own ſoil.
[m] Job xx. 7.
[n] Iſa. lvii. 2.
‡ Or, reward. Ver. 38.
[o] Jonah ii. 9.
[p] Iſa. xxxi. 5.
[q] 1 Chron. v. 20.

v. 34—40. We cannot have the path of duty too frequently or too warmly enforced.

1. The Pſalmiſt repeats the exhortation to *wait on the Lord*, in patient perſeverance, inſtant prayer, and humble faith; and *keep his way*; make conſcience of duty, conſult his word, eye his providences, ſubmit to his corrections, improve his mercies, then all will be well.

2. His arguments for ſo doing are the ſame as before; the miſery of the impenitently wicked, and the bleſſedneſs of the righteous.

(1.) The miſery of the wicked. *He ſhall be cut off*, from life, from hope, from God, from glory. David had lived to ſee the divine threatnings accompliſhed; he had beheld his ſpreading branches and lofty head, like a bay-tree flouriſhing; yet how momentary the proſperity! the ax of judgment is laid at his root; he falls, forgotten among the living; his memorial periſhes, and, as fuel only for the flames, he is caſt into the burning lake. Nor was this the caſe of one notoriouſly abandoned, but ſhall be the portion of all unhumbled ſinners, be they never ſo great, never ſo numerous: *they ſhall be deſtroyed together*, ſinking in one promiſcuous ruin; and, having been companions in ſin, muſt mingle their ceaſeleſs tears, and lie down together in that pit from which there is no deliverance.

(2.) The bleſſedneſs of the righteous, the perfect, the upright; that is, of the ſoul that, juſtified in a Redeemer's righteouſneſs, and renewed by a Saviour's grace, ſeeks in ſimplicity to pleaſe God. He ſhall be delivered from all his enemies, and ſtrengthened in every time of trouble, *v.* 39, 40.

Peace ſhall be his happy lot, in death at leaſt, when all the ſtorms of life blown over, he ſurrenders his departing ſoul into the Saviour's hands, and enters into that eternal reſt, where ſorrow is unknown, and no cloud obſtructs the beams of the life-giving Sun of righteouſneſs. His ſalvation is ſecured, for it is of the Lord, the author and finiſher of it, *v.* 39. to be enjoyed in him, and with him, through all the ages of a bliſsful and glorious eternity.

PSALM XXXVIII.

This is one of the penitential pſalms; it is full of grief and complaint from the beginning to the end: He complains, 1. *Of God's diſpleaſure, and of his own ſin which provoked it,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Of his bodily ſickneſs,* ver. 6—10. 3. *Of the unkindneſs of his friends,* ver. 11. 4. *Of injuries which his enemies did him, pleading his good carriage towards them, yet confeſſing his ſins againſt God,* ver. 12—20. 5. *He concludes with a prayer to God, for his gracious preſence and help,* ver. 21, 22. *The ſweets of ſin can never pay us for the bitterneſs of the ſorrow and ſuffering. Let us learn theſe therefore rather from others falls than our own.*

¶ A pſalm of David [a] to bring to remembrance.

1. O LORD, [b] rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure. 2. For [c] thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. 3. *There is* no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger: [d] neither *is there any* † reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin. 4. For [e] mine iniquities are gone over mine head: [f] as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. 5. My wounds ſtink *and* are corrupt: becauſe of my fooliſhneſs. 6. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; [g] I go mourning all the day long. 7. For my loins are filled with a loathſome *diſeaſe:* and *there is* no ſoundneſs in my fleſh. 8. I am feeble and ſore broken: [h] I have roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs of my heart. 9. LORD, all my deſire [i] *is* before thee: and my groaning is not hid from thee. 10. [k] My heart panteth, my ſtrength faileth me: as for [l] the light of mine eyes, it alſo ‡ is gone from me. 11. [m] My lovers and my friends ſtand aloof from my ‖ ſore: and my kinſmen ſtand afar off.

v. 1—11. The title of this pſalm is, *to bring to remembrance;* either to bring to remembrance his ſins, when lying on the bed of ſickneſs; or after his recovery, to remember his deep diſtreſs and God's mercy to him, as a humbling memorial to him of his own vileneſs, and a conſtant evidence of the amazing grace of a pardoning God.

1. He earneſtly deprecates the wrath of God, *v.* 1. the ſenſe of which was the moſt intolerable part of his ſufferings. Bitter as his bodily pains were, theſe were light afflictions, compared with the apprehenſion of God's diſpleaſure. This therefore he begs may be removed.

2. He ſpreads his diſtreſſing caſe before the father of mercies, bewailing his wretchedneſs, but moſt bewailing his ſins. *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me,* not only ſharp to pierce deep, but, as it were, tipped with poiſon, filling his ſoul with bitterer anguiſh, than his body with acute pain: *and thy hand preſſeth me ſore,* ſo inſupportably heavy, I ſink under it. *There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, v.* 7. diſeaſe, loathſome and univerſal, hath ſeized upon me; and what aggravates every pang, it appears inflicted *in thine anger,* which, who can endure, if it be kindled, yea but for a moment? *neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin;* ſin, that bitter and evil thing provokes the holy God, kindles a fire even in my bones, and haunting my conſcience, gives me no reſt day nor night. Yet righteous art thou, O God; theſe are the juſt deſert of *mine iniquities;* iniquities great and grievous, that like ſtormy waves threaten to overwhelm me, and as a burden inſupportable, to ſink me in the loweſt deeps. My ſoul is filled with gaping wounds, loathſome as the fouleſt ulcers, and deadly, as made with the ſcorpion's ſting, whilſt my fooliſhneſs bitterly upbraids me; that for a vile and momentary gratification, could thus offend the God of purity, and plunge myſelf to ſuch an abyſs of anguiſh. I mourn, I groan, I roar for the diſquietneſs of my heart, mine eyes grow dim, worn out with weeping, and darkned with the ſhadows of death. My heart pants, as though I were juſt expiring, and my ſtrength faileth me, as ſinking under my burdens. Amidſt this bitterneſs of ſoul and anguiſh of body, no kind friend is near to miniſter the cordial of comfort, to ſooth my agony, or cloſe my dying eyes: deſerted, forſaken, abhorred; a monſter in their eyes, a terror to myſelf. *Note,* (1.) What ſad work does ſin make, even in the heart of a child of God? and if this be done in the green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry? (2.) The griefs of a real penitent are always bitterer for his ſins, than his ſufferings. (3.) They who have ever felt the burden of ſin, have known ſome of the Pſalmiſt's groans. (4.) However painful the wounds of conſcience, it is a ſign of life to feel. Inſenſibility is the moſt fatal ſymptom. (5.) Under ſickneſs of body, let us reflect upon, and be humbled for the ſin of our ſoul. (6.) The ſtrongeſt muſt bow before God's afflicting hand; ſinews of braſs and bones of iron cannot reſiſt the ſtroke of fierce diſeaſe. (7.) Worldly friends, like the ſwallow, flutter round us in the ſummer of proſperity, but forſake us in the winter of adverſity. (8.) In his ſufferings, David was a type of Chriſt; bitterer ſorrows his ſoul endured, more agonizing pain his body ſuffered, more baſely deſerted of his friends, and even for a while to ſenſe forſaken of his God, and all this not for his own ſins, but for ours.

3. Though perplexed, he is not in deſpair. Hope ſupported his fainting heart, *v.* 9. God knew his groaning was no feigned ſorrow, and *his deſire,* all his deſire *was before him,* who ſaw his deep diſtreſs, and what above all things he ſought, even pardon and peace with God. *Note,* It is ſome comfort that our compaſſionate God ſees our anguiſh; and whilſt we are enabled, though he ſlay us, to truſt in him, we cannot utterly fail.

12. They alſo that ſeek after my life, lay ſnares *for me:* and they that ſeek my hurt, ſpeak miſchievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long. 13. But [n] I, as a deaf *man,* heard not: and *I was* [o] as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth. 14. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whoſe mouth *are* no reproofs. 15. For † in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt ‡ hear, O LORD my God. 16. For I ſaid, *Hear me,* leſt *otherwiſe* they ſhould rejoice over me: [p] when my foot ſlippeth, they magnify *themſelves* againſt me. 17. For I *am* ready to halt, and my ſorrow *is* continually before me. 18. For [q] I will declare mine iniquity; I will be ſorry for my ſin. 19. But mine enemies *are* lively, *and* they are ſtrong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. 20. [r] They alſo that render evil for good, are mine adverſaries: [s] becauſe I follow *the thing that* good *is.* 21. Forſake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. 22. Make haſte ‖ to help me, O LORD, my ſalvation.

v. 12—22. Whilſt within were fears, without were fightings. His enemies took advantage of his diſeaſe and diſtreſs to inſult and aſſail him.

1. He complains of them to God, who was not an unconcerned ſpectator of their wickedneſs. Thirſting for his blood, they laid ſnares for his life; their lips were full of miſchief, and their heart of deceit: with malicious pleaſure they rejoiced, when his foot ſlipped and ſin prevailed, and magnified themſelves when calamity ſeemed to lay him low, and death threatned him. They hated him without a cauſe, returned his kindeſt offices with black ingratitude; and, devil like, his holy conduct provoked their bittereſt enmity. Their might and multitude made them very formidable, and, left to himſelf, he was utterly unable to reſiſt them. *Note,* (1.) The great quarrel againſt the people of God, is becauſe of his image they bear; whatever handle is made uſe of, this enmity againſt God is at the bottom. (2.) So fixed is the hatred of the wicked againſt goodneſs for its own ſake, that though benefited by it, they deteſt it, abhor the prayers offered for them, and can ſcarce give a civil anſwer to the kindeſt enquiries. (3.) When the views of our utter helpleſſneſs lead us to ſeek Divine ſtrength, then ſhall we out of weakneſs be made ſtrong.

2. He mentions, with ſatisfaction, his own unruffled temper under theſe provocations, *v.* 13, 14, and the cauſe of it, *v.* 15. he committed his caſe to God, his covenant God, not doubting but in him to find a friend when all forſook him; and that he would *hear,* or *anſwer for him,* hear his prayer to help him, anſwer for him, by appearing in judgment as his avenging God. Thus ſatisfied, like a *deaf man he heard not,* neither regarded, reſented, nor retorted their ill uſage; and as one dumb, his lips never uttered an unkind word, or attempted to expoſtulate where reaſoning was vain. *Note,* (1.) To be calm and compoſed under ſevere provocation, is the mark of a truly bleſſed ſpirit. (2.) It is wiſe to appear ignorant of many unkindneſſes done us. (3.) When anſwering will but exaſperate, we muſt be content ſilently to ſuffer. (4.) Thus did the Lamb of God appear dumb before his ſhearers. (5.) Hope in God is the great ſupport againſt all oppreſſion and wrong. (6.) They who contentedly leave their caſe with him, ſhall not be diſappointed, or want an advocate to plead for them.

3. Though he was ſilent before man, where he could vindicate himſelf, he is not ſilent before God, where he deſires to humble his ſoul. There he declares his iniquity, that had been the juſt cauſe of all his ſufferings, and with unfeigned ſorrow, *v.* 18. bewails his ſins. Reſpecting men, he could look for juſtice; reſpecting God, he applied only for mercy. *Note,* (1.) A ſenſe

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[a] Pſal. lxx. Title.

[b] Ibid. vi. 1. Jer. x. 24.

[c] Job vi. 4.

[d] Pſal. vi. 2.

† Heb. Peace or health.

[e] Ezra ix. 6. Pſal. xl. 12.

[f] Mat. xi. 28.

[g] Job xxx. 28. Pſal. xlii. 9. & xliii. 2.

[h] Job iii. 24. Iſa. lix. 11.

[i] Rom. viii. 27.

[k] Pſal. xl. 12.

[l] Ibid. vi. 7. & lxxxviii. 9.

‡ Heb. Is not with me.

[m] Pſ. xxxi. 11. Luke xxiii. 49.

‖ Heb. Stroke.

[n] 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

[o] Pſ. xxxix. 2, 9.

† Or, thee do I wait for.

‡ Or anſwer.

[p] Pſal. xxxv. 15, 26.

[q] Prov. xxviii. 13.

[r] Pſ. xxxv. 12. & cix. 5.

[s] 1 Pet. iii. 14. 1 John iii. 12.

‖ Heb. To my help.

of our own offences againſt God, will ſerve to make us patient under the provocation of men. (2.) They who have a true ſight and ſenſe of ſin, cannot but be deeply ſorry for having offended a God ſo holy, and grieved him that is ſo gracious.

4. He directs his prayer to God for help, for preſent help; *forſake me not, O Lord*; though left of all beſide, let thy preſence comfort, thy power ſupport me: *O my God, be not far from me*, my God in whom, by promiſe, I have an intereſt, whoſe nearneſs to me I now peculiarly need; *make haſte to help me*, for *I am ready to halt*, v. 17. under ſuch complicated and continual ſorrow, make haſte then, *O Lord, my ſalvation*, on thee I place my hope, from thee alone my help muſt come, and chearfully I reſign myſelf up to thee, perſuaded that thou art and wilt be my preſent, yea, my eternal ſalvation. Let God's Iſrael then in deepeſt affliction ſtill truſt, and not be afraid.

PSALM XXXIX.

David ſeems to have penned this pſalm under ſome ſeaſon of deep affliction, wherein he found it difficult to exerciſe that patience he had ſo late preſcribed; ſo much eaſier is it to preach than to practiſe. 1. *He relates the ſtruggle that he felt between grace and corruption*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He meditates upon the doctrine of man's frailty and mortality*, ver. 4—6. 3. *He prays for the pardon of his ſins, the removal of his afflictions, and the lengthning out of his life till he was ready for death*, ver. 7—13.

¶ To the chief muſician, *even* to [a] Jeduthun,
A pſalm of David.

1. I Said I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin
not with my tongue: [b] I will keep † my mouth
with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. 2. [c] I was
dumb with ſilence, I held my peace, *even* from good,
and my ſorrow was ‡ ſtirred. 3. My heart was hot
within me, while I was muſing the fire burned: [d] *then*
ſpake I with my tongue. 4. LORD, [e] make me to
know mine end, and the meaſure of my days, what it
is: *that* I may know ‖ how frail I *am*. 5. Behold, thou
haſt made my days *as* an hand-breadth, and [f] mine age *is*
as nothing before thee: [g] verily every man § at his beſt
ſtate *is* altogether vanity. Selah. 6. Surely every man
walketh † in a vain ſhew: ſurely they are diſquieted in
vain: he [h] heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who ſhall
gather them.

[a] 1 Chron. xvi. 41. Pſal. lxii. 77. Title.
[b] Jam. i. 26.
† Heb. A bridle, or muzzle for my mouth.
[c] Pſ. xxxviii. 13.
‡ Heb. Troubled.
[d] Job iii. 1. Jer. xx. 14.
[e] Pſal. xc. 12. & cxix. 84.
‖ Or what time I have here.
[f] Pſal. xc. 4.
[g] Ver. 11. Pſal. lxii 9. & cxliv. 9.
§ Heb. Settled.
† Heb. An image.
[h] Eccleſ. ii. 18, 19. Luke xii. 20.

v. 1—6. Jeduthun ſeems to be the chief muſician who led the band, to whom this is directed, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 41. and it contains much matter for a mournful ſong, ſuited to ſooth the ſorrows which mortality is heir to, and reconcile our ſouls to the holy will of God.

1. David reflects upon the ſolemn purpoſes he had formed, to watch over his words and ways, which was ſo needful when many eyes were upon him, waiting for his halting. *He ſaid* within his heart, *I will take heed to my ways*, to walk circumſpectly after the word and will of God. *I will keep my mouth with a bridle* from every murmuring expreſſion under my trials, *while the wicked is before me*, who would take pleaſure to ſee him provoked to ſpeak unadviſedly with his lips. *Note*, (1.) We need much watchfulneſs and circumſpection, in order to walk aright; a careleſs heart will make crooked ways. (2.) Nothing is more difficult to reſtrain than the tongue; he is a perfect man that can curb it.

2. For a while he kept his purpoſe, *v.* 2. ſilent as a dumb man, under every provocation; and leaſt he ſhould ſpeak wrong, he even held his peace from good words, which, though ſpoken with the kindeſt purpoſe, ſerve only to ſtir up the greater wrath of the wicked.

3. Unable long to refrain, at firſt his grief, pent up, but ſwelled the more; his heart grew warm, either with zeal for God, or rather with impatience under his ſufferings, and muſing upon the wickedneſs of his enemies, his own afflictions, the fire of anger kindled, and he ſpake with his tongue; either wiſhing impatiently to die out of his troubles, or rather that God would make him look to his end, as a ſupport to him under them. *Note*, When the mind is ever ruminating upon its ſorrows, and reflecting upon the authors of them, the galling ſore is aggravated, and fuel provided for the fire of diſcontent.

[1.] He begs to know his end. If conſidered as the language of haſtineſs, it means that it might be ſoon, that his troubles and life might end together; or it is a prayer for ſupport under them, in the view of his quickly approaching death, and the bleſſed reſt which would then enſue. *Note*, (1.) The conſideration of our latter end ſhould be the frequent ſubject of our meditations, that the certainty and nearneſs of it being more deeply felt, we might be more ſolicitous to prepare for it. (2.) When ſickneſs, decay, or age are teaching us our frailty, we are peculiarly called upon to ſeek a more enduring portion in the eternal world.

[2.] He replies to his own enquiry: *Behold, thou haſt made my days as an hand-breadth*, ſo ſcanty is the meaſure of man's ſhort life; *mine age is as nothing before thee*; compared with God's eternity, ſhorter than a moment: *verily every man at his beſt eſtate*, when moſt proſperous, covered with honour, health, and wealth, *is altogether vanity*; every thing he poſſeſſes is inſignificant. *Surely every man*, of whatever rank or degree, *walketh in a vain ſhew*, when in the eyes of worms like himſelf, in pageant ſplendor he appears diſtinguiſhed, vain is the gaudy pride, himſelf a ſtalking ſhadow, yea, the ſhadow of a ſhade: *ſurely they are diſquieted in vain*, their buſy anxious cares diſturb them, often groundleſs, ever uſeleſs; *he heapeth up riches*, vain comforters in a dying hour; riches, which he that increaſeth, increaſeth ſorrow and care, and muſt leave behind him, he knows not whether to a wiſe man or a fool: ſurely all is vanity. *Note*, The more we ſee vanity ſtamped upon the creature, the more ſollicitous ſhould we be to ſecure the ſubſtantial and eternal good.

7. And now, LORD, what wait I for? my hope is
in thee. 8. Deliver me from all my tranſgreſſions,
make me not the reproach of the fooliſh. 9. [i] I was
dumb, I opened not my mouth; becauſe thou didſt *it*.
10. [k] Remove thy ſtroke away from me: I am conſumed
by the blow of thine hand. 11. When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt † his
beauty to conſume away [l] like a moth: [m] ſurely every
man *is* vanity. Selah. 12. Hear my prayer, O LORD,
and give ear unto my cry, hold not thy peace at
my tears: for I [n] *am* a ſtranger with thee, *and* a ſojourner, [o] as all my fathers *were*. 13. [p] O ſpare me, that
I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no
more.

[i] Pſal. xxxviii. 13. Ver. 2.
[k] Job ix. 34.
† Heb. That which is deſireable in him to melt away.
[l] Job xiii. 28. Hoſ. v. 12.
[m] Ver. 5.
[n] Lev. xxv. 23. 1 Chron. xxix. 15. Heb. xi. 13. 1 Pet. i. 17. & ii. 11.
[o] Gen. xlvii. 9.
[p] Job x. 20, 21. & xiv. 6.

v. 7—13. The views of man's vanity bids him look for a more enduring portion in God. And therefore,

1. He profeſſes that on him all his hope is ſtaid, and that as he could expect nothing beneath the ſun, as his happineſs, neither would he be diſquieted with the light and momentary troubles he might be expoſed to. *Note*, (1.) The leſs we expect on earth, the more will our eyes be turned to heaven. (2.) Whatever elſe is a vain hope, they who hope in God ſhall never be aſhamed.

2. He prays for pardon and deliverance. His ſins were his great concern, he longs above all things to be delivered from their condemning guilt, that he may enjoy peace of conſcience; and from their prevailing power, that would give occaſion to the wicked and fooliſh to reproach him: and then he hopes his ſufferings would be removed alſo, that lay heavy upon him. The ſtroke of God's hand conſumed him, his ſtrength failed him, his health and beauty decayed, as a garment moth-eaten: he wept and prayed therefore, begging God's kind regard to his prayers and tears, and pleading his old loving-kindneſſes that had been ſhewn to his fathers, when ſtrangers and ſojourners. Like them therefore in temper, he begs to ſhare their mercies. *Note*, (1.) Our ceaſeleſs prayer muſt be for pardoning mercy. The ſting of affliction is removed when ſin is forgiven. (2.) One ſtroke of diſeaſe makes ſtrange alterations; the bloom of beauty fades, the ſparkling eye is dim, the ruddy lip is livid, and languor, paleneſs, and decay, mars all the lovely form. How poor a thing then to be proud of, how precarious a vanity! (3.) The prayer of faith, and the tears of penitence, will never be diſregarded of God. (4.) When we conſider ourſelves as really ſtrangers upon earth, who neither have nor ſeek our reſt below, each trial we meet will quicken our pace, and whet our longings after our houſe and home, a manſion in the ſkies.

3. With holy reſignation, *v.* 9. he ſurrenders up himſelf to God; having begun to pray, his ruffled ſpirits are compoſed, and his ſoul returns to its reſt again. Since God's hand is in every affliction, and every chaſtiſement moſt righteous, yea leſs than our iniquity deſerves, it ill becomes us to find fault, but rather continually to acknowledge that he doth all things well.

4. He concludes with a deſire of ſome ſhort reſpite, that he might recover his bodily and ſpiritual ſtrength a little, if ſo God pleaſed, to ſerve his cauſe and intereſts upon earth, and grow more meet for his inheritance above, before he left this mortal ſcene, and returned to his eternal reſt.

PSALM XL.

This pſalm is a prophecy of Chriſt, his mediatorial undertaking, the ſufferings he underwent, his prayers for ſupport, and the deliverance he obtained. Probably David penned it on ſome ſpecial deliverance of his own, and whilſt he was opening his mouth in praiſe, *the*

the ſpirit of prophecy led him on to ſpeak of that Son and Lord of his, to whom much of what he ſays is only applicable. 1. He begins with recording God's favour, and deſcribes the character of the truly bleſſed man, ver. 1—5. 2. He ſpeaks of the Redeemer's glorious undertaking, ver. 6—10. 3. He prays for himſelf and all the faithful, ver. 11—17.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. †I [a] WAITED patiently for the LORD, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2. He brought me up alſo out of ‡ an horrible pit, [b] out of the miry clay, and ſet my feet upon a rock, *and* eſtabliſhed my goings. 3. And [c] he hath put a new ſong in my mouth, *even* praiſe unto our God: [d] many ſhall ſee *it* and fear, and ſhall truſt in the LORD. 4. [e] Bleſſed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his truſt: and reſpecteth not the proud, nor ſuch as turn aſide to lies. 5. [f] Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou haſt done, and [g] thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and ſpeak *of them,* [h] they are more than can be numbered.

† Heb. In waiting I waited.
a Pſal. xxvii. 14. & xxxvii. 7.
‡ Heb. A pit of noiſe.
b Zech. ix. 11.
c Pſ. xxxiii. 3.
d Ibid. lii. 6.
e Jer. xvii. 7.
f Job v. 9. & ix. 10. Pſal. xcii. 5.
g Pſ. cxxxix. 17.
h 1 Cor. ii. 9. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

v. 1—5. None ever yet truſted in God, and were confounded. The Pſalmiſt acknowledges, by bleſſed experience, that in his deepeſt diſtreſs God had not failed him. *I waited patiently on the Lord*; though his burden was heavy, and help long delayed, he fainted not, but cried unto God, and God heard and anſwered him. *He brought me up alſo out of the horrible pit* of deſpondence, *and out of the miry clay*, in which he was faſt ſtuck that he could not get out, *and ſet my feet upon a rock*, where nothing could ſhake him, and *eſtabliſhed my goings*, that no power of evil might be able to turn him aſide. Then was his mouth filled with joy; *he hath put a new ſong of praiſe into my mouth*; and from his own caſe he doubted not but others would be encouraged to exerciſe the ſame faith; *many ſhall ſee it and fear, and ſhall truſt in the Lord*, and whoever doth ſo, renouncing every other confidence, will be found truly bleſſed and happy, *v.* 4. Thus Jeſus waited on God, when agonizing in the garden, and bleeding on the tree: horrible indeed was the pit in which he lay, when loaded with the guilt of all our iniquities, the pains of hell gat hold upon him, but he cried, and God heard him. From the grave he brought him up, raiſed him to the throne of glory, firm as a rock, and eſtabliſhed as the days of eternity. With everlaſting joy upon his head, there he reigns; and all his people, renouncing every other hope of righteouſneſs, and every lying vanity which would draw off the ſingleneſs of their eye from him, look to him, truſt in him, fear him, and find themſelves bleſſed in ſo doing. This relieves their deſpondence, reſcues them from the horrible pit of hell, raiſes their hearts from melancholy fears to confidence, and changes their voice from mourning to praiſe; rejoicing in Chriſt Jeſus, in his ſufferings, righteouſneſs and glory, and deriving from thence joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

6. [i] Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire, mine ears haſt thou † opened: burnt-offering and ſin-offering haſt thou not required. 7. Then ſaid I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me: 8. [k] I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart. 9. [l] I have preached [m] righteouſneſs in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knoweſt. 10. I have not hid thy righteouſneſs within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindneſs, and thy truth, from the great congregation.

i Pſal. li. 16. Heb. x. 5.
† Heb. Digged.
k John iv. 34.
l Heb. ii. 3.
m Rom. iii. 21, 22.

v. 6—10. Theſe are the words of the Divine Redeemer, the ſong of praiſe put into his mouth, which, as the repreſentative of his redeemed people who are included in him, he offers for the glorious work of redemption. Many and wonderful are the works of God, wonders of creation and providence, admirably ordered and diſpoſed with infinite wiſdom, all deſigned for the good of men, and ſo innumerable, that we are loſt in the vaſt abyſs, and know not where to begin or where to end the ſong of praiſe: but one more eminent, more tranſcendantly glorious than all the reſt, ſtands forth, and claims peculiar admiration. Great is the work of worlds, ſpoke into being at a word; great the upholding power, that ſtill preſerves and regulates with wondrous harmony the vaſt creation; but greater far the vaſt deſign and wondrous execution of man's redemption, by the incarnation, ſuffering, and death of God's eternal Son; and this is here ſet forth and quoted at large by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* x. 5.

1. The inſufficiency of all ceremonial ſacrifices is here intimated, and their utterly ceaſing to be offered when the oblation of the body of Jeſus once for all ſhould aboliſh theſe ſhadows, *v.* 1. They were indeed of Divine inſtitution, but all their efficacy lay in directing the offerer's faith to the vicarious ſufferings of God's Son; for their own ſakes, they were never acceptable to God, who could take no delight in the blood of bulls, nor could they ever pacify the ſinner's conſcience, which required a better ſacrifice than theſe to take away ſin.

2. The voluntary oblation of Chriſt, in conſequence of the everlaſting covenant, and the Divine deſignation, is mentioned, *v.* 7. In the records of eternity it was enrolled, in the revealed word declared, and in the fulneſs of time manifeſted. *Mine ears haſt thou opened*, perhaps alluding to *Exod.* xxi. 6. intimating his taking the form of a ſervant, or as the Apoſtle quotes it, *a body haſt thou prepared me*, and this his choice: it was not what he was obliged to, but by voluntary engagement, and the conſtrainings of mighty love towards miſerable man. But having once engaged, he ratified the agreement, profeſſes his readineſs to abide by it, yea, takes delight in executing it; and from his heart is ready to fulfil all the will of God, reſpecting his mediatorial work, whether by obedience or ſufferings, in behalf of his ranſomed people. *Note*, If Chriſt ſo readily engaged for us, what gratitude and willing ſubjection do we owe him in return?

3. He became himſelf the great preacher of the righteouſneſs he wrought out, and the ſalvation he accompliſhed; in both which alſo God's faithfulneſs to his promiſes appeared, and his tranſcendant loving-kindneſs to the children of men. Theſe Jeſus declared, nor kept back from us any thing of the whole counſel of God. Bleſſed be his name, that his divine ſermons have reached unto us: oh! that we may experience divine teaching alſo, and read ſo as to underſtand.

11. Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: [n] let thy loving-kindneſs and thy truth continually preſerve me. 12. For innumerable evils have compaſſed me about, [o] mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore [p] my heart faileth me. 13. [q] Be pleaſed, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haſte to help me. 14. [r] Let them be aſhamed and confounded together, that ſeek after my ſoul to deſtroy it: let them be driven backward, and put to ſhame that wiſh me evil. 15. Let them be deſolate for a reward of their ſhame, [s] that ſay unto me, Aha, aha. 16. Let all thoſe that ſeek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee: let ſuch as love thy ſalvation, [t] ſay continually, The LORD be magnified. 17. But I *am* poor and needy, *yet* the LORD [u] thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer, make no tarrying, O my God.

n Pſal. lvii. 3. & lxi. 7.
o Ibid. xxxviii. 4.
p Ibid. lxxiii. 26.
q Ibid. lxx. 1, &c.
r Ibid. xxxv. 4, 26. & lxxi. 13.
s Pſ. xxxv. 21, 25.
t Ibid. xxxv. 27.
u Gen. viii. 1.

v. 11—17. Though this may refer to the Pſalmiſt's caſe, as reſuming his prayer in the view of the glorious redemption accompliſhed for him, yet it may be alſo well applied to the Redeemer himſelf.

1. In executing his work, he muſt bear our ſins, and carry our ſorrows; and under theſe he complains and cries for help. Though in himſelf without ſin, holy and harmleſs, yet when he appeared in our nature he became ſin for us, not only an offering for ſin, but having all the iniquity of his redeemed people actually imputed to him; ſo that in this view, never was a guilty ſoul ſo heavy laden: more than human ſtrength was needful to ſupport the dreadful load; the humanity fainted, but by the eternal Spirit he was upheld. He prays, and pleads the truth and grace engaged to ſupport him through his ſufferings; and as his diſtreſs is urgent, he cries for preſent and immediate help, and was heard becauſe he feared. *Note*, (1.) Since Jeſus ſunk not under the load of the ſins of the world, ſhall our ſins, but one of that many, lead us to deſpair? God forbid. (2.) They who plead the Divine faithfulneſs, may depend upon ſeeing the fulfilment of the promiſes. (3.) There is a throne of grace open, and through Jeſus we may come boldly; no tender mercy will be withheld, no kindneſs refuſed, no help delayed when in his name we pray.

2. He prays for the deſtruction of all his enemies, which he foreſees ready to be accompliſhed. The powers of hell that ſought to deſtroy him, muſt fall as lightning before him; the Jews that in his crucifixion cried inſultingly, Aha, ſo would we have it, are long ſince deſolate to their ſhame, diſperſed into all the nations, and every where a proverb of reproach; and all his foes, whether fallen angels, or impenitent ſinners, muſt at the laſt day feel the effects of his indignation, driven backward into hell, and covered with everlaſting confuſion. *Note*, All the afflictions of a ſaint of God, however Satan and his enemies may inſult over him, ſhall terminate to his comfort and their confuſion.

3. He prays for his own redeemed ones, thoſe *that love thy ſalvation*, love him, the author of it, and delight in the gracious way in which it is accompliſhed for them, and beſtowed upon them; and *ſeek thee*, make God's will their rule, God's glory their end, and the enjoyment of God their ſovereign happineſs. Let them rejoice, on earth beginning the ſong of praiſe, and to eternity crying *continually, the Lord be magnified*.

4. He concludes with a believing commiſſion of himſelf to God. Though he was rich for our ſakes, he became *poor* and *needy, yet the Lord regarded him* in his low eſtate; and therefore truſting on his ſaving help and deliverance, he cries to him to make no delay. *Note*, (1.) Our ſpiritual poverty is abject, but we have an inexhauſtible treaſury, which the key of prayer can unlock. (2.) In every trial let us not think the time long; the promiſe is ſure, the moment haſting by, time expiring, eternity approaching, and there at leaſt our ſalvation ſhall be accompliſhed.

PSALM XLI.

God's kindneſs and truth have often been the ſupport and comfort of the ſaints, when they have had moſt experience of men's unkindneſs and treachery: ſo David found them. Here, 1. *He comforts himſelf in God under his ſickneſs*, ver. 1, 2, 3. *and lifts up his heart in prayer to him*, ver. 4. 2. *He repreſents the malice and inſolence of his enemies*, ver. 5—9. 3. *He leaves his caſe with God, not doubting but that he would own and favour him*, ver. 10, 11. *and concludes with a doxology*, ver. 13. *But if we look not farther than David, even to his glorious Son, we ſhall be beſide the purport of this pſalm.*

¶ To the chief muſician,

A pſalm of David.

1. [a] BLESSED *is* he that conſidereth the † poor; the LORD will deliver him ‡ in time of trouble. 2. The LORD will preſerve him, and keep him alive, *and* he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth; and [b] thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies. 3. The LORD will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing: thou wilt ‖ make all his bed in his ſickneſs. 4. I ſaid, LORD, be merciful unto me; [c] heal my ſoul, for I have ſinned againſt thee.

[a] Prov. xiv. 21. & xix. 17. Heb. xiii. 16.
† Or weak or ſick.
‡ Heb. In the day of evil.
[b] Pſal. xxvii. 12.
‖ Heb. Turn.
[c] Pſal. vi. 2.

v. 1—4. The labour of love is never labour loſt; ſo the Pſalmiſt aſſures us.

1. He pronounces the man bleſſed that conſidereth the poor; either in general the poor in this world, compaſſionate their wants, ſympathize with them in their ſorrows, and ſeek by counſel, influence, and liberal diſtribution, to relieve the diſtreſſes of the neceſſitous; or it may refer to *that poor man* whom ſo few *remember*, Eccleſ. ix. 15. the lowly Jeſus expoſed for our ſakes to want, and having no where to lay his head: to conſider his humiliation for us, is the way to true bleſſedneſs.

2. He ſhews wherein this bleſſedneſs conſiſts. In trouble, God would deliver him, preſerve him from his enemies, repay him with intereſt even upon earth, ſupport him on the bed of languiſhing, and tenderly watch over him in his ſickneſs. *Note*, (1.) Kindneſs to God's poor and afflicted ones, is highly our intereſt as well as duty; none ever loſt by lending thus to the Lord. (2.) God's bleſſing is the comfort of every eſtate; it can make the bed of languiſhing chearful, give reſt in trouble, and make even grief to ſmile.

3. Having ſome good hope through grace, that he could claim the character, he is emboldened in prayer to ſeek the promiſes. Yet, as a miſerable ſinner in himſelf utterly undeſerving, he pleads for mercy with God, and begs his ſickneſs may be healed, that worſt and moſt dangerous diſeaſe, corruption in his ſoul. *Note*, They who ſee deeply into their fallen nature, will, in their beſt eſtate, cry for mercy to their ſins, and healing of their corruptions.

5. Mine enemies ſpeak evil of me: When ſhall he die, and his name periſh? 6. And if he come to ſee *me*, [d] he ſpeaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itſelf, *when* he goeth abroad, he telleth *it*. 7. All that hate me, whiſper together againſt me: againſt me do they deviſe my hurt. 8. † An evil diſeaſe, *ſay they*, cleaveth faſt unto him: and *now* that he lieth, he ſhall riſe up no more. 9. [e] Yea, ‡ mine own familiar friend in whom I truſted, [f] which did eat of my bread, hath ‖ lift up *his* heel againſt me. 10. But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raiſe me up, that I may requite them. 11. [g] By this I know that thou favoureſt me, becauſe mine enemy doth not triumph over me. 12. And as for me, thou upholdeſt me in mine integrity, and ſetteſt me before thy face for ever. 13. [h] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael, from everlaſting, and to everlaſting. Amen, and Amen.

[d] Pſal. xii. 2.
† Heb. A word or thing of Belial.
[e] Job xix. 19. Pſal. lv. 13, 20. Jer. xx. 10.
‡ Heb. The man of my peace.
[f] Obad. vii. John xiii. 18.
‖ Heb. Magnified.
[g] Pſal. lxxxvi. 17.
[h] Ibid. lxxii. 18, 19. & lxxxix. 52. & cvi. 41.

v. 5—13. They who live in a wicked world, may expect to meet with much deceit, as David did, to the great diſcomfort of his ſoul.

1. They ſpoke againſt him with inveterate rancour, and wiſhed every evil might attend him; death ſeize his body, and oblivion blot out his name for ever. And thus did Chriſt's enemies revile him with every opprobrious character, wiſh and contrive his death, and hope that then the memory of his miracles, and the doctrines of his goſpel, would periſh with him. But lo! their malice make his memorial more glorious and abiding. Let not Chriſt's ſervants count it ſtrange, then, if the worſt wiſhes and words attend them; their Lord hath ſuffered it before them.

2. If they came on pretence of paying him a friendly viſit, *v.* 2. their profeſſions were hypocriſy, their deſigns malignant, to obſerve his words and behaviour, that they might report it to his diſadvantage. The ſcribes and phariſees for this purpoſe attended the Saviour, to entangle him in his talk; and whilſt they pretended to admire him in his preaching and piety, ſought to impeach him as a teacher of ſedition, *Mat.* xxii. 17. If we meet with the ſame deceitful men, and hear the moſt invidious remarks or miſrepreſentations made of us, it was ſo from the beginning.

3. They flattered themſelves they ſhould ſooner or later prevail. In ſecret they whiſpered, plotted their wicked devices, and when *an evil diſeaſe*, ſome dangerous ſickneſs, ſeized him, or as the words literally may be rendered, *a word of Belial*, ſome vile aſperſion they had forged and propagated, cleaved to him, then they hoped he would never again recover his health or his character. Such whiſperers contrived the Saviour's death, with perjured evidence the ſons of Belial ſwore againſt him, and having procured his condemnation and death, and ſealed his ſepulchre, they promiſed themſelves he ſhould never riſe up again. How vain the hopes, as well as vile the efforts, of wicked men!

4. His boſom friend betrayed him, *v.* 9. perhaps Ahitophel, and ſought to ſpurn him from his throne, in return for the moſt obliging kindneſs. Ingratitude is a ſin as common as odious. We are aſſured, *John* xiii. 18. that David looked farther than his own caſe. Judas the traitor was this familiar friend, and from the table where Jeſus fed him, went to the prieſts to betray him. Put not your truſt in any child of man, friends will be faithleſs; the friend of ſinners alone will never deceive nor diſappoint thoſe who truſt him.

5. He directs his prayer to God, *v.* 10. for mercy and help, that he *may requite them*, either do them good for their evil, or rather, as their King, puniſh them for their wickedneſs: and ſuch ſupport he would interpret, and rejoice in, as a ſure ſign of God's favour and regard.—In anſwer to the Redeemer's prayer, he was raiſed from the duſt of death, and with ſwift deſtruction recompenſed his enemies into their own boſom. Neither Satan nor all the powers of darkneſs, nor the high-prieſt and all his wicked train, were permitted to triumph, when in the reſurrection day all their devices were confounded; and He, of whom they ſaid, Perſecute him, for there is none to deliver him, aroſe then moſt eminently declared to be the Son of God with power. *Note*, The very trials we are expoſed to, ſerve to make the love of God to our ſouls more evident and precious.

6. He expreſſes his confidence of being kept in faithfulneſs to God's everlaſting kingdom; and he acknowledges the work muſt be entirely of God's grace, both to uphold and reward him, *v.* 12. The ſon of David, in unſpotted integrity, ſtood faſt; and after an obedience unto death, received the reward in glory, where now he ſits at God's right hand, enthroned for evermore. May we come in his good time to ſit down by him! In order thereto, we muſt be ſenſible, 1. That the work is entirely of grace, either that we are called or kept. 2. That, left to ourſelves, we muſt inevitably fall. 3. That thoſe whom God upholds, none can prevail againſt; but in time and eternity they are ſafe.

7. He concludes with a thankſgiving for ſuch a glorious hope; and well he deſerves the everlaſting praiſe who brings the ſoul to everlaſting bleſſedneſs. The whole Iſrael of God, in the view of the glorious and finiſhed work of redemption in Chriſt Jeſus, cannot but echo back the ſound, with hearts warm with gratitude, and burſting with gladneſs. *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, from everlaſting to everlaſting. Amen, Amen!*

PSALM XLII.

This pſalm appears to have been penned when David, a fugitive from Saul or Abſalom, was forced from that ſanctuary, in the ſervice of which was his delight. 1. *He earneſtly longs to return*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *Complains of his ſufferings during his abſence*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *Seeks by faith to ſtill his troubled ſoul*, ver. 5. 4. *He feels and laments his preſent deſolate eſtate*, ver. 6, 7, 9, 10. 5. *He eſtabliſhes his heart towards God, and reſts in hope*, ver. 8, 11.

About 1023.
† i. e. Inſtruction.
a 1 Chron. vi. 33.
b Pſal. lxiii. 1. & lxxxiv. 2.
c 1 Theſ. i. 9.
d Pſal. lxxx. 5. & cii. 9.
e Ver. 10. Pſal. lxxix. 10. & cxv. 2.
f Job xxx. 16.
g Iſa. xxx. 29.
h Pſal. xliii. 5.
† Heb. bowed down.
‡ Or, his preſence is ſalvation.

¶ To the chief muſician. † Maſchil, for [a] the ſons of Korah.

1. AS the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God. 2. [b] My ſoul thirſteth for God, for [c] the living God: when ſhall I come and appear before God? 3. [d] My tears have been my meat day and night, while [e] they continually ſay unto me, Where *is* thy God? 4. When I remember theſe *things*, [f] I pour out my ſoul in me; for I had gone with the multitude, [g] I went with them to the houſe of God; with the voice of joy and praiſe, with the multitude that kept holy-day. 5. [h] Why art thou † caſt down, O my ſoul, and *why* art thou diſquieted in me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him ‡ *for* the help of his countenance.

v. 1—5. This pſalm is entitled Maſchil, inſtruction, as containing ſweet inſtructions for mourning ſouls. It is directed to the ſons of Korah; for though their father periſhed in his ſins, his children, who fled from his tent and treaſon, ſhared neither his puniſhment, nor loſt their office as miniſters of the ſanctuary. We have here,

1. The eager longings of his ſoul after communion with God in the courts of his ſanctuary. As the hart flying before the blood-thirſty hounds, parched with heat, and panting for breath, with ſuch intenſe deſires is he *a-thirſt for God*, for a ſenſe of his love and favour, *even for the living God*, the only fountain of true felicity; and looks with languiſhing eyes towards that heavenly hill where God manifeſted peculiarly his glorious preſence. *Note*, (1.) Nothing but God will ſatisfy the believer's ſoul; a ſenſe of his love is his ſupreme happineſs, and if that be withdrawn, every enjoyment is taſteleſs. (2.) Whilſt fooliſh men, with eager impatience, ſeek from the broken ciſterns of earthly comforts to ſlack their raging thirſt: how few feel theſe ardent deſires after the living fountain! (3.) Conſtrained abſence from the means of grace is a ſore burden to the faithful, and quickens his longings after them. (4.) If God's ſanctuary was ſo deſirable, how much more his beatific preſence in his eternal temple?

2. He laments the ſorrows that oppreſſed him, the inſults he ſuſtained from his taunting enemies, *v.* 5. and his dejection under the views of the bleſſings he had loſt and the miſeries he endured, *v.* 6. The heathen, among whom he dwelt, upbraided him as having no viſible God, whilſt their idols ſtood in their temples; or his Jewiſh enemies reproached him, as if he was now abandoned of God, becauſe he appeared not inſtantly for his relief. Theſe things melted his heart with ſorrow, and made his eyes as fountains of tears, that, flowing ceaſeleſs, mingled with his cup, or ſo affected him, that he forgot to eat his bread; whilſt the remembrance of paſt happy days roſe up to aggravate his diſtreſs in that ſtrange land, where no ſongs of Zion were heard, no holy feſtivals obſerved to Jehovah, nor multitude of worſhippers appeared, crouding his gates with ſacrifices of praiſe. *Note*, (1.) Affliction is no proof of God's want of affection to us. (2.) When outward diſtreſs lies heavy, inward temptations are often violent. (3.) The joys we have taſted in God, make the want of his preſence, and the withdrawing his comfort, more grievous.

3. Under all he encourages his heart in God. *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul*, ſo broken, ſo diſpirited? why, though ſin hath prevailed, though Satan accuſes, though darkneſs overſhadows thee, is he not the ſame God of grace, can his promiſes fail, or doth the cloud blot out the ſun? *why art thou then diſquieted within me*, as if all were loſt, and help deſpaired of? *hope thou in God*, caſt this firm anchor there, and then thou ſhalt not only ride out the ſtorm in ſafety, but, when theſe thick clouds diſperſe before his bright beams, the light of his countenance ſhall return, and the language of my ranſomed ſoul be praiſe. *Note*, (1.) In our diſtreſſes it is good to reaſon with our ſouls, why am I thus? We often cauſe our own dejection, by poring on our corruptions or afflictions, and forgetting the promiſes, grace, and faithfulneſs of our Redeemer. (2.) The longeſt night ends in day: if we have a little patience under our troubles, we ſhall ſurely at laſt find cauſe for praiſe. (3.) In heaven at leaſt all our ſorrows ſhall end, and the never-clouded light of God's countenance fill our ſouls with everlaſting conſolations.

† Or, the little hill.
i Jer. iv. 20. Ezek. vii. 26.
k Pſal. lxxxviii. 7. Jonah. ii. 3.
l Deut. xxviii. 8. Pſ. cxxxiii. 3.
m Job xxxv. 10. Pſ. cxlix. 5. Iſa. xxx. 29.
n Pſ. xxxviii. 6. & xliii. 2.
‡ Or, killing.
o Ver. 3. Joel ii. 17. Mic. vii. 10.

6. O my God, my ſoul is caſt down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from † the hill of Mizar. 7. [i] Deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of thy water-ſpouts: [k] all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. 8. *Yet* the LORD will [l] command his loving-kindneſs in the day-time, and [m] in the night his ſong *ſhall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto the God of my life. 9. I will ſay unto God my rock, Why haſt thou forgotten me? [n] why go I mourning, becauſe of the oppreſſion of the enemy? 10. *As* with a ‡ ſword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me: [o] while they ſay daily unto me, Where *is* thy God? 11. Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

v. 6—11. God is not diſpleaſed with us that we feel, nay that we complain, but he will not have us diſtruſt him. The Pſalmiſt is our gracious pattern.

1. He complains to God; and where can we get relief ſo ſoon as by pouring out our ſorrows into his compaſſionate boſom? His heart was dejected; his troubles, like ſtormy billows, ſucceſſive, and each threatning to ſwallow him up, *v.* 7. whilſt God ſeemed as if he had forgotten him, *v.* 9. and given him up to his oppreſſing foe; and their taunting reproaches, like a ſharp ſword, wounded his inmoſt ſoul, *v.* 10. *Note*, (1.) The louder the ſtorm blows, the more earneſt ſhould our applications be to God. (2.) Though trouble upon trouble follow us, far be it from us to think God hath forgotten us. (3.) The faith of God's elect doth not fail, but it is often feeble and ſore ſhaken.

2. He encourages his heart in God by the remembrance of paſt experience, when God in former afflictions had appeared for him, *v.* 6. or it may ſignify, wherever he was he continued in ceaſeleſs prayer; *God was ſtill his rock*, there his ſoul ſtuck faſt, and he could not but confidently expect deliverance. *The Lord will command his loving-kindneſs*, and all the ſtorms of affliction ſhall be huſhed into a calm, and this publickly and openly *in the day-time*, that his enemies may ſee and own the hand of God viſible in his protection; and *in the night*, during the continuance of his afflicted ſtate, though ſorrowful, he would rejoice in him, *his ſong ſhall be with me*; the ſong, of which his grace, and love, and faithfulneſs is the burden; *and my prayer unto the God of my life*; my life bound up as with his own, and which, with humble faith, I will commit to his ſafe keeping. With theſe views he can chide down his fears, and bid his troubled heart return to its reſt again; what can move him whoſe hope is in God? what make him miſerable, on whom the light of God's countenance ſhines? yea, what be wanting to his conſummate felicity, who can ſay aſſuredly, My God? *Note*, (1.) When we remember what God has done for us, it ſhould ſuppreſs our unbelieving fears. (2.) Wherever we are, or in whatever ſtate, it becomes us never to reſtrain prayer before God. (3.) If God command his loving kindneſs, it is not in the power of earth or hell to make us miſerable. (4.) In our worſt eſtate we have much to be thankful for; if we conſider our mercies, we owe continually the tribute of praiſe. (5.) If God be the God of our life, then death is diſarmed. (6.) The feeble minded need repeated encouragement, ſo ſlow of heart are they to believe. (7.) When we have a ſure intereſt in God, as our covenant God, we have nothing to fear from the malice of earth or hell.

PSALM XLIII.

This pſalm, it is likely, was penned upon the ſame occaſion with the former. In it, 1. *He appeals to God concerning the injuries that were done him by his enemies*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He prays to be reſtored to the free enjoyment of public ordinances again, and promiſes to make a good improvement of them*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *He endeavours to ſtill the tumult of his own ſpirit, with a lively hope and confidence in God*, ver. 5.

About 1023.
† Or, unmerciful.
‡ Heb. the man of deceit and iniquity.
a Iſa. xxvi. 4.
b Pſal. xlii. 9.
c Ibid. xl. 11. & lvii. 3.
d Iſa. xxxviii. 22.
e Pſal. xlii. 5, 11.

1. JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cauſe againſt an † ungodly nation; O deliver me from ‡ the deceitful and unjuſt man. 2. For thou *art* the God of [a] my ſtrength: [b] why doſt thou caſt me off? why go I mourning, becauſe of the oppreſſion of the enemy? 3. O [c] ſend out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. 4. Then [d] will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praiſe thee, O God, my God. 5. [e] Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

v. 1—5. We have here,

1. David's appeal and prayer to God. Though in God's ſight he would cry, enter not into judgment; yet, with reſpect to his enemies, he deſired nothing more than to be tried at God's bar; where his innocence would certainly engage him for his advocate, againſt the ungodly nation of Iſrael, and the

deceitful and unjuſt Saul; or his rebellious ſubjects, and his unnatural ſon. *Note*, Whether we deſire it or no, there is a tribunal at which we muſt appear; and a judge at hand from whoſe ſentence there is no appeal: happy the ſoul that hath boldneſs in that day.

2. Under the moſt diſcouraging circumſtances, he profeſſes his fixed dependance on divine ſupport: his fooliſh reaſon could hardly be reconciled to his oppreſſed ſituation, and his unbelieving fears were ready to prevail, *v.* 2. but he cleaves to God, as the God of his ſtrength; and if ſo, omnipotence was his guard. *Note*, (1.) Under deep convictions there are often melancholy apprehenſions in the children of God, as if they were caſtaways: but till unchangeableneſs become variable, and omnipotence weak, that cannot be. (2.) It is often difficult to reconcile providences with promiſes; but with a little patience the myſtery will be diſcloſed.

3. He prays for God's guidance and direction; his light of Divine teaching, and his truth in the revealed word, to lead him ſafe through all his difficulties and dark providences, and once more to bring him back to that happy hill and bleſt abode, where God's honour dwelled. Some interpret this of ſending the Meſſiah, the light of the world, and his goſpel, which is the truth emphatically, as theſe were the objects of longing deſire to all the ſaints of old, who wiſhed to ſee that bleſſed day: nor leſs do the faithful, in every age, cry for his appearing as the day-ſtar in their hearts, and to be led into deeper diſcoveries of his word of goſpel grace; that by theſe they may be brought to God's eternal ſanctuary, and have their feet ſet on the heavenly Zion.

4. He promiſes hereupon to compaſs God's altar; and his voice, like his harp in tune, ſhould utter grateful ſacrifice of praiſe to God; *my God*, he ſays, my covenant God, whom I have ever found gracious, good, and therefore true; and *my exceeding joy*; joy too big for utterance, and which time is too ſhort to tell. *Note*, (1.) We have an altar it becomes us ever to approach with joy, remembering the ſacrifice which Jeſus hath offered, and the ineſtimable bleſſings we receive thereby. (2.) When we can ſay, *my God*, we ſhall be able ever to add, *my joy*, *my exceeding joy*; ſince compared with him and his love, we ſhall rejoice in other things as though we rejoiced not.

5. He concludes as before, with chiding his anxious heart, and caſting his hope on that firm baſis, whence nothing can move him. *Note*, Hope in God will never ſhame us, either in time or eternity.

PSALM XLIV.

We are not told who the penman of this pſalm was, though probably it was David, who prophetically ſpeaks of the afflicted ſtate of the Jews under the Babyloniſh yoke, or the perſecution of Antiochus; or more probably it looks forwards to goſpel times, and the ſufferings of God's people in every age under the croſs; in which view the apoſtle quotes ver. 22. Rom. viii. 36. *which may be conſidered as a key to the whole. Chriſt's church muſt ever expect the croſs, till he comes to beſtow the crown. The people of God are taught,* 1. *To own with thankfulneſs the great things God has done for their fathers,* ver. 1—8. 2. *To exhibit a memorial of their preſent calamitous ſtate,* ver. 9—16. 3. *To file a proteſtation of their integrity and adherence to God notwithſtanding,* ver. 17—22. 4. *To lodge a petition at the throne of grace for ſuccour and relief,* ver. 22—26.

¶ To the chief muſician for the ſons of Korah, Maſchil.

1. WE have heard with our ears, O God, [a] our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didſt in their days, in the times of old. 2. *How* [b] thou didſt drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedſt them; *how* thou didſt afflict the people, and caſt them out. 3. For [c] they got not the land in poſſeſſion by their own ſword, neither did their own arm ſave them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, [d] becauſe thou hadſt a favour unto them. 4. [e] Thou art my king, O God, [f] command deliverances for Jacob. 5. Through thee will we puſh down our enemies; through thy name will we tread them under that riſe up againſt us. 6. For [g] I will not truſt in my bow, neither ſhall my ſword ſave me. 7. But thou haſt ſaved us from our enemies, and haſt put them to ſhame that hated us. 8. [h] In God we boaſt all the day long: and praiſe thy name for ever. Selah.

[a] Pſ. lxxviii. 3. Iſa. xxxviii. 19.
[b] Ex. xv. 17. Pſal. lxxviii. 55. & lxxx. 8.
[c] Deut. viii. 17. Joſh. xxiv. 12. Hoſ. i. 7. Zech. iv. 6.
[d] Deut. iv. 37. & vii. 8.
[e] Pſ. lxxiv. 12.
[f] Ibid. xlii. 8.
[g] Ibid. xxxiii. 16.
[h] 1 Cor. i. 31.

v. 1—8. The church of God is the ſame in all ages, ſaved by the ſame blood, ſtrengthened by the ſame grace, oppoſed by the ſame enemies; and expecting the ſame deliverances. Here we behold her proſtrate under the feet of her enemies, but calling to mind former days, and hoping ſtill in God.

1. In their diſtreſs the people of God look back to their father's mercies; the wonders God had wrought of old, caſting out the Canaanites before them, and giving them their land for an inheritance; and this not by any proweſs or might of their own, but by ſuch repeated miracles as convinced them of the hand from whence all their victories came, and of the great good will of God therein manifeſted towards them, *v.* 1—3. *Note*, (1.) Memorials of paſt mercies deſerve to be faithfully recorded, and piouſly tranſmitted to our children, for their encouragement in every time of need. (2.) Not by human power, but Divine, was the glorious goſpel of Jeſus made at firſt triumphant over the powers of darkneſs and heatheniſm: and he who once made bare his arm to plant, will not fail to preſerve it; and every antichriſtian foe, however tyrannous and perſecuting, ſhall fall at laſt before it.

2. They profeſs their confidence in God for preſent ſalvation, and join their prayers that he would haſten it in his time. God is their king, therefore he will protect his faithful ſubjects: renouncing all human confidences, they reſt their caſe with him, to tread down their enemies, and cover them with ſhame, and know it is but for him to ſpeak and the work is done: *Command deliverances for Jacob*; deliverances of all kinds, ſpiritual, temporal, eternal, from men, devils, ſin, corruption, death. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt we pray for ourſelves as individuals, the church of Chriſt, and eſpecially the perſecuted members of it, ſhould ever be remembered by us. (2.) They who would prevail againſt their ſpiritual enemies, muſt firſt renounce themſelves, that God may be glorified. *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong.*

3. They boaſt themſelves in God, not in themſelves, unleſs they glory in their infirmities, that the power and grace of God may more abundantly appear: God is their glory and praiſe for ever. *Note*, The work of eternity will be everlaſting praiſe; when with unutterable tranſport our golden crowns ſhall be caſt at the Redeemer's feet, and all our great ſalvation aſcribed to his power, grace, and love.

9. But [i] thou haſt caſt off, and put us to ſhame; and goeſt not forth with our armies. 10. Thou makeſt us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us ſpoil for themſelves. 11. [k] Thou haſt given us † like ſheep *appointed* for meat: and haſt ſcattered us among the heathen. 12. [l] Thou ſelleſt thy people ‡ for nought, and doſt not increaſe *thy wealth* by their price. 13 [m] Thou makeſt us a reproach to our neighbours, a ſcorn and a deriſion to them that are round about us. 14. [n] Thou makeſt us a by-word among the heathen: [o] a ſhaking of the head among the people. 15. My confuſion *is* continually before me, and the ſhame of my face hath covered me: 16. For the voice of him that reproacheth and blaſphemeth; by reaſon of the enemy and avenger.

[i] Pſal. lx. 1. & lxxiv. 1. & lxxxix. 38.
[k] Rom. viii. 36.
† Heb. as ſheep of meat.
[l] Iſa. lii. 3. Jer. xv. 13.
‡ Heb. without riches.
[m] Deut. xxviii. 37. Pſ. lxxix. 4. & lxxx. 6.
[n] Jer. xxiv. 9.
[o] Pſal. xxii. 7.

v. 9—16. We have here the deep complaints of the perſecuted church of God: to the eye of ſenſe they ſeemed caſt off, diſowned and diſhonoured; their armies diſcomfited, as hath been often the caſe with thoſe who have attempted to oppoſe the papal tyranny, and ſlain like ſheep before hungry wolves; ſold under the antichriſtian yoke, and no glory ariſing to God, as they are apt to conclude, from their oppreſſion; loaded with contempt, and every opprobrious name, as heretics, dogs, fanatics; ridiculed and inſulted; covered with ſhame and confuſion, and grieved at the blaſphemies uttered by their antichriſtian foes againſt God, his truths, and people. *Note*, (1.) They who are caſt down, are tempted to think themſelves caſt off. (2.) Reproach and ſufferings are our appointed croſs; let us not ſhrink under them. (3.) Though we may fooliſhly wonder why God permits his foes and ours to trample on his people, we ſhall know hereafter, and admire the diſpenſation. (4.) The diſhonour caſt upon God, is a greater grief to the chriſtian ſpirit than the injury done himſelf.

17. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falſly in thy covenant. 18. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way. 19. Though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of † dragons, and covered us with [p] the ſhadow of death. 20. If we have forgotten the name of our God, or [q] ſtretched out our hands to a ſtrange god: 21. [r] Shall not God ſearch this out? for he knoweth the ſecrets of the heart. 22. [s] Yea, for thy ſake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter. 23. [t] Awake, why ſleepeſt thou, O LORD? ariſe, caſt *us* not off

† Or, whales, as Gen. i. 21.
[p] Pſ. xxiii. 4.
[q] Job xxxi. 26.
[r] Jer. xvii. 10.
[s] Rom. viii. 36.
[t] Pſ. vii. 6. & xxxv. 23. & lix. 4, 5. & lxxviii. 65.

for

u Ibid. xiii. 1. x Ibid. cxix. 25. † Heb. a help for us.

for ever. 24. [u] Wherefore hideſt thou thy face? *and* forgetteſt our affliction and our oppreſſion? 25. For [x] our ſoul is bowed down to the duſt; our belly cleaveth unto the earth. 26. Ariſe † for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies ſake.

v. 17—26. Lord, to whom ſhall we go, may the church and every ſuffering member well ſay, but unto thee? for there is ſalvation in no other: hither therefore they fly, and

1. Plead their own ſteady adherence to God's pure word and worſhip, amidſt all the evils they endured for the ſake of them; and for this they appealed to the heart-ſearching God: they neither could be compelled to worſhip the gods of the heathen, nor the ſtrange idol images of antichriſtian invention; no, not though fire and rack were the inſtruments of their torture, and dark priſons, inquiſitorial dungeons, and every helliſh device, had been uſed to ſhake their conſtancy: they loved not their lives unto death, and rather choſe to be butchered all the day long, than comply with theſe abominations; their heart cleaved to Jeſus and his truth, and therefore faithfully endured his croſs, and continued ſteadfaſt in his covenant. *Note*, (1.) Though we are not called to the ſufferings of martyrs, we ſhall have that croſs which nothing but Almighty grace can enable us to endure. (2.) They who, to ſhun troubles, comply with ſin, only exchange the ſufferings of time for the torments of eternity. (3.) When we have to deal with a heart-ſearching God, we may well tremble at the thought of inſincerity.

2. They preſent their ſupplications for help and deliverance; and with moving repreſentations, and expoſtulations, urge their ſuit. *Awake*; not that God ſleeps; but, like one regardleſs of them, he ſeemed to have forſaken them; but they plead, let it not be *for ever: why hideſt thou thy face?* as though diſregarding their affliction, when their ſouls were ſunk with deſpondence, and their bodies made as the dung of the earth under the feet of their inſulting foes. *Ariſe*; they repeat the cry, their diſtreſs made them importunate; *redeem us for thy mercies ſake*; not becauſe we have any deſert to plead, but becauſe of thy rich mercy in Chriſt Jeſus, wherein thou haſt cauſed us to put our truſt. *Note*, (1.) If God ſeems to diſregard our danger, as Jeſus in the ſtorm ſlept, it is only to awaken our importunity, and to magnify the more his mercy in our deliverance. (2.) The greateſt ſaints of God have the loweſt opinion of themſelves: they, who could appeal to God for their ſimplicity, go forth with no other plea than his mercy.

PSALM XLV.

This pſalm is an illuſtrious propheſy of Meſſiah the prince; of him ſpeaketh the prophet this, and of no other man; and to him it is expreſly applied, Heb. i. 8. *The preface ſpeaks the excellency of the ſong*, ver. 1. *The pſalm deſcribes*, 1. *The royal bridegroom, who is Chriſt.* (1.) *The tranſcendent excellency of his perſon*, ver. 2. (2.) *The glory of his victories*, ver. 3—5. (3.) *The righteouſneſs of his government*, ver. 6, 7. (4.) *The ſplendor of his court*, ver. 8, 9. 2. *The royal bride, which is the church.* (1.) *Her conſent gained*, ver. 10, 11. (2.) *The nuptials ſolemnized*, ver. 12—15. (3.) *The iſſue of this marriage*, ver. 16, 17.

a Pſ. lxix. & lxxx. tit. † Or, concerning the lilies Cant. ii. 1. b Pſ. xxxii. & xlii. tit. ‡ Or, of the beloved virgins. § Heb. boils or bubbles up.

¶ To the chief muſician [a] † upon Shoſhannim, for the ſons of Korah, [b] Maſchil, A ſong ‡ of loves.

1. MY heart § is inditing a good matter: I ſpeak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

v. 1. The word Shoſhannim, which we meet with in the title, is variouſly interpreted; ſome underſtand it of the muſical inſtrument, for which the ſong was ſet; but others, more probably, refer it to the ſubject of the pſalm, *concerning the lilies*; concerning him who is the *lily of the valley*, and thoſe faithful ones, that by a marriage union with him, partake of his beauty and fragrance. This is the epithalamium compoſed on this royal nuptial; *A ſong of loves*; the mutual love of Chriſt and his church; or, *of the beloved virgins*; ſung by them in honour of their auguſt bridegroom, whoſe praiſe ſhall never ceaſe from their lips, when in glory they ſhall follow the Lamb whereſoever he goeth.

The author prefaces his bridal ode with a preface concerning the perſon. *My heart is inditing a good matter*; yea, the beſt ſubject that ever employed poet's thought, the grace and glory of our Immanuel: *is inditing*, or *bubbling* as a fountain; his heart was big with the ſacred theme, and ready to burſt, like the fountain from its overflowing reſervoir: deeply in thought he firſt digeſted and arranged the matter, then uttered his ſong. *I ſpeak of the things I have made touching the king*; Jeſus is the grand object in his view, his perſon, grace, and government: *I ſpeak* not under the influence of meer poetic genius, but inſpired by that eternal Spirit of truth and holineſs, who dictates as I utter: *my tongue is the pen of a ready writer*; delight in the glorious ſubject gives freedom to the tongue, and fluency to the pen; and deeply may the ſong be engraved on every heart, and kindle ſtill the ſacred flame of love as it deſcends to lateſt ages. *Note*, They who know the excellence of Jeſus, delight to think of him, ſpeak of him, write of him; a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt is in all their words and works, and this ſubject will never be exhauſted to eternity.

2. [c] Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is [d] poured into thy lips: therefore God hath bleſſed thee for ever. 3. Gird [e] thy ſword upon *thy* thigh, [f] O *moſt* mighty: with thy glory and thy majeſty. 4. And [g] in thy majeſty † ride proſperouſly, becauſe of truth, and meekneſs, *and* righteouſneſs: and thy right hand ſhall teach thee terrible things. 5. Thine arrows *are* ſharp in the heart of [h] the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

c Cant. v. 16. d Ibid. v. 13. Luke iv. 22. e Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16. & xix. 15. f Iſa. ix. 6. g Rev. vi. 2. † Heb. proſper thou, ride thou. h Luke xix. 27.

v. 2—5. We have a glorious deſcription of the divine and adored Redeemer, appearing in the fleſh for the ſalvation of his people, and the ruin of his enemies.

1. His beauty is deſcribed. *Thou art fairer than the children of men:* not conſidered in his uncreated beauty, nor, I apprehend, reſpecting his human form and countenance as man, but with regard to the tranſcendent excellencies he poſſeſſes as Redeemer, which render him *the chief of ten thouſand, and altogether lovely.* Thus every faithful ſoul regards him as the grand object of his warmeſt affections; and though he hath neither form nor comelineſs to others, he can ſay, whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is nothing upon earth I deſire in compariſon of thee.

2. His words are as ſweet and kind as his perſon, as Mediator, is amiable. *Grace is poured into thy lips*; the goſpel of grace, which was delivered unto him, and which he declared unto men, containing thoſe rich and ineſtimable promiſes of pardon, grace, conſolation, and glory; the report of which make *his feet beautiful upon the mountains.*

3. The bleſſing of God is upon him for ever. It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell, that out of the plenitude he had received, he might for ever diſpenſe to his people according to their neceſſities, be their fountain of bleſſing, their *eternal excellence*, and *joy of many generations.* Bleſſed and happy are they who out *of his fulneſs receive grace for grace.*

4. Victory attends his chariot wheels: he comes to conquer his peoples enemies, to reſcue the prey from the mighty, and to deliver the captives of ſin and Satan; firſt bringing his church from ſlavery, then making her partner of his throne. The Pſalmiſt addreſſes him therefore, as ready to go forth to battle againſt the powers of darkneſs: *Gird thy ſword upon thy thigh, O moſt mighty*; that ſword of the Spirit, even the word of God; by the preaching and power of which, at laſt the kingdoms of the world ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Chriſt: and in this warfare he appears *with glory and majeſty*; not to the eye of ſenſe, in that he was deſpicable; but they who regarded him as the only-begotten of the Father, beheld his glory; nor did his excellent majeſty ever appear more diſtinguiſhed than when covered with clotted gore, and ſtreaming down with blood: *he ſpoiled on the croſs principalities and powers, making a ſhew of them openly. And in thy majeſty ride proſperouſly:* this is the churches prayer, that he would go *forth* conquering and to conquer, and triumph *in* the heart of every believer, as he hath overcome *for* them; and this *becauſe of truth, of meekneſs, and righteouſneſs*; by means of theſe, by his word of *truth*, the promiſe which ſupported him in his ſufferings; or the goſpel, through which the ſaints overcome, *Rev.* xii. 11. becauſe of *meekneſs*, either his own, which enabled him patiently to endure our puniſhment, or that which he works in his people under all their trials; becauſe of *righteouſneſs*, that which he hath completely wrought out in his own perſon, and is now for ever imputed to them as their title to glory; or that internal holineſs of heart he works in them, whereby they are ſtrengthened againſt all the temptations of ſin and Satan: thus entering the liſts, *thy right hand ſhall teach thee terrible things*; thy omnipotent arm ſhall prevail over all the combined powers of earth and hell. *Thine arrows are ſharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee*; either thoſe who, though once enemies, ſubdued by mighty grace, and pierced with deep conviction, fall down at the Redeemer's feet as humble ſupplicants for mercy; or thoſe who, obſtinately impenitent, and ſtanding out againſt the warnings of his word, and the calls of his goſpel, are broken under the rod of his judgments, and pierced with the arrows of his eternal wrath, find it in vain to ſtruggle with Omnipotence. *Note*, (1.) The ſharpeſt convictions of ſin are gracious wounds, deſigned not to deſtroy, but to recover us. (2.) When by Divine grace the majeſtic Saviour takes poſſeſſion of the heart, corruption muſt fall before

his mighty ſword. (3.) Wo to the ſinner's ſoul againſt whom the arrows of vengeance are ready on the ſtring.

6. [i] Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the ſceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right ſceptre. 7. [k] Thou loveſt righteouſneſs and hateſt wickedneſs: therefore † God, [l] thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs [m] above thy fellows. 8. [n] All thy garments *ſmell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* caſſia; out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. 9. [o] Kings daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did ſtand [p] the queen in gold of Ophir.

[i] Pſ. xciii. 2. Heb. i. 8.
[k] Pſ. xxxiii. 5.
† Or, O God.
[l] Iſa. lxi. 1.
[m] Joh. iii. 34.
[n] Cant. i. 3.
[o] Ibid. vi. 8.
[p] Rev. xxi. 9.

v. 6—9. The Pſalmiſt having ſet forth the king Meſſiah victorious over his foes, here deſcribes him on his exalted throne, in robes of majeſty, and graced with moſt magnificent attendants.

1. His throne and righteous adminiſtration are remarked. *Thy throne, O God*; no leſs a perſonage than the eternal Jehovah; not a creature of the higheſt rank, but the ſelf-exiſtent Creator, whom angels adore, *Heb.* i. 8, 9. and whoſe kingdom ruleth over all; and eternal as univerſal, *for ever and ever:* equitable in all his adminiſtration, *the ſceptre of thy kingdom is a right ſceptre*; none ſhall have cauſe to complain: even thoſe that receive the ſentence of eternal death ſhall be ſpeechleſs, and own their condemnation juſt. *Thou loveſt righteouſneſs*, or righteous perſons; thoſe who under the influence of faith and love, walk after his own bleſſed pattern and precepts, *and hateſt wickedneſs* of all ſorts, and thoſe who practice it; and will, in condign puniſhment, make his hatred of it appear to all eternity. *Note*, We are all under this government; and whether we will or no, muſt ſtand or fall by his deciſions. How highly than doth it import us to conſider, whether we are dutiful ſubjects whom he loves, or wilful rebels whom he hates?

2. The appointment of Chriſt to his mediatorial kingdom is obſerved, *v.* 7. *Therefore God, even thy God*, John xx. 17. who appointed him for the work of redemption, and was the head of Chriſt and his God, as incarnate, *hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs*; all ſpiritual gifts and graces, without meaſure, were beſtowed upon the man Jeſus, that he might be every way qualified for the undertaking whereunto he was appointed; and have in all things the pre-eminence in the ſurpaſſing excellence of his human nature, as well as in the tranſcendent dignity to which he was advanced *above his fellows.*

3. His royal apparel is mentioned. *All thy garments ſmell of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia*; alluding to the ingredients of the holy oil, *Exod.* xxx. 23. *out of the ivory palaces*; heaven, from whence he came forth thus glorioſly arrayed, and to which he is now returned; *whereby they have made thee glad*; either the Mediator himſelf, who delighted in theſe glorious garments; or it may be read, *for which*, and refer to believers, who are cloathed with his robes of righteouſneſs, and his garments of ſalvation; and thus adorned, the Saviour takes pleaſure in their beauty.

4. His court appears magnificently ſplendid. *Kings daughters were among thy honourable women*; the children of God are ſons and daughters of the eternal king, and their higheſt honour is to be attendants on his exalted Son; ſeeing by him they obtain this glorious relation, becoming children of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt. And as particular believers, virgin ſouls of royal extraction appear his attendants, his church ſits *as a queen at his right hand in gold of Ophir*; adorned with gifts and graces more pure and precious than the fineſt gold; or rather beautiful in his bright robes of ſpotleſs righteouſneſs, which as he commands, *Rev.* iii. 18. ſhe hath bought. We may ſay of him, with greater propriety than the queen of Sheba did of Solomon's ſervants, 1 *Kings* x. 8. *Happy are they that ſtand continually before thee*; for a greater than Solomon is here.

10. Hearken, O daughter, and conſider, and incline thine ear; [q] forget alſo thine own people, and thy father's houſe. 11. So ſhall the king greatly deſire [r] thy beauty: for [s] he *is* thy Lord, [t] and worſhip thou him. 12. And the daughter of Tyre *ſhall be there* [u] with a gift, [x] *even* the rich among the people ſhall intreat thy favour. 13. [y] The king's daughter *is* all glorious within; her clothing *is* of wrought gold. 14. [z] She ſhall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work: [a] the virgins her companions that follow her ſhall be brought unto thee. 15. With gladneſs and rejoicing *ſhall* they *be* brought: they ſhall enter into [b] the king's palace. 16. Inſtead of thy fathers ſhall be [c] thy children, whom thou mayſt make [d] princes in all the earth. 17. [e] I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore ſhall the people praiſe thee for ever and ever.

[q] See Deut. xxi. 13.
[r] Cant. i. 15.
[s] John xx. 28.
[t] Ibid. v. 23.
[u] Pſ. lxviii. 29. & lxxii. 10.
[x] Iſa. xlix. 23. & lx. 3.
[y] Rev. xix. 7, 8.
[z] Cant. i. 4.
[a] Rev. xiv. 4.
[b] John xiv. 2.
[c] Gal. iv. 26.
[d] Rev. i. 6. & v. 10. & xx. 6.
[e] Mal. i. 11.

v. 10—17. As the former part related to the king, this reſpects the queen, the Lamb's wife; and ſhe is called daughter, either referring to her relation to God's dear Son, or as a term of tender and affectionate regard.

1. A ſolemn injunction is given her. *Hearken, conſider, incline thine ear:* thou art no longer thine own, thy huſband's will muſt be thy law; hearken to it with attention, conſider it with delight, and incline to it with cheatfulneſs; *forget alſo thine own people, and thy father's houſe*; let no attachment beſide engage thy heart, the whole belongs to him. They who would be Chriſt's ſpouſe, muſt be ſeparated for him from whatever here below would enſnare and draw away their affections; compared with our love to him, we muſt hate father and brother; yea, our own lives alſo. *So ſhall the king have pleaſure in thy beauty:* this is an argument for her faithful adherence to him alone; the delight he would take in her, and the happineſs thence reſulting. Another is drawn from his right and authority over her: *He is thy Lord*; thy maſter, to whom obedience is ſo highly due; *and therefore worſhip thou him*, as thy maker, as well as thy huſband and thy Redeemer, who is moſt high in the glory of God the Father; equal as touching his Godhead, and therefore to be adored with equal honour; *John* v. 23. *Note*, (1.) We cannot entertain too high thoughts of the glory of our divine Lord: the humiliation of the man muſt never leſſen in our eye the eſſential and ſelf-exiſtent deity of the Son. (2.) None can call Chriſt their bridegroom, whoſe fidelity and love doth not evidence the truth of their relation. (3.) The Lord's delight is thoſe who love and ſerve him; no beauty in his eye like the beauty of holineſs.

2. The converſion of the Gentiles unto her is foretold. *The daughter of Tyre*, the neareſt bordering heathen nation, *ſhall be there with a gift*, offering up herſelf and her goods for the ſupport of the goſpel; *even the rich among the people*; not only the lower ranks in life, but even kings *ſhall intreat thy favour*; deſire to be admitted into the communion and fellowſhip of the goſpel, which in a meaſure hath been, and ſhall yet be, more eminently fulfilled in its ſeaſon.

3. Her beautiful apparel and admiſſion into her huſband's palace is obſerved. *The king's daughter is all glorious within*; her ſoul is adorned with every divine and gracious diſpoſition; *her clothing is of wrought gold*; a ſhining profeſſion, and exemplary conduct, mark all her ſteps. *She ſhall be brought unto the king*, conducted by the hand of grace, and prepared for her high eſtate, *in raiment of needle-work*; the pure and precious robe of her Redeemer's righteouſneſs; or thoſe bright garments of immortality, which in the reſurrection-day ſhe ſhall put on: *the virgins her companions*; the ſouls preſerved in purity, unſpotted from the world, *that follow her* in all holy ordinances and godly converſation, *ſhall be brought unto thee*, to the eternal enjoyment of thy preſence and love. *With gladneſs and rejoicing ſhall they be brought*, amidſt congratulating angels, themſelves loſt in wonder, love, and praiſe; and no marvel! *when they ſhall enter into the king's palace*; the heaven of heavens, the place where his throne of glory ſtands; and where, next his own, thrones are prepared for them, that they may reign with him eternally. May my poor ſoul be numbered among theſe virgin fellows.

4. The Progeny of the Redeemer is promiſed to be many and illuſtrious. *Inſtead of thy fathers*, the Jewiſh ſtock from whence he ſprung, *ſhall be thy children*, of the Gentile world, admitted into the church inſtead of the Jews, who were rejected; *whom thou mayſt make princes in all lands*, for his dominion ſhall be from ſea to ſea; the very iſles of the Gentiles ſhall come in unto him, and their kings reign by his appointment and for his glory: and alſo, from all theſe nations ſhall there be a choſen generation, to reign with him as kings and prieſts for ever, *Rev.* i. 6. In conſequence of this ſpread of the goſpel, the Father engages to make his memorial everlaſting. *I will make thy name to be remembered* in all generations, by maintaining a perpetual ſucceſſion of faithful men: *therefore ſhall the people praiſe thee for ever and ever*; whilſt ſun and moon endureth, there ſhall be a generation to praiſe him; and when theſe bright luminaries are extinguiſhed, the praiſes of our Jeſus ſhall continue the burden of the never-ceaſing ſong of eternity. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM XLVI.

This pſalm encourages us to hope in God in the worſt of times; to praiſe him for the paſt, and truſt him for future mercies. We are here taught, 1. *To take comfort in God when things look very black and threatning,* ver. 1—5. 2. *To mention to his praiſe the great things he has wrought for his church againſt its enemies,* ver. 6—9. 3. *To aſſure ourſelves that God, who hath glorified his own name, will glorify it yet again, and to comfort ourſelves with that,* ver. 10, 11. *And thus, though our ſpiritual enemies are mighty, or our outward foes threatning, we have a faithful God to truſt, and this pleaſant ſong to ſing.*

¶ To the chief muſician for the ſons of Korah. A ſong upon [a] Alamoth.

1. GOD *is* our refuge and ſtrength, [b] a very preſent help in trouble. 2. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the † midſt of the ſea. 3. [c] *Though* the waters thereof rore, *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof. Selah. 4. *There is* a river, the ſtreams whereof ſhall make glad the city of God: the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the moſt High. 5. [d] God *is* in the midſt of her; ſhe ſhall not be moved: God ſhall help her, *and that* ‡ right early.

[a] 1 Chron. xv. 20.
[b] Deut. iv. 7. Pſ. cxlv. 18.
† Heb. Heart of the ſeas.
[c] Pſal. xciii. 3, 4. Jer. v. 22. Mat. vii. 25.
[d] Rev. ii. 1.
‡ Heb. When the morning appears. See Ex. xiv. 24, 27. Pſ. xxx. 5.

v. 1—5. Amidſt the furious attacks of enraged foes, the name of our God is a ſtrong tower, into which the righteous runneth and is ſafe. We have here David profeſſing his own and the church's confidence in God, amidſt the moſt threatning appearances, and giving his reaſons for ſuch his hope.

1. They are ſafe amidſt all the tumults of this diſordered world. *God is our refuge*, who ſhall pluck us thence? our *ſtrength*, who ſhall be able to ſtand before us thus ſupported? *a very preſent help in trouble*, to extricate from every difficulty, and ever near to ſuccour and ſave us. *Therefore will we not fear*; there is no ſhadow of ground for it, ſeeing he who is for us, is *moſt High*, ſo infinitely ſurpaſſing in power all that are againſt us. *And in the midſt of her*, his church, taking up his reſidence, and manifeſting his preſence in the believer's heart. In vain, therefore, the earth trembles and is diſſolved, the mountains leap from their baſes, the ſtormy billows roar and laſh the rocky ſhores; in vain are all the attacks; in vain the threatnings of earth or hell; the church, and every faithful ſoul, is founded on a rock; not only ſafe from ruin, but ſecure from every terrifying fear; *ſhe ſhall not be moved: God ſhall help her*, and make her adverſaries lick the duſt, *and that right early*; quickly, or *when the morning appears*; the night of trouble ſhall be ſhort, and the welcome morning of deliverance and joy ariſe. *Note*, (1.) When danger is moſt alarming, faith ſhould be moſt in exerciſe. (2.) The changes and revolutions of this ſublunary globe, can little affect thoſe whoſe ſouls are fixed on things above. (3.) They need not fear, and ſhall not fall, who make God their refuge and ſtrength.

2. They are comforted as well as ſecure. *There is a river, the ſtreams whereof ſhall make glad the city of our God*: a river of never-ceaſing conſolations, that ſprings from the fountain of God's eternal love, whoſe ſtreams no foe can interrupt; theſe, like the waters of Siloam, ſweetly flow into the faithful ſoul in the midſt of every trial, and fill him with joy as well as peace in believing: he is the city where God delights to dwell, and *the holy place of the tabernacles of the moſt High*, being made the habitation of God through the ſpirit. *Note*, If we enjoy divine communications of grace and comfort, we are amply repaid for all the ſtorms and tempeſts raiſed by a world that lieth in wickedneſs.

6. [e] The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. 7. [f] The LORD of hoſt *is* with us, the God of Jacob *is* † our refuge. Selah. 8. [g] Come, behold the works of the LORD, what deſolations he hath made in the earth. 9. [h] He maketh wars to ceaſe unto the end of the earth, [i] he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the ſpear in ſunder, [k] he burneth the chariot in the fire. 10. Be ſtill, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. 11. [l] The LORD of hoſts *is* with us, the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

[e] Pſ. ii. 1. Rev. xi. 18.
[f] Ver. 11.
† Heb. An high place for us.
[g] Pſal. lxvi. 5.
[h] Iſa. ii. 4.
[i] Pſal. lxxvi. 3.
[k] Ezek. xxxix. 3.
[l] Ver. 7.

v. 6—11. Who can ſtand when God appeareth?

1. His foes are routed and deſtroyed. *The heathen raged* againſt his church and people; of old, Rome pagan, and at preſent Rome papal, and all the antichriſtian enemies of his Redeemed; and *the kingdoms are moved*, ſtirred up to war againſt the ſaints of the moſt High: but *he uttered his voice*, and at the breath of his lips *the earth melted*; all theſe collected forces diſſolved as the ſnow before the ſun. Thus, under the wings of Jacob's God, the God of hoſts, we are not only protected, but by his power triumphant. *Come and behold the works of the Lord*, with wonder ſee his glorious interpoſition, *what deſolations he hath wrought in the earth* upon all his furious adverſaries: the deſolations of Judea, the downfal of the Roman monarchy; mark his avenging rod: and from theſe we may be aſſured the preſent powers of Antichriſt, whether popiſh or mahometan, ſhall alike with their carcaſes ſtrew the ground; nor will he ceaſe till all his enemies are made his footſtool; when, their power utterly broken, and all their armour, wherein they truſted, ſpoiled and conſumed, the war ſhall ceaſe, and his people enjoy for ever the fruits of that glorious and eternal peace he hath obtained for them. For,

2. They are bid only to *be ſtill*, to wait upon the Lord without diſtraction, *and know that I am God*; believe my power and love, and ye ſhall aſſuredly ſee my great ſalvation; and that diſplayed not more for their comfort and ſafety, than for his own glory: *I will be exalted among the heathen*, who oppoſe his kingdom and intereſts, by their deſtruction; *I will be exalted on the earth*, by ſubduing the nations of the world to the obedience of the faith, and ſetting up the throne of the Redeemer from pole to pole. Such promiſes may therefore well ſilence all our fears, and confirm our confidence. *The Lord of hoſts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.*

PSALM XLVII.

Many ſuppoſe that this pſalm was penned upon occaſion of the bringing up of the ark to mount Sion; but it looks further, to the aſcenſion of Chriſt into the heavenly Sion, after he had finiſhed his undertaking on earth, and to the ſetting up of his kingdom in the world, to which the heathen ſhould become willing ſubjects. We are directed to praiſe God, ver. 1. 1. *For his glory and deſigns of grace*, ver. 2—5. 2. *For the aſcenſion of the Redeemer*, ver. 5, 6. 3. *For his univerſal dominion*, ver. 7—9.

¶ To the chief muſician, A pſalm † for the ſons of Korah.

† Or, of.

1. O [a] Clap your hands, all ye people, ſhout unto God with the voice of triumph: 2. For the LORD moſt High [b] *is* terrible; [c] *he is* a great King over all the earth. 3. [d] He ſhall ſubdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. 4. He ſhall chooſe our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

[a] Iſa. lv. 12.
[b] Pſal. lxxvi. 12.
[c] Mal. i. 14.
[d] Pſal. xviii. 47.

v. 1—4. The Pſalmiſt opens with an addreſs to all people to expreſs their utmoſt exultation in the God of their ſalvation.

O clap your hands, all ye people, not only of the Jewiſh nation, but thoſe who are redeemed by Jeſus out of all lands: *ſhout unto God with a voice of triumph*, not merely for Iſrael's enemies ſubdued by David's ſword, but for the more glorious victories the Son of David hath obtained over all the powers of ſin, death, and hell: *for the Lord moſt High*, the incarnate Saviour, whoſe name is above every name in heaven or earth; *he is terrible* in his judgments, when, turning upon his affrighted foes, confuſion covers them, and ruin overtakes them: *he is King over all the earth*, his dominion ſovereign and univerſal; his people therefore may well be joyful in their king. *He ſhall ſubdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet*; by the powerful influences of his word and ſpirit, either effectually converting the Gentiles to himſelf, and bringing them to the obedience of the faith, or caſting down with his mighty arm the refractory and impenitent. *He ſhall chuſe an inheritance for us*, not Canaan's fertile land, but a better and more enduring portion eternal in the heavens, which his blood hath bought, his promiſe hath ſecured, and himſelf is gone up to prepare for us; *the excellency of Jacob*, the ſpiritual Iſrael of God, and Jacob's moſt honourable deſcendants, *whom he loved*; either Jacob, on whom God's election of grace fixed, or his people, the objects of his everlaſting love. *Note*, (1.) They who believe the promiſes, cannot but rejoice in hope. (2.) Jeſus is a terrible enemy, but a moſt deſirable friend: happy they, who fleeing from the wrath to come, find favour and reconciliation with him. (3.) Heaven is our inheritance, entailed upon the adopted children of grace, and ſure to all the ſeed; where then ſhould our affections be?

5. [e] God is gone up with a ſhout, the LORD with the ſound of a trumpet. 6. Sing praiſes to God, ſing praiſes: ſing praiſes unto our King, ſing praiſes. 7. For [f] God *is* the King of all the earth, [g] ſing ye praiſes † with underſtanding. 8. God reigneth over the heathen: God ſitteth upon the throne of his holineſs. 9. ‡ The princes of the people are gathered together, § *even* [h] the people of the God of Abraham: for the ſhields of the earth *belong* unto God: he is greatly exalted.

[e] Pſal. lxviii. 18. Eph. iv. 8.
[f] Zech. xiv. 9.
[g] 1 Cor. xiv. 15.
† Or, every one that hath underſtanding.
‡ Or, the voluntary of the people.
§ Or, unto the people.
[h] Rom. iv. 11.

v. 5—9. If this moment we begin the ſong, and ceaſeleſs continue it through the days of eternity, we cannot ſhew forth all the Redeemer's praiſe; yet the attempt is gratitude, and the ſervice our bounden duty. We have here ſeveral ſubjects of praiſe pointed out.

1. For the aſcenſion of Jeſus to the right hand of God. It might be matter of national joy when the ark, reſtored from obſcurity, was carried in grand proceſſion to the tabernacle of David; but this is a univerſal burſt of praiſe; earth rings with

the glory of the aſcending Saviour, whilſt angels catch the mighty joy, and opening their ſhining ranks, receive with a ſhout of triumph the returning conqueror, who leads captivity captive, *v.* 5, 6.

2. For his univerſal ſovereignty. High on his exalted throne the Redeemer ſits, as God over all, bleſſed for ever; as king, ruling by his providence in all the earth, protecting his people, reſtraining the heathen, and making his holineſs appear in all his adminiſtration; and therefore demanding praiſe, *with underſtanding*, ſuch as becomes him, or from every *intelligent being*, who are all bound to ſet forth his glory.

3. For the converſion of the Gentiles. *The princes of the people are gathered together*, to tender their ſubmiſſion at the feet of Jeſus, *even the people of the God of Abraham*, for ſuch by faith they become; followers of the patriarch, and ſharers in his bleſſing; or *to the people, &c.* intimating their union in one body, under Jeſus their exalted head: *for the ſhields of the earth*, the rulers of the nations, *belong unto the Lord*, are appointed by him, their hearts are in his hand, and he can make them willing to give up themſelves to him by choice, as they are his by bounden duty. *He is greatly exalted*; all power is given him in heaven and in earth, and his dominion eternal as univerſal: *therefore ſing praiſes unto our God, ſing praiſes: ſing praiſes to our King, ſing praiſes!*

PSALM XLVIII.

This pſalm, as the two former, is a triumphant ſong, penned upon occaſion of ſome eminent victory obtained, or more probably prophetical of the Redeemer's triumphs, and the glories of the goſpel church, of which Jeruſalem was a type. Jeruſalem is here praiſed, 1. *For its relation to God,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *For God's care of it,* ver. 3. 3. *For the terror it ſtrikes upon its enemies,* ver. 4—7. 4. *For the pleaſure it gives to its friends, who delight to think,* (1.) *Of what God has done, doth, and will do for it,* ver. 8. (2.) *Of the gracious diſcoveries he makes of himſelf, in and for that holy city,* ver. 9, 10. (3.) *Of the effectual proviſion which is made for its ſafety,* ver. 11—13. (4.) *Of the aſſurance we have of the perpetuity of God's covenant with the children of Sion,* ver. 14.

¶ A ſong *and* pſalm † for the ſons of Korah.

† Or, of.

1. GREAT *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praiſed in [a] the city of our God, *in* the mountain of his holineſs. 2. [b] Beautiful for ſituation, [c] the joy of the whole earth *is* mount Zion, [d] *on* the ſides of the north, [e] the city of the great King. 3. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. 4. For lo, [f] the kings were aſſembled, they ‡ paſſed by together. 5. They ſaw *it, and* ſo they marvelled, they were troubled, *and* haſted away. 6. Fear took hold upon them there, [g] *and* pain as of a woman in travail. 7. [h] Thou breakeſt the ſhips of Tarſhiſh with an eaſt-wind.

[a] Pſ. lxxxvii. 3.
[b] Ibid. l. 2. Lam. ii. 15. Dan. viii. 9. & xi. 16.
[c] Ezek. xx. 6.
[d] Iſa. xiv. 35.
[e] Mat. v. 13.
[f] Pſ. xlvi. 6. Rev. xix. 19.
‡ Or, paſſed away preſently.
[g] Iſa. xiii. 8.
[h] Ezek. xxvii. 26.

v. 1—7. The work of heaven will be everlaſting praiſe; it is good to antedate the joy, and begin the ſervice of eternity.

1. *Great is the Lord*, who is in his mediatorial glory ſo high exalted, *and greatly to be praiſed* for all his wondrous works of power, grace, and love, manifeſted in all ages to his choſen people; and this his glory is to be ſet forth,

2. *In the city of our God*, in Jeruſalem, *the mountain of his holineſs* in Zion, where in his temple, his ſacred preſence dwelt between the cherubims. *Beautiful for ſituation*, eminent to view, and the country around it like the garden of Eden: *the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion*, being the favoured reſidence of the God of the whole earth, *on the ſides of the north*, turned from the ſultry beam of day, *the city of the great King*, where moſt eminently he fixes his throne, and manifeſts his glory. *God is well known in her palaces for a refuge*, having protected it from every foe, and all who come to worſhip there, find ſafety under his wings. Thus glorious was the earthly Jeruſalem, but how much in glory doth the ſpiritual Zion exceed her. In his church the great Redeemer is pleaſed to dwell now, bright in holineſs ſhe ſhines, firm as a mountain, and filled with inhabitants as a city. In beauty excellent, watered with the ſtreams of grace, that flow from the fountain of bleſſedneſs, adorned with living palaces, the reſidence of the eternal Spirit: here a ſure refuge is found in the arms of Jeſus from guilt and ſin, known by the word of his goſpel, and proved by the experience of every faithful ſoul.

3. All attempts of foes to hurt are fruitleſs, where God is thus known and praiſed. This Jeruſalem had experienced, 2 *Sam.* v. 17. The aſſembled kings paſſed by, they ſaw Almighty Power engaged to protect her, and with aſtoniſhment fled; a panic fear ſeized them, they were daſhed in pieces by the ſtormy wind: and ſuch will be the iſſue of the war againſt the church of God, carried on by the antichriſtian foes, *Rev.* xix. 19—21. They will fall before the power of Jeſus, be overthrown with perpetual deſolations, and ſink as a ſtone in the mighty waters of God's wrath, and never riſe up again.

8. As [i] we have heard, ſo have we ſeen in [k] the city of the LORD of hoſts, in the city of our God, [l] God will eſtabliſh it for ever. Selah. 9. We have † thought of thy loving kindneſs, O God, in the midſt of thy temple. 10. According to thy name, O God, ſo *is* thy praiſe unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is [m] full of righteouſneſs. 11. Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, becauſe of thy judgments. 12. [n] Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. 13. ‡ Mark ye well her bulwarks, § conſider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following. 14. For this God *is* our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide *even* unto death.

[i] Pſ. xliv. 1.
[k] Ver. 1, 2.
[l] Mat. xvi. 18.
† Or, waited for.
[m] Pſ. xlv, 4, 7.
[n] Neh. xii. 31.
‡ Heb. Set up your heart to her bulwarks.
§ Or, raiſe up.

v. 8—14. We have here the church of God declaring by experience the truth of what the pſalmiſt had aſſerted. *As we have heard*, either in former ages, when God vouchſafed ſuch mighty aid, or in the word of promiſe, *ſo have we ſeen* the accompliſhment of the promiſe, and the like protection, *in the city of the Lord of hoſts, in the city of our God*; Jeruſalem bore teſtimony to God's faithfulneſs and care then, and in like manner may the people of God in every age increaſe the number of witneſſes. *God will eſtabliſh it for ever*; the church, and every particular member of it; the gates of hell ſhall never prevail, but finally we ſhall triumph over all our enemies. *We have thought of thy loving kindneſs, O Lord*, from whence all his rich mercy ſprings, or *waited* for it, when dangers ſeemed to threaten, *in the midſt of thy temple*, thy church, where in prayer we called upon thee, and with praiſes celebrated thy faithfulneſs. *According to thy name*, thy boundleſs perfections, *ſo is thy praiſe unto the ends of the earth*, whither the glorious goſpel hath carried the diſcovery of that bleſſed name, the Lord our Redeemer and Saviour. *Thy right hand is full of righteouſneſs*, every deciſion of his is equitable, and eſpecially what ſeems here intended, the doom reſerved for the oppoſers of God's truth and kingdom is altogether righteous. And herein *let mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad*; all who are faithful, *becauſe of thy judgments*, which ſhall be executed on the powers of Antichriſt, in the great day of retribution. And in the mean time, *walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.* Jeruſalem was regarded as an impregnable fortreſs, *Lam.* iv. 12. but ſtronger towers of angelic guards keep ſafe the ſpiritual Zion. *Mark well her bulwarks*, built on Chriſt, the rock of ages, defended by the arm of Omnipotence; *conſider her palaces*, ſuch as are the prophets, apoſtles, confeſſors, and faithful in every age, *that ye may tell it to the generation following*, for the ſupport of their faith and hope in every exigence. *For this God is our God for ever and ever*, the ſame powerful protector, the ſame gracious and loving Saviour to all who truſt in him, that never changes, never forſakes them. *He will be our guide even unto death*, ſafely to preſerve us from all the dangers of life; in death, to keep us from all fear or failing; and after death, to bring us to the eternal enjoyment of his bleſſed ſelf. May we prove him ſuch by happy experience.

PSALM XLIX.

This pſalm is a leſſon of admonition, to teach us the folly of ſetting our hearts on this world's goods, and to comfort us under the want of them. 1. *David demands audience and attention,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Profeſſes his confidence in God,* ver. 5. 3. *Seeks to convince thoſe who truſt in riches, of the vanity of their confidence here and hereafter,* ver. 6—14. 4. *Comforts himſelf in the proſpect of death,* 5. *Cautions us not to fear the proſperity of the wicked,* ver. 16—20.

¶ To the chief muſician,

A pſalm † for the ſons of Korah.

† Or, of.

1. HEAR this, all *ye* people, [a] give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world: 2. Both low and high, rich and poor together. 3. My mouth ſhall ſpeak of wiſdom: and the meditation of my heart *ſhall be* of underſtanding. 4. [b] I will incline mine ear to a parable; I will open my dark ſaying upon the harp.

[a] Pſ. xxxiv. 11. Jam. i. 19.
[b] Pſ. lxxviii. 2. Mat. xiii. 35.

v. 1—4. The Pſalmiſt, with ſolemnity, introduces his important diſcourſe, and calls upon all, both high and low, to attend the leſſons of inſtruction he was about to deliver. The one, that they might know the vanity of their poſſeſſions; the other, that they might be content in the want of them, nor envy thoſe who enjoyed them. His ſubject was concerning the trueſt wiſdom, *v.* 3. and he ſpoke after deep meditation: his diſcourſe might indeed appear to the world parabolical and dark, but he deſired ſo to incline his own hear to divine teaching, that he might be enabled to make the matter clear to others, and with his harp engage, by pleaſing harmony, the ears of others to liſten to his ſong. *Note*, (1.) The poor need as much be warned againſt envy and diſcontent, as the rich againſt pride and worldly confidence. (2.) Divine ſubjects ſhould be ſpoken of with great thought and ſeriouſneſs. (3.) What we inculcate on others, we muſt recommend by our own practice. (4.) Muſick anſwers its original deſign, when employed to convey, or imprint, the ſentiments of Divine wiſdom.

5. Wherefore ſhould I fear in [c] the days of evil, *when* the iniquity of my heels ſhall compaſs me about? 6. They [d] that truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches: 7. None *of them* can by any means redeem *his* brother, [e] nor give to God a ranſom for him: 8. (For [f] the redemption of their ſoul *is* precious, and it ceaſeth for ever) 9. That he ſhould ſtill live for ever, [g] *and* not to ſee corruption. 10. For he ſeeth *that* [h] wiſe men die, likewiſe the fool and the brutiſh perſon periſh, and [i] leave their wealth to others. 11. Their inward thought *is*, *that* their houſes *ſhall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling-places to all generations; they call *their* lands after their own names. 12. Nevertheleſs [k] man *being* in honour abideth not; he is like the beaſts *that* periſh. 13. This their way *is* their folly; yet their poſterity † approve their ſayings. Selah. 14. [l] Like ſheep they are laid in the grave, death ſhall feed on them; and [m] the upright ſhall have dominion over them in the morning, and [n] their ‡ beauty ſhall conſume in the graves from their dwelling.

c Eph. v. 16.
d Job xxxi. 24. Pſ. lii. 7. & lxii. 10. Mark x. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
e Mat. xvi. 26.
f Job xxxvi. 18, 19.
g Pſ. lxxxix. 48.
h Eccleſ. ii. 16.
i Prov. xi. 4.
k Ver. 20. Pſ. lxxxii. 7.
† Heb. Delight in their mouth.
l Jer. xii. 3.
m Dan. vii. 22. Luke xxii. 30. 1 Cor. vi. 2. Rev. ii. 26.
n Job iv. 21. Pſ. xxxix. 11.
‡ Or, ſtrength.

v. 5—14. Having engaged attention, he begins to open his parable.

1. He deſcribes the ſecurity of a gracious ſoul, and intimates how unſpeakably ſuperior that is to all worldly wealth. In the days of affliction they are delivered from all diſtreſſing fear, with which worldly men are overwhelmed; and even in death and judgment, when iniquity compaſſeth about the ſinner, and riches profit not in this day of wrath, David, and every faithful ſoul, amidſt all the accuſations of numberleſs tranſgreſſions, would be confident in the pardoning love of a reconciled God. *Note*, True happineſs can only be known at death, that is the grand touchſtone; and a ſenſe of God's love, and the near proſpect of glory, are then infinitely more precious than thouſands of gold and ſilver.

2. He points out the vain confidence of the worldly-minded, and the inſufficiency of all their boaſted acquiſitions, to make them happy in time or eternity.

[1.] Their character is ſtrongly marked, *v.* 6, 9. (1.) *They truſt in their wealth*; it is not having wealth is any man's ſin, for all the creatures of God are good, and when improved for God's glory, riches are a bleſſing, though uſually to our earthly minds they prove a dangerous ſnare. The men of the world make them their confidence, as if they could protect them from evil, and furniſh them with every good, truſting on theſe uncertain poſſeſſions, more than the living God, 1 *Tim.* vi. 17. (2.) *They boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches*; it is what they value themſelves upon, and look down on their poorer neighbours with a ſupercilious diſregard, as if every man's excellency and ſuperiority were meaſured by the number of acres he poſſeſſed. (3.) *Their inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever*, &c. conceiting they ſhall be able to build ſo firmly, and leave ſuch wealth to their ſucceſſors, that their palaces ſhall never moulder, and their deſcendants continue from age to age in grandeur and magnificence. (4.) *They call the lands after their own names*, vainly ſeeking thereby to keep up an immortal remembrance upon earth, and affecting the honour of being the founders of ſuch a noble family.

[2.] The folly, ſin, and danger of ſuch worldly pride is great. This indeed is the common way, and riſing generations copy after their ungodly fathers; but the multitude of followers diminiſhes nothing from the fooliſhneſs or evil of the practice. The folly of truſting in worldly goods, is evident, if we conſider,

(1.) Their inſufficiency to ranſom a brother from the hand of death, or diſeaſe, or to ſave his ſoul from hell. No gifts can bribe or ſecure from the arreſt of God's meſſengers; no riches profit in the day of wrath, to ſuſpend the ſentence, or prevent its execution. The ſoul is too precious to be purchaſed by corruptible things, ſuch as ſilver and gold: if the blood of Jeſus, and the redemption which is in him, be neglected, all other price is fruitleſs, and the ſinner periſhes for ever.

(2.) As vain are riches to ſecure the life of their poſſeſſors, or the honours which they hope for. Though they ſeek to perpetuate their names, man being in honour, abideth not; all things are ſubject to change, riches often make themſelves wings, and flee away, before the owner returns to the duſt; ſcarce his head is cold, before his extravagant heir diſſipates his ſubſtance, and his land changes its name as well as occupant: his palaces moulder into duſt, and the ſame age which wondered at the magnificent ſtructure, beholds the tottering wall, and deſolate abode. But could the honour abide, what comfort would it bring to the departed maſter? as the beaſts that periſh, the nobleſt muſt rot in the duſt; however great their wiſdom, in getting worldly wealth, they cannot elude the ſtroke of death. They die as the fool, for there is no diſcharge in this war, and leave their riches to others, who probably are glad of their departure, and will waſte in profuſion what they have collected by their parſimony.

(3.) More miſerable ſtill is their ſtate beyond the grave: tho' they who have made earth their confidence, die as beaſts, and perhaps like them, ſtupid and inſenſible; yet infinitely preferable is the lot of the beaſts that periſh. Like ſheep fatted for the ſlaughter, death feeds upon them; the ſecond death, the worm that never dies. In hell they lie down together, and inſtead of all their pomp and affluence, there, loathſome and defiled as a dead corpſe, they are an abhorring to all around them, a terror to themſelves, and want a drop of water to cool their tongues tormented in thoſe flames. There all their beauty ſhall be burning, and their pride everlaſtingly humbled, but *the upright ſhall have dominion over them in the morning*; though here they were oppreſſed by them, or neglected, as Lazarus at their gate, the day is coming, the bright reſurrection morn, when the tables will be changed; the poor ſervants of Jeſus, whom they deſpiſed, ſhall then awake triumphant from the duſt, be caught up to an eternal throne of glory; and underneath their feet, behold the proud oppreſſors laid low, and all their worldly confidence ſunk in eternal confuſion and deſpair. *Note*, (1.) This is true wiſdom, to judge not by preſent appearances, but to weigh time againſt eternity. (2.) They who have this world's wealth, need tremble for themſelves. Though their ſalvation is not impoſſible, yet it is highly difficult, *Mark* x. 24. (3.) It is not poverty, but piety, to which the promiſe is made; the diſcontented indigent lie down in hell, as well as the proudly affluent.

15. But [o] God will redeem my ſoul from the † power of the ‡ grave; for he ſhall receive me. Selah. 16. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his houſe is increaſed. 17. For when he dieth, [p] he ſhall carry nothing away: his glory ſhall not deſcend after him. 18. Though whiles he lived, [q] he bleſſed his ſoul: and *men* will praiſe thee, when thou doſt well to thyſelf. 19. ‖ He ſhall go to the generation of his fathers, they ſhall never ſee light. 20. [r] Man *that is* in honour and underſtandeth not, [s] is like the beaſts *that* periſh.

o Hoſ. xiii. 14.
† Heb. Hand.
‡ Or, hell.
p 1 Tim. vi. 7.
q Deut. xxix. 19. Luke xii. 19.
‖ Heb. The ſoul ſhall go.
r Ver. 12.
s Eccleſ. iii. 19.

v. 15—20. Two reaſons are here further urged, why the faithful ſhould here endure want in patient hope, and neither fear nor envy the proſperity of the proud.

1. Becauſe in death the ſoul of the righteous hath hope. The Lord will redeem him from the power of the grave, and receive him into his everlaſting arms of love. The ſame Jeſus that hath paid the price of redemption for his people, will aſſuredly raiſe them up at the laſt day. Therefore, whatever outward diſtinctions may now ſubſiſt, they are trivial; one mite of grace that promiſes an intereſt in the eternal glory, is better than all the great riches of the ungodly.

2. Becauſe the end of the proud and ungodly man is terrible. In the preſent diſpenſation of God's providence, indeed, they are ſeen to flouriſh; their riches flow in like a river; their families increaſe; their names are reſpected; they bleſs themſelves, as if they had heaven's favour, and ſay, Soul, take thine eaſe; whilſt others fooliſhly follow their example, and encourage the deceit; praiſing their worldly wiſdom, and admiring them as the truly happy men. Such general approbation, and apparent proſperity, might be apt to awaken the envy, or excite the fears of the faithful. But there is no cauſe for either: this big-ſwoln worm is duſt of the earth, and returning quickly to the grave: thither, neither his riches, honour, nor fame can deſcend: among his fathers his ſepulchre will be found; and, when once he hath left the light of this ſun, the outer and eternal darkneſs muſt receive him, without one glimpſe of hope or joy for ever. Such is the miſerable end of the proud man, that neglects the concerns of eternity, for the vanities of time; and, ſtupid as the beaſts which periſh, underſtandeth not the things that make for his everlaſting peace. *Note*, (1.) We may not take our eſtimation of men from their own vaunts, or the world's admiration, but from the word of God. Many a joyous ſinner, many a great character in the earth, whom man bleſſes, is a wretch in proſpect, and under the preſent and eternal curſe of God. (2.) It is not what we have in this world, but what we carry with us into the next, that conſtitutes the true riches. How infinitely more magnificent

cent are they adorned, who deſcend into the grave cloathed in the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, than they who wear purple and fine linen every day. How unſpeakably richer the poor ſoul that goes to treaſure incorruptible in heaven, than he who leaves behind him of earth's droſs thouſands and millions. (3.) They are only wiſe who conſider their latter end; and they the moſt errant fools, who forget it. (4.) The ſtate of the moſt loathſome animal is infinitely preferable to the brutiſh ſinner: the one dies, and is no more; the other, after a life of ſinful madneſs, enters upon an eternity of miſery.

PSALM L.

As worldly proſperity is no defence, ſo neither is the form of godlineſs, without the power of it, at all able to protect us in the day of judgment. Here is, 1. *The glorious appearance of the prince that gives law and judgment,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Inſtruction given to his worſhippers to turn their ſacrifices into prayers,* ver. 7—15. 3. *A rebuke to thoſe who pretend to worſhip God, but live in diſobedience to his commands,* ver. 16—20. *Their doom read,* ver. 21, 22. *and warning given to all, to look to their converſation as well as to their devotions,* ver. 23. *This may well refer to the times of Chriſt, when the whole ceremonial ſervice was to be aboliſhed, and in every place men were to lift up pure hands in prayer, without wrath and doubting.*

¶ A pſalm † of [a] Aſaph.

1. THE mighty God, *even* the LORD hath ſpoken, and called the earth from the riſing of the ſun, unto the going down thereof. 2. Out of Zion [b] the perfection of beauty [c] God hath ſhined. 3. Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence: [d] a fire ſhall devour before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous round about him. 4. [e] He ſhall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. 5. [f] Gather my ſaints together unto me: thoſe [g] that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice. 6. And [h] the heavens ſhall declare his righteouſneſs: for [i] God *is* judge himſelf. Selah.

† Or, for.
[a] 1 Chron. xv. 17. & xxv. 2. 2 Chron. xxix. 30.
[b] Pſ. xlviii. 2.
[c] Deut. xxxiii. 2. Pſ. lxxx. 1.
[d] Pſ. xcvii. 3. Dan. vii. 10. 2 Theſ. i. 8. Rev. xviii. 8.
[e] Deut. iv. 26. Iſa. i. 2.
[f] Mat. xiii. 30. & xxiv. 31.
[g] Exod. xxiv. 8.
[h] Pſ. xcvii. 6.
[i] Pſ. lxxv. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 1.

v. 1—6. Aſaph, whoſe name is prefixed to this pſalm, was either the compoſer of it, 2 *Chron*, xxix. 30. or the chief muſician that led the band. The matter is ſolemn and weighty.

1. The pſalmiſt begins with an addreſs, awakening the attention of heaven and earth from that great God, who, in the glory of uncreated majeſty, aſcends his radiant throne. The earth, from the riſing to the ſetting ſun, is commanded to hearken, whilſt out of Zion, the church of God on earth, or from the heavenly hill of glory, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the El, Elohim, Jehovah, the almighty ſelf-exiſtent God, ſhines forth in his goſpel to enlighten the earth; or from his judgment-ſeat ſends out his light and truth, that he may weigh the actions of men in his balances, and execute righteous judgment. Terrible ſhall be the day of his coming, as when of old in thick clouds and darkneſs he deſcended on Sinai's hoary top, and more awful his voice than thoſe mighty thunderings and words of terror, at which Moſes ſo exceedingly trembled. In ſuch tremendous majeſty he appeared, when, after his ſlighted goſpel, ſwift vengeance ſeized on the Jewiſh people; and we wait for the laſt moſt awful manifeſtation of his glory, when the aſſembled world of men and angels ſhall ſtand before his dread tribunal.

2. He commands his ſaints to be ſelected and ſeparated for himſelf, either by the miniſters of the churches, whoſe preaching is made effectual to the vocation of Chriſt's redeemed people; or by his angels in the reſurrection-day, who ſhall gather the righteous from among the wicked: and theſe choſen ones are deſcribed as having *made a covenant with him by ſacrifice*, or *on ſacrifice*; that is to ſay, have laid hold on the everlaſting covenant of grace eſtabliſhed in the Redeemer, and feeding on the memorials of his ſacrifice, have ſolemnly given up themſelves to him, as bought with his blood. *Note*, (1.) Chriſt's people, who are joined to him by ſolemn ſurrender, and have partaken of his ſacramental inſtitutions upon earth, will be aſſuredly gathered to him in heaven. (2.) All our hopes in eternity depend on the great ſacrifice our Redeemer offered in our behalf.

3. His righteouſneſs ſhall be applauded; the heavens and all their hoſts will proclaim it, and praiſe him for it; *for God is judge himſelf*, and therefore all his deciſions muſt be guided by unerring juſtice. His ſaints ſhall be acquitted with honour; for who can lay any thing to their charge whom God juſtifieth, *Rom.* viii. 33. and the ſinner with righteous judgment ſhall be condemned and ſpeechleſs.

7. [k] Hear, O my people, and I will ſpeak; O Iſrael, and I will teſtify againſt thee: [l] I *am* God, *even* thy God. 8. [m] I will not reprove thee for thy ſacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings *to have been* continually before me. 9. [n] I will take no bullock out of thy houſe, *nor* he-goats out of thy folds. 10. For every beaſt of the foreſt *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thouſand hills. 11. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beaſts of the field *are* † mine. 12. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for [o] the world *is* mine, and the fulneſs thereof. 13. [p] Will I eat the fleſh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? 14. [q] Offer unto God thankſgiving, and [r] pay thy vows unto the moſt High. 15. And [s] call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and [t] thou ſhalt glorify me.

[k] Pſ. lxxxi. 8.
[l] Exod. xx. 2.
[m] Iſa. i. 11. Jer. vii. 22. Hoſ. vi. 6.
† Or, with me.
[o] Exod. xix. 5. Deut. x. 14. Job xli. 11. Pſ. xxiv. 1. 1 Cor. x. 26.
[p] Iſa. lxvi. 3.
[q] Hoſ. xiv. 2. Heb. xiii. 15.
[r] Deut. xxiii. 21. Pſal. lxxvi. 11. Eccleſ. v. 4.
[s] Job xxii. 27. Pſ. xci. 15. & cvii. 6, 13. Jam. v. 13.
[t] Ver. 23.

v. 7—15. Theſe words are an addreſs to the Jewiſh people, once his choſen, and towards whom God of old ſtood in a peculiar relation, as their God, but now about to be rejected for their diſobedience and formality, and an abolition made of all the ceremonial worſhip, to give way for a more general and purer ſervice of prayer and praiſe through Jeſus Chriſt.

1. God aboliſhes the ceremonial inſtitutions; not that their neglect of theſe was their capital fault; their ſin was the hypocriſy, and unbelieving heart, wherewith they offered them, and their continued violations of the moral law, in compariſon with which, theſe were ſuperficial obſervances. Though they were of divine inſtitution, they were not of any intrinſic value, or brought any glory to God, farther than as they led to Chriſt, whoſe blood alone could give them any efficacy, or reſtore the honour of a broken law, *v.* 8. and it was abſurd to imagine, that God could be any more profited than pleaſed by the fleſh of bulls, or the blood of goats, when, as the univerſal Creator and poſſeſſor of all things, he could never want ſuch oblations, *v.* 9, 10. Now therefore another diſpenſation, different from the Sinai covenant, is iſſued forth; and when Jeſus, the end of all the ceremonies, appears, this ſhadowy ſervice muſt ceaſe of courſe, and a new and ſpiritual worſhip be eſtabliſhed. Therefore,

2. He directs what this ſhould be: *Offer unto God thankſgiving*, or *confeſſion*; confeſſion of daily ſin, and thankſgiving for daily mercies, and *pay thy vows unto the Moſt High*; be ſincere in univerſal devotedneſs to the ſervice of the bleſſed Jeſus, and in his holy ſacrament give up thyſelf to him; and *call upon me in the day of trouble*, when thy conſcience is diſturbed with ſin, or affliction of any kind overtakes thee, and *I will deliver thee* from the fears of guilt by my pardoning grace, which all the legal ſacrifices could not do; from every trouble, by my almighty power and love; and *thou ſhalt glorify me*, by aſcribing to me the praiſe of all, as the author and finiſher of the ſinner's ſalvation. *Note*, Jeſus, who works all for us and in us, juſtly deſerves to have the glory of all aſcribed to him by us.

16. But [u] unto the wicked God ſaith, What haſt thou to do to declare my ſtatutes, or *that* thou ſhouldſt take my covenant in thy mouth? 17. [x] Seeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee. 18. When thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſentedſt with him, and † haſt been partaker with adulterers. 19. Thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and [y] thy tongue frameth deceit. 20. Thou ſitteſt *and* ſpeakeſt againſt thy brother; thou ſlandereſt thine own mother's ſon. 21. Theſe *things* haſt thou done, [z] and I kept ſilence: [a] thou thoughteſt that I was altogether *ſuch a one* as thyſelf: *but* [b] I will reprove thee, and ſet *them* in order before thine eyes. 22. Now conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt I tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* none to deliver. 23. [c] Whoſo offereth praiſe, glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth *his* converſation *aright*, [d] will I ſhew the ſalvation of God.

[u] Iſa. i. 11, &c.
[x] Rom. ii. 21, 22.
† Heb. Thy portion was with, &c.
[y] Pſ. lii. 2.
[z] Iſa. lvii. 11.
[a] Rom. ii. 4.
[b] Pſ. xc. 8.
[c] Pſ. lxix. 30, 31. Rom. xii. 1.
[d] Pſ. xci. 16.

v. 16—23. We have here the character and doom of the hypocrite and the ungodly, the Phariſees and Sadducees of our Saviour's day, and all their ſucceſſors in every age, who ſay, and do not.

1. The ſins charged upon them. They were, [1.] *Hypocrites*, *v.* 16, 17. They pretended to teach others, yet themſelves lived in contradiction to their own precepts. The Phariſees ſat in Moſes's ſeat, yet moſt oppoſed him, of whom Moſes and the prophets wrote. They affected ſanctity, but were in fact abominable, and, to every good work, reprobate. *Note*, Among the moſt guilty and criminal in the day of God, will thoſe be found, who pretend to be teachers of the goſpel, yet both adulterate the doctrines, and contradict it in their practice. [2.] *Thieves*, *v.* 18. Unjuſt themſelves, and conniving at the knavery of others; eating the wages they never earned, and, figuratively, robbing God of his glory, by ſetting up human ſufficiency againſt his grace, and the miſerable works of fallen man as the cauſe of his juſtification, inſtead of the righteouſneſs of the Redeemer. [3.] *Adulterers*, *v.* 18. either preaching continence, as monks and friars, and practiſing lewdneſs; or, for the ſake of advantage, conniving at men's ſins, and not daring

to rebuke them; or, ſpiritually adulterers, lovers of pleaſure more than lovers of God, and courting the friendſhip and favour of ſinners, preferably to the honour that cometh from God only. [4.] *Slanderers, v.* 19, 20. framing lies, and uttering them even againſt thoſe who are under the neareſt relation to them, as is common with the falſe and faithleſs miniſters, who cannot bear their own mother's children, their brethren even in the ſame church, whoſe faithful teſtimony for Chriſt, and holy lives, they are ever ſeeking to malign, in order to cover their own ſloth, ignorance, and falſhood.

2. God's patience in bearing long with them. He kept ſilence, though the evidence of their guilt was clear; and this, inſtead of leading them to repentance, hardened them in their iniquities. Thus the Phariſees perſiſted in their rejection of Jeſus, becauſe immediate judgments did not overtake them; and ſinners in general think God doth not care for, or overlooks, their evil deeds, as if he connived at ſin, and really were ſuch as themſelves. But they are grievouſly deceived; the day of ſolemn recompenſe is coming, when all the iniquities and hypocriſy of the ſinner, like an army marſhalled in battle array, ſhall be ſet in order before him; and God, though long ſilent, will ſpeak, bring forth his book of judgment, where every thought and word is regiſtered; will cover with conſcious guilt the miſerable ſoul, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites and ſelf-deceivers in eternal darkneſs, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth.

3. The Pſalmiſt urges them to conſider theſe awful truths, that they might prevent the impending judgments. *Conſider this, ye that forget God.* This is at the bottom of all evil: If God's omniſcience, his holineſs, and the warnings of his word, were not forgotten and neglected, it were impoſſible for a moment to be at peace in ſin; but our forgetfulneſs of him will not make him forget us. His wrath is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, eſpecially ſuch as hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs; and high time it is they ſhould awake out of ſleep, *leſt I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you*: for, though he long delays, God is not ſlack; vengeance, terrible as ſure, will overtake the ſinner; and if once his wrath ſeizes the ſoul, there is no more hope or help, his wrath will be for ever, *wrath to come.*

4. The way to eſcape the rod of God's judgment, is to bow before the ſceptre of his grace. *Whoſo offereth praiſe*, in return for the riches of that mercy revealed in the Redeemer, *glorifieth me*; for therein God's glory is moſt tranſcendently diſplayed: *and to him who ordereth his converſation aright*, in conſequence of ſuch grace extended to him, inclining him to that willing obedience which in Chriſt Jeſus is acceptable, *will I ſhew the ſalvation of God*, the completion of it, in the day of the appearing of the great God and Saviour, when his humble, patient, ſuffering ſervants upon earth ſhall be tranſlated to the triumphant ſaints in heaven.

PSALM LI.

In this pſalm, 1. *He confeſſeth his ſin,* ver. 3—6, 2. *He prays earneſtly for the pardon of it,* ver. 1, 2, 7, 8. 3. *For peace of conſcience,* ver. 8—12. 4. *For grace to go and ſin no more,* ver. 10, 11, 14. 5. *For liberty of acceſs to God,* ver. 15. 6. *He promiſeth to do what he could for the good of the ſouls of others,* ver. 13. *and for the glory of God,* ver. 16, 17, 19. *And laſtly, concludes with a prayer for Sion and Jeruſalem,* ver. 18. *Let thoſe whoſe conſciences by ſin are accuſed, yea, though they have been guilty of adultery and murder, or the like enormous crimes, apply to Jeſus in the ſentiments of this pſalm, and they will find that the Lord's hand is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear.*

¶ To the chief muſician, A pſalm of David, [a] when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after [b] he had gone in to Bathſheba.

[a] 2 Sam. xii. 1.
[b] 2 Sam. xi. 4.

1. HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindneſs: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, [c] blot out my tranſgreſſions. 2. [d] Waſh me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanſe me from my ſin. 3. For I acknowledge my tranſgreſſions: and my ſin *is* ever before me. 4. [e] Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done *this* evil [f] in thy ſight: [g] that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, *and* be clear when thou judgeſt. 5. Behold, [h] I was ſhapen in iniquity: and in ſin did my mother † conceive me. 6. Behold, [i] thou deſireſt truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou ſhalt make me to know wiſdom.

[c] Ver. 9. Iſa. xliii. 25. & xliv. 22. Col. ii. 14.
[d] Heb. ix. 14. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5.
[e] Gen. xx. 6. & xxxix. 9.
[f] Luke xv. 21.
[g] Rom. iii. 4.
[h] Job xiv. 4. Pſ. lviii. 3. John iii. 6. Rom. v. 12. Eph. ii. 3.
† Heb. Warm me.
[i] Job xxxviii. 36.

v. 1—6. Mournful was the occaſion of this penitential pſalm. The matter of Uriah was the great blemiſh in the character of the man after God's own heart; and ſcarce a more complicated ſcene of guilt can be conceived; adultery and murder, aggravated with every circumſtance of ingratitude, baſeneſs, hypocriſy, injuſtice, treachery; and this to one whoſe fidelity deſerved the moſt honourable and diſtinguiſhed regard: and all this rendered more deſperately wicked, ſcandalous, and offenſive to God and man, when we conſider the perſon, his ſtation, character, religious profeſſion, and the unſpeakable mercies, temporal and ſpiritual, he had received at the hands of God. Yet what cannot ſovereign grace effect! Behold this miſerable ſinner ſought by divine mercy, when inſenſible and hardened; awakened, convinced, humbled, pardoned. The effuſions of his broken heart on this occaſion are here recorded: [1.] For our admonition, that we way know how bitter and evil a thing ſin is, however pleaſing in the enjoyment. [2.] To awaken our jealouſy and fear, leſt we alſo being tempted, fall from our ſtedfaſtneſs. [3.] To declare the ſtupendous patience and ineſtimable rich grace of God towards his people, who, in their moſt deſperate eſtate, never leaves or forſakes them. [4.] To engage us, after our moſt unhappy falls, not to be driven from God in deſpair, but to return to him with a broken heart, and truſt on the blood that cleanſeth from all ſin. [5.] To ſet us an example of the duty of penitents, to take public ſhame, where they have given public offence, and count no abaſement too great, to teſtify their remorſe and anguiſh for the diſhonour done to God, as well as for the injury done to men.

1. He cries for mercy to a pardoning God. As a periſhing ſinner he makes but one plea, Mercy, dear Lord, mercy I crave. All he had done and ſuffered for God and his cauſe comes not into his mouth or mind: were it not for the loving-kindneſs of God, his pure, free, unmerited, ſovereign mercy, his ſtate was deſperate; but he ſaw in God not only tender mercies, but a multitude of tender mercies, great and extenſive as his numberleſs iniquities; therefore he ardently prays, *Blot out my tranſgreſſions*; and, as one ſin peculiarly heavy lay upon his conſcience, from this eſpecially he begs to be cleanſed. *Note,* (1.) If our ſins be not blotted out by the blood of a Redeemer, and our debt paid by our Surety's ſufferings, nothing can reſcue us from the arreſt of judgment, or deliver us from being caſt into the priſon of hell. (2.) They who feel the burden of ſin cannot but cry importunately for mercy at God's hands. (3.) The hope and promiſe of pardon is the great inducement for ſinners always to pray, and not faint.

2. He deeply acknowledges his tranſgreſſions manifold and great, and *his ſin*, his peculiarly provoking ſin, was ever before him. It haunted his imagination like a terrible ſpectre; every thing around him ſerved to awaken ſome circumſtances of his guilt; and, riſing up, and lying down, his conſcience, wounded with the bitter remembrance, groaned being burdened. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned:* he had ſinned againſt others, againſt Uriah, his wife, againſt his own ſoul, and all God's people; but that which was the deepeſt ſting of guilt, was the offence againſt God: *and done this evil in thy ſight*; daringly, as if defying his power to puniſh; and openly, for though hid from men, what darkneſs, or ſhadow of death, could exclude his piercing eye? Juſt therefore were all the threatnings of God, 2 *Sam.* xii. 10. againſt him; yea, leſs than his iniquity deſerved; for not in this inſtance only he ſtood convicted: ſin, traced to its fountain-head, laid open a ſcene of deep and deſperate apoſtacy within, that added aggravation to all his crimes. *Behold, I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me:* no outward fruit had been produced, but what was the genuine produce of a nature altogether corrupt, and utterly defiled within. *Note,* (1.) A heart truly broken under a ſenſe of ſin, never ſeeks exculpation, but deſires to take all ſhame and confuſion to itſelf. (2.) The exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin lies in its oppoſition to God's nature and law. (3.) True penitents ever juſtify God in his judgments, however heavy upon them. (4.) No perſon was ever really humbled for any ſin, till they were brought acquainted with their fallen nature, and ſaw there the eſſence of all iniquity.

3. What God required, David deſired to offer, *truth in the inward parts*; for from deep heart-felt ſorrow for ſin he poured out his humbling confeſſion, and, vile as his paſt conduct had been, now he in ſimplicity deſired to pleaſe God, and he truſted God would teach and guide him. *In the hidden part thou ſhalt make me to know wiſdom,* the wiſdom that maketh wiſe unto ſalvation, the knowledge of ſin, and of God's pardoning love in Jeſus Chriſt, producing all holy converſation and godlineſs. *Note,* (1.) It is not the outward form, but the inward affection, God requires. (2.) He who commands, *Give me thy heart*, can alone work in us the will or ability in ſimplicity to ſurrender up ourſelves to him.

7. [k] Purge me with hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean: waſh me, and I ſhall be [l] whiter than ſnow. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladneſs: *that* the bones *which* thou haſt broken, [m] may rejoice. 9. Hide thy face from my ſins, and [n] blot out all mine iniquities. 10. [o] Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a † right ſpirit within me. 11. Caſt me not away from thy

[k] Lev. xiv. 4, 6. Num. xix. 18. Heb. ix. 19.
[l] Iſa. i. 18.
[m] Mat. v. 4.
[n] Ver. 1.
[o] Eph. ii. 10.
† Or, Firm, or conſtant.

p Gen. vi. 3. thy preſence ; and [p] take not thy holy Spirit from me.
12. Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation : and up-
q Luke xxii. 32. hold me *with thy* free Spirit. 13. [q] *Then* will I teach
tranſgreſſors thy ways, and ſinners ſhall be converted un-
to thee.

v. 7—13. In hope of mercy from the father of mercies, the pſalmiſt continues his prayer,

1. For the pardon of his ſins, *v*, 7—9. *Purge me with hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean, waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow* ; alluding to the purifying the leper, and the unclean perſon under the law, *Lev.* xiv. 4—8. *Numb.* xix. 6—19. The blood which was ſprinkled with the bunch of hyſſop, repreſented the blood of Jeſus ; and the water, that fountain which was opened in his ſide for ſin and for uncleanneſs. If our conſciences are ſprinkled with this cleanſing blood, and our ſouls waſhed in theſe healing ſtreams, every ſtain of guilt will be done away, and we ſhall be whiter than ſnow. All our ſins will then be blotted out, as the cloud before the riſing ſun, *Iſa.* xliv. 22. and God's pure eyes behold no ſpot nor blemiſh in us.

2. For the reſtoration of his joys. Sin had ſpread a deadly gloom over all his comforts, and the wounds of his ſoul occaſioned bitterer anguiſh, than the grating of broken bones. But if his iniquity, the cauſe of his grief, were removed, then he hoped God would again lift up the light of his countenance, put gladneſs into his heart, and *reſtore* him again *to the joys of his ſalvation*, *v.* 12. *Note*, (1.) They who have felt a broken heart, have known an anguiſh that the pains of broken bones can but imperfectly repreſent. (2.) A backſliding ſoul, who hath fled to God in Jeſus Chriſt, may humbly hope, not only that he ſhall not periſh, but be reſtored again to his former joys. (3.) He who gives the pardon, muſt give the comfort of it alſo.

3. For a new heart, *v.* 10. A ſoul ſenſible of the evil of ſin, deſires as much to be delivered from the power as the puniſhment of it. *Create in me a clean heart* ; *clean* from the allowed indulgence of ſin ; *create*, becauſe the new creation in Chriſt Jeſus is the work of almighty power and grace alone ; *and renew a right ſpirit within me* ; *prepared*, or *firm*, as the word may ſignify : *right*, as recovered from its grievous backſliding ; *prepared* for all God's work and ſervice ; *firm*, never again thus to depart from God.

4. For the continual ſenſe of God's gracious preſence, and the ſupport of his Spirit. *Caſt me not away*, as one abominable and reprobate, *from thy preſence*, as if abhorring the ſight of me ; but look upon me with thy wonted favour and regard, *and take not thy holy Spirit from me* ; though grieved by my perverſeneſs, yet take it not utterly away, but, as a ſpirit of holineſs, let me find his bleſſed agency upon my ſoul, *and uphold me* amidſt all the dangers that ſurround me, that I may never fall ; and this *with thy free Spirit*, whoſe operations are all gracious and free, and the effects of them, liberty, and readineſs to ſerve the bleſſed God. *Note*, They who are renewed in true holineſs, count God's ſervice perfect freedom.

5. In return for ſuch ineſtimable mercies, he will declare the riches of the grace he hath taſted, and by experience *teach tranſgreſſors* God's *ways* ; how he may be found in humble prayer, and how ready he is to receive the miſerable ſoul that flies to him, even after its deepeſt falls : and thus *ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee* ; reſcued from deſpair, and encouraged to return, becauſe God will yet have mercy, yea, he will abundantly pardon. *Note*, (1.) If we have found mercy and plenteous redemption, we cannot but declare what great things God hath done for us, and invite others to come and taſte that the Lord is gracious. (2.) They who have themſelves known the pangs of a broken heart, are the fitteſt comforters for others in the like afflicted caſe. (3.) It is a great encouragement to the ſinner ready to deſpair, when he hears, not only that there are promiſes of pardon, but that others, as guilty as himſelf, have actually obtained mercy.

r 2 Sam. xi. 17. 14. Deliver me from [r] blood-guiltineſs, O God, thou
God of my ſalvation ; *and* my tongue ſhall ſing aloud
of thy righteouſneſs. 15. O LORD, open thou my
lips, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe. 16.
s Pſ. xl. 6. & l. 8. Iſa. i. 11. Jer. vii. 22. Hoſ. vi. 6. For [s] thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give *it* :
thou delighteſt not in burnt-offering. 17. [t] The ſa-
crifices of God *are* a broken ſpirit : a broken and a con-
t Pſ. xxxiv. 18. Iſa. lvii. 15. & lxvi. 2. trite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe. 18. Do
good in thy good pleaſure unto Zion : build thou the
walls of Jeruſalem. 19. Then ſhalt thou be pleaſed with
u Pſ. iv. 5. Mal. iii. 3. [u] the ſacrifices of righteouſneſs, with burnt-offering and
whole burnt-offering : then ſhall they offer bullocks upon
thine altar.

v. 14—19. Particular ſins lying heavy upon the conſcience, will ſtir up particular mention of them.

1. David prays to be delivered from *blood-guiltineſs*, and a heavy load is this. The blood of Uriah, and thoſe who fell with him, 2 *Sam.* xi. 15—17. witneſſed againſt him. He owns and trembles under the guilty and grievous charge ; yet, *O God*, thou art *able to ſave*, however deep the ſtain of my ſin : *thou God of my ſalvation*, in whom I am encouraged to truſt, that thou *wilt* ſave, and then *my* grateful heart and *tongue ſhall ſing aloud of thy righteouſneſs* : for in every pardon granted to the ſinner, it is not his miſery or penitence which God regards, nor doth his ſalvation come from God's mercy abſolutely conſidered, but regard is therein ever had to the ſufferings of Jeſus, the ſinner's ſurety ; whence it becomes an act of God's righteouſneſs to pardon, foraſmuch as the Redeemer hath born our ſins ; and when we plead his vicarious obedience and ſufferings, then God is juſt in juſtifying the ungodly.

2. He begs that his lips might be opened, *v.* 15. which guilt had ſealed up ; for how could he pray to, or praiſe God, whilſt lying under ſuch abominations ? Yea, though he had begun to mourn in his prayer, yet, till the joys of God's ſalvation were reſtored, he could not rejoice with a ſong.

3. He offers up that beſt ſacrifice, a broken heart. *Thou deſireſt not ſacrifice*, no ſacrifice being appointed under the law for murder, adultery, or any wilful tranſgreſſion : had it been, tho' never ſo expenſive, *I would have given it*. *Thou delighteſt not in burnt-offering* : even in the ſacrifices of divine appointment, God delighted not in the beaſts that were offered, but deſigned in theſe to point them to the one great ſacrifice of Jeſus, in whom alone he could be well-pleaſed. In him having found acceptance, and on him, the altar, preſenting *the ſacrifices of a broken ſpirit and contrite heart*, God doth not deſpiſe the offering ; it is accepted in the beloved, and regarded as a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour.

4. Having found grace for himſelf, he becomes an advocate for Zion. *Do good in thy good pleaſure unto Zion : build thou the walls of Jeruſalem*. For his own kingdom and people he prays, that his ſins might not bring judgments upon them ; but that they might experience God's goodneſs, and be ſtrengthened by his might : or more generally for the ſpiritual Zion, that increaſing converts might be added, and, in numbers and ſtrength, the goſpel church be eſtabliſhed.

5. Peace being made between God and them, *then ſhalt thou be pleaſed with the ſacrifices of righteouſneſs, with burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering*. Their perſons being accepted, their ſervices would be pleaſing ; and gratitude for their mercies would make their ſacrifices liberal and chearful ; *then ſhall they offer bullocks upon thine altar*. *Note*, Since the ſhadows are fled in the offering of the body of Jeſus once for all, it remains now that through him we *offer up ourſelves to God*, *our bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits, to be a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reaſonable ſervice* ; and this ſhall *pleaſe the Lord better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs*, Pſal. lxix. 31.

PSALM LII.

In this pſalm, 1. *David accuſes and upbraids the wicked Doeg*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He paſſeth ſentence upon him*, ver. 5. 3. *He foretels the triumphs of the righteous in the execution of the ſentence*, ver. 6, 7. 4. *He comforts himſelf in the mercy of God, and the aſſurance he had that he ſhould yet praiſe him*, ver. 8, 9.

¶ To the chief muſician, Maſchil, *A pſalm* of David,
[a] when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and a 1 Sam. xxii. 9.
ſaid unto him, David is come to the houſe of Ahi-
melech.

1. WHY boaſteſt thou thyſelf in miſchief, O
[b] mighty man ? the goodneſs of God *endureth* b 1 Sam. xxi. 7.
continually. 2. [c] Thy tongue deviſeth miſchiefs : [d] like c Pſ. l. 19.
a ſharp razor, working deceitfully. 3. Thou loveſt evil d Pſ. lvii. 4. & lix. 7. & lxiv. 3.
more than good : *and* [e] lying rather than to ſpeak righte-
ouſneſs. Selah. 4. Thou loveſt all devouring words, e Jer. ix. 3, 5.
† O *thou* deceitful tongue. 5. God ſhall likewiſe de- † Or, and the deceitful tongue.
ſtroy thee for ever, he ſhall take thee away, and pluck
thee out of ‡ *thy* dwelling-place, and root thee out of ‡ Or, the tabernacle.
the land of the living. Selah.

v. 1—5. The title of this pſalm informs us of the occaſion on which it was compoſed, and an afflictive one it was : wherein, whilſt Doeg's malicious and cruel wickedneſs ſtood the object of juſt abhorrence, David's diſſimulation, tho' undeſigned, which gave a handle for all the miſchief, no doubt grieved him much, *See* 1 *Sam.* xxii. 22. So great a matter a little fire kindles ; how careful then ſhould we be of all our words !

1. David expoſtulates with Doeg : *Why boaſteſt thou thyſelf in miſchief, O mighty man ?* It was mean as wicked to fall on thoſe who were unarmed, and whoſe profeſſion ſhould have been their protection from inſult ; but he not only executed the bloody command, but gloried in his wickedneſs. *Note*, Glorying in ſin is the ſummit of iniquity.

2. He profeſſes his own confidence in God : *The goodneſs of God endureth continually.* Doeg would as gladly have ſhed David's

vid's blood as Ahimelech's; but a good God was his protector, and he defied the impotent malice of ſuch a foe.

3. He lays ſundry and heavy accuſations againſt Doeg. *Thy tongue deviſeth miſchiefs*; in deſign, crafty; in expreſſion, artful; *like a ſharp razor, working deceitfully*, that cuts the throat, inſtead of ſhaving the beard. *Thou loveſt evil more than good*; thy wicked conduct ſhews the principle from whence it flowed, a heart apoſtate from good, and rooted in evil; *and lying rather than to ſpeak righteouſneſs*; miſrepreſenting Ahimelech, and by a lying report procuring his death. *Thou loveſt all devouring words*, delighting in the wickedneſs he committed, *O thou deceitful tongue*. *Note*, (1.) A lying and deceitful tongue is God's abhorrence. (2.) A crafty wicked man is the ſtrongeſt image of the devil.

4. His mightineſs ſhould be no preſervative from ruin. *God ſhall deſtroy thee for ever*, whoſe arm can reach the moſt daring and exalted ſinner, and whoſe judgments extend to eternity. *He ſhall take thee away*, by ſome ſudden ſtroke, *and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place*, or *the tabernacle*; either his own houſe, or, more probably, God's tabernacle, where he hypocritically paid his devotions; and *root thee out of the land of the living*; cut off not only from communion with the church of God on earth, but conſigned to that death which is the wages of ſin, the eternal death of body and ſoul in hell. *Note*, This is the end of a lying tongue.

6. [f] The righteous alſo ſhall ſee, and [g] fear, and [h] ſhall laugh at him. 7. Lo, *this is* the man *that* made not God his ſtrength: but [i] truſted in the abundance of his riches, *and* ſtrengthned himſelf in his † wickedneſs. 8. But I ‡ *am* [k] like a green olive-tree in the houſe of God: I truſt in the mercy of God for ever and ever. 9. I will praiſe thee for ever, becauſe thou haſt done *it*: and I will wait on thy name, for [l] *it is* good before thy ſaints.

f Pſ. xl. 3. & lxiv. 9.
g Rev. xv. 4.
h Pſ. lviii. 10.
i Pſ. xlix. 6.
† Or, ſubſtance.
‡ Or, ſhall be.
k Hoſ. xiv. 6.
l Pſ. liv. 6.

v. 6—9. Short is the triumphing of the wicked, and his fall is the joy of God's ſaints.

1. They are here deſcribed mocking at his calamity. *The righteous ſhall ſee it*, for it ſhall quickly be accompliſhed, *and fear*, with filial and reverential awe before the judgments of a holy God, and be themſelves thereby deterred from offending; *and ſhall laugh at him*; not that they take pleaſure in his miſery, but that God is glorified, and his miſchievous deſigns diſappointed. *Lo, this is the man that made not God his ſtrength, but truſted in the abundance of his riches*, which is to change a rock for a reed. How great the folly! but, worſe, *he ſtrengthned himſelf in his wickedneſs*; as if daring impiety would be his protection from puniſhment. *Note*, They who make gold their confidence, and harden themſelves in their wicked ways, will find a lie in their right hand, and their end eternal deſolations.

2. David expreſſes his own confidence in God. *I am*, or rather, *I ſhall be, like a green olive-tree in the houſe of God*. Tho' then an exile, he doubted not his return, and fixed abode in the ſanctuary; rooted as an olive-tree, ever green and flouriſhing, and bearing the precious fruits of peace and joy. *I truſt in the mercy of God for ever and ever*: his mercy is unchangeable, therefore they who truſt in it ſhall never be moved. *I will praiſe thee for ever, becauſe thou haſt done it*; avenged the innocent blood Doeg ſhed, and reſtored him from his preſent baniſhment; neither of which indeed were yet performed; but what faith comprehends, is as if already done, and calls for the grateful thankſgiving: *and I will wait on thy name*, in patient hope of what is promiſed; or in thy houſe and ordinances, when brought again to the courts of the ſanctuary; *for it is good before thy ſaints*: the name of God is good and grateful to them; his ſervice and ordinances pleaſing; and patient hope approved by long and happy experience to be the ſure way to everlaſting bliſs.

PSALM LIII.

God ſpeaketh once, yea twice, and it were well if man would even then perceive it. This pſalm is the ſame almoſt verbatim with the fourteenth: the ſcope of it is to convince us of our ſins; and abundant need there is that this eſſential point ſhould be repeatedly touched upon. God, by the pſalmiſt here, 1. *Shews us how bad we are*, ver. 1. 2. *Proves it upon us by his own certain knowledge*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *He ſpeaks terror to perſecutors, the worſt of ſinners*, ver. 4, 5. 4. *He ſpeaks encouragement to God's perſecuted people*, ver. 6.

¶ To the chief muſician † upon Mahalath, [a] Maſchil, A pſalm of David.

1. [b] THE fool hath ſaid in his heart, *There is* no God; corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: [c] *there is* none that doth good. 2. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were *any* that did underſtand, that did ſeek God. 3. Every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; *there is* none that doth good, no not one. 4. Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people, *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God. 5. [d] There ‡ were they in great fear, *where* no fear was: for God hath ſcattered the bones of him that encampeth *againſt* thee, thou haſt put *them* to ſhame, becauſe God hath deſpiſed them. 6. § O that the ſalvation of Iſrael *were come* out of Zion! when God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob ſhall rejoice, *and* Iſrael ſhall be glad.

† Or, concerning infirmity.
a Pſ. xxxii. & xlii. tit.
b Pſ. xiv. 1, &c.
c Rom. iii. 10.
d Lev. xxvi. 17, 36. Prov. xxviii. 1.
‡ Heb. They feared a fear.
§ Or, Who will give ſalvations.

v. 1—6. Mahalath, in the title of this pſalm, is by ſome ſuppoſed to be a muſical inſtrument, but by others referred to the ſubject of the pſalm, *concerning infirmity*, that is, the deplorable diſeaſe of ſin, under which the fallen nature labours; a truth of deep moment, and needs to be again and again inculcated, as it is the ground of all true humiliation, and, in a ſort, a key to all the doctrines of the goſpel.

1. The practical atheiſm of the natural heart is obſerved, *v.* 1. We firſt leave God far above out of our ſight, and then dare ſin ſecurely.

2. The univerſal guilt of mankind is aſſerted, *v.* 2. Not ſome, or a few in one age or nation, but all in every age, in every nation, have come ſhort of the glory of God. *There is none that doth good*, according to the perfect rule of God's law, *no not one*.

3. The greatneſs of this guilt is noticed, as flowing from that deep and deſperate corruption in the nature, which produces abominable iniquity in the practice; particularly, *v.* 4. ſelfiſhneſs, covetouſneſs, oppreſſion, and habitual neglect of prayer. *Note*, Sin is the abominable thing God hates: the leaſt ſpot of it, uncleanſed, muſt eternally exclude us from his preſence.

4. The folly, as well as the wickedneſs, of ſinners is great: they live without conſideration; they have no knowledge of themſelves, or of God; of their guilt here, or their ruin hereafter; the god of this world hath blinded their eyes.

5. Their ſecurity will be ſhortly at an end, and terrors overtake the finally impenitent, *v.* 5. They ſhall be in great fear, where before they laughed at danger; ruin unavoidable ſhall deſtroy them, everlaſting confuſion cover them, and God ſhall deſpiſe their impotent reſiſtance.

6. The pſalmiſt concludes with an earneſt wiſh, that God would haſten the ſalvation of his people, reſcue them from amidſt the world that lieth in wickedneſs, and cauſe them to rejoice in Jeſus, their glorious Redeemer and Saviour. *Note*, (1.) Though we are all by nature formed from the ſame maſs of corruption, they who are redeemed by the blood of Jeſus, are ſaved from the pollutions that are in the world. (2.) All ſinners, of whatever rank and degree, and eſpecially thoſe who in the ſpirit of Antichriſt oppoſe the power of true religion, and perſecute its profeſſors, will periſh together, in the day when the triumphs of God's ſaints ſhall be compleated. (3.) We ſhall aſſuredly join the pſalmiſt's prayer, if our hearts poſſeſs his hopes, and cry, Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.

PSALM LIV.

The Ziphites twice attempted to betray David, 1 Sam. xxiii. 19. xxvi. 1. *On which of theſe occaſions this pſalm was compoſed is not certain. Here,* 1. *He complains to God of the malice of his enemies, and prays for help againſt them*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He comforts himſelf with an aſſurance of the divine favour and protection, and that in due time his enemies ſhould be confounded, and he delivered*, ver. 4—7. *What time we are in diſtreſs, we may comfortably ſing this pſalm.*

¶ To the chief muſician [a] on Neginoth, [b] Maſchil, *A pſalm* of David, [c] when the Ziphims came and ſaid to Saul, Doth not David hide himſelf with us?

1. SAVE me, O God, [d] by thy name, and judge me by thy ſtrength. 2. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. 3. For [e] ſtrangers are riſen up againſt me, and oppreſſors ſeek after my ſoul; [f] they have not ſet God before them. Selah.

a Pſ. iv. tit.
b Pſ. xxxii. & xlii. tit.
c 1 Sam. xxiii. 19. & xxvi. 1.
d Pſ. cvi. 8.
e Pſ. lxxxvi. 14.
f Pſ. x. 4.

v. 1—3. It is a comfort to a child of God, that whatever he meets with from man, he hath a friend to fly to, who will never leave nor forſake him. We have here,

1. David's prayer for help and ſtrength. *Save me, O God, by thy name*; by thy power and wiſdom, which can fruſtrate the devices of my perfidious foes; or, *for thy name's ſake*, to manifeſt thy glory in protecting the poor deſtitute that flies to thee

for ſuccour; *and judge me by thy ſtrength*: ſtrongly interpoſe in my behalf; and, as my cauſe is juſt, be thou my judge, O Lord, and avenge me of mine enemies. *Note*, (1.) Prayer is a ſovereign medicine for every diſtreſs. (2.) Salvation cometh from God, and he never faileth thoſe who ſeek him.

2. He complains of his perſecutors. *Strangers are riſen up againſt me*: though they were of his own tribe, and profeſſors of the ſame religion, yet they acted worſe than Philiſtines; *and oppreſſors*, or *the mighty men*, Saul, Doeg, and the Ziphites, *ſeek after my ſoul*: nothing but his life would gratify their blood-thirſty malice: *they have not ſet God before them*; pay no regard to his appointment, forget his all-ſeeing eye, and diſregard the threatnings of his word. *Note*, (1.) The bittereſt enemies of a child of God are often his neareſt neighbours and relations. (2.) When men leave God out of their ſight, there is no wickedneſs too great for them. (3.) Though our ſpiritual foes ſeek with more inveterate malice after our ſouls, than theſe Ziphites after David, God will not leave us in their hands.

4. Behold, God *is* mine helper: [g] the LORD *is* with them that uphold my ſoul. 5. He ſhall reward evil unto † mine enemies; cut them off in thy truth. 6. I will freely ſacrifice unto thee; I will praiſe thy name, O LORD, [h] for *it is* good. 7. For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and [i] mine eye hath ſeen *his deſire* upon mine enemies.

[g] Pſ. cxviii. 7.
† Heb. Thoſe that obſerve me.
[h] Pſ. lii. 9.
[i] Pſ. lix. 10. & xcii. 11.

v. 4—7. Having commended his caſe in prayer to God, we have here,

1. The lively profeſſion of his confidence in God. *Behold*, take notice of it, ye children of God, for your encouragement; be admoniſhed, ye ſons of wickedneſs, before it be too late; *God is my helper* againſt every foe, therefore will I not faint or fear: *the Lord is with them that uphold my ſoul*; he is my upholder, and the friend of my friends, approving and ſupporting them in their adherence to me. *Note*, (1.) They who are faithful to God, ſhall find he will raiſe them up friends in the worſt of times. (2.) They who eſpouſe the cauſe of injured innocence, ſhall be ſupported by the God of truth.

2. He expects ſurely and ſhortly the ruin of his oppoſers, *v.* 5. and, as they ſtruck at God's glory, as well as his life, he prays, *Cut them off in thy truth*, according to the threatnings denounced againſt the ungodly. It is not the wiſh of malice, but the hope of faith.

3. God's gracious help he promiſes thankfully to remember. *I will freely ſacrifice unto thee*, not only the free-will offerings of bullocks, but the more pleaſing oblation of the calves of the lips. *I will praiſe thy name, for it is good*; gracious, and worthy to be praiſed; and moſt becoming him would it be, who had experienced God's goodneſs, to ſhew it forth continually.

4. He looks upon his petitions as already accompliſhed, ſince faith is in exerciſe. *He hath delivered me out of all my trouble*; hath done it in his purpoſe, and I regard it as ſure as if the promiſe was fulfilled; *and mine eye hath ſeen his deſire upon mine enemies*; humbled, and diſabled from hurting him. *Note*, (1.) The ſoul is ſafe, that hath the ſecurity of everlaſting promiſes. (2.) Paſt experience is the earneſt of continual ſupport.

PSALM LV.

It is the general opinion of expoſitors, that David penned this pſalm on Abſalom's rebellion: certain it is, he was in great diſtreſs. 1. *He prays, that God would manifeſt his favour to him, and pleads his own ſorrow and fear*, ver. 1—8. 2. *He prays, that God would manifeſt his diſpleaſure againſt his enemies, and pleads their great wickedneſs and treachery*, ver. 9—15. *and again*, ver. 20, 21. 3. *He aſſures himſelf, that God would in due time appear for him, and encourageth others to truſt in God*, ver. 16—19. *and again*, ver. 22, 23.

¶ To the chief muſician [a] on Neginoth, [b] Maſchil,
A pſalm of David.

[a] Pſ. iv. tit.
[b] Pſ. xxxii. & xlii. tit.

1. GIVE ear to my prayer, O God: and hide not thyſelf from my ſupplication. 2. Attend unto me, and hear me: [c] I mourn in my complaint, and make a noiſe. 3. Becauſe of the voice of the enemy, becauſe of the oppreſſion of the wicked: for [d] they caſt iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. 4. My heart is ſore pained within me: and [e] the terrors of death are fallen upon me. 5. Fearfulneſs and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath † overwhelmed me. 6. And I ſaid, O that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at reſt. 7. Lo *then* would I wander far off, [f] *and* remain in the wilderneſs. Selah. 8. I would haſten my eſcape from the windy ſtorm and tempeſt.

[c] Iſa. xxxviii. 14.
[d] 2 Sam. xv. 3.
[e] Pſ. cxvi. 3.
† Or, covered me.
[f] Jer. ix. 2.

v. 1—8. Swift as Job's meſſengers of evil, David's troubles return; and as ſwift are his applications to him who was able to ſave him.

1. He begs God's attention to his mournful caſe, and that he would not, as one unconcerned about his grief, hide himſelf from his ſupplications. Urgent was his importunity, *becauſe of the voice of the enemy*, loud and threatning; *becauſe of the oppreſſion of the wicked*, whoſe conſpiracy was ſo ſtrong, that he was forced to fly for his life: *for they caſt iniquity upon me*; not content with robbing him of his crown, they ſought to blacken his character; *and in wrath they hate me*, a bitter hatred, ſharpened with fierce wrath. So beſet was the Son of David, when he poured out ſtrong crying and tears: the wicked oppreſſing him, with loud voices demanding his death; laying to his charge things that he knew not of, and blackening his character as a drunkard, a magician, a blaſphemer; with implacable hatred purſuing him, and furious to ſhed his blood. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of men are moſt expoſed to the world's enmity. (2.) We need not ſtartle at the groſſeſt calumnies caſt upon us; it is the croſs we muſt bear after our Maſter.

2. He paints the deep anguiſh of his heart in ſtrong and ſtriking colours. Inward pangs, and terrors of death ſeized him; fearfulneſs, trembling, and horror overwhelmed him. He had faced death often before without dread; but complicated miſery, not only his own, but his kingdom's, now lay upon him; whilſt, no doubt, he alſo remembered his ſins, the bitter cauſe of theſe heavy viſitations; and this was a corroſive to his bleeding wounds. When viſited alſo for iniquities, though not his own, that king, Meſſiah, whom David prefigured, bore our puniſhment in the garden, his ſoul was more deeply pained, his horrors darker, and trembling before the wrath our ſins had provoked, he ſunk to the earth, as unable to bear the inſupportable load. *Note*, (1.) Good men may, like David, in very great trials, find their fears ſtrong, and their faith ſhaken. (2.) Though it is the general privilege of every believer to be delivered from the terrors of death, yet we muſt not conclude, that every one who is not fearleſs in a dying hour, is therefore faithleſs.

3. He is eager to fly from the purſuing ſword. His danger was imminent, the ſtorm high, and he needed wings, yea, the ſwift wings of the dove, to eſcape far away, and in the ſolitary wilderneſs ſeek reſt from thoſe enemies that, like rapacious vultures, threatned to ſeize him in their talons. *Note*, (1.) Thus longs the awakened ſinner, when purſued by the curſes of a broken law, to fly to the boſom of Jeſus, the only ſafe hiding-place. (2.) A child of God in this diſordered world often ſighs after his bleſſed reſt above, and wiſhes for the day when he ſhall reach that peaceful manſion in the ſkies, where ſtorms and tempeſts are no more.

9. † Deſtroy, O LORD, *and* divide their tongues: for I have ſeen [g] violence and ſtrife in the city. 10. Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof; miſchief alſo and ſorrow *are* in the midſt of it. 11. Wickedneſs *is* in the midſt thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her ſtreets. 12. For [h] *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me, then I could have born it; neither *was it* he that hated me, *that* did magnify *himſelf* againſt me, then I would have hid myſelf from him. 13. But [i] *it was* thou, a man, ‡ mine equal, [k] my guide, and mine acquaintance. 14. § We took ſweet counſel together, *and* walked unto the houſe of God in company. 15. Let death ſeize upon them, *and* let them go down quick into ‖ hell: for wickedneſs *is* in their dwellings, *and* among them.

† Heb. Swallow them up. Num. xvi. 30, 33.
[g] Jer. vi. 7.
[h] Pſ. xli. 9.
[i] 2 Sam. xv. 31.
‡ Heb. According to my rank.
[k] 2 Sam. xvi. 23. Pſ. xli. 9.
§ Heb. Who ſweetened counſel.
‖ Or, the grave.

v. 9—15. Though we may not render evil for evil, we may ſafely pray, that God would diſappoint the devices of the wicked, and glorify his own name in their righteous puniſhment, as David here doth.

1. He prefers his juſt complaint againſt them. Jeruſalem, which now was in the hands of the conſpirators, was full of violent and contentious men: day and night theſe compaſſed the walls, and wickedneſs, deceit, and miſchief being in the midſt of her, ſorrow was the neceſſary conſequence; for bad men are a mutual plague. One above the reſt, ſuppoſed to be Ahitophel, he eſpecially complains of; a man in whom he had repoſed the greateſt confidence; ſhewn him the greateſt kindneſs; treated him as his equal, his friend, his companion; joined with him in the courts of the ſanctuary; and therefore juſtly expected from him far different returns; and to be thus diſappointed was in every view exceeding grievous. Had he ever ſhewn any ſign of his hatred before, he would have been more reſerved and cautious; but now his confidence is betrayed, his friend falſe, and from his moſt obliged ſervant he meets the blackeſt ingratitude. *Note*, (1.) The beſt of men, as

leaſt ſuſpicious, are often moſt eaſily impoſed upon. (2.) Hypocriſy hath ever been a deep-rooted evil among profeſſors of religion: we may not marvel, if thoſe we thought high in grace, prove, at laſt, baſe apoſtates. (3.) Chriſt himſelf was betrayed by a boſom friend: out of but twelve diſciples there was one Judas.

2. He prays for their confuſion and ruin, and in the ſpirit of prophecy foreſees it approaching. *Deſtroy them*, or, *ſwallow them up* in thy judgments, as Dathan and Abiram: *divide their tongues*; put confuſion into their counſels: *let death ſeize upon them, ſudden and terrible*; *and let them go down quick into hell*, into *the grave*; cut off by an earthquake, as Korah and his adherents; or *into the place of torment*, where ſinners eternally receive the juſt recompenſe of their deeds. And this he prays, not as moved by revenge, but as a prophet predicting the wages of ſin, and as zealous for the vindication of God's honour, deſiring that *wickedneſs*, which *is in their dwellings and among them*, might receive its juſt recompenſe and reward. *Note*, They who live in wickedneſs muſt infallibly lie down quickly in the flames of hell.

16. As for me, I will call upon God: and the LORD ſhall ſave me. 17. [l] Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud: and he ſhall hear my voice. 18. He hath delivered my ſoul in peace from the battle *that was* againſt me: for there were many with me. 19. God ſhall hear and afflict them, even [m] he that abideth of old, Selah: becauſe [n] they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. 20. He hath put forth his hands againſt ſuch as be at peace with him: he hath † broken his covenant. 21. *The words* of his mouth were ſmoother than butter, but war *was* in his heart: his words were ſofter than oil, [o] yet *were* they drawn ſwords. 22. [p] Caſt thy burden upon the LORD, and he ſhall ſuſtain thee: [q] he ſhall never ſuffer the righteous to be moved. 23. But thou, O God, ſhalt bring them down into the pit of deſtruction: [r] bloody and deceitful men ſhall not [s] live out half their days, but I will truſt in thee.

[l] Dan. vi. 10. Acts x. 3, 9, 30.
[m] Deut. xxxiii. 27.
[n] Jer. xlviii. 11.
† Heb. Prophaned.
[o] Pſ. xxviii. 3. & lvii. 4. & lxii. 4. & lxiv. 3. Prov. v. 3, 4.
[p] Pſ. xxxvii. v. Mat. vi. 25. 1 Pet. v. 7.
[q] Pſ. xxxvii. 24.
[r] Pſ. v. 6.
[s] Job xv. 32. Prov. x. 27. Eccleſ. vii. 17.

v. 16—23. The prayer of faith is the heart's eaſe.

1. David determines unceaſingly to wait upon God, in confidence of being heard and anſwered. No morning ſhould riſe, no evening cloſe, no ſun mount to his meridian height, but with as regular order he would be found bowing his knees to the Father of mercies; and that with fervency, that ſpoke aloud the longings of his heart. *Note*, (1.) Thrice a day, at leaſt, our ſtated ſeaſons of prayer ſhould return, and as much oftener as opportunity or circumſtances require; and if our time be ſhort, let it be the more earneſtly improved. (2.) Strong crying will often be the effect of warm deſire.

2. He already foreſees and triumphs in his compleat ſalvation. *He ſhall ſave me*, *v.* 1. nay, *he hath delivered my ſoul in peace*: it is done, ſince he hath ſpoken, and I have believed. He felt the peace of his deliverance already in his ſoul, *from the battle that was againſt him*: paſt victories enſured the preſent: ſuch as his other foes had been, ſuch ſhould his preſent rebellious ſubjects be, carcaſſes on the plain: *for there were many with me*, even the chariots of God, and the horſemen thereof, and more faithful and loyal ſubjects than at firſt ſeemed to ſide with him. *Note*, They who have God and his hoſts on their ſide, have nothing to fear from the numbers of their adverſaries; for more, as well as greater, are thoſe who are for us, than they who are againſt us.

3. He foretels the fall of his enemies, in conſequence of his prayer. *He that abideth of old*, the eternal God, *ſhall afflict them*, with vexation, anguiſh, and diſappointment here, and *ſhall bring them down into the pit of deſtruction*, into the everlaſting perdition of ungodly men, cutting them off in the midſt of their days by vengeance juſt as terrible. *For they have no changes*, continue uniformly impenitent, unmoved by warnings, hardened under judgments, inſenſible of mercies; *Therefore they fear not God*, nor regard man, *v.* 20. Their moſt ſolemn engagements are violated, and treacherouſly they lift up their hands againſt thoſe who, as at peace with them, were prepared to make no reſiſtance. Their words, *v.* 21. were falſe and hypocritical; then meditating the fatal blow, when moſt fawning, and deepeſt in profeſſion of kindneſs and ſervice; and withal, bloody as deceitful, *v.* 23. well therefore doth *God, to give unto ſuch blood to drink*, Rev. xvi. 6. *Note*, (1.) Impenitence and perdition are linked inſeparably. (2.) Falſhood and perfidy will find an avenging God.

4. He encourages others by his own example to truſt in God. *I will truſt in thee*, v. 23. at all times, under all difficulties; therefore learn of me; *caſt thy burden on the Lord*, of whatever kind it be, affliction, temptation, corruption, or perſecution; *and he ſhall ſuſtain thee*, enable thee to bear up under every trial; for *he ſhall never ſuffer the righteous to be moved*, either from his love and care, or from their ſure intereſt in that eternal kingdom, of which all the powers of earth, hell, and ſin, ſhall never be able to deprive them. O for ſuch a heart, to truſt him evermore.

PSALM LVI.

David was in imminent peril when he penned this pſalm, at leaſt when he meditated it; yet even then his meditation of God was ſweet. 1. *He complains of the malice of his enemies, and begs mercy for himſelf and juſtice againſt them*, ver. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. 2. *Expreſſes his confidence in God*, ver. 3, 4, 8—13.

¶ To the chief muſician, † upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, [a] Michtam of David, when [b] the Philiſtines took him in Gath.

1. [c] BE merciful unto me, O God, for man would ſwallow me up: he fighting daily oppreſſeth me. 2. Mine ‡ enemies would daily ſwallow *me* up: for *they be* many that fight againſt me, O thou moſt High. 3. What time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee. 4. [d] In God I will praiſe his word, in God I have put my truſt, [e] I will not fear what fleſh can do unto me. 5. Every day they wreſt my words: all their thoughts *are* againſt me for evil. 6. [f] They gather themſelves together, they hide themſelves, they mark my ſteps [g] when they wait for my ſoul. 7. Shall they eſcape by iniquity? in *thine* anger caſt down the people, O God.

† Or, concerning the ſilent dove afar off.
[a] Pſ. xvi. Tit.
[b] 1 Sam. xxi. 10. or xxvii. 2.
[c] Pſ. lvii. 1.
‡ Heb. Obſervers.
[d] Ver. 10, 11.
[e] Pſ. cxviii. 6. Iſa. xxxi. 3. Heb. xiii. 6.
[f] Pſ. lix. 3. & cxl. 2.
[g] Pſ. lxxi. 10.

v. 1—7. The words Jonath-elem-rechokim in the title, are generally ſuppoſed to refer to his preſent ſituation, and are rendered *concerning the mute dove in far places*, as was the caſe with David at this time, driven for ſafety into the land of the Philiſtines. Though harmleſs as a dove, an exile from his country, and mute under all his reproaches; or in his madneſs, which he feigned before Achiſh to preſerve himſelf from ruin. Such was the bleſſed Jeſus, innocent and harmleſs, ſilent before his perſecutors, and ſuffering without the camp. May we imitate his patience, and be content to ſuffer with him!

The arms of Divine mercy are ever open to the miſerable, hither therefore David flees.

1. He complains of his enemies. They deſigned nothing leſs than his utter ruin, *v.* 1. Their attacks were reſtleſs and inceſſant; too numerous, as well as mighty, for him to contend with, *v.* 2. Malicious, they perverted his words to ſome ill meaning; miſchievous, they were ever plotting againſt him ſome evil, *v.* 4. Unanimous, they conſulted and aſſembled to deſtroy him, and every art of fraud, as well as force, was employed to enſnare and undo him, *v.* 6. *Note*, (1.) A child of God muſt ever expect to meet the enmity of a world that lieth in wickedneſs. (2.) Every eye is upon the ſteps of the godly, with eagerneſs waiting for their halting, every ear ready to catch their words, and artful to miſrepreſent them to their prejudice: let them take the greater heed to their ways. (3.) The tempter and accuſer of the brethren is ceaſeleſs in his ſnares, and the more abundantly need we watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation. (4.) However divided wicked men are among themſelves, they can ever cordially unite to oppoſe and oppreſs the faithful followers of Jeſus.

2. In his trouble, David directs his prayer to God. *Be merciful unto me*; could he obtain that, the malice of his foes ſhould not be able to prevail. *Note*, We have no demand on God for ought; our only plea is for mercy through the Redeemer, and that includes all we can wiſh or need.

3. He encourages his heart in God. Fearful he ſometimes was, but he hath a never-failing reſource, even the *Moſt High*. His word would comfort, his power protect him: on this rock therefore his confidence fixes, and thence defies the impotent enmity of man, *v.* 3, 4. Yea, he not only truſts ſecurely, but praiſes joyfully, aſſured that God's promiſes were as good as performances, and that his thanks might antedate his deliverance. *Note*, (1.) Fear will ſometimes beſet the ſtrongeſt believers. (2.) Faith is then moſt needful, when the ſtorm of temptation is higheſt. (3.) Trials drive us nearer to God, as the tree ſhaken by the wind, takes firmer and deeper root. (4.) God's promiſes demand our praiſes; and both praiſe as well as promiſe is *in God*, his gift, and from his grace alone.

4. He expreſſes his confidence of the approaching ruin of the wicked. *Shall they eſcape by iniquity?* no: though they promiſe themſelves impunity, and think they are ſo great and above controul, yet God will not ſuffer them to go unpuniſhed. *In thine anger caſt down the people, O God*, that their devices might be diſappointed, and their deſtruction come upon them. *Note*, None are too great for God to humble; none ſo ſecure, or daring, but he will make them feel his arm.

8. Thou telleſt [h] my wandrings, put thou my tears into thy bottle: [i] *are they* not in thy book? 9. When I
cry

[h] 1 Cor. iv. 11.
[i] Mal. iii. 16.

cry *unto thee*, then ſhall mine enemies turn back: this I know, for God *is* for me. 10. [k] In God will I praiſe *his* word: in the LORD will I praiſe *his* word. 11. In God have I put my truſt: [l] I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. 12. Thy vows *are* upon me, O God: I will render praiſes unto thee. 13. For [m] thou haſt delivered my ſoul from death: *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may [n] walk before God in [o] the light of the living?

[k] Ver. 4.
[l] Pſ. xxvii. 1. Ver. 4.
[m] Pſ. cxvi. 8. 2 Cor. i. 10.
[n] Gen. xvii. 1.
[o] Job xxxiii. 30.

v. 8—13. Though the world frowns, if God ſmiles, we may well be comforted. Thus was the Pſalmiſt in the midſt of his trials.

1. He had confidence of God's notice and kind compaſſions towards him in his diſtreſs: not a weary wandering ſtep he took, but the Lord watched over it, and noted it down; not a tear he dropped, but, as precious, it was preſerved in God's bottle, and a regiſter exact kept of both, to be produced hereafter for his comfort, and his adverſaries confuſion. *Note*, (1.) The tears of God's people here below have often cauſe to flow; ſhortly they ſhall be for ever wiped away from their eyes. (2.) Not a tear drops from the eye of his afflicted ones, but the Father of mercies regards and remembers it, for their everlaſting conſolation. (3.) They who cauſed the griefs of God's ſuffering ſaints, will ſhortly find every tear they have drawn, productive of a deluge of wrath upon their own heads.

2. He was aſſured God would hear his cry, and help him, *v.* 9. However mighty or numerous his foes, God was for him, and therefore the victory ſecure. *Note*, Whatever enemies without beſet, or within war againſt us, the prayer of faith is all-prevailing, and every believer knows it by experience.

3. He repeats with exultation the profeſſion made, *v.* 4. No fear ſhall diſtreſs him, faith ſhall ſtrengthen him, not only to pray, but praiſe, *v.* 10, 11. *Note*, They who have God for them, may well contemn the impotent threats of man that is a worm.

4. He had vowed, and he would pay the bounden ſacrifices of praiſe, *v.* 12. Paſt mercies demanded that grateful tribute, and future ones which he expected, would ſtill increaſe his obligation, *v.* 13. In deaths oft, he had been hitherto preſerved, and ſhall not the ſame power and grace protect him? yes; he is fully perſuaded he ſhall not be ſuffered to fall into ſin, to wound his conſcience, or into the ſnares of his enemies, though thick ſet around him. God will keep him, and enable him to walk in the light of the living; neither cut off by death, nor ſeduced into the darkneſs of error, but in ſafety of his perſon, and in the uprightneſs of his heart, to enjoy the light of God's countenance here, as the earneſt of that eternal light and life he expected among the ſaints in glory. *Note*, (1.) Every chriſtian hath vows upon him; baptiſmal, ſacramental: let them be often and ſolemnly remembered, to quicken us to our bounden duty of praiſe and holineſs. (2.) Our ſouls by ſin are now ſpiritually dead, and liable to eternal death; it is a deliverance indeed deſerving our everlaſting acknowledgment, if by his Son God hath redeemed, by his Spirit hath quickned us, then we may well rejoice in hope of partaking his eternal glory, among the ſaints in light. (3.) We walk in a ſlippery path, our tottering footſteps weak, and we often thruſt at that we ſhould fall; if amidſt ſuch danger we are preſerved, not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praiſe.

PSALM LVII.

This pſalm is very like the preceding. 1. *He begins with prayer and complaint; yet not without ſome aſſurance of ſpeeding in his requeſt*, ver. 1—6. 2. *He concludes with joy and praiſe*, ver. 7—11.

¶ To the chief muſician, † Al-taſchith, [a] Michtam of David, [b] when he fled from Saul in the cave.

1. [c] BE merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my ſoul truſteth in thee: yea, [d] in the ſhadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until *theſe* calamities be overpaſt. 2. I will cry unto God moſt high: unto God [e] that performeth *all things* for me. 3. [f] He ſhall ſend from heaven, and ſave me ‡ *from* the reproach of him that would ſwallow me up; Selah. God [g] ſhall ſend forth his mercy and his truth. 4. My ſoul *is* among lions, *and* I lie *even among* them that are ſet on fire, *even* the ſons of men, [h] whoſe teeth *are* ſpears and arrows, and [i] their tongue a ſharp ſword. 5. [k] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth. 6. They have prepared a net for my ſteps, my ſoul is bowed down: [l] they have digged a pit before me, into the midſt whereof they are fallen *themſelves*. Selah.

† i. e. Deſtroy not.
[a] Pſ. xvi. Tit.
[b] 1 Sam. xxiv. 3.
[c] Pſ. lvi. 1.
[d] Ibid. xvii. 8. & lxiii. 7. Iſa. xxvi. 20.
[e] Pſal. cxxxviii. 8. Phil. i. 6.
[f] Pſ. xviii. 16. & cxliv. 7.
‡ Or he reproacheth him that, &c.
[g] Pſ. xl. 11. & xliii. 3. & lxi. 7.
[h] Prov. xxx. 14.
[i] Pſ. lv. 21. & lxiv. 3.
[k] Ver. 11. Pſ. cviii. 5.
[l] Ibid. vii. 15, 16. & ix. 15.

v. 1—6. We ſhould have thought, when hunted as a partridge in the mountain, that David would have little time for prayer and praiſe, and that his harp would be hung on the willows; but when forced to fly to a cave for ſhelter, his ſoul more ardently fled to God for help and hope. *Al-taſchith* in the title, ſignifies *deſtroy not*, perhaps an ejaculation he had often in his mouth, and expreſſive of the ſubject of this pſalm.

1. He deſcribes his enemies as lions, ſuch were Saul and his forces, furious and raging to ſwallow him up. Men ſet on fire of hell with malice, gnaſhing upon him as if they would devour him; with the blackeſt lies, ſharpening their tongues as a ſword, to ruin his character, whilſt they thirſted for his blood, and with craft and fraud they ſought to entrap him, in order to deſtroy him, *v.* 4, 6. *Note*, (1.) The tongue of ſecret ſlander is more hurtful than the ſword of an open enemy. (2.) They who now in raging luſts and paſſions are ſet on fire of hell, muſt ſhortly burn there. (3.) The bleſſed Jeſus was thus beſet when ſeized by his bloody perſecutors; and his people ſtill, in many circumſtances of oppoſition and temptation, can often with feeling propriety adopt theſe words, *My ſoul is among lions.*

2. His recourſe is ever to God under his wants, and to him he never ſeeks in vain: he was bowed down, *v.* 6. his calamities great, *v.* 1. therefore he pleads that God would ſhew him mercy, *v.* and manifeſt his own glory, *v.* 5. in his protection and the diſappointment of his enemies; and as he reſolved to perſevere in his ſupplications, *v.* 2. he expected continually an anſwer of peace. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt we are praying for the mercies we need, it becomes us to have an eye ever to God's glory, as what ſhould be dearer to us than our own ſafety. (2.) Ceaſeleſs prayer on earth is our duty; in heaven it will be exchanged for everlaſting praiſe.

3. He chearfully in faith commits his body and ſoul to God's ſure keeping. The ſhadow of his wings was his refuge, under them he ſhould be hid, till every ſtorm was overpaſt, *v.* 1. The Moſt High was able to preſerve him, he had committed himſelf to his care, and expected the performance of his promiſes, *v.* 2. From heaven his help came, and his ſalvation thence was ſure, through the mercy and faithfulneſs of God, *v.* 3. whilſt his enemies, expoſed to deſerved wrath, would fall into the pit they have digged, *v.* 6. and God would be magnified in the juſt judgments executed upon them, *v.* 5. *Note*, (1.) A covenant of promiſe is a ſurer defence than a ſhield of adamant. (2.) They who have a heart to truſt God, will ever find he is faithful that hath promiſed. (3.) Every believer's ſalvation is from heaven alone, from the power, grace, and love of God. (4.) Whatever reproach lights on us upon earth, if we have God's favour, we need not fear the revilings of men. (5.) The wicked, through God's juſt judgment, often periſh in the ſnare they laid for others.

7. [m] My heart is † fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will ſing and give praiſe. 8. Awake up [n] my glory, awake pſaltery and harp: I *myſelf* will awake early. 9. [o] I will praiſe thee, O LORD, among the people: [p] I will ſing unto thee among the nations. 10. For [q] thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. 11. [r] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

[m] Pſ. cviii. 1, &c.
† Or prepared.
[n] Pſ. xvi. 9. & xxx. 12.
[o] Pſ. cviii. 3.
[p] Rom. xv. 9.
[q] Pſ. xxxvi. 5. & ciii. 11. & cviii. 4.
[r] Ver. 5.

v. 7—11. Riſing as it were from his knees, after the former verſes, his believing heart enraptured burſts into a ſong of praiſe. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed*, or *prepared*, fixed in confident dependance, prepared for every danger; my troubles vaniſh, and ſongs of gratitude and love flow from my heart. *I will ſing and give praiſe, awake up my glory*, ariſe my ſoul, ſhake off dull ſloth, and leave thy ſorrows far behind; *awake pſaltery and harp*, no longer mute, your ſwelling notes ſhall join my joyful ſong. *I myſelf will awake early*, prevent the dawn of day, eager to proclaim the praiſes of my God. *I will praiſe thee, O Lord, among the people*, among the firſt of thy congregation my grateful voice ſhall be heard; *I will ſing unto thee among the nations*, though driven to heathen lands, will never be ſilent or aſhamed to tell the glories of Jehovah; *for thy mercy* which I have experienced, *is great unto the heavens*, beyond expreſſion or conception, *and thy truth unto the clouds*, thy faithfulneſs inviolable in every promiſe, and not only extending to time but to eternity. *Be thou exalted*, therefore, *O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth*; let the manifeſtations of it appear to the admiration of men and angels, and all the hoſts above join to adore thy great name, exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe. *Note*, (1.) In God's worſhip our whole ſoul ſhould be engaged, fixed attention ſhould keep out wandring thoughts, enlivened devotion drive away all ſtupor and heavineſs, and heart and voice unite in the bleſſed ſervice. (2.) They who rejoice in God themſelves, deſire to diffuſe their joys around, and induce others to come and taſte their mercies, and join their ſongs. (3.) How feeble now are our warmeſt efforts, and how little a while can our affections fix intenſely on the divine ſubject! Bleſſed be God, we have a hope above the heavens, where our ſouls will be ſeraphic as the ſong, and never faulter or be weary in the work of everlaſting praiſe.

PSALM LVIII.

In order to give a pretext for his perſecution, it is ſuggeſted by ſome that David, by Saul's influence over the judges, was condemned as a traitor, and proclaimed an outlaw; and that he here arraigns as a prophet his unrighteous judges. 1. *He deſcribes their ſin, and aggravates that*, ver. 1—5. 2. *He imprecates and foretels their ruin*, ver. 6—9. *Which would redound*, (1.) *To the comfort of the ſaints*, ver. 10. (2.) *To the glory of God*, ver. 11. *Sin appears here both exceeding ſinful and exceeding dangerous, and God a juſt avenger of wrong.*

a Pſ. lvii. Tit.
b Ibid. xvi.

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] Al-taſchith, [b] Michtam of David.

c Iſa. lix. 9, 14.
d Pſ. xciv. 20. Iſa. x. 1.
e Pſal. li. 5. Iſa. xlviii. 8.
† Heb. From the belly.
f Pſ. cxl. 3. Eccleſ. x. 11. Rom. iii. 13.
‡ Or, aſp.
g Acts vii. 57.
|| Or, be the charmer never ſo cunning.

1. DO ye indeed ſpeak righteouſneſs, O ye congregation? [c] do ye judge uprightly, O ye ſons of
men? 2. Yea, in heart you work wickedneſs, [d] you
weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. 3. [e] The
wicked are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray
† as ſoon as they be born, ſpeaking lies. 4. [f] Their
poiſon *is* like the poiſon of a ſerpent; *they are* like the
deaf ‡ adder, [g] *that* ſtoppeth her ear: 5. Which will
not hearken to the voice of charmers, || charming never
ſo wiſely.

v. 1—5. This pſalm bears the ſame title as the former, *Altaſchith*, for he hoped God would not ſuffer him to be deſtroyed by the ſentence of unrighteous judges; and in confidence thereof, he, at God's bar, turns accuſer againſt them.

1. He charges them with deliberate and wilful injuſtice. *Do ye indeed ſpeak righteouſneſs, O ye congregation?* The mighty of the land, the judges aſſembled to decide the cauſe of David, but corrupted probably by Saul's bribes and influence, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 7, and therefore either dumb in his vindication, or active in his condemnation. *Do ye judge uprightly, O ye ſons of men?* no: the very contrary; perverting juſtice to the baſeſt purpoſes, and though as gods ſitting on the ſeat of magiſtracy, yet, as ſons of men, corrupt, and thoughtleſs how they muſt appear before the eternal judge. *Yea, in heart you work wickedneſs*, contrive and plot how to execute it, *and ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth*, pretend to weigh the cauſe, as if they would act with equity, but make the oppreſſion more infamous to the ſufferer, and more intolerable under the cloak of juſtice. *Note*, (1.) Oppreſſion by law is the moſt grievous tyranny. (2.) Good men have often ſuffered by the partiality of unjuſt judges. (3.) The heart gives malignity to the ſin: falls through ſudden temptation are *ſinful*, deliberate wickedneſs *exceeding ſinful*.

2. The evil of their conduct proceeded from the corruption of their nature, which is the ſame in all the ſons of men, till Divine grace produces a change. *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb*, they bring with them into the world a nature alienated from God, and enmity againſt him; *they go aſtray as ſoon as they be born*, original ſin being as much a departure from God, as actual, and conſtantly producing it with the firſt dawnings of reaſon; or even before, in the frowardneſs and diſingenuouſneſs that in the earlieſt infancy appears, *ſpeaking lies*, as ſoon as they have the uſe of ſpeech, yea, whilſt liſping, prevaricating and falſe. *Their poiſon*, or *wrath*, *is like the poiſon of a ſerpent*, innate, and deadly. The ſerpent that firſt beguiled, left his poiſon in the wound ſin made in the ſoul, and ever ſince it hath infected the whole human race. *They are like the deaf adder that ſtoppeth her ear*, whom no muſic can lull, obſtinately bent on miſchief, and froward from the womb. Arguments and remonſtrances from the wiſeſt and beſt are fruitleſs; the perverſe heart refuſes to *hearken to the voice of the charmer charming never ſo wiſely*. *Note*, (1.) A clear view of the corruption of our nature, is the muſt humbling of all conſiderations. (2.) Neither the rod of correction, nor the beſt advice; neither the terrors of God's wrath, nor the hopes of the goſpel, can produce any effectual change on the heart, as the moſt prudent parents and the wiſeſt miniſters prove by ſad experience, unleſs the Spirit of God open the ear to inſtruction.

h Job iv. 10.
i Joſh. vii 5.
k Job iii. 16. Eccleſ. vi. 3.
l Prov. x. 25.
† Heb. As living as wrath.
m Pſ lii. 6. & lxiv. 10. Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xix. 1, 2.
n Pſ. lxviii. 23.
o Ibid. xcii. 15.
‡ Heb. Fruit.

6. [h] Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break
out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.
7. [i] Let them melt away as waters, *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to ſhoot* his arrows, let them
be as cut in pieces. 8. As a ſnail *which* melteth, let
every one of them paſs away: [k] *like* the untimely birth of a
woman, *that* they may not ſee the ſun. 9. Before your
pots can feel the thorns, he ſhall take them away [l] as
with a whirlwind, † both living, and in *his* wrath. 10.
[m] The righteous ſhall rejoice when he ſeeth the vengeance: [n] he ſhall waſh his feet in the blood of the
wicked. 11. [o] So that a man ſhall ſay, Verily, *there is* ‡
a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

v. 6—11. The ruin of the ungodly is ſure.

1. David imprecates vengeance upon them, not as actuated by a ſpirit of revenge, but as a prophet from God, predicting their ruin, and approving the righteouſneſs of the judgment. He prays that their teeth of oppreſſion might be broken, *v.* 6. that as waters ſpilt on the ground their purpoſes might be abortive; or, weak as water, they may be unable to accompliſh their wicked devices, *v.* 7. When higheſt in confidence of ſucceſs, he begs their arrows on the ſtring may then be broken, *v.* 8. That every ſtep they took in miſchief, like the ſnail's motion, might be to their own waſte and loſs; and that as the untimely fruit of a woman, they might be either by death carried to the grave, or that ſecret diſappointment might blaſt their enterprizes, ſo as never to be ripe for execution. *Note*, It is well for God's people his care is over them; did he not reſtrain the wickedneſs, or defeat the deſigns of the crafty, ſuch is the inbred enmity of the natural heart againſt them, it would ſoon be literally true, that not one godly man was left, that the faithful were periſhed from the children of men.

2. He foreſees their unexpected and terrible deſtruction. *Before your pots can feel the thorns*, quick as they kindle, and ſtrong as they blaze, more ſuddenly *He*, the avenging God, *ſhall take them away as with a whirlwind*, whoſe fury is reſiſtleſs, and this *both living*, when they are in the midſt of life, health, and proſperity, *and in his wrath*, in ſuch a manner, that they who behold the judgment, ſhall confeſs it is the finger of God. *Note*, When God riſes up in diſpleaſure, the moſt proſperous ſinner in the midſt of health, youth, and affluence, is hurried to the grave, as the leaf before the tempeſt.

3. The bleſſed effects this would produce. *The righteous ſhall rejoice* to ſee God thus glorified, and *waſh his feet in the blood of the wicked*, as approving the Divine proceedure, *Rev.* xiv. 20. experimentally confirmed by ſuch interpoſition of God's care over his people; whilſt every attentive beholder would be led to reverence and fear before this holy God, acknowledging that there is a God, or, as in the original, *that Gods judge in the earth*, the Elohim, the ſacred Three. *Note*, (1.) Though a good man now grieves over every ſinner, and pities him, he will approve God's juſtice in his puniſhment, and in the day of judgment praiſe God when the ſmoke of his torment aſcendeth. (2.) None ever ſerved God faithfully, but owned the unſpeakable comfort and ſatisfaction which is to be found in the way of righteouſneſs. (3.) There is a God that judgeth the earth: let the ſinner tremble, his damnation ſlumbreth not; let the righteous rejoice, his ſalvation draweth nigh.

PSALM LIX.

This pſalm is of the ſame nature with the foregoing. 1. *David prays to God to defend and deliver him from his enemies, repreſenting them as very ill men, barbarous, malicious, and atheiſtical*, ver. 1—7. 2. *He foreſees and foretells the deſtruction of his enemies, which he would give to God the glory of*, ver. 8—17.

a Pſ. lvii.
b Ibid. 16.
c 1 Sam. xix. 11.

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] Al-taſchith, [b] Michtam of David: [c] when Saul ſent, and they watched the houſe to kill him.

d Pſ. xviii. 48.
† Heb. Set me on high.
e 1 Sam. xix. 11.
f Pſ. lvi. 6.
g 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 17. Pſ. vii. 4.
h Ibid. xxxv. 23. & xliv. 23.
‡ Heb. To meet me.
i Ver. 14.
k Pſ. lvii. 4. Prov. xii. 18.
l Pſ. x. 11, 13. & lxxiii. 11. & xciv. 7.

1. [d] DELIVER me from mine enemies, O my God:
† defend me from them that riſe up againſt
me. 2. Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and
ſave me from bloody men. 3. For lo, [e] they lie in wait
for my ſoul; [f] the mighty are gathered againſt me; [g]
not *for* my tranſgreſſion, nor *for* my ſin, O LORD.
4. They run and prepare themſelves without *my* fault:
[h] awake ‡ to help me and behold. 5. Thou therefore,
O LORD God of hoſts, the God of Iſrael, awake to
viſit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked
tranſgreſſors. Selah. 6. [i] They return at evening: they
make a noiſe like a dog, and go round about the city.
7. Behold, they belch out with their mouth: [k] ſwords
are in their lips; for [l] who (*ſay they*) doth hear?

v. 1—7. This pſalm was compoſed, as appears by the title, on his deliverance, when Saul ſent to ſlay him in his own houſe, 1 *Sam.* xix. 11. and is *Michtam*, one of the golden mercies he hath to record, and *Altaſchith*, an inſtance of God's preſerving him from deſtruction.

We have here,

1. The very bad character of his enemies, men who were as impious againſt God, as cruel and unjuſt to him. They made iniquity their practice, and nothing but blood would ſatisfy

them, *v.* 2. Treacherous, they lay in wait; and mighty, employed violence, as well as cunning, to compaſs their deſigns; uniting againſt him, unable to reſiſt, *v* 3. eager in their purſuit, they ran to ſeize him, *v.* 4. At evening they compaſſed his houſe, and, diſappointed of their prey, like a hungry dog howled for vexation, and greedily went about the city, in hopes of diſcovering or overtaking him, *v.* 6. breathing out threatnings, and belching forth blaſphemies, as if God could not, or would not hear them, *v.* 7. *Note*, They who lift up their tongues in ſlander and blaſphemy, may ſay, Tuſh, God careth not for it, but will find to their confuſion, that there is not a word in their tongue but is heard, recorded, and will be produced againſt them in the day of judgment.

2. He prays importunately for help, and with confidence that he ſhall be heard. *Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God:* my God, and therefore thou wilt never leave nor forſake me. *Defend me*, for I am weak; *awake for me*, for the ſtorm is high; unleſs thou ſave, I periſh. *Behold my innocence*, v. 3, 4. I have given them no provocation: *their wickedneſs*, v. 5. though Iſraelites, become worſe than the heathen, and ſuch wilful and obſtinate tranſgreſſors, that judgment without mercy was their juſt deſert. *Note*, (1.) A gracious confidence of an intereſt in God enables the ſoul in prayer to approach with boldneſs a throne of grace. (2.) None can deſtroy thoſe whom God defends. (3.) Though no innocence will protect us from the malignity of the wicked, it will be a comfortable ſupport to us under their aſperſions. (4.) Before God we cannot plead we are faultleſs, yet when unjuſtly oppreſſed of men, we may carry our righteous cauſe to him, and appeal for redreſs. (5.) Sinners will be viſited of God; and if not before, in a judgment-day at leaſt the juſt will be vindicated, and the guilty periſh without mercy or hope.

8. But [m] thou, O LORD, ſhalt laugh at them; thou ſhalt have all the heathen in deriſion. 9. [n] *Becauſe of* his ſtrength will I wait upon thee: for [o] God *is* my † defence. 10. [p] The God of my mercy [q] ſhall prevent me: God ſhall let me [r] ſee *my deſire* upon mine ‡ enemies. 11. [s] Slay them not, leſt my people forget: ſcatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O LORD our ſhield. 12. [t] *For* the ſin of their mouth, *and* the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride: and [u] for curſing and lying *which* they ſpeak. 13. [x] Conſume *them* in wrath, conſume *them*, [y] that they *may* not *be:* and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob, unto the ends of the earth. Selah. 14. And [z] at evening let them return, *and* let them make a noiſe like a dog, and go round about the city. 15. Let them [a] wander up and down for meat, and ‖ grudge if they be not ſatisfied. 16. But I will ſing of thy power; yea, [b] I will ſing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou haſt been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. 17. Unto thee, O my ſtrength, will I ſing: for [c] God *is* my defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

[m] 1 Sam. xix. 16. Pſ. ii. 4.
[n] 2 Chron. xx. 12.
[o] Ver. 17.
† Heb. High place.
[p] 2 Cor. i. 3.
[q] Pſ. xxi. 3.
[r] Ibid. liv. 7. & xcii. 11.
‡ Heb. Obſervers.
[s] Gen. iv. 12, 15.
[t] Prov. xii. 13. & xviii. 7.
[u] Pſ. cix. 17, 18.
[x] Ibid. vii. 9.
[y] Ibid. lxxxiii. 18.
[z] Ver. 6.
[a] Job xv. 23. Pſ. cix. 10.
‖ Or, if they be not ſatisfied, then they will ſtay all night.
[b] Iſa. lxv. 14.
[c] Ver. 9, 10.

v. 8—17. David having committed his caſe to God in prayer, here waits in hope.

1. He is confident God will diſappoint his enemies, will mock at their impotent devices, *v.* 8. and protect him from their malice. *Becauſe of his ſtrength*, either of his enemy, who was againſt him, or of God, who was for him, *will I wait upon thee*; and then when God's mercy prevented him, and his defence covered him, he muſt be ſafe, and expect to ſee the vengeance due to his cruel foes, *v.* 9, 10. *Note*, (1.) God not only preſerves his people when they cry, but prevents them with his mercy from dangers they cannot foreſee. (2.) When we can ſay in prayer, *My* merciful God, and *my* defence, we may well take courage, all is ſafe, if God is our friend.

2. He prays they may be puniſhed; not utterly deſtroyed, but left as ſtanding monuments of God's care over his people, and diſpleaſure againſt their perſecutors. *Slay them not* utterly, *leaſt my people forget*, as they would be apt to do, if no memorial remained of the viſitation, *but ſcatter them by thy power*, *and bring them down*, *O Lord*, *our ſhield*, reduce them from their abuſed heighth of power, and make them little and contemptible, that they may live ſtanding evidences of the Divine viſitation. Moſt juſtly had their malice, ſlander, pride, curſing, and lying provoked their puniſhment, *v.* 12. therefore he wiſhed to ſee God glorified in their ruin, *that they may not be*, not continue in honour and proſperity as before, but be reduced to the moſt abject want and wretchedneſs, that as they had, *v.* 7. thirſted for his blood, they might, as hungry dogs, pine for want of bread, *v.* 14, 15. and feel by their ſufferings, that though they forgot or deſpiſed him, there was a ruler in Jacob, a univerſal king, whoſe righteous government never ſuffered iniquity with impunity, *v.* 13. If this pſalm be applied to the Meſſiah, as it well may, the preſent ſtate of the Jewiſh people will appear ſtrongly marked in theſe verſes, a people deſpicable, rapacious, ſcattered on the face of the earth, and every where appearing as the monuments of Divine wrath, for their rejection of the ſon of David. *Note*, (1.) They are in a ſtate of terrible danger, againſt whom the prayers of God's ſuffering people aſcend. (2.) The tongue defiled with ſlander, curſing, and lyes, will burn ſhortly with fire unquenchable. (3.) God will make the ſinner know he rules, by the ſufferings he inflicts, and often cauſe his puniſhment to bear the marks of his provocation.

3. Songs of praiſe ſhall be the tribute of his mercies. God's power and grace, ſo opportunely diſplayed in the day of his trouble, he will for ever exalt: early will he riſe for the delightful taſk, and loud ſhall his voice be heard, proclaiming the ſwelling gratitude of his heart, *v.* 16. The God of his ſtrength, his mercy, and defence, ſhall be the ſubject of his never-ending praiſe. *Note*, (1.) A grateful heart delights in proclaiming his obligations. (2.) Every thankſgiving we offer, beſpeaks new mercies. (3.) The ſaints of God who find preſent help, may comfortably conclude it ſhall be the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.

PSALM LX.

This pſalm was penned when David was in the zenith of his proſperity, and the affairs of his kingdom ſeem to have been in a better poſture than ever they were either before or after. See 2 Sam. viii. 3, 13. 1 Chron. xviii. 3, 12. *David in proſperity was as devout as David in adverſity.* 1. *He reflects upon the ill ſtate of the public intereſts for many years, in which God had been contending with them*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He takes notice of the happy turn lately given to their affairs*, ver. 4. 3. *He prays for the deliverance of God's Iſrael from their enemies*, ver. 5. 4. *He triumphs in hope of their victories over their enemies, and begs of God to carry them on, and complete them*, ver. 6—12.

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] upon Shuſhan-eduth, [b] Michtam of David, to teach [c] when he ſtrove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and ſmote of Edom in the valley of ſalt twelve thouſand.

[a] Pſ. lxxx. Tit.
[b] Ibid. xvi. Tit.
[c] 2 Sam. viii. 3, 13 1 Chron. xviii. 3, 12.

1. O GOD [d] thou haſt caſt us off, thou haſt † ſcattered us, thou haſt been diſpleaſed; O turn thyſelf to us again. 2. Thou haſt made the earth to tremble; thou haſt broken it: heal the breaches thereof, for it ſhaketh. 3. [e] Thou haſt ſhewed thy people hard things: [f] thou haſt made us to drink the wine of aſtoniſhment. 4. [g] Thou haſt given a banner to them that fear thee: that it may be diſplayed becauſe of the truth. Selah. 5. [h] That thy beloved may be delivered; ſave *with* thy right hand, and hear me.

[d] Pſ. xliv. 9.
† Heb. Broken.
[e] Pſ. lxxi.
[f] Iſa. li. 17, 22. Jer. xxv. 15.
[g] Pſ. xx. 5. Iſa. xi. 12. & xlix. 22.
[h] Pſ. cviii. 6, &c.

v. 1—5. The occaſion of this pſalm was Joab's victory over the Edomites, and the war againſt the Syrians of Meſopotamia and Zobah, who were alſo ſubdued; and typically it teaches us, that all enemies of Chriſt, his church, and people, muſt finally fall, however long or obſtinate the ſtruggle. It is directed to the chief muſician upon Shuſhan-eduth, probably the muſical inſtrument for which it was ſet.

1. The deplorable ſtate of the Jewiſh affairs is deſcribed, during the ill adminiſtration of Saul, and the ſtruggles of Iſhboſheth, *v.* 1—3. God's diſpleaſure gave their enemies advantage, they were ſcattered, wide breaches opened, the land trembling under God's correction; and they, as men, deſperate and overwhelmed with aſtoniſhment, ready to give up all for loſt. Probably this deſcription looked forward alſo, as prophetical of that ſtate, when, for their rejection of God's anointed, his wrath ſhould be kindled, more terrible convulſions deſtroy their whole polity and government, and, ſcattered into all lands, they ſhould bear the marks of God's heavy hand; an aſtoniſhment to others, a terror to themſelves.

2. In the midſt of their diſtreſſes, a banner is diſplayed, for the faithful Iſraelites in David, promiſed to be their king and captain, and now exalted to the throne, under whom enliſted, union within prepared them for victory without: animated by his preſence, and bold under ſuch a leader, they lifted up their hoſtile banners, defied and vanquiſhed their foes, *v.* 4. Chriſt, the captain of our ſalvation, may alſo be here deſigned; his banner of love ſpread abroad, invites poor ſinners to his ſtandard, under him inliſted, ſpiritual ſtrength and courage animate their ſouls, and they go forth conquering and to conquer: and to him ſhall the diſperſed of Iſrael be gathered at laſt, and turning to the Lord, ſee a period of their miſeries. *Note*, (1.) The deeper our diſtreſſes, the more is the power and grace of our God magnified in our deliverance. (2.) We ſhould ever remember the ſtate in which Jeſus found us, and the miſery

from which he drew us, as an engagement to be faithful, and fight manfully under his banners.

3. He prays earneſtly for God's help and healing. *O turn thyſelf to us again*, ceaſe from thy diſpleaſure, and viſit us with thy ſalvation; *heal the breaches*, *for* thou alone canſt heal them, and as the danger is imminent, *it ſhaketh*, let thy mercy be ſpeedy to the land, *that thy beloved*, thy choſen people, *may be delivered* from the hands of all their enemies; for having no power of themſelves, they look to thee, *ſave with thy right hand, and hear me*, their advocate. *Note*, (1.) Sin hath made a deadly breach in our ſouls, which nothing but the ſovereign grace of God can repair. (2.) They who turn to God in prayer, may expect his return to them in mercy. (3.) They who fear God, are beloved by him, and his right hand will ſave them. (4.) Though our deliverance may be delayed, yet covenant mercies, confirmed by the truth of God, are ſure mercies. Wait therefore, in patience of hope.

6. God hath ſpoken in his holineſs, I will rejoice: I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. 7. Gilead *is* mine, and Manaſſeh *is* mine, [i] Ephraim alſo *is* the ſtrength of mine head; [k] Judah *is* my law-giver. 8. Moab *is* my waſhpot, [l] over Edom will I caſt out my ſhoe: Philiſtia, triumph thou † becauſe of me. 9. Who will bring me *into* [m] the ſtrong city? who will lead me into Edom: 10. Wilt not thou, O God, [n] *which* hadſt caſt us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* didſt not go out with our armies? 11. Give us help from trouble; for [o] vain *is* the ‡ help of man. 12. Through God [p] we ſhall do valiantly: for he *it is that* ſhall tread down our enemies.

[i] See Deut. xxxiii. 17.
[k] Gen. xlix. 10.
[l] Pſ. xci. 13.
† Or, over me (by an irony) Pſ. cviii. 9.
[m] 2 Sam. xii. 26.
[n] Pſ. xliv. 9. & cviii. 11.
[o] Pſ. cxlvi. 3.
‡ Heb. Salvation.
[p] Num. xxiv. 18. 1 Chron. xix. 13.

v. 6—12. David here appears triumphing in the Divine promiſes; God hath ſworn, he believes, and in conſequence rejoices.

1. All foes within and without ſhall yield to him. Iſrael in their ſeveral tribes that had joined Iſhboſheth, ſhall return to him. Shechem and Succoth, places of Ephraim, the chief tribe ſhall own his ſway, and the land of Gilead, the country beyond Jordan, obey him. The levies of Ephraim ſhould ſtrengthen his army, and Judah afford him wiſe and able magiſtrates, *v.* 6, 7. Conqueſt without would follow union within, Moab be enſlaved, Edom reduced to the meaneſt offices, and thoroughly ſubdued and poſſeſſed, *Ruth* iv. 7. and let Philiſtia triumph if ſhe dares; or under his mild government ſhe would be happy even in her captive ſtate, *v.* 8. *Note*, (1.) When a believer can ſay, Chriſt is mine, then all other bleſſings of grace and glory neceſſarily follow. (2.) When God pleaſes, he can make our bittereſt foes our warmeſt friends. (3.) National union is a great bleſſing from God. (4.) They who change the lawleſs ſtate of ſin, for the eaſy yoke of Chriſt, will have occaſion for ever to bleſs the day when that happy change was effected.

2. He anſwers a difficulty which might be ſuggeſted from the ſtrength of the enemy's fortreſſes. *Who will bring me into the ſtrong city?* either Rabbah, or more probably the capital of Idumea; *who will lead me into Edom?* God is the ſtrength of his confidence. *Wilt not thou, O God, which hadſt caſt us off?* yes, aſſuredly: now thou art returned in mercy, we ſhall be victorious; and *thou, O God, which didſt not go out with our armies* before, ſhalt make us now more than conquerors. *Therefore give us help in trouble*, in anſwer to our fervent prayers; *for vain is the help of man*, we acknowledge it; and renouncing every human confidence, deſire alone to repoſe ourſelves on thee. And thus we are always confident, that *through God we ſhall do valiantly*, and put all our enemies under our feet, *for he it is who ſhall tread down our enemies*, on whom we depend, and to whom we will aſcribe the praiſe of all our ſucceſs. *Note*, (1.) Difficulties will often ſtand in the believer's way, but faith will overcome them all. (2.) When to ſenſe we ſeem as caſt off, we muſt not quit our hold of the promiſe, but truſt, and wait to ſee the ſalvation of God. (3.) When our dangers are greateſt, our prayers and cries ſhould be moſt earneſt. (4.) The leſs we expect to receive from the creature, the ſurer we are to avoid diſappointment. (5.) If we are enabled to do valiantly againſt our ſpiritual enemies, let us remember from whom cometh our ſtrength, and lay at his feet the crown, which his own grace has obtained for us.

PSALM LXI.

David in this pſalm, as in many others, begins with prayer, and ends with praiſe. It ſeems penned during his troubles under Abſalom, when he fled to the fartheſt part of the land to ſave his life, and in it, ver. 6. *eſpecial regard ſeems to be had to that Meſſiah, whom in his ſufferings he repreſented. He reſolves,* 1. *To call upon God, becauſe God had protected him,* ver. 1—3. 2. *Becauſe God had provided well for him,* ver. 4, 5. 3. *To praiſe God, becauſe he had an aſſurance of the continuance of God's favour to him,* ver. 6, 7, 8.

¶ To the chief muſician upon Neginah,
A pſalm of David.

1. HEAR my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer. 2. From [a] the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock *that* is higher than I. 3. For [b] thou haſt been a ſhelter for me, *and* a ſtrong tower from the enemy. 4. [c] I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: [d] I will † truſt in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

[a] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[b] 1 Sam. xvii. 37.
[c] Pſ. xxvii. 4.
[d] Ibid. xvii. 8. & lvii. 1. & xci 4.
† Or, make my refuge.

v. 1—4. The word Neginah in the title, ſeems to be the muſical inſtrument to which the pſalm was ſet. In it,

1. David looks up to God in his troubles; *Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth*, the fartheſt part of Judea, whither he had fled for ſafety, *will I cry unto thee*, earneſtly, aloud, importunately, *when my heart is overwhelmed* with trouble and anguiſh of whatever kind; all my complaints will I pour out, into thy compaſſionate boſom; *lead me to the rock that is higher than I*, to a place of preſent ſafety, but eſpecially to the rock of ages, the promiſed Meſſiah, the hope of his afflicted people. *Note*, (1.) Wherever we are, a throne of grace is open, and the more we are removed from other means, the more diligent ought we to be in ſecret prayer. (2.) The ſouls of the faithful are ſometimes overwhelmed with the ſenſe of ſin, with afflictive providences, with ſore temptations, and ready to ſink under their burden, but when moſt diſtreſſed, they fly to God, and find him a very preſent help in trouble. (3.) There is, bleſſed be God, a rock higher than we, on which, if placed, we need not fear what earth or hell can do againſt us. (4.) Every day we need cry to God, to fix us more ſecurely on this ſure foundation, Jeſus Chriſt.

2. From paſt experience, he is encouraged to expect preſent help. *Thou haſt been a ſhelter*, or *a covert for me, and a ſtrong tower from the enemy*; therefore in humble hope of the ſame needful protection, *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever*; now taking refuge under thy protection, hoping ſhortly to return to the tabernacle in Sion, and by and by to go to that heavenly hill, where God's glory is ever viſible to his ſaints; and *I will truſt in the covert of thy wings*, confident of ſafety there, when every proſpect around me is moſt dark and threatning. *Note*, (1.) We ſhould often remember what God hath done for us, as an argument to encourage our hearts to hope for greater mercies. (2.) They are ſafe, whom God's almighty power gathers under his wing. (3.) If we abide faithful and conſtant in his worſhip and ſervice below, we may comfortably look forward to an eternal manſion, in his better tabernacle above.

5. For thou, O God, haſt heard my vows: thou haſt given *me* the heritage of thoſe that fear thy name. 6. [e] Thou wilt † prolong the king's life: *and* his years as many generations. 7. [f] He ſhall abide before God for ever: O prepare [g] mercy and truth *which* may preſerve him. 8. So will I ſing praiſe unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

[e] Pſ. xxi. 4.
† Heb. Add days to the days of the king.
[f] Luke i. 33.
[g] Pſ. xl. 11. Prov. xx. 28.

v. 5—8. David having truſted himſelf with God,

1. Regards his prayer as already heard and anſwered, and his vows of praiſe already due, becauſe of the certainty of the promiſed mercy. *Thou haſt given me the heritage of thoſe that fear thy name*, either the inheritance of Iſrael, or his portion in a better country, that is, an heavenly; and this he regards as already beſtowed, foraſmuch as the covenant of promiſe is ſure to all the ſeed, and he had comfortable certainty of being of that bleſſed number, who feared God, and truſted in his ſalvation. *Note*, They who are under the influence of holy fear, will never fail, nor come ſhort of the heritage laid up for them in glory.

2. He expreſſes his confidence of preſent ſalvation. His life, *v.* 6. though ſo thirſted after, ſhall be preſerved amidſt every danger, and prolonged for God's glory, and the people's good: or probably he looks farther, to the King Meſſiah, the proſpect of whoſe glorious kingdom and approaching day, was his delight and joy. His life ſhould be long, and *his years as many generations*, even coeval with the days of eternity; for *he ſhall abide before God for ever*. *Note*, Since Jeſus ever lives and reigns, his people may confidently expect to live and reign with him in glory everlaſting.

3. He offers up his prayers, and engages for continual praiſe. *O prepare mercy and truth, which may preſerve him*, king David, on his throne, according to the mercy and faithfulneſs of God in his promiſes, or the Son of David, whoſe kingdom is eſtabliſhed and preſerved, according to the mercy and truth of God, in the everlaſting covenant. *So will I ſing praiſe unto thy name for ever*, make it my daily happy ſervice here below, and my eternal employment ſhortly above, *that I may daily perform*

my vows, in thoſe continual grateful acknowledgments for mercies ſo unſpeakably great and gracious. *Note*, (1.) If we are intereſted in God's covenant of promiſes, he will take care of our ſtability. (2.) They who expect to ſpend eternity in God's unceaſing praiſe, will daily here below begin to exerciſe themſelves in this delightful employment.

PSALM LXII.

This pſalm ſeems compoſed under ſome of his perſecutions; wherein, 1. David profeſſeth his confidence in God and dependence upon him, and encourageth himſelf to continue waiting on him, ver. 1—7. *2. With a great deal of earneſtneſs he excites and encourageth others to truſt in God likewiſe, and not in any creature*, ver. 8—12.

¶ To the chief muſician, to [a] Jeduthun,
A pſalm of David.

1. † TRULY [b] my ſoul ‡ waiteth upon God:
from him cometh my ſalvation. 2. [c] He only
is my rock and my ſalvation: *he is* my § defence; [d] I
ſhall not be greatly moved. 3. How long will ye imagine
miſchief againſt a man? ye ſhall be ſlain all of you:
[e] as a bowing wall *ſhall ye be, and as* a tottering fence.
4. They only conſult to caſt *him* down from his excellency,
they delight in lies: [f] they bleſs with their mouth,
but they curſe ‖ inwardly. Selah. 5. [g] My ſoul, wait
thou only upon God: for my expectation *is* from him.
6. He only *is* [h] my rock and my ſalvation; *he is* my defence;
I ſhall not be moved. 7. In God *is* my ſalvation
and my glory: the rock of my ſtrength, *and* my refuge
is in God.

a 1 Chron. xxv. 2, 3.
† Or, only.
b Pſ. xxxiii. 20.
‡ Heb. Is ſilent, ſo Pſ. lxv. 1.
c Ver. 6.
§ Heb. High place.
d Pſ. xxxvii. 24.
e Iſa. xxx. 13.
f Pſ. xxviii. 3. & lv. 21.
‖ Heb. In their inward parts.
g Ver. 1, 2.
h Pſal. xviii. 2.

v. 1—7. David here,

1. Profeſſes his confidence in God for protection and ſafety: as he made him alone his rock and defence, he *waited*, or was *ſilent*, as it may be rendered; without impatience or diſtruſt expected to ſee the ſalvation of God. Numerous and miſchievous as his foes were, he knew he ſhould not be *greatly moved*; tempted he might be, in difficulties and dangers, but ſtill ſafe under the defence of the Almighty. *Note*, (1.) Patient and ſubmiſſive reſignation of our ſouls to God, is the certain way to a happy iſſue out of all our afflictions. (2.) God is the alone author and finiſher of our ſalvation; as in his eternal counſels he contrived the wondrous ſcheme; by his ſovereign and effectual grace he compleats his purpoſe, and prepares us for the kingdom he hath prepared for us. (3.) Though we may be moved, through temptation and corruption, we ſhall not be ſuffered to fall finally and eternally.

2. He foreſees the ruin of his enemies, whoſe character he deſcribes, *v.* 3, 4. They were miſchievous; plotted how to deprive him of his crown and dignity, delighted to propagate lies to injure him; and with perfidious treachery, whilſt they profeſſed outward kindneſs, their hearts within rankled with malice. But vain were their deſigns to thruſt him down whom God would exalt: deſtined to the ſword, they ſhould fall; and, as a bowing wall and tottering fence, ſo weak would be their wicked attempts, and as eaſily overturned. *Note*, (1.) A lying tongue will be the curſe of its owner. (2.) Traitors will find an avenging God. (3.) They who truſt in God may defy all their enemies to hurt them.

3. He encourages his ſoul to wait only upon God, and ſtrengthens his faith in him by a variety of epithets. *My rock*, who can move me? *my ſalvation*, who can deſtroy me? *my defence*, who can hurt me? *my glory*, therefore it cannot fade; *my ſtrength*, to make me more than conqueror; *my refuge*, under whoſe wings I ſhall be eternally ſafe. *Note*, (1.) They are truly bleſſed and happy who can ſay, This God is my God. (2.) The expectation of the faithful cometh only from God, he is to them all and in all. (3.) The believer's rejoicing is never in himſelf, but in his exalted head, he will ever ſay, My God is my glory.

8. Truſt in him at all times; ye people, [i] pour out
your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah.
9. [k] Surely men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* men of
high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they
are † altogether *lighter* than vanity. 10. [l] Truſt not in
oppreſſion, and become not vain in robbery: [m] if riches
increaſe, ſet not your hearts *upon them*. 11. God hath
ſpoken once; twice have I heard this, that ‡ power *belongeth*
unto God. 12. Alſo unto thee, O Lord, *belongeth*
mercy: for [n] thou rendreſt to every man according
to his work.

i 1 Sam. i. 15. Lam. 2. 19.
k Pſ. xxxix. 5. Iſa. xl. 17.
† Or, alike.
l Jer. xvii. 11.
m Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
‡ Or, ſtrength.
n Job xxxiv. 11. Prov. xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Ezek. xxxiii. 20. Mat. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 8. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 Pet. i. 17. Rev. xxii. 12.

v. 8—12. His own experience of the bleſſedneſs of dependance upon God, urges him to invite all to come and taſte the ſame felicity. *Truſt in him at all times*; *ye people*, ye people of Iſrael, and all the Iſrael of God, wherever diſperſed, or however diſtreſſed, at all times make God your truſt, to guide, protect, preſerve, and ſtrengthen you; *pour out your heart before him*, in earneſt and importunate prayer, and tell him of all your troubles with freedom: for *God is a refuge for us*; for me, and for you, and all that fly to him as their rock and hope alone, renouncing every other ground of confidence, which would be utterly inſufficient to ſupport their ſouls. He cautions them therefore,

1. Not to truſt in men, neither of high or low degree, whoſe multitude, or greatneſs, or wiſdom, can afford us no ſafety; they are deceitful helps, and in the day of trial will prove lighter than vanity. *Note*, The more we ceaſe from man, and entirely cleave to God, the more ſecure ſhall we be from diſappointment.

2. Not to truſt in riches, however obtained, whether by oppreſſion or extortion, by open violence or robbery; or by the moſt lawful means, honeſt labour or inheritance, *v.* 10. *Note*, Gain is often a great foe to godlineſs, and gold too often made the rival of God in the heart: a ſtate of proſperity is exceeding dangerous, and they who are in it, have as much need to pray in all time of their wealth as of their tribulation, *Good Lord deliver us!*

3. He exhorts them to truſt in God as their never-failing refuge; and this becauſe of his faithfulneſs, power, mercy, and juſtice. He hath ſpoken once, yea twice, confirming the ſouls of his people by his word and oath; two immutable things, in which it is impoſſible for us to be deceived. His omnipotence none dare encounter; his mercy is infinite, and we may therefore always hope in it; and his juſtice impartial; therefore ſhall the enemies of his name and people be deſtroyed, and thoſe who were oppreſſed with wrong be vindicated. Good reaſon then there is, that at all times he ſhould be alone exalted as our only hope and help. *Note*, The more we conſider God's perfections and promiſes, as manifeſted to us in a covenant of grace, the more cauſe we ſhall ſee to depend on him as our Almighty ſtrength, to truſt him as infinite in goodneſs and abundant in mercy, and to expect from him preſent protection and eternal glory.

PSALM LXIII.

As the ſweeteſt of Paul's epiſtles were thoſe that bore date out of a priſon; ſo ſome of the ſweeteſt of David's pſalms, were thoſe that were penned as this was in a wilderneſs. And here we have, 1. His deſire towards God, ver. 1, 2. *2. His eſteem of God*, ver. 3, 4. *3. His ſatisfaction in God*, ver. 5. *4. His ſecret communion with God*, ver. 6. *5. His joyful dependence upon God*, ver. 7, 8. *6. His holy triumph in God over his enemies, and in the aſſurance of his own ſafety*, ver. 9, 10, 11. *A devout and pious ſoul has little need of direction how to ſing this pſalm, ſo naturally doth it ſpeak its own genuine language; and an unſanctified ſoul, that is unacquainted and unaffected with divine things, is ſcarce capable of ſinging it with underſtanding.*

¶ A pſalm of David, [a] when he was in the wilderneſs
of Judah.

1. O GOD, thou *art* my God, early will I ſeek
thee, [b] my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh
longeth for thee, in a dry and † thirſty land, where no
water is: 2. [c] To ſee [d] thy power and thy glory, ſo *as*
I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary.

a 1 Sam. xxii. 5. & xxiii. 14, 26. About 1062.
b Pſal. xlii. 2. & lxxxiv. 2. & cxliii. 6.
† Heb. Weary.
c Pſal. xxvii. 4.
d 1 Sam. iv. 21. Pſal. lxxviii. 61.

v. 1, 2. Wherever David was, he found his heart in tune for praiſe; a wilderneſs ſhall echo with his ſongs, ſince thither divine providence hath led him: the children of God ſhould learn of him, even though ſorrowful, to be always rejoicing, and when moſt deſolate and ſolitary, to make melody ſtill in their hearts unto God.

1. The ground of all his comfort was this, *O God, thou art my God*: a ſenſe of an intereſt in his love and favour, can make a priſon a palace, a wilderneſs a paradiſe.

2. He reſolves to cleave to God, and longs for his return to the ſanctuary, from which at preſent he ſuffered an irkſome baniſhment. *Early will I ſeek thee*; here, though deſtitute of public ordinances, in private prayer and ſecret meditation he would exerciſe himſelf, beginning with the dawn of day; *my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee*, with eager and importunate deſire, *in a dry and thirſty land, where no water is*; no waters of the ſanctuary to refreſh and comfort his ſoul; therefore he pants for the courts of God's tabernacle. *To ſee thy power and glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary*; to enjoy ſome ſweet manifeſtations of divine favour where he was, as he had formerly been favoured with when engaged in the worſhip of the ſanctuary, and thither he wiſhes to return. *Note*, (1.) This world is a barren land, nothing in it can ſatisfy the longings of the ſoul, God alone is the believer's all-

ſufficient portion. (2.) The more we are convinced of the emptineſs of the creature, the more we ſhould fly to the fulneſs of God. (3.) They who know the bleſſings of public ordinances will feelingly regret the want of them. (4.) Whereever we are, a throne of grace is open; and if we diligently ſeek him, we may find the ſame comfortable preſence of God under a tree or in a mountain, as in the midſt of the congregation.

3. [e] Becauſe thy loving kindneſs *is* better than life: my lips ſhall praiſe thee. 4. Thus will I bleſs thee [f] while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. 5. My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as *with* † marrow and fatneſs; and my mouth ſhall praiſe *thee* with joyful lips: 6. When [g] I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night*-watches.

e Pſal. xxx. 5.
f Ibid. civ. 33.
† Heb. Fatneſs.
g Pſal. xlii. 8. & cxix. 55. & cxlix. 5.

v. 3—6. His deſires are anſwered, and prayers ſoon exchanged for joyful praiſes.

1. *Becauſe thy loving kindneſs is better than life: my lips ſhall praiſe thee*; though life is a bleſſing, yet without God's love, in the midſt of life we are in death; we may then only be truly ſaid to live, when, quickned by his ſpirit, our ſouls live by him and for him: in this caſe even death becomes our privilege, and removal from earth is our tranſlation to the life of eternity.

2. He will continue his praiſe as long as his being: thus, as he had begun, he purpoſes to perſevere, and lift up his hands inceſſantly below in thankſgiving, till he ſhould join above the everlaſting ſongs of ſaints and angels, *v.* 4. *Note,* They who expect to ſpend eternity in God's praiſe, will begin the pleaſing ſervice here, and learn in every ſtate, condition, and circumſtance, to give thanks.

3. He promiſes himſelf great delight in his ſervice; this work of praiſe ſhall be his preſent reward. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs*; the moſt delicious viands to the taſte would not be ſo grateful, as to his ſoul this happy communion with God, whilſt his mouth praiſed him with joyful lips. *Note,* There is a complacence and inward ſatisfaction to be enjoyed in God's love and ſervice, compared with which the higheſt gratifications of ſenſe are poor and inſipid.

4. By night as well as day, on this pleaſing ſubject his thoughts continually dwelt. *When I remember thee on my bed*; lying down to reſt, and waking up in the morning, God was laſt and firſt in his thoughts; *and meditate on thee in the night-watches*; when his eyes were kept waking that he could not ſleep, he employed the hours of darkneſs in contemplation, that more than recompenſed the loſt repoſe.

7. Becauſe thou haſt been my help, therefore [h] in the ſhadow of thy wings will I rejoice. 8. My ſoul followeth hard after thee: [i] thy right hand upholdeth me. 9. But thoſe *that* ſeek my ſoul to deſtroy *it*, ſhall go into the lower parts of the earth. 10. [k] † They ſhall fall by the ſword, they ſhall be a portion for foxes. 11. But the king ſhall rejoice in God, [l] every one that ſweareth by him ſhall glory: but the mouth of them that ſpeak lies ſhall be ſtopped.

h Pſ. lxi. 4.
i Cant. ii. 6.
k Jer. xviii. 21.
† Heb. They ſhall make him run out like water, by the hands of the ſword.
l Deut. vi. 13. Iſa. xlv. 23. & lxv. 16.

v. 7—11. Reſolved to praiſe, he wanted not abundant matter for his ſong.

1. His experience of paſt ſupport, and confidence of preſent help, afforded cauſe of rejoicing. *Thou haſt been my help*, and wilt ſave me to the uttermoſt, *therefore under the ſhadow of thy wings*, where, as the chickens ſhelter themſelves from danger, and are refreſhed with the vital warmth, my ſoul is comfortably lodged, *will I rejoice*. *My ſoul followeth hard after thee*, in prayer, meditation, and every means of grace; but all my own endeavours ſecure not my ſtability: *thy right hand upholdeth me*, by which alone I am ſupported and ſtrengthened, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not be faint. *Note,* (1.) They who would cleave to God faithfully, are called upon to follow hard after him in the means of grace and the path of duty. (2.) Our ſtrength for the one or other is not in ourſelves but from him, without which our feet would quickly ſtumble, our hearts grow dead, and our lips be ſealed up in ſilence, and forget to pray or praiſe.

2. He could triumph in his enemies certain ruin, which he foreſaw; though they aimed at *his* life, they ruſhed on *their own death*; the grave was opened for them, hell enlarged its mouth to receive them, the ſword of God's judgment was unſheathed, and on the mountains of Gilboa their carcaſes ſoon fell, and, unburied, remained a portion for foxes and every beaſt of the foreſt. *Note,* All who are the enemies of Chriſt and his kingdom muſt expect to ſhare with theſe in their deſtruction, *Rev.* xix. 17, 18.

3. He exults as if already upon the throne, becauſe he knew it was ſure to him. *The king ſhall rejoice in God*; though an exile, an outlaw, yet in the divine deſignation a king, and joyful in God, when every worldly comfort failed: it was enough if he had his favour, this ſhould make him more than conqueror. Perhaps the king Meſſiah is intended, rejoicing in God becauſe of his people's ſalvation, and who may therefore well rejoice with him. *Note,* Though the child of God is now exerciſed with variety of trials, he is born for a throne, and may exult in the aſſured proſpect of it.

4. He is happy to ſee the joy of God's people on his advancement and the confuſion of his enemies. *Every one that ſweareth by him*, which is one religious act, put for the whole worſhip and ſervice of God, theſe godly ſouls *ſhall glory* in God for his mercy to them in raiſing David to the throne: *but the mouth of them that ſpeak lies ſhall be ſtopped*; Saul's courtiers, who had traduced him, and all who had propagated falſehood to aſperſe his character; theſe ſhall be ſilenced through fear, confounded with ſhame, or cut off by death, and their mouth ſtopped in the duſt. *Note,* (1.) It is the comfort of the redeemed that their Lord is exalted, and when they ſhall ſee him on the great white throne, they ſhall lift up their heads with joy. (2.) Lying lips will be ſhortly ſilenced, and all the maligners of Chriſt's church and people be aſtoniſhed when they behold them ſet down with him on his throne, and they themſelves trembling at their feet.

PSALM LXIV.

There is no reſt for David from his enemies; therefore, 1. *He prays to God to preſerve him from their malicious deſigns,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *He gives a very ill character of them,* ver. 3—6. 3. *By the ſpirit of prophecy he foretels their deſtruction, which would redound to the glory of God and the encouragement of his people,* ver. 7—10. *Thus was the Son of David perſecuted, but his foes at laſt are made his footſtool.*

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. [a] HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer; preſerve my life from fear of the enemy. 2. Hide me from the ſecret counſel of the wicked; from the inſurrection of the workers of iniquity: 3. [b] Who whet their tongue like a ſword, *and* [c] bend *their bows to ſhoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words: 4. That they may ſhoot in ſecret at the perfect: ſuddenly do they ſhoot at him, and fear not. 5. [d] They encourage themſelves *in* an evil matter: they commune † of laying ſnares privily, they ſay, [e] Who ſhall ſee them? 6. [f] They ſearch out iniquities, ‡ they accompliſh a diligent ſearch: both the inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart *is* deep.

a Pſ. xxvii. 7.
b Ibid. xi. 2. & lvii. 4.
c Ibid. lviii. 7. Jer. ix. 3.
d Prov. i. 11.
† Heb. To hide ſnares.
e Pſ. x. 11. & lix. 7.
f Dan. vi. 4.
‡ Or, we are conſumed by what they have thoroughly ſearched.

1—6. We have here,

1. David in fear crying unto God for protection and ſafety. Secret counſels and open inſurrections of the wicked, who ſtuck at nothing to carry their point, expoſed his life to danger great and imminent; to God therefore he applies, that he may be hid from the gathering ſtorm, *v.* 1, 2. *Note,* The faithful have their fears, and ſometimes may find their hearts tremble when death ſternly approaches them; but they have one who can deliver them from every bondage of fear.

2. He opens before God the wickedneſs of his enemies, as a plea for protection from them. With lies ſharp as a ſword, and inſinuations malignant as a poiſoned arrow, *v.* 3. they ſhot at him, though perfectly innocent of every charge they laid againſt him: in ſecret they watched the opportunity, or eager to embrace it ſuddenly let fly, fearleſs of confutation, and confident of ſucceſs; or impiouſly daring, caſt off all fear of God, *v.* 4. Strengthening each other's hands in wickedneſs, they conſulted how to deſtroy him privately, and pleaſed themſelves with the atheiſtical conceit, that even God's eye could not diſcover them, *v.* 5. Sollicitous to pick up ſome ſhadow of accuſation, with diligent ſearch they ſought to find ſome evil in him, or to ſuborn witneſſes againſt him; and in the depth of a heart, full of malignity and wickedneſs, contrived how to blaſt his character, or to rob him of his life. *Note,* (1.) The people of God have been in every age the butt of the malignant tongue, and bitter words of reproach and infamy have been liberally ſhot forth againſt them. (2.) Though no man is abſolutely perfect in himſelf, yet they who are accepted in the Redeemer, and have the truth of grace in their heart, are compleat in him, and therefore hated of the world, who cannot bear their holy and heavenly converſation. (3.) Againſt a lying tongue there is no defence. (4.) Daring ſinners harden each other; and having caſt off God's government, would fain flatter themſelves they can elude his omniſcience, and promiſe themſelves impunity in their iniquities. (5.) They who are maliciouſly bent on miſchief, ſtick at no pains to accompliſh their deſigns; how few chriſtians ſerve their

Lord ſo aſſiduouſly, heart and hand, as the devil's ſervants do their maſter?

7. But [g] God ſhall ſhoot at them *with* an arrow, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded. 8. So [h] they ſhall make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves: [i] all that ſee them, ſhall flee away. 9. And [k] all men ſhall fear, [l] and ſhall declare the work of God; for they ſhall wiſely conſider of his doing. 10. [m] The righteous ſhall be glad in the LORD, and ſhall truſt in him; and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.

[g] Pſ. vii. 12, 13.
[h] Prov. xii. 13.
[i] Rev. xviii. 10.
[k] Pſ. lii. 6. Rev. xi. 13.
[l] Jer. l. 28.
[m] Pſal. lviii. 10.

v. 7—10. Though the wicked ſay, God ſhall not ſee, he will awfully convince them of their folly.

1. By his judgments. *God ſhall ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded*: one of his arrows ſhall do more terrible execution than all theirs; it ſhall pierce their hearts, and lay them dead at his feet, in the midſt of their falſe and fatal ſecurity, *v.* 7. *So they ſhall make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves*; the curſes they have utterred againſt the innocent ſhall return upon their own heads. *Note*, (1.) When God ſtrikes, he ſtrikes home, and there is no eſcape. (2.) The horrid imprecations of the paſſionate and prophane, bring upon their own ſouls that damnation they ſo impiouſly and raſhly denounce on others.

2. The effects of theſe judgments would be great; fear of their plagues ſhall make beholders flee to ſave themſelves from periſhing among them, *v.* 8. All that ſee it, ſtruck with conviction, ſhall conſider, and own God's righteous vengeance, and declare it as an admonition to the riſing generation, *v.* 9. The righteous will be glad at beholding God glorified, and ſhall rejoice in his ſalvation, thus manifeſted for them; and by preſent experience of his gracious interpoſition, be encouraged to truſt him in all future dangers. *Note*, (1.) It is wiſdom to profit by others harms. (2.) Many a warning is loſt by inconſideration. (3.) The perſecutors of God's people ſhould read and learn, and tremble, whilſt the door of hope is yet open. (4.) Though the miſery of an enemy, ſimply conſidered, cannot be a good man's delight; yet to be reſcued from the oppreſſor, and to ſee God's righteous judgments executed, is juſt matter of joy. (5.) They who make God their truſt, ſhall find him their glory.

PSALM LXV.

In this pſalm we are directed to give God the glory of his power and goodneſs, which appears, 1. *In the kingdom of grace*, ver. 1. *Hearing prayer*, ver. 2. *Pardoning ſin*, ver. 3. *Satisfying the ſouls of the people*, ver. 4. *Protecting and ſupporting them*, ver. 5. 2. *In the kingdom of providence, fixing the mountains*, ver. 6. *Calming the ſea*, ver. 7. *Preſerving the regular ſucceſſion of day and night*, ver. 8. *And making the earth fruitful*, ver. 9—13. *Theſe are bleſſings we are all indebted to God for, and for which we owe the tribute of praiſe.*

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm *and* ſong of David.

1. PRAISE † waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee ſhall the vow be performed. 2. O thou [a] that heareſt prayer, [b] unto thee ſhall all fleſh come. 3. ‡ Iniquities prevail againſt me; *as for* our tranſgreſſions, thou ſhalt purge them away. 4. [c] Bleſſed *is the man whom* thou chooſeſt, and cauſeſt to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: [d] we ſhall be ſatisfied with the goodneſs of thy houſe, *even* of thy holy temple. 5. *By* terrible things in righteouſneſs, wilt thou anſwer us, O God of our ſalvation: *who art* the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off *upon* the ſea.

† Heb. Is ſilent, Pſ. lxii. 1.
[a] Dan. ix. 20.
[b] Pſ. lxvi. 24.
‡ Heb. Words, or matters of iniquities.
[c] Pſ. xxxiii. 12. & lxxxiv. 4.
[d] Pſ. xxxvi. 8.

v. 1—5. The Pſalmiſt here, as the mouth of the congregation, addreſſes his prayer to God.

1. He aſcribes glory to him. *Praiſe waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion*; thy people there, expecting thy mercies, are ready to meet them with ſongs of thankſgiving: or the words may be rendered, *to thee belong ſilence and praiſe*; ſilent expectation under every difficulty and trial, and entire acquieſcence in thy holy will, and praiſe the tribute due for ſure deliverance: *unto thee ſhall the vow be performed*, which was made in their diſtreſs; and on the gracious anſwer given to their prayer, ſhould be with delight rendered unto God. *Note*, (1.) Patient expectation ſhall be ſucceeded with joyful praiſe. (2.) When we vow unto God, let us be ſpeedy to pay.

2. He adores him as the prayer-hearing God. *O thou that heareſt prayer*, ever ready to anſwer, yea, more ready to hear than we to pray, *unto thee ſhall all fleſh come*, engaged by the fame of thy grace, encouraged by the promiſes of thy word, and the experience of thy people.

3. He expreſſes his confidence in God's pardoning grace. *Iniquities prevail againſt me*; *the words of iniquity*, the malicious aſperſions of his enemies, or the indwelling corruptions of his own heart, that roſe up to condemn him; but *as for our tranſgreſſions, thou ſhalt purge them away*, how great ſoever they have been, whether his own or thoſe of God's people, he knew the atoning blood would purge their conſciences, and wipe away the guilt of all their ſins. *Note*, (1.) Though at times iniquities may prevail againſt us, we may not deſpair, nor be driven from God, but to him: *if any man ſin, there is ſtill an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.* (2.) The more we ſee of our own guilt and ſinfulneſs, the more are we bound to admire and adore the tranſcendent mercy of a pardoning God.

4. He declares the bleſſedneſs of God's choſen, who were admitted into his courts, and favoured with a ſenſe of his love, *v.* 4. There the trueſt ſatisfaction was to be found; the goodneſs of his houſe, and the comforts of his worſhip, would abundantly refreſh their ſouls, *v.* 5. *Note*, (1.) It is not our deſert, but God's gracious choice, that brings any ſoul near to him; till he draws, we cannot run after him. (2.) Communion with God is man's greateſt happineſs. (3.) They who would enjoy God's preſence, muſt draw near to him in the ordinances of his worſhip, and be among the conſtant attendants at his temple. (4.) Though nothing on earth beſide can ſatisfy an immortal ſoul, God is the ſufficient portion of his people.

5. He expects to ſee the deſtruction of all their enemies. *By terrible things in righteouſneſs, wilt thou anſwer us, O God of our ſalvation*; by juſt judgments inflicted on our foes, and merciful interpoſitions manifeſted in our behalf, wherein thy hand will be ſeen as the God of our ſalvation; and this will engage the truſt of all thy people, wherever diſperſed, or however diſtreſſed: *who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are far off upon the ſea*; the Iſrael of God, whether on ſea or land, or driven to the moſt diſtant corner, making him their confidence, find him a ſure refuge. *Note*, (1.) The enemies of God's people are regarded as rebels againſt himſelf, and will be made to tremble under his terrible arm. (2.) None that truly truſted in God, or cried to him in faith, could ever complain of diſappointment.

6. Which by his ſtrength ſetteth faſt the mountains; [e] *being* girded with power. 7. [f] Which ſtilleth the noiſe of the ſeas, the noiſe of their waves, [g] and the tumult of the people. 8. They alſo that dwell in the uttermoſt parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makeſt the out-goings of the morning and evening to rejoice. 9. Thou viſiteſt the earth, [h] and † watereſt it: thou greatly enricheſt it with the river of God *which* is full of water: thou prepareſt them corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it. 10. Thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly: thou ‡ ſettleſt the furrows thereof: thou § makeſt it ſoft with ſhowers, thou bleſſeſt the ſpringing thereof. 11. Thou crowneſt the year with thy goodneſs, and thy paths drop fatneſs. 12. They drop *upon* the paſtures of the wilderneſs: and the little hills ‖ rejoice on every ſide. 13. The paſtures are clothed with flocks; [i] the valleys alſo are covered over with corn; they ſhout for joy, they alſo ſing.

[e] Pſal. xciii. 1.
[f] Pſ. lxxxix. 9. & cvii. 29.
[g] Ibid. lxxvi. 10. Iſa. xvii. 12, 13.
[h] Pſ. lxviii. 9. & civ. 13.
† Or, after thou haſt made it deſire rain.
‡ Or, cauſeſt rain to deſcend upon.
§ Or, diſſolveſt it.
‖ Heb. Are girded with joy.
[i] Iſa. lv. 12.

v. 6—13. It is an encouraging conſideration to the people of God to behold the works of his power and providence around them, as an engagement always to truſt him as able to ſave to the uttermoſt.

1. By his power the mountains are ſet faſt on their wide baſes; and like to them his church is fixed and immoveable: ſooner may the mountains be overturned than his promiſes to his people.

2. At his voice the ſtormy billows peacefully ſubſide, and the more tumultuous inſurrections of the wicked are ſtilled; in his hands are the hearts of all men, and therefore his faithful ones need not fear the loudeſt threatnings.

3. The tokens of God's judgments on the wicked, or the daily evidences of his wiſdom and power in the ſucceſſion of day and night, make the utmoſt parts of the earth to reverence his majeſty; whilſt the out-goings of the morning and evening rejoice to be made inſtruments of diſplaying his glory; or from eaſt to weſt God diffuſes gladneſs, by ſending forth his light and truth in the goſpel to the benighted world.

4. God's providential care appears in the rain and fruitful ſeaſons he beſtows. *Thou viſiteſt the earth* with kind regard, *and watereſt it* when parched with drought: *thou greatly enricheſt it with the river of God*, the clouds of heaven, *which is full of water: thou prepareſt them corn*, by moiſtening the ſeed ſown with ſhowers, *when thou haſt*, or *becauſe thou haſt ſo prepared it*, to drink in the rain and drops of dew. *Thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly*, on which the corn is ſcattered: *thou ſettleſt*

the furrows thereof: thou makeſt it ſoft with ſhowers, thou bleſſeſt the ſpringing thereof, cauſing it to take root, and ſhoot upwards vigorouſly. In conſequence of which, *thou crowneſt the year with thy goodneſs*, cauſing a plentiful harveſt, *and thy paths*, the heavens, whence the rain deſcends, *drop fatneſs*, fertilizing the ſoil, and diffuſing plenty around. *They drop upon the paſtures of the wilderneſs*, to produce graſs to fatten the cattle: *and the little hills rejoice on every ſide*, echoing with lowing herds and bleating flocks, that feed on their ſides. *The paſtures are clothed with flocks*; ſo thick covered, and affording ſuch plenty of food; *the valleys alſo* beneath *are covered over with corn*; *they ſhout for joy, they alſo ſing*; rejoicing to ſupply the wants of man, or filled with the joyous ſongs of mowers and reapers, gathering in the welcome harveſt. *Note*, (1.) The heart of man, till watered with the dew of heavenly influences, is like the barren ground. (2.) Where God ſows the ſeed of eternal life, he waters it abundantly, and bleſſes the increaſe. (3.) The hardeſt heart grows tender, and ſuſceptible of the deepeſt impreſſions, when God prepares and ſoftens it. (4.) The church is a paſture filled with Chriſt's flock, and there his praiſes are echoed on every ſide. (5.) If plenty crown the year, let it awake our gratitude to him whoſe clouds drop down fatneſs. (6.) There is not a morſel of bread goes into our mouths but ſpeaks God's goodneſs and demands our praiſe.

PSALM LXVI.

This is a thankſgiving pſalm, deſigned for the Iſrael of God in all ages. They praiſe God, 1. *For his greatneſs and glory, manifeſt in creation and providence*, ver. 1—5. 2. *For ſpecial mercies to his choſen people*, ver. 6—12. *And then*, 3. *The pſalmiſt praiſeth God for his own experiences of his goodneſs to him in particular, eſpecially in anſwering his prayers*, ver. 13—20.

¶ To the chief muſician, A ſong *or* pſalm.

† Heb. All the earth.

1. MAKE a joyful noiſe unto God, † all ye lands.
2. Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praiſe glorious. 3. Say unto God, How terrible *art thou in* thy works! through the greatneſs of thy power ſhall thine enemies ‡ ſubmit themſelves unto thee. 4. [a] All the earth ſhall worſhip thee, and ſhall ſing unto thee, they ſhall ſing *to* thy name. Selah. 5. [b] Come and ſee the works of God: *he is* terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men. 6. [c] He turned the ſea into dry land: [d] they went through the flood on foot, there did we rejoice in him. 7. He ruleth by his power for ever, [e] his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themſelves. Selah.

‡ Or, yield feigned obedience, Pſ. xviii. 44. & lxxxi. 15.
a Ibid. lxvii. 3. Dan. vii. 14.
b Pſal. xlvi. 8.
c Ex. xiv. 21.
d Joſh. iii. 14.
e Pſ. xi. 4.

v. 1—7. We have here,

1. The perſons called upon to unite in the praiſes of God. *All lands*, not merely the people of Iſrael, but all the ends of the earth; to whom, in the fulneſs of time, God would ſend the knowledge of his grace. *Note*, We have reaſon to bleſs God in this land, for being numbered among thoſe to whom the word of ſalvation hath been ſent, and with whom it abides.

2. The manner of their praiſes. They muſt make a joyful noiſe, ſing aloud their Creator and Redeemer's praiſes, proclaim his glory; and in their lives, as well as lips, ſhew forth his honour.

3. The reaſons why they ſhould thus praiſe him. [1.] Becauſe of his terrible works and the greatneſs of his power, manifeſted in the abaſement of his enemies and theirs, *v.* 3. *Note*, Every antichriſtian foe will be made ſhortly to bow at the feet of the faithful, and to know that God hath loved them. [2.] For the mercies manifeſted to his church of old; the remembrance of which ſhould be ever new; ſuch as was the deliverance of Iſrael from Egypt, when the ſea opened a way for the redeemed to paſs over; *there did we rejoice in thee. Note*, Our father's mercies are our own, and ſhould awaken our praiſes. [3.] Becauſe the ſame protection ſhall be for ever vouchſafed to all God's Iſrael. As God ever rules, and ever ſees the devices of their enemies, he will diſappoint them, to the confuſion of their proud and rebellious foes. *Note*, Since all power is given to Chriſt in heaven and on earth, his people may be aſſured no powers of darkneſs ſhall be able to hurt them, but ſhall with joy ſee them ſhortly put under his feet and theirs for ever.

† Heb. Putteth.
f Pſal. xvii. 3.
g Iſa. xlviii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 7.
h Lam. i. 13.
i Iſa. li. 23.
k Ibid. xliii. 2.

8. O bleſs our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praiſe to be heard. 9. Which † holdeth our ſoul in life, and ſuffereth not our feet to be moved. 10. For [f] thou, O God, haſt proved us: [g] thou haſt tried us, as ſilver is tried. 11. [h] Thou broughteſt us into the net, thou laidſt affliction upon our loins. 12. [i] Thou haſt cauſed men to ride over our heads, [k] we went through fire and through water: but thou broughteſt us out into a ‡ wealthy *place*.

‡ Heb. Moiſt.

v. 8—12. They who have an intereſt in God, as their covenant God, ought to make their voices of grateful praiſe to be heard. Particularly,

1. For their lives; not only the preſervation of bodily life, but more eſpecially for the ſpiritual life Chriſt hath beſtowed and maintains, and for the eternal life to which he will ſhortly bring them, *and ſuffereth not our feet to be moved*; though ſore thruſt at by temptation, and hard beſet with corruption, yet, by the power of Almighty grace, our ſouls are preſerved from final and fatal apoſtacy.

2. For the bleſſed iſſue of their trials. Many an enemy had harraſſed the land, they had been taken priſoners in the net of their oppreſſors, had ſuffered a variety of afflictions, been trampled upon and inſulted by the Philiſtines and neighbouring nations; but it was to prove, not deſtroy them; and therefore they were delivered, and public tranquillity and plenty reſtored to them. Thus the church of Chriſt hath been alſo in the furnace of affliction, under the man of ſin, in Rome pagan and papal, has paſſed through variety of tortures by fire and water, terrible as theſe devouring elements, and been often reduced to the greateſt diſtreſs, in order to prove the patience of the ſaints; but God will bring them into a wealthy or large place; as at the reformation, when true religion reared its head; and as will be more eminently the caſe, when at laſt Chriſt ſhall come and reign over his ſaints gloriouſly. This alſo is the ſtate of every believer, who paſſes through temptation, painful as the action of fire, and deep as the floods; but the iſſue ſhall be peace; his graces, thus exerciſed, ſhall ſhine the brighter, and into his wealthy place, even a manſion in eternal glory, will he be brought; when he hath ſuffered a little while for Chriſt, he ſhall reign with him for ever.

13. [l] I will go into thy houſe with burnt-offerings: [m] I will pay thee my vows, 14. Which my lips have † uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken when I was in trouble. 15. I will offer unto thee burnt-ſacrifices of ‡ fatlings, with the incenſe of rams: I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah. 16. [n] Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul. 17. I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue. 18. [o] If I regard iniquity in my heart: the Lord will not hear *me*. 19. *But* verily [p] God hath heard *me*: he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. 20. Bleſſed *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

l Pſal. c. 4.
m Eccleſ. v. 4.
† Heb. Opened.
‡ Heb. Marrow.
n Pſ. xxxiv. 11.
o Prov. xxviii. 9. Iſa. i. 15. Joh. ix. 31. Jam. iv. 3.
p Pſ. cxvi. 1. Prov. xv. 29.

v. 13—20. The pſalmiſt here, in the perſon of the faithful, declares the effects which God's grace and protection would have upon them.

1. He and they would offer the nobleſt ſacrifices appointed under the law, the fatteſt beaſts ſhall burn on God's altar, according to the vows they had made in trouble. *Note*, Since Chriſt's one oblation was offered, all other ſacrifices of blood are aboliſhed; but ſacrifices of praiſe will never ceaſe aſcending from every faithful heart, and will go up with acceptance in the ſmoak which ariſes from the Saviour's ſacrifice, making all our offerings a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to God.

2. He calls on all that fear God to come and hear what God had done; what wonders of grace in pardoning, ſanctifying, comforting, and ſaving his ſinful ſoul, *v.* 16. and this in anſwer to his faithful and fervent prayer, *v.* 17. which God, who knew the ſimplicity of his heart, *v.* 18. had heard and granted, *v.* 19. and for which he deſires ever to bleſs and praiſe him, as for all his mercies, *v.* 20 *Note*, (1.) We are bound for God's glory, and the encouragement of his people, to communicate our experience of his goodneſs; not as vain of our mercies, as if the favourites of heaven, but as thankfully teſtifying our gratitude to him from whom we have received all. (2.) There can be no comfort obtained from prayer, nor any well-grounded confidence entertained of God's acceptance of us, whilſt allowed and indulged iniquity remains in the heart. (3.) They who lift up holy hands, without wrath and doubting, may riſe from their knees continually bleſſing and praiſing God.

PSALM LXVII.

This pſalm is the church's prayer. 1. *For proſperity*, ver. 1. 2. *For the converſion of the Gentiles*, ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. 3. *It deſcribes happy and glorious times when God ſhall do this*, ver. 6, 7. *And herein David ſpoke by the ſpirit of prophecy, foretelling the glorious eſtate of the Chriſtian church, in which Jews and Gentiles ſhould be united.*

¶ To the chief muſician[a] on Neginoth, A pſalm *or* ſong.

1.[b] GOD be merciful unto us, and bleſs us: *and*
[c] cauſe his face to ſhine upon us. Selah. 2.
That thy way may be known upon earth, [d] thy ſaving
health among all nations. 3. [e] Let the people praiſe
thee, O God; let all the people praiſe thee. 4. O let
the nations be glad, and ſing for joy: for [f] thou ſhalt
judge the people righteouſly, and † govern the nations
upon earth. Selah. 5. Let the people praiſe thee, O
God; let all the people praiſe thee. 6. [g] *Then* ſhall the
earth yield her increaſe; *and* God, *even* our own God
ſhall bleſs us. 7. God ſhall bleſs us, and all the ends
of the earth ſhall fear him.

[a] Pſ. iv. tit.
[b] Numb. vi. 25.
[c] Pſ. iv. 6.
[d] Luke ii. 31.
[e] Pſ. lxvi. 4.
[f] Ibid. xcvi. 13.
† Heb. Lead.
[g] Pſ. lxxxv. 12.

v. 1—7. David, as a lively member of the church of the redeemed, pours forth his prayers to God for their proſperity, and that deſirable event, the converſion of the Gentile world.

1. He prays in particular for the faithful. *God be merciful unto us*, and forgive and pardon us, as ſinners ever need to pray, *and bleſs us*; which comprehends all that we can aſk or think, and God ſees uſeful for us: *and lift up the light of thy countenance upon us*; comforting our ſouls and chearing us, cauſing the ſun of righteouſneſs to ariſe with healing in his wings: and theſe are requeſts which every believer will never ceaſe to offer for himſelf and his brethren.

2. He prays for a diffuſion of goſpel light and grace throughout the world, that all nations might know his ſaving health revealed in Jeſus Chriſt, and his way of juſtification through his blood and righteouſneſs, and of ſanctification by his ſpirit.

3. That in conſequence thereof they might be led to praiſe God, as for the light and truth diſpenſed, ſo for the protection and grace promiſed. *For thou ſhalt judge righteouſly*, vindicating thy redeemed from every charge laid againſt them, and ſaving them from every enemy, *and govern the nations upon earth*, who ſhall be happy under thy ſafe and gentle ſway. *Note*, (1.) The ſervice of Chriſt is the perfect freedom and happineſs of his people. (2.) We ſhall have cauſe to all eternity to bleſs the day when firſt our neck was bowed to his eaſy yoke.

4. Great he foreſees will be the increaſe of the church, under the Divine bleſſing, by the preaching of the goſpel. The earth, the various nations of it, ſhall yield a plenteous harveſt of converted ſouls; and a covenant God for ever bleſs his people, putting his fear into their hearts, and be their everlaſting confidence and joy. *Note*, (1.) When we can ſay, God is our God, we may confidently add, he ſhall bleſs us. (2.) They who are intereſted in his everlaſting love, have the increaſe of earth, and every creature comfort, heightened by a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them.

P S A L M LXVIII.

This pſalm is ſuppoſed to have been compoſed on bringing the ark to Zion from the houſe of Obed-edom; and looks forward to Chriſt's aſcenſion, his ſitting on the throne of his glory, and his calling the Gentiles into his church. 1. *David begins with prayer, both againſt God's enemies*, ver. 1, 2. *and for his people*, ver. 3. 2. *He proceeds to praiſe, calling upon all to praiſe God*, ver. 4, 26, 32. (1.) *For his greatneſs and goodneſs*, ver. 4—6. (2.) *For the wonderful works he had wrought for Iſrael*, ver. 7—14. (3.) *For his ſpecial preſence in his church*, ver. 15—17. (4.) *For the aſcenſion of Chriſt*, ver. 18. *and the ſalvation of his people by him*, ver. 19, 20. (5.) *For the victories which Chriſt would obtain over his enemies, and the favours he would beſtow upon his church*, ver. 21—28. (6.) *For the enlargement of the church by the acceſſion of the Gentiles to it*, ver. 29—31. *And ſo he concludes the pſalm with an awful acknowledgment of the glory and grace of God*, ver. 32—35.

¶ To the chief muſician,

A pſalm *or* ſong of David.

1.[a] LET God ariſe, let his enemies be ſcattered: let
them alſo that hate him, flee † before him.
2. [b] As ſmoke is driven away, *ſo* drive *them* away: [c] as
wax melteth before the fire, *ſo* let the wicked periſh at
the preſence of God. 3. But [d] let the righteous be glad:
let them rejoice before God, yea, let them ‡ exceedingly
rejoice. 7. [e] Sing unto God, ſing praiſes to his name:
extol him [f] that rideth upon the heavens by his name
JAH, and rejoice before him. 5. [g] A father of the fatherleſs,
and a judge of the widows, *is* God in his holy
habitation. 6. [h] God ſetteth the ſolitary § in families:
[i] he bringeth out thoſe which are bound with chains, but [k]
the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.

[a] Numb. x. 35.
† Heb. From his face.
[b] Iſa. ix. 18. Hoſ. xiii. 3.
[c] Pſ. xcvii. 5. Mic. i. 4.
[d] Pſ. xxxii. 11. & lviii. 10.
‡ Heb. With gladneſs.
[e] Pſal. lxvi. 4.
[f] Deut. xxxiii. 26. Ver. 33.
[g] Pſal. x. 14, 18. & cxlvi. 9.
[h] 1 Sam. ii. 5. Pſ. cxiii. 9.
§ Heb. In a houſe.
[i] Pſ. cvii. 10. & cxlvi. 7. Acts xii. 7, &c.
[k] Pſal. cvii. 34, 40.

v. 1—6. We have here,

1. David's prayer for the diſperſion of the enemies of God and his people, and for the comfort and joy of his faithful ones. It may be conſidered alſo as prophetical of the Meſſiah's appearing, *Let God* incarnate *ariſe, and let his enemies be ſcattered*, the powers of earth or hell that oppoſe his kingdom in the world: *Let them alſo that hate him*, whether men or devils, *flee before him*, vanquiſhed by his Almighty arm; *as ſmoke is driven away, ſo* eaſily and thoroughly *drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, ſo let the wicked periſh at the preſence of God* the Redeemer, when either in preſent judgments he ſhall viſit them, or in the great day of his appearing and glory, ariſe to conſume them with the brightneſs of his coming. *But let the righteous*, thoſe who are accepted in him, and counted righteous through him, be glad when they ſee his day: *let them rejoice before God*, in the preſent joy of his ſalvation, and in hope of the compleat redemption which awaits them, from ſin, death, and hell; *yea, let them rejoice exceedingly*, with exultation proportioned to the greatneſs of the ſalvation. *Note*, (1.) Though many ſtartle at the charge of *haters of God*, yet ſuch every diſobedient ſinner will be proved at laſt. (2.) Though we muſt rather pray for our enemy's converſion than deſtruction, yet when Chriſt's kingdom comes, which we are bound to pray for, his being glorified in their ruin will be our joy. (3.) Though ſinners are now never ſo obdurate, they will ſhortly be brought to their terrors, and their once fearleſs hearts fail as the ſmoke, and melt as the wax. (4.) However terrible it will be to the wicked world, God's people are ſure of comfort and ſafety when he ariſes to judgment.

2. He magnifies God as the king of heaven, the ſelf-exiſtent Jehovah; gracious to regard the fatherleſs and widows, to reſtore the deſolate families of his people, to looſe the priſoners bands, and make the rebellious pine with famine and miſery. Jeſus is this JAH, the ſelf-exiſtent, ſelf-ſufficient God, aſcended into the heavens, the object of the eternal praiſes of men and angels, the guardian of his afflicted church and people, raiſing up families of the faithful among the Gentiles that were ſolitary and deſolate; delivering the bondſmen of ſin and Satan from their chains, and bringing them into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God; but letting the rebellious ſinners, whether of Jews or Gentiles, or falſe profeſſors, to periſh in the dry land of ignorance, infidelity, and obſtinate impenitence.

7. O God, when [l] thou wenteſt forth before thy people;
when thou didſt march through the wilderneſs.
Selah. 8. [m] The earth ſhook, the heavens alſo dropped
at the preſence of God: *even* Sinai itſelf *was moved* at
the preſence of God, the God of Iſrael. 9. Thou, O
God, didſt † ſend [n] a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt
confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary. 10. Thy
congregation hath dwelt therein: [o] thou, O God, haſt
prepared of thy goodneſs for the poor. 11. The Lord
gave the word, great *was* the ‡ company of thoſe that
publiſhed *it*. 12. [p] Kings of armies § did flee apace: and
ſhe that tarried at home divided the ſpoil. 13. Though
ye have lien [q] among the pots, [r] *yet ſhall ye be as* the
wings of a dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers
with yellow gold. 14. When the Almighty ſcattered
kings ‖ in it, it was *white* as ſnow in Salmon.

[l] Judg. iv. 14.
[m] Exod. xix. 18. Judg. v. 4. Iſa. lxiv. 3.
† Heb. Shake out.
[n] Pſ. lxxviii. 24. 27.
[o] Ibid. lxxiv. 19.
‡ Heb. Army.
[p] Joſh. x. 16.
§ Heb. Did flee, did flee.
[q] Pſ. lxxxi. 6.
[r] Ibid. cv. 37.
‖ Or, for her, ſhe was, &c.

v. 7—14. God's wondrous works are here recorded to his glory, for his people's comfort; and they may be conſidered,

1. As a pleaſing retroſpect on paſt mercies. When from the houſe of their priſon delivered, God led their hoſts through the wilderneſs, *v.* 7. by the pillar and cloud brought them to Sinai's mount, where, in the moſt tremendous manner, his law was given to them, *v.* 8. provided for them by miracles of manna and water from the rock, when fainting in their march, and gave them at laſt an inheritance in the good land flowing with milk and honey, where his poor people found an abundant portion prepared for them of all good things, *v.* 9, 10. by his prophets, and divinely appointed miniſters, he taught them, encouraged them to ſerve him, and aſſured them on their fidelity they would be always victorious: and the event every way verified his promiſes; none, even the mightieſt kings, could withſtand them; and ſuch abundant ſpoil was gotten, that even the women who were at home were enriched by it, *v.* 11, 12. Thus, though in the brick-kilns of Egypt they had lain and ſoiled their beauty, now they ſhould ſhine in glory as the glowing feathers of the dove, *v.* 13. and, better than their outward riches, their victories, whilſt they awakened their thankfulneſs, brought them nearer to God, and made them white and pure as ſnow in Salmon.

2. As a glorious prophecy of the goſpel church, under their head Chriſt Jeſus, leading up his people from the bondage of ſin, and his oppreſſed church from the power of antichriſtian foes; as the captain of their ſalvation going before them, and by his word and ſpirit directing their march through this howling wilderneſs, the world that lieth in wickedneſs, *v.* 7.

At the promulgation of his goſpel the powers of earth were ſhaken; and before his preſence, the hearts of proud ſinners, though exalted as mountains in height, flowed down in lowlieſt abaſement, *v.* 8. By the plentiful effuſion of his Spirit in the miniſtration of the goſpel, the ſouls of weary and heavy-laden ſinners were refreſhed, *v.* 9. and, into his church admitted, dwelt with comfort there, where, with ſuch a profuſion of goodneſs, the bleſſings of pardon, grace, conſolation, glory, were prepared for every poor and periſhing ſoul, *v.* 10. By his apoſtles and miniſters, divinely commiſſioned, he gave the word, qualified them for their work, and accompanied their preaching with demonſtration of the Spirit; and multitudes, *an army*, as the word *company* may be rendered, readily engaged in the warfare, notwithſtanding all the dangers: even women, (the word *preachers* being of the feminine gender, and alluding to the women who ſung the victories of their generals) helped in the goſpel, *v.* 11. The powers of the heathen, though long perſecuting, were vanquiſhed by the word of truth; and their kings, converted, became nurſing fathers, whilſt the church, as a conqueror, divided the ſpoils, the ſouls of men reſcued from heatheniſm, and the power of Satan, *v.* 12. Long had theſe lain in the corruption and defilement of their fallen nature, as is the caſe of every ſinner, till ſaved by grace: but now were adorned with the garments of a Redeemer's righteouſneſs, bright as the ſilver wings of the dove, and beautiful in holineſs as her glowing feathers in the ſun, *v.* 13. And when the final day of recompence comes, and at the battle of Armageddon, *Rev.* xvi. 14—16. all oppoſing potentates ſhall finally be overthrown; then white as ſnow in Salmon ſhall the faithful ſhine for ever, perfect in holineſs.

15. The hill of God *is as* the hill of Baſhan, an high hill *as* the hill of Baſhan. 16. [s] Why leap ye, ye high hills? [t] *this is* the hill *which* God deſireth to dwell in, yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever. 17. [u] The chariots of God *are* twenty thouſand, † *even* thouſands of angels: the LORD *is* among them *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place.* 18. [x] Thou haſt aſcended on high, [y] thou haſt led captivity captive: thou haſt received gifts ‡ for men; yea, [z] *for* the rebellious alſo, [a] that the LORD God might dwell *among them.* 19. Bleſſed *be* the LORD, [b] *who* [c] daily § loadeth us *with benefits, even* the God of our ſalvation. Selah. 20. He that is our God, *is* the God of ſalvation; and [d] unto God the LORD *belong* the iſſues from death. 21. But [e] God ſhall wound the head of his enemies: *and* the hairy ſcalp of ſuch a one as goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes.

[s] Pſ. cxiv. 4, 6.
[t] Pſ. ii. 6. & lxxxvii. 1. & cxxxii. 13, 14.
[u] Deut. xxxiii. 2. 2 Kings vi. 16, 17. Dan. vii. 10.
† Or, even many thouſands.
[x] Eph. iv. 8.
[y] Judg. v. 12. Iſa. xxxiii. 1.
‡ Heb. In the man.
[z] Rom v. 6. 1 Tim. i. 13, 15.
[a] Eph. iii. 17.
[b] Mal. iii. 10.
[c] Lam. iii. 23.
§ Or, beareth us up.
[d] Deut. xxxii. 39. Rev. i. 18.
[e] Pſ. cx. 6. Hab. iii. 13.

v. 15—21. We have here,

1. The ſtrength and ſtability of the church of Chriſt. High as Baſhan, fixed as the everlaſting mountains, *v.* 15. vain are all the efforts of the potentates of earth againſt it: though they threaten to overwhelm it, God's preſence in the midſt of her is a ſure protection, and for ever he will watch over, and preſerve her unhurt, *v.* 16.

2. Angelic hoſts are her conſtant guard; the thouſands of angels ſtand around their Lord in ſhining ranks, ready to obey his high commands, and miniſter to thoſe that are heirs of ſalvation.

3. The Lord Jeſus is aſcended up on high, to take the throne, and guide, govern, and preſerve his choſen; angels, principalities, and powers, being made ſubject unto him. *He hath led captivity captive:* like a conqueror, death, hell, and all the powers of darkneſs, bound in chains, follow his triumphant car: his people are delivered, and ſhout for victory. *He hath received gifts for men*, or, *given gifts unto men*, (See *Eph.* iv. 8.) whether miniſterial gifts, to qualify them for preaching his goſpel; or gifts of grace, which he beſtows on his people for ſtrength, comfort, and edification: *yea, for the rebellious alſo*, ſuch as all men are by nature and practice, till changed by divine grace, and made obedient to the faith; *that the Lord God might dwell among them*, as a reconciled God in Chriſt, maniſeſting his favour and love to thoſe who were once rebel ſinners, making them fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſhold of God. *Note*, (1.) We can never enough admire and adore the triumphs, grace, and glory of our aſcended Saviour. (2.) A pardoned rebel never felt ſuch gratitude to his generous prince, as the pardoned ſinner ought to feel towards his gracious Lord.

4. He is glorified in the ſalvation of his people, for which they ever bleſs and praiſe him. *He loadeth us with benefits*, ſpiritual and temporal; or, *he will bear us up*, carry us in his arms, that we may be ſafe. *He is our God*, ever intereſting himſelf for us; *the God of our ſalvation*, who hath begun, and will perfect it; and unto him belong *the iſſues from death*; he will preſerve his people from the deadly devices of their foes, Satan, the world, and ſin; will open a door of hope to them in the grave; and, in the reſurrection-day, give them victory over death for ever. *Note*, (1.) God is never weary in doing us good; why then ſhould we ever faint in his praiſe or ſervice? (2.) They who have an intereſt in a covenant God, have their ſalvation in eternity ſecured; and death to them is diſarmed of all its terrors.

5. He will deſtroy every enemy at laſt. The head of the old ſerpent ſhall be finally bruiſed, and the obſtinately impenitent, who have joined the devil and his angels in their rebellion, ſhall be thruſt down with them into the place of torment, *v.* 21.

22. The LORD ſaid, I will bring again from Baſhan, I will bring *my people* again [f] from the depths of the ſea: 23. That [g] thy foot may be † dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* [h] the tongue of thy dogs in the ſame. 24. They have ſeen thy goings, O God, *even* the goings of my God, my king, in the ſanctuary. 25. [i] The ſingers went before, the players on inſtruments *followed* after, amongſt *them were* the damſels playing with timbrels. 26. Bleſs ye God in the congregations, *even* the LORD, ‡ from [k] the fountain of Iſrael. 27. There *is* [l] little Benjamin *with* their ruler, the princes of Judah, § *and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali. 28. [m] Thy God hath commanded thy ſtrength: ſtrengthen, O God, that which thou haſt wrought for us. 29. Becauſe of thy temple at Jeruſalem, [n] ſhall kings bring preſents unto thee. 30. Rebuke || the company of ſpearmen, [o] the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one* ſubmit himſelf with pieces of ſilver: ſcatter thou the people *that* delight in war. 31. [p] Princes ſhall come out of Egypt, [q] Ethiopia ſhall ſoon [r] ſtretch out her hands unto God.

[f] Exod. xiv. 22.
[g] Pſ. lviii. 10.
† Or, red.
[h] 1 Kings xxi. 19.
[i] 1 Chron. xiii. 8. & xv. 16. Pſ. xlvii. 5.
‡ Or, Ye that are of the fountain.
[k] Deut. xxxiii. 28. Iſa. xlviii. 1.
[l] 1 Sam. ix. 21.
§ Or, with their company.
[m] Pſ. xlii. 8. & xliv. 4.
[n] 1 Kings x. 10, 25. 2 Chron. xii. 23. Pſ. lxxii. 10. Iſa. lx. 16.
|| Heb. The beaſt of the reeds. Jer. li. 32, 33.
[o] Pſ. xxii. 12.
[p] Iſa. xix. 19, 21.
[q] Pſ. lxxii. 9. Iſa. xlv. 14. Zeph. iii. 10. Acts viii. 27.
[r] Pſ. xliv. 20.

v. 22—31. Such as were the former deliverances of God's people, ſuch, and more eminent, ſhall be the ſalvation and glory of Chriſt's church.

1. They ſhall be brought from Baſhan, as Iſrael from the mighty army of Og, victorious over every oppreſſing and perſecuting power, whether Pagan, Mahometan, or Papal; and ſhall come up from the depths of their diſtreſſes, under the leading of the great Captain of their ſalvation, *v.* 22. Such a vaſt ſlaughter ſhall be made among their foes, (*See Rev.* xiv. 20.) that they ſhall wade in a ſea of blood, and the dogs lap it as water; in ſuch abundance ſhall it be ſhed. *Note*, However oppreſſed the cauſe of Chriſt may be for a while, the triumphing of his foes is momentary, and their ruin near and terrible.

2. The people of God will celebrate this victory, as of old in the temple the Levites and ſingers magnified God on their ſucceſſes gained by the armies of Iſrael. *They have ſeen thy goings, O God, how thou, my God and king, goeſt in the ſanctuary*, maniſeſting his preſence in his church, and exerting his power for the ſalvation of his people, and the deſtruction of their foes. The apoſtles and preachers, as ſweet ſingers, proclaim the glad tidings of ſalvation, and all the congregations of the redeemed, without diſtinction of ſex or ſtation, male and female, princes and ſubjects, ſhall unite in the ſong of praiſe for goſpel mercies, flowing from the fountain of Iſrael, the incarnate Saviour, *v.* 26. Or little Benjamin may have ſome reference to Paul, the great apoſtle of the Gentiles, who was of that tribe, as Zebulun and Naphtali to the firſt apoſtles, who were chiefly of the land of Galilee, where theſe tribes lay; whilſt the princes of Judah, and their council, may ſignify the firſt goſpel churches and their miniſters, eſtabliſhed at Jeruſalem and in the neighbourhood.

3. They will depend on God for the perfecting his own work. *Thy God hath commanded thy ſtrength*; which may be conſidered as an apoſtrophe to the Meſſiah, ſtrengthened for the great work of redemption; or as the encouragement the pſalmiſt ſuggeſts to God's people. Since God, their God, hath commanded their ſtrength, they cannot fail, and therefore may be aſſured of an anſwer to their prayer, *Strengthen, O God, that which thou haſt wrought for us*; bring to a happy concluſion what is ſo glorioully begun. *Note*, (1.) All our ſpiritual ſtrength comes from God: whatever we enjoy, it is by his grace alone we are what we are. (2.) If we have experienced the ſupports of his arm, we muſt in faith continue to wait upon him, and may be aſſured he will ſtrengthen us unto the end.

4. They expect to ſee the ſpread of the Redeemer's kingdom univerſally, and the ſubdual of all his enemies. *Becauſe of thy temple at Jeruſalem, ſhall kings bring preſents unto thee*, becoming converts to the goſpel, and joining themſelves to the church of Chriſt; as when Conſtantine profeſſed Chriſtianity, and as hereafter will be ſeen, when the kingdoms of the earth ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Chriſt. *Princes from Egypt*, the old enemy of God's people, ſhall make their ſubmiſſion; and ſuch will be the caſe, when the princes ſhall quit the communion of the church of Antichriſt, (*See Rev.* xi. 8. xviii. 4.) and *Ethiopia*, the moſt diſtant realms of the heathen,

ſtretch out their hands unto God in prayer, or as laying hold on Jeſus's ſtrength to make peace with him, *v.* 31. and thoſe who will not bow to him, muſt periſh. The enemies of God, though ſtrongly armed, furious, and numerous as herds of bulls, and ſupported by a deluded people, kept like calves in ignorance and ſtupidity, will be rebuked, *till every one ſubmit himſelf*, be made to yield; or rather, as the words may ſignify, *though glorying themſelves*, or *treading proudly*, becauſe of their riches, they ſhall be brought low; and the people who delight in war, have long waged it againſt the ſaints, be finally and eternally ſcattered from the face of the earth, *v.* 30.

32. Sing unto God, [s] ye kingdoms of the earth: O ſing praiſes *unto* the LORD, Selah: 33. To him [t] that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, *which were* of old; lo, [u] he doth ſend out his voice, *and that* a mighty voice. 34. [x] Aſcribe ye ſtrength unto God: his excellency *is* over Iſrael, and his ſtrength *is* in the † clouds. 35. O God, [y] *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places, the God of Iſrael *is* he that giveth ſtrength and power unto *his* people: bleſſed *be* God.

[s] Rev. xi. 15.
[t] Pſ. xviii. 10. & civ. 3. Ver. 4.
[u] Ibid. xxix. 3, &c.
[x] Ibid. 1.
† Or, heavens.
[y] Pſ. xlv. 4.

v. 32—35. The pſalm concludes with an exhortation to the redeemed from the earth, to unite heart and voice, as in duty bound, in aſcribing glory to God their Redeemer.

1. As aſcended to his throne in the heavens, eſtabliſhed from eternity, and ruling over all, *v.* 33.

2. For the mighty efficacy of his goſpel, ſent forth into all lands, and working with irreſiſtible energy upon the ſouls of men.

3. For his operations of grace and providence towards his Iſrael. In him is everlaſting ſtrength; *his excellency*, all his glorious perfections, *is over Iſrael*, engaged for their comfort and ſupport; *and his ſtrength is in the clouds:* they are his inſtruments of vengeance; on them he went up to heaven, with them he ſhall deſcend to judgment.

4. For the awful viſitations on his enemies. *O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places*; in preſent ſtrokes of vengeance, and eſpecially as ready to conſume the wicked with the brightneſs of his coming.

5. For the preſervation of his Iſrael. *The God of Iſrael is he that giveth ſtrength and power unto his people*; ſupports them under all difficulties, ſtrengthens them for their work, and enables them to perſevere in their fidelity. *Bleſſed be God:* let that Redeemer, whoſe grace alone works all for us, and in us, receive the praiſe of all.

PSALM LXIX.

David's troubles were typical of the Redeemer's ſorrows, of whoſe ſufferings, and the glory which followed, he here principally treats. 1. *He complains of the great diſtreſs and trouble he was in, and earneſtly begs of God to relieve and ſuccour him*, ver. 1—21. 2. *He imprecates the judgments of God upon his perſecutors*, ver. 22—29. 3. *He concludes with the voice of joy and praiſe, in an aſſurance that God would help and ſuccour him, and would do well for the church*, ver. 30—36.

¶ To the chief muſician [a] upon Shoſhannim,
A pſalm of David.

[a] Pſ. xlv. tit.

1. SAVE me, O God, for [b] the waters are come in unto *my* ſoul. 2. [c] I ſink in † deep mire where *there is* no ſtanding: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. 3. [d] I am weary of my crying, my throat is dried: [e] mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. 4. They [f] that hate me without a cauſe, are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would deſtroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I reſtored *that* which I took not away. 5. O God, thou knoweſt my fooliſhneſs; and my ‡ ſins are not hid from thee. 6. Let not them that wait on thee, O LORD God of hoſts, be aſhamed for my ſake: let not thoſe that ſeek thee, be confounded for my ſake, O God of Iſrael. 7. Becauſe for thy ſake [g] I have born reproach: ſhame hath covered my face. 8. [h] I am become a ſtranger unto my brethren, and an aliant unto my mother's children. 9. For [i] the zeal of thine houſe hath eaten me up; and [k] the reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen upon me. 10. When [l] I wept *and chaſtned* my ſoul with faſting, that was to my reproach. 11. I made ſackcloth alſo my garment: and I became a proverb to them. 12. They that ſit in the gate, ſpeak againſt me; and [m] *I was* the ſong of the § drunkards.

[b] Ibid. xlii. 7. Ver. 2, 14, 15. Jonah ii. 5.
[c] Pſ. xl. 2.
† Heb. The mire of depth.
[d] Pſ. vi. 6.
[e] Ibid. cxix. 82, 123.
[f] John xv. 25.
‡ Heb. Guiltineſs.
[g] Pſ. xliv. 13.
[h] Ibid. xxxi. 11. Iſa. liii. 3. John vii. 5.
[i] Pſ. cxix. 139. John ii. 17.
[k] Pſ. lxxxix. 50, 51. Rom. xv. 3.
[l] Pſ. xxxv. 13, 14.
[m] Job xxx. 9. Pſ. xxxv. 15, 16.
§ Heb. The drinkers of ſtrong drink.

v. 1—12. We have here, in the ſuffering ſon of Jeſſe, a lively figure of the ſuffering Son of God, of whom theſe things are chiefly ſpoken.

1. He pours out his complaints unto God, and they are many and grievous. Troubles, deep as the ſwelling flood, compaſſed him, and he ready to ſink under them, *v.* 1, 2. Exhauſted with ſtrong crying and tears, and failing becauſe no help appeared, *v.* 3. Though inoffenſive, yet hated, perſecuted by many and mighty foes, and cruelly as wrongfully, *v.* 4. His deareſt friends were afraid to own him, leſt they ſhould be involved with him in ruin, *v.* 5. His zeal for God exaſperated his enemies, and brought upon him a load of reproaches and infamy, *v.* 7, 9. and when in the holy exerciſes of religion he was engaged, they ridiculed his humiliations, *v.* 10, 11. The great, who ſat in the gate, maligned and abuſed him; and the drunkards, in their midnight revels, made him the ſubject of their ſport and ſongs, *v.* 12. And herein he was,

[1.] A type of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe ſoul in the garden, deluged with anguiſh, ſeemed as if weighed down with the inſupportable load, and the humanity unable to ſupport it, *v.* 2. With ſtrong crying and tears he then made ſupplication unto God, and on the croſs with bitterneſs lamented the divine dereliction, *v.* 3. Though ſinleſs and harmleſs, he paid the debt of ſin he had never contracted, and ſatisfied that juſtice he had never injured: yet did thoſe ſinners, whoſe guilt he bore, perſecute him with ceaſeleſs hatred. Fixed on his deſtruction, they ſuborned falſe witneſſes againſt him, to take away his life, *v.* 4. He was diſowned by every friend; betrayed by one diſciple; denied by another; forſaken of all, *v.* 5. Loaded with the moſt malignant reproaches; his tears over them, and his efforts to ſave them, deſpiſed and rejected; inſulted, with the moſt unrelenting cruelty, by the meaneſt as well as greateſt; by governor, prieſts, elders, ſoldiers: his miracles of grace imputed to diabolical agency; and his importunate cries upon the croſs mocked and ridiculed, *v.* 7, 9, 10.

[2.] Of all believers, whoſe trials are ſevere, and help often long delayed; whoſe ſouls are ready to faint; the objects of the world's malice and ſcorn; forſaken and given up by their once deareſt friends and relations; treated as mad, and derided as fooliſh; oppoſed by the great, and often literally ſtill the drunkard's ſong. But through much tribulation we muſt thus enter into the kingdom of God, through evil report and good report; and whilſt we carry our griefs to a compaſſionate Redeemer, muſt patiently expect the ſalvation of God.

2. He confeſſes his ſins, which were known unto God; the folly bound up in his heart, and the ſins of his life, which, however upright before men, he could not plead as pure before God. The Lord Jeſus had no ſin of his own to confeſs, yet was he made ſin for us; our folly and guilt were imputed to him, and he was therefore numbered with the tranſgreſſors. *Note*, They who know themſelves beſt, know moſt evil of themſelves. The deepeſt read in ſelf-knowledge are ever the moſt humble before a holy God.

3. He prays earneſtly for help and ſalvation, *v.* 1. pleads the diſcouragement it would caſt on the faithful, if he was left to fall, *v.* 6. and the diſhonour it would bring upon God, ſince it was purely on account of his zeal for his cauſe that he was expoſed, *v.* 7—9. Thus Chriſt prayed to be ſaved from the trying hour; and that his people might not be diſappointed of their expectations of redemption by him, who now in his reſurrection and triumphant aſcenſion have confidence towards God. *Note*, (1.) A faithful ſoul cannot but zealouſly eſpouſe the cauſe of God and truth. (2.) It is a great ſatisfaction when we ſuffer, to know that it is for righteouſneſs ſake.

13. But as for me, my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, [n] *in* an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy ſalvation. 14. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not ſink: [o] let me be delivered from them that hate me, and [p] out of the deep waters. 15. Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep ſwallow me up, and let not the pit ſhut her mouth upon me. 16. Hear me, O LORD, for [q] thy loving kindneſs *is* good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. 17. And [r] hide not thy face from thy ſervant, for I am in trouble: † hear me ſpeedily. 18. Draw nigh unto my ſoul, *and* redeem it: deliver me [s] becauſe of mine enemies. 19. Thou haſt known [t] my reproach, and my ſhame, and my diſhonour: mine adverſaries *are* all before thee. 20. Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heavineſs: and [u] I looked *for ſome* ‡ to take pity, but *there was* none; and for comforters, but I found none. 21. They gave me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt [x] they gave me vinegar to drink.

[n] Iſa. xlix. 8. & lv. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 2.
[o] Pſ. cxliv. 7.
[p] Ver. 1, 2, 15.
[q] Pſ. lxiii. 3.
[r] Ibid. xxvii. 9. & cii. 2.
† Heb. Make haſte to hear me.
[s] Deut. xxxii. 27.
[t] Pſ. xxii. 6, 7. Iſa. liii. 3. Heb. xii. 2.
[u] Pſ. cxlii. 4. Iſa. lxiii. 5.
‡ Heb. To lament with me.
[x] Mat. xxvii. 34, 48.

v. 13—21. Whilſt we have a gracious God to fly to, we need not be concerned about the malicious reproaches of the proud.

David, oppreſſed, has recourſe to God for deliverance from his dangers, that his enemies might not prevail, nor his ſoul ſink under his troubles. And he enforces his requeſts, [1.] By the acceptableneſs of the time: never could relief come ſo welcome, as when he is reduced ſo low, *v.* 13. [2.] By the multitude of God's mercies, which now would be eſpecially manifeſted, *v.* 16. [3.] By the truth of his ſalvation, his faithfulneſs being engaged for the anſwer of humble and fervent prayer, *v.* 13. [4.] By the views of his great trouble, which God well knew; the ſhame, reproach, and diſhonour he endured for his ſake, *v.* 19, 20. which required ſpeedy help, and the comforts of his countenance, *v.* 17. that he might not be diſcouraged. [5.] By the deſolateneſs of his eſtate: all other friends have forſaken him, therefore the more he needs God to appear for him. [6.] By the inſolence and cruelty with which he was treated, which he knew God would not behold with unconcern, *v.* 21.

Such requeſts, in the days of his fleſh, the Son of David made. God knew what ſufferings he endured; what trouble and reproach he bore from foes without; what anguiſh, from the withdrawing of his ſenſible favour; how exceeding ſorrowful and very heavy his ſoul was burdened; no friend to pity or relieve; in his enemies hands, ready to be ſwallowed up; the pit of the grave opening; death, with all its horrors, the death of the croſs, approaching; and even when in his agonizing pangs extended on the tree, there inſulted with vinegar mingled with gall, to mock his raging thirſt. In his diſtreſs he prayed, and pleaded the multitude of his Father's mercies, and his truth engaged for the fulfilment of the everlaſting covenant. He begged to behold the light of his Father's countenance, which was hid from him in diſpleaſure; to be ſupported and carried through his work of redemption; that thoſe who hated him, Satan and his ſervants, might be diſappointed, and the grave unable to keep him priſoner: that he might be delivered from all his enemies, redeemed from death and hell, and finally victorious: and God abundantly anſwered his prayers in the reſurrection-day, when all his reproach and ſorrow was for ever rolled away, and his glory great as his ſufferings had been.

Such alſo muſt be our recourſe in our diſtreſſes, ſuch our pleas, and ſuch then aſſuredly will be the eternal deliverance we may expect from all our enemies.

22. [y] Let their table become a ſnare before them: and *that which ſhould have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap. 23. [z] Let their eyes be darkned that they ſee not: and make their loins continually to ſhake. 24. [a] Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. 25. [b] Let their † habitation be deſolate, *and* let none dwell in their tents. 26. For [c] they perſecute *him* [d] whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of ‡ thoſe whom thou haſt wounded. 27. [e] Add § iniquity to their iniquity: and [f] let them not come into thy righteouſneſs. 28. Let them [g] be blotted out of the book of the living, [h] and not be written with the righteous. 29. But [i] I *am* poor and [k] ſorrowful: let thy ſalvation, O God, ſet me up on high.

[y] Rom. xi. 9, 10.
[z] Iſa. vi. 9, 10. John xii. 39, 40. Rom. xi. 8. 2 Cor. iii, 14.
[a] 1 Theſ. ii. 16.
[b] Acts i. 20.
† Heb. Palace.
[c] Zech. i. 15.
[d] Iſa. liii. 4.
‡ Heb. Thy wounded ones.
[e] Rom. i. 24. 2 Theſ. ii. 11.
§ Or, puniſhment of their iniquity.
[f] Rom. ix. 31. & x. 3.
[g] Exod. xxxii. 32.
[h] Ezek. xiii. 5. Luke x. 20. Heb xiii. 23. Rev. xiii. 8.
[i] 2 Cor. viii. 9.
[k] Mat. xxvi. 38.

v. 22—29. Theſe words being expreſsly applied to the Jews, who rejected the true Meſſiah, *Rom.* xi. 9. 10. we can be at no loſs for the explanation of them. They contain a prophetical denunciation of God's righteous judgments againſt them; and we ſee them this day lying under his curſe, and, in the fulfilment of the prophecy, ſtanding evidences for the truth of the Chriſtian religion. We have here,

1. The judgments denounced. [1.] Their comforts ſhould enſnare them; or the ſacrifices, part of which belonged to the offerer, to which they ſo obſtinately adhered, in oppoſition to the true ſacrifice of the Redeemer, whom they rejected; theſe ſhould be made the means of hardening them againſt him, inſtead of leading them to him, as we ſee they were, *v.* 22. [2.] They ſhould be given up to judicial blindneſs, rejecting the cleareſt declarations of their own prophets, *v.* 23. [3.] They ſhould be in continual terrors, or *bow down their backs alway*, as the apoſtle renders the words, *Rom.* xi. 10. which was not only the caſe when the Romans came and beſieged Jeruſalem, and made ſuch a dreadful maſſacre; but to this day, they are ſervants in all lands; in many governments forced to conceal their religion; and in all have been haraſſed and plundered, and are ſtill expoſed to the ſame ſufferings; not to ſpeak of their horrors, when they ſhall ſee him whom they have pierced, coming in the clouds of heaven, *v.* 23. [4.] They ſhould feel the ſeverity of his wrath, which they eminently did, when their city and country was utterly deſtroyed, and the land ploughed up; ſo that for a while none dwelt there; and to this day theſe deſolations in a great meaſure continue, very few Jews being now found in the whole land of Paleſtine, and theſe miſerably oppreſſed by the Turkiſh governors, *v.* 24, 25. [5.] They ſhould add ſin to ſin; having crucified the Maſter, they would perſecute the diſciples, and, inſtead of being convinced by all they ſuffered, would continue hardened and inveterate as ever; ſo that they ſhould not come into God's righteouſneſs; rejecting him who is the only righteouſneſs of his people, they are ſhut up in unbelief, *v.* 27. And, laſtly, that their name ſhould be blotted out from the living, as was literally, in a great meaſure, fulfilled, when the Romans ſlew ſuch vaſt numbers, that they ſeemed to threaten an entire exciſion of the whole Jewiſh race; and ſpiritually is accompliſhed in their excluſion from the bleſſings of the goſpel, by which righteouſneſs and life eternal alone can be obtained, *v.* 28.

2. The cauſe of theſe judgments is mentioned, *v.* 26. Their perſecutions of Jeſus, whom they eſteemed ſtricken and ſmitten of God; and whom, according to the divine counſels and foreknowledge of God, *Acts* xi. 23. they with wicked hand crucified and ſlew; and, inſatiate in their rage againſt his cauſe, contrived every method to inſult God's *wounded ones*, as the word ſignifies, thoſe who ſuffered for their fidelity to Jeſus. *Note*, It is doubly cruel to grieve thoſe already weighed down with ſufferings; but diabolical malice ſports at miſery.

3. The pſalmiſt, in the perſon of the Redeemer, commends himſelf to God. *But I am poor*; in his humiliation for our ſakes he became poor; ſo poor, that he had not a place to lay his head; *and ſorrowful*: from the cradle to the grave, a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief: ſorrows, like unto which were no ſorrows. *Let thy ſalvation, O God, ſet me up on high*, or, *thy ſalvation ſhall ſet me up on high*. Either it is a prayer for, or his confident expectation of, the glory which ſhould follow after his ſufferings, when by death having overcome every enemy, he ſhould ariſe, aſcend, and reign on his eternal throne. *Note*, The poor and ſorrowful believer may be comforted. If we have been planted with Jeſus in the likeneſs of his ſufferings and death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection and glory.

30. I will praiſe the name of God with a ſong, and will magnify him with thankſgiving. 31. [l] *This* alſo ſhall pleaſe the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock that hath horns and hoofs. 32. [m] The † humble ſhall ſee *this*, *and* be glad: and [n] your heart ſhall live that ſeek God. 33. For the LORD heareth the poor, and deſpiſeth not his priſoners. 34. [o] Let the heaven and earth praiſe him, the ſeas and [p] every thing that ‡ moveth therein. 35. For [q] God will ſave Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in poſſeſſion. 36. [r] The ſeed alſo of his ſervants ſhall inherit it: and they that love his name ſhall dwell therein.

[l] Pſ. l. 13, 14.
[m] Pſ. xxxiv. 2.
† Or, meek.
[n] Pſ. xxii. 26.
[o] Ibid. xcvi. 11. & cxlviii. 2, &c. Iſa. xliv. 23. & xlix. 13.
[p] Iſa. lv. 12.
‡ Heb. Creepeth.
[q] Pſ. li. 18.
[r] Ibid. cii. 28.

v. 30—36. David, in the proſpect of this ſalvation of the Redeemer and his people, triumphs, and calls on heaven and earth to join his praiſes.

1. He declares his own purpoſe to exalt and magnify God's holy name, and is aſſured theſe grateful ſongs will pleaſe him beyond the moſt expenſive ſacrifices. Theſe are all now aboliſhed by the offering of the body of Jeſus once for all; but the ſacrifices of praiſe, with which God is well-pleaſed, will never ceaſe being offered in earth and heaven for redeeming love. So cheap yet ſo acceptable a ſacrifice then who will grudge?

2. The people of God ſhall rejoice in beholding his ſalvation, manifeſt in the reſurrection of Jeſus. They will be encouraged now to ſeek God, becauſe ſince he lives, they ſhall live alſo. Though poor in this world, and priſoners for Chriſt; or tied and bound with the chain of ſins, under which they groan, and long to be looſed; God will not deſpiſe their prayer; he will hear their cry, and will help them. *Note*, As long as we have a heart to pray, we ſhall always have cauſe to rejoice.

3. He calls upon all men and angels, yea, every creature that moveth through the paths of the water, to praiſe God with him for his glorious ſalvation. His Zion ſhall be ſaved; his church, and the cities of Judah, the different aſſemblies of the faithful, ſhall be built up. The faithful ſeed ſhall inherit a portion in God's holy mountain, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt; and *they that love his name*, his perſon, his worſhip, his word, his ways, *ſhall dwell therein*, as at preſent the children of God's family, and ſhortly to poſſeſs the enduring manſions in the ſkies, where, with Jeſus our exalted head, we ſhall take up our glorious and eternal abode. Well do ſuch inſpiring hopes demand our warmeſt praiſe.

PSALM LXX.

This pſalm is adapted to a ſtate of affliction. It may be conſidered as an appendix to the foregoing, and is almoſt literally the ſame with Pſal. xl. *v.* 13—17. *which relates to the Meſſiah. He prays,* *that God would ſend*, 1. *Help to himſelf*, ver. 1, 5. 2. *Shame to his enemies*, ver. 2, 3. 3. *Joy to his friends*, ver. 4.

¶ To the chief muſician, *A pſalm* of David, [a] to bring to remembrance.

1. [b] MAKE *haſte*, O God, to deliver me; [c] make haſte to help me, O LORD. 2. [d] Let them be aſhamed and confounded that ſeek after my ſoul: let them be turned backward, and put to confuſion, that deſire my hurt. 3. [e] Let them be turned back for a reward of their ſhame, that ſay, Aha, Aha. 4. Let all thoſe that ſeek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee: and let ſuch as love thy ſalvation ſay continually, Let God be magnified. 5. But [f] I *am* poor and needy, make haſte unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and [g] my deliverer, O LORD, make no tarrying.

a Pſ. xxxviii. tit.
b Ibid. xl. 13, &c.
c Ibid. lxxi. 12.
d Ibid. xxxv. 4, 26. & lxxi. 13.
e Ibid. xl. 15.
f Ibid. 17. & lxix. 29.
g 2 Tim. iv. 18.

v. 1—5. The title of this pſalm is *to bring to remembrance* the mercies he had experienced; the former prayers he had offered, and God had anſwered; and therefore, in new trials to remember the good old way, and make his requeſts ſtill known unto God, he uſes nearly the ſame words as he had done before, *Pſal.* xl. for though formal prayer is folly and hypocriſy, a form of prayer may ſpeak the warm breathings of a pious heart, and be uſed repeatedly to edification.

1. He ſeeks for help *in haſte*, becauſe his danger was imminent, *v.* 1. *Note*, Urgent trials ſhould awaken fervent prayer.

2. He prays that his enemies may be diſappointed and confounded. They were maliciouſly bent to hurt him; ſought after his ſoul, to enſnare him with ſin, or to rob him of his life; and already triumphed, as if they had ſucceeded: but he expects to ſee them turned backward, and their wicked devices baffled, *v.* 2, 3.

3. He prays that God's people may rejoice, eſpecially on obſerving his gracious interpoſition in his deliverance, and magnify God for his mercy. They are deſcribed as *ſeeking God*, this being the conſtant delightful taſk of the faithful, to pray and not faint; as *loving his ſalvation*, loving Jeſus, the author of the ſalvation, and holineſs, the appointed way, *v.* 4.

4. He expreſſes his confidence of help, whilſt he pleads his wants. *I am poor and needy*; ſpiritually needy, and poor in ſpirit; *but thou art my help and deliverer*, and therefore my ſalvation is ſafe and ſure, *v.* 5.

Jeſus was thus ſought for, his precious life purſued, and his enemies confident of ſucceſs; but in his prayer he prevailed: Satan and all his emiſſaries were confounded in the day of his reſurrection, and God, his helper and deliverer, made no tarrying, nor ſuffered his Holy One to ſee corruption; therefore doth his church triumph in their exalted head, and ſay with joy, *The Lord be magnified.*

The faithful ſervants of God are alſo the mark of the world's enmity, and the devil's hatred; and they may expect many a ſore thruſt from both: but they know where their help lies, and make haſte to God in prayer; and though he may ſometimes ſeem to delay his coming, he is not ſlack concerning his promiſes, but exerciſes the graces of his people to confirm and ſtrengthen them, and makes no tarrying when their deliverance is neceſſary. However ſorely they may be exerciſed, the iſſue of their trials will be peace and joy; and they who love God's ſalvation, and ſeek him without ceaſing, will, in time and eternity, by delightful experience, bear teſtimony to his rich and ſovereign grace, and aſcribe to him the everlaſting praiſe.

PSALM LXXI.

This pſalm ſeems to have been penned by David in his old age, probably at the time of Abſalom's rebellion. 1. *He prays that God would deliver and* ſave him, *ver.* 2, 4. *and not* caſt him off, ver. 9. *or be* far from him, *ver.* 12. *and that his enemies might be put to ſhame,* ver. 13. *He pleads his confidence in God,* ver. 1, 3, 5, 7. *The experience he had of help from God,* ver. 6. *and the malice of his enemies againſt him,* ver. 10, 11. 2. *He concludes the pſalm with believing praiſes,* ver. 14, &c. *Never was his hope more eſtabliſhed,* ver. 16, 18, 20, 21. *Never were his joys and thankſgivings more enlarged,* ver. 15, 19, 22, 23, 24. *Let old diſciples join in his prayer, his faith, his joy.*

1. [a] IN thee, O LORD, do I put my truſt, let me never be put to confuſion. 2. [b] Deliver me [c] in thy righteouſneſs, and cauſe me to eſcape: incline thine ear unto me, and ſave me. 3. [d] Be thou † my ſtrong habitation, whereunto I may continually reſort: thou haſt [e] given commandment to ſave me, for thou *art* my rock and my fortreſs. 4. [f] Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man. 5. For thou *art* my hope, O LORD God: *thou art* my truſt from my youth. 6. [g] By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels, my praiſe *ſhall be* continually of thee. 7. [h] I am as a wonder unto many; but thou *art* my ſtrong refuge. 8. Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praiſe *and with* thy honour all the day. 9. Caſt me not off in [i] the time of old age, forſake me not when my ſtrength faileth. 10. For mine enemies ſpeak againſt me: and they [k] that ‡ lay wait for my ſoul, take counſel together, 11. Saying, God hath forſaken him: [l] perſecute and take him, for *there is* none to deliver *him*. 12. [m] O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haſte for my help. 13. [n] Let them be confounded *and* conſumed that are adverſaries to my ſoul: let them be covered *with* reproach and diſhonour, that ſeek my hurt.

a Pſ. xxv. 2. & xxxi. 1.
b Ibid. xxxi. 2.
c Dan. ix. 16.
d Pſ. xxxi. 12.
† Or, a rock of habitation to me.
e Pſ. xliv. 4. & xci. 11.
f Ibid. cxl. 1, 4.
g Pſal. xxii. 9, 10. Iſa. xlvi. 3.
h Zech. iii. 8. 1 Cor. iv. 9.
i Ver. 18.
k Pſ. lvi. 6.
‡ Heb. Watch, or obſerve.
l 2 Sam. xvii. 1.
m Pſ. lxx. 1.
n Ver. 24. Pſ. xxxv. 4, 26. & xl. 14. & lxx. 2.

v. 1—13. The longer the faithful ſoul hath been found in the good ways of God, the ſtronger he grows. *Inſtaurabit iter vires.* Thus David here appears.

1. He profeſſes his confidence in God, amidſt the ſharp trials with which he was now exerciſed. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my truſt*; delighting to repeat the pleaſing ſubject, and dwelling upon the ſure foundation on which his hope was built; a rock, no tempeſt could ſhake; a fortreſs, no foe could ſcale; a ſtrong refuge, where he was ſafe from danger; a ſtrong habitation, where he reſted in comfort. *Note*, They who know God, his faithfulneſs and grace, will with comfort and confidence be engaged to truſt him in every time of need.

2. He remembers to God's glory, and for his own preſent encouragement, the paſt deliverances he had experienced, *v.* 5, 6. From the womb he had been holden up, protected amidſt the dangers of infancy, and the perils of youth; and therefore now he is ſure that God will not fail to ſave him, and reſolves never to ceaſe in praiſing him. *Note*, The more we reflect on what God hath done for us, it will both engage our truſt in him, and awaken our praiſes to him.

3. He makes his prayer in the preſent emergency of his affairs, and it conſiſts of various particulars, and is ſupported with the moſt urgent pleas.

[1.] He prays that he may not be put to confuſion, *v.* 1. but find God his ſtrong habitation in his troubles; pleading God's righteouſneſs as a reaſon why he ſhould vindicate his ſuffering cauſe, *v.* 2. and his promiſe, *v.* 3. on which his hope was grounded. *Note*, They who confidently plead God's faithfulneſs, ſhall never be covered with confuſion, as diſappointed of their hope.

[2.] He cries for deliverance, *v.* 4. from the ſurrounding dangers, when flying from his rebellious ſon, and ſupports his prayer with urging God's relation to him, *O my God*, as an argument for preſent help; and his enemies ill character, as a reaſon for ſaving him out of their hand. *Note*, *My God* is the moſt powerful of all arguments in our approaches to God, to obtain his grace, and encourage our patient waiting upon him.

[3.] He deſires to have new matter for his praiſes, and ſubjects for freſh ſongs all the day; and intimates how greatly God would be glorified in his preſervation. *I am a wonder unto many*; reduced to ſuch a ſtate of deep diſtreſs, want, and wretchedneſs; and the more forlorn, the greater the mercy would appear, and the louder and more inceſſantly God's mercy in his reſtoration would be magnified, *v.* 7, 8. *Note*, God delights in the depth of our miſery to magnify his mercy.

[4.] He begs not to be caſt off now at laſt; and, to move his gracious Maſter's pity, produces his locks grown hoary in his ſervice, and urges his weakneſs as a plea for compaſſionate relief, *v.* 9. *Note*, (1.) In old age we muſt expect infirmities, and need an increaſe of faith and patience to bear them. (2.) God's old ſervants are never caſt off: though they cannot be active in his ſervice as formerly, their hoary heads are a crown of glory, and ready to receive the crown of righteouſneſs, in that world where their youth will be renewed as the eagle's. (3.) When we are moſt ſenſible of our own weakneſs, we ſhall moſt aſſuredly experience the divine ſupport.

[5.] He intreats God to draw near, and make haſte to help him. His dangers could not bear delay; for his enemies were many, politic, plotting his ruin; encouraging themſelves in hope that God had forſaken him, and therefore they muſt prevail; and diſcouraging his friends from helping him, and his heart from depending on God. *Note*, (1.) They who are moſt afflicted of God, are not therefore rejected of him. (2.) The vain hope of the ſinner will prove a lie in his right hand.

[6.] He beſeeches God to turn the evil they meditated againſt him upon themſelves, and to cover them with reproach and diſhonour, who ſought his hurt; wherein he ſpeaks not in a ſpirit of revenge, but in the ſpirit of prophecy, foreſeeing and foretelling their impending ruin. *Note*, They who perſiſt in the ways of wickedneſs, may expect to reap the wages of wretchedneſs.

14. But I will hope continually, and will yet praiſe
thee more and more. 15. My mouth ſhall ſhew forth
thy righteouſneſs, *and* thy ſalvation all the day: for [o] I
know not the numbers *thereof.* 16. I will go [p] in the
ſtrength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of
thy righteouſneſs, *even* of thine only. 17. O God,
thou haſt taught me from my youth: and hitherto have
I declared thy wondrous works. 18. [q] Now alſo † when
I am old and gray-headed, O God, [r] forſake me not:
until I have ſhewed thy ‡ ſtrength unto *this* generation,
and thy power to every one *that* is to come. 19. Thy
righteouſneſs alſo, O God, *is* very high, who haſt done
great things: O God, [s] who *is* like unto thee? 20.
Thou [t] which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore troubles,
[u] ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me up again
from the depths of the earth. 21. Thou ſhalt increaſe
my greatneſs, and comfort me on every ſide. 22. I
will alſo praiſe thee with § the pſaltery, *even* thy truth,
O my God: unto thee will I ſing with the harp, O
thou holy one of Iſrael. 23. My lips ſhall greatly re-
joice when I ſing unto thee: and my ſoul which thou
haſt redeemed. 24. My tongue alſo ſhall talk of thy
righteouſneſs all the day long: for [x] they are con-
founded, for they are brought unto ſhame, that ſeek
my hurt.

[o] Pſ. xl. 5. & cxxxix. 17, 18.
[p] Phil. iv. 13.
[q] Ver. 9.
† Heb. Unto old age, and gray hairs.
[r] Phil. i. 6.
‡ Heb. Arm.
[s] Pſ. lxxxix. 6, 8.
[t] Ibid. lx. 3.
[u] Hoſ. vi. 2.
§ Heb. The inſtrument of pſaltery.
[x] Ver. 13.

v. 14—24. Filled with hope and joy, the pſalmiſt is happy in the midſt of all his ſorrows, and the greateſt of his troubles cannot ſilence his inceſſant praiſe.

1. He expreſſes his lively hope in a variety of inſtances; *I will hope continually*, at all times, and in all ſituations; when others deſpair of my recovery, my heart ſhall never fear nor fail, becauſe the God of my hope faileth not. [1.] God's power and promiſe are his grand ſupports; *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God*, diſclaiming all ſelf-ſufficiency, and ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might, for duty I ſhall be enabled, and in danger be ſecure. *I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs only*, either his fidelity in his word, or that perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus, which is the believer's ſupreme hope and plea. *Note*, Though we have neither ſtrength nor righteouſneſs in ourſelves, there is ſuch fulneſs of both in the Redeemer, that we may be always moſt confident in him, when moſt deſpairing of ourſelves. [2.] His paſt experience encourages his preſent hopes. God had been the guide of his youth, *v.* 17. and he had hitherto acknowledged his wondrous preſervation; therefore in his old age he truſts God will not forſake him, but enable him to leave with the riſing generation, a teſtimony of God's faithfulneſs and care, as a grateful acknowledgment to his glory, and an engagement to them to make him their hope and truſt. *Note*, (1.) Early impreſſions of divine grace are a ſingular mercy, and demand ſuitable improvement. (2.) Every day's experience ſhould confirm our confidence, that God will never leave nor forſake us. (3.) The longer we live under the Divine protection and favour, the more earneſt ſhould we be in commending theſe good ways of God, in which we have walked, to the generations to come. [3.] In many great and ſore troubles he had been ſupported, therefore in the preſent he truſts he ſhall not faint; *thou ſhalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the earth*, tho' he ſeemed as one dead and buried in his grave, he was aſſured his caſe was not beyond the Divine power, nor his circumſtances ſo deſperate, but God would retrieve them. *Note*, (1.) Great and ſore troubles are here often the portion of the righteous, but he who brings them into their difficulties, can and will ſafely extricate them out of them. (2.) Though we go down at death into the grave, and the earth cloſes upon us, we have a hope ſtill full of immortality, a reſurrection-day ſhall quicken our duſt, and bring us from theſe depths of the earth again. [4.] He not only expects deliverance from his troubles, but an increaſe of his greatneſs and conſolations, *v.* 21. Thus the darkneſs of our troubles, like the cloud which covers the ſun, ſerves but to heighten our joys, when at God's word the cloud vaniſhes, the ſun of divine grace ſhines with double luſtre, and the trial of our faith contributes to the increaſe of our honour and glory. [5.] His enemies that ſought his hurt, muſt with ſhame retire, and find it vain to contend with him whom God protects. *Note*, All our ſpiritual enemies at laſt ſhall gnaſh in deſpair, when they ſee us ſet above their malice, and receive the eternal deſert of their deeds.

2. He exults in joyful praiſes. *All the day would he be ſhewing forth God's righteouſneſs and his ſalvation.* His juſtice in the deſtruction of the wicked, his enemies; his faithfulneſs and mercy in his own preſervation; and, above all, the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus, on account of which alone ſalvation becomes ſecured to ſinners: theſe deſerved continual thanks, therefore he reſolves, *I will praiſe thee more and more, or add to all thy praiſe*, v. 14. Since every day afforded ſome new occaſions, called for increaſing acknowledgments, and left him far behind, unable to keep pace even in gratitude, with the mercies continually ſhowered upon him, the number of which ſurpaſſed his comprehenſion, *v.* 15. They were like the God who beſtowed them, very high, above all bleſſing and praiſe, and without parallel; for in heaven or earth none can compare with him, or do as he doth, *v.* 19. With joy therefore, ſurpaſſing great, his ſoul within, redeemed by divine grace and truth, *v.* 23. ſhall ſwell with gratitude too big for utterance; his voice be heard aloud in praiſe, and calling in the ſacred aid of muſic to aſſiſt the expreſſions of his enraptured Spirit, the pſaltery and harp ſhould pour forth a flood of harmony, and raiſe his ſong high as heaven's arch, and rival the angelic choir above. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is the natural expreſſion of the grateful heart, the bounden duty of the favoured ſinner, and the acceptable ſacrifice to a gracious God. (2.) When we ſing with our lips, let us be careful to make melody with our hearts, and not forget the ſenſe in the ſound. They ſacrifice to their own drag, who merely love to hear their own voices; and that muſic is moſt inharmonious to God, which however exquiſite in itſelf, ſerves to draw off our attention from the divine object of our praiſes, to the manner and performance of them. (3.) It is the joyful hope of every redeemed ſoul, however feeble now his efforts, that ſhortly he ſhall be enabled to offer more worthy praiſes, when, with his golden harp before the throne, he ſhall have learnt the ſong of Moſes and the Lamb, and join thoſe heavenly hoſts, whoſe ceaſeleſs ſongs fill God's eternal temple with ſeraphic harmony.

PSALM LXXII.

This is intitled a pſalm for Solomon: it is probable David dictated it a little before he died, when, by divine direction, he ſettled the ſucceſſion, and gave orders to proclaim Solomon king, 1 Kings i. 30. *But though Solomon's name is made uſe of, a greater than Solomon is here, even that Son of David, whoſe throne ſhould be higher than Solomon's, and his dominion univerſal and everlaſting. David in ſpirit,* 1. *Begins with a ſhort prayer for his ſucceſſor,* ver. 1. 2. *He paſſeth immediately into a long prediction of the glories of his reign,* ver. 2—17. *And* 3. *He concludes with praiſe to the God of Iſrael,* ver. 18—20. *And herein we muſt have an eye to Chriſt, praiſing him as our king, and pleaſing ourſelves with our happineſs as his ſubjects.*

¶ *A pſalm* † [a] for Solomon.

1. GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy
righteouſneſs unto the king's ſon. 2. [b] He ſhall
judge thy people with righteouſneſs, and thy poor with
judgment. 3. [c] The mountains ſhall bring peace to the
people, and the little hills, by righteouſneſs. 4. [d] He
ſhall judge the poor of the people, he ſhall ſave the
children of the needy, and ſhall break in pieces the op-
preſſor. 5. [e] They ſhall fear thee [f] as long as the ſun
and moon endure, throughout all generations. 6. [g] He
ſhall come down like rain upon the mown graſs: as
ſhowers *that* water the earth. 7. In his days ſhall the
righteous flouriſh: and [h] abundance of peace ‡ ſo long
as the moon endureth. 8. [i] He ſhall have dominion
alſo from ſea to ſea, and from the river unto the ends
of the earth. 9. They that dwell in the wilderneſs ſhall
bow before him: and [k] his enemies ſhall lick the duſt.
10. The kings of Tarſhiſh, and of the iſles, [l] ſhall
bring preſents: the kings of Sheba, and Seba, [m] ſhall
offer gifts. 11. Yea, [n] all kings ſhall fall down before
him: all nations ſhall ſerve him. 12. For he ſhall de-
liver the needy when he crieth: the poor alſo, and *him*
that hath no helper. 13. He ſhall ſpare the poor and
needy, and ſhall ſave the ſouls of the needy. 14. He
ſhall redeem their ſoul from deceit and violence: and [o]
precious ſhall their blood be in his ſight. 15. And [p] he
ſhall live, and to him ‖ ſhall *be* given of the gold of
Sheba; prayer alſo ſhall be made § for him continually,
and daily ſhall he be praiſed. 16. There ſhall be an
handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the moun-
tains; the fruit thereof ſhall ſhake like Lebanon, and
they of the city ſhall flouriſh like graſs of the earth.
17. [q] His name ſhall endure for ever: † his name ſhall
be continued as long as the ſun: and [r] *men* ſhall be bleſ-
ſed in him; all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.

† Or, of.
[a] Pſ. cxxvii. Title.
[b] Iſa. xi. 3, 4.
[c] Pſ. lxxxv. 10. Iſa. lii 7.
[d] Iſa. xi. 4.
[e] Hoſ. iii. 5.
[f] Pſ. lxxxix. 36, 37.
[g] 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Hoſ. vi. 3.
[h] Iſa. ii. 4.
‡ Heb. Till there be no moon.
[i] 1 Kings iv. 21, 24. or Pſ. ii. 8. Zech. ix. 10. Rev. xi. 15.
[k] Iſa. xlix. 23. Mic. vii. 17.
[l] Pſ. xlv. 12. & lxviii. 29. Iſa. xlix. 7. & lx. 10.
[m] Mat. ii. 11.
[n] Iſa. xlix. 23. Rev. xxi. 24.
[o] Pſ. cxvi. 15.
[p] Rev. i. 18.
‖ Heb. Shall one give.
§ Or, through him.
[q] Pſ. lxxxix. 36.
† Heb. Shall be as a ſon to continue his father's name for ever.
[r] Gen. xii. 3. & xxii. 18. Jer. iv. 2.

v. 1—17. The pſalm opens,

1. With a ſhort prayer, which may be conſidered as David's requeſt for his ſon Solomon, that he might be qualified for the work of adminiſtring his kingdom with equity and righteouſneſs; or rather it is his prayer, in the perſon of all the faithful,

for the Meſſiah, that he might appear, be exalted to his glorious throne, having all judgment in heaven and earth committed to him, and be qualified for the perfecting of the redemption of his people, by ſuch a fulneſs of gifts and graces, as might enable him to work out for them an everlaſting righteouſneſs.

2. He prophetically deſcribes the excellence and glory of his government, wherein though ſome things may be applicable to Solomon, others are only true of him whom Solomon prefigured, and therefore to him the whole may be beſt referred.

(1.) He ſhall rule with righteouſneſs, and be the protector of *the poor* or *afflicted ones* from their oppreſſors, *v.* 2. When ſenſible of their ſpiritual wants and wretchedneſs, they cry to him, under the ſtrivings of Satan, their great enemy, or of wicked men who perſecute them, *v.* 4. being in themſelves helpleſs and deſtitute, he will deliver and ſave them, redeeming their ſouls, and reſcuing them by his grace from the ſnares of the wicked one, and the deceitfulneſs of ſin. And if they are called to ſuffer unto blood, he will keep a precious memorial of it, and reward their martyrdom with a crown of glory, *v.* 12—14.

2. Under his government peace ſhall be diffuſed, *v.* 3. abundance of peace; peace with a reconciled God, peace in our guilty conſciences, peace in our diſpoſitions renewed by Divine grace, peace within preſerved, when all without is moſt threatning, and this effected by his righteouſneſs, the great meritorious cauſe of all our mercies.

3. His enemies ſhall feel his arm, and the rebels againſt his government be broken in pieces, *v.* 4. Whether Satan, the arch-rebel, or thoſe antichriſtian powers that long perſecute and harraſs his church, their end will be to be deſtroyed together. *Note,* The ſinner's damnation ſlumbereth not, though for a while it may be delayed.

4. His government ſhall be moſt deſirable and bleſſed. Like the rain on the new-mown graſs, the graces and conſolations of his ſpirit ſhall deſcend on his people, to refreſh them, *v.* 6. and flouriſhing under theſe heavenly influences, the ſouls of the righteous ſhall bring forth theſe fruits of holineſs abundantly, which are to the praiſe and glory of God, *v.* 7. Does it appear then, that we are the ſubjects of his kingdom by theſe flouriſhing fruits of peace within, and piety without?

5. His dominion will be univerſal, from ſea to ſea, from one end of the earth to the other. The inhabitants of the moſt deſolate parts of the earth ſhall ſome time or other have his goſpel preached to them, and yield obedience to the faith; and his enemies, whether Jews or gentiles, be brought to lick the duſt, laid low in deepeſt humiliation at his feet, *v.* 9. The richeſt kings of the earth ſhall bring their preſents, and the diſtant monarchs, in the fartheſt iſles of the ſea, offer their tribute, as a token of ſubjection, *v.* 10. They ſhall worſhip before him, as their God and king, and all nations ſerve him, when the kingdoms of the world at laſt ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Chriſt, *v.* 11.

6. All his ſubjects ſhall honour and praiſe him; he ſhall live the joy of his people, and the gold of Sheba, the moſt precious offerings, even the bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits of his redeemed, infinitely more precious than gold that periſheth ſhall be preſented to him: *prayer ſhall be made for him,* for the proſperity and increaſe of his kingdom, or *through him,* as the mediator between God and man, through whom alone we can be accepted; *and daily ſhall he be praiſed* in his church, and by his faithful ſubjects, happy under his gracious ſway.

7. His increaſe will be wonderful and great. *There ſhall be a handful of corn,* which may denote Chriſt himſelf, *upon the top of the mountains,* on Calvary, ſown in his death as corn in the earth; or it may refer to the word of goſpel-grace, that at firſt was but as an handful, and ſeemed as unlikely to flouriſh as ſeed ſown on a mountain, but great was the effect; *the fruit thereof ſhall ſhake like Lebanon,* ineſtimably rich and precious ſhall be the fruits that ſpring from the death of Chriſt; or it refers to the vaſt increaſe of converts that ſhould be made to the truth, as ſoon as it was preached, and *they of the city,* the inhabitants of the ſpiritual Jeruſalem, *ſhall flouriſh as the graſs of the earth.*

8. His kingdom ſhall be everlaſting. Whilſt ſun and moon endureth, *v.* 5. he will have a people upon earth, his offspring, as the original word *ſhall continue,* *v.* 17. implies; and when ſun and moon ſhall fade and fail, ſtill he ſhall reign, his throne abiding as the days of eternity, bleſſing for ever his choſen people, and the ſubject of their everlaſting praiſes, *v.* 17.

18. [s] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God, the God of Iſrael, [t] who only doth wondrous things. 19. And bleſſed *be* his glorious name for ever, and [u] let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and amen. 20. The prayers of David the ſon of Jeſſe are ended.

[s] 1 Chron. xxix. 10.
[t] Pſ. cxxxvi. 4.
[u] Zech. xiv. 9.

v. 18—20. The pſalmiſt concludes with enlarged praiſes, excited by the glorious proſpect he had before him.

1. He bleſſes the Lord God, the Redeemer, the God of his Iſrael, whoſe wonders of creation, providence, and eſpecially of grace in his incarnation, death, and ſufferings, were ſo ſtupendous, and deſerving to be had in everlaſting remembrance.

2. He prays for the manifeſtation of his glorious kingdom upon earth, when he ſhall take to him his great power, and reign; and whilſt he breathes the longings of his heart, profeſſes his confident expectation of it in due time, Amen and amen, ſo let it be, ſo ſhall it be.

3. *The prayers of David the ſon of Jeſſe are ended.* This, tho' placed here, might be the laſt of his divine compoſitions, or it may ſignify that this was the ſummit of all his wiſhes, to ſee the Redeemer's kingdom come; or ſome ſuppoſe theſe are the words of the perſon who collected the pſalms together, and that the pſalm ends with the Amen in the former verſe. In ſuch a prayer, may every dying believer well deſire to employ his parting breath, and pouring forth his ſoul into the boſom of his Saviour, cry, Come quickly Lord Jeſus!

PSALM LXXIII.

This pſalm, and the ten that next follow it, carry the name of Aſaph in the titles of them; if he was the penman of them (as many think) we rightly call them pſalms of Aſaph: If he was only the chief muſician, to whom they were delivered, our marginal reading is right, which calls them pſalms for Aſaph. It is probable he penned them; for we read of the words of David, and of Aſaph the ſeer, which were uſed in praiſing God in Hezekiah's time, 2 Chron. xxix. 30. *This is a pſalm of great uſe, it gives us an account of the conflict which the pſalmiſt had with a ſtrong temptation to envy the proſperity of wicked people. He begins his account with a ſacred principle, by the help of which he kept his ground, and carried his point,* ver. 1. *And then tells us,* 1. *How he got into the temptation,* ver. 2—14. 2. *How he got out of the temptation, and gained a victory over it,* ver. 15—20. 3. *How he got by the temptation, and was the better for it,* ver. 21—28. *The experience of others ſhould be our inſtructions.*

¶ A pſalm † of [a] Aſaph.

† Or, for.
[a] Pſ. l. Tit.

1. ‡ TRULY God *is* good to Iſrael, *even* to ſuch as are of a clean heart. 2. But as for me, my feet were almoſt gone: my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt. 3. For [b] I was envious at the fooliſh, *when* I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked. 4. For *there are* no bands in their death: but their ſtrength *is* ‖ firm. 5. [c] They *are* not § in trouble *as other* men: neither are they plagued † like *other* men. 6. Therefore pride compaſſeth them about as a chain: violence covereth them *as* a garment. 7. [d] Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs: they have more than heart could wiſh. 8. [e] They are corrupt, and ſpeak wickedly *concerning* oppreſſion: they ſpeak loftily. 9. [f] They ſet their mouth againſt the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth. 10. Therefore his people return hither: and [g] waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them. 11. And they ſay, [h] How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the moſt High? 12. Behold, theſe *are* the ungodly, [i] who proſper in the world, they increaſe *in* riches. 13. Verily, [k] I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and [l] waſhed mine hands in innocency. 14. For all the day long have I been plagued and chaſtned every morning.

‡ Or, yet.
[b] Job xxi. 7. Pſ. xxxvii. 1. Jer. xii. 1.
‖ Heb. Fat.
[c] Job xxi. 9.
§ Heb. In the trouble of, &c.
† Heb. With.
[d] Job xv. 27. Pſ. xvii. 10. & cxix. 70.
[e] Jer. v. 28.
[f] Rev. xiii. 6.
[g] Pſ. lxxv. 8.
[h] Job xxii. 13. Pſ. x. 11. & xciv. 7.
[i] Jer. xii. 1.
[k] Job xxi. 15. & xxxv. 3. Mal. iii. 14.
[l] Pſ. xxvi. 6.

v. 1—14. The proſperity of the wicked hath been a common temptation to the ſaints of God. The pſalmiſt was ſtaggered at it, and muſing on the myſterious providence, breaks forth, *Truly,* or *notwithſtanding God is good to Iſrael, even to them that are of a clean heart:* this he is aſſured of, amidſt all his doubts and perplexities, and holding faſt this principle, rides out the ſtorm. *Note,* (1.) There are ſome firſt principles clear as the ſun; to them we muſt recur under all our difficulties. (2.) God's Iſrael are of a clean heart, waſhed in the blood, and renewed by the ſpirit of a Divine Redeemer. (3.) They who are thus pure in heart, will ever, by experience, own that God is good, and all his ways mercy and truth.

1. The pſalmiſt owns, how near he was being overcome by the temptation. *But as for me, my feet were almoſt gone: my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt;* the aſſault was ſo violent, and his faith ſo ſhaken, that it was with difficulty he kept his footing: *For I was envious at the fooliſh,* or the wicked, for folly and ſin are inſeparably linked together. *Note,* (1.) The ſtrongeſt believers are often the moſt ſorely tempted, and ſometimes ready to faint under their trials. (2.) Many a precious ſoul that enters heaven, can look back and reflect on the day and hour, when there was but a ſtep between him and hell. (3.) Though in our own apprehenſion we ſeem ſometimes well nigh gone, it is engaged in the everlaſting covenant, that God will never leave nor forſake us, and all our trials ſhall but the more magnify the riches of his grace.

2. He deſcribes the cauſe and proceſs of the temptation:

(1.) *I ſaw the proſperity,* or *peace of the wicked.* They know few

14. But I will hope continually, and will yet praiſe thee more and more. 15. My mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſs, *and* thy ſalvation all the day: for [o] I know not the numbers *thereof.* 16. I will go [p] in the ſtrength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, *even* of thine only. 17. O God, thou haſt taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. 18. [q] Now alſo † when I am old and gray-headed, O God, [r] forſake me not: until I have ſhewed thy ‡ ſtrength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come. 19. Thy righteouſneſs alſo, O God, *is* very high, who haſt done great things: O God, [s] who *is* like unto thee? 20. *Thou* [t] which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore troubles, [u] ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. 21. Thou ſhalt increaſe my greatneſs, and comfort me on every ſide. 22. I will alſo praiſe thee with § the pſaltery, *even* thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I ſing with the harp, O thou holy one of Iſrael. 23. My lips ſhall greatly rejoice when I ſing unto thee: and my ſoul which thou haſt redeemed. 24. My tongue alſo ſhall talk of thy righteouſneſs all the day long: for [x] they are confounded, for they are brought unto ſhame, that ſeek my hurt.

o Pſ. xl. 5. & cxxxix. 17, 18.
p Phil. iv. 13.
q Ver. 9.
† Heb. Unto old age, and gray hairs.
r Phil. i. 6.
‡ Heb. Arm.
s Pſ. lxxxix. 6, 8.
t Ibid. lx. 3.
u Hoſ. vi. 2.
§ Heb. The inſtrument of pſaltery.
x Ver. 13.

v. 14—24. Filled with hope and joy, the pſalmiſt is happy in the midſt of all his ſorrows, and the greateſt of his troubles cannot ſilence his inceſſant praiſe.

1. He expreſſes his lively hope in a variety of inſtances; *I will hope continually*, at all times, and in all ſituations; when others deſpair of my recovery, my heart ſhall never fear nor fail, becauſe the God of my hope faileth not. [1.] God's power and promiſe are his grand ſupports; *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God*, diſclaiming all ſelf-ſufficiency, and ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might, for duty I ſhall be enabled, and in danger be ſecure. *I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs only*, either his fidelity in his word, or that perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus, which is the believer's ſupreme hope and plea. *Note*, Though we have neither ſtrength nor righteouſneſs in ourſelves, there is ſuch fulneſs of both in the Redeemer, that we may be always moſt confident in him, when moſt deſpairing of ourſelves. [2.] His paſt experience encourages his preſent hopes. God had been the guide of his youth, *v.* 17. and he had hitherto acknowledged his wondrous preſervation; therefore in his old age he truſts God will not forſake him, but enable him to leave with the riſing generation, a teſtimony of God's faithfulneſs and care, as a grateful acknowledgment to his glory, and an engagement to them to make him their hope and truſt. *Note*, (1.) Early impreſſions of divine grace are a ſingular mercy, and demand ſuitable improvement. (2.) Every day's experience ſhould confirm our confidence, that God will never leave nor forſake us. (3.) The longer we live under the Divine protection and favour, the more earneſt ſhould we be in commending theſe good ways of God, in which we have walked, to the generations to come. [3.] In many great and ſore troubles he had been ſupported, therefore in the preſent he truſts he ſhall not faint; *thou ſhalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the earth*, tho' he ſeemed as one dead and buried in his grave, he was aſſured his caſe was not beyond the Divine power, nor his circumſtances ſo deſperate, but God would retrieve them. *Note*, (1.) Great and ſore troubles are here often the portion of the righteous, but he who brings them into their difficulties, can and will ſafely extricate them out of them. (2.) Though we go down at death into the grave, and the earth cloſes upon us, we have a hope ſtill full of immortality, a reſurrection-day ſhall quicken our duſt, and bring us from theſe depths of the earth again. [4.] He not only expects deliverance from his troubles, but an increaſe of his greatneſs and conſolations, *v.* 21. Thus the darkneſs of our troubles, like the cloud which covers the ſun, ſerves but to heighten our joys, when at God's word the cloud vaniſhes, the ſun of divine grace ſhines with double luſtre, and the trial of our faith contributes to the increaſe of our honour and glory. [5.] His enemies that ſought his hurt, muſt with ſhame retire, and find it vain to contend with him whom God protects. *Note*, All our ſpiritual enemies at laſt ſhall gnaſh in deſpair, when they ſee us ſet above their malice, and receive the eternal deſert of their deeds.

2. He exults in joyful praiſes. *All the day would he be ſhewing forth God's righteouſneſs and his ſalvation.* His juſtice in the deſtruction of the wicked, his enemies; his faithfulneſs and mercy in his own preſervation; and, above all, the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus, on account of which alone ſalvation becomes ſecured to ſinners: theſe deſerved continual thanks, therefore he reſolves, *I will praiſe thee more and more, or add to all thy praiſe*, v. 14. Since every day afforded ſome new occaſions, called for increaſing acknowledgments, and left him far behind, unable to keep pace even in gratitude, with the mercies continually ſhowered upon him, the number of which ſurpaſſed his comprehenſion, *v.* 15. They were like the God who beſtowed them, very high, above all bleſſing and praiſe, and without parallel; for in heaven or earth none can compare with him, or do as he doth, *v.* 19. With joy therefore, ſurpaſſing great, his ſoul within, redeemed by divine grace and truth, *v.* 23. ſhall ſwell with gratitude too big for utterance; his voice be heard aloud in praiſe, and calling in the ſacred aid of muſic to aſſiſt the expreſſions of his enraptured Spirit, the pſaltery and harp ſhould pour forth a flood of harmony, and raiſe his ſong high as heaven's arch, and rival the angelic choir above. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is the natural expreſſion of the grateful heart, the bounden duty of the favoured ſinner, and the acceptable ſacrifice to a gracious God. (2.) When we ſing with our lips, let us be careful to make melody with our hearts, and not forget the ſenſe in the ſound. They ſacrifice to their own drag, who merely love to hear their own voices; and that muſic is moſt inharmonious to God, which however exquiſite in itſelf, ſerves to draw off our attention from the divine object of our praiſes, to the manner and performance of them. (3.) It is the joyful hope of every redeemed ſoul, however feeble now his efforts, that ſhortly he ſhall be enabled to offer more worthy praiſes, when, with his golden harp before the throne, he ſhall have learnt the ſong of Moſes and the Lamb, and join thoſe heavenly hoſts, whoſe ceaſeleſs ſongs fill God's eternal temple with ſeraphic harmony.

PSALM LXXII.

This is intitled a pſalm for Solomon: it is probable David dictated it a little before he died, when, by divine direction, he ſettled the ſucceſſion, and gave orders to proclaim Solomon king, 1 Kings i. 30. *But though Solomon's name is made uſe of, a greater than Solomon is here, even that Son of David, whoſe throne ſhould be higher than Solomon's, and his dominion univerſal and everlaſting. David in ſpirit,* 1. *Begins with a ſhort prayer for his ſucceſſor,* ver. 1. 2. *He paſſeth immediately into a long prediction of the glories of his reign,* ver. 2—17. *And* 3. *He concludes with praiſe to the God of Iſrael,* ver. 18—20. *And herein we muſt have an eye to Chriſt, praiſing him as our king, and pleaſing ourſelves with our happineſs as his ſubjects.*

¶ *A pſalm* † [a] for Solomon.

1. GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteouſneſs unto the king's ſon. 2. [b] He ſhall judge thy people with righteouſneſs, and thy poor with judgment. 3. [c] The mountains ſhall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteouſneſs. 4. [d] He ſhall judge the poor of the people, he ſhall ſave the children of the needy, and ſhall break in pieces the oppreſſor. 5. [e] They ſhall fear thee [f] as long as the ſun and moon endure, throughout all generations. 6. [g] He ſhall come down like rain upon the mown graſs: as ſhowers *that* water the earth. 7. In his days ſhall the righteous flouriſh: and [h] abundance of peace ‡ ſo long as the moon endureth. 8. [i] He ſhall have dominion alſo from ſea to ſea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. 9. They that dwell in the wilderneſs ſhall bow before him: and [k] his enemies ſhall lick the duſt. 10. The kings of Tarſhiſh, and of the iſles, [l] ſhall bring preſents: the kings of Sheba, and Seba, [m] ſhall offer gifts. 11. Yea, [n] all kings ſhall fall down before him: all nations ſhall ſerve him. 12. For he ſhall deliver the needy when he crieth: the poor alſo, and *him* that hath no helper. 13. He ſhall ſpare the poor and needy, and ſhall ſave the ſouls of the needy. 14. He ſhall redeem their ſoul from deceit and violence: and [o] precious ſhall their blood be in his ſight. 15. And [p] he ſhall live, and to him ‖ ſhall *be* given of the gold of Sheba; prayer alſo ſhall be made § for him continually, *and* daily ſhall he be praiſed. 16. There ſhall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof ſhall ſhake like Lebanon, and *they* of the city ſhall flouriſh like graſs of the earth. 17. [q] His name ſhall endure for ever: † his name ſhall be continued as long as the ſun: and [r] *men* ſhall be bleſſed in him; all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.

† Or, of.
a Pſ. cxxvii. Title.
b Iſa. xi. 3, 4.
c Pſ. lxxxv. 10. Iſa. lii 7.
d Iſa. xi. 4.
e Hoſ. iii. 5.
f Pſ. lxxxix. 36, 37.
g 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Hoſ. vi. 3.
h Iſa. ii. 4.
‡ Heb. Till there be no moon.
i 1 Kings iv. 21, 24. or Pſ. ii. 8. Zech. ix. 10. Rev. xi. 15.
k Iſa. xlix. 23. Mic. vii. 17.
l Pſ. xlv. 12. & lxviii. 29. Iſa. xlix. 7. & lx. 10.
m Mat. ii. 11.
n Iſa. xlix. 23. Rev. xxi. 24.
o Pſ. cxvi. 15.
p Rev. i. 18.
‖ Heb Shall one give.
§ Or, through him.
q Pſ. lxxxix. 36.
† Heb. Shall be as a ſon to continue his father's name for ever.
r Gen. xii. 3. & xxii. 18. Jer. iv. 2.

v. 1—17. The pſalm opens,

1. With a ſhort prayer, which may be conſidered as David's requeſt for his ſon Solomon, that he might be qualified for the work of adminiſtring his kingdom with equity and righteouſneſs; or rather it is his prayer, in the perſon of all the faithful,

for the Meſſiah, that he might appear, be exalted to his glorious throne, having all judgment in heaven and earth committed to him, and be qualified for the perfecting of the redemption of his people, by ſuch a fulneſs of gifts and graces, as might enable him to work out for them an everlaſting righteouſneſs.

2. He prophetically deſcribes the excellence and glory of his government, wherein though ſome things may be applicable to Solomon, others are only true of him whom Solomon prefigured, and therefore to him the whole may be beſt referred.

(1.) He ſhall rule with righteouſneſs, and be the protector of *the poor* or *afflicted ones* from their oppreſſors, *v.* 2. When ſenſible of their ſpiritual wants and wretchedneſs, they cry to him, under the ſtrivings of Satan, their great enemy, or of wicked men who perſecute them, *v.* 4. being in themſelves helpleſs and deſtitute, he will deliver and ſave them, redeeming their ſouls, and reſcuing them by his grace from the ſnares of the wicked one, and the deceitfulneſs of ſin. And if they are called to ſuffer unto blood, he will keep a precious memorial of it, and reward their martyrdom with a crown of glory, *v.* 12—14.

2. Under his government peace ſhall be diffuſed, *v.* 3. abundance of peace; peace with a reconciled God, peace in our guilty conſciences, peace in our diſpoſitions renewed by Divine grace, peace within preſerved, when all without is moſt threatning, and this effected by his righteouſneſs, the great meritorious cauſe of all our mercies.

3. His enemies ſhall feel his arm, and the rebels againſt his government be broken in pieces, *v.* 4. Whether Satan, the arch-rebel, or thoſe antichriſtian powers that long perſecute and harraſs his church, their end will be to be deſtroyed together. *Note*, The ſinner's damnation ſlumbereth not, though for a while it may be delayed.

4. His government ſhall be moſt deſirable and bleſſed. Like the rain on the new-mown graſs, the graces and conſolations of his ſpirit ſhall deſcend on his people, to refreſh them, *v.* 6. and flouriſhing under theſe heavenly influences, the ſouls of the righteous ſhall bring forth theſe fruits of holineſs abundantly, which are to the praiſe and glory of God, *v.* 7. Does it appear then, that we are the ſubjects of his kingdom by theſe flouriſhing fruits of peace within, and piety without?

5. His dominion will be univerſal, from ſea to ſea, from one end of the earth to the other. The inhabitants of the moſt deſolate parts of the earth ſhall ſome time or other have his goſpel preached to them, and yield obedience to the faith; and his enemies, whether Jews or gentiles, be brought to lick the duſt, laid low in deepeſt humiliation at his feet, *v.* 9. The richeſt kings of the earth ſhall bring their preſents, and the diſtant monarchs, in the fartheſt iſles of the ſea, offer their tribute, as a token of ſubjection, *v.* 10. They ſhall worſhip before him, as their God and king, and all nations ſerve him, when the kingdoms of the world at laſt ſhall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Chriſt, *v.* 11.

6. All his ſubjects ſhall honour and praiſe him; he ſhall live the joy of his people, and the gold of Sheba, the moſt precious offerings, even the bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits of his redeemed, infinitely more precious than gold that periſheth ſhall be preſented to him: *prayer ſhall be made for him*, for the proſperity and increaſe of his kingdom, or *through him*, as the mediator between God and man, through whom alone we can be accepted; *and daily ſhall he be praiſed* in his church, and by his faithful ſubjects, happy under his gracious ſway.

7. His increaſe will be wonderful and great. *There ſhall be a handful of corn*, which may denote Chriſt himſelf, *upon the top of the mountains*, on Calvary, ſown in his death as corn in the earth; or it may refer to the word of goſpel-grace, that at firſt was but as an handful, and ſeemed as unlikely to flouriſh as ſeed ſown on a mountain, but great was the effect; *the fruit thereof ſhall ſhake like Lebanon*, ineſtimably rich and precious ſhall be the fruits that ſpring from the death of Chriſt; or it refers to the vaſt increaſe of converts that ſhould be made to the truth, as ſoon as it was preached, and *they of the city*, the inhabitants of the ſpiritual Jeruſalem, *ſhall flouriſh as the graſs of the earth.*

8. His kingdom ſhall be everlaſting. Whilſt ſun and moon endureth, *v.* 5. he will have a people upon earth, his offspring, as the original word *ſhall continue*, *v.* 17. implies; and when ſun and moon ſhall fade and fail, ſtill he ſhall reign, his throne abiding as the days of eternity, bleſſing for ever his choſen people, and the ſubject of their everlaſting praiſes, *v.* 17.

18. [s] Bleſſed *be* the LORD God, the God of Iſrael, [t] who only doth wondrous things. 19. And bleſſed *be* his glorious name for ever, and [u] let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and amen. 20. The prayers of David the ſon of Jeſſe are ended.

[s] 1 Chron. xxix. 10.
[t] Pſ. cxxxvi. 4.
[u] Zech. xiv. 9.

v. 18—20. The pſalmiſt concludes with enlarged praiſes, excited by the glorious proſpect he had before him.

1. He bleſſes the Lord God, the Redeemer, the God of his Iſrael, whoſe wonders of creation, providence, and eſpecially of grace in his incarnation, death, and ſufferings, were ſo ſtupendous, and deſerving to be had in everlaſting remembrance.

2. He prays for the manifeſtation of his glorious kingdom upon earth, when he ſhall take to him his great power, and reign; and whilſt he breathes the longings of his heart, profeſſes his confident expectation of it in due time, Amen and amen, ſo let it be, ſo ſhall it be.

3. *The prayers of David the ſon of Jeſſe are ended.* This, tho' placed here, might be the laſt of his divine compoſitions, or it may ſignify that this was the ſummit of all his wiſhes, to ſee the Redeemer's kingdom come; or ſome ſuppoſe theſe are the words of the perſon who collected the pſalms together, and that the pſalm ends with the Amen in the former verſe. In ſuch a prayer, may every dying believer well deſire to employ his parting breath, and pouring forth his ſoul into the boſom of his Saviour, cry, Come quickly Lord Jeſus!

PSALM LXXIII.

This pſalm, and the ten that next follow it, carry the name of Aſaph in the titles of them; if he was the penman of them (as many think) we rightly call them pſalms of Aſaph: If he was only the chief muſician, to whom they were delivered, our marginal reading is right, which calls them pſalms for Aſaph. It is probable he penned them; for we read of the words of David, and of Aſaph the ſeer, which were uſed in praiſing God in Hezekiah's time, 2 Chron. xxix. 30. *This is a pſalm of great uſe, it gives us an account of the conflict which the pſalmiſt had with a ſtrong temptation to envy the proſperity of wicked people. He begins his account with a ſacred principle, by the help of which he kept his ground, and carried his point,* ver. 1. *And then tells us,* 1. *How he got into the temptation,* ver. 2—14. 2. *How he got out of the temptation, and gained a victory over it,* ver. 15—20. 3. *How he got by the temptation, and was the better for it,* ver. 21—28. *The experience of others ſhould be our inſtructions.*

¶ A pſalm † of [a] Aſaph.

1. ‡ TRULY God *is* good to Iſrael, *even* to ſuch as are of a clean heart. 2. But as for me, my feet were almoſt gone: my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt. 3. For [b] I was envious at the fooliſh, *when* I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked. 4. For *there are* no bands in their death: but their ſtrength *is* ‖ firm. 5. [c] They *are* not § in trouble *as other* men: neither are they plagued † like *other* men. 6. Therefore pride compaſſeth them about as a chain: violence covereth them *as* a garment. 7. [d] Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs: they have more than heart could wiſh. 8. [e] They are corrupt, and ſpeak wickedly *concerning* oppreſſion: they ſpeak loftily. 9. [f] They ſet their mouth againſt the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth. 10. Therefore his people return hither: and [g] waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them. 11. And they ſay, [h] How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the moſt High? 12. Behold, theſe *are* the ungodly, [i] who proſper in the world, they increaſe *in* riches. 13. Verily, [k] I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and [l] waſhed mine hands in innocency. 14. For all the day long have I been plagued and chaſtned every morning.

† Or, for.
[a] Pſ. l. Tit.
‡ Or, yet.
[b] Job xxi. 7. Pſ. xxxvii. 1. Jer. xii. 1.
‖ Heb. Fat.
[c] Job xxi. 9.
§ Heb. In the trouble of, &c.
† Heb. With.
[d] Job xv. 27. Pſ. xvii. 10. & cxix. 70.
[e] Jer. v. 28.
[f] Rev. xiii. 6.
[g] Pſ. lxxv. 8.
[h] Job xxii. 13. Pſ. x. 11. & xciv. 7.
[i] Jer. xii. 1.
[k] Job xxi. 15. & xxxv. 3. Mal. iii. 14.
[l] Pſ. xxvi. 6.

v. 1—14. The proſperity of the wicked hath been a common temptation to the ſaints of God. The pſalmiſt was ſtaggered at it, and muſing on the myſterious providence, breaks forth, *Truly*, or *notwithſtanding God is good to Iſrael, even to them that are of a clean heart:* this he is aſſured of, amidſt all his doubts and perplexities, and holding faſt this principle, rides out the ſtorm. *Note*, (1.) There are ſome firſt principles clear as the ſun; to them we muſt recur under all our difficulties. (2.) God's Iſrael are of a clean heart, waſhed in the blood, and renewed by the ſpirit of a Divine Redeemer. (3.) They who are thus pure in heart, will ever, by experience, own that God is good, and all his ways mercy and truth.

1. The pſalmiſt owns, how near he was being overcome by the temptation. *But as for me, my feet were almoſt gone: my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt*; the aſſault was ſo violent, and his faith ſo ſhaken, that it was with difficulty he kept his footing: *For I was envious at the fooliſh*, or the wicked, for ſolly and ſin are inſeparably linked together. *Note*, (1.) The ſtrongeſt believers are often the moſt ſorely tempted, and ſometimes ready to faint under their trials. (2.) Many a precious ſoul that enters heaven, can look back and reflect on the day and hour, when there was but a ſtep between him and hell. (3.) Though in our own apprehenſion we ſeem ſometimes well nigh gone, it is engaged in the everlaſting covenant, that God will never leave nor forſake us, and all our trials ſhall but the more magnify the riches of his grace.

2. He deſcribes the cauſe and proceſs of the temptation:

(1.) *I ſaw the proſperity*, or *peace of the wicked.* They know few of the troubles to which good men are expoſed, and ſeem to have a leſs ſhare of the common calamities of the human life, *v.* 5. Their worldly wealth increaſes, ungodly as they are, and evil as the means are which they uſe to obtain it, *v.* 12. They give a looſe to every appetite, and wallowing with luxury, *their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs*, or *go out*, pampered luſt continually ſeeking after forbidden gratification, *v.* 7. *They have more than heart could wiſh*, their proſperity exceeded their former moſt ſanguine hopes; or, *the imaginations of their heart go on* to covet more, and ſtill add to their ſtore: and as their life is proſperous, their death is peaceful; *for there are no bands in their death*, or *until their death*, nothing diſtreſſes them, they have neither pain of body, or terrors of conſcience, and die in peace, and at eaſe: *but their ſtrength is firm*, not weakned with ſickneſs or diſeaſe, or brought down to the grave by an untimely death. *Note*, (1.) It is an ill ſign when we know no trouble here below, but all things go on ſmoothly; for every ſon whom God loveth, he chaſteneth. (2.) Proſperous iniquity may continue even to the grave; yea, in death the ſinner may lie down inſenſible of danger; but he is not therefore the ſafer. Many die like lambs, who, if they ſaw whither they were going, would roar like lions.

(2.) He ſaw them not only proſperous, but abuſing that proſperity, and hardening their hearts in wickedneſs, inſtead of being thankful for the gifts of God. *Pride compaſſeth them about as a chain*, v. 6. they attribute to their own wiſdom all their acquiſitions, and think it an ornament to look great, and make a diſplay of their riches and magnificence. *They ſpeak loftily*, boaſting of their acquiſitions and mighty deeds, and with diſdain, inſolence, and arrogance, addreſſing their inferiors, *Dan.* iii. 15. Their power is turned into oppreſſion, *they are corrupt* in principle and practice; *they ſpeak wickedly concerning oppreſſion*, *v.* 8. vindicating their injuſtice, and glorying in their iniquity; *violence covereth them as a garment*, they deck themſelves with the ſpoils of rapine, and are not aſhamed publickly to appear in theſe *garments of violence*, Iſa. lix. 6. and they ſhew no more fear of God, than regard to man. *They ſet their mouth againſt heaven*, blaſpheming God, denying his providence, and defying his threatnings; *and their tongue walketh through the earth* with unbridled licentiouſneſs, neither greatneſs or goodneſs is any protection from their malevolence and ſlander. They are not afraid *to ſpeak evil of dignities*, and none eſcape the laſh of their calumnies; *and they ſay, how doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Moſt High?* atheiſtically concluding he took no concern in the affairs of mortals, and that as he neither ſaw nor regarded their iniquities, they were ſafe, and might live as they liſted. *Behold, theſe* indeed *are the ungodly*, v. 12. *Note*, (1.) Pride was the ſin of devils, and thereby men moſt reſemble them. (2.) They who talk proudly, talk fooliſhly, as well as wickedly, and will ſhortly change their tone. (3.) Though the oppreſſor ſucceed in his violence, theſe garments will prove his ſhame, not his glory. (4.) Wickedneſs in practice is often productive of infidelity in principle. They who fear a day of recompence, flatter themſelves there is none.

(3.) Whilſt the wicked were thus proſperous and proud, he obſerved God's faithful ones afflicted, and felt it to be his own caſe; and this eſpecially ſtaggered him. *Therefore his people return hither*, God's people are brought to the Pſalmiſt's perplexity by obſerving theſe things; *and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them*, for many and bitter are their afflictions. Though theſe words may be applied to the wicked, as connected with the foregoing and following verſes, intimating the multitudes who join them, and approve their ways, and have a full cup of worldly comforts put into their hands. The Pſalmiſt alſo himſelf had experienced many a ſore trial, *All the day long have I been plagued*, or *ſcourged*, *and chaſtened every morning*, v. 14. every day brought him ſome croſs and trial, whilſt they who blaſphemed God, knew no ſorrow, and this made him ready to accuſe God's ways as unequal. *Note*, (1.) Correction is a mark of God's paternal heart towards us, and therefore we muſt not faint when he chaſtiſeth. (2.) Though our afflictions be heavy, or long continued, the deepeſt of our diſtreſſes are far preferable to the greateſt heighth of proſperous iniquity.

3. He owns the temptation ſo far prevailed againſt him, as to lead him to this raſh concluſion, *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency*; as if it profited a man nothing to ſerve God, and that, as the wicked ſuggeſted, God had indeed forſaken the earth; this he owns was his infirmity. *Note*, (1.) By nature we are all impure, till our hearts are cleanſed in the fountain of a Redeemer's blood. (2.) Every one who hath waſhed therein, walks in holineſs, as Chriſt alſo walked. (3.) They who have faith to wait the iſſue, will be convinced, whatever they ſuffer here below, that it is not *in vain to ſerve God*, when they perceive that *great is their reward in heaven*.

15. If I ſay, I will ſpeak thus: behold, I ſhould
offend *againſt* the generation of thy children. 16. [m] When
I thought to know this, it *was* † too painful for me.
17. Until [n] I went into the ſanctuary of God; *then* underſtood
I [o] their end. 18. Surely [p] thou didſt ſet them
in ſlippery places: thou caſtedſt them down into deſtruction.
19. How are they *brought* into deſolation, as in a
moment? they are utterly conſumed with terrors. 20.
[q] As a dream when *one* awaketh; *ſo*, O LORD, when
thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image.

m Eccleſ. viii. 17.
† Heb. Labour in mine eyes.
n Pſ. lxxvii. 13.
o Ibid. xxxvii. 38.
p Ibid. xxxv. 6.
q Job xx. 8. Pſ. xc. 5.

v. 15—20. He was ſtrongly tempted, but as ſtrongly ſupported, and enabled at laſt to prevail.

1. He kept his thoughts to himſelf, whilſt he ruminated on the ſubject, leaſt he ſhould offend God's people; and though he ſaw the raſh ſuggeſtion of his ſpirit, he would not ſpeak unadviſedly with his lips. *If I ſay, I will ſpeak thus: behold, I ſhould offend the generation of thy children*; and that he was ſhocked to think of, and carefully avoided. *Note*, (1.) When evil thoughts ariſe, our labour muſt be to ſuppreſs them; when once uttered, their miſchief may be endleſs and irreparable. (2.) There are a people in the world dear to God as children, and who love him as their father, whom we muſt be careful never to offend, to grieve, or diſcourage. (3.) It would be the greateſt reproach on God's ſervice, and moſt effectually tend to weaken the hands of his people, to miſrepreſent his good ways, as unprofitable and vain. (4.) They who do ſo, ſhew they have never truly ſerved God, ſince the experience of every faithful ſoul proves his ſervice to be the ſupreme felicity.

2. Though by the light of reaſon he could not reconcile this difficulty, yet when he went into the ſanctuary, ſought God by prayer, and communed with his word and miniſters, then the myſtery was unfolded; he ſaw the proſperity of ſinners no longer to be envied, when they were fattening only as an ox for the ſlaughter, *v.* 17. Their joy had no ſtability, was precarious and momentary, their deſtruction inevitable, ſudden, and terrible, *v.* 18, 19. Like a dream of the night, when God awakes to judgment, their proſperity vaniſhes, and *their image*, their vain pomp and ſplendor, which now proves a mere ſhadow, is deſpiſed, and exchanged for everlaſting ſhame and contempt, *Dan.* xii. 2. *Note*, We muſt form our judgment of men and things not by appearances, but by the word of God; and when we there ſee the end of proſperous iniquity in everlaſting burnings, and of ſuffering piety in eternal glory, we ſhall no longer heſitate about our choice.

21. Thus [r] my heart was grieved, and I was pricked
in my reins. 22. [s] So fooliſh *was* I, and ignorant: I
was *as* a beaſt before thee. 23. Neverthele ſs, I *am* continually
with thee: [t] thou haſt holden *me* by my right
hand. 24. [u] Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and
afterward receive me *to* glory. 25. Whom have I in
heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I deſire
beſides thee. 26. [x] My fleſh and my heart faileth:
but God *is* the † ſtrength of my heart, and [y] my portion
for ever. 27. For lo, they that are far from thee, ſhall
periſh: thou haſt deſtroyed all them [z] that go a whoring
from thee. 28. But it is good for me to draw near to
God: I have put my truſt in the Lord GOD, that I
may declare all thy works.

r Pſ. xxxvii. 1.
s Ibid. xcii. 6. Prov. xxx. 2.
t 1 Pet. i. 5.
u Pſ. xxxii. 8.
x Ibid. lxxxiv. 2. & cxix. 81.
† Heb. Rock.
y Pſ. xvi. 5. & cxix. 5, 7.
z Exod. xxxiv. 15. Num. xv. 39.

v. 21—28. The temptations of the ſaints ſerve to brighten their graces, and their recovery from the doubts which ſtaggered them, iſſues in their greater eſtabliſhment. Such good the Pſalmiſt found,

1. His ſinful thoughts tended to his deeper abaſement. *My heart was grieved*, or *leavened*, he owns it, to his ſhame, that the proſperity of the wicked put his mind into an undue ferment, *and I was pricked in my reins*, his envy at them gave him acute pain; *ſo fooliſh was I, and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee:* he ſcarce finds words ſufficiently expreſſive of the ſtupidity and folly of his conduct. *Note*, (1.) Envy and fretfulneſs make men their own tormentors. (2.) Good men, who have the deepeſt knowledge of their own hearts, have the deepeſt ſenſe of their own perverſeneſs and folly; and each knowing moſt of himſelf, thinks he can with greateſt propriety apply to himſelf the ſaying, *I am more brutiſh than any man*, Prov. xxx. 2.

2. He owns his deep obligations to the grace of God. *Neverthele ſs*, notwithſtanding his folly, *I am continually with thee*, the object of God's tender regard, and at bottom in heart and affection cleaving to God amidſt all his temptations; *thou haſt holden me by my right hand*, as a tender parent that ſupports his falling child. *Note*, We are weak as helpleſs infancy, and ſtand wholly indebted to the everlaſting arms that are under us, for our preſervation. And the more we are convinced of this, the more ſhall we be engaged to love God.

3. He expreſſes his confidence of God's continual guidance and ſupport. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel*, his revealed word, and the teachings of his holy ſpirit, *and afterwards receive me to glory*, when every trial paſſed, and death the laſt overcome, thou wilt bring me to the conſummation of bliſs in thy eternal kingdom. *Note*, (1.) God's counſel in his word infallibly conducts to his glory thoſe who follow it. (2.) From paſt experience of God's grace, we may comfortably conclude

the continuance of it even to the end. (3.) If we have a ſure inheritance in eternal glory, we little need envy ſinners any thing they poſſeſs above us here below.

4. His ſoul riſes up in fervent aſpirations after God, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* a covenant God is the ſole object of the believer's worſhip and confidence, from whom alone he expects his felicity, and in the enjoyment of whom his eternal happineſs conſiſts. He hopes to be happy in heaven, becauſe God is there; *and there is none upon earth I deſire beſides thee*, all that earth affords, health, wealth, friends, family, honour, &c. are nothing, compared with a ſenſe of God's love, and the enjoyment of communion with him. All without him cannot ſatisfy, whilſt, in the want of all, he can ſatisfy our ſouls, and be to us a better portion than ten thouſand worlds. *Note*, (1.) The more we ſee of God's excellence and all-ſufficiency, the leſs we ſhall regard every thing beſides. (2.) What cauſe have we to lament the coldneſs of our hearts, that ſo little correſpond with the Pſalmiſt's fervent deſires?

5. In every diſtreſs he reſts his ſoul upon this Almighty God, his everlaſting portion. *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength*, or *rock*, *of my heart*, to ſupport me in every diſtreſs, *and my portion for ever*; when the body is laid in the duſt and forgotten, God would be ſtill the ſame to him, the portion of his immortal ſoul. *Note*, (1.) We muſt expect the hour, when this feeble fleſh ſhall fail, and ſickneſs, or age, bring us to the grave. (2.) Death is terrible to nature, and our heart, as well as fleſh, will fail us in that trying ſeaſon, unleſs God be our ſtrength, and faith in his power and grace removes the ſting of death. (3.) They who have made God their rock in time, will find him their portion in eternity.

6. Miſerable will be the end of the ungodly. *For lo, they that are far from thee*, that depart from God in heart and conduct, and live eſtranged from his love, worſhip, and ſervice, *ſhall periſh* eternally. *Thou haſt deſtroyed all them that go a whoring from thee*, that follow other gods, or, idolatrouſly attached to the creature, love and ſerve it more than their Creator; all ſuch ſinners have periſhed, and all ſuch will periſh to the end of time, who thus apoſtatize from God. *Note*, Let no wilful ſinner hope for impunity; none ever yet hardned his heart againſt God, and proſpered.

7. He declares his fixed purpoſe of cleaving to God. *But it is good for me to draw near unto God* in prayer, and all thoſe means of grace, whereby communion with God is maintained, and which they, who have their ſouls truly attached to him, find moſt profitable and delightful. *I have put my truſt in the Lord God*, who will never diſappoint my expectations, *that I may declare all thy works* of providence and grace, wherein his faithfulneſs and mercy appear, and for which we owe everlaſting praiſe. *Note*, (1.) They who know the comfort of communion with God, can ſay by experience, it *is good to draw near* to him. (2.) None ever truſted on him, and were confounded. (3.) The more we are enabled to truſt him, the more ſhall we ſee cauſe to praiſe him.

PSALM LXXIV.

This pſalm ſeems to refer to the miſeries of the Jewiſh people in their captivity. If penned by Aſaph, who lived in the days of David, it is prophetical, though ſome ſuggeſt it was written by another of the ſame name, after their return from Babylon. It may alſo be conſidered as referring to the ſufferings of the church in general in the latter days. The prophet, 1. *Makes known to God the miſeries that they ſuffered,* ver. 1—11. 2. *He encourages his and the people's hopes, from the conſideration of what God had done for them formerly,* ver. 12—17. 3. *He concludes with divers petitions to God for deliverance,* ver. 18—23.

¶ [a] Maſchil † of [b] Aſaph. — [a] Pſ. xxxii. Title. † Or, for.

1. O GOD, why haſt thou caſt *us* off for ever? — [b] Pſ. l. Tit.
why doth thine anger ſmoke againſt [c] the ſheep — [c] Ibid. xcv. 7. & c. 3.
of thy paſture? 2. Remember thy congregation [d] *which*
thou haſt purchaſed of old: [e] the ‡ rod of thine inheri- — [d] Exod. xv. 16.
tance *which* thou haſt redeemed, this mount Zion where- — [e] Deut. xxxii. 9.
in thou haſt dwelt. 3. Lift up thy feet unto the perpe- — Jer. x. 16.
tual deſolations: *even* all that the enemy hath done — ‡ Or, tribe.
wickedly in the ſanctuary. 4. [f] Thine enemies roar in the — [f] Lam. ii. 7.
midſt of thy congregations: [g] they ſet up their enſigns — [g] Dan. ix. 27.
for ſigns. 5. *A man* was famous according as he had
lifted up axes againſt the thick trees. 6. But now they — [h] 1 Kings vi. 18, 29, 32,
break down [h] the carved work thereof at once, with — 35.
axes and hammers. 7. [i] They have caſt fire into thy — [i] 2 Kings xxv. 9.
ſanctuary, they have defiled *by caſting down* the dwelling- — [k] Pſ. lxxxiii.
place of thy name to the ground. 8. They ſaid in — 4.
their hearts, [k] Let us ‖ deſtroy them together: they have — ‖ Heb. Break.
burnt up all the ſynagogues of God in the land. 9. We — [l] 1 Sam. iii.
ſee not our ſigns, [l] *there is* no more any prophet, neither — & Amos viii. 11.
is there among us any that knoweth how long. 10. O
God, how long ſhall the adverſary reproach? ſhall the
enemy blaſpheme thy name for ever? 11. [m] Why with- — [m] Lam. ii. 3.
draweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck *it*
out of thy boſom.

v. 1—11. A day of trouble ſhould be a day of prayer. Whence can we hope for relief, but by pouring our complaints into the boſom of our compaſſionate God? The Pſalmiſt here,

1. Humbly expoſtulates with God on their calamities. *O God, why haſt thou caſt us off for ever?* for ſo long their ſufferings were continued, that they began to fear they would never end. *Why doth thine anger ſmoke againſt the ſheep of thy paſture?* ſo fierce his wrath appeared againſt them, though *the ſheep of his paſture*, whom once he had fed with a ſhepherd's care; and though fooliſhly they had ſtrayed from him, yet cannot they quit their hope, that he would ſtill regard them in this endeared relation, and ſtay the furiouſneſs of his diſpleaſure. *Note*, (1.) The people of God are ſometimes brought to very melancholy apprehenſions about their ſtate, and to fear the rod of correction is the ſword of judgment. (2.) Though God for a time caſt down his people, he will never finally caſt them off.

2. He pleads for a gracious remembrance from God. *Remember thy congregation*, choſen by him to be a peculiar people, *which thou haſt purchaſed of old*, by the blood of the Lamb, ſlain from the foundation of the world; *the rod of thine inheritance*, to whom God had an eſpecial claim, *which thou haſt redeemed*, not only by the eternal redemption of his Son, but by many temporal deliverances wrought for them, eſpecially from Egypt, *this mount Zion wherein thou haſt dwelt*, and from whence he intreats God would not remove his reſidence. And this is applicable to the church in every age, redeemed by Jeſus from ſin, death, and hell, in the midſt of which God is pleaſed to dwell, and who may in every time of trouble expect a gracious remembrance from him. *Note*, (1.) The paſt favours we have received from God, may be made a plea for greater; for where he loves, he loves unto the end. (2.) They who are redeemed by the blood of Jeſus, ſhall never periſh under the bondage of corruption.

3. He complains of the diſtreſs to which they were reduced. *Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual deſolations*, to come and ſee them; either thoſe of the Chaldeans, which they feared would be perpetual, or of the Romans, of ſo much longer continuance: *even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the ſanctuary*, for though they had God's commiſſion to deſtroy, the ſpirit with which they did it, rendered them utterly guilty. *Thine enemies roar in the midſt of thy congregations*, where once the voice of humble praiſe was heard, there riotous mirth and joy defile the ſacred courts; or where they aſſembled for worſhip, they inſulted, diſturbed, and diſperſed them: *they ſet up their enſigns for ſigns*, on the battlements of the temple, as proud conquerors; and this defiance of God, his people could not behold without bitter anguiſh. *A man was famous*, or *known*, according *as he had lifted up*, or *as one that lifts up axes upon the thick trees*; formerly it was eſteemed a man's honour to have contributed to raiſe the temple, *but now they break down the carved work thereof at once, with axes and hammers*, eager to deface and deſtroy the glorious fabric: the ſanctuary is in flames, and razed to the ground, *v.* 7. *They ſaid in their hearts*, ſuch was their malicious purpoſe, *let us deſtroy them together*, that not a man may be left, or a place of worſhip remain. *They have burnt up all the ſynagogues of God in the Land*, ſo deſirous they ſeemed to extirpate their holy religion, and put an end to their ſolemn aſſemblies. *Note*, Worldly minds only feel their worldly croſſes; to a child of God, the intereſts of religion are infinitely dearer to him, than any earthly concern.

4. No proſpect of relief appeared. *We ſee not our ſigns*, none of the wonderful interpoſitions of God, to which they had been accuſtomed; none of the inſtitutions and ordinances of God's worſhip, which were a ſign of God's preſence with them, but ceaſed on the deſtruction of the temple. *There is no more any prophet*, few were raiſed up in Babylon; in Malachi they ceaſed, and ſince their laſt diſperſion, they have been left utterly deſtitute: *neither is there any among us that knoweth how long*; they underſtood not the prophecies concerning the end of the Babyloniſh captivity, and at preſent are entirely in the dark, without the leaſt knowledge when their deſolations ſhall end.

5. He intreats an immediate exertion of God's power on their behalf. *How long ſhall the adverſary reproach and blaſpheme thy name for ever?* for this is the moſt grievous part of their calamity, that God is ſo diſhonoured by the inſulting foe. *Why withdraweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy boſom*, and deſtroy our enemies. *Note*, The enemies of God, however proſperous for a while, will be conſumed at the laſt with an utter deſtruction. — [n] Pſ. xliv. 4. [o] Exod. xiv. 21.

12. For [n] God *is* my king of old, working ſalvation in — [p] Iſa. li. 9, 10. Ezek.
the midſt of the earth. 13. [o] Thou didſt divide the ſea by — xxix. 3. &
thy ſtrength: [p] thou brakeſt the heads of the § dragons in — xxxii. 2. § Or whales.
the

the waters. 14. Thou brakeſt the heads of leviathan in
pieces, *and* gaveſt him *to be* [q] meat to the people inhabiting
the wilderneſs. 15. [r] Thou didſt cleave the fountain and
the flood: [s] thou driedſt up mighty rivers. 16. The day
is thine, the night alſo *is* thine: [t] thou haſt prepared the
light and the ſun. 17. Thou haſt ſet all the borders of
the earth: [u] thou haſt made ſummer and winter.

[q] Num. xiv. 9.
[r] Exod. xvii. 5. Num. xx. 11. Pſ. cv. 41. Iſa. xlviii. 21.
[s] Joſh. iii. 13.
[t] Gen. i. 14, &c.
[u] Ibid. viii. 22.

v. 12—17. We have here two conſiderations ſuggeſted for the quieting the people of God under their troubles.

1. God is Iſrael's King, working wonders for their ſalvation. *God is my King of old*, protecting and preſerving his people from their foes, *working ſalvation in the midſt of the earth*; that ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation which all nations ſhould partake of through Jeſus Chriſt; or as interpoſing in a miraculous manner, in delivering the Jewiſh people, dividing the red ſea for their paſſage, and deſtroying Pharoah and his captains in the waters, *v.* 13. though fierce as dragons, and ſtrong as leviathan, and with their ſpoil enriched his people; and hereby alſo he fed their hopes, and ſupported their faith during their long abode in the wilderneſs, *v.* 14. forth from the rock, at God's command, the fountain guſhed to relieve their thirſt, and followed them their journey through; and Jordan's mighty waters were dried up, to open a way for the redeemed to paſs over, *v.* 15. Miracles like theſe might well raiſe their expectation of deliverance from their preſent troubles, ſeeing his hand is not ſhortened. *Note*, (1.) The head of the old dragon is bruiſed by our divine Lord, and we may triumph over him as a vanquiſhed foe. (2.) The ſame rock that followed Iſrael follows us, for that rock was Chriſt, and from the waters of his grace and conſolations, believers are daily comforted and ſtrengthened in their journey through this wilderneſs. (3.) If we ſee not theſe outward miracles, as great ſpiritual wonders are ſtill wrought for God's Iſrael, who, through difficulties to human apprehenſion inſurmountable, are led ſafely to their heavenly Canaan.

2. He is the God of nature. *The day is thine, the night alſo is thine*; he opens the eye-lids of the morning, and draws the curtains of the evening, and in regular ſucceſſion the luminaries of heaven move in their orbits: *he hath prepared the moon and the ſun*, that alternately give light to the world. *Thou haſt ſet all the borders of the earth*; ſettling the bounds of nations, and fixing the habitation of each individual: *thou haſt made ſummer and winter:* and ſurely, he who made all theſe hath power to ſave his people; if his covenant of nature abide, his covenant of grace with them is more unchangeable, and whilſt they ſee theſe changes in the world they may not deſpair; their night of adverſity he can diſpel with the ſunſhine of proſperity, and change their dreary winter, of ſorrows and deſolation, into the ſummer of abundance and joy.

18. [x] Remember this, *that* the enemy hath reproached,
O LORD, and *that* the fooliſh people have blaſ-
phemed thy name. 19. O deliver not the ſoul of
[y] thy turtle-dove unto the multitude *of the wicked*, [z] for-
get not the congregation of thy poor for ever. 20.
[a] Have reſpect unto the covenant: for the dark places
of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.
21. O let not the oppreſſed return aſhamed: let the
poor and needy praiſe thy name. 22. Ariſe, O God,
plead thine own cauſe: [b] remember how [c] the fooliſh
man reproacheth thee daily. 23. Forget not the voice
of thine enemies: the tumult of thoſe that riſe up againſt
thee, † increaſeth continually.

[x] Ver. 22. Rev. xvi. 19.
[y] Cant. ii. 14.
[z] Pſ. lxviii. 10.
[a] Gen. xvii. 7. Pſ. cv. 8. Jer. xxxiii. 21.
[b] Ver. 18.
[c] Pſ. lxxxix. 51.
† Heb. Aſcendeth.

v. 18—23. Conſcious that their help cometh only from the Lord, the pſalmiſt calls upon him to *ariſe* and *plead*, not merely on their behalf, but *thine own cauſe*, his glory being intimately connected with their ſalvation.

1. God was reproached and blaſphemed daily by their enemies, as if he was unable to deliver them, or unfaithful to his promiſes, and diſappointed their hopes, *v.* 18. their ſucceſs intoxicated them, and daily they increaſed their proud boaſtings. This their fooliſhneſs and wickedneſs, David hopes God will remember, and not forget for the ſake of his own glory, ſo diſhonoured hereby, *v.* 22, 23. *Note*, (1.) Succeſs often makes ſinners more daring, and ripens them for ruin. (2.) The enemies of God's people triumph often, as if the day was their own, but the proſperity of fools deſtroys them. (3.) Ungodly ſinners think they are very wiſe when they turn things ſacred into ridicule; but, to their confuſion, they will be proved in the end as fooliſh as they are wicked. (4.) God needs no memorial, he ſees and notes the ways of men; but it is right we ſhould plead this as a teſtimony of our regard for God's glory, and of our confidence he will appear to vindicate it.

2. His people were oppreſſed and perſecuted: they are called *God's turtle-dove*, ſo mournful, harmleſs, pure, affectionate, conſtant; *his poor*, humble and lowly in ſpirit, ſuch as God promiſes to regard; therefore the pſalmiſt prays, *O deliver not the ſoul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked*, who waited but for permiſſion to deſtroy them, *forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever*; though for a time they had ſeemed forſaken, he hopes God will at laſt remember them in mercy. *Have reſpect unto the covenant*; the conditions of which being fulfilled in the Redeemer, though we are unworthy, it is ſure to all the ſeed: *for the dark places of the earth*, and ſuch were the manſions of their captivity, *are full of the habitations of cruelty*, which rendered their ſtate more wretched and pitiable, being ſo cruelly treated by their enemies. *O let not the oppreſſed return aſhamed*; as diſappointed of their requeſts at a throne of grace: *let the poor and needy praiſe thy name*; give them *occaſion* to do ſo, for the deſtruction of their enemies, and their own ſalvation; and give them a *heart* to do ſo, that whilſt the wicked blaſpheme, they may adore thee.

PSALM LXXV.

This pſalm is ſuppoſed to deſcribe David's circumſtances at his acceſſion after the death of Saul: and may alſo have reſpect to Chriſt coming in the fleſh, and at laſt to judge the world. In it, 1. *David returns God thanks for bringing him to the throne*, ver. 1, 9. 2. *He promiſes to lay out himſelf for the public good*, ver. 2, 3, 10. 3. *He checks the inſolence of thoſe that oppoſed his coming to the throne*, ver. 4, 5. 4. *He fetches a reaſon for all this from God's ſovereign dominion in the affairs of the children of men*, ver. 6, 7, 8.

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] Altaſchith,
A pſalm *or* ſong † of Aſaph.

[a] Pſal. lvii. tit.
† Or, for.

1. UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks: *un-
to thee* do we give thanks: for that thy name
is near, thy wondrous works declare. 2. When I ſhall
‡ receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly. 3.
The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are diſſolved:
[b] I bear up the pillars of it. Selah. 4. I ſaid unto the
fools, Deal not fooliſhly; and to the wicked, [c] Lift
not up the horn. 5. Lift not up your horn on high:
[d] ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck.

‡ Or, take a ſet time.
[b] Heb. i. 3.
[c] Zech. i. 21.
[d] Pſal. lxxiii. 8.

v. 1—5. The pſalm opens,

1. With repeated and fervent thankſgivings for God's great mercies received, and may be the language of David and his ſervants on his coming to the crown, after ſo many ſcenes of God's providential care; or of the church adoring God for the gift of his Son, who in his incarnation was brought near unto them, and whoſe miracles, and wondrous works of redemption, declared his power and grace. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is ever our bounden duty on every review of God's mercies towards us. (2.) Every faithful ſoul experiences wondrous inſtances of God's nearneſs to help him out of dangers, from which he could not eſcape, and to bring him to the enjoyment of mercies above his expectations.

2. The pſalmiſt promiſes, when he ſhall be brought to the crown, his adminiſtration ſhall be juſt and upright. And when the great congregation of the elect ſhall be gathered unto Chriſt in the day of his appearing and glory, then ſhall righteous judgment proceed againſt the ungodly. *Note*, (1.) Magiſtrates are accountable to God, from whom they receive their authority, and their deciſions muſt be without partiality. (2.) They who have the honour of office, muſt remember the conſcientious diſcharge of the burden thereto annexed.

3. He undertakes to ſupport and reſtore, through the Divine bleſſing, the weak and diſtracted ſtate of Iſrael, that, through Saul's miſmanagement, and the factions in the ſtate, had been brought to the brink of ruin. *Note*, (1.) Diſunion and factions haſten a kingdom to deſtruction. (2.) One true patriot hath often ſaved a nation. But this more emphatically appertains to Chriſt, who, when the world and all its inhabitants by ſin were diſſolved, and ready to be ſwallowed up in miſery, bore up the pillars of it, and by his redemption renewed the face of the earth.

4. He rebukes the folly as well as wickedneſs of thoſe who oppoſed his government. Though they exerted all their power againſt him, with a ſtiff neck refuſed to bend, and proudly ſpoke againſt his adminiſtration, it was all in vain; and therefore he admoniſhes them to ſubmit, leaſt they ſhould feel the weight of his arm. Many are the enemies from earth and hell that oppoſe the kingdom of Jeſus; but it ſhall riſe ſuperior to all oppoſition, the antichriſtian horns, *Rev.* xviii. 7. ſhall all be broken, and the ſinners that have ſpoken hard ſpeeches againſt him, be ſilenced in eternal deſtruction, *Jude*, 14 15. *Note*, It is folly to oppoſe where reſiſtance is vain, and madneſs where ruin muſt be the conſequence; yet thus fooliſhly and madly do ſinners plunge their ſouls into eternal perdition, and will not have this Jeſus to reign over them.

6. For promotion *cometh* neither from the eaſt, nor
from the weſt, nor from the † ſouth. 7. But [e] God
is the judge: [f] he putteth down one, and ſetteth up
another. 8. For in the hand of the LORD *there is* [g]
a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture, and
he poureth out the ſame: but [h] the dregs thereof all
the wicked of the earth ſhall wring *them* out, [i] *and*
drink *them*. 9. But I will declare for ever; I will ſing
praiſes to the God of Jacob. 10. [k] All the horns of
the wicked alſo will I cut off; *but* [l] the horns of the
righteous ſhall be exalted.

† Heb. Deſert.
e Pſ. l. 6. & lviii. 11.
f Sam. ii. 7. Dan. ii. 21.
g Pſ. xi. 6. Rev. xvi. 19.
h Pſ. lxxiii. 10.
i Job xxi. 20. Jer. xxv. 15. Rev. xiv. 10.
k Pſ. ci. 8. Jer. xlviii. 25.
l Pſ. lxxxix. 17. & cxlviii. 14.

6—10. We have here the folly of David's enemies, and the ruin which would attend thoſe, who, in oppoſing his promotion, were fighting againſt God.

1. All power is from God; he is the eternal king and judge; and according to the counſels of his own will *he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another*, and all human efforts to riſe, without his ſupport, are vain; for *promotion* cometh not from any quarter of the compaſs, but by him, and from him alone kings reign. As David the type, ſo Jeſus the antitype hath God exalted, to be a prince and a Saviour, and hath put all enemies under his feet, and made him to be head over all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

2. They who reſiſt God's anointed, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation. *For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red*, a cup of afflictions: *it is full of mixture*, mercy and grace temper the viſitations of ſome, *and he poureth out of the ſame*, according to men's provocations, lighter or heavier chaſtiſements: *but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them*; when, without the leaſt drop of mercy, the Lord will pour out upon them in hell, fire and brimſtone, ſtorm and tempeſt; this ſhall be their eternal portion to drink, *Pſalm* xi. 6. *Note*, Whatever an impenitent ſinner feels on this ſide the grave, it is but the beginning of ſorrows, a drop, compared with that ocean of wrath in which he will to eternity be immerſed.

3. For both theſe manifeſtations of God's power, in ſetting up and caſting down, the pſalmiſt engages to render continual praiſe, *v.* 9. and employing the power with which God had entruſted him, *All the horns of the wicked alſo will I cut off*; break their oppreſſive rule, and prevent them from doing hurt; *but the horns of the righteous ſhall be exalted*; magiſtrates being ſet not only for the puniſhment of evil doers, but for the praiſe of them that do well. And thus ſhall the Son of David declare and praiſe the name of God upon earth, in his goſpel word, and in the church of his redeemed; and in the great day of his appearing and glory he will bruiſe the wicked with a rod of iron, and exalt his ſaints to reign with him in his eternal kingdom.

PSALM LXXVI.

This pſalm appears to have been penned on ſome ſignal victory obtained over the enemies of God's people, and may be conſidered as prophetical of the Redeemer's triumphs over the antichriſtian powers who perſecute his church. 1. *The pſalmiſt congratulates the happineſs of the church in having God ſo nigh*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He celebrates the glory of God's power, which this was an illuſtrious inſtance of*, ver. 3—6. 3. *He infers from hence what reaſon all have to fear him*, ver. 7—9. *And, his people to truſt and pay their vows to him*, ver. 10—12.

¶ To the chief muſician on [a] Neginoth,
A pſalm *or* ſong † of Aſaph.

a Pſ. iv. tit.
† Or, for.

1. [b] IN Judah *is* God known: his name *is* great in
Iſrael. 2. In Salem alſo is his tabernacle, and his
dwelling-place in Zion. 3. [c] There brake he the arrows
of the bow, the ſhield, and the ſword, and the battle.
Selah. 4. Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent than
[d] the mountains of prey. 5. [e] The ſtout-hearted are
ſpoiled, [f] they have ſlept their ſleep: and none of the
men of might have found their hands. 6. [g] At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horſe are
caſt into a dead ſleep.

b Pſ. xlviii. 3. & cxlvii. 19, 20.
c Ibid. xlvi. 9. Ezek. xxxix. 9.
d Ezek. xxxviii. 12, 13. & xxxix. 4.
e Iſa. xlvi. 12.
f Pſal. xiii. 3. Jer. li. 39.
g Ex. xv. 1, 21. Ezek. xxxix. 20. Zech. xii. 4.

v. 1—6. The church of God is often made to ſing her triumphant ſongs, even here below.

1. God is here repreſented as eminently appearing for her. *In Judah is God known*; there he had made the moſt glorious revelation of himſelf, and of his will: *his name is great in Iſrael*, exalted and praiſed by his people, and magnified in the wonders he wrought on their behalf. *In Salem alſo is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion*; favoured with his immediate preſence, viſible in the Shecinah of glory. And this may refer to the incarnation of the Son of God, made known in Judah by the preaching of the Baptiſt, as Iſrael's exalted Saviour, who pitched his tabernacle among men, appeared in the fleſh at Jeruſalem, and in his church, the ſpiritual Zion, continues to take up his abode.

2. A glorious victory is obtained, whether by David, 2 *Sam.* xii, 26—31. or by Jehoſhaphat, 2 *Chron.* xx. 1—29. or by Hezekiah, 2 *Kings*, xix. 35. or by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to whom emphatically it may be applied, over the powers of ſin, Satan, death, and hell. The enemies are repreſented as *ſtout-hearted*, as *men of might*, as completely armed, *v.* 3. But there is no contending againſt God; the arrows are broken, *the ſhield, the ſword, and the battle*: unable to defend themſelves, the mighty are fallen with their chariots and horſes, they ſleep the ſleep of death, and the weak take the ſpoil, *v.* 5, 6. Thus hath our Redeemer ſpoiled principalities and powers; and following him, the weakeſt believer ſeizes the prey, and triumphs over vanquiſhed foes; for all the enemies of Chriſt's church and people, however many or mighty, ſhall be rooted out at the laſt.

3. The whole is aſcribed to God alone, his is the work, to him muſt be the praiſe. Not by our might or power, but *at thy rebuke, O God*, they are caſt down. *Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey*; tyrannical kings, and all the perſecuting powers, are nothing in the hands of his omnipotence; the higher they are exalted, the more will he be glorified in their abaſement, for every mountain ſhall be brought low. *Note*, In all the dangers to which God's people are expoſed, they muſt look to the glorious power of God, engaged for them, and not be afraid.

7. Thou, *even* thou *art* to be feared, and who may
ſtand in thy ſight when once thou art angry? 8. [h] Thou
didſt cauſe judgment to be heard from heaven: [i] the
earth feared and was ſtill, 9. When God aroſe to
judgment to ſave all [k] the meek of the earth. Selah.
10. Surely [l] the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee: [m] the
remainder of wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain. 11. [n] Vow, and
pay unto the LORD your God: [o] let all that be round
about him bring preſents unto him that ought to be
feared. 12. [p] He ſhall cut off the ſpirit of princes: *he
is* terrible to the kings of the earth.

h Judg. v. 20.
i 2 Chron. xx. 29. Pſ. xlvi. 10. Zech. ii. 13.
k Zeph. ii. 3.
l Ex. ix. 16. & xviii. 11.
m Pſ. lxv. 7.
n Eccleſ. v. 4, 5.
o 2 Chron. xxxii. 23. Pſ. lxviii. 29. & lxxxix. 7.
p Pſ. lxviii. 35.

v. 7—12. The effects of this glorious victory are deſigned,

1. To ſtrike terror into their enemies. *Thou, even thou art to be feared*, ſo able to deſtroy to the uttermoſt, *and who may ſtand in thy ſight when once thou art angry?* when his wrath, like a conſuming fire, devours round about him. *Thou didſt cauſe judgment to be heard from heaven*; decided the cauſe in favour of his people, by a miraculous interpoſition; *the earth feared and was ſtill*, or *trembled and was quiet*; ſome ſuppoſe it refers to an earthquake, or a clap of thunder, when the deſtroying angel deſcended from heaven againſt the Aſſyrians; or it deſcribes the ſilent awe with which the whole earth will be ſtruck, in that great day when the Judge of all ſhall be revealed from heaven; *when God aroſe to judgment, and to ſave all the meek upon earth*; this being the diſtinguiſhing character of that people whom the Saviour will deliver from all their enemies. *Note*, (1.) They who expect God to appear in their behalf, muſt ſee that, as the meek of the earth, they patiently wait for his ſalvation. (2.) Though patient ſufferers in ſilence refrain their complaints, God ſees, and will avenge them ſpeedily.

2. To engage the dependance of his people in times of greateſt danger. *Surely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee*; ultimately, whatever the ſaints of the moſt High ſuffer under oppreſſors, it ſhall ſerve to brighten their graces, and redound to his glory, who in the fire preſerves them, and the more it rages, the more will he be exalted in quenching the flames: *the remainder of wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain*; no farther can it go than his permiſſion. Thus all the rage and malice of the enemies of Jeſus moſt effectually, in the iſſue, tended to God's glory, and his people's ſalvation; and when he had permitted them to bring his dead body to the grave, he checked their fury, and by his glorious reſurrection accompliſhed that redemption they meant to defeat. What comfort and confidence then ſhould this miniſter to us under our ſevereſt trials?

3. To quicken them to the more diligent diſcharge of their duty, conſtrained by ſuch manifeſtations of the Divine grace on their behalf. *Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God*, the bounden tribute of thankfulneſs, and that not only with their lips, but in their lives devoted to his ſervice; *let all that are round about him*, the congregation of his ſaints, *bring preſents unto him*, even that moſt acceptable preſent of themſelves, their bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits, offered up at his footſtool, the ſacrifices due to him, *that ought to be feared*, with reverential and filial fear by his children, and who is the terror of his enemies. *He ſhall cut off the ſpirit of princes*, diſpirit the moſt daring, and deſtroy the moſt formidable: *he is terrible to the kings of the earth*, who in the day of final judgment will call to the mountains to cover them, and the rocks to fall on them and hide them from his intolerable wrath, *Rev.* vi. 16.

PSALM LXXVII.

The complaints of this pſalm are by ſome applied to the Jews in Babylon; and by others to their preſent deplorable ſtate; but they may be conſidered as expreſſive of the pſalmiſt's griefs, and in him of every believer. 1. *He complains of the deep impreſſions which his troubles made upon his ſpirits, and the temptation he was in to deſpair of relief*, ver. 1—10. 2. *He encourageth himſelf to hope that it would be well at laſt, by the remembrance of God's former appearances for the help of his people*, ver. 11—20. *In ſinging this pſalm we muſt take ſhame to ourſelves for our ſinful diſtruſt of God, his providence and promiſe, and give to him the glory of his power and goodneſs by a thankful commemoration of what he has done for us formerly, and a chearful dependence on him for the future.*

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] to Jeduthun,
A pſalm † of Aſaph.

1. I Cried unto God with my voice: *even* unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me. 2. [b] In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord: ‡ my ſore ran in the night, [c] and ceaſed not: my ſoul [d] refuſed to be comforted. 3. I remembred God, and was troubled: I complained, and my ſpirit was overwhelmed. Selah. 4. Thou holdeſt mine eyes waking: I am ſo troubled that I cannot ſpeak. 5. [e] I have conſidered the days of old, the years of ancient times. 6. I call to remembrance my ſong in the night: I [f] commune with mine own heart, and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch. 7. [g] Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? 8. Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth *his* promiſe fail § for evermore? 9. Hath God [h] forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies? Selah. 10. And I ſaid, This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the moſt High.

[a] Pſ. xxxix. & lxii. tit.
† Or, for.
[b] Pſ. l. 15.
‡ Heb. My hand was ſtretched out.
[c] Luke xviii. 1.
[d] Jer. xxxi. 15.
[e] Deut. xxxii. 7. Pſ. cxliii. 5. Iſa. li. 9.
[f] Pſ. iv. 4.
[g] Ibid. xiii. 1.
§ Heb. To generation and generation.
[h] Iſa. xlix. 15.

v. 1—10. Among the ſevereſt conflicts the believer endures, are thoſe inward diſtreſſes and dejections with which his ſpirit is ſometimes afflicted; but let him not think ſome ſtrange thing is happened unto him, here is a holy man of God in his ſtate; nor let him deſpair of comfort and relief, when it ſtands here on record, *I cried, and he gave ear to me.* We have here,

1. The pſalmiſt's fervent and inceſſant prayers in *the day of his trouble. I cried with my voice*, earneſt and aloud; *I ſought the Lord* with eager importunity; *my ſore ran in the night*, his heart bled with anguiſh; or, *my hand was ſtretched out in the night* in prayer to God, *and ceaſed not. Note*, (1.) God's people muſt expect to ſee many a day of trouble from temptation, corruption, affliction, and deſertion. (2.) In our diſtreſs we are eſpecially called upon to fly to the compaſſionate boſom of our God, and pour out our complaints to him. (3.) If we would ſpeed, we muſt be both importunate and unwearied in our application.

2. His anguiſh was bitter, and he could find no immediate relief. *My ſoul refuſed to be comforted*; could lay hold on none of the promiſes; yea, when ſuggeſted to him, he thruſt them from him as if they belonged not to him. *I remembred God*, and inſtead of finding relief from thence, *I was troubled*; his inexorable juſtice, and terrible majeſty, faſtened on his mind, and ſunk him in deeper dejection: *I complained* of my ſin and ſufferings, *and my ſpirit was overwhelmed*, as if the one were too great to be forgiven, and the other too heavy to be born. *Thou holdeſt mine eyes waking*; no balmy ſleep brought for a time a truce of reſpite to his afflicted ſpirit: *I am ſo troubled I cannot ſpeak*; his diſtreſs ſo unutterable, and his ſoul ſo dejected. *Note*, (1.) Under deep temptation we are apt to feed our own ſorrows, and reject the conſolations God's word ſuggeſts to us. (2.) If we cannot ſpeak but in groans, that is a language which God can underſtand, and will anſwer.

3. His reflections on paſt experience rather aggravated than alleviated his ſorrows. *I have conſidered the days of old, the years of ancient times*; what goodneſs God had ſhown to his faithful, and what himſelf had experienced, which made the preſent ſad reverſe the more afflicting. *I call to remembrance my ſong in the night*, which in his happier days he ſung with delight; but now unſtrung, and out of tune, he cannot ſtrike one chearful note.

4. His melancholy fears occaſioned great ſearchings of heart. *I commune with mine own heart, and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch* into the cauſe of my diſtreſs, and where it would end; and between hope and fear reaſon with myſelf, *Will the Lord caſt off for ever?* as he ſeems now to have forſaken me; *and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy*, ſo often ſhown to me, *clean gone for ever?* Is there no more mercy, not a drop yet in ſtore for me? *doth his promiſe fail for evermore?* that no word of comfort ſhall again refreſh my ſpirit. *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* is it poſſible? *hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* ſo muſed, ſo reaſoned his dejected heart: and it ſpeaks the ſtrength of the temptation, that could call him to queſtion truths ſo evident; and of his unbelief, that could ſuggeſt ſuppoſitions ſo diſhonourable to God; or by theſe queſtions he ſought to ſtrengthen his faith ſeverely tried, by ſuggeſting the impoſſibility of his being utterly abandoned, when all God's promiſes and perfections, his truth, mercy, and faithfulneſs, were engaged never to deſert him. *Note*, (1.) They who are God's deareſt children, ſometimes diſtreſs themſelves with the moſt melancholy apprehenſions of being forſaken by him, and left to eternal perdition. (2.) This is of all troubles the moſt grievous. (3.) It is an unſpeakable mercy the fear is groundleſs; for he hath ſaid, *I will never leave nor forſake thee.*

5. One beam of hope at laſt brightens up the proſpect: he had gone far in his fears, much farther than he had any real cauſe for; now he ſtops ſhort, and chides his unbelieving heart. *I ſaid, This is my infirmity*, my lot of affliction, under which I ought not to complain, or rather my weakneſs and ſin ever to entertain a doubt of the love and compaſſions, the faithfulneſs and truth of God and his promiſes: *but I will remember the years of the right hand of the moſt High*, that he is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, able to ſave to the uttermoſt, and therefore ever to be remembred and truſted. Some render the words, *the changes of the right hand of the moſt High*; intimating, that notwithſtanding what he at preſent felt, he hoped to ſee a bleſſed alteration, and that God would change his diſpenſations towards him, and give him the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs. *Note*, (1.) We have already got, in a meaſure, out of our troubles when we begin to condemn our unbelief, and to caſt our care upon God. (2.) No ſin more beſetting, none more to be lamented, than this diſhonourable diſtruſt of God's faithfulneſs and love. (3.) If we have the right hand of the moſt High to hold us faſt, who can ever pluck us thence?

11. I will remember the works of the Lord: ſurely I will remember [i] thy wonders of old. 12. [k] I will meditate alſo of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. 13. [l] Thy way, O God, *is* in the ſanctuary: [m] who *is ſo* great a God as *our* God? 14. Thou *art* the God that doſt wonders; thou haſt declared thy ſtrength among the people. 15. [n] Thou haſt with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, the ſons of Jacob and Joſeph. Selah. 16. [o] The waters ſaw thee, O God, the waters ſaw thee: they were afraid: the depths alſo were troubled. 17. The clouds † poured out water, the ſkies ſent out a ſound: thine arrows alſo went abroad. 18. The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: [p] the lightnings lightned the world, the earth trembled and ſhook. 19. [q] Thy way *is* in the ſea, and thy path in the great waters, and [r] thy foot-ſteps are not known. 20. [s] Thou leddeſt thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moſes and Aaron.

[i] Pſal. xliv. 1.
[k] Ibid. cxliii. 5.
[l] Ibid. lxxiii. 17.
[m] Ex. xv. 11.
[n] Ibid. vi. 6.
[o] Ibid. xiv. 21. Pſ. cxiv. 3. Hab. iii. 8, &c.
† Heb. Were poured forth with water.
[p] Pſ. xcvii. 4.
[q] Neh. ix. 11. Hab. iii. 15.
[r] Ex. xiv. 28. Rom. xi. 33.
[s] Ex. xiv. 19. Pſal. lxxviii. 52. & lxxx. 1.

v. 11—20. Though we find not the immediate effect of the means of grace, we muſt not grow weary in uſing them; when we are found in God's way, we ſhall certainly ſucceed at laſt.

1. He continues to meditate on God's works and ways for the comfort of his ſoul. *I will remember the works of the Lord: ſurely I will remember thy wonders of old*; the great things he had done for his people of old, and the earneſt of what he will do for them for ever. *I will meditate alſo of all thy ways*, of providence, redemption, and grace, for his own ſtrength and conſolation, *and talk of all thy doings*, for others ſupport and edification. *Note*, (1.) It becomes us often to remember the wonders of God's diſpenſations of providence and grace towards us, to awaken our greater thankfulneſs and gratitude. (2.) What he hath done for our ſouls ſhould be ſpoken of to his glory, and for the encouragement of others who may be in the like diſtreſs.

2. He acknowledges God's way to be holy. *Thy way, O God, is in the ſanctuary*, or *in holineſs*; all his diſpenſations altogether righteous, and they who wait upon him in his ſanctuary will ſee the reaſons of them opened and made known to them. *Note*, Though we may not always ſolve particular difficulties in God's dealings with men, yet this principle we muſt hold faſt, that God is holy in all his ways, and juſt in all his works.

3. He magnifies God's power and grace, ſo eminently diſplayed in behalf of his people: *Thou art the God that doſt wonders; thou haſt declared thy ſtrength among the people*, in thoſe ſtupenduous miracles wrought for their redemption out of Egypt, *v.* 15. Afraid and troubled at the preſence of God, the depths of the red ſea were diſcovered, and its waters ſtood up as congealed into a wall of ſtone, *v.* 16. the ſhowring ſkies poured down torrents on the Egyptians, the thunders roared, the

lightnings flaſhed, the earth quaked, and killed them with terror and diſmay before the waters overwhelmed them; circumſtances which, though not recorded in the moſaical hiſtory, attended that fatal overthrow of Iſrael's enemies, *v.* 17, 18. whilſt they, conducted by the way God opened through the ſea, following his paths in theſe great waters, paſſed ſafely through, and then the ſea returned to his ſtrength, and no footſteps remained: thus, like a flock, God led them by the hand of Moſes and Aaron, and brought them at laſt to the promiſed reſt in Canaan, *v.* 19, 20. In all which he glorioufly manifeſted his power and grace towards his people, and hath given them everlaſting cauſe to triumph in him: *Who is ſo great a God as our God? Note,* (1.) The redemption of Iſrael from Egypt, is typical of our redemption from the bondage of corruption; and whatever difficulties lie in the way, God will aſſuredly bring his people to their eternal inheritance as he led them into the land of promiſe. (2.) Like this paſſage through the ſea, ſo are many of the works of God's grace and providence, incomprehenſible to us; we can only ſtand on the ſhore and cry, *O the depth!* Rom. xi. 33. (3.) As God of old thus delivered his people, ſo will he ever lead, guide, and preſerve them, and they who truſt in him ſhall never be diſappointed of their hope.

PSALM LXXVIII.

This pſalm is hiſtorical; it is a narrative of the great mercies God had beſtowed upon Iſrael; the great ſins wherewith they had provoked him, and the many tokens of his diſpleaſure they had been under for their ſins. The perſon ſpeaking is the Lord Jeſus, as appears from Math. xiii. 34, 35. *and the deſign of it is not only to convince the Jews of their unbelief and ingratitude, but to caution us againſt the ſame ſins,* For theſe things happened to them for enſamples, 1 *Cor.* x. 11.

¶ [a] Maſchil † of Aſaph.

1. GIVE ear, O my people, *to* my law: [b] incline
your ears to the words of my mouth. 2. [c] I will
open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark ſayings of old: 3. [d] Which we have heard and known,
and our fathers have told us. 4. [e] We will not hide
them from their children, ſhewing to the generation to
come, the praiſes of the LORD; and his ſtrength and
his wonderful works that he hath done. 5. For [f] he
eſtabliſhed a teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a law
in Iſrael, which he commanded our fathers: [g] that
they ſhould make them known to their children. 6.
[h] That the generation to come might know *them, even*
the children *which* ſhould be born: *who* ſhould ariſe
and declare *them* to their children: 7. That they
might ſet their hope in God, and not forget the
works of God; but keep his commandments: 8. And
might not be as their fathers, [i] a ſtubborn and rebellious generation; a generation [k] *that* ‡ ſet not their
heart aright, and whoſe ſpirit was not ſtedfaſt with
God.

[a] Pſ. xxxii. & xlii. tit.
† Or, for.
[b] Iſa. lv. 3.
[c] Pſ. xlix. 4. Mat. xiii. 35.
[d] Pſal. lxiv. 1.
[e] Deut. iv. 9. Joel i. 3.
[f] Pſ. cxlvii. 19.
[g] Deut. iv. 9. & vi. 7. & xi. 19.
[h] Pſ. cii. 18.
[i] Ex. xxxii. 9. & xxxiv. 9. Deut. ix. 6, 13. & xxxix. 27.
[k] Ver. 37.
‡ Heb. Prepared not their heart.

v. 1—8. The pſalm opens with a ſolemn call from the Lord Chriſt to attend the inſtructive truths here recorded: they are addreſſed to *his people,* the Jews in general, who are called *his own,* John i. 11. and who were peculiarly bound to remember the wonders he had wrought on their behalf, to *incline their ears to the words of his mouth;* that everlaſting goſpel, which in the law and the prophets, was declared to them, and in the fulneſs of time preached by himſelf among them.

1. The matter required attention. *I will open my mouth in a parable;* which was his uſual method of teaching, *Math.* xiii. 34, 35. *I will utter dark ſayings of old;* truths which challenge the moſt ſerious regard, and which have antiquity to recommend them, the goſpel being as old as the firſt man, though more clearly and plainly diſpenſed when Chriſt the ſubſtance came, and the ſhadows fled away: *which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us;* thoſe holy anceſtors, of whom, as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who carefully tranſmitted the revelation God had made to them, and the memory of all his wondrous works which follow, to their poſterity: *and we will not hide them from their children,* the Jewiſh people, to whom Chriſt and his apoſtles fully publiſhed the glorious goſpel, *ſhewing to the generation to come,* in a conſtant ſucceſſion of miniſters, *the praiſes of the Lord;* thoſe truths of goſpel grace, which will furniſh matter for the ſaints everlaſting praiſes; and *his ſtrength,* manifeſted in the redemption, converſion, and ſalvation of ſinners; *and his wonderful works that he hath done* for his people in all ages, in delivering them from the hands of their enemies. *Note,* (1.) The matters of our ſalvation are infinitely important, and demand our moſt ſerious attention. (2.) Among all the moſt precious treaſures we can tranſmit to our children, we muſt ever eſteem the doctrines of the grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt to be the chief, and carefully inſtruct them in this moſt ineſtimable wiſdom.

2. The two chief particulars of thoſe inſtructions, which, with ſuch care, are here enjoined to be delivered down ſucceſſively through all ages, are the *word* and *works* of God: the *word* of God containing both the law and goſpel; the *works* of God including all his providential diſpenſations in behalf of his people, *v.* 5, 6. and theſe are carefully to be inculcated on the riſing generation. [1.] *That they might ſet their hope in God,* and in him alone; renouncing all other confidences, expecting pardon, righteouſneſs, ſtrength, and ſalvation, from his ſovereign grace and mercy in Chriſt Jeſus, *and not forget the works of God,* manifold and marvellous, working for the good of his people, eſpecially the finiſhed work of the Redeemer; *but keep his commandments* from a principle of love, and through the grace miniſtered to them from God. [2.] That they *might not be like their fathers,* whoſe ill examples ſhould be their warnings; as Stephen alſo admoniſhed the Jews of his time, *Acts* vii. 51. *a ſtubborn and rebellious generation,* which, in innumerable inſtances, appeared from the day of their coming out of Egypt; *a generation that ſet not their heart aright,* faithleſs and hypocritical, *and whoſe ſpirit was not ſtedfaſt with God;* when they made the moſt ſolemn engagements, and moſt ſpecious profeſſions, they quickly ſtarted aſide as a broken bow. *Note,* (1.) Hypocriſy is the high-road to apoſtacy. (2.) The children of ungodly parents ſhould be doubly careful to avoid their evil ways, the bad effects of which they often ſeverely feel.

9. The children of Ephraim *being* armed, *and* † car-
rying bows, turned back in the day of battle. 10.
They kept not the covenant of God, and [l] refuſed to
walk in his law: 11. And [m] forgat his works, and his
wonders that he had ſhewed them. 12. Marvellous
things did he in the ſight of their fathers, in the land
of Egypt, *in* the field of [n] Zoan. 13. [o] He divided the
ſea, and cauſed them to paſs through, and [p] he made
the waters to ſtand as an heap. 14. [q] In the day-time
he alſo led them with a cloud, and all the night with
a light of fire. 15. [r] He clave the rocks in the wilderneſs, and gave *them* drink as out of the great depths.
16. He brought [s] ſtreams alſo out of the rock, and
cauſed waters to run down like rivers. 17. And they
ſinned yet more againſt him, by [t] provoking the moſt
High in the wilderneſs. 18. And [u] they tempted God
in their heart, by aſking meat for their luſt. 19. Yea,
[x] they ſpake againſt God: they ſaid, Can God furniſh a
table in the wilderneſs? 20. Behold, [y] he ſmote the
rock, that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed; can he give bread alſo? can he provide fleſh
for his people? 21. Therefore the LORD heard *this,*
[z] and was wroth, ſo a fire was kindled againſt Jacob,
and anger alſo came up againſt Iſrael; 22. Becauſe
they believed not in God, and truſted not in his ſalvation: 23. Though he had commanded the clouds
from above, and [a] opened the doors of heaven, 24.
And had [b] rained down manna upon them to eat, and
had given them of the corn of heaven. 25. Man did
eat ‡ angels food: he ſent them meat to the full. 26.
[c] He cauſed an eaſt-wind to blow in the heaven: and by
his power he brought in the ſouth-wind. 27. He
rained fleſh alſo upon them as duſt, and feathered fowls
like as the ſand of the ſea. 28. And he let *it* fall in
the midſt of their camp, round about their habitations. 29. So they did eat, and were well filled: for
he gave them their own deſire; 30. They were not
eſtranged from their luſt: but [d] while their meat *was*
yet in their mouths, 31. The wrath of God came up
on them, and ſlew the fatteſt of them, and § ſmote
down the choſen *men* of Iſrael. 32. For all this [e] they
ſinned ſtill: and believed not for his wondrous works.
33. [f] Therefore their days did he conſume in vanity,
and their years in trouble. 34. [g] When he ſlew them,
then they ſought him: and they returned and enquired
early after God. 35. And they remembred that [h] God
was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.
36. [i] Neverthele[s]s, they did flatter him with their mouth,
and they lied unto him with their tongues. 37. For
[k] their heart was not right with him, neither were they
ſtedfaſt in his covenant. 38. But he [l] *being* full of compaſſion, forgave *their* iniquity, and deſtroyed *them* not;
yea, many a time [m] turned he his anger away, [n] and did

† Heb. Throwing forth, or ſhooting with.
[l] 2 Kings xvii 14.
[m] Jer. ii. 32.
[n] Num. xiii. 22.
[o] Ex. xiv. 21.
[p] Ibid. xv. 8. Pſ. xxxiii. 7.
[q] Ex. xiii. 21. Pſ. cv. 39.
[r] Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11. Pſ. cv. 41. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[s] Deut. ix. 21
[t] Pſ. xcv. 8.
[u] Ex. xvi. 2, &c.
[x] Num. xi. 4.
[y] Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11.
[z] Num. xi. 1, 10.
[a] Gen. vii. 11. Mal. iii. 10.
[b] Ex. xvi. 14. Pſ. cv. 40. John vi. 31. 1 Cor. x. 3.
‡ Heb. The food of the mighty ones, Pſ. ciii. 20.
[c] Num. xi. 31.
[d] Ibid. xi. 33.
§ Heb. Made to bow.
[e] Num. xiv. & xvi. & xvii.
[f] Ibid. xiv. 29.
[g] Hoſ. v 15.
[h] Deut. xxxii. 4.
[i] Ezek. xxxiii. 31.
[k] Ver. 8.
[l] Num. xiv. 18. Pſ. cxxx. 7.
[m] Iſa. xlviii. 9.
[n] 1 Kings xxi. 29.

not ſtir up all his wrath. 39. For [o] he remembered that [p] they *were but* fleſh; [q] a wind that paſſeth away and cometh not again.

[o] Pſ. ciii. 14, 16.
[p] Gen. vi. 3. John iii. 6.
[q] Job vii. 7, 16. Jam. iv. 14.

v. 9—39. In a variety of inſtances the mercies of God, the rebellions of Iſrael, and the ſufferings they endured, are here recorded.

1. The diſcomfiture of the Ephraimites is mentioned, *v.* 9. which is by ſome referred to the times of Eli, 1 *Sam.* iv. 1—12. by others to the days of Jephthah, *Judg.* xii. 1—6. or it may probably relate to that more ancient tranſaction, when, in oppoſition to the Divine command, they went up againſt the Canaanites, *Numb.* xiv. 40—45. Whatever event be referred to, the cauſe of their defeat is clearly told; *They kept not the covenant of God, and refuſed to walk in his law*; faithleſs, diſobedient, and ungrateful withal, they *forgat his works, and his wonders which he had ſhewed them*: no marvel, therefore, they were forſaken of God, and left to themſelves became an eaſy prey to their enemies. *Note,* (1.) If God, by our ſins, is turned to be our enemy, vain are the ſhield, the ſpear, and the bow in the day of battle. (2.) Guilty fear makes men cowards; the wicked even fleeth when no man purſueth.

2. Many marvellous works of God are taken notice of: the plagues of Egypt, which procured the deliverance of the Jews; their paſſage through the red ſea between the divided waters; their conſtant guard and guide, the pillar of a cloud by day, and of fire by night; the copious ſtreams guſhing from the rock. Theſe all beſpoke his wondrous regard towards them, and ſhould have engaged the warmeſt returns of duty and affection. *Note,* In Jeſus we have all a greater redemption than from Egypt: by him a way is opened through the ſea of troubles that obſtructs our way to glory: his word and ſpirit afford us a ſure guide to heaven; and ſtreams of grace, infinitely more precious than theſe waters, guſhing from the rock Chriſt, follow the faithful ſoul in all his journey through this world's wilderneſs, till he reaches the heavenly Canaan.

3. Their baſe ingratitude is obſerved. They had been bad in Egypt, but they grew worſe in the wilderneſs, the place where ſuch amazing mercies had been ſhown them; and after all they had ſeen and received from God, *ſinned yet more*, and provoked his wrath and indignation againſt them, *v.* 17. [1.] They *tempted God in their hearts*; within the wickedneſs began, for there is the root of evil, an apoſtate nature: they were diſcontent with the proviſion he beſtowed on them, though ſo rich, ſo wonderfully provided, and ſo plentiful; from heaven's windows the manna daily fell, angelic food, ſo excellent it was; or *the bread of the mighty*, princely fare; and *to the full*: yet, like the firſt ſinners even in Eden, they entertained hard thoughts of God, nor ſmothered them in their boſoms, but dared to mutter their perverſeneſs, *by aſking meat for their luſt*, not ſatisfied to be fed, unleſs their pampered appetite was indulged in all its cravings. *Note,* (1.) Nothing will ſatisfy a diſcontented ſpirit. (2.) To murmur againſt God as a hard maſter, is a deep proof of the deſperate and unſubdued wickedneſs of the fallen heart. [2.] *They ſpake againſt God*, broke out into open blaſphemy, arraigning his providence, and diſtruſting his power. They admit he had opened the rock and given them water; but that was little in their eyes; could he give them *bread* alſo? (for manna they loathed as light food, though the bread of heaven) and *provide fleſh for his people? Can he furniſh a table in the wilderneſs?* without which his other gifts ſeemed to them ſcarce worth a thank.

4. With indignation God heard their murmurs, *v.* 21. for he ever hears, and is wroth with thoſe who doubt his power, and quarrel with his proviſion: inſtant the fire kindled; at his word the winds aroſe, and blew from thoſe points of the compaſs whence their meat was to be brought, and ſtrait immenſe clouds of feathered fowls appeared, (which ſome ſuppoſe were locuſts, though I rather take them literally to be quails, for, to God's almighty power, it was alike eaſy to bring the one as the other) thick they fell about their camp, cubits in heighth, enough to feed for a month ſix hundred thouſand men, beſides women and children, *Numb.* xi. 19—32. *Note,* (1.) The meals of luxury are deceitful meat, it may be ſweet in the mouth, but in the belly it will be bitter as gall. (2.) When God gratifies ſinners in their requeſts, his gifts become their ſnare and curſe.

5. They ſhamefully abuſed their proviſion. *They did eat, and were filled*, or *gorged*; their appetite was ſatiated, and their luſts gratified to the full. *Note,* (1.) This world's abundance is often thus abuſed to groſs exceſs. (2.) When men are given up to their luſts, reflection is baniſhed, and they ruſh on their ruin.

6. God ſmote them in the very act of ſin. Whilſt the meat was yet in their mouth his wrath fell upon them, *and ſlew the fatteſt of them*, prepared as ſheep for the ſlaughter; *and ſmote down their choſen men*, the mightieſt and ſtrongeſt. *Note,* (1.) They who make a God of their bellies, will find their end to be deſtruction. (2.) When the arm of death is lifted up, the ſtouteſt and moſt affluent fall an eaſy prey.

7. They perſiſted in their ſins, and God followed them with repeated judgments: neither mercies nor corrections bowed their ſtubborn hearts; their faith ſcarce laſted whilſt the miracles were before their eyes, and on every new difficulty they relapſed into murmuring and unbelief. For this, in fruitleſs marches he conſumed their days, forbidding them to enter Canaan, and during forty years ſtrewed the wilderneſs with their carcaſes. *Note,* (1.) They who will not be bowed by mercies nor corrections, muſt be broken by judgments. (2.) Whilſt ſin is indulged, ſorrow muſt follow.

8. When they profeſſed to repent, they proved themſelves inſincere. *When he ſlew them*, terrified at the judgment, *they ſought him* for pardon and mercy, and ſeemed to *return and enquire after God*, as though they deſired to know and ſerve him; then they remembred his wondrous ſupport of them, and their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage: but ſhort-lived and hypocritical were theſe appearances; it was mere lip ſervice, their prayers were faithleſs, and their profeſſions falſe; the promiſes their fears extorted, were no ſooner made than broken; their *heart* was unſound, and therefore their covenanted obedience quickly failed. *Note,* (1.) If the heart be not right with God, however a hypocrite may ſeek to keep up appearances, he will be detected at laſt. (2.) Men in a fright fall to their knees and their prayers, like ſailors in a ſtorm; but they forget their convictions and promiſes the moment the danger is blown over.

9. Notwithſtanding, God's compaſſions with-held him from utterly deſtroying them: many a time *turned he his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath. For he remembred that they were but fleſh*, corrupt in nature, and prone to evil; or ſo frail and feeble, that they muſt be cruſhed under the lighting down of his arm; *a wind that paſſeth away and cometh not again*; for ſo tranſitory, ſo irrecoverable is the breath of man. *Note,* We may all ſay, It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not.

40. How oft did [r] they † provoke him in the wilderneſs, [s] *and* grieve him in the deſert? 41. Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and [t] limited the holy One of Iſrael. 42. They remembred not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them ‡ from the enemy. 43. How [u] he had wrought his ſigns in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan: 44. And had [x] turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink. 45. [y] He ſent divers ſorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and [z] frogs which deſtroyed them. 46. [a] He gave alſo their increaſe unto the caterpiller, and their labour unto the locuſt. 47. [b] He § deſtroyed their vines with hail, and their ſycamore-trees with ‖ froſt. 48. [c] He gave up their cattle alſo to the hail, and their flocks to † hot thunderbolts. 49. He caſt upon them the fierceneſs of his anger, [d] wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by ſending ‡ evil angels *among them.* 50. He § made a way to his anger, he ſpared not their ſoul from death: but gave ‖ their life over to the peſtilence. 51. And [e] ſmote all the firſt-born in Egypt: the chief of *their* ſtrength [f] in the tabernacles of Ham: 52. But [g] made his own people to go forth like ſheep, and guided them in the wilderneſs like a flock. 53. And he led them on ſafely, ſo that they feared not: but [h] the ſea overwhelmed their enemies. 54. And he brought them to the border of his ſanctuary, *even to* this mountain, [i] *which* his right hand had purchaſed. 55. He caſt out the heathen alſo before them, and [k] divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Iſrael to dwell in their tents. 56. [l] Yet they tempted and provoked the moſt high God, and kept not his teſtimonies: 57. But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aſide [m] like a deceitful bow. 58. For [n] they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealouſy with their graven images. 59. When God heard *this*, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Iſrael: 60. So that [o] he forſook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men: 61. And delivered his ſtrength into captivity, and [p] his glory into the enemies hand. 62. He gave his people over alſo unto the ſword: and was wroth with his inheritance. 63. The fire conſumed their young men: and their maidens were not † given to marriage. 64. [q] Their prieſts fell by the ſword: and [r] their widows made no lamentation. 65. Then the LORD [s] awaked as one out of ſleep, *and* [t] like a mighty man that ſhouteth by reaſon of wine. 66. And [u] he ſmote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a per-

[r] Pſ. xcv. 9, 10. Iſa. vii. 13. Eph. iv. 30.
† Or, rebel againſt.
[s] Iſa. lxiii. 10.
[t] Ver. 20.
‡ Or, from affliction.
[u] Pſal. cv. 27, &c.
[x] Ex. vii. 20. Pſ. cv. 29.
[y] Ex. viii. 24. Pſ. cv. 31.
[z] Ex. viii. 6.
[a] Ibid. x. 13. Pſ. cv. 34.
[b] Ex. ix. 23. Pſ. cv. 37.
§ Heb. Killed.
‖ Or, great hail ſtones.
[c] Ex. ix. 23. Pſ. cv. 28.
† Or, lightnings.
[d] Rom. ii. 8, 9.
‡ i. e. Deſtroying.
§ Heb. Weighed a path.
‖ Or, their beaſts to the murrain, Ex. ix. 3, 6.
[e] Ex. xii. 29. Pſ. cv. 36.
[f] Pſ. cvi. 22.
[g] Ibid. lxxvii. 20.
[h] Ex. xiv. 27. & xv. 10.
[i] Pſ. xliv. 3.
[k] Joſh. xiii. 7. Pſal. cxxxvi. 21, 22.
[l] Iſa. xxvi. 10.
[m] Hoſ. vii. 16.
[n] Deut. xxxii. 16, 21.
[o] 1 Sam. iv. 11. Jer. vii. 12. & xxvi. 6, 9.
[p] 1 Sam. iv. 21.
† Heb. Praiſed.
[q] 1 Sam. iv. 11.
[r] Ibid. iv. 19. Job xxvii. 15. Ezek xxiv. 23.
[s] Pſal. xliv. 23.
[t] Iſa. xlii. 13.
[u] 1 Sam. v. 6, 12.

a perpetual reproach. 67. Moreover, he refuſed the ta-
bernacle of Joſeph: and choſe not the tribe of Ephraim.
68. But choſe the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion
[x] which he loved. 69. And he built his ſanctuary like
high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath † eſtabliſhed
for ever. 70. [y] He choſe David alſo his ſervant, and
[z] took him from the ſheepfolds: 71. From following
the ewes great with young, he brought him [a] to feed
Jacob his people, and Iſrael his inheritance. 72. So he
[b] fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and
guided them by the ſkilfulneſs of his hands.

[x] Pſ. lxxxvii. 2.
† Heb. Founded.
[y] 1 Sam. xvi. 12.
[z] 2 Sam. vii. 8.
[a] Ibid. v. 2. 1 Chron. xi. 2.
[b] Iſa. xl. 11.

v. 40—72. The ſubject, as before, is here continued, of God's mercies, and their provocations.

1. By a ſeries of rebellion they marked their abode in the wilderneſs, and grieved his holy Spirit, *v.* 40. Repeatedly they tempted God, and turned back from their profeſſions of repentance; and ſometimes talked of returning to Egypt. *They limited the holy One of Iſrael*, as if unable to ſupply their wants, or daring to preſcribe to him the time and manner of doing it, *v.* 41. forgetful of all the works of power he had ſhown in their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage. *Note*, (1.) God is grieved to ſee the perverſeneſs of his children, and feels for them when they provoke him to take up the ſcourge. (2.) When we are poor penſioners on mercy, unworthy the leaſt regard, it ill becomes us to preſcribe how God ſhall order the diſpenſations of his providence or grace towards us.

2. By a ſeries of miracles and favours, God marked his peculiar regard towards them, which rendered their ingratitude more aggravated. With a high hand he brought them from their houſe of bondage, having, by the moſt heavy and repeated plagues, compelled their oppreſſors to let them go. All the creatures appear armed in their quarrel; and the meaneſt, when he employs them, can be made ſevere executioners of his vengeance. Flies, lice, frogs, locuſts, caterpillars, devour, torment, deſtroy their enemies. Their waters are turned into blood, their cattle ſlain with thunderbolts, and every tree broken with the battering hail. Yea, heaven, as well as earth, appears againſt them, to execute the fierceneſs of God's wrath and indignation. The holy angels draw the ſword of judgment, and bring the threatned evil upon this devoted people. Death marks their way; in every houſe of Egypt the firſt-born expires. Eager now to haſten their departure, as obſtinate before to retain them, the Egyptians urge them to go; and, like a flock under the divine guidance, Iſrael departs, delivered from all their fears, conducted through the ſea, and beholding their enemies ſink like ſtones in theſe mighty waters, *v.* 52, 53. Brought at laſt to the promiſed land by the power of God, even to the mountain where God's ſanctuary ſhould be built; their enemies, though ſo mighty, diſpoſſeſſed and deſtroyed; and they made to inherit their cities, and divide their ſpoil, *v.* 54, 55. Such miracles of mercy God had ſhewn them, that deſerved to be kept in everlaſting remembrance. *Note*, (1.) Where God hath been liberal in his gifts, he may well of ſuch expect more abundant returns of thankfulneſs, love, and ſervice. (2.) The creatures, if armed with God's wrath, can quickly cover his enemies with deſolation. (3.) The ſame bleſſed ſpirits that miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation, are the executioners of wrath upon the ungodly. (4.) The greateſt of our mercies is not ſo much the poſſeſſing the good land, as being brought to the ſanctuary, and having a place among the living members of Chriſt's church.

3. Their ingratitude and rebellions in Canaan continued as before: they exactly followed their fathers bad examples; neglected God's commands; apoſtatized from his worſhip; unfaithful to their engagements, as a deceitful bow that diſappoints the archer, either breaks in his hand, or carries not the arrow to the mark. By their idolatries and ſpiritual adultery they provoked God's jealouſy, and kindled the wrath of the moſt High againſt them, *v.* 56—58. *Note*, (1.) The evil example of parents is dreadfully influential. (2.) The unfaithfulneſs of thoſe who profeſs to ſerve God, is more criminal than the wickedneſs of ſuch as live in open rebellion againſt him.

4. God's wrath broke forth upon them. He marked their baſeneſs, eſpecially their idolatry, and with abhorrence regarded this apoſtate people, *v.* 59. As a token of his diſpleaſure, he forſook *the tabernacle of Shiloh*, where he had been pleaſed to fix his abode, and manifeſt his glory, *v.* 60. No longer under his protection, their enemies prevailed againſt them. *He delivered his ſtrength and glory*, the ark in which they truſted, and where God's glory reſted, into the hands of the Philiſtines; whilſt the ſword devoured them, and their inheritance was plundered, becauſe he was wroth, *v.* 61, 62. Their young men were conſumed in the prime of life; their maidens left unmarried, or, *were not praiſed*; no bridal ſongs and ſolemnities were heard, *v.* 63. Even their prieſts fell with their ſacred charge, whoſe wickedneſs, notwithſtanding their character, juſtly expoſed them to the divine wrath; and *their widows made no lamentation*: either their ill conduct made them diſregarded, or they were ſwallowed up in deeper grief on the loſs of the ark, and the impending calamities, as appeared in the wife of Phinehas, who inſtantly fell in labour, and died, 1 *Sam.* iv. 19—22. *Note*, (1.) If God's people forſake him, juſtly may they expect to be forſaken by him. (2.) It is a fooliſh dependance to truſt on the tabernacle and the formalities of religion, when the ſpirit of it is loſt, and God is departed.

5. Though they had ſo ſhamefully departed from God, he had not utterly caſt them off, but returned in mercy to them. As one *awaked from ſleep*, and *refreſhed with wine*, the Lord aroſe in pity to their caſe, and with power ſtretched forth his arm. His enemies felt the dreadful blow, ſmitten with hæmorrhoids, or the piles, and confounded: their Dagon falls, and their treſpaſs-offering ſent with the returning ark, perpetuates their reproach, 1 *Sam.* vi. 5. Once more he pitched his tent among them; and, though he refuſed Shiloh and the tribe of Ephraim for his abode, *v.* 67. he *choſe the tribe of Judah*, and in the beloved Zion choſe his habitation. There *he built his ſanctuary*: the work was Solomon's; the plan, the power, and ability, were from God. There firm he fixed the pillars of his throne, and eſtabliſhed that church, againſt which, though the temple's walls are long ſince demoliſhed, neither earth nor hell can ever prevail. To crown his favours, he raiſed the man after his own heart to ſit on Iſrael's throne; exalted him from his low eſtate, where he fed his flock as a ſhepherd, to *feed Jacob his people, and Iſrael his inheritance*; and he diſcharged the important truſt with the greateſt *integrity* and uprightneſs; aiming at his ſubjects' good, and making God's word the rule of his adminiſtration: and his *wiſdom* as great as his probity: ſo that, endued with theſe qualities, he was enabled to make his people happy, and thankful to God for his wiſe and righteous government. *Note*, (1.) Though God may viſit his people ſharply for their ſins, he hath yet mercy in ſtore for them. (2.) They who triumph over God's people, ſhall find their glory quickly turned into ſhame. (3.) God will maintain his church for ever; but if one nation prove unfaithful, he will remove their candleſtick, and ſend the light of his truth to another people. (4.) This king of Iſrael was the type of his greater Son, who feeds, like a tender ſhepherd, the flock of the redeemed, and with ſuch ſurpaſſing righteouſneſs and wiſdom adminiſters the affairs of his ſpiritual kingdom. Bleſſed and happy are thoſe ſubjects, who can claim an intereſt in his government, and call him, *My king, and my God!*

PSALM LXXIX.

This pſalm ſeems to be prophetical of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by Nebuchadnezzar, or Veſpaſian, and may have a farther reſpect to the afflictions of the church of God. We have here, 1. *The deplorable condition that the people of God were in at the time*, ver. 1—5. 2. *A petition to God for ſuccour and relief; that their enemies might be reckoned with*, ver. 6, 7, 10, 12. *their ſins pardoned*, ver. 8, 9. *and they themſelves delivered*, ver. 11. 3. *A plea taken from the readineſs of his people to praiſe him*, ver. 13.

¶ A pſalm † of Aſaph.

† Or, for.

1. O GOD, the heathen are come into thine inhe-
ritance, [a] thy holy temple have they defiled:
[b] they have laid Jeruſalem on heaps. 2. [c] The dead
bodies of thy ſervants have they given *to be* meat unto
the fowls of the heaven, the fleſh of thy ſaints unto the
beaſts of the earth. 3. Their blood have they ſhed like
water round about Jeruſalem: and [d] *there was* none to
bury *them*. 4. [e] We are become a reproach to our
neighbours: a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round
about us. 5. [f] How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry
for ever? ſhall thy jealouſy burn like fire?

[a] Pſ. lxxiv. 7.
[b] Mic. iii. 12.
[c] Jer. vii. 33. 1 Mac. vii. 17.
[d] Pſ. cxli. 7. Jer. xiv. 16. & xvi. 4. Rev. xi. 9.
[e] Pſ. xliv. 14. & lxxx. 6.
[f] Pſ. lxxxix. 46.

v. 1—5. In this world the church of Chriſt is in a militant ſtate: many are the troubles of the righteous; and whither can they ſo properly carry their complaints, as to him who is able to ſave them from the hands of their enemies? We have here,

1. Their ſorrowful complaint.

[1.] They are invaded, and laid waſte. *O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance*, where God himſelf abode, and his Iſrael dwelt by his gift. *Thy holy temple have they defiled*, by entering it, and ſetting up their abominations, as Antiochus had done; or by deſtroying it, as was the caſe under Nebuchadnezzar and Titus; and this was a bitter grief to the faithful, to whom this temple was dearer than all they held beſide. *They have laid Jeruſalem in heaps*; burnt and deſolate, and the inhabitants buried in the ruins. *Note*, The church of God may be ſometimes brought to the moſt abject ſtate of miſery, but ſhall riſe as a phœnix from her aſhes.

[2.] They were ſlain and expoſed. *The dead bodies of thy ſervants*, who fell in the common calamity; for in national judgments it is often ſeen that the righteous periſh with the wicked: or, in hatred to their memory, their enemies dug up their bodies from the graves; theſe *they have given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and the fleſh of thy ſaints unto the beaſts of the earth.* Cruel, and without remorſe, *their blood have they ſhed like water round about Jeruſalem*; *and*, the multitude of the ſlain ſo great, or their malice ſo inveterate againſt their very corpſes, that *there was none to bury them.* See *Rev.* xi. 7—9.

[3.] They were reviled. *We*, the few ſurvivors, *are become a reproach to our neighbours*: they inſult over our fall, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. 7. *a ſcorn and deriſion to all that are round about us*, who mock at our pretended relation to God, and our profeſſions of expected relief. *Note*, It is no new thing for the people of God to be loaded with reproach, and turned into ridicule by their ungodly neighbours.

2. Their humble expoſtulation hereupon. *How long, Lord*, ſhall theſe ſufferings and reproaches continue? *wilt thou be angry for ever?* and leave us under theſe marks of diſpleaſure? *Shall thy jealouſy burn like fire?* and utterly conſume us? No: his wrath is but for a moment; he keepeth not his anger for ever; and therefore his people muſt ſtill hope in his mercy. *Note*, The bittereſt part of every Chriſtian's ſufferings ariſes from the fear of God's diſpleaſure.

6. [g] Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen [h] that have
not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not
called upon thy name. 7. For they have devoured Jacob,
and laid waſte his dwelling-place. 8. O [i] remember
not againſt us † former iniquities: let thy tender
mercies ſpeedily prevent us: for we are brought very
low. 9. Help us, O God of our ſalvation, for the glory
of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our
ſins [k] for thy name's ſake. 10. [l] Wherefore ſhould the
heathen ſay, Where *is* their God? let him be known
among the heathen in our ſight, *by* [m] the revenging of
the blood of thy ſervants *which is* ſhed. 11. Let [n] the
ſighing of the priſoner come before thee; according to
the greatneſs of thy power ‡ preſerve thou thoſe that are
appointed to die. 12. And [o] render unto our neighbours
[p] ſeven-fold into their boſom, [q] the reproach wherewith
they have reproached thee, O LORD. 13. So
[r] we thy people and ſheep of thy paſture, will give thee
thanks for ever: we will ſhew forth thy praiſe to all generations.

[g] Jer. x. 25.
[h] 2 Theſ. i. 8.
[i] Iſa. lxiv. 9.
† Or, the iniquities of them that were before us.
[k] Joſh. vii. 9. Pſ. cvi. 8.
[l] Pſ. xlii. 10. & cxv. 2.
[m] Jer. li. 36.
[n] Pſ. cii. 20.
‡ Heb. Reſerve the children of death.
[o] Iſa. lxv. 7. Luke vi. 38.
[p] Gen. iv. 15.
[q] Pſ. lxxiv. 22.
[r] Ibid. xcv. 7. & c. 3.

v. 6—13. We have here the requeſts of God's people, under the preſſure of their heavy afflictions.

1. They beg God would avenge their quarrel in the puniſhment of their oppreſſors. *Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen*; which is not to be conſidered as an imprecation of private revenge, but of public juſtice, their evil character provoking God's wrath, as it is added, *that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.* And what alſo farther contributed to fill up the meaſure of their iniquities, was, that *they have devoured Jacob, and laid waſte his dwelling-place*, ſpreading mercileſs havock on every ſide. *Note*, (1.) They who live in ignorance of God, and neglect of prayer, will aſſuredly be viſited with his wrath. (2.) Though God permit his people to be oppreſſed and harraſſed for a while, he will ſpeedily avenge them of their perſecutors.

2. They intreat him not to remember either their own *former iniquities*, or thoſe of their forefathers, now alſo viſited upon them; but that their conſciences might be purged from guilt, and then they hope the ſufferings, which were the effects of their ſins, would ceaſe. *Note*, (1.) When God forgives, he forgets alſo; and our ſins are caſt behind his back, as if they had never been. (2.) The blood of Jeſus alone can purge the conſcience; to this therefore the ſinner muſt apply.

3. They importunately pray for ſpeedy deliverance, pleading the greatneſs of the affliction, and the glory of God concerned in their ſalvation. *Let thy tender mercies ſpeedily prevent us*; for ſinners have no merit to plead, nor hope, but in God's unbounded love. Their caſe required ſpeedy relief, or they were undone; *for we are brought very low*, or *weak*, ſin being the diſeaſe of the ſoul, and inevitably mortal, unleſs the Lord interpoſe to heal. *Help us, O Lord God of our ſalvation, for the glory of thy name, and deliver us.* All other help they knew was vain; and their own ſtrength but weakneſs: therefore they caſt their care upon him, as every periſhing ſinner muſt do, truſting his promiſes, as the God of their ſalvation, and pleading his own glory, the moſt prevailing argument; for his name would be diſhonoured by their enemies, if they were ſuffered to prevail and triumph with impunity. *Wherefore ſhould the heathen ſay, Where is their God?* whilſt in the ſalvation of his people a large revenue of praiſe would accrue to him; and the deeper their diſtreſs, the more would he be magnified in their deliverance. *Let him* therefore, the God of our ſalvation, *be known among the heathen in our ſight*, in his righteous judgment, *by the avenging of the blood of thy ſervants which is ſhed*; giving them blood to drink, in retaliation of their cruelty. They urge their preſent danger, from which nothing but the *greatneſs of his power* could reſcue them; *priſoners, appointed to die*, and ready to be ſacrificed by their mercileſs enemies, they ſighed out their ſorrows, and look to him to *render unto their neighbours ſeven-fold into their boſom*, not merely the wrongs they ſuffered, but *the reproach wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord*, denying his being, diſbelieving his providence, deſpiſing his power, and reviling his true religion and faithful worſhippers. *Note*, (1.) Our greateſt extremity is God's opportunity. (2.) If the criminal appointed to die, even with the halter round his neck, caſts his eyes on the croſs of Jeſus, and in faith cries, Save, Lord, he may in this laſt ſigh ſtill find a pardoning God. (3.) The reproaches caſt on God ſhould be a greater grief to us, than any reproaches caſt on ourſelves. (4.) When our diſtreſs is ſo great that we can only ſpeak in ſighs and groans, that is a language God will hear and anſwer.

4. They engage to render their hearty thanks for ſuch mercy ſhown them. *So we thy people, and ſheep of thy paſture*, in which bleſſed relation they comforted themſelves in confidence of ſpeedy help, *will give thee thanks for ever*; the voice of prayer exchanged for praiſe, and their ſighing turned into ſongs of joy. *We will ſhew forth thy praiſe unto all generations*; recording the wonders of his grace, and miniſtring matter of thankſgiving to their grateful poſterity. *Note*, (1.) Praiſe is the tribute we owe for mercies; and, though ever paying, we muſt own ourſelves poor, even in thanks. (2.) Our experience of Divine grace and providence ſhould be tranſmitted to the ſucceeding ages, to engage their truſt in God, and excite their praiſes.

PSALM LXXX.

To which of Iſrael's many diſtreſſes this pſalm particularly refers, ſeems uncertain. The pſalmiſt here, 1. *Begs for the tokens of God's preſence with, and favour to them,* ver. 1—3. 2. *He complains of the preſent rebukes they were under,* ver. 4—7. 3. *He illuſtrates the preſent deſolations of the church, by the compariſon of a vine and a vineyard, which had flouriſhed, but was now deſtroyed,* ver. 8—16. 4. *He concludes with prayer to God for the preparing of mercy for them, and the preparing of them for mercy,* ver. 17—19.

¶ To the chief muſician upon [a] Shoſhannim, Eduth,
A pſalm † of Aſaph.

[a] Pſ. xlv. & lx. tit.
† Or, for.

1. GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Iſrael, thou [b] that
leadeſt Joſeph like a flock, thou [c] that dwelleſt
between the cherubims, [d] ſhine forth. 2. [e] Before Ephraim,
and Benjamin, and Manaſſeh, ſtir up thy ſtrength,
and come *and* ſave us. 3. [f] Turn us again, O God:
and [g] and cauſe thy face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved.
4. O LORD God of hoſts, how long wilt thou ‡ be
angry againſt the prayer of thy people? 5. [h] Thou
feedeſt them with the bread of tears: and giveſt them
tears to drink in great meaſure. 6. [i] Thou makeſt
us a ſtrife unto our neighbours: and our enemies
laugh among themſelves. 7. [k] Turn us again, O God
of hoſts, and cauſe thy face to ſhine, and we ſhall be
ſaved.

[b] Pſ. lxxvii. 20. & lxxviii. 52.
[c] 1 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 2.
[d] Pſ. l. 2. & xciv. 1.
[e] Num. ii. 18—23.
[f] Ver. 7, 19. Lam. v. 21.
[g] Num. vi. 25, 26. Pſ. iv. 6.
‡ Heb. Smoke. Pſ. lxxiv. 1.
[h] Pſ. xlii. 3. & cii. 9. Iſa. xxx. 20.
[i] Pſ. xliv. 13. & lxxix. 4.
[k] Ver. 3, 19.

v. 1—7. The eyes of the Lord are ever upon his people, and his ears open to their prayers; to him therefore in every diſtreſs they look, and find him ever near to help in time of need.

1. The pſalmiſt begs God's gracious regard, and powerful deliverance. He addreſſed him as the *Shepherd of Iſrael*, whoſe tender care towards the ſheep of his paſture had been proved by long experience. *Thou that leadeſt Joſeph like a flock*; who had done ſo in time paſt, and was ſtill ready to manifeſt the ſame regard towards them: *thou that dwelleſt between the cherubims*, exalted on a throne of grace, to receive the petitions of his people, *give ear* to our prayers; *ſhine forth*, to diſpel the gloom that thickens round us: *Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manaſſeh, ſtir up thy ſtrength*, theſe tribes on their march, *Numb.* xi. 17, 24. immediately following the ark, *and come and ſave us* from the power of our enemies, who are too mighty for us. This may be conſidered as the prayer of the church for the appearance of Chriſt in the fleſh, the Sun of righteouſneſs, whoſe riſing with healing in his wings was the great object of their deſire, and his ſpiritual ſalvation the great hope of their ſouls.

2. He humbly expoſtulates with God on their afflictions. *How long wilt thou be angry againſt the prayer of thy people?* appear ſo at leaſt, by refuſing them an anſwer; or be really diſpleaſed with them, becauſe they aſked amiſs, were inſincere, or lukewarm. *Thou feedeſt them with bread of tears, and giveſt them tears to drink in great abundance*: ſo abundant were their ſorrows, that even they did not eat or drink, but tears mingled with their repaſt. *Thou makeſt us a ſtrife to our neighbours*, which divide our ſpoil; *and our enemies laugh among themſelves*, at the eaſy prey they have gotten, and the diſappointment of

our hopes. *Note*, (1.) When we pray, it becomes us well to conſider what we ſay, and in what manner we approach God; leſt, by our formality and unbelief, our prayers ſhould be turned into ſin. (2.) If God delays or refuſes the prayers of his people, it is never in anger, but in love. (3.) The way to join the everlaſting ſongs of angels lies uſually, in this world, through the vale of tears. (4.) The people of God will be often the deriſion of their enemies; and nothing more expoſes them to ridicule, than thoſe tears of godly ſorrow which they ſhed over their ſins. But woe to thoſe who laugh now, for they ſhall mourn and weep; when bleſſed are thoſe that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.

3. In order to obtain the ſalvation he deſired, the pſalmiſt begs the converſion of their ſouls to God. *Turn us again, O God, and cauſe thy face to ſhine*, in token of reconciliation, *and* then he is ſure their hope ſhall not be delayed, *we ſhall be ſaved*. And this is repeated, *v.* 7, 19. as the great burden of their prayer; for this being obtained, every other requeſt would be granted. *Note*, (1.) The ſoul hath already begun to turn to God, on whom this ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication is poured out. (2.) The great deſire of the awakened ſinner is to obtain reconciliation with God. (3.) If ever we are converted to God, it muſt be his own work, for we have no power of ourſelves to help ourſelves. (4.) Every ſoul who is a partaker of converting grace, will be an inheritor of eternal glory.

8. Thou haſt brought [l] a vine out of Egypt: [m] thou
haſt caſt out the heathen, and planted it. 9. Thou
preparedſt *room* before it, and didſt cauſe it to take deep
root, and it filled the land. 10. The hills were covered
with the ſhadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like*
† the goodly cedars. 11. [n] She ſent out her boughs
unto the ſea, and her branches unto the river. 12.
Why haſt thou *then* [o] broken down her hedges, ſo that
all they which paſs by the way, do pluck her? 13.
The boar out of the wood doth waſt it, and the wild
beaſt of the field doth devour it. 14. Return, we beſeech
thee, O God of hoſts: [p] look down from heaven,
and behold, and viſit this vine: 15. And the vineyard
which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that*
thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf. 16. *It is* burnt with
fire: *it is* cut down: [q] they periſh at the rebuke of thy
countenance. 17. [r] Let thy hand be upon the man of
thy right hand, and upon [s] the ſon of man *whom* thou
madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf. 18. So will not we go back
from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.
19. [t] Turn us again, O LORD God of hoſts, cauſe thy
face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved.

[l] Iſa. v. 7. Jer. ii. 21. Ezek. xvii. 6.
[m] Pſ. xliv. 2. & lxxviii. 55.
† Heb. The cedars of God.
[n] Pſ. lxxii. 8.
[o] Pſ. lxxxix. 40. Iſa. v. 5.
[p] Iſa. lxiii. 15.
[q] Pſ. lxxvi. 6.
[r] Ib. lxxxix. 21.
[s] Dan. vii. 13.
[t] Ver. 3, 7.

v. 8—19. The former favours of God to his Iſrael are here pleaded as an argument for his preſent regard towards them in their diſtreſs. The church is compared to a vine, of which Jeſus is the living root; to a vineyard, of which God is the huſbandman; and he who planted it, will preſerve and keep it night and day.

1. By the Divine mercy and providence they had been brought out of Egypt; the Canaanites diſpoſſeſſed to make room for them; and they planted in their ſtead. Deep-rooted and vigorous, they multiplied exceedingly, and extended their branches unto the ſea and the river, their conqueſts being bounded by ſea on the weſt, and reaching from Egypt to the river Euphrates, *v.* 8—10.

2. They had experienced a ſad reverſe of ſtate, and enquire into the cauſe. *Why haſt thou then broken down her hedges?* withdrawn his defence and protection, in conſequence of which they were become deſolate; ſo that every traveller, every enemy, now made inroads upon them, to ſpoil and lay their vineyard waſte, *v.* 12. Fierce and cruel as the beaſts of the deſert, their foes devoured them without pity or remorſe, *v.* 13. Their cities burnt with fire; their land waſted; and the inhabitants ſlaughtered: being under God's *rebuke*, they fell an eaſy prey to their invaders, *v.* 16. *Note*, (1.) If God corrects, ſurely there is a cauſe: ſin, ſin, breeds all our miſery. (2.) The ſtrongeſt nation becomes an eaſy prey the moment God withdraws his protection. (3.) Though the Lord ſuffers the rage of the enemy to prevail againſt his own people, it is with a view not to deſtroy them, but to excite their prayers, to quicken their repentance, and magnify the more the wonders of his power and grace in their deliverance.

3. They earneſtly intreat a return of the divine favour; that God would from heaven caſt a favourable look towards them, and, as he was ſo able to reſcue them, would graciouſly viſit them with his ſalvation, *v.* 14. nor ſuffer the vineyard, the planting of his own hands, and therefore dear to him, to be deſtroyed; and the branch he had made ſo ſtrong for himſelf, the people ſeparated for his ſervice, and deſigned for his glory, to be broken down, *v.* 15. Therefore, *let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand*, which ſome apply to the king of Iſrael, but rather belongs to the Lord Jeſus, the great repairer of the breaches of his church, who in the fulneſs of time ſhould become incarnate, *the Son of man*, the object of his Father's regard, and *made ſtrong* for all the arduous work of redemption he undertook in behalf of his people; and *for thyſelf*, becauſe by his undertaking, and the accompliſhment of his mediatorial office, glory was given to God in the higheſt. *Note*, (1.) The return of a ſenſe of God's favour is more earneſtly deſired by his people, than the removal of their afflictions. (2.) What God hath planted none ſhall be able to pluck up. (3.) There is help laid on one mighty to ſave; we may therefore boldly truſt, and not be afraid.

4. They engage heartily to cleave unto God. *So will we not go back from thee*: the all-ſufficiency of Jeſus would encourage their faith and hope; and God's love, herein manifeſted, for ever attach them to his ſervice. *Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name*: ſo dead and lifeleſs often are our hearts, that we have no power to pray with any fervency, till the Lord pours out a ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication, and then our drooping ſouls revive. *Note*, (1.) Though we can do nothing in ourſelves, we can do all things, Chriſt ſtrengthening us. (2.) In him the perſeverance of believers is ſecured; and they whom he draws with the cords of his love, ſhall never go back from him. (3.) Prayer is the conſtant and daily employment of every one who is truly alive to God.

5. The pſalmiſt concludes with reiterating his former ſupplication for converting grace, and addreſſing his prayer *to the Lord God of hoſts*, ſo able to ſave all that come to him, expects in faith the ſalvation for which he ſo ardently pleads. *Note*, Repetition in our prayers is not always vain, but often ſpeaks the language of moſt importunate deſire. Lord have mercy upon us! Chriſt have mercy upon us! Lord have mercy upon us!

PSALM LXXXI.

This pſalm is ſuppoſed to have been penned for the new moons and ſolemn feaſt days, 1. *To praiſe God, for what he is to his people*, ver. 1—3. *and has done for them*, ver. 4—7. 2. *To admoniſh one another concerning the obligations we lie under to God*, ver. 8—10. *The danger of revolting from him*, ver. 11, 12. *And the happineſs we ſhould have if we would but keep cloſe to him*, ver. 13—16.

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] upon Gittith,
¶ A pſalm † of Aſaph.

1. SING aloud unto God [b] our ſtrength: make a
joyful noiſe unto the God of Jacob. 2. Take
a pſalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleaſant harp
with the pſaltery. 3. [c] Blow up the trumpet in the new-
moon, in [d] the time appointed, on our ſolemn feaſt-day.
4. For [e] this *was* a ſtatute for Iſrael, *and* a law of the
God of Jacob. 5. This he ordained in Joſeph *for a* teſtimony,
when he went out through the land of Egypt:
[f] *where* I heard a language *that* I underſtood not. 6.
[g] I removed his ſhoulder from the burden: his hands
were delivered from [h] the ‡ pots. 7. [i] Thou calledſt in
trouble, [k] and I delivered thee; [l] I anſwered thee in the
ſecret place of thunder: [m] I proved thee at the waters of
§ Meribah. Selah.

[a] Pſ. viii. tit.
† Or, for.
[b] 2 Sam. xxii. 33.
[c] Num. x. 10.
[d] Deut. xvi. 16.
[e] Lev. xxiii. 24.
[f] Pſ. cxiv. 1.
[g] Iſa. ix. 4. & x. 27.
[h] Exod. i. 14.
‡ Or, baſkets.
[i] Exod. ii. 23. & xiv. 10.
[k] Pſ. l. 15.
[l] Exod. xix. 19.
[m] Ibid. xvii. 6, 7. Num. xx. 13.
§ i. e. Strife.

v. 1—7. Before we join the ſongs of angels, the work of praiſe ſhould be our joyful employment here below.

1. The pſalmiſt excites the people of God to unite heart and voice in adoring their covenant God, the rock of their ſalvation; by whoſe ſtrength every faithful Iſraelite is enabled to grapple with all the enemies of his ſoul, to fulfil every ſervice, and endure every ſuffering to which the Lord is pleaſed to call him, *v.* 1. To raiſe the concert high, ſweet inſtruments of muſic are employed, and the loud trumpet's ſound proclaims, on the ſolemn feaſt day, the appointed ſeaſon for the general aſſembly, the great Jehovah's praiſe. *Note*, (1.) The more we regard God as our ſtrength, the ſurer is our ſtability. (2.) Muſic is not only pleaſing, but, under proper regulations, might be made profitable too, and aſſiſt in raiſing up the ſoul to God in hymns of praiſe.

2. This was God's inſtituted ordinance, *v.* 4. and deſigned as a means to keep up the grateful remembrance of the mercies he had beſtowed on them, when *he went out through the land of Egypt*, in judgments againſt their oppreſſors. Eſpecially it was appointed to perpetuate the memorial of his favour towards them, when, on the night of the paſſover, he paſſed by their doors, and ſlew the Egyptians, a people whoſe language they underſtood not, which was an aggravation of their afflictions, *v.* 3. Then God reſcued them from their hard ſervitude, and delivered them from *the pots*, in making which they were employed; or *the baſkets*, in which they carried the bricks, *v.* 6.

He heard their prayer in their trouble, and brought them forth, and with his mighty thunderings ſcared their foes, *Exod.* xiv. 25. *Pſal.* lxxvii. 18. and when they proved rebellious at the waters of ſtrife, he bore with them, and deſtroyed them not, as they deſerved. All which inſtances of his mercy they were bound to commemorate, eſpecially on the days of their ſolemn aſſemblies, to excite their praiſes, and engage their fidelity. *Note*, (1.) They who call on God in trouble, will find him near to help and ſave them. (2.) A greater redemption than this is wrought out for ſinners by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and ſhould excite our more abundant thankfulneſs.

8. [n] Hear, O my people, and I will teſtify unto thee ;
O Iſrael, if thou wilt hearken unto me ; 9. [o] There
ſhall no ſtrange god be in thee : neither ſhalt thou wor-
ſhip any ſtrange god. 10. [p] I *am* the LORD thy God
which brought thee out of the land of Egypt : [q] open
thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. 11. But my people
would not hearken to my voice : and Iſrael would none
of me. 12. [r] So I gave them up unto † their own
hearts luſt : *and* they walked in their own counſels. 13.
[s] O that my people had hearkned unto me, *and* Iſrael
had walked in my ways ! 14. I ſhould ſoon have ſub-
dued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their
adverſaries. 15. The haters of the LORD ſhould have
‡ ſubmitted themſelves unto him : but their time ſhould
have endured for ever. 16. He ſhould [t] have fed them
alſo with the fineſt of the wheat : and with honey [u] out
of the rock ſhould I have ſatisfied thee.

n Pſ. l. 7.
o Exod. xx. 3.
p Ibid. 2.
q Pſ. xxxvii. 4. Eph. iii. 20.
r Acts vii. 42. & xiv. 16. Rom. i. 24.
† Or, the hardneſs of their hearts.
s Deut. v. 29 & xxxii. 29. Iſa. xlviii. 18.
‡ Heb. Lied, i. e. yielded feigned obedience, Pſ. xviii. 44. & lxvi. 3.
t Deut. xxxii. 13, 14. Pſ. cxlvii. 14.
u Job xxix. 6.

v. 8—16. When the eternal Jehovah ſpeaks, let every mortal ear attend. *Hear, O my people*, peculiarly bound to be adviſed and governed by him ; *O Iſrael, if thou wilt*, or, *O that thou wouldſt hearken unto me*. It was their duty, and God wiſhes it might be their deſire to do ſo. His peculiar charge to them is,

1. Flee from idolatry. *There ſhall no ſtrange god be in thee ; neither ſhalt thou worſhip any other god.* This is the firſt and great commandment : God muſt be made the ſupreme object of our faith, fear, and love : whatever creature rivals him in our heart, we become ſpiritual idolaters.

2. He enforces the command by two conſiderations. [1.] His right in them, and their obligations to him. *I am the Lord thy God*, the only object of worſhip, ſtanding in a peculiar relation to them, and therefore eſpecially demanding it from them ; *that brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, and therefore from gratitude are they moſt bound to love and ſerve him. [2.] It would be their higheſt intereſt alſo to cleave to him alone ; *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it :* he will be their all-ſufficient portion ; and they cannot aſk more than he is willing to beſtow on them, provided they continue faithful. *Note*, (1.) God's ſervice is our higheſt intereſt, as well as duty. (2.) If we had no future promiſes in view, paſt obligations ſhould engage our hearts to him. (3.) The prayer of faith can never aſk too much. (4.) They who have God for their portion, have all that heart can wiſh.

3. He charges them with their diſobedience and ingratitude. *But my people*, from whom he had ſuch juſt expectation, *would not hearken to my voice*, inattentive and perverſe ; *and Iſrael would none of me* ; fooliſhly as wickedly rejecting their own mercies, and neither willing to ſerve God as their maſter, nor content with his love, as their portion.

4. Juſtly God viſited their iniquities. *So I gave them up unto their own hearts luſts* ; which is of all judgments the moſt terrible ; for, his grace withdrawn, we are then abandoned to ſin and miſery, and ruſh on our deſtruction, as the horſe into the battle : *and they walked in their own counſels.* Since they were headſtrong and obſtinate, he left them to their own devices, and the dreadful conſequences which muſt enſue. *Note*, They who reſiſt God's word and Spirit, have only their own wilfulneſs to blame, when their deſtruction cometh.

5. He expreſſes his kind wiſhes for them, and his gracious deſigns towards them, had they been faithful. *O that my people*, bound by every tie to approve themſelves to him, *had hearkned unto me*, obeyed my law, and attended to my warnings, *and Iſrael had walked in my ways*, ſo much their intereſt as well as duty. For then, [1.] They would have been for ever victorious over their foes, and God himſelf would have appeared to fight their battles, and make them more than conquerors, *v.* 14. (2.) They would have uninterruptedly enjoyed the poſſeſſion of their good land ; and all that hated God and his worſhip, *ſhould have ſubmitted themſelves unto him*, or *lied unto him* ; ſo that, though it might be a feigned and forced ſubmiſſion, they ſhould not be able to diſturb them. [3.] They would have been bleſt with plenty of every earthly good : the fineſt wheat, and honey ready provided for them in the rock, where the bees had formed their hive, would have been their food ; of all which, their folly and ſin would deprive them, and leave them as wretched as they might have been happy. *Note*, (1.) Sinners are the greateſt enemies to their own ſouls. (2.) They who attend to the voice of Chriſt, will ſee all their foes become their foot-ſtool. (3.) The ſupplies of his grace to his faithful people are more ſtrengthening than bread, and ſweeter than honey. (4.) If any periſh, it is not through want of compaſſion in God, but through the hardneſs and impenitence of their own hearts.

PSALM LXXXII.

This pſalm is calculated for the meridian of princes courts and courts of juſtice, not in Iſrael only, but in other nations. We have here, 1. *The dignity of magiſtracy, and its dependence upon God*, ver. 1. 2. *The duty of magiſtrates*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *The degeneracy of bad magiſtrates, and the miſchief they do*, ver. 2, 5. 4. *Their doom read*, ver. 6, 7. 5. *The deſire and prayer of all good people, that the kingdom of God may be ſet up more and more*, ver. 8.

¶ A pſalm † of Aſaph.

† Or, for.

1. [a] GOD ſtandeth in the congregation of the migh-
ty : he judgeth among the gods. 2. How
long will ye judge unjuſtly, and [b] accept the perſons of
the wicked ? Selah. 3. ‡ Defend the poor and father-
leſs : [c] do juſtice to the afflicted and needy. 4. [d] Deli-
ver the poor and needy : rid *them* out of the hand of the
wicked. 5. [e] They know not, neither will they under-
ſtand ; they walk on in darkneſs : [f] all the foundations of
the earth are § out of courſe.

a 2 Chron. xix. 6. Eccleſ. v. 8.
b Deut. i. 17. 2 Chron. xix. 7.
‡ Heb. judge.
c Jer. xxii. 3.
d Job xxix. 12. Prov. xxiv. 11.
e Mic. iii. 1.
f Pſ. xi. 3.
§ Heb. moved.

v. 1—5. All power is from God : the powers that be, are ordained of God : a ſtrong argument to enforce our obedience, and to engage them to rule with uprightneſs, knowing from whom they have received authority, and to whom they are accountable for the uſe of it.

1. God's preſence and preſidence is aſſerted in the *congregations of the mighty*, and *among the gods*. The magiſtrates of the earth, who receive their honour from him, as his vicegerents upon earth, are appointed to adminiſter judgment with impartiality, according to God's holy word ; and his eye is ever upon them, obſerving their conduct, for which they muſt anſwer before him in the great day of his appearing and glory.

2. God gives a ſolemn charge to his delegates. They are to be the defenders of the poor and fatherleſs ; to *do juſtice to the afflicted and needy*, whoſe poverty, and want of friends to vindicate their rights, expoſes them to injuries ; and, however great or rich their oppreſſors, they muſt deliver them out of their wicked hands. *Note*, (1.) They who are poor, are too often trampled upon. (2.) It is a grievous thing when the law is made ſo expenſive, that the poor cannot right themſelves ; or the injury ſuſtained is more tolerable, than the method of redreſs.

3. God lodges an accuſation againſt wicked magiſtrates. *How long will ye judge unjuſtly*, and make oppreſſion more intolerable under the ſanction of the law ? *and accept the perſons of the wicked ?* awed by their greatneſs, or ſwayed by perſonal regard, or influenced by bribes. *They know not, neither will they underſtand :* plain as the caſe is, they know not to fear God, and do juſtice, and wilfully pervert judgment. *They walk on in darkneſs*, partiality having blinded their eyes, and ſtudiouſly avoiding the light of truth ; in conſequence of which, *all the foundations of the earth are out of courſe*, or *moved* ; for when magiſtrates are thus unjuſt and oppreſſive, confuſion and every evil work muſt enſue. This deſcription is very applicable to the Jewiſh rulers in the days of Chriſt, to whom it may particularly refer.

6. [g] I have ſaid, Ye *are* gods : and all of you *are*
children of the moſt High. 7. But [h] ye ſhall die
like men, and fall like one of the princes. 8. [i] Ariſe,
O God, judge the earth : for [k] thou ſhalt inherit all
nations.

g John x. 34.
h Job xxi. 32. Ezek. xxxi. 14.
i Mic. vii. 7.
k Pſ. ii. 8. Rev. xi. 15.

v. 6—8. The higheſt God can humble, when they abuſe their power.

1. He pronounces their doom. *I have ſaid, Ye are gods* ; have given you authority as my delegates ; *and all of you children of the moſt High*, exalted to a ſtate of ſingular eminence. *But* think not your greatneſs will protect you in the abuſe of your power ; for *ye ſhall die like men* ; though as gods in the eyes of men, yet dying worms in the ſight of God, *and* ready to *fall as one of the princes*, See *Pſal.* lxxxiii. 11. cut off in their iniquities, and brought before his dread tribunal, to anſwer the charges lodged againſt them. *Note*, (1.) The mightieſt men are mortal ; let them therefore ſtand in awe, and ſin not, leſt they provoke God to cut them down. (2.) Though magiſtrates abuſe their power, we muſt leave it to God to puniſh them : vengeance is his work ; patient ſubmiſſion our duty.

2. The pſalmiſt looks up to God as the judge of the earth, to redreſs theſe grievances, *v.* 8. and this with a particular reſpect to the coming of Chriſt, for which he prays, who will judge the folk righteouſly : and being appointed heir of all things, and having all judgment committed to him in heaven and in earth, will come quickly according to his promiſe, and reſtore all things ; redreſſing the evils his people have ſuffered in this diſordered world, and recompenſing tribulation to them that troubled them ; ſo *come, Lord Jeſus !*

PSALM LXXXIII.

This pſalm was penned, as ſome ſuppoſe, on David's victories over the nations recorded, 2 Sam. viii. 1—14. *or was prophetical of the invaſion mentioned,* 2 Chron. xx. 1. *And it may well be referred to all the confederate enemies of God's ſpiritual Iſrael, whoſe projects will fail, and their attacks be baffled. The pſalmiſt here makes an appeal and application,* 1. *To God's knowledge, by a remonſtrance of their deſigns and endeavours to deſtroy Iſrael,* ver. 1—8. 2. *To God's juſtice and jealouſy, both for his church and for his own honour, by an earneſt prayer for the defeat of their attempt, that the church might be preſerved, the enemies humbled, and God glorified,* ver. 9—18.

¶ A ſong *or* pſalm † of Aſaph.

† Or, for.

1. [a] KEEP not thou ſilence, O God : hold not thy
peace, and be not ſtill, O God : 2. For lo,
thine enemies make a tumult : and they [b] that hate
thee, have lift up the head. 3. They have taken
crafty counſel againſt thy people, and conſulted againſt
[c] thy hidden ones. 4. They have ſaid, [d] Come, and
let us cut them off from *being* a nation : that the name
of Iſrael may be no more in remembrance. 5. For
they have conſulted together with one ‡ conſent : they
are confederate [e] againſt thee. 6. [f] The tabernacles of
Edom, and the Iſhmaelites : of Moab, and the Hagarenes.
7. Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the
Philiſtines, with the inhabitants of Tyre. 8. Aſſur alſo
is joined with them : they have § holpen the children
of Lot. Selah.

[a] Pſ. xxviii. 1. & xxxv. 22. & cix. 1.
[b] Pſ. lxxxi. 15.
[c] Pſ. xxvii. 5. & xxxi. 20. Col. iii. 3.
[d] Prov. i. 11. Jer. xi. 19.
‡ Heb. Heart.
[e] Acts ix. 4.
[f] 2 Chron. xx. 1, 10, 11.
§ Heb. Been an arm, to, &c.

v. 1—8. The church on earth is ever militant, and muſt ſoon be cruſhed, were it not for the protection of their glorious head.

1. The pſalmiſt directs his prayer to God. *Keep not thou ſilence,* but hear our cry, and ſend a word of encouragement to us amidſt the threatnings of our enemies. *Hold not thy peace,* as if unconcerned at their blaſphemies, or conniving at their attempts ; *and be not ſtill, O God,* but ariſe to preſerve and protect us from their malice and violence. *Note,* Sometimes the Lord appears to diſregard his people's diſtreſs, but it is to quicken them with greater importunity to fly to him for ſuccour.

2. He deſcribes the confederacy formed ; urges their wicked deſigns ; repreſents their rage and craftineſs, againſt which they were unable to ſtand, unleſs the Lord appeared to ſtrengthen his people, and confound their foes. [1.] The quarrel was his own : they were his enemies, and hated him, his laws, and his worſhip ; but, unable any other way to vent their enmity, turned it againſt his people, *his hidden ones,* who were covered with the ſhadow of his wings, and their excellencies unknown. *Note,* (1.) Whatever pretences men may make for their oppoſition againſt God's people, the real cauſe is enmity againſt God, whoſe holineſs they cannot endure, and whoſe image they cannot ſee in their neighbour, without hatred. (2.) The faithful *are hid with Chriſt in God,* and impotent is the rage of their enemies againſt them. [2.] The confederacy was ſtrong. Might and policy were united againſt them : ten nations, however divided in intereſts, were faſt leagued againſt God's Iſrael ; inſolent, and confident of ſucceſs ; with ſchemes deep laid, and in tumultuous rage breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter ; content with nothing leſs than the extirpation of the very name of Iſrael. *Note,* (1.) Whatever differences of ſentiments men entertain, or however otherwiſe at variance, all cordially unite in oppoſing the cauſe of God and truth. (2.) A wicked world would be heartily glad, if there were neither a preacher nor profeſſor of true religion left ; for theſe are ever their troublers. (3.) Though craft be employed to ſeduce, and threatnings to intimidate the faithful, the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure. God knoweth thoſe that are his, and they ſhall never be moved. (4.) When all other help fails us, it is a comfort we have that all-ſufficient Lord to fly to, who can ſtill the madneſs of the people.

9. Do unto them as [g] *unto* the Midianites : as [h] *to*
Siſera, as *to* Jabin, at the brook of Kiſon : 10. *Which*
periſhed at En-dor : [i] they became *as* dung for the
earth. 11. Make their nobles like [k] Oreb, and like
Zeeb : yea, all their princes as [l] Zebah, and as Zalmunna :
12. Who ſaid, Let us take to ourſelves the
houſes of God in poſſeſſion. 13. O my God, [m] make
them like a wheel : [n] as the ſtubble before the wind.
14. As the fire burneth the wood, and as the flame ſetteth
the mountains on fire ; 15. So perſecute them
with thy tempeſt, and make them afraid with thy ſtorm.
16. Fill their faces with ſhame : † that they may ſeek
thy name, O LORD. 17. Let them be confounded
and troubled for ever : yea, let them be put to ſhame
and periſh : 18. [o] That *men* may know, that thou,
whoſe name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* the moſt high
over all the earth.

[g] Numb. xxxi. 7, 8. Judg. vii. 22.
[h] Judg. iv. 15, 24. & v. 21.
[i] 2 Kings ix. 37. Zeph. i. 17.
[k] Judg. vii. 25.
[l] Judg. viii. 21.
[m] Pſ. lxviii. 2.
[n] Iſa. xvii. 13.
† Or, that men may, &c. Pſ. lviii. 11.
[o] Pſ. lix. 13.

v. 9—18. Having deſcribed the enemies of the church, the prophet prays for, and foreſees, their diſappointment and deſtruction, whereby God will be glorified, and his people delivered.

1. He prays, that their preſent enemies may meet the ſame fate as thoſe of old. *Do unto them as to the Midianites,* who, in the time of Gideon, deſtroyed one another ; *as to Siſera and Jabin,* who fell before Barak and Deborah, and all their mighty warriors lay in heaps unburied on the field of battle, *v.* 11. They thought to make an eaſy prey of the temple and city, and ſeize the inheritance of Iſrael ; but he hopes their lot will be no better than that which befel the princes of Midian, ſlain by the Ephraimites, and the victorious ſword of Gideon, *Judg.* vii. 25. viii. 21. *Note,* Paſt examples of God's interpoſition in behalf of his people, ſhould encourage us to pray, and hope for the like mercy.

2. He prays they may be quickly and utterly conſumed, as the wheel moves on a declivity : or the alluſion may be to the going round of the wheel by which the corn was ground, *Iſa.* xxviii. 28. *Prov.* xx. 26. As the chaff, which the wind diſſipates ; and as the wood before the raging flames, or the briars and fern on the mountain, which in an inſtant are burnt up, *ſo perſecute them with thy tempeſt* to their deſtruction, *and make them afraid with thy ſtorm,* confounded and diſmayed. *Note,* (1.) Even in this life the ſinner is often made to feel terrors, that embitter all his joys, and make life a burden to him ; but how much heavier are in ſtore for him after death, when the deluge of the wrath of God ſhall be poured on his devoted head ! (2.) All oppoſition againſt God and his church is as vain as ſetting briars and thorns in array againſt devouring fire.

3. He prays that ſhame may cover them : either godly ſhame for their ſins ; or, if they refuſed to repent, eternal confuſion. *Fill their faces with ſhame,* at their folly and diſappointment, or for their ſins, *that they may ſeek thy name, O Lord* ; acknowledging their ſinfulneſs and penitently returning : or, *that men may ſeek thy name,* ſeeing the judgments brought on the ungodly. *Let them be confounded and troubled for ever,* that they may know no peace, who refuſe the proffers of God's pardoning grace : *yea, let them be put to ſhame, and periſh,* uttterly and eternally, who continue obſtinately impenitent ; *that men may know,* by their dreadful ruin, *that thou, whoſe name alone is Jehovah,* the only ſelf-exiſtent, almighty, and eternal God, *art the moſt high over all the earth :* and thoſe who walk in pride and enmity againſt his people, he is able and determined to abaſe. *Note,* (1.) Our bittereſt enemies are entitled to our prayers, and we muſt long for their conviction and converſion rather than their deſtruction. (2.) Men muſt know at laſt that the Lord omnipotent reigneth, and the execution of deſerved vengeance on the ungodly will redound to his everlaſting glory.

PSALM LXXXIV.

David is ſuppoſed the author of this pſalm, and is thought to have compoſed it during his abſence from the ſanctuary, occaſioned by Abſalom's rebellion : though it may alſo be equally the breathing of his devout ſpirit at any other time. He expreſſeth his affection, 1. *To the ordinances of God ; his value for them,* ver. 1. *deſire towards them,* ver. 2, 3. *His conviction of the happineſs of thoſe that did enjoy them,* ver. 4—7. *And his placing his own happineſs ſo very much in the enjoyment of them,* ver. 10. 2. *To the God of the ordinances ; his deſire towards him,* ver. 8, 9. *His faith in him,* ver. 11. *And his conviction of the happineſs of thoſe that put their confidence in him,* ver. 12. *In ſinging this pſalm, we ſhould have the ſame devout affections working towards God that David had.*

¶ To the chief muſician, [a] upon Gittith,
A pſalm for the ſons of Korah.

[a] Pſ. viii. tit.

1. HOW [a] amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD
of hoſts ! 2. [b] My ſoul longeth, yea, even
fainteth for the courts of the LORD : my heart and

[a] Pſ. xxvii. 4.
[b] Pſ. xlii. 1, 2. & lxiii. 1, 2.

my fleſh crieth out for the living God. 3. Yea, the
ſparrow hath found an houſe, and the ſwallow a neſt for
herſelf, where ſhe may lay her young, *even* thine altars,
[c] Pſ. lxv. 4. O LORD of hoſts, my King and my God. 4. [c] Bleſſed
are they that dwell in thy houſe: they will be ſtill praiſ-
ing thee. Selah. 5. Bleſſed *is* the man whoſe ſtrength
is in thee: in whoſe heart *are* the ways *of them*. 6.
† Or, mulberry-trees. 2 Sam. v. 22, 23. *Who* paſſing through the valley of † Baca, make it a
[d] Prov. iv. 18. well: the rain alſo filleth the pools. 7. [d] They go
‡ Or, from company to company. ‡ from ſtrength to ſtrength, *every one of them* in Zion
appeareth before God.

v. 1—7. We have here,

1. The pſalmiſt admiring the beauty of God's ordinances. *How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hoſts!* Externally the tabernacle appeared without beauty, but within all was glorious; there dwelt the Shechinah; there the incenſe ſmoaked upon the golden altar, and the miniſters of God performed the ſacred ſervice. More amiable ſtill the goſpel church appears, where God incarnate dwells, where incenſe of prayer and praiſe is continually offered, and the glad tidings of ſalvation proclaimed.

2. The fervent longings of his ſoul burſt forth after God: probably now he was at a diſtance from the ſanctuary, but his heart was there. *My ſoul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord*; ſo intenſely were his deſires after them: *my heart and my fleſh crieth out for the living God*; importunate to be reſtored to the ſanctuary, but moſt importunate to meet God there, and maintain delightful communion with him in the ordinances of his ſervice. *Note*, (1.) A ſoul who hath no delight in God's houſe, can have no lot in his kingdom. (2.) The thing which makes all the acts of worſhip ſo deſirable, is the communion therein maintained with the living God, the life and joy of our ſouls; and without this they are dry, barren, and formal.

3. He looks upon the little birds, and envies them as it were their happineſs. *Yea, the ſparrow hath found an houſe, and the ſwallow a neſt*, &c. *even thine altars*: not that we can ſuppoſe they literally built their neſts in theſe altars, but near them; either in the houſes adjoining to the ſanctuary, or perhaps within the ſacred incloſure; and this was a ſituation ſo deſirable to the pſalmiſt, that with them he longed to dwell. Some interpret the words in another ſenſe: The birds have their neſts, and lodge ſecurely; but I, a wanderer, can find no reſting-place abſent from thine altars, *my King and my God*. As ſuch by faith the pſalmiſt regarded him, and intimates the hope he had, that as a faithful ſubject, and true worſhipper, the Lord would hear his prayer, and bring him to this bleſt abode. *Note*, (1.) The meaneſt abode with God's preſence, is better than a palace without him. (2.) They who know the value of the ordinances of God, will ſeek a ſettlement where they may be moſt profitably enjoyed. (3.) When faith can ſay, *My* King, and *my* God, we are ſure all our prayers will ſpeed.

4. He counts them moſt bleſſed, who are continually employed in the ſervice and praiſe of God. *Bleſſed are they that dwell in thy houſe*; the miniſters of the ſanctuary, who were in conſtant attendance: *they will be ſtill praiſing thee*; and ſurely, if there be ought like heaven upon earth, it is this bleſſed work. *Note*, (1.) However deſpicable in the eyes of men the ſervice of the miniſtry may appear, it is of all employments the moſt bleſſed and honourable. (2.) They who draw neareſt to God, and ſerve him moſt faithfully, ſee moſt abundant cauſe to praiſe him continually.

5. He not only counts the prieſts and Levites happy, but regards it as the portion of all the people of God, who have liberty of acceſs to the courts where his honour dwelleth. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſtrength is in thee*; ſuch as are enabled to go up to celebrate the appointed feaſts, and find their ſouls as well as their bodies ſtrengthened for the work and ſervice of the ſanctuary: *in whoſe heart are the ways of them*, earneſtly engaged in the ſervice of God, and delighted to be found in the ways of Zion; *who paſſing through the vale of Baca*, a rough and barren road, *make it a well*; overlook the difficulties of the way, and find divine conſolations like a well of water; or, *make him a well*, meditating upon God, and thus renew their ſtrength. *The rain alſo filleth the pools*; the Lord providing them with a rich ſupply of his graces and comforts. *They go from ſtrength to ſtrength*, more vigorous as they advance nearer Zion; or *from company to company*, in which way they went up to Jeruſalem from the country, *Luke* xi. 44. and thoſe who were earneſt, would be overtaking thoſe who were before. *Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God*; and in this their happineſs the pſalmiſt longed to partake. *Note*, (1.) All our ſtrength cometh from the Lord; without him we cannot take one ſtep heavenward. (2.) When the heart is engaged, we ſhall walk with pleaſure in God's ways. (3.) They who have a reliſh for the lively adminiſtration of the word and ordinances, will chearfully travel far, in order to partake of them, and count the labour amply repaid. (4.) Our way to heaven lies through many a difficult paſs, and they who would be ſoldiers of Chriſt, muſt be ready to endure hardſhip. But when our tribulations abound, our conſolations abound alſo; and perhaps the ſweeteſt hours of our lives were thoſe in which we ſtruggled with the greateſt obſtacles. (5.) The farther a ſoul goes in the ways of God, the ſtronger he grows. *Inſtaurabit iter vires.* (6.) They can never faint, who make God the ſtrength of their heart. (7.) It will be the unutterable felicity of the faithful ſoul in the heavenly Zion, to behold the King in his beauty, and to enjoy the uninterrupted viſion of the bleſſed God.

8. O LORD God of hoſts, hear my prayer: give
ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. 9. Behold, O God [e] our [e] Gen. xv. 1.
ſhield, and look upon the face of [f] thine anointed. 10. [f] Pſ. ii. 2.
For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thouſand: I
had rather † be a door-keeper in the houſe of my God, † Or, ſit at the threſhold.
than to dwell in the tents of wickedneſs. 11. For the
LORD God *is* a ſun and [g] ſhield: the LORD will give [g] Gen. xv. 1. Pſ. cxv. 9. & cxix. 114. Prov. ii. 7.
grace and glory: [h] no good *thing* will he withhold from
them that walk uprightly. 12. O LORD of hoſts, [h] Pſ. xxxiv. 9, 10.
[i] bleſſed *is* the man that truſteth in thee. [i] Pſ. ii. 12.

v. 8—12. Having teſtified his earneſt deſire after the courts of God's houſe, the pſalmiſt here,

1. Intreats a gracious acceptance of his prayer. *O Lord God of hoſts*, able to ſave to the uttermoſt, and ſupply the deſires of every longing ſoul, *hear my prayer*, and give an anſwer of peace: *give ear, O God of Jacob*, our covenant God. *Behold* my preſent ſituation, and the ardent breathings of my heart, *O God our ſhield*, my protector, and the ſure hope of every believer; *and look upon the face of thine anointed*; either himſelf, God's anointed king, or the Meſſiah, for whoſe ſake he hoped God would be gracious to him; and on whoſe interceſſion he truſted, more than on his own ſupplications. *Note*, (1.) The ſeed of Jacob, his praying children, may confidently expect their father's bleſſing, and be aſſured they ſhall not ſeek God's face in vain. (2.) When God is our ſhield, then ſhall we be ſafe from fear of evil. (3.) Our confidence towards God ſtands ſolely on the foundation of the Redeemer's all-prevailing advocacy: when we look to him with an eye of faith, God will look on us with an eye of favour.

2. He profeſſes the high regard he had for God's courts. *For a day in thy courts*, ſpent in the bleſſed work of prayer and praiſe, meditation and communion with God, *is better than a thouſand* ſpent in every delight that earth can give. *I had rather be a door-keeper*, employed in the meaneſt offices, as the lower Levites in the temple, or *ſtand at the threſhold*, as the poor beggar, *Acts* iii. 1, 2. *in the houſe of my God*, which endeared relation afforded him the moſt enlivened ſatisfaction, and made the houſe of God ſo deſirable, *than to live among the tents of wickedneſs*, where perhaps by ſad neceſſity he might now, as formerly, *Pſal.* cxx. 5. be compelled to take up his abode. *Note*, (1.) They who never found delight in God's houſe and worſhip, prove themſelves utter ſtrangers to *his grace and truth*. (2.) One hour's communion with God is as much ſuperior to all the joys of pleaſurable ſin, as heaven is higher than the earth.

3. He ſhews the ground of this preference. *For the Lord God is a ſun and ſhield*; *a ſun*, to enlighten our ſpiritual darkneſs, and chear us with his bright beams of love; *a ſhield*, to protect us from every danger. *The Lord will give*, ſovereignly and abundantly, *grace*, according to all our neceſſities; preventing, pardoning, juſtifying, ſanctifying, comforting, perſevering grace; *and glory* eternal in the heavens, the free gift of God in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.* Indeed, what good can be conceived, which theſe two, grace and glory, do not include? be it therefore our care to walk under the influence of ſuch great and precious promiſes, and in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity to approve our fidelity to God.

4. They who truſt God's promiſes are partakers of all this bleſſedneſs. *O Lord of hoſts, bleſſed is the man that truſteth in thee.* Though he may be unable to appear before God in his courts, he ſhall have all the bleſſings of the ordinances of which he is deprived. God is his portion, and what can he wiſh for more?

PSALM LXXXV.

Interpreters are generally of opinion that this pſalm was penned after the return of the Jews out of their captivity in Babylon, when under diſtreſs, as in the days of Nehemiah, or under Antiochus. We have here, 1. Their prayer, and pleas from former favours and preſent trouble, looking up to God for mercy and deliverance, ver. 1—7. 2. The pſalmiſt in faith expects an anſwer, and prophetically deſcribes the favours God would beſtow on them, as already preſent, ver. 8—13.

¶ To the chief muſician, A pſalm [a] † for the ſons of Korah.

1. LORD, thou haſt been ‡ favourable unto thy land: thou haſt brought back the captivity of Jacob. 2. [b] Thou haſt forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou haſt covered all their ſin. Selah. 3. [c] Thou haſt taken away all thy wrath: thou haſt turned *thyſelf* from the fierceneſs of thine anger. 4. Turn us, O God of our ſalvation, and cauſe thine anger towards us to ceaſe. 5. [d] Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations? 6. Wilt thou not [e] revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? 7. Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy ſalvation.

[a] Pſ. xlii. Tit.
† Or, of.
‡ Heb. Well pleaſed with.
[b] Pſ. xxxii. 1.
[c] Ibid. lxxx. 7.
[d] Ibid. lxxvii. 7.
[e] Hab. iii. 2.

v. 1—7. Experience of paſt mercies gives encouragement under preſent diſtreſs. Thus the people of God here draw near to him.

1. They thankfully acknowledge his great goodneſs in time paſt, and this in many particulars, in his favour ſhewn them, which is the chief bleſſing and the ſpring of all the reſt; in the reſtoration of them from captivity, *v.* 1. in the full and free forgiveneſs of their manifold tranſgreſſions, *v.* 2. and the bleſſed effects thereof, the removal of all that wrath and indignation they had ſo highly provoked, *v.* 3. *Note,* (1.) Preſent diſtreſs muſt never obliterate the grateful memory of paſt mercies. (2.) What can ſo deſervedly engage our thanks, as the deliverance wrought by Jeſus for his people, from the captivity of ſin and Satan? (3.) When God pardons, he does it fully as freely; the blood of Jeſus ſprinkled on the conſcience *covers all ſin.* (4.) When guilt is removed, wrath ceaſes of courſe.

2. They cry for mercy and ſalvation under their preſent troubles. *Turn us again, O God of our ſalvation:* they had backſlidden, and ſuffered for their faithleſſneſs, therefore they beg of God to turn them from their ſins, that their ſufferings may be removed, and plead the covenant of ſalvation, which ſtill affords them grounds of hope: *and cauſe thine anger towards us to ceaſe,* ſin, the cauſe of it, being removed. *Shew us thy mercy, O Lord,* how thy grace abounds beyond all our demerit, *and grant us thy ſalvation;* appear for our deliverance, and make us know that thou art able to ſave to the uttermoſt. *Note,* (1.) Though we may have been unfaithful, God is not inexorable; when we are led to cry, *Turn us,* he will return in mercy. (2.) No ſalvation can be hoped whilſt we continue in our ſins, and without deſire to part from them. (3.) All a ſinner can ever aſk at God's hands is mercy: unleſs he ſave freely, without reſpect to our deſerts, we are undone eternally.

3. They humbly expoſtulate on his diſpleaſure now teſtified towards them. *Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?* that we have deſerved thy anger we own, but muſt periſh if it be not removed. *Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?* no; thou art, though our offended, yet our covenant God, and wilt not retain thine anger for ever towards the people of thy grace. *Wilt thou not revive us again* with words of conſolation, with the light of thy countenance, and the interpoſition of thy grace and providence, raiſing us from our ſtate of languiſhing, through our backſliding, and from the ſufferings under which we are oppreſſed; *that thy people may rejoice in thee,* experienceing thy love, power, and faithfulneſs, and aſcribing to thee the entire glory of their ſalvation. *Note,* (1.) Though God's people provoke him to correct them, he will not be angry with them for ever. (2.) It is the fearful lot of the impenitent and damned ſinner to endure God's wrath to all generations. (3.) They who experience the power of reſtoring grace, will rejoice in God their Saviour, and ſpeak, to his glory, of the wonders of his grace.

8. [f] I will hear what God the LORD will ſpeak: for [g] he will ſpeak peace unto his people, and to his ſaints: [h] but let them not turn again to folly. 9. Surely his ſalvation *is* nigh them that fear him; that [i] glory may dwell in our land. 10. [k] Mercy and truth are met together: righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed *each other.* 11. [l] Truth ſhall ſpring out of the earth: and righteouſneſs ſhall look down [m] from heaven. 12. [n] Yea, the LORD ſhall give *that which is* good: and [o] our land ſhall yield her increaſe. 13. [p] Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him: and ſhall ſet *us* in the way of his ſteps.

[f] Hab. ii. 1.
[g] Zech. ix. 10.
[h] 2 Pet. ii. 21.
[i] Zech. ii. 5. John i. 14.
[k] Luke ii. 14. John i. 17.
[l] Iſa. xlv. 8.
[m] Jam. i. 17.
[n] Pſ. lxxxiv. 11.
[o] Ibid. lxvii. 6.
[p] Ibid. lxxxix. 14.

v. 8—13. The Pſalmiſt's prayer quickly meets an anſwer of peace.

1. He waits in confidence of being heard and anſwered. *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak,* patiently, compoſedly, and confidently expecting a reply to his petitions; *for he will ſpeak peace unto his people, and to his ſaints,* they are his, ſeparated for his bleſſed work and ſervice, and deſigned for the eternal enjoyment of himſelf; and however for a ſeaſon here they may be afflicted, he will keep their ſouls in peace, while truſting upon him, in the midſt of their troubles, and bring them at laſt to that eternal peace which paſſeth all underſtanding; *but let them not return again unto folly,* to ſin, and backſliding, which muſt deſtroy their peace, and bring the ſcourge upon them. *Note,* (1.) They who pray, ſhould expect an anſwer. (2.) When God hath ſpoken peace to our ſouls, let us be careful not to provoke him again, to withdraw it from us, through our folly.

2. He enlarges on the bleſſings that in faith he expects to receive, and ſeems particularly to have in view the coming of the glorious Meſſiah and his kingdom, the great hope and happineſs of Iſrael. *Surely his ſalvation is nigh them that fear him; his ſalvation,* for from God alone cometh our help, and it is *nigh,* when we are moſt oppreſſed he is at hand, and thoſe who *fear him* will never be forſaken by him in any of their diſtreſſes; and this may refer to the Lord Jeſus, whoſe day, by faith, the believers of old beheld approaching, and rejoiced in his ſalvation; *that glory may dwell in our land,* honourable as well as ſafe, under the divine protection, and moſt eminently glorious by the appearing of Immanuel, and the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel. *Mercy,* or *grace, and truth are met together: righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other,* ſo full of theſe good fruits is their land, and ſuch harmony maintained among the Iſrael of God; or rather in the Redeemer's perſon, grace and truth are met, *John* i. 14, 17. grace in the moſt tranſcendant manner ſhewn to periſhing ſinners, and God's faithfulneſs to all his promiſes eminently manifeſted. The righteouſneſs of God now fully revealed and magnified, and yet peace on earth, and good will to men reſtored, *Luke* xi. 14. The puniſhment of ſin is exacted, yet the ſinner ſaved, the juſtice of God awfully executed, and withal abounding grace extended to the fallen ſons of Adam. *Truth ſhall ſpring out of the earth,* either the goſpel-word, ſo univerſally ſpread abroad, as graſs covers the earth watered with vernal ſhowers; or the truth of divine grace ſpringing up in the heart, through the enlightening and ſanctifying influences of the Spirit of truth; *and righteouſneſs ſhall look down from heaven,* the righteous God being well pleaſed with beholding the Redeemer executing his work of redemption, and regarding with delight all thoſe who, waſhed in his blood, and cloathed in his righteouſneſs, are now without ſpot or blemiſh. *Yea, the Lord ſhall give that which is good,* not merely temporal gifts, but the greater ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus, of pardon, grace, and glory; *and our land ſhall yield her increaſe,* not only abundance of corn and wine and oil, but thoſe fruits of righteouſneſs which are by Jeſus Chriſt, to the praiſe and glory of God; or the Saviour himſelf born on earth, the moſt bleſſed fruit it ever produced. *Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him,* in perfect righteouſneſs all his ways will be directed, or it may ſignify a righteous perſon, as John the Baptiſt, ſent to prepare the way of the Lord; *and ſhall ſet us in the way of his ſteps,* pointing us to the Lamb of God, and teaching us to be followers of him in faithfulneſs and truth, that we may be led into the paths of everlaſting peace.

PSALM LXXXVI.

This pſalm is intitled a prayer of David; probably it was penned under Saul's perſecution, and he may herein be conſidered as a type of Chriſt, who in the days of his fleſh offered up ſtrong cries, *Heb.* v. 7. 1. *He gives glory to God,* ver. 8, 9, 10, 12, 13. 2. *He prays that God would hear him,* ver. 1, 6, 7. *Preſerve him, and be merciful to him,* ver. 2, 3, 16. *that he would give him joy, and ſtrength, and put honour upon him,* ver. 4, 11, 17. *He pleads God's goodneſs,* ver. 5, 15. *and the malice of his enemies,* ver. 14.

¶ A prayer of David.

1. BOW down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy. 2. Preſerve my ſoul, for I *am* † holy: O thou my God, ſave thy ſervant that truſteth in thee. 3. Be merciful unto me, O LORD: for [a] I cry unto thee ‡ daily. 4. Rejoice the ſoul of thy ſervant: for [b] unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my ſoul. 5. For [c] thou, LORD, *art* good, and ready to forgive: and [d] plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. 6. Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer: and attend to the voice of my ſupplications. 7. [e] In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt anſwer me.

† Or one whom thou favoureſt.
[a] Luke xviii. 1.
‡ Or all the day.
[b] Pſ. xxv. 1. & cxliii. 8.
[c] Ver. 15. Pſ. cxlv. 9. Joel ii. 13.
[d] Pſ. cxxx. 7.
[e] Ibid. l. 15.

v. 1—7. The ſame compoſition may breathe the language of prayer and praiſe, and our hymns ſpeak our requeſt for mercy, as well as our thankfulneſs for what we have received.

1. He intermixes his prayers and pleas for mercy and ſalvation. *Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me,* ſpeaking after

the manner of men, and intimating the great condeſcenſion of God, when he takes notice of ſuch poor worms as we are, and vouchſafes a hearing to our imperfect ſupplications; *for I am poor and needy*, this is his plea, for God hath promiſed to hear ſuch, and will be magnified in his mercy towards them, who have nothing but their wants and miſeries to bring to him. *Preſerve my ſoul*, or *my life*, the life of his body, from Saul's enmity, or the more precious life of his ſpirit; which, in his ſojourning among idolaters, amidſt temptations, and far from the ordinances of the ſanctuary, was in danger; for the greateſt ſaint of God, without his continual preſervation, would quickly fall. His plea is, *for I am holy*, innocent of all the accuſations laid againſt him by Saul and his courtiers, and alſo being renewed by divine grace, he pleads it as an argument for God's carrying on his work in his ſoul. *Note*, However poor we are, yet if rich in grace, we need never repine at our lot. *O thou my God, ſave thy ſervant*; other ſalvation he expected none, but hoped to find it in him, his reconciled God; in whoſe love he had a ſure intereſt, as being his ſervant, and therefore entitled to his protection; and *that truſteth in thee*, not in his own holineſs, but God's grace, and therefore God's faithfulneſs was engaged to him, for the fulfilment of his promiſes. *Be merciful unto me, O Lord*, for merit he utterly diſclaimed, and now in time of need ſought the promiſed mercy; *for I cry unto thee daily*, and therefore waiting on God in his appointed way, was emboldened to expect the help he wanted. *Rejoice the ſoul of thy ſervant* with diſcoveries of thy pardoning love, with thy comforting ſpirit, and with deliverance from his preſent trouble: and he urges this argument, *for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my ſoul*, as an oblation on God's altar, devoted to his ſervice; and whoever thus continues inſtant in prayer, will be ſent away rejoicing in God.

2. He expreſſes his confidence in God's grace and help. *For thou, Lord, art good*, eſſentially ſo in himſelf, and manifeſting in innumerable inſtances his goodneſs to his people, *and ready to forgive*, which is an eſpecial proof of it, nothing being ſo deſirable to a guilty ſoul, as the pardon of his ſins; *and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon thee*: knowing the riches of God's grace, his heart reſted ſatisfied in him, and left his caſe contentedly in God's hands, *Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer, and attend to the voice of my ſupplications*; and being fully perſuaded of God's willingneſs to hear and help him, he profeſſes it as his continual purpoſe to wait upon God, *In the day of my trouble*, for ſuch muſt every faithful ſoul expect, from corruption within, and temptation, oppoſition, and affliction without, *I will call upon thee*, committing all the concerns of body and ſoul into thy hands; *for thou wilt anſwer me*, of this I reſt aſſured, and therefore wait in confidence to ſee the ſalvation of God.

8. [f] Among the gods *there is* none like unto thee, O
LORD, [g] neither *are there any works* like unto thy works.
9. [h] All nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come and
worſhip before thee, O LORD: and ſhall glorify thy
name. 10. For thou *art* great, and [i] doſt wondrous
things: [k] thou *art* God alone. 11. [l] Teach me thy way,
O LORD, I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to
fear thy name. 12. I will praiſe thee, O LORD my
God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name
for evermore. 13. For great *is* thy mercy toward me:
and thou haſt delivered my ſoul from the loweſt † hell.
14. O God, [m] the proud are riſen againſt me, and the
aſſemblies of ‡ violent *men* have ſought after my ſoul:
and have not ſet thee before them. 15. [n] But thou, O
LORD, *art* a God full of compaſſion, and gracious:
long-ſuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. 16.
O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me, give thy
ſtrength unto thy ſervant, and ſave [o] the ſon of thine
handmaid. 17. Shew me a token for good, that they
which hate me may ſee *it*, and be aſhamed: becauſe
thou, LORD, haſt holpen me, and comforted me.

[f] Exod. xv. 11. Pſ. lxxxix. 6.
[g] Deut. iii. 24.
[h] Pſ. lxxii. 8.
[i] Ibid. 17. & lxxvii. 44.
[k] Deut. vi. 4. & xxxii. 39. Iſa. xxxvii. 16. & xliv. 6. Mark xii. 29. 1 Cor. viii. 4. Eph. iv. 6.
[l] Pſal. xxv. 4. & xxvii. 11. & cxix. 33. & cxliii. 8. Jer. x. 23.
† Or, grave.
[m] Pſ. liv. 3.
‡ Heb. Terrible.
[n] Exod. xxxiv. 6. Num. xiv. 18. Neh. ix. 17. Ver. 5. Pſ. ciii. 8. & cxi. 4. & cxxx. 7. & cxlv. 8. Joel ii. 13.
[o] Pſ. cxvi. 16.

v. 8—17. Having profeſſed his own dependance upon God, the Pſalmiſt,

1. Aſcribes to him the glory due unto his name, and therein ſhews what ground he had to truſt, and not be afraid, when this glorious God was his ſupport. Among angels, or men, none can be found comparable with him, or that can preſume to rival his ſtupendous works of creation, providence, and redemption, *v.* 8. All nations are the work of his hands, and muſt own him their great Creator: *They ſhall come and worſhip* him alone, and *glorify his name*, by yielding themſelves up to his ſervice, in body, ſoul, and ſpirit, as bound for ever to approve themſelves his faithful ſervants, which will receive its glorious accompliſhment in the latter days of the Meſſiah's kingdom, *v.* 9. Infinitely great in his adorable perfections, he worketh wonders in nature, providence, and grace; which angels, as well as men, behold with admiration: and as there is none like him, neither is there any beſides him, *thou art God alone!*

2. He prays for a heart to fear and follow him. *Teach me thy way, O Lord*, for we are blind and ignorant without divine teaching, and never elſe could know the way of ſalvation. *I will walk in thy truth*; when taught of God what is truth, he would follow it, particularly when inſtructed in the knowledge of Chriſt, the way, the truth, and the life, in whom we muſt walk, believing in him, and expecting happineſs from him, *John* i. 17. xiv. 6. *Col.* xi. 6. *Unite my heart to fear thy name*, ſolely and ſincerely attached to God, fearing nothing but to offend him, deſiring nothing ſo much as to pleaſe him, and this can only be received from God, whoſe grace can alone enable us thus to walk.

3. He acknowledges the everlaſting obligations lying on him to bleſs and praiſe God's name, and declares it his full purpoſe of heart to do ſo. *I will praiſe thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart*, moſt cordially, and with delight; *and I will glorify thy name for evermore*, whilſt I have a being upon earth, and through the days of eternity, and with abundant reaſon: *For great is thy mercy towards me*, yea, greater than I am able to expreſs; *and* to me in ſuch an aſtoniſhing manner declared; *thou haſt delivered my ſoul from the loweſt hell*, when by his ſins, eſpecially in the matter of Uriah, he had ſo juſtly deſerved the wrath of God, and yet had obtained mercy, and plucked as a brand from the burning, ſtood a monument of God's infinitely rich and ſovereign grace. *Note*, The greateſt ſaints of God reflect with deepeſt gratitude on the mercies they have experienced, and it heightens the ſongs of heaven, when thoſe who are advanced to that glorious place, look down on the flames beneath, and ſee on what a precipice of miſery they ſtood, when God ſnatched them from the everlaſting burnings.

4. He lodges his complaint with God againſt his enemies. *O God, the proud are riſen againſt me*, that could not bear the thoughts of his exaltation, *and the aſſemblies of violent men*, or *terrible* ones, *have ſought after my ſoul*, confederate to deſtroy him, plotting his ruin, and with cruelty and malice breathing forth ſlaughter; *and have not ſet thee before them*, regardleſs of God's omniſcience, and fearleſs of his vengeance. *Note*, (1.) Proud men cannot bear the rebuke of a holy converſation, and therefore turn perſecutors of the righteous. (2.) Though the wicked forget God, he does not forget them; but will, to their confuſion, return their miſchievous devices upon their own heads.

5. He profeſſes his dependance on God's kindneſs, to ſave him from their malice. *But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compaſſion, and gracious*, though they were cruel, he was kind; though they perſecuted, he would protect: *long-ſuffering*, even to the wicked, and much more to his own people; *plenteous in mercy*, to redeem them from every miſery, *and truth* to engage their confidence, on the faithfulneſs of his promiſes. *Note*, They who are under the care of this good God, need not fear the enmity of evil and malicious men.

6. He renews his prayer. *O turn unto me* with kind regard, *and have mercy upon me*, for thereon my hope is placed; *give thy ſtrength unto thy ſervant*, for my own is very weakneſs, but thine almighty, *and ſave the ſon of thine handmaid*, as one born in God's houſe, from days of infancy devoted to his ſervice, and who had taken the Lord by choice for his bleſſed maſter. *Shew me a token for good*, both for his own comfort, and viſibly for his enemies confuſion, *that they which hate me, may ſee it and be aſhamed* of their malice and enmity; *becauſe thou, Lord, haſt holpen me, and comforted me*, and therefore in fighting againſt his favoured ſervant, they will find they have been impotently ſtruggling againſt that omnipotent arm which protected him. *Note*, (1.) All our ſpiritual ſtrength is from God alone; without him, we are weak and helpleſs as infancy. (2.) Whom God helps, he comforts; his aſſiſtance being the pledge of his love, and that for everlaſting. (3.) Sooner or later the enemies of God's people will be aſhamed of their impotent malice.

PSALM LXXXVII.

This pſalm is an encomium of Sion, as a type and figure of the goſpel church. Sion, for the temple's ſake, is here preferred, 1. *Before the reſt of the land of Canaan, as being crowned with ſpecial tokens of God's favour*, ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *Before any other place or country whatſoever, as being repleniſhed with more eminent men, and with a greater plenty of divine bleſſings*, ver. 4—7. *And theſe glorious things ſpoken of here have their perfection and accompliſhment in the goſpel church.*

¶ A pſalm *or* ſong † for the ſons of Korah.

1. HIS foundation *is* [a] in the holy mountains. 2. [b]
The LORD loveth the gates of Zion, more
than all the dwellings of Jacob. 3. Glorious things are
ſpoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

† Or, of.
[a] Pſ. xlviii. 1.
[b] Ibid. lxxviii. 67, 68.

v. 1—3. The pſalm begins abruptly, as if he had been muſing on the glories of God's Zion, and inſtantly burſts forth in deſcribing them.

1. *His foundation is in the holy mountains*; the Lord hath laid the foundations of his church on Chriſt, the rock of ages; it is ſupported by his everlaſting promiſes, and ſtands firm in the beauty of holineſs.

2. He delights in the work of his own hands. *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob*; though all are dear to him, yet not alike dear; in Zion he hath choſen to fix his peculiar abode. *Note*, God is preſent in every family of his worſhipping people, and accepts their ſervice, but his eſpecial delight is in the great congregation, where all his people appear together before him.

3. *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O thou city of God.* Jeruſalem was a beautiful place, the joy of the whole earth, adorned with ſtately palaces, and moſt adorned with God's magnificent temple; but even this hath no glory, in compariſon with the goſpel church, which ſo far excelleth, the ſpouſe of Chriſt, the purchaſe of his blood; where all are kings and prieſts unto God; the walls ſalvation; the gates praiſe; the building eternal; that time, ſo far from ruining, muſt improve; and againſt which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

4. I will make mention of [c] Rahab, and Babylon, to
them that know me: behold Philiſtia, and Tyre, with
Ethiopia: this *man* was born there. 5. And of Zion it
ſhall be ſaid, This and that man was born in her: and
the higheſt himſelf [d] ſhall eſtabliſh her. 6. The LORD
ſhall count when [e] he writeth up the people, *that* this
man was born there. Selah. 7. As well the ſingers as
the players on inſtruments *ſhall be there*: [f] all my ſprings
are in thee.

[c] Pſ. lxxxix. 10.
[d] Mat. xvi. 18.
[e] Ezek. xiii. 9.
[f] Pſ. xlvi. 4.

v. 4—7. Some of the church's peculiar glories are here farther mentioned.

1. A great increaſe of converts ſhall be made to her. *I will make mention of Rahab*, that is Egypt, *and Babylon, to them that know me*, that they may expect their converſion, and receive them into the boſom of the church, *or among them that know me*; admitting them to the privileges of native Iſraelites, as fellow-citizens with the ſaints. *Behold Philiſtia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia*, ſtrangers hitherto, and foreigners; *this man was born there*, not any ſingular perſon, eminent for wiſdom, who might be produced among them; or here and there a proſelyte made to the Jewiſh religion; but rather it ſignifies, that in theſe countries multitudes ſhould be called to the faith and hope of the goſpel, and become regenerate by divine grace. *And of Zion it ſhall be ſaid, this and that man was born in her*; not ſo much the kings and prophets, the ornament of the Jewiſh Zion, as the redeemed of the Lord out of all lands, begotten to Chriſt, by the preaching of that everlaſting goſpel, that went forth out of Zion. *And*,

2. *The higheſt himſelf ſhall eſtabliſh her*. God, the moſt high, whoſe power none can withſtand, undertakes for her ſtability; and though floods of errors and hereſies threaten to overwhelm her, and ſtorms of perſecution furiouſly beat againſt her, ſhe ſhall never be removed, but riſe ſuperior to every foe, *mergas profundo, pulchrior exilit*. *Note*, It is a comfort amidſt the attacks of all the enemies of our ſalvation, to think what an almighty friend we have engaged to preſerve and protect us.

3. God will regiſter the names of his people in his book. From eternity they were written in the book of life of the Lamb, *Rev.* xiii. and now in the fulneſs of time, are called into the fellowſhip of the goſpel, and have a name among the living ſaints of God. So that *the Lord ſhall count when he writeth up the people*, in that great day, when they ſhall paſs in review before him, *that this man was born there*; each individual being known by him, ordained of him unto life, and not one ſhall periſh of all whom he hath given to be ſubjects and children to his king in Zion.

4. Great joy ſhall be in the midſt of her. *As well the ſingers as players upon inſtruments ſhall be there*, as in Zion of old, rehearſing God's praiſes, ſo in the goſpel-church ſhall be heard the voice of thoſe who ſing and make melody in their hearts unto God. *All my freſh ſprings are in thee*, which may be the words of the Pſalmiſt, or the ſong of the Redeemed, adoring Chriſt the ſource of all their joys, from whom they drink in pleaſures, as out of a river, and find freſh ſprings of grace implanted by him in their hearts, ſpringing up into everlaſting life.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

This pſalm is the moſt melancholy of all the pſalms; from firſt to laſt it is full of mourning, lamentation, and woe. We have, 1. *The great preſſure of ſpirit that the pſalmiſt was under*, ver. 3—6. 2. *The wrath of God, which was the cauſe of that preſſure*, ver. 7, 15—17. 3. *The wickedneſs of his friends*, ver. 8, 18. 4. *The application he made to God by prayer*, ver. 1, 2, 9, 13. 5. *His humble expoſtulations and pleadings with God*, ver. 10, 12, 14. *And herein he ſeems to have been a type of Chriſt, to whom theſe things are more applicable than to any other.*

¶ A ſong *or* pſalm † for the ſons of Korah, to the
chief muſician ‡ upon Mahalath Leannoth, [a] Maſchil
of [b] Heman the Ezrahite.

1. O LORD God of my ſalvation, [c] I have cried
day *and* night before thee. 2. Let my prayer
come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry. 3. For
my ſoul is full of troubles: and [d] my life draweth nigh
unto the grave. 4. I am counted with them that go
down into the pit: I am as a man *that hath* no ſtrength.
5. [e] Free among the dead, like the ſlain that lie in the
grave whom thou remembreſt no more: and they are
cut off ‖ from thy hand. 6. Thou haſt laid me in the
loweſt pit, in darkneſs, in the deeps. 7. Thy wrath
lieth hard upon me, and [f] thou haſt afflicted *me* with all
thy waves, Selah. 8. [g] Thou haſt put away mine acquaintance far from me: thou haſt made me an abo-
mination unto them: [h] *I am* ſhut up, and I cannot come
forth. 9. [i] Mine eye mourneth by reaſon of affliction:
LORD, I have called daily upon thee, [k] I have ſtretch-
ed out my hands unto thee.

† Or, of.
‡ Or, concerning the afflicting diſeaſe.
[a] Pſ. xxxii. Tit.
[b] 1 Kings iv. 31. 1 Chron. ii. 6.
[c] Pſ. lxxxvi. 3. Luke xviii. 7.
[d] Pſ. cvii. 18.
[e] Ibid. xxxi. 12.
‖ Heb. Or, by thy hand.
[f] Pſ. xlii. 7.
[g] Job xix. 13. Pſ. xxxi. 11. & cxlii. 4.
[h] Sam. iii. 7.
[i] Pſ. xxxviii. 10.
[k] Job xi. 13. Pſ. cxliii. 6.

v. 1—9. The penman of this pſalm is called Heman the Ezrahite: there were two of this name; the one famed for wiſdom, 1 *Chron.* xi 6. 1 *Kings* iv. 31. the other, who lived in David's time, a ſinger, and the king's ſeer, 1 *Chron.* vi. 33. xv. 17, 19. who was probably the perſon. The title of it is *Mahalath Leannoth*, which ſome ſuppoſe to be the muſical inſtrument; others, to ſignify the ſubject of the pſalm, *The afflicting diſeaſe*, whether of body or ſoul, or it may be of both, for it is evidently penned in great bitterneſs; and except in the addreſs to God, whom he calls the *God of my ſalvation*, affords not one comfortable word of hope. Yet where God is our ſalvation, though we are ſunk in deepeſt diſtreſs, and all the ſtorms and billows go over us, we ſhall at laſt emerge, and cannot finally periſh.

1. His prayer is fervent and importunate. *O Lord God of my ſalvation*, from whom alone I can expect relief, *I have cried day and night before thee*, long and often, and ſtill continue to look up, though my troubles are unabated. *Let my prayer come before thee, and incline thine ear unto my cry*; thus in the days of his fleſh the Redeemer poured out his prayers, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto him who was able to ſave him from death, *Heb.* v. 7. and in all our trials, to a throne of grace muſt we continually fly, and never faint, or be weary of praying and waiting upon God, till he is pleaſed to viſit us with his ſalvation, and ſay to our tempeſtuous ſouls, *Peace, be ſtill.*

2. His ſorrows are enlarged. *For my ſoul is full of trouble*, and ſoul-troubles are the ſoreſt of all others: *a wounded ſpirit who can bear?* yet with theſe, God is ſometimes pleaſed to exerciſe his deareſt ſaints, and they muſt not count this fiery trial ſtrange: *and my life draweth nigh unto the grave*, unable to ſupport the burden, or *unto hell*, ſo dreadful were his apprehenſions, now the light of God's countenance was withdrawn. The Son of God repeated theſe deep complaints, and with a bitterneſs which never any ſoul but his taſted, *Math.* xxvi. 38.

3. He is reduced to the brink of deſpair. *I am counted with them that go down into the pit*, as a dead man, or among malefactors, whoſe dead bodies were caſt into the pit together. *I am as a man that hath no ſtrength*, helpleſs and hopeleſs: *free among the dead*, of that ghaſtly family, *like the ſlain that lie in the grave, whom thou remembereſt no more*, no longer the objects of his providential care; *and they are cut off from thy hand*, no more ſtretched out to feed them, or *by thy hand*, and that is of all deaths the moſt miſerable, which is ſent as a judgment from God. *Thou haſt laid me in the loweſt deep*, ſunk under the moſt deplorable diſtreſs, *in darkneſs*, both with regard to the concerns of body and ſoul; *and in the deeps*, lower he cannot be, but in the belly of hell. Among thoſe who go down to the loweſt pit, yea, among the vileſt malefactors was the ſon of God reckoned; and though the mighty God, as unable to help himſelf, he yielded up his body to be nailed to the tree: with the ſlain he lay down, and viſited the manſions of the dead, cut off by the hand of juſtice, under the tranſgreſſions of his people, *Iſa.* liii. 8. *Note*, Though the faith of God's people never faileth, it may ſometimes, in thoſe who are in general the ſtrongeſt believers, be ſo ſhaken, and unbelief ſo prevalent, that they are ready to give up all for loſt, and conclude their ſtate deſperate.

4. A ſenſe of divine wrath was the bittereſt part of his ſufferings. *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me*, ſuch were then his gloomy fears, though towards his people there is no wrath in God; *and thou haſt afflicted me with all thy waves*, one dark providence and diſtreſſing fear ſucceeding another, as if he was about to overwhelm him in the abyſs of miſery: thus may God's deareſt

children ſuffer under that moſt painful of all their troubles, the fear of his intolerable anger. What he feared, really fell on Jeſus, our ſubſtitute, who bore our ſins, and the wrath due to them, on his own body on the tree; and over him every wave of juſtice broke terrible, till in death he paid the dreadful debt.

5. His friends deſerted him in his troubles, but he ſaw God's hand in the affliction. *Thou haſt put away mine acquaintance far from me*; to find a kind and compaſſionate friend is an alleviation to our ſorrows; but he had none, or by divine Providence they were removed from him, or incapacitated for ſerving him; *thou haſt made me an abomination to them*; perhaps, like Job's friends, they miſinterpreted his ſufferings, as if they proved him a wicked man, and ſhunned him as ſuch, which made it the more grievous: thus was Jeſus alſo betrayed by one diſciple, denied by another, forſaken of all. Let no follower of his therefore wonder, if deareſt friends forſake, ſlight, or abhor him; he is then but as his Lord.

6. His caſe appeared remedileſs. *I am ſhut up*, confined with bodily affliction, or in a priſon of ſpiritual darkneſs, *and I cannot come forth*, ſee no door open, have no power to help myſelf, and can only vent my diſconſolate ſorrows. *Mine eye mourneth by reaſon of affliction*, but neither tears or prayers brought him relief: *Lord, I have called daily unto thee, I have ſtretched out my hands unto thee*, and yet found no relief: a diſcouraging caſe indeed! when even our prayers ſeem to return unanſwered, and our miſeries to continue unremoved. The agonizing prayers of Jeſus ſpoke his deep apprehenſions of the Divine wrath, from which the humanity ſhrunk, and wiſhed the cup to paſs from him, but it is decreed he muſt drink it.

10. [l] Wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead? ſhall the dead ariſe *and* praiſe thee? Selah. 11. Shall thy loving kindneſs be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulneſs in deſtruction? 12. [m] Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteouſneſs in [n] the land of forgetfulneſs? 13. But unto thee have I cried, O LORD, and [o] in the morning ſhall my prayer prevent thee. 14. LORD, why caſteſt thou off my ſoul? *why* hideſt thou thy face from me? 15. I *am* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth up: *while* [p] I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted. 16. Thy † fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors have cut me off. 17. They came round about me ‡ daily like water, they compaſſed me about together. 18. [q] Lover and friend haſt thou put far from me, *and* mine acquaintance into darkneſs.

[l] Pſ. vi. 5. & xxx. 9. & cxv. 17. & cxviii. 17. Iſa. xxxviii. 18.
[m] Job x. 21. Pſ. cxliii. 3.
[n] Pſ. xxxi. 12. Eccleſ. ix. 5.
[o] Pſ. v. 3.
[p] Job vi. 4.
† Heb. Burnings
‡ Or all the day.
[q] Pſ. xxxi. 11. & xxxviii. 11.

v. 10—18. From prayer, he proceeds,

1. To expoſtulations. *Wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead? ſhall the dead ariſe and praiſe thee?* they no more tell of his goodneſs, *declare his loving-kindneſs, proclaim his faithfulneſs*, ver. 11. *diſplay his amazing grace*, or *exalt his righteouſneſs* here below. Though in the eternal world they live, yet here God could receive no more ſervice from them; and this he intimates muſt be his caſe, without ſpeedy relief, as death would quickly put it out of his power for ever to glorify God among the living, *Job* vii. 8. x. 21. *Note*, The great end for which a good man wiſhes to live, is to ſerve God's intereſts in the world, and ſhew forth his praiſe.

2. He returns to prayer again. *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord*; he had done ſo, and reſolved to continue unwearied, yea, more diligent in the work: *and in the morning ſhall my prayer prevent thee*, not that he could riſe earlier to pray, than God would wake to hear, for he never ſlumbers nor ſleeps; but he would begin before the uſual time of prayer for others, and ſooner than he himſelf was wont to pray, *Mark* i. 35. *Note*, (1.) Early prayers will uſually be moſt lively. (2.) The more affliction preſſes, the more preſſing and perſevering ſhould be our ſupplications.

3. He determines what to ſay in his early approach to God. *Lord, why caſteſt thou off my ſoul?* he dreaded the thought of being abandoned of God, deſired to know the cauſe why he contended thus with him, for cauſe no doubt there was, that it might be removed. *Why hideſt thou thy face from me?* better, infinitely better be without the light of the ſun, than of God's countenance: ſo thinks a child of God. In like manner did the Saviour reaſon under his ſad deſertion on the tree, *Matth.* xxvii. 46.

4. He repeats his bitter complaints, and leaves them in God's compaſſionate boſom. *I am afflicted* in body and mind, from earth and hell; and worſt of all, even heaven ſeems to frown. Or, *I am poor*, reduced to the deepeſt ſtate of want and wretchedneſs, *and ready to die from my youth up*, ſo ſickly, or ſo beſet with enemies, as Jeſus was, even when a babe. *While I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted*; the frightful apprehenſions of God's wrath quite diſcompoſed his ſpirit, and drove him for a while to the very brink of deſpair; and this hath been the caſe with many a ſoul now rejoicing in glory. Even the divine Redeemer once was *ſore amazed* at what he felt and ſaw, *Mark* xiv. 33. *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me*, or *wraths*; ſuch inceſſant waves of anguiſh and diſtreſs rolled upon him, and ſo inſupportable this wrath of God appeared, that he was ready to give over himſelf for loſt: *thy terrors have cut me off* from the land of the living, as the Meſſiah was, *Iſa.* liii. 8. or from God's favour for ever, in which conſiſts the miſery of the damned, and he looked only for a place with them, ſo deſperate his ſtate appeared. *Note*, The way to heaven lies often by the very gates of hell. *They came round about me daily like water*, the terrors of God riſing like a ſwelling flood; *they compaſſed me about together*, ſo that no eſcape ſeemed poſſible, as when the Egyptians were hemmed in by the ſea on every ſide. Thus Jeſus complained, *Pſal.* xxii. 12, 16. xl. 12. and to ſuch aſſaults of temptation may his people be expoſed. *Lover and friend haſt thou put far from me*, taken from me, or become unkind and faithleſs; *and mine acquaintance into darkneſs*, or *are darkneſs*, dead, at leaſt to him, as bringing no chearing beam of conſolation, to alleviate his ſorrows; next to religion are the comforts of friendſhip; to be deſtitue of both, is wretchedneſs in perfection. Thus ends this mournful ſong: but though no word of comfort is added, we may ſupply it without fear; for none ever thus ſowed in tears, who did not reap in joy.

PSALM LXXXIX.

This pſalm bears the name of Ethan, of him mentioned 1 Kings iv. 31. *or of a ſinger, who lived in Solomon's reign, and ſaw the decline of David's houſe on his deceaſe, or by one of his name during the captivity in Babylon.* 1. *He begins with joy,* (1.) *In God's covenant of mercy*, ver. 1—4. (2.) *In his glorious perfections*, ver. 5—14. (3.) *In the happineſs of thoſe who are admitted into communion with him*, ver. 15—18. (4.) *In the hope of the Meſſiah's enduring kingdom*, ver. 19—37. 2. *He ends with mourning over the calamities of the houſe of David*, ver. 38—45. *Expoſtulates with God thereon*, ver. 46—49. *and begs redreſs*, ver. 50, 51.

¶ [a] Maſchil of [b] Ethan the Ezrahite.

1. I WILL ſing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulneſs † to all generations. 2. For I have ſaid, Mercy ſhall be built up for ever: [c] thy faithfulneſs ſhalt thou eſtabliſh in the very heavens. 3. I have made a covenant with my choſen, [d] I have ſworn unto David my ſervant. 4. [e] Thy ſeed will I eſtabliſh for ever, and [f] build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

[a] Pſ. xxxii. Title.
[b] 1 Kings iv. 31. 1 Chron. ii. 6.
† Heb. To generation and generation. Ver. 4.
[c] Pſ. cxix. 89.
[d] 2 Sam. vii. 11, &c. or Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23.
[e] Ver xxix. 36.
[f] Luke i. 32, 33.

v. 1—4. The Pſalmiſt opens with praiſe, notwithſtanding the deſolations before him, which ſo deeply affected and afflicted him; for no troubles ſhould untune our hearts: we can be in no ſtate or condition, when we have not matter for a ſong, and ſhall get more heart's-eaſe by praiſing than complaining.

1. The Pſalmiſt declares his purpoſe to celebrate with ceaſeleſs praiſe, the mercies and faithfulneſs of the Lord, *v.* 1. However dark preſent providences appeared, he could not doubt his boundleſs mercy, nor diſtruſt his inviolable faithfulneſs; and therefore not only his lips ſhould praiſe, but he would make known God's mercy and truth, and leave it upon record to future generations.

2. He profeſſes his own faith and hope in God. *For I have ſaid*, confiding in God's promiſe, in oppoſition to all appearances, *Mercy ſhall be built up for ever*, the tabernacle of David be revived from its ruins, flouriſh for ever through God's mercy: *thy faithfulneſs ſhalt thou eſtabliſh in the very heavens*, his promiſes enduring as the heavens, and his faithfulneſs moſt eminently proved, when his ſaints ſhall be taken up to heaven, and herein with unſhaken confidence he reſted.

3. The ground on which this faith was built, is God's everlaſting covenant of grace. *I have made a covenant with my choſen* David, as the type of the Meſſiah, and called by the name of David, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23. 24. *Hoſ.* iii. 5. choſen from eternity, appointed to be the covenant head of his people, their ſurety and repreſentative, and in whoſe hands all the bleſſings of the covenant are lodged. *I have ſworn unto David my ſervant*, to ſhew the immutability of his counſel, *Heb.* vi. 18. *Thy ſeed will I eſtabliſh for ever*, not his natural ſeed merely, but all believers, the ſpiritual ſeed of Chriſt, who have an intereſt in this everlaſting covenant; *and build up thy throne to all generations*, the throne of Chriſt, whoſe kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and of his government there will be no end. And this is the grand foundation of every believer's hope and confidence, that the covenant ſtands firm in Chriſt, and therefore is ſure to all the ſeed, however ſore beſet with trials, and compaſſed with enemies on every ſide. We have the word, the oath of God for us; till they fail, we cannot.

5. And [g] the heavens ſhall praiſe thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulneſs alſo in the congregation of the ſaints.

[g] Pſ. xix. 1.

ſaints. 6. For [h] who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? 7. [i] God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of the ſaints: and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him. 8. O LORD God of hoſts, who *is* a ſtrong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulneſs round about thee? 9. [k] Thou ruleſt the raging of the ſea: when the waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them. 10. [l] Thou haſt broken † Rahab in pieces, as one that is ſlain; thou haſt ſcattered thine enemies with thy ſtrong arm. 11. [m] The heavens *are* thine, the earth alſo *is* thine: *as for* the world, and the fulneſs thereof, thou haſt founded them. 12. The north and the ſouth thou haſt created them: Tabor and Hermon ſhall rejoice in thy name. 13. Thou haſt ‡ a mighty arm: ſtrong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand. 14. [n] Juſtice and judgment *are* the ‖ habitation of thy throne, [o] mercy and truth ſhall go before thy face.

[h] Pſal. lxxi. 19. & lxxxvi. 8. & cxiii. 5.
[i] Pſ. lxxvi. 11.
[k] Ibid. lxv. 7. & xciii. 4.
[l] Exod. xiv. 26. Iſa. li. 9.
† i.e. Egypt.
[m] 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Pſ. xxiv. 1. & l. 12.
‡ Heb. An arm with might.
[n] Pſ. xcvii. 2.
‖ Or, eſtabliſhment.
[o] Pſ. lxxxv. 13.

v. 5—14. The Pſalmiſt reiterates the praiſes of God, and moſt worthy he appears to be adored, and had in everlaſting remembrance.

1. Heaven and earth muſt celebrate his glory. *The heavens*, with all their bright inhabitants, *ſhall praiſe thy wonders*, or *that wonderful work of thine*, the covenant of grace eſtabliſhed in Chriſt with loſt ſinners, or that ſtupenduous incarnation of the Son of God: *thy faithfulneſs alſo in the congregation of the ſaints*, earth as well as heaven unites in adoration, and ſaints ſeek to emulate the ſervice of angels; and moſt eſpecially bounden are they to join in the ſong of praiſe, when aſſembled in the great congregation, where God has promiſed the eſpecial preſence of his grace, and is to be approached with filial reverence and godly fear, *v.* 7. *Heb.* xii. 28. *Note*, They who ever hope for heaven, muſt begin the ſervice upon earth. If we have now no joy in God's worſhip and praiſes, how can we expect happineſs there, where this is the everlaſting employment of the glorified ſoul?

2. Moſt abundant reaſon there is, why God ſhould be thus adored,

[1.] Becauſe his greatneſs is beyond compare. Heaven yields none like him; the higheſt archangel is infinitely more beneath his perfection, than they are above the worm, the meaneſt worm that crawls: and much leſs can earth, among its mightieſt ſons, produce a rival to him, who ſitteth on the circle of the heavens, and the inhabitants of the world are but as graſhoppers before him.

[2.] His ſtrength and faithfulneſs are moſt tranſcendantly great. None can do what he doth, nor did ever any truſt him and were diſappointed, *v.* 8. Several inſtances of this his Almighty power are here given:

(1.) In his controul of the moſt unruly elements, *Thou ruleſt the raging of the ſea: when the waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them:* he hath appointed their bounds; and though the foaming billows lift their heads, they cannot paſs them, but in an inſtant at his word ſubſide, and creep in murmurs to the ſhore. By this act of omnipotence did Jeſus manifeſt his godhead and glory, *Mat.* viii. 24—27.

(2.) In his victories over Egypt, and his people's enemies, when Pharaoh, that *Rahab, that proud one* was deſtroyed, and all his hoſts, as corpſes, ſcattered on the ſhore; an emblem of the victories of Jeſus over Satan and the powers of darkneſs, and of his deſtruction of the antichriſtian foe, when Babylon myſtical, as Rahab, ſhall be broken in pieces.

(3.) In his univerſal dominion over all the creatures. The heaven and earth, and all who dwell in them own his authority, and regard him as their creator: from pole to pole he is Lord of all, *and Tabor and Hermon rejoice in his name*, all the fertility, ſtrength, and beauty they poſſeſs, are from his gift; and if Tabor, as is generally ſuppoſed, was the mount where our Lord was transfigured, it might with peculiar propriety be ſaid to rejoice in him.

(4.) In his providential government. *Thou haſt a mighty arm*, able to ſave and to deſtroy; *ſtrong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand*, to preſerve, protect, and chaſtiſe his people for their good, or to puniſh and overwhelm his enemies with judgments irreſiſtible; and withal moſt holy juſt and good are all his diſpenſations. *Juſtice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne*, the adminiſtration of the kingdom of his providence is altogether righteous and equitable. *Mercy and truth ſhall go before his face*; *mercy* in pardoning the periſhing ſinner, *truth* in performing all his promiſes; and juſtly do theſe exalt him, and render him worthy to receive bleſſing, and glory, and majeſty, and might, and dominion, for ever and ever.

15. Bleſſed *is* the people that know [p] the joyful ſound: they ſhall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. 16. In thy name ſhall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted. 17. For thou *art* the glory of their ſtrength: and [q] in thy favour our horn ſhall be exalted. 18. For † the LORD *is* our defence: and the holy One of Iſrael *is* our king.

[p] Lev. xxv. 9. or Num. xxiii. 21.
[q] Ver. 24. Pſ. cxxxii. 17.
† Or, our ſhield is of the Lord, and our king is of the holy One of Iſrael. Pſ. xlvii. 9.

v. 15—18. The bleſſedneſs of God's people is here deſcribed; as there is no God like him, ſo no people ſo happy as thoſe who know him, love him, ſerve him.

1. *They know the joyful ſound* of goſpel-grace, like the ſhout of a victorious army, *Numb.* xxiii. 21. or the welcome trump of Jubilee, proclaiming victory over ſin, death, and hell, liberty from the bondage of corruption, and ſpeaking pardon, peace, and eternal reconciliation between the offended God, and the ſinful ſoul.

2 *They ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance*, under the ſpecial tokens of his favour, enjoying the moſt endeared communion with him, and walking in the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt.

3. Their joy ſhall be permanent. *In thy name ſhall they rejoice all the day*, every day they will have cauſe to do ſo, in further and clearer manifeſtations of the divine grace and love, and in the darkeſt hour, ſtill they may find matter for a ſong.

4. Their exaltation will be great, cloathed with the divine righteouſneſs of Jeſus, which, from the loweſt ſtate of miſery and ſin, entitles them to a place among God's princes, *v.* 16. endued with divine ſtrength, which will make them more than conquerors over all the enemies of their ſouls; and poſſeſſed of theſe, they will appear glorious in the eyes of God, in that beauty and comelineſs he hath put upon them; and lifting up their horn on high, be aſſured, through the unchangeable favour of their God, that none ſhall be able to move them, or make their glorying void.

5. Their relation to God makes them both ſafe and honourable. *For the Lord is our defence or ſhield*, to protect and defend us from every evil, *and the holy One of Iſrael*, whoſe promiſes never fail, *is our king*, to rule and guide us in paths of everlaſting peace, under his happy ſway. Bleſſed, for ever bleſſed are the people that are in ſuch a caſe!

19. Then thou ſpakeſt in viſion to the holy One, and ſaidſt, I have laid help upon [r] *one that is* mighty: I have exalted *one* choſen out of the people. 20. I have found David my ſervant: [s] with my holy oil have I anointed him. 21. [t] With whom my hand ſhall be eſtabliſhed: mine arm alſo ſhall ſtrengthen him. 22. [u] The enemy ſhall not exact upon him: nor [x] the ſon of wickedneſs afflict him. 23. And [y] I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. 24. But [z] my faithfulneſs and my mercy *ſhall be* with him: and [a] in my name ſhall his horn be exalted. 25. [b] I will ſet his hand alſo in the ſea, and his right hand in the rivers. 26. He ſhall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my ſalvation. 27. Alſo I will make him [c] *my* firſt-born, [d] higher than the kings of the earth. 28. [e] My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with him. 29. [f] His ſeed alſo will I make *to endure* for ever, [g] and his throne as the days of heaven. 30. [h] If his children forſake my law, and walk not in my judgments; 31. If they † break my ſtatutes, and keep not my commandments: 32. Then [i] will I viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes. 33. [k] Nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs will I not ‡ utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to ‖ fail. 34. My covenant will I not break, [l] nor alter the thing *that is* gone out of my lips. 35. Once [m] have I ſworn [n] by my holineſs, that I will not lie unto David. 36. [o] His ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his throne [p] as the ſun before me. 37. It ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever as the moon, and *as* [q] a faithful witneſs in heaven. Selah.

[r] Iſa. ix. 6.
[s] Pſ. xlv. 7. John iii. 34.
[t] Pſ. lxxx. 17.
[u] 2 Sam. vii. 10.
[x] 2 Theſſ. ii. 8.
[y] Pſ. cx. 1.
[z] Ibid. lxi. 7.
[a] Ver. 17.
[b] Pſ. lxxii. 8.
[c] Ibid. ii. 7. Col. i. 15, 18.
[d] Num. xxiv. 7. Rev. xxi. 24.
[e] Iſa. lv. 3.
[f] Ver. 4, 36.
[g] Iſa. ix. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 17. Luke i. 33.
[h] 2 Sam. vii. 14.
† Or, prophane. Ver. 34.
[i] Heb. xii. 7, &c.
[k] 2 Sam. vii. 15.
‡ Heb. Make void.
‖ Heb. Lie.
[l] Mal. iii. 6. Jam. i. 17.
[m] Heb. vi. 13.
[n] Amos iv. 2.
[o] 2 Sam. vii. 16. Ver. 4. 29. Luke i. 33. John xii. 34.
[p] Pſ. lxxii. 17.
[q] Gen. ix. 13.

v. 19—37. The covenant God had made with David was before mentioned, and here is enlarged upon, as a ground of comfort in the preſent low eſtate of the royal family. And herein eſpecial relation is had to Chriſt, to whom alone the things here mentioned are entirely applicable, and the *everlaſting covenant* is therefore called the *ſure mercies* of our ſpiritual *David*, Acts xiii. 34. We have here,

1. The glorious perſonage pointed out with whom the covenant is made. *Then thou ſpakeſt in viſion to thy Holy One*, to Samuel, who was appointed to anoint David king, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 1. or Nathan, 2 *Sam.* vii. 4. or *concerning thy Holy One*, the Meſſiah, to whom gave all the prophets witneſs; and to him moſt emphatically belongs the character here deſcribed. *The mighty* One, able to ſave to the uttermoſt; *choſen out of the people*, God's elect, in whom his ſoul delighteth; one in our nature, ſingled out to be united to the eternal word, no longer two but

one Chriſt. *Found* and provided of God from eternity, *anointed* with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows, for the diſcharge of all his offices of prophet, prieſt, and king. *Help laid upon him*, that he might be fully qualified for the arduous work of bringing many ſons unto glory, from the depths of wretchedneſs and weakneſs into which we were fallen; God's *ſervant* willingly undertaking the buſineſs aſſigned him, and *exalted* by him to the higheſt place of honour and dignity at his right hand, all power being committed to him in heaven and in earth, and angels, principalities, and powers made ſubject unto him.

2. The great and precious promiſes made to this mighty and exalted Meſſiah.

[1.] For himſelf God promiſes, (1.) That in all his undertakings he ſhall be ſupported with the arm of omnipotence; enabled to encounter and overcome all difficulties; be ready armed againſt every temptation, and unmoved under every aſſault, *v.* 21. *Note*, If almighty ſtrength be engaged for us, then ſurely we cannot miſcarry. (2.) He ſhall be made victorious over his enemies. Satan, with all his wiles, ſhall not prevail, nor be able to *exact upon him* more than as the ſinner's ſurety he undertook to bear; or *afflict* him farther than the determinate counſel and fore-knowledge of God decreed: and though he raiſed up all the malice of earth and hell, the blow he meditates muſt cruſh his own head. God will beat down all his foes before him, whether the powers of darkneſs, or the Jewiſh people that conſpired againſt him, or the antichriſtian oppreſſors of his people: all who hate him muſt be confounded at his feet; bow down, and feel his iron rod breaking them in pieces as a potter's veſſel, and dooming them to the everlaſting burnings, the juſt puniſhment of their ſins. *Note*, The end of all the enemies of the Redeemer and his people is to periſh for ever. (3.) God will never fail him in his undertaking. *My faithfulneſs and my mercy ſhall be with him*: all the promiſes ſhall be made good to him, and all the bleſſings engaged for in the covenant of grace be lodged in his hands for his people's uſe and benefit; ſo that out of his fulneſs we may all receive, and find all the promiſes of God in him, yea, and Amen. (4.) He ſhall be advanced to great honour and extenſive dominion. *In my name ſhall his horn be exalted*, high in power and glory: *I will ſet his hand in the ſea, and his right hand in the rivers*: both continent and iſlands, ſea and rivers, with all that dwell in them, and occupy their buſineſs there, ſhall own his ſway, and ſubmit to his government. (5.) He ſhall be owned of God as his Son, as his firſt-born, and enjoy the bleſſings of that endeared relation, which in a ſenſe belonged to Solomon, 2 *Sam.* vii. 14 but more peculiarly to Chriſt Jeſus. *He ſhall cry unto me, Thou art my Father*, by eternal generation, as he is very God of very God; or rather as Mediator, for whom a body was prepared, when in the fulneſs of time it was fulfilled, *This day have I begotten thee*, Pſal. ii. 7. *My God*, whoſe power and protection were engaged for him and over him, *John* xx. 17. *and the rock of my ſalvation*, to carry him through his arduous undertaking, and enable him to accompliſh it for his own and his people's glory. *Alſo I will make him my firſt-born*, the moſt eminent and exalted of all the ſons of God in the human nature, he having in all things the pre-eminence, *higher than the kings of the earth*, for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, *Rev.* xix. 16. His throne exalted over all, and that for ever and ever, for his kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom. (6.) In him God's covenant ſhall ſtand faſt for ever with all thoſe for whom he hath undertaken: all the mercies of the everlaſting covenant ſhall be ſure to them both in time and eternity.

[2.] For them God promiſes, in general, *that his ſeed ſhall endure for ever*, which cannot well be applied to David and his poſterity, which, though the throne long continued in his family, are now no more, unleſs conſidered as ſtill ſubſiſting in the Meſſiah, whoſe throne is eſtabliſhed for ever. But it moſt properly belongs to believers, the ſpiritual ſeed of Chriſt, who ſhall have a people to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, whilſt ſun and moon endureth; and when theſe luminaries are extinguiſhed, ſhall ſtill reign over his choſen through all the ages of eternity: and though in ſome ſeaſons the proſpect looks threatning, through declenſions, perſecutions, and apoſtacy, and few men left, yet not one jot or tittle of the promiſes ſhall ever fail.

(1.) It is ſuppoſed, that even among the redeemed, ſome things, yea much, may be found amiſs. They may be guilty of many and great offences, by omiſſion, and commiſſion, thro' neglect, yea, thro' wilfulneſs: all but the unpardonable ſin they may be ſeduced to commit; yet, though they are falſe, God is faithful to his covenant with Chriſt, and will not deſtroy, but recover them, *v.* 30, 31.

(2.) He will viſit them with a father's rod; though they are not undone, they ſhall not go unpuniſhed. Yea, with ſevere ſcourges ſhall they be often made to ſmart for their frowardneſs and folly, yet whilſt God's honour is thus vindicated, and their ſouls humbled, the effects wrought will be peace and righteouſneſs, and good be brought even out of their evil. *Note*, This ſhould teach us to hear and kiſs the rod, and bleſs the hand that corrects us, that we ſhould not be given over unto death.

(3.) God's covenant ſhall *nevertheleſs* ſtand faſt with them. *My kindneſs will I not take from them*, though the ſenſe of it may be withdrawn, yet his mercy ſhall not ever totally or finally depart. There remain a father's bowels under the ſevereſt ſtrokes of deſerved chaſtiſement, and this becauſe of the faithfulneſs of God to his Meſſiah, according to his promiſe, confirmed by an oath to him. Whatever breaches or profanations they were guilty of in God's law and worſhip, he would not *break*, or *prophane*, as the word ſignifies, his covenant. He had promiſed him a ſeed for ever on earth, perpetual as ſun and moon, and the bright bow in the clouds, the faithful witneſs of God's covenant with Noah, and the emblem of this everlaſting covenant of grace. Nor ſhall they end with the days of time, but live and reign with their exalted head coeval with the days of eternity.

38. But thou haſt caſt off and abhorred, thou haſt been wroth with thine anointed. 39. Thou haſt made void the covenant of thy ſervant: [r] thou haſt profaned his crown, *by caſting it* to the ground. 40. [s] Thou haſt broken down all his hedges, thou haſt brought his ſtrong holds to ruin. 41. All that paſs by the way, ſpoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours. 42. Thou haſt ſet up the right hand of his adverſaries: thou haſt made all his enemies to rejoice. 43. Thou haſt alſo turned the edge of his ſword, [t] and haſt not made him to ſtand in the battle. 44. Thou haſt made his † glory to ceaſe, and caſt his throne down to the ground. 45. The days of his youth haſt thou ſhortned: thou haſt covered him with ſhame. Selah. 46. [u] How long, LORD, wilt thou hide thyſelf for ever? [x] ſhall thy wrath burn like fire? 47. Remember [y] how ſhort my time is: wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain? 48. [z] What man *is he that* liveth, [a] and ſhall not ſee death? ſhall he deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave? Selah. 49. LORD, where *are* thy former loving-kindneſſes, [b] *which* thou ſwareſt unto David in thy truth? 50. Remember, LORD, the reproach of thy ſervants; [c] *how* I do bear in my boſom *the reproach of* all the mighty people; 51. [d] Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footſteps of thine anointed. 52. [e] Bleſſed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and amen.

[r] Lam. v. 16.
[s] Pſ. lxxx. 12.
[t] Deut. xxviii. 25.
† Heb. Brightneſs.
[u] Pſ. xiii. 1. & lxxix. 5.
[x] Pſ. lxxviii. 63.
[y] Ibid. xxxix. 5. & cxix. 84.
[z] Pſ. xlix. 9.
[a] Heb. xi. 5.
[b] 2 Sam. vii. 15. Iſa. lv. 3.
[c] Pſ. lxix. 9.
[d] Ibid. lxxiv. 22.
[e] Ibid. xli. 13.

v. 38—52. We have here an awful change. The language of praiſe and exultation is ſunk to the loweſt depth of mourning and woe; and this may be conſidered as a lamentation over the fall of the houſe of David under Rehoboam, or during the captivity, when he and his ſeed appeared to be fallen paſt recovery, their honour tarniſhed, their ſtrength broken, their enemies prevailing, and their utter ruin expected. But as the former part of the pſalm ſeems moſt eminently to relate to the ſpiritual David and his church, theſe words may be better interpreted of them. We have here,

1. A melancholy complaint of their miſerable ſtate, when the Meſſiah appeared in his ſufferings, as *caſt off and abhorred of God*, under God's *wrath*, v. 38. *The covenant* made with him broken, and his crown laid in the duſt, *v.* 39. His people given up to be a ſpoil to the enemy, himſelf reproached and vanquiſhed, his enemies triumphant, his days cut ſhort by an ignominious death, and laid with ſhame in the duſt of death, *v.* 40—45. And by the afflictive diſpenſations of God's providence, the church hath often ſince been brought low, oppreſſed, devoured, and reviled by the antichriſtian foe, pagan and papal, that all the promiſes to appearance ſeemed to fail: but as in the loweſt ſtate of the Saviour's humiliation the covenant ſtood faſt, and by his death his conqueſts were obtained; ſo when the ſufferings of his people are greateſt; their enemies moſt ſecure and joyous; the ſword of the Spirit, as they fear, blunted; and themſelves ready, as they apprehend, to be utterly conſumed; their fears will be be proved groundleſs, and their troubles only heighten their triumphs.

2. A very pathetical expoſtulation with God,

(1.) On the continuance and ſeverity of the trial. *How long wilt thou hide thyſelf for ever? and ſhall thy wrath burn like fire?* which may be the words of Chriſt, under his ſufferings; or of his church, to whom the withdrawing of the ſenſible tokens of his favour is very grievous, and his wrath apprehended the bittereſt affliction. *Note*, (1.) A ſoul who hath ever taſted God's love, cannot but dread the thoughts of his diſpleaſure. (2.) The torments of the damned ariſe from this eternal and fiery wrath of God.

(2.) On the ſhortneſs of life, and the certainty of death, *v.* 47, 48. *Remember how ſhort my time is*; but a moment, and therefore let it not wholly be conſumed in miſery. *Wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain?* as they would be, if the anointed

Meſſiah were left under the power of his enemies; of death particularly, for no redemption then could be hoped for by any of his people. *What man is he*, however mighty, *that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death? ſhall he deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave?* No: death is the ſure portion of man; and therefore, if after death the everlaſting covenant did not ſtand faſt, we, who have believed, ſhould be of all men moſt miſerable. But, bleſſed be God, Chriſt is riſen from the dead, and is become the firſt fruits of thoſe that ſlept. *Note*, (1.) It is a truth deſerving our conſtant remembrance, how ſhort, how uncertain, our days are here below. (2.) If we would not have lived in vain, it muſt be our care, through Jeſus the reſurrection and the life, to live to God's glory here, that we may live with God in glory for ever.

(3.) On his former loving-kindneſſes. *Lord, where are thy former loving-kindneſſes*, the promiſes of the everlaſting covenant, including every ſpiritual bleſſing, *which thou ſwareſt unto David in thy truth?* confirmed to Chriſt by the truth and oath of Jehovah, and therefore cannot fail. However his death may have ſhaken the confidence of his people, his reſurrection ſhall confirm all the promiſes. *Note*, They who plead the covenanted mercies of David, are ſure not to be diſappointed; for faithful is he that hath promiſed.

(4.) On their enemies' reproaches and triumphs. The Scribes and Phariſees having crucified the maſter, reviled his ſervants. They reproached him as a ſabbath-breaker, as in connection with Satan, as executed among the vileſt criminals, and mocked at them for placing any dependance on a crucified man, *v.* 50, 51. And thus the mighty people of this world are in general ſcoffers ſtill; neither hath the offence of the croſs ceaſed. They who will be Chriſt's diſciples, muſt ſtill go to him without the camp, bearing their reproach.

3. The pſalmiſt, in the perſon of all God's people, concludes with a triumphant benediction, as an anſwer to all their own fears, and their enemies' reproaches, *Bleſſed be the Lord for ever more!* Jeſus is riſen from the dead; the covenant ſtands faſt; we are begotten to a new and lively hope; and, ſince he now for ever lives to make interceſſion for us, we know our work ſhall ſhortly be everlaſting praiſe, when he ſhall perfect in us the redemption he hath obtained for us; and therefore every faithful ſoul cannot but join the pſalmiſt in his faith and hope, and cry, *Amen and Amen.*

PSALM XC.

This is the moſt ancient of all the pſalms. It was compoſed by Moſes, on occaſion, as it ſhould ſeem, of the rebellion of Iſrael, Numb. xiv. *for which they were cut off in the wilderneſs, and the days of their life ſhortned. In it*, 1. *Moſes comforts himſelf and his people with the eternity of God, and their intereſt in him*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He humbles himſelf and his people with the conſideration of the frailty of man*, ver. 3—6. 3. *He ſubmits himſelf and his people to the righteous ſentence of God paſſed upon them*, ver. 7—11. 4. *He commits himſelf and his people to God by prayer, for divine mercy and grace, and the return of God's favour*, ver. 12—17. *Though it ſeems to have been penned upon this particular occaſion, yet it is very applicable to the frailty of human life in general, and we may eaſily apply it to the years of our paſſage through the wilderneſs of this world, and it furniſheth us with meditations and prayers very ſuitable to the ſolemnity of a funeral.*

¶ A prayer of Moſes, [a] the man of God.

[a] Deut. xxxiii. 1.

1. LORD, [b] thou haſt been our dwelling-place in all generations. 2. [c] Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadſt formed the earth and the world: even from everlaſting to everlaſting, thou *art* God. 3. Thou turneſt man to deſtruction: and ſayeſt, [d] Return, ye children of men. 4. For [e] a thouſand years in thy ſight *are but* as yeſterday, when it is paſt, and *as* a watch in the night. 5. Thou carrieſt them away as with a flood, [f] they are *as* a ſleep: in the morning [g] *they are* like graſs *which* † groweth up. 6. [h] In the morning it flouriſheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

[b] Ibid. xxxiii. 27. Ezek. xi. 16.
[c] Prov. viii. 25.
[d] Gen. iii. 19. Eccleſ. xii. 7.
[e] Eccleſ. xviii. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 8.
[f] Pſ. lxxiii. 20.
[g] Ibid. ciii. 15. Iſa. xl. 6.
† Or, is changed.
[h] Pſ. xcii. 7.

v. 1—6. This pſalm is entitled, *A prayer of Moſes the man of God*, eminently raiſed up by him, and faithful to the truſt committed to him. It opens,

1. With an acknowledgment of God's goodneſs to his people. *Lord, thou haſt been our dwelling-place in all generations.* From the days that Abraham firſt at his command left his native land, God had provided for him and his ſeed, and made them to dwell in ſafety. Chriſt our Lord is every believer's reſt: in him by faith we dwell; ſafe under the covert of the wings of his love we abide, protected from every ſtorm, and enduring to all generations; for none ever periſh, whom he will preſerve.

2. He adores God as the everlaſting Jehovah, *v.* 2. the conſideration of whoſe eternity and unchangeableneſs adminiſters the greateſt conſolation to his people; for whatever we meet with of diſappointment or miſery in this tranſitory and periſhing world, we have in him an ever-living God, a never-failing portion; the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.

3. He aſcribes to him the univerſal ſovereignty. *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction*, or *until he is broken*, by ſickneſs, diſeaſe, and age; and till at laſt his body corrupts in the grave; *and ſayeſt, Return, ye children of men*, either to the duſt of death, or from going down to the pit, by reſtoring man to health again; or, as calling them under his afflicting hand to repent, and return to him; or finally at the reſurrection-day, by his mighty word collecting the ſcattered duſt, and reuniting again the bodies and ſouls of men.

4. He owns the diſproportion between the eternal God and the longeſt-lived of all the ſons of men. *For a thouſand years in thy ſight are but as yeſterday, when it is paſt, and as a watch in the night.* All compariſon fails between finite and infinite, between time and eternity: to God's exiſtence, a thouſand years and one day bear juſt the ſame proportion, and all the events of time are equally preſent with him; ſo that reſpecting the coming of Chriſt, and the reſurrection of the body, the length of time they may be deferred, is not the leaſt objection to either, 2 *Pet.* iii. 4—8.

5. He deſcribes the frailty of man even in his beſt eſtate; *Thou carrieſt them away with a flood*, ſwiftly, ſuddenly, irreſiſtably, as in the deluge, *they are as a ſleep*, their life inſenſibly ſpent, and at beſt to the ſinner but a pleaſing dream, which at death vaniſhes: *in the morning they are like graſs which groweth up. In the morning* of youth *it flouriſheth, and groweth up*; beauty, vigour, wealth, proſperity make them appear like the verdant field, but momentary is the joy: *in the evening it is cut down and withereth*, the beauty fades, the ſtrength fails, the poſſeſſions vaniſh; when death, the mower, puts in the ſickle, and under diſeaſe, or age, the enfeebled body bends to the tomb. *Note*, (1.) The vanity of earthly enjoyments, and the folly of ſeeking happineſs in things ſo fleeting and unſatisfactory. Shall we exchange an eternity of bleſſedneſs for the pleaſures of a dream? (2.) They who look often in their glaſs, ſhould look oftner into their coffin; this will check the pride of beauty. (3.) If our hour is ſo ſhort, it becomes us to improve it as it flies, and not dream our life away, leaſt death awaken us at laſt in terrible ſurprize, inſtead of finding us watching, and prepared for his ſummons.

7. For we are conſumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. 8. [i] Thou haſt ſet our iniquities before thee, [k] our ſecret *ſins* [l] in the light of thy countenance. 9. For all our days are paſſed away in thy wrath: [m] we ſpend our years as a † tale *that is told.* 10. The days of our years *are* threeſcore years and ten; and if by reaſon of ſtrength *they be* fourſcore years, yet *is* their ſtrength labour and ſorrow: for it is ſoon cut off, and we flee away. 11. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *ſo is* thy wrath.

[i] Ibid. l. 21.
[k] Ibid. xix. 12.
[l] Jer. xvi. 17.
[m] Pſ. xxxix. 5.
† Or word, or meditation.

v. 7—11. The Iſraelites for their rebellion being appointed to die in the wilderneſs, are here taught to humble their ſouls under the righteous ſentence of God pronounced upon them.

1. They acknowledge God's hand in their miſeries. *For we are conſumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled*; death is the wages of ſin, and however reſpecting the ſaints of God, through the Redeemer, this ſting is taken away; yet when coming upon ſinners in wrath, it appears of all terribles the moſt terrible, and even to the people of God, through their unfaithfulneſs, brings ſometimes fear and diſmay. They will be able to meet it with the greateſt confidence, who have moſt ſurely embraced him by faith, who is the reſurrection and the life.

2. They confeſs their ſins which had provoked God's diſpleaſure; *thou haſt ſet our ſins before thee*, our open tranſgreſſions, nor are our boſom iniquities hid, *our ſecret ſins in the light of thy countenance*, laid naked and open, and as well as outward actions rendering us guilty. *Note*, (1.) Our ſins are all recorded before God; nor doth a vain or fooliſh thought paſs through our minds unnoticed. (2.) They who confeſs their iniquities, deſire to unveil their inmoſt ſoul to God, and fly to the ſinner's refuge, will find all cancelled, forgiven, and forgotten, and ſhall be made glad with the light of God's countenance.

3. They expected no reverſion of the divine ſentence. *For all our days are paſſed away in thy wrath*, they had begun, and muſt continue to wander in the wilderneſs, under the evident tokens of divine diſpleaſure, till all the men of that generation, except Caleb and Joſhua, were conſumed. And this is the caſe alſo of wicked men; yea, of man in general, burdened now with all the various ills that fleſh is heir to. *We ſpend our years as a tale that is told*, or *a meditation*, or *a word*, expreſſive of the vanity and ſhortneſs of their life; ſuch were the years which Iſrael ſpent in their wanderings, and we may well apply the ſimilitude. As a tale, compoſed of various incidents, pleaſing and

afflictive, ſuch is our life; and often ſpent as vainly as in telling idle ſtories; fleeting as the word which iſſues from our lips, and our miſpent time as irrecoverable.

4. They mention the bounds ſet to their mortal days, *v.* 10. Though thoſe of their fathers had much exceeded, theirs is limited to threeſcore years and ten; and if a few reached fourſcore, it would be weariſome, and rather a burden than a bleſſing. And ever ſince this hath been counted the age of man, which far the greater number never reach, and few exceed; and if here and there one hoary head is found ſurviving the wintry blaſts of fourſcore years, it is but a kind of dying life, the whole extent of their days hath been full of trouble, and thoſe of old age peculiarly burdened with infirmities quickly to be cut off, and vaniſhing as the ſhadow. *Note,* (1.) The aged, who defer the thoughts of dying, are peculiarly inexcuſable. (2.) Leave this earth we ſhortly muſt, happy they who then fly away to the boſom of Jeſus.

5. They tremble at the wrath they have deſerved. *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* expreſſed in all his judgments on earth, or in hell: the fallen angels and damned ſouls know and feel it; but how imperfect are our apprehenſions, and who amongſt us conſiders it as it deſerves? *even according to thy fear, ſo is thy wrath*; in other caſes our fears may exceed our danger, but our deepeſt fears of the wrath of God not only do not exceed, but come unſpeakably ſhort of the reality. *Note,* The conſideration of God's intolerable wrath will be a profitable ſubject for our meditations, both to quicken our watchfulneſs againſt ſin, and to excite the greater thankfulneſs for our deliverance from it.

12. [n] So teach *us* to number our days, that we may † apply *our* hearts unto wiſdom. 13. Return, O LORD, how long? and [o] let it repent thee concerning thy ſervants. 14. O ſatisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. 15. Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou haſt afflicted us; *and* the years *wherein* we have ſeen evil. 16. [p] Let thy work appear unto thy ſervants, and thy glory unto their children. 17. And [q] let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and eſtabliſh thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands eſtabliſh thou it.

[n] Pſ. xxxix. 11.
† Heb. Cauſe to come.
[o] Deut. xxxii. 36.
[p] Pſ. lxxxv. 6. Hab. iii. 2.
[q] Pſ. xxvii. 4.

v. 12—17. The man of God having in the name of his people confeſſed their ſin, puts up his prayer,

1. For wiſdom to improve under their afflictions. *So teach us to number our days*, to conſider their brevity, uncertainty, and ſinfulneſs, *that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom*, to redeem the time, prepare for our great change, and by the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, become wiſe unto ſalvation. *Note,* (1.) The great buſineſs of life is to get ready for death. (2.) It is a vain curioſity to be ſolicitous to know the preciſe period of our days, but a neceſſary enquiry what will become of us when we go hence and are no more ſeen. (3.) The concerns of our ſouls and eternity deſerve the moſt ſerious and attentive application. (4.) As all true wiſdom can only come from above, we muſt be ceaſeleſs in prayer, ſeeking it from God.

2. For pardon and mercy. *Return, O Lord,* with ſome tokens of thy regard: *How long* ſhall we ſuffer and be thus afflicted, without help or redreſs? *and let it repent thee concerning thy ſervants,* implying not a change of his mind, for that never happens, but of his method of dealing with them; or *comfort thy ſervants,* by removing from them his chaſtiſing hand, and reſtoring them to the comforts of his ſalvation. *O ſatisfy us early with thy mercy,* merit they diſclaim, and caſt themſelves on ſovereign grace, and urge it may quickly be extended to them, and abundantly, that their ſouls may receive ſatisfaction therein, *that we may rejoice and be glad all our days* in the favour and love of God; and this joy proportioned to their former ſorrows, *Make us glad according to the days thou haſt afflicted us, and the years wherein we have ſeen evil.* *Note,* (1.) Every moment a child of God apprehends his diſpleaſure appears an age, ſo grievous it is to him, and importunately he ſeeks its removal. (2.) They who cry for mercy, will find a God who will hear them, eſpecially thoſe who early in the morning of their days ſeek to him. (3.) The ſoul that hath truly taſted of the bitterneſs of ſin, can never be ſatisfied, till the Lord return in pardoning mercy, and ſpeak peace to the conſcience. (4.) They who ſee God as their reconciled God, rejoice in him all their days, at leaſt it is their privilege to do ſo. (5.) A chriſtian's experience is uſually chequered, ſometimes afflictions draw forth his tears, then conſolations make glad his heart; both he receives as coming from God's hand, and with thankfulneſs acknowledges the rod of correction as needful as the cup of joy is delightful.

3. For the progreſs and accompliſhment of God's work among them. *Let thy work appear unto thy ſervants,* the work of his providence in their protection in the wilderneſs, *and thy glory unto their children,* who ſhould be brought to the promiſed land of Canaan; or more generally it may be conſidered as their prayer for the coming of the Meſſiah, the great ſalvation he ſhould obtain, the powerful operations of his grace upon their hearts, and herein for the manifeſtation of his glory to their lateſt poſterity; *and let the beauty of our God be upon us,* or *with us,* either Chriſt himſelf, or his preſence in their aſſemblies, or his grace renewing their hearts in the beauty of holineſs: *And eſtabliſh thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands eſtabliſh thou it,* from God alone all power being derived to work and walk aright. *Note,* (1.) Till God work in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure, we can neither think or do any thing truly pleaſing to him. Our ſanctification is as much his act, as our juſtification. (2.) God is magnified in his grace beſtowed upon ſinners, whoſe fruits of righteouſneſs are by Jeſus Chriſt to the praiſe and glory of God. (3.) They who are moſt deeply ſenſible of their want of divine ſtrength, and ſeek to God for his Spirit, will be ever moſt ſteadfaſt, immoveable, and abounding in the work of the Lord.

PSALM XCI.

This pſalm, though without a title, is generally aſcribed to David, and is ſuppoſed to be written at the time of the peſtilence, 2 Sam. xxiv. *Obſerve,* 1. *The Pſalmiſt's own reſolution to take God for his keeper,* ver. 2. *from which he gives both direction and encouragement to others,* ver. 9. 2. *The promiſes which are here made in God's name to all thoſe that do ſo in ſincerity.* (1.) *They ſhall be taken under the peculiar care of heaven,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *They ſhall be delivered from the malice of the powers of darkneſs,* ver. 3—5, 6. *and that by a diſtinguiſhing preſervation,* ver. 7, 8. (3.) *They ſhall be the charge of the holy angels,* ver. 10, 11. (4.) *They ſhall triumph over their enemies,* ver. 13. (5.) *They ſhall be the ſpecial favourites of God himſelf,* ver. 14—16. *Many think, that to Chriſt, as mediator, theſe promiſes do primarily belong,* (Iſa. xlix. 2.) *not becauſe to him the devil applied one of theſe promiſes,* Mat. iv. 6. *but becauſe to him they were applicable, and coming through him, they are more ſweet and ſure to all believers.*

1. [a] HE that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High, ſhall † abide under [b] the ſhadow of the Almighty. 2. I will ſay of the LORD, [c] *He is* my refuge, and my fortreſs; my God, in him will I truſt. 3. Surely [d] he will deliver thee from the ſnare of the fowler: *and* from the noiſome peſtilence. 4. [e] He ſhall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings ſhalt thou truſt: his truth *ſhall be thy* ſhield and buckler. 5. [f] Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the terror by night: *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day: 6. *Nor* for the peſtilence *that* walketh in darkneſs: *nor* for the deſtruction *that* waſteth at noon-day. 7. A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand: [g] *but* it ſhall not come nigh thee. 8. Only [h] with thine eyes ſhalt thou behold, and ſee the reward of the wicked.

[a] Pſ. xxvii. 5. & xxxi. 20. & xxxii. 7.
† Heb. Lodge.
[b] Pſ. xvii. 8.
[c] Ibid. xviii. 2. & cxlii 5.
[d] Pſ. cxxiv. 7.
[e] Ibid. xvii. 8. & lvii. 1. & lxi. 4. Mat. xxiii. 37.
[f] Job v. 19, &c. Prov. iii. 25. Iſa. xliii. 2.
[g] Pſ. xxxii. 6.
[h] Ibid. xxxvii. 34.

v. 1—8. The ſcripture abounds with great and precious promiſes, and God's people who come to theſe ſacred fountains, may ever draw waters of comfort.

1. The Pſalmiſt deſcribes the ſafety and conſolation of the gracious ſoul. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High,* delights in his worſhip, and ſeeks repoſe for his ſoul in the boſom of his grace, *ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty,* ſheltered from every danger by Almighty power, comforted with a ſenſe of everlaſting love.

2. He profeſſes his purpoſe to fly to this bleſt hiding-place. *I will ſay of, or to the Lord, He is my refuge* in every time of danger, *my fortreſs,* impregnable to the aſſaults of every enemy, ſpiritual or temporal, *my God,* in whoſe regard, by faith, I claim a ſure intereſt, *in him will I truſt,* confident of his never-failing protection, and expecting all felicity from his power, grace, and faithfulneſs, according to his promiſes. *Note,* They who make God their only truſt, will never be diſappointed of their hope.

3. He inſtances a great variety of particulars, wherein God's care of his people would appear. *Surely he will deliver thee* from every evil and danger, temporal or ſpiritual.

(1.) *From the ſnare of the fowler, and from the noiſome peſtilence,* either literally, from thoſe who lie in wait to deſtroy our bodies, and from the peſtilential diſeaſes which endanger our lives, or from the ſnares and temptations which Satan lays for our ſouls; from that moſt peſtilential of all diſeaſes, ſin, and that worſt of plagues, the plague of our own hearts. *Note,* (1.) How often may every man reflect on ſeaſons of danger, when he owed the preſervation of his life purely to the divine providence? (2.) If God hath once given ſpiritual life to our ſouls, he will preſerve them, that they ſhall never periſh.

(2.) *He ſhall cover thee with his feathers,* expreſſive of God's tender regard toward his people, as a hen covereth her chickens calling them when danger threatens, protecting and cheriſhing them under her wings, *v.* 1. *His faithfulneſs and truth,* whereon the believer's confidence is placed, *ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler*; his promiſes engaged for him, his power almighty to defend him. *Note*, Though we are weak and helpleſs, our God is able to ſave to the uttermoſt; bleſſed and happy are they whom he covers with his wings and ſhield.

(3.) No fear ſhall diſmay. *Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the terror by night*, from fire, ſtorm, robbers, or ſpirits of darkneſs, who would in frightful dreams diſturb the mind, or inject diſtruſtful fears of God's care and protection: *nor for the arrow that flieth by day*; the ſudden and unexpected judgments of God: *nor for the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs*, when the dead are carried forth to their graves; or, as ariſing from hidden cauſes, and ſtalking terrible through the land: *nor for the deſtruction that waſteth at noon*, when the heat cauſeth the peſtilential vapour to be more fatal; or reſpect may be had to that ſuffocating wind, which, in ſome eaſtern countries, kills thoſe who are expoſed to it: none of theſe ſhall terrify the faithful, God can preſerve him from death, or make him triumphant over it, ſo that he ſhall never know that fear which hath torment. *Note*, (1.) If we lie down in peace, and ſleep undiſturbed, if we awake refreſhed, and paſs the day in ſafety amidſt the unnumbered dangers which ſurround our path, God's hand is to be thankfully acknowledged. (2.) No arrow of death flies but God directs it unerring to the mark. (3.) Faith in God delivers from terrifying fear, and even death, to the believer, hath loſt its ſting.

(4.) In general deſolations the faithful ſhall be ſafe. *A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand*, ſuch dreadful havock doth the plague often make, as David had ſeen, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. *but it ſhall not come nigh thee*; either a particular providence ſhall guard their houſes, as when the deſtroying angel paſſed through Egypt; or at leaſt they ſhall not be hurt by it if they fall, for to them death is gain. *Only with thine eye ſhalt thou behold, and ſee the reward of the wicked*, in whoſe deſtruction God is glorified, and in his righteous judgments they rejoice and adore him.

9. Becauſe thou haſt made the LORD *which is* my refuge, *even* the moſt High, [i] thy habitation: 10. [k] There ſhall no evil befal thee, neither ſhall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. 11. For [l] he ſhall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee [m] in all thy ways. 12. They ſhall bear thee up in *their* hands, [n] leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone. 13. Thou ſhalt tread upon [o] the lion [p] and adder: the young lion and the dragon ſhalt thou trample under foot. 14. Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him: I will [q] ſet him on high, becauſe he hath known my name. 15. [r] He ſhall call upon me, and I will anſwer him: [s] I *will be* with him in trouble, I will deliver him, [t] and honour him. 16. With † long life will I ſatisfy him, and ſhew him my ſalvation.

i Pſ. xc. 1.
k Prov. xii. 21.
l Pſ. xxxiv. 7. Mat. iv. 6. Luke iv. 10. Heb. i. 14.
m 2 Chron. xv. 2.
n Job v. 23. Pſ. xxxvii. 24.
o Dan. vi. 22. or 1Pet. v. 8.
p Mark xvi. 18.
q Iſa. xxxiii. 16.
r Pſ. l. 15.
s Iſa. xliii. 2.
t 1 Sam. ii. 30.
† Heb. Length of days.

v. 9—16. We have here many farther rich promiſes of God declared, and the character of his people deſcribed, to whom they are ſure.

1. Their character. [1.] They make the Lord their *refuge*, truſting in him in every time of trial. [2.] The moſt High is their *habitation*, where their ſoul finds ſweet repoſe, and a comfortable proviſion of all good things, *v.* 9. The words may be rendered, *Becauſe thou, Lord, art my refuge, thou haſt made the moſt High thy habitation*; and thus they contain an apoſtrophe of the Pſalmiſt to his own ſoul, intimating the ground of his ſafety and confidence. [3.] *They ſet their love on God*, he is the grand object of it, and reigns in their hearts without a rival. [4.] They *know his name*; are acquainted with his word, where he hath made the moſt glorious diſplays of his perfections, and with his Son the brightneſs of his glory, by whom alone the Father can be truly known, *Mat.* xi. 27. [5.] They *call* upon him in ceaſeleſs prayer for the relief of all their wants, and teſtify their continual dependance on his protection and care. Reader, is this thy character? then bleſſed art thou. For,

2. Great are the promiſſed bleſſings which the Pſalmiſt, in God's name, yea, which God himſelf, pronounces on all ſuch.

(1.) *No evil ſhall befal thee, nor any plague come nigh thy dwelling*; either God will, by a diſtinguiſhing act of his providence, protect them, or whatever trouble comes it ſhall be ſanctified, in the iſſue produce their greateſt good, and prove a real bleſſing in diſguiſe.

(2.) Angelic guards ſhall attend their ſteps; they miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation, and from every unforeſeen danger preſerve and protect them with the moſt condeſcending tenderneſs and mighty power, *v.* 11, 12. Satan applied this paſſage to Chriſt, but with the omiſſion of a material clauſe: *they ſhall keep thee in all thy ways*, into which by Divine providence thou art led, or by the Divine word directed; for out of the path of duty we may not expect the way of ſafety.

(3.) The powers of darkneſs ſhall be ſubdued under them. *Thou ſhalt tread upon the lion and adder*; literally, theſe noxious animals being reſtrained from hurting; or, figuratively, wicked men and wicked devils, for power and ſubtilty, compared to theſe, ſhall be trodden down: *the young lion and dragon ſhalt thou trample under foot*, even Satan, whoſe head ſhall ſhortly be bruiſed under the feet of God's redeemed people.

(4.) God himſelf promiſes, *in trouble to be with them, and out of trouble to deliver them*, *v.* 15. Trouble we may expect; it is the lot of God's people; but his preſence, and a ſenſe of his love, over-balances every affliction, and living and dying he will deliver us, either from our trials, by giving us ſtrength to ſupport and overcome them, or by diſcharging us from the warfare, and admitting us to his eternal reſt.

(5.) He will hear all their prayers, and give them anſwers of peace, *v.* 15. He gives the ſpirit of ſupplication, then grants the requeſts his grace enables us to preſent before him, for the prayer of faith never returned empty.

(6.) He engages to ſet them *on high*, *v.* 14. on the rock Chriſt, againſt which all ſtorms and tempeſts rage in vain, and from whence they can look down on all the impotent malice of their foes; and to *honour* them, not only with the title of his ſons and daughters, with the robe of a Redeemer's righteouſneſs, and the graces of his ſpirit here below, but with an inheritance eternal in the heavens, and with a throne of glory everlaſting.

(7.) *With length of days will I ſatisfy him*; they ſhall live here as long as they deſire to live, and God has work for them to do, *and ſhew him my ſalvation*; the fulneſs of it above, when all the unutterable bleſſedneſs, which the Lord Jeſus hath purchaſed, ſhall fully, freely, and eternally be beſtowed on the faithful ſoul, and he ſhall be for ever ſatiſfied with it.

PSALM XCII.

It is probable this pſalm was penned by David. It is calculated for the ſabbath-day, 1. *Praiſe, the buſineſs of the ſabbath, is here recommended*, ver. 1—3. 2. *God's works, which gave occaſion for the ſabbath, are here celebrated as great and unſearchable*, ver. 4—6. 3. *God's enemies ſhall be cut off, but David ſhall be exalted*, ver. 9, 10. 4. *David's enemies ſhall be confounded*, ver. 11. *but all the righteous ſhall be fruitful and flouriſhing*, ver. 12—15.

¶ A pſalm or ſong for the ſabbath-day.

1. [a] IT *is a* good *thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to ſing praiſes unto thy name, O moſt High: 2. To ſhew forth thy loving-kindneſs [b] in the morning, and thy faithfulneſs [b] every night; 3. Upon an inſtrument of ten ſtrings, and upon the pſaltery; upon the harp with † a ſolemn ſound. 4. For thou, LORD, haſt made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hand. 5. [c] O LORD, how great are thy works! *and* [d] thy thoughts are very deep. 6. [e] A brutiſh man knoweth not: neither doth a fool underſtand this.

a Pſ. cxlvii. 1.
bb Pſ. lv. 17.
† Heb. Higgaion.
c Pſ. xl. 5. & cxxxix. 17.
d Iſa. xxviii. 29. Rom. xi. 33.
e Pſ. xciv. 8. Iſa. i. 3.

v. 1—6. This pſalm is entitled, A ſong for the ſabbath; praiſe being the moſt becoming work of that holy-day If, as ſome ſuppoſe, it refers to the eternal reſt that remaineth for the people of God, under the reign of the Meſſiah, *Heb.* iv. 9. we know our happy labour then will be everlaſting praiſe.

1. The pſalmiſt encourages us to join heartly in the ſacred ſong. *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to ſing praiſes unto thy name, O moſt High*; it is both our duty and privilege, the tribute of gratitude we owe, and the preparation for the ſervice of heaven; and abundant matter we have for the bleſſed ſervice, *to ſhew forth thy loving-kindneſs in the morning*, the various inſtances of it we have experienced in providential care, and eſpecially in the ſpiritual bleſſings obtained by Chriſt Jeſus, *and thy faithfulneſs every night*; not merely confining our grateful acknowledgment to one day, but day and night continually, as moſt bounden, aſcribing to God the glory due unto his name, whoſe mercy and truth never fail, *upon an inſtrument of ten ſtrings, and upon the pſaltery*; *upon the harp with a ſolemn ſound*. *Note*, (1.) Whatever our engagements may be, we are bound at leaſt to begin and end each day with prayer and praiſe. (2.) They who have themſelves a deep experience of the Divine love and faithfulneſs, will delight to be telling of his ſalvation from day to day.

2. He ſets before us his own example for our imitation. *Thou, Lord, haſt made me glad through thy work*; the work of creation and providence, or rather of redemption and grace by Jeſus Chriſt: an experimental knowledge of which is matter of the moſt enlivened joy: *I will triumph in the works of thy hands*, confident of the completion of that ſalvation God hath begun. *O how great are thy works!* when we contemplate the works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace, we are loſt in admiration, and can only wonder and adore; *and thy thoughts are very deep*, unfathomable by the ſhallow line of hu-

man reaſon, and above our conception as the heaven is higher than the earth. *Iſa.* lv. 9.

3. They who diſregard the works of God, and neglect to praiſe him, are brutiſh and wicked. *A brutiſh man knoweth not: neither doth a fool underſtand this*; by the indulgence of their appetites they degrade themſelves into beaſts, and brutiſh in their knowledge, looking no higher than the earth, nor farther than the grave, they leave God far above out of their ſight, inſenſible all his mercies, and negligent of his ſervice.

7. When [f] the wicked ſpring as the graſs, and when all the workers of iniquity do flouriſh: *it is* that [g] they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever. 8. But [h] thou, LORD, *art moſt* high for evermore. 9. For lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for lo, thine enemies ſhall periſh: [i] all the workers of iniquity ſhall be ſcattered. 10. But [k] my horn ſhalt thou exalt like *the horn of* an unicorn: [l] I ſhall be anointed with freſh oil. 11. [m] Mine eye alſo ſhall ſee *my deſire* on mine enemies: *and* mine ears ſhall hear *my deſire* of the wicked that riſe up againſt me. 12. [n] The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the palm-tree: he ſhall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13. Thoſe that be [o] planted in the houſe of the LORD, [p] ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God. 14. They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age: they ſhall be fat and † flouriſhing: 15. To ſhew that the LORD *is* upright: [q] *he is* my rock, and [r] *there is* no unrighteouſneſs in him.

[f] Job xii. 6. & xxi. 7. Jer. xii. 1, 2.
[g] Pſ. xxxvii. 2.
[h] Ex. xviii. 11. Pſ. lvi. 2.
[i] Pſ. lxviii. 1.
[k] Ibid. lxxv. 10. & lxxxix. 17, 24.
[l] Ibid. xxiii. 5.
[m] Ibid. liv. 7. & lix. 10. & xci. 8. & cxii. 8.
[n] Cant. vii. 7. Iſa. lxv. 22. Hoſ. xiv. 5, 6.
[o] Rom. vi. 5. & xi. 17.
[p] Pſ. i. 3.
† Heb. Green.
[q] Deut. xxxii. 4.
[r] Rom. ix. 14.

v. 7—15. The pſalmiſt triumphs over his enemies, and in God's love and favour to him, and all his faithful ones.

1. He expects to ſee the ruin of the wicked, however proſperous and proud. *When the wicked ſpring up as the graſs*, ſo numerous and vigorous, *and when all the workers of iniquity do flouriſh*, in health, wealth, power, and every earthly poſſeſſion, *it is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever*: their proſperity becomes their ruin, and they are only fattened for the ſlaughter. *But thou, Lord, art moſt high for evermore*, reigning over all, abaſing the proud, and ever living to inflict on them their deſerved puniſhment. *For lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for lo, thine enemies ſhall periſh*; for ſuch are all the workers of wickedneſs, who daringly oppoſe the moſt high, reject his government, and rebel againſt his crown and dignity; but vain their impotent malice, they muſt periſh under his eternal wrath; *and all the workers of iniquity ſhall be ſcattered*, their ſchemes fruſtrated, their combinations broken, their ruin irrecoverable and everlaſting, when God ſhall ſay unto them, *Depart accurſed*, &c. *But my horn ſhalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn*, eſtabliſhing his royal authority, and exalting his throne on high. This may be applied to the Meſſiah, who is the horn of ſalvation, raiſed up from the houſe of David, *Luke* i. 69. And thus alſo will all the ſaints of God be at the laſt day ſet above their enemies. *I ſhall be anointed with freſh oil*; every attack of his foes ſhould only ſerve to bring renewed ſupplies of grace, ſtrength, and divine conſolations into his ſoul. *Mine eyes alſo ſhall ſee my deſire on mine enemies: and mine ears ſhall hear my deſire of the wicked who riſe up againſt me*, whoſe power to hurt ſhould be broken, and God glorified in their puniſhment, which he could not but deſire and rejoice in. *Note*, (1.) All the enemies of Chriſt and his people rage in vain; they who will not ſubmit to his government muſt periſh together and for ever under his vengeance. (2.) Though we may not wiſh evil to our bittereſt enemies through any private revenge, we cannot but deſire to ſee the power of the wicked reſtrained, and God's glory manifeſted in his righteous judgments.

2. He expects to ſee the exaltation of the ſaints of God, however now depreſſed and low. *The righteous ſhall flouriſh as a palm-tree*; whatever burdens are laid on him, he ſhall not only be enabled to ſupport them, but proſper in his ſoul under the load. *Creſcit ſub pondere virtus.* *He ſhall grow like a cedar in Lebanon*, ſtrong and high, reaching to the heavens, unmoved by ſtormy blaſts, and incorruptible. Such is the believer, going from ſtrength to ſtrength, having his affections ſet on heaven and heavenly things, rooted on Chirſt, never to be moved, and more durable than the cedar, even poſſeſſed of life eternal. *Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord*, removed from the wilderneſs of the world, grafted into Chriſt, and thus tranſplanted into his church, where they partake of the heavenly dew of Divine benediction, and in the word and ordinances are watered day by day, theſe *ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God*, being full of ſap, derived from Chriſt the living root; adorning the doctrine of God the Saviour in all things, and continuing, not merely for a while, as the graſs to which the wicked are compared, but to eternity; their leaf ſhall never wither, nor their fruit fail; for *they ſhall bring forth fruit in old age*, grace being often moſt vigorous and fruitful when nature's ſtrength decays: *they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing*, not withered or decayed by time, as other trees, but partaking of the fatneſs of the root, *Rom.* xi. 17. walking in the moſt enlivened exerciſe of Divine grace, and abounding in every good work. *To ſhew that the Lord is upright*, faithful to all his promiſes, carrying his people on to hoary hairs, and never leaving or forſaking them till he hath brought them to his eternal glory: *he is my rock*, firm and ſtable; ſuch the pſalmiſt had by experience proved him to be, and ſo will every ſoul that truly truſts upon him; *and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him*; he never raiſes expectations to diſappointment them, what he promiſes he fully performs; he never leaves nor forſakes his people, nor fails to puniſh the workers of iniquity, *for juſt and right is he*.

PSALM XCIII.

The Meſſiah and his kingdom are the ſubject of this pſalm, which ſpeaks comfort to his loving ſubjects, and terror to his inveterate enemies. Of this kingdom glorious things are here ſpoken. 1. *Have other kings their royal robes? ſo has he*, ver. 1. 2. *Have they their throne? ſo has he*, ver. 2. 3. *Have they their enemies whom they ſubdue and triumph over? ſo has he*, ver. 3, 4. 4. *Is it their honour to be faithful and holy? ſo it is his*, ver. 5.

1. [a] THE LORD reigneth, [b] he is clothed with majeſty, the LORD is clothed with ſtrength [c] *wherewith* he hath girded himſelf: [d] the world alſo is ſtabliſhed, that it cannot be moved. 2. [e] Thy throne *is* eſtabliſhed of old: thou *art* from everlaſting. 3. The floods have lifted up, O LORD, [f] the floods have lifted up their voice: the floods lift up their waves. 4. The LORD on high *is* mightier than the noiſe of many waters, *yea, than* the mighty waves of the ſea. 5. Thy teſtimonies are very ſure: [g] holineſs becometh thine houſe O LORD, † for ever.

[a] Pſ. xcvi. 10. & xcvii. 1. & xcix. 1. Iſa. lii. 7. Rev. xi. 15.
[b] Pſ. civ. 1.
[c] Ibid. lxv. 6.
[d] Ibid. xcvi. 10.
[e] Ibid. xlv. 6. Prov. viii. 22, &c.
[f] Pſ. lxv. 7.
[g] Zech. xiv. 20.
† Heb. To length of days.

v. 1—5. The ſovereign dominion, the glorious and eternal kingdom of Jeſus, Jehovah, God over all, bleſſed for ever, is a ſubject of pleaſing meditation to the faithful ſoul.

1. He reigns in majeſty and power. *The Lord reigneth*; all power in heaven and earth is given to the Lord Chriſt, his kingdom of grace is ſet up in the hearts of his people, and his throne in glory is prepared, when he ſhall reign over them for ever and ever; *he is clothed with majeſty*, compared with which all the glory of earthly monarchs vaniſhes as the light of the glow-worm before the meridian ſun; *the Lord is clothed with ſtrength wherewith he hath girded himſelf*, needing no ſupport but from his own Almighty arm, doing whatſoever pleaſeth him among the hoſts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, and able to bear down all oppoſition that can be raiſed againſt his kingdom and people in an inſtant: *the world alſo is ſtabliſhed, that it cannot be moved*; he upholdeth all things which he created, and eſpecially his church and the goſpel diſpenſation, called, *The world to come*, Heb. xi. 5. which, however diſturbed and diſtreſſed, the powers of darkneſs never can prevail againſt, for it is eſtabliſhed for ever. *Note*, (1.) The more we look to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, clothed with majeſty and power, the leſs ſhall we fear worms of the earth. (2.) They who have Chriſt for their keeper ſhall never be moved from their ſteadfaſtneſs.

2. He reigns from everlaſting to everlaſting. Of old, even from eternity, his throne is eſtabliſhed: *thou art from everlaſting*, the eternal God, and therefore the everlaſting King; of whoſe government there will be no end.

3. He reigns unmoved by all the oppoſition of his enemies. Though angels in heaven dared to rebel, and men and devils join on earth to deſtroy his kingdom, and, like roaring waves of the ſea, lift up themſelves to overwhelm his people, their rage is impotent and vain. *The Lord on high is mightier than the noice of many waters*; and as of old he caſt from their ſhining thrones the angels which ſinned, ſo will he deſtroy all the principalities and powers of earth leagued againſt his people, will ſilence their tumult, and keep his people in perfect peace whoſe minds are ſtayed upon him. *Note*, In all our frights and fears, if we look up with an eye of faith, our tempeſtuous ſouls will ſoon be calmed, and Jeſus will ſay to every ſtorm, *Peace, be ſtill.*

4. He reigns in righteouſneſs. *Thy teſtimonies are very ſure*; all his promiſes inviolably faithful, and we may confidently truſt him for ſupport and ſalvation in time and eternity; let it be our care only to walk agreeable to our glorious hope, ſince *holineſs becometh thine houſe, O Lord, for ever.* This is the great ornament of the church of Chriſt on earth; and whilſt every faithful member of Jeſus ſeeks to grow in grace below, it is his joy and happineſs, that ſhortly he ſhall be perfected in holineſs above.

PSALM XCIV.

This pſalm was penned when the church of God was oppreſſed and perſecuted; and it is an appeal to God, as the judge of Heaven and

and earth, and an addreſs to him, to appear for his people againſt his and their enemies. Two things this pſalm ſpeaks, 1. *Conviction and terror to the perſecutors,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Comfort and peace to the perſecuted,* ver. 12—23. *and this, under every diſcouragement and ſuffering, ſhould engage us with patience and hope to wait the ſalvation of God.*

1. O LORD God, [a] to whom vengeance belongeth: O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, † ſhew thyſelf. 2. [b] Lift up thyſelf, thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. 3. LORD, how long ſhall the wicked, [c] how long ſhall the wicked triumph? 4. *How long* ſhall [d] they utter *and* ſpeak hard things? *and* all the workers of iniquity boaſt themſelves? 5. They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage. 6. They ſlay the widow and the ſtranger, and murder the fatherleſs. 7. [e] Yet they ſay, The LORD ſhall not ſee: neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard *it*. 8. [f] Underſtand ye brutiſh among the people: and *ye* fools, when will ye be wiſe? 9. [g] He that planted the ear, ſhall he not hear? he that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee? 10. He that chaſtiſeth the heathen, ſhall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, *ſhall not be know?* 11. [h] The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

[a] Deut. xxxii. 35. Nah. i. 2.
† Heb. Shine forth, Pſ. lxxx. 1.
[b] Ibid. vii. 6.
[c] Job xx. 5.
[d] Ibid. xxxi. 18. Jude 15.
[e] Pſ. x. 11, 13. & lix. 7.
[f] Ibid. xcii. 6.
[g] Ex. iv. 11. Prov. xx. 12.
[h] 1 Cor. iii. 20.

v. 1—11. There is an Almighty Judge, to whom the oppreſſed may appeal, and who will vindicate their cauſe.

1. The pſalmiſt lodges his appeal with God againſt his adverſaries. *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth*, who hath the power to avenge the oppreſſed with wrong, and whoſe holineſs engages him to exert it, *ſhew thyſelf*, or *ſhine forth*, appear in behalf of thy ſuffering people, and confound with the light of truth the works of darkneſs. *Lift up thyſelf, thou Judge of the earth*, that thoſe who ſay the Lord hath forſaken the earth, and with confidence of impunity grow daring in wickedneſs, may be diſmayed, and that God's own people may be comforted by his appearing: *render a reward to the proud*; according to their provocations repay them with puniſhment. *Note*, Under every preſent oppreſſion it becomes God's people patiently to endure, and wait the day when he that judgeth righteouſly ſhall ariſe to avenge them ſpeedily.

2. He complains of the wickedneſs of the enemies of God's people, and expoſtulates with God on ſuffering them ſo long. [1.] They are *wicked* in nature and heart. [2.] With their lips they blaſpheme God, and utter hard ſpeeches againſt his providence, his Chriſt, his truth, his people. [3.] In their lives they are *workers of iniquity*, ſtick at nothing to compaſs their deſigns, and make it their habitual practice. [4.] They are cruel oppreſſors, afflicting and perſecuting God's people, whom he hath choſen for his heritage for ever, not ſparing the widow and ſtranger, and, adding cruelty to oppreſſion, they murder the fatherleſs, who are unable to defend themſelves. [5.] They are atheiſtical, *they ſay, The Lord ſhall not ſee*; either there is no God, or that he concerns himſelf not about the affairs of men: *neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it*; which title they ſeem to give to God, as ridiculing their confidence who called him their covenant God. For theſe abominations he cannot but expoſtulate. *How long, Lord, how long ſhall the wicked triumph?* &c. It was grievous to him to behold God's people ſo harraſſed, and his name ſo diſhonoured; and he urges the Lord without delay to appear on their behalf. This is very applicable to the blaſphemies, perſecutions, cruelties, and atheiſm, that have diſtinguiſhed the Romiſh antichriſtian church: but their triumphing is but for a moment, the vengeance due to Babylon myſtical advances.

3. He addreſſes theſe wicked men, and urges them to conſider their ways. *Underſtand, ye brutiſh among the people*; for ſuch conduct as is above deſcribed, ſhews more of the tyger of the deſert than of humanity: *and ye fools*, in their own infidel conceits the only knowing men, in God's account, the moſt wretchedly ignorant, *when will ye be wiſe?* and learn true wiſdom and the fear of God? *He that planted the ear, ſhall he not hear? he that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee?* It argues the fooliſhneſs of folly to ſuppoſe, that he who formed theſe organs of our bodies with ſuch exquiſite art, ſhould himſelf be defective in thoſe faculties he ſo wonderfully beſtows. *He that chaſtiſeth the heathen*, as he did the old world, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the idolatrous inhabitants of Canaan, *ſhall not be correct?* hath he not the ſame abhorrence of the like ſins, and the ſame power to puniſh them? undoubtedly: *he that teacheth man knowledge*, that gave man his natural reaſon and underſtanding, and is the fountain of all human wiſdom, *ſhall not be know?* yea, verily; his underſtanding is infinite, extending to all perſons and things, and from him nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret, even our hearts are naked and open before him. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*; either that their object is vain, the ſinful pleaſures and purſuits of a periſhing world, or the iſſue of them is vanity, he diſappointing the devices of men and bringing them to nought. Seeing then we have to do with ſuch an all-ſeeing God, how careful ſhould we be to keep our hearts with all diligence, and watch over the firſt motions within of evil concupiſcence?

12. [i] Bleſſed *is* the man whom thou chaſtneſt, O LORD, and [k] teacheſt him out of thy law? 13. That thou mayſt give him reſt from the days of adverſity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. 14. For [l] the LORD will not caſt off his people, neither will he forſake his inheritance. 15. But judgment ſhall return unto righteouſneſs: and all the upright in heart ſhall † follow it. 16. Who will riſe up for me againſt the evil-doers? *or* who will ſtand up for me againſt the workers of iniquity! 17. [m] Unleſs the LORD *had been* my help, my ſoul had ‡ almoſt dwelt in ſilence. 18. When I ſaid, [n] My foot ſlippeth: thy mercy, O LORD, held me up. 19. [o] In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul. 20. [p] Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee, [q] which frameth miſchief by a law? 21. [r] They gather themſelves together againſt the ſoul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. 22. But the LORD is my defence: and my God *is* the rock of my refuge. 23. And [s] he ſhall bring upon them their own iniquity, and ſhall cut them off in their own wickedneſs; *yea*, the LORD our God ſhall cut them off.

[i] 1 Cor. xi. 32. Heb. xii. 5, &c.
[k] Job xxxiii. 16.
[l] 1 Sam. xii. 22. Rom. xi. 1, 2. Heb. xiii. 5.
† Heb. Be after it.
[m] Pſ. cxxvi. 1, &c. 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.
‡ Or, quickly.
[n] Pſ. xxxviii. 16.
[o] 2 Cor. i. 4.
[p] Ibid. vi. 14.
[q] Iſa. x. 1. Mic. vi. 16.
[r] Pſ. ii. 2.
[s] Ibid. vii. 16. & lv. 23. Prov. v. 22.

v. 12—23. Verily there is a reward for the righteous, they ſhall be comforted in, and be delivered from, all their troubles.

1. God will bleſs them in all their ſufferings; though their enemies for a time are permitted to prevail, they are but the rod in God's hand, and lifted up with the moſt gracious deſign for their good. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſtneſt*; every child of God may expect his corrections, they are abſolutely neceſſary, and the proof of his adoption; and ſo far from complaining of them as hard, ſhould he regard them as the kindeſt inſtances of paternal tenderneſs; *and teacheſt him out of thy law*, afflictions being deſigned for our inſtruction and improvement; God by his word and ſpirit teaching his children how to profit under his correcting hand, and we are then bleſſed indeed, when by our trials we gain a ſurer evidence of our ſonſhip, and grow more conformed to the image of our crucified Maſter: *that thou mayſt give him reſt from the days of adverſity*, or *evil*; for this works peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs to thoſe who are exerciſed thereby; the Lord alſo ſweetly ſupports the ſouls of his ſaints under their troubles, till the end for which they were ſent is anſwered, and then he delivers them ſafely out of them; and he will ſhortly bring them to his eternal reſt, where their enemies ſhall for ever ceaſe from troubling, *until the pit be digged for the wicked*, whoſe end is deſtruction, eternal torment their portion, and the pit of hell their accurſed abode. *For the Lord will not caſt off his people*; how long, or how greatly ſoever he may ſuffer them to be afflicted, he is bound to them in a covenant of everlaſting love in Jeſus Chriſt, and they ſhall never periſh; *neither will he forſake his inheritance*, his title to them he will never quit, even in the loweſt eſtate to which his church and every individual member of it may be reduced, they are precious in his ſight, and he hath promiſed, *I will never leave nor forſake thee*; ſo that we may confidently truſt him, and wait in hope. *But judgment ſhall return unto righteouſneſs*; the ſeeming diſorders of providence ſhall be rectified, when in the laſt days all the antichriſtian perſecutors of God's people ſhall have their plagues poured out upon them; and in the day of final retribution, God will appear righteous in all his judgments: *and all the upright in heart ſhall follow it*; either the judgment of God with their praiſes, acknowledging the glory of his juſtice, *Rev.* xvi. 6, 7. xix. 12. or righteouſneſs, approving themſelves before him in all holy converſation and godlineſs; or, as the words may be rendered, *all the upright in heart ſhall be after him*, as the flock of his paſture attending their ſhepherd, and following the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth with their unceaſing praiſes.

2. He will help and defend them, and make them at laſt more than conquerors. *Who will riſe up for me againſt the evil-doers? or who will ſtand up for me againſt the workers of iniquity?* The pſalmiſt ſpeaks in the perſon of God's ſuffering church and people, deſcribing the character of their enemies, *evil-doers and workers of iniquity*, who made no difficulty of committing all manner of abominations, and therefore the more to be feared; whilſt the queſtion put intimates the weakneſs of the faithful to ſtruggle with their mightier foes, unleſs God interpoſe; for indeed, when we conſider our enemies ſpiritual and temporal, we ſhall find ourſelves a very unequal match for them, and may well ſay, *Unleſs the Lord had been my help, my ſoul had almoſt*, or *muſt quickly have, dwelt in ſilence*, as was the caſe of the apoſtles,

2 *Cor.* i. 10. and in innumerable inſtances every chriſtian hath experienced it to be his own caſe, when almoſt reduced to deſpair, he feared he ſhould fall under his temptations, but the Lord was his helper. *When I ſaid, My foot ſlippeth*, I am ſinking, help, Lord, I periſh: *thy mercy, O Lord, held me up*; mercy that never fails, and then appears moſt precious when extended to us in the time of need: let no afflicted child of God therefore utterly deſpond, but look to him who glorifies his grace in delivering the ſouls appointed unto death. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me*, perplexed and diſtreſſed, as God's deareſt people ſometimes are, with apprehenſions of his purity and majeſty which confounds them; with ſuch a ſenſe of their own guilt as terrifies them, with unbelieving fears that their ſins are too great to be forgiven, their corruptions too ſtrong to be ſubdued, that they cannot be children of God, and their hope is deluſion, that they ſhall never be able to endure unto the end: theſe, and the like diſcouraging thoughts, tumultuous riſe within the ſoul, and breed anxiety and trouble; *but thy comforts delight my ſoul*; comforts, ariſing from a ſenſe of the unchangeable love, and tranſcendantly rich and ſovereign grace of God, derived from Jeſus, and by his ſpirit ſhed abroad in the heart; comforts, not like thoſe poor pleaſures the world can miniſter to ſooth the melancholy, which often are ineffectual to diſpel the gloom, and when ſucceſsful are but like the momentary relief procured by an opiate, whilſt the diſeaſe remains rooted as ever; but theſe comforts delight the ſoul, are ſolid, ſubſtantial, abiding, enjoyed independant of all the world can give or take away, and the fore-taſtes of eternal conſolation. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee?* No, that God abhors, and moſt abhors thoſe, who, in his name, pretend authority for committing iniquity; as the man of ſin, the head of the Romiſh church, who claims all power in heaven and earth, and pretends a right to beſtow indulgences and pardons for ſin at his pleaſure, *which frameth miſchief by a law*, then moſt oppreſſive when clad with the appearance of juſtice; and ſuch are the horrid decrees of the church of Rome; or *againſt law*, the character given of Antichriſt, 2 *Theſſ.* xi. 8. *They gather themſelves together againſt the ſouls of the righteous*, to deſtroy them, or uſurp dominion over their conſciences, *and condemn the innocent blood*; murdering the juſt for refuſing to ſubmit to their abominations, *Rev.* xvii. 6. xviii. 24. *But the Lord is my defence* from every aſſault, *and my God is the rock of my refuge*, where the ſoul of the faithful is ſafe, and founded on Chriſt the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt him, who will protect his people, and puniſh their cruel enemies. *He ſhall bring upon them their own iniquities*, the juſt puniſhment of them, and for the blood they have ſhed give them blood to drink, *Rev.* xvi. 6. *and ſhall cut them off in their own wickedneſs; yea, the Lord our God ſhall cut them off*; and then wo unto their ſouls, they muſt periſh without hope; their wickedneſs will follow them to their graves, witneſs againſt them in judgment, and thruſt them down into the belly of hell. Such is the end of the ungodly.

PSALM XCV.

This pſalm belongs to the times of the Meſſiah, as is evident, Heb. iii. 7—19. *It contains*, 1. *The praiſe we owe to our divine Redeemer, as our maker and benefactor*, ver. 1—7. 2. *A warning not to harden our hearts againſt his goſpel, leaſt, like the Jews, we periſh under his wrath*, ver. 7—11.

1. O Come, [a] let us ſing unto the LORD: [b] let us make a joyful noiſe to [c] the rock of our ſalvation. 2. Let us † come before his preſence with thankſgiving, and make a joyful noiſe unto him with pſalms. 3. For [d] the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4. In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the ‡ ſtrength of the hills *is* his alſo. 5. The ſea *is* his, [e] and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. 6. O come, let us worſhip and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD [f] our maker. 7. For he *is* our God, and [g] we *are* the people of his paſture, and the ſheep of his hand:

a Col. iii. 16.
b Pſ. c. 1.
c 1 Cor. x. 4.
† Heb. Prevent his face.
d Pſ. xcvi. 4. & xcvii. 9. & cxxxv. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 15.
‡ Or, knights.
e Gen. i. 9, 10.
f Joh. i. 3.
g Pſ. lxxix. 13. & lxxx. 1. & c. 3.

v. 1—7. The pſalmiſt opens with a warm exhortation to all around him, to unite in the delightful work of praiſe to the great God and Saviour.

1. He directs how they ſhould draw near to him with a *joyful noiſe*, not only making melody in their hearts, but ſpeaking forth his praiſe in *pſalms*, and hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs, *with thankſgiving* for all his boundleſs mercies; with humble reverence and lowly adoration *kneeling* before him; the poſture of their body expreſſing the deep abaſement of their ſouls in his preſence.

2. He points out abundant matter for their praiſes.

(1.) He is *the rock of our ſalvation*, hath obtained it for his people in time and eternity; and all who are built upon him are ſecure from all wrath, ſafe from all enemies, and ſure to ſtand unto eternity.

(2.) He *is a great God*, partaking of all the eſſential attributes of the Deity, ſelf-exiſtent, eternal, omnipotent, omniſcient.

(3.) His dominion is univerſal: *He is a great King over all Gods*; by him all earthly princes reign, to him all magiſtrates are accountable, and before him the fictitous gods of the heathen periſh: he is King of kings, and Lord of lords. His dominion is wide extended from pole to pole; both land and ſea acknowledge his ſovereignty: the deepeſt receſſes of the earth he ſearches, and the higheſt mountains are fixed by his power, and upheld by his providence, *v.* 4. 5. *Note*, If all the world be thus in the hands of our Jeſus, how can his people want any manner of thing that is good?

(4.) He is the maker of all, and therefore juſtly the owner; by him and in him we live and move and have our being: he bad the dry land appear, and bound up the great deep in ſwaddling bands. Theſe are thy works, O God; and juſtly therefore does he deſerve to be praiſed; of whom are all things, and for whom are all things.

(5.) He ſtands in a peculiar relation to his people, and demands their grateful tribute of thankſgiving. *For he is our God* and Saviour, who became incarnate for us, our ſubſtitute and ſurety, and in an everlaſting covenant of love hath united us to himſelf in one body, *and we are the people of his paſture, and the ſheep of his hands*; not merely fed by his providence, but formed for himſelf by grace, to be a peculiar people, led by his word and ſpirit, protected by his power, and preſerved for his everlaſting kingdom. Well, therefore, may we ſay in this view, *O come, let us ſing unto the Lord*, who is ſo worthy to be praiſed, and to be had in everlaſting remembrance.

7. — [h] to day if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your heart, [i] as in the provocation, *and* as *in* the day of † temptation in the wilderneſs: 9. When [k] your fathers tempted me, proved me, and ſaw my work. 10. Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and ſaid, *It is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways. 11. Unto whom I ſware in my wrath, ‡ that [l] they ſhould not enter into my reſt.

h Heb. iii. 7. & iv. 7.
i Ex. xvii. 2, 7. Numb. xiv. 22, &c.
† Or, maſſah.
k Pſ. lxxviii. 40, 56. 1 Cor. x. 9.
‡ Heb. If they enter, &c.
l Heb. iii. 11, 19. & iv. 9, 11.

v. 7—11. The tribute of our lips is but a vain oblation, unleſs our lives alſo ſhew forth the Saviour's praiſe; therefore we are called upon,

1. To *hear his voice*: this is our great duty as *the ſheep of his hand*, who muſt know the ſhepherd's voice and follow it. *Note*, If Chriſt be our Saviour and King, juſtly doth he expect we ſhould be obedient ſubjects; to none but theſe is he the author of eternal ſalvation.

2. This muſt be done immediately, *to-day*, whilſt it is called to-day, delays are dangerous. By nothing are ſouls more frequently undone than by procraſtination; they put off the concerns of eternity to a more convenient ſeaſon, and periſh ere it arrives.

3. We are warned of our danger. *Harden not your hearts* againſt Chriſt and his goſpel, as the Jews did, who rejected the true Meſſiah, and, as their fathers before them had done in the wilderneſs, *in the day of temptation*, or *the day of Maſſah*, their whole conduct being one continued ſcene of rebellions and provocations againſt him. *Note*, (1.) However ſlightly men paſs over their ſins, in God's ſight they are highly provoking. (2.) Diſbelief of God's promiſes is among the greateſt inſults we can put upon him, yet a crime we are very apt to diſregard and make light of. (3.) That heart is hardened indeed, that the great and precious promiſes of the goſpel cannot affect. (4.) It is wiſe to be warned by others harms, leaſt we fall after the ſame example of unbelief.

4. The great aggravation of the unbelief, and hardneſs of heart of the Jewiſh people, is inſiſted upon. They had ſeen the Lord's wonders, had proved his providential care ſo long, ſo often, during forty years; but their hearts were perverſe, they would neither know nor walk in his ways; and having wearied out his patience, brought down his wrath upon them. In the ſame manner did the Jews, from the miniſtry of John to the death of Chriſt, continue to reject the counſel of God againſt themſelves, refuſing to be convinced by all the miracles he wrought, and hardening their hearts, till wrath came upon them to the uttermoſt. *Note*, (1.) Every mercy we receive from God, aggravates our ingratitude againſt him. (2.) Wilful ignorance is wilful ſin. (3.) They who err in heart, chuſe darkneſs rather than light; and none more blind than thoſe who will not ſee.

5. The doom denounced againſt them was terrible. *I ſware in my wrath, that they ſhould not enter into my reſt*; in juſt indignation he excluded them from the land of promiſe, and by an oath confirmed the immutability of his counſel: which things are *written for our admonition*, 1 Cor. x. 11. *There remaineth a reſt for the people of God*, into which they who believe in Jeſus

do enter: whilſt unbelief is the injurious bar, as ruinous to our ſouls as diſhonourable to God. They who diſtruſt God's power and love, or, careleſs about the promiſed inheritance above, ſeek for their portion on earth, and take up their reſt below, are juſtly excluded from the heavenly Canaan.

PSALM XCVI.

This pſalm is part of that which was delivered into the hand of Aſaph and his brethren, 1 Chron. xvi. 7. *by which it appears, that David was the penman of it, and that it has reference to the bringing up of the ark to the city of David; but it looks farther, and is deſigned to celebrate the glories of Chriſt's kingdom, eſpecially the acceſſion of the Gentiles to it. Here is,* 1. *A call given to all people to praiſe, worſhip, and glorify Chriſt, as the great and glorious God,* ver. 1—9. 2. *Notice given to all people of his univerſal government and judgment,* ver. 10—13.

1. O [a] Sing unto the LORD a new ſong: ſing unto the LORD all the earth. 2. Sing unto the LORD, bleſs his name: ſhew forth his ſalvation from day to day. 3. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. 4. For [b] the LORD *is* great, and [c] greatly to be praiſed: [d] he *is* to be feared above all gods. 5. For [e] all the gods of the nations *are* † idols: but [f] the LORD made the heavens. 6. Honour and majeſty *are* before him: ſtrength and beauty *are* in his ſanctuary. 7. Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, [g] give unto the LORD glory and ſtrength. 8. Give unto the LORD the glory ‡ *due unto* his name: bring [h] an offering and come into his courts. 9. O worſhip the LORD § in the beauty of holineſs: fear before him all the earth.

a 1 Chron. xvi. 23. Pſ. xxxiii. 3.
b Pſal. cxlv. 3.
c Pſ. xviii. 3. Rev. iv. 11.
d Pſ. xcv. 3.
e Jer. x. 11, 12.
† Or, nothings, 1 Cor. viii. 4.
f Pſ. cxv. 15.
g Ibid. xxix. 1, 2.
‡ Heb. Of his name.
h Rom. xii. 1.
§ Or, in the glorious ſanctuary, Pſ. xxix. 2.

v. 1—9. When Jeſus is the ſubject of our ſong, words muſt fail to ſpeak our gratitude.

1. With warm devotion the enraptured pſalmiſt calls on the redeemed of the Lord, through the whole earth, to join the ſong of praiſe, and publiſh abroad from day to day, to the moſt diſtant heathen lands, the glory of his grace, and the wonders of his mercy in that amazing work he hath accompliſhed, the ſalvation of ſinners; a theme which will be ever *new*, nor to eternity be exhauſted, but miniſter occaſion for new and everlaſting praiſes, *Rev.* xiv. 3.

2. He mentions various particulars that afford motives and matter for our ſongs. *For the Lord is great,* in uncreated glory, in the works of creation and providence, and eſpecially of redemption and grace, *and greatly to be praiſed*; and when we raiſe our loftieſt ſtrains he is exalted ſtill far above all bleſſing and praiſe: *he is to be feared above all gods. For,* however high their votaries exalt them, *all the gods of the nations are idols,* or *mere nothings,* unable to do good or hurt, lifeleſs and inſenſible: *but the Lord made the heavens,* and garniſhed them with all their luſtre to declare his glory. *Honour and majeſty are before him*; enthroned in brightneſs inacceſſible; adoring angels bow before him, and cover their faces with their wings: *ſtrength and beauty are in his ſanctuary*; *ſtrength,* viſible in the converſion of ſinners, and the ſupport of his militant ſaints; and *beauty* diſplayed in all the ordinances of his worſhip, and graces of his Spirit beſtowed on his church and people here below, or in heaven, where the moſt glorious manifeſtations of his power and excellence appear, amidſt cherubic hoſts, and ſpirits of the juſt made perfect, who wonder and adore.

3. The manner of their ſervice is preſcribed. No longer confined to one people, his courts are open to all *kindreds* or *families,* and the redeemed out of the whole earth muſt approach him, *giving him the glory* ſo peculiarly his own; not that we can beſtow any thing on him, we receive all from him before we can render ought unto him; *acknowledging his power,* dominion, and ſovereignty, *v.* 7. *bring our offering,* not the blood of beaſts, but our own bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits, a living ſacrifice; *worſhipping him in the beauty of holineſs,* both in his own inſtituted ordinances of prayer and praiſe, and out of pure hearts, ſanctified by his grace, devoted to his glory; and with reverential *fear,* ſenſible of our own vanity, vileneſs, and unworthineſs, to approach him ſo high, ſo holy.

10. [i] Say among the heathen, *that* [k] the LORD reigneth: the world alſo ſhall be eſtabliſhed that it ſhall not be moved; [l] he ſhall judge the people righteouſly. 11. [m] Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: [n] let the ſea roar, and the fulneſs thereof. 12. Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein: then ſhall all the trees of the wood rejoice 13. Before the LORD, for he cometh, for he cometh to [o] judge the earth: he ſhall judge the world with righteouſneſs, and the people with his truth.

i Rom. xv. 6.
k Pſ. xciii. 1. & xcvii. 1.
l Ibid. xcviii. 9. Iſa. xi. 4.
m Pſal. lxix. 34.
n Ibid. xcviii. 7.
o Pſal. lxvii. 4. Rev. xix. 11.

v. 10—13. The converted Jews and Gentiles, or rather the miniſters put in truſt with the goſpel, are here directed what to *ſay among the heathen.*

1. *The Lord reigneth* victorious over death and hell, and all his foes; aſcended up on high, ſat down on his throne, and all power committed to him in heaven and earth; exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins.

2. *The world alſo ſhall be eſtabliſhed that it ſhall not be moved*; for he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, will preſerve this material world till his elect are gathered out of it, and eſpecially will eſtabliſh his church to the end of time, and then take it to himſelf a glorious church, and reign over his redeemed people for ever and ever.

3. *He ſhall judge the people righteouſly*; the ordinances of his kingdom ſhall be moſt perfectly juſt and equitable; in the hearts of his people he ſhall rule by his ſpirit, eſtabliſhing them in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, and be their judge to vindicate their cauſe againſt the accuſations and attacks of every enemy.

4. Let heaven and earth adore him. *Let the heavens rejoice,* the angelic hoſts who behold with joy the incarnate Saviour, and the converſion of the Gentile world, *and let the earth be glad*; the righteous, who ſee the Redeemer's kingdom exalted among men! *let the ſea roar, and the fulneſs thereof*; all who ſail on theſe mighty waters muſt advance his praiſe. *Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein*; the church, and all the members of it, incloſed by divine love, and cultivated by the great huſbandman, exult in God their Saviour: *then ſhall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord*; every child of God, the planting of the Lord, ſhall bleſs and praiſe him. *Note,* The eſtabliſhment of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth is matter of general joy; and how much greater will the exultation be, when at laſt in heaven he ſhall for ever reign over his antients glorioully?

5. Let the world prepare to meet their God, *for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,* it is certain, it is near, at his tremedous bar muſt all appear, to receive according to the things they have done in the body, *with righteouſneſs, and the people with his truth*: he needs no evidence who is omniſcient; and being by his nature altogether righteous and true, his deciſions will appear perfect juſtice. May we be found of him in peace at that day!

PSALM XCVII.

This pſalm dwells upon the ſame ſubject with the foregoing, Chriſt is the alpha and the omega of both. He it is that reigns to the joy of all mankind, ver. 1. *and his government ſpeaks,* 1. *Terror to his enemies; for he is a prince of inflexible juſtice, and irreſiſtible power,* ver. 2—7. 2. *Comfort to his faithful ſubjects, ariſing from his ſovereign dominion; the care he takes of his people, and the proviſion he makes for them,* ver. 8—12.

1. [a] THE LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice! let † the multitude of iſles be glad *thereof.* 2. [b] Clouds and darkneſs *are* round about him: [c] righteouſneſs and judgment *are* the ‡ habitation of his throne. 3. [d] A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. 4. [e] His lightnings enlightned the world: the earth ſaw [f] and trembled. 5. [g] The hills melted like wax at the preſence of the LORD: at the preſence of the LORD of the whole earth. 6. [h] The heavens declare his righteouſneſs: and all the people ſee his glory. 7. [i] Confounded be all they that ſerve graven images, that boaſt themſelves of idols: [k] worſhip him, all *ye* gods.

a Pſal. xcvi. 10.
† Heb. Many, or great iſles.
b 1 Kings viii. 12. Pſ. xviii. 11.
c Pſ. lxxxix. 14.
‡ Or, eſtabliſhment.
d Pſ. l. 3. Dan. vii. 10. 2 Theſ. i. 8.
e Pſ. lxxvii. 18.
f Ibid. xviii. 7. & civ. 32.
g Judg. v. 5. Mic. i. 4. Nah. i. 5.
h Pſ. xix. 1. & l. 6.
i Exod. xx. 4. Lev. xxvi. 1. Deut. v. 8.
k Heb. i. 6.

v. 1—7. *The Lord reigns.* This is the glorious ſubject; all power in heaven and earth is committed into his hands.

1. It ſhould be matter of joy to all. *Let the earth rejoice* in the bleſſings which attend his government: *let the multitude of the iſles be glad thereof,* and among the reſt eſpecially our own, ſo highly favoured with the light of his glorious goſpel: though ſometimes, as to us it appears, *clouds and darkneſs are round about him,* and his diſpenſations of providence or grace are dark and myſterious; yet, notwithſtanding, *righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of his throne,* the baſis and ſupport of it, and all his deciſions moſt indiſputably equitable.

2. His wrath will be terrible to thoſe who refuſe obedience to his government. *A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about him*; which was ſeen in the vengeance executed on the Jewiſh people, who would not have him to rule over them; and will more eminently appear when he ſhall be revealed at the laſt day from heaven in flaming fire, and the

breath of his mouth ſhall ſlay the wicked, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 7, 8. *His lightnings enlightned the world*; and, ſtruck with terror at the judgments, which, ſwift and irreſiſtible as the flaſh of lightning, fell upon his murderers, *the earth ſaw and trembled. The hills*, his mighty oppoſers, proud of their ſtrength, and immoveable in their obſtinacy, *melted like wax at the preſence of the Lord: at the preſence of the Lord of the whole earth.* Thus the Jewiſh nation were conſumed before the Roman ſword; and thus the powers of Antichriſt ſhall be diſſolved, when he ariſeth in the latter day to ſhake terribly the earth. *Note*, However ſecure and confident ſinners are at preſent, the day is near when their ſtout hearts ſhall melt, and their knees tremble before the eternal Judge and King.

3. His judgments, executed on the ungodly, will be acknowledged as altogether righteous. *The heavens declare his righteouſneſs*; the lightning and thunder, employed as inſtruments of his vengeance; or the angelic hoſts, who laud and praiſe him for the juſtice executed on the wicked: *and all the people* of his grace *ſee* and acknowledge *his glory*, manifeſted in the ſalvation of his redeemed, and the deſtruction of the impenitent. *Confounded be all they*, or *they ſhall be confounded, that ſerve carved images*, whether heathen or popiſh idolaters; and it may be conſidered either as a prayer for them, that they may with ſhame repent and be converted; or rather as a prophecy of the ruin they will bring upon themſelves by ſuch abominations; and *that boaſt themſelves of idols*, which is remarkably verified in the Papiſts, who glory in their pictures and images of the Virgin Mary and their ſaints, and place ſuch confidence in them, with a folly equal to their wickedneſs, and which at laſt will be manifeſt to all men: *worſhip him, all ye gods*; the angels, ſo called, *Heb.* i. 6. who adore him for all his works of righteous judgment. *Note*, (1.) Jeſus is very God, the angels worſhip him, and teach us where to pay our adorations. (2.) If they are our fellow-ſervants, and fellow-worſhippers, what folly, as well as profaneneſs, would it argue to make them the objects of our devotions.

8. Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced; becauſe of thy judgments, O LORD. 9. For thou, LORD, *art* high above all the earth: [l] thou art exalted far above all gods. 10. Ye that love the LORD, [m] hate evil: he preſerveth the ſouls of his ſaints, he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11. [n] Light *is* ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart. 12. [o] Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous: [p] and give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs.

l Pſ. xcv. 3. & xcvi. 4.
m Pſ. xxxiv. 14. Am. v. 15. Rom. xii. 9.
n Eſth. viii. 16. Pſ. cxii. 4.
o Pſ. xxxii. 11. & xxxiii. 1.
p Pſ. xxx. 4.

v. 8—12. It was commanded, *v.* 1: that the whole earth ſhould rejoice in the eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's kingdom on the ruin of his enemies; and, however others may be affected, his *Zion*, his church, *and the daughters of Judah*, all faithful ſouls, cannot but be glad.

1. They have abundant cauſe to do ſo.

(1.) Becauſe of the dignity of their Redeemer's perſon. *For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth*; the name of Jeſus is above every name, not only on earth but in heaven, and all power is given him over them both: *thou art exalted far above all gods*; not only above the fictitious deities of men, but the angels, principalities and powers, are all ſubject to him, *Heb.* i. 13. 1 *Pet.* iii. 22.

(2.) Becauſe *he preſerveth the ſouls of his ſaints*. This is their character: They are ſeparated by His grace from a world that lieth in wickedneſs; they are *righteous* through the imputation of his righteouſneſs to them, *and upright in heart* by the power of the Divine Spirit, renewing their minds in true holineſs; they *love the Lord*, unfeignedly make him the object of their affections, and cleave to him alone. Such ſouls are precious in his ſight; he preſerves them from the power of ſin, ſtrengthens them againſt every temptation, enables them to perſevere in the ways of truth, and brings them at laſt to life eternal: *he delivers them out of the hand of the wicked*, of wicked men, or wicked devils, that ſeek to ſeduce and deſtroy them, but cannot, for God is their refuge and ſtrength, and they ſhall never periſh; and therefore they are bound to praiſe him.

(3.) Becauſe *light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart*; whatever darkneſs may at times ſurround their path, at eventide it ſhall be light, and the brightneſs of eternal glory awaits them. Though for a moment they may be now in heavineſs through manifold temptations, yet even in the midſt of their ſorrows, God's comforts do refreſh their ſouls, and quickly every tear ſhall be wiped from their eyes; and joy and gladneſs, eternal and uninterrupted, be their happy portion.

(4.) Becauſe of his *judgments*, ver. 8. The juſtice of God magnified in the damnation of the wicked, as well as the mercy of God exalted in the ſalvation of the righteous, affords juſt matter for his people's everlaſting praiſe.

2. The manner in which they muſt expreſs their joy and gratitude is deſcribed. (1.) *Rejoice in the Lord*, in Chriſt Jeſus, not in ourſelves, our own doings, or deſerts, but in his righteouſneſs, promiſes, and grace. (2.) *Give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs*, with our lips we muſt ſpeak to his honour, and his holineſs be eſpecially the theme at which ſinners tremble, and ſaints rejoice. (3.) *Hate evil*, our lives as well as lips muſt ſhew forth his praiſe; without which, all the offerings of the tongue and knee are unacceptable, and hypocritical. *Note*, (1.) The love of God, where genuine, cannot but produce hatred of ſin. (2.) The more we keep in mind God's holineſs, the more we ſhall be deterred from approaching whatever is offenſive to him.

PSALM XCVIII.

This pſalm is to the ſame purpoſe with the two foregoing; it is a prophecy of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, the ſetting it up in the world, and the bringing in of the gentiles. It ſets forth, 1. *The glory of the Redeemer*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The joy of the redeemed*, ver. 4—9. *And if they who ſaw Chriſt's day at a diſtance, and in the promiſe only, rejoiced and triumphed thus, much more reaſon we have to do ſo, that ſee theſe things accompliſhed, and ſhare in the better things provided for us*, Heb. xi. 40.

¶ A Pſalm.

1. O [a] Sing unto the LORD a new ſong, for [b] he hath done marvellous things: [c] his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory. 2. [d] The LORD hath made known his ſalvation: his righteouſneſs hath he † openly ſhewed in the ſight of the heathen. 3. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the houſe of Iſrael: all the ends of the earth have ſeen the ſalvation of our God.

a Pſ. xxxiii. 3. & xcvi. 1. Iſa. xlii. 10.
b Rev. xv. 3.
c Iſa. lix. 16. & lxiii. 5.
d Ibid. lii. 10.
† Or, revealed.

v. 1—3. We have repeated calls to *ſing unto the Lord*, for our hearts are too often ſadly out of tune, and need be urged to the bleſſed work; and what can enliven them, if this *new ſong* doth not, the ſubject of which is redeeming love?

Three things are here ſuggeſted, as claiming our moſt enlarged praiſe.

1. The work Jeſus hath wrought. *For he hath done marvellous things.* His incarnation, miracles, life, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, are all wonderful: his love to ſinners; his gifts of pardon, grace, and glory, ſtupendous: his whole ſalvation, from its firſt contrivance to its conſummation, marvellous. *His right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.* Alone he took the field againſt our foes, infinitely too great to need aſſiſtance, and too jealous of his own honour to accept it. Alone he won the day, vanquiſhed Satan, made an end of ſin, deſtroyed death, ſhut up the jaws of hell, opened the gates of heaven. Can we believe it, and not triumph in the God of our ſalvation!

2. The goſpel preached. *The Lord hath made known his ſalvation*, himſelf the great Evangeliſt, and commiſſioning his ſervants in his name to carry the glad tidings to the ends of the earth. *His righteouſneſs hath he openly ſhewed in the ſight of the heathen*; either the faithfulneſs of God in fulfilling his promiſes, or his own divine and all-perfect righteouſneſs, by which the ſalvation is obtained, and openly ſhewed, not in dark types, but in his own obedience unto death; and his grace not confined to one people, but all nations freely invited to the faith and privileges of the goſpel.

3. The prophecies fulfilled. *He hath remembred his mercy and truth towards the houſe of Iſrael*; appearing as their Meſſiah in the fulneſs of time, according to the promiſes which went before concerning him. *All the ends of the earth have ſeen the ſalvation of our God*; agreeable to the prophetic word, which declared he ſhould be the light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Iſrael.

4. [e] Make a joyful noiſe unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noiſe, and rejoice, and ſing praiſe. 5. Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a pſalm. 6. With trumpets and ſound of cornet, make a joyful noiſe before the LORD, the King. 7. [f] Let the ſea rore, and the fulneſs thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein. 8. Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together 9. Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth; [g] with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

e Pſ. xcv. 1.
f Ibid. xcvi. 11, &c.
g Ibid. lxvii. 4. Rev. xix. 11.

v. 4—9. The pſalm concludes much like the ninety-ſixth, with an exhortation to all people, with voices and muſic, aloud to exalt the Redeemer's name, and with that warmth of affection to his perſon, zeal for his glory, and exceeding great joy, which his tranſcendently rich ſalvation ſhould inſpire; yea, the inanimate creation are called upon to join the ſong of praiſe to the univerſal Lord, and the eternal King; whoſe government, in the diſpenſation of the goſpel, will be ever moſt juſt and equitable; and his deciſions, when he ſhall ſit upon the throne of final judgment, be altogether righteous, *v.* 9. *Note,* If we know Jeſus as our Lord and King, it cannot but miniſter to us matter of the moſt enlivened joy, and tune our hearts for his praiſe in time and in eternity.

PSALM XCIX.

This pſalm is a prophecy of the glory of the Meſſiah's kingdom. 1. *The people of God are called to praiſe and worſhip him in the view of his greatneſs and glory,* ver. 1—5. 2. *For the inſtances of his mercy of old vouchſafed to his people Iſrael,* ver. 6—9.

1. [a] THE LORD reigneth, let the people tremble: [b] he ſitteth *between* the cherubims, let the earth † be moved. 2. The LORD *is* great in Zion, and [c] he *is* high above all people. 3. Let them praiſe thy great and terrible name: *for* it *is* holy. 4. [d] The king's ſtrength alſo loveth judgment, thou doſt eſtabliſh equity, thou executeſt judgment and righteouſneſs in Jacob. 5. [e] Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worſhip at [f] his footſtool: *for* [g] ‡ he *is* holy.

a Pſ. xciii. 1. & xcvi. 10. & xcvii. 1.
b Ex. xxv. 22. Pſal. lxxx. 1.
† Heb. Stagger.
c Ex. xviii. 11. Pſ. xcvi. 4. & xcvii. 9.
d Job xxxvi. 5.
e Ver. 9.
f 1 Chron. xxviii. 2.
g Iſa. v. 16.
‡ Or, it is holy.

v. 1—5. The exaltation of Jeſus is the joy of his people and the terror of his enemies.

1. It ſpeaks terror to his enemies. *The Lord reigneth,* whom men by wicked hands had crucified and ſlain; but by Divine power ariſen from the dead, is ſet down at the right hand of the Majeſty on high; *let the people tremble;* all the enemies of his kingdom, that will not have him to reign over them, ſhall feel ere long with terror the rod of his judgment: *he ſitteth between the cherubims,* on his exalted throne, attended by miniſtring ſpirits, ready to fulfil his pleaſure, *let the earth be moved,* as when the Jewiſh civil and eccleſiaſtical ſtate was diſſolved by his righteous vengeance, and as the whole world will be in the day of perdition of the ungodly. *Note,* Many mock at the terrors of God's judgments, who will, to their coſt, ſhortly find them awful realities.

2. It is the joy of his people. *The Lord is great in Zion,* where many of his miracles were wrought, and from whence his goſpel went forth, or rather in the ſpiritual Zion his church, who behold the glory of his perſon and offices, and enjoy his protection and bleſſing, *and he is high above all people;* not only as head of his church, but as God over all, bleſſed for ever, and therefore are they bound to rejoice in him. *Let them praiſe thy great and terrible name;* terrible to his foes, but moſt lovely to his people: *for it is holy,* and this it is which renders it a terror to ſinners, and ſo glorious in the eyes of his ſaints. *The king's ſtrength alſo loveth judgment;* Almighty as he is, his power is never abuſed to injuſtice, but righteouſneſs is his delight, and the conſtant guide of his adminiſtration; *thou doſt eſtabliſh equity;* his laws are all moſt holy and juſt; or, *thou haſt prepared righteouſneſs,* a perfect and compleat righteouſneſs, wrought out by his obedience unto death for his people, and withal has the fulneſs of Divine grace to beſtow, to ſanctify their hearts, and make them upright before him; *thou executeſt judgment and righteouſneſs in Jacob,* protecting his people by his providence, correcting them when they offend, and governing his mediatorial kingdom in the moſt righteous manner; and for this his ſubjects are called upon to adore him. *Exalt ye the Lord our God* with heart and voice, in all the glorious offices he bears, *and worſhip at his footſtool* with lowly reverence, praiſing him for all his greatneſs and glory, and looking up to him for the continual ſupplies of his power and grace: *for he is holy;* worthy our higheſt adoration, and faithful to all his promiſes, as they will ever find who worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth.

6. [h] Moſes and Aaron among his prieſts, and Samuel among them that call upon his name: they called upon the LORD, and he anſwered them, 7. [i] He ſpake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his teſtimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them. 8. Thou anſweredſt them, O LORD our God: [k] thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt vengeance of their inventions. 9. [l] Exalt the LORD our God, and worſhip at his holy hill: for the LORD our God *is* holy.

h Jer. xv. 1.
i Ex. xxxiii. 9.
k Num. xiv. 20. Jer. xlvi. 28.
l Ver. 5.

v. 6—9. The Lord hath been the object of adoration to all his ſaints of old, and their experience proves him to be the God that heareth and anſwereth the prayers of his people. We have,

1, The names and characters of theſe moſt eminent men of God: *Moſes and Aaron among his prieſts,* Moſes having exerciſed the ſacerdotal office till Aaron was appointed thereunto, with his brethren, and this by his conſecration, *and Samuel among them that call upon his name:* theſe eminent worthies ſtand diſtinguiſhed not ſo much for their ſtation and dignity, to which God advanced them, as for their piety: *they called upon the Lord,* in every emergence they placed their dependance on God, and found him a never-failing refuge: *they kept his teſtimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them,* conſcientiouſly obſervant of the precepts of his law, and the ceremonies of his worſhip: and they who thus walk in God's ways, may expect in theſe ways he will meet them, and anſwer all their petitions.

2. The notice and regard God ſhewed them. *He anſwered them;* granted their requeſts, and communed with them as a man with his friends. *He ſpake unto them out of the cloudy pillar;* to Moſes and Aaron often, and probably to Samuel alſo, in the frequent viſions vouchſafed to him, or when he anſwered his prayer by mighty thunderings, 1 *Sam.* xii. 18. *Thou anſweredſt them, O Lord our God,* when, as advocates for rebellious Iſrael, they lifted up their prayer for mercy: *thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them,* at the interceſſion of theſe holy men, *though thou tookeſt vengeance of their inventions,* making them ſmart for their ſins by their ſufferings, though prevailed upon by their prayers from utterly deſtroying them. *Note,* (1.) We can never ſufficiently value the prayers of good men; they are indeed often branded as the troublers, but are in fact the preſervers of the nation. (2.) God will make his own people ſmart ſeverely for their perverſeneſs, even when he hath, reſpecting the eternal conſequences of their ſins, delivered their ſouls from death.

3. The praiſe due to God for theſe mercies. *Exalt the Lord our God;* as our God he deſerves our love and praiſe, and our father's mercies are our own, and demand our grateful acknowledgments; *and worſhip at his holy hill;* in the church of Chriſt: *for the Lord our God is holy* in his nature, in all his works and ways, and to be exalted by all his people according to his adorable perfections.

PSALM C.

It is with good reaſon that we ſing this pſalm very frequently in our religious aſſemblies, ſince we are the Gentile lands, now called to the knoweldge of the goſpel, and therefore bound to praiſe our God and Saviour. 1. *We are called upon to praiſe God, and rejoice in him,* ver. 1—4. 2. *We are furniſhed with matter for praiſe; we muſt praiſe him, conſidering his being and relation to us,* ver. 3. *and his mercy and truth,* ver. 5.

¶ [a] A pſalm of † praiſe.

1. [b] MAKE a joyful noiſe unto the LORD, [c] all ye lands. 2. Serve the LORD with gladneſs: come before his preſence with ſinging. 3. Know ye that the LORD he *is* God, [d] *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourſelves; [e] *we are* his people, and the ſheep of his paſture. 4. [f] Enter into his gates with thankſgiving, *and* into his courts with praiſe: be thankful unto him, *and* bleſs his name. 5. For the LORD *is* good: [g] his mercy *is* everlaſting: and his truth *endureth* ‡ to all generations.

a Pſ. cxlv. tit.
† Or, thankſgiving.
b Pſ. xcv. 1.
c Rom. xv. 10.
d Pſ. cxix. 73. & cxxxix. 13, &c. & cxlix. 2. Eph. ii. 10.
e Pſ. xcv. 7. Ezek. xxxiv. 30, 31.
f Pſ. lxvi. 13.
g Ibid. cxxxvi. 1, &c.
‡ Heb. To generation and generation.

1—5. Praiſe is the work of heaven, and upon earth the pleaſing employment of God's redeemed people.

1. The pſalmiſt calls upon them to laud the Lord, and directs how to worſhip and ſerve him acceptably. *Make a joyful noiſe unto the Lord,* aloud proclaim his glory, *all ye lands* from pole to pole, whither the glad tidings of ſalvation ſhall ſpread abroad. *Serve the Lord with gladneſs,* not under the yoke of Jewiſh ceremonies, and the ſpirit of bondage, which under the law prevailed, but with that delight which the ſpirit of adoption gives, rendering his ſervice perfect freedom: *come before his preſence with ſinging;* in private and public worſhip celebrating his mercies, and pouring forth the tribute of our grateful ſongs. *Enter into his gates with thankſgiving, and into his courts with praiſe,* joining our voices to the great congregation that in his houſe adore him: *be thankful unto him* for all the innumerable bleſſings, ſpiritual and temporal, that with unſparing hand he hath beſtowed, and daily ſhowers down upon us, *and bleſs his name,* aſcribing to him the honour and glory of all, to whom alone the praiſe of all his due.

2. Abundant cauſe there is why we ſhould thus bleſs and praiſe him. [1.] He is *the Lord,* the only true God, the fountain of bleſſedneſs, in his perfections tranſcendantly adorable, and exalted far above all bleſſing and praiſe. [2.] *He is the God that made us, and not we ourſelves,* in him we live and move and have our being; our bodies and our ſouls are both the work of his hands, and the new creation in Chriſt Jeſus is purely by the mighty working of his Spirit. [3.] *We are his people;* as our creator, he hath the moſt inconteſtible right to our ſervice, all we have and are is his, derived from him, and ſhould be devoted to him, and before him we muſt at laſt render up an account of the talents with which he hath entruſted us.

[4.] We are *the ſheep of his paſture*, bought with his blood, fed by his providence and grace, protected by his care, and regarded as his treaſure. [5.] He is *good* in himſelf, and in the diſpenſations of his providence and grace is continually manifeſting his goodneſs to us. [6.] *His mercy is everlaſting*, he bears with us long, and is kind, multiplies his pardons, and though we deſerve ſo often to be diſowned and forſaken by him, his love is unchangeable, and continues unto the end, ſo that we can never periſh. [7.] *His truth endureth to all generations*; his fidelity to his promiſes is inviolable for ever, and all the generations of his people ſhall prove it to their great conſolation; for he will never fail them in their way to glory, nor diſappoint their expectations in eternity. This *know ye*, O ye children of God, meditate on the glorious ſubject, and then it cannot but fill your enraptured hearts with love, and your joyful lips with never-ending praiſe.

PSALM CI.

David was for certain the penman of this pſalm; it is a ſolemn vow he made to God when he took upon him the charge of a family and of the kingdom. It might be penned during his reigning in Hebron over Judah, whilſt he waited for the ſubmiſſion of the other tribes: it contains a model of good government, not only for kings, but for every maſter of a family over their houſhold. Here is, 1. *The general ſcope of David's vow,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The particulars of it, that he would deteſt and diſcountenance all manner of wickedneſs,* ver. 3, 4, 7, 8. *and that he would favour and encourage ſuch as were virtuous,* ver. 6. *Some think this may fitly be accommodated to Chriſt, the Son of David, who governs his church, the city of the Lord, by theſe rules, and who loveth righteouſneſs and hateth wickedneſs.*

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. I Will ſing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O
LORD, will I ſing. 2. [a] I will behave myſelf
wiſely in a perfect way; O when wilt thou come unto
me? I will walk within my houſe with a perfect heart.
3. I will ſet no † wicked thing before mine eyes: [b] I
hate the work of them [c] that turn aſide, *it* ſhall not
cleave to me. 4. A froward heart ſhall depart from me:
I will not know a wicked *perſon*. 5. Whoſo privily ſlandereth
his neighbour, him will I cut off: [d] him that
hath an high look, and a proud heart, will not I ſuffer.
6. [e] Mine eyes *ſhall be* upon the faithful of the land, that
they may dwell with me: he that walketh in ‡ a perfect
way, he ſhall ſerve me. 7. He that worketh deceit
ſhall not dwell within my houſe: he that telleth lies ſhall
not § tarry in my ſight. 8. I will [f] early deſtroy all the
wicked of the land: that I may cut off all wicked doers
from [g] the city of the LORD.

[a] 1 Sam. xviii. 14.
† Heb. Thing of Belial.
[b] Pſ. xcvii. 10.
[c] Ibid. cxxv. 5.
[d] Prov. vi. 17.
[e] Rom. xiii. 4.
‡ Or, perfect in the way.
§ Heb. Be eſtabliſhed.
[f] Pſ. lxxv. 10. Jer. xxi. 12.
[g] Pſ. xlviii. 2, 8.

v. 1—8. The pſalmiſt here appears an example unto believers how to demean themſelves as good maſters or good magiſtrates.

1. He opens with praiſe. *I will ſing of mercy and of judgment*; either of the mercy and juſtice he purpoſed to exerciſe in the adminiſtration of that kingdom to which he was advanced, or rather of God's diſpenſations towards him; his *mercy* in calling him to the throne, and his righteous *judgments* in ſubduing all his enemies before him, or of the chaſtiſements and corrections he had felt, as well as the grace and loving-kindneſs he had experienced, which alike wrought together for his good, and called for his gratitude. *Note*, A chriſtian's courſe is uſually chequered with mercies and judgments; but which-ever be his preſent portion, he is called upon, *in every thing*, in every ſtate, condition, and circumſtance, to *give thanks*.

2. He profeſſes his ſolemn reſolutions to approve himſelf faithful to God in all his ways.

(1.) He reſolves to devote his heart to God without guile, and that muſt be the root of all acceptable ſervice. *I will behave myſelf wiſely in a perfect way:* which, if taken in the ſtrict ſenſe of the words, is applicable only to Chriſt, and to him the whole pſalm may be well referred; but it is alſo the pſalmiſt's, and every faithful ſoul's purpoſe to ſet before them the perfect law of God as the rule of duty, and to walk circumſpectly and in ſimplicity, to pleaſe God in all things: *O when wilt thou come unto me?* and ſtrengthen me for thy ſervice; or it may be read without an interrogation, *when thou ſhalt come unto me*, then by thy grace and preſence I ſhall be enabled for every duty. *I will walk within my houſe with a perfect heart*, or, *in the integrity of my heart*, directing all the concerns of his family with a conſtant eye to God's glory, and walking before his houſhold an example of all holy converſation and godlineſs. *Note*, (1.) The moſt ſubſtantial wiſdom is ſerious godlineſs. (2.) They who would bring up their families in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, muſt themſelves ſhew the practice of the precepts they inculcate.

(2.) He reſolves to renounce every work of wickedneſs. *I will ſet no wicked thing before mine eyes*, neither ſuffering his bodily eyes to gaze on any object which might excite impure deſire, nor permitting his mind to harbour any baſe deſign: *I hate the work of them that turn aſide* from God, his worſhip and ſervice, *it ſhall not cleave to me*; he will have no fellowſhip with ſuch unfruitful works of darkneſs. *Note*, Did we ſee more of the evil and danger of ſin, our abhorrence of it would be more rooted, and we ſhould fly from it as from the face of a ſerpent.

(3.) He reſolves what company he will avoid, and with whom he will aſſociate. *The froward ſhall depart* unwelcome from his door; he will not *know*, or maintain the leaſt acquaintance with a *wicked perſon*, whoſe life is immoral and perverſe before God, *v.* 4. Every tongue that drops the invenomed words of ſlander, ſhall be *cut off* from the circle of his friends: the *proud* and ambitious ſhall not be ſuffered to enjoy his familiarity, *v.* 5. No flatterer or ſycophant ſhould find a welcome at his table, nor a deceitful perſon be harboured within his doors. A liar is his abhorrence, and ſhall never *tarry in his ſight*; but, the moment he is detected, ſhall be diſmiſſed. Thus, as a magiſtrate, he would diſcountenance the ungodly; as a maſter, entertain none ſuch as ſervants under him; nor, as a man, be ſeen in their company, or aſſociate with them as his friends. But *mine eyes ſhall be upon the faithful in the land*, to ſeek them out, to ſhew them favour, to receive them into his friendſhip and ſervice: *they ſhall dwell with me*, as miniſters of his council-board, as the companions in whom he delighted, as the menials of his family. *He that walketh in a perfect way*, making God's law his guide, and conſcientiouſly obſervant of it, *he ſhall ſerve me*, and well would it become all kings to follow David's pattern; for that land will be happy, where ſuch evil doers are rejected, and ſuch miniſters choſen. The peace, godlineſs, and internal comfort of every family will be greatly promoted where the maſter rejects the wicked from his doors, and employs thoſe faithful ſervants: and every man, who conſults his own happineſs, muſt follow the pſalmiſt in the choice of his friends, and reſolve to ſeparate from the workers of wickedneſs, and to make thoſe only his delight, who excel in virtue.

(4.) He reſolves to deſtroy all that were convicted of notorious wickedneſs out of the land of Iſrael, and the city of Jeruſalem, *v.* 8. which would conduce to the glory of God, and the ſtability of his throne. And herein throughout David may be conſidered as the type of Chriſt, whoſe perfection of obedience is abſolute, who hath an utter hatred of ſin, calls to his work and ſervice in the goſpel kingdom none that are ungodly, but the righteous are his delight; and as his knowledge is infinite, and his power almighty, no wicked doers can avoid his notice, or at the laſt eſcape his judgments.

PSALM CII.

Some think David penned this pſalm at the time of Abſalom's rebellion; others, that Daniel, Nehemiah, or ſome other prophet, penned it for the uſe of the church, during their captivity in Babylon: but it is clear, from the application of ver. 25, 26. *to Chriſt,* Heb. i. 11, 12. *that the pſalm has reference to the days of the Meſſiah, and ſpeaks either of his afflictions, or the afflictions of his church for his ſake. In it we have,* 1. *A ſorrowful complaint made of great and grievous afflictions,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Seaſonable comfort fetched in againſt theſe grievances,* (1.) *From the eternity of God,* ver. 12, 23, 27. (2.) *From a believing proſpect of the deliverance which God would in due time work for his afflicted church,* ver. 13—22. *and the continuance of it in the world,* ver. 28.

¶ [a] A prayer † of the afflicted, [b] when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.

[a] Jam. v. 13.
† Or, for.
[b] Pſ. lxi. 2.

1. HEAR my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry
come unto thee. 2. [c] Hide not thy face from
me in the day *when* I am in trouble, incline thine ear
unto me: in the day *when* I call, anſwer me ſpeedily.
3. For [d] my days are conſumed ‡ like ſmoke: and [e] my
bones are burnt as an hearth. 4. My heart is ſmitten,
and withered like graſs, ſo that I forget to eat my
bread. 5. By reaſon of the voice of my groaning, [f] my
bones cleave to my § ſkin. 6. [g] I am like a pelican of
the wilderneſs: I am like an owl of the deſert. 7. I
watch, and am as a ſparrow alone upon the houſe-top. 8.
Mine enemies reproach me all the day: *and* they that
are mad againſt me, [h] are ſworn againſt me. 9. For I
have eaten aſhes like bread, and [i] mingled my drink
with weeping: 10. Becauſe of thine indignation and
thy wrath: for [k] thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me
down.

[c] Pſ. xxvii. 9. & lxix. 17.
[d] Jam. iv. 14.
‡ Some read, Into ſmoke.
[e] Job xxx. 30.
[f] Job xix. 20. Lam. iv. 8.
§ Or, fleſh.
[g] Job xxx. 29.
[h] Acts xxiii. 14.
[i] Pſ. xlii. 3. & lxxx. 5.
[k] Pſ. xxx. 7.

[l] Pſ. cix. 23. & cxliv. 4. Eccleſ. vi. 12. down. 11. [l] My days are like a ſhadow that declineth :
[m] Iſa. xl. 6. Jam. i. 10. and [m] I am withered like graſs.

v. 1—11. The title of this pſalm is obſervable ; it is *a prayer of the afflicted*, and ſuch are all the people of God at times, from a ſenſe of their ſins, the oppoſition of their enemies ſpiritual and temporal, and from the burden of their in-bred corruptions, *when he is overwhelmed* ; *and* ſo ſunk they ſometimes are under the load of their trials, that they are ready to deſpair ; yet, when he *poureth out his complaint before the Lord*, as he is invited freely to do, aſſured that his compaſſionate boſom can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, he will hear his cry, and will help him ; and this ineſtimable privilege the child of God fails not to improve, and lodges all his complaints with the Father of mercies, and the God of all conſolation. This the afflicted pſalmiſt did, and in his own caſe directs us how to act when under the like preſſure.

1. He directs his prayer to God, entreating kind regard, the return of the light of God's countenance, and a ſpeedy anſwer, becauſe his neceſſities were urgent, *v.* 1, 2. *Note*, (1.) Outward troubles are made light, when God comforts the ſoul with internal conſolations ; but when inward diſtreſs is joined with outward afflictions, the caſe is peculiarly grievous. (2.) If God ſuffers his people to be reduced very low, it is with a deſign to exerciſe their faith, and excite their more importunate prayers.

2. He ſpreads his particular complaints before the Lord. His body, through diſeaſe or trouble, is ſo emaciated, that *his bones cleave to his ſkin*, *v.* 5. and ſeem ready to burſt through it, enfeebled, and unable to ſupport him, as if *burnt* with fire, *v.* 3. His anguiſh bitter and continual ; his *groans* piercing ; his *days conſumed like ſmoke*, ſo tranſient ; or *in ſmoke*, in darkneſs, trouble, and vexation, *v.* 3. His ſpirits quite exhauſted ; *his heart* ſunk in dejection ; like the *withered graſs*, ſcorched up with inward torment ; and his appetite loſt, *v.* 4. Like the *pelican and owl* he ſhunned the light, and converſe of men, and pined away in melancholy ſolitude. No balmy ſleep cloſed up his eyes, but poring on his ſorrows, alone he ſat, *as a ſparrow on the houſe-top*, deſerted by all his friends, or avoiding their company, *v.* 7. His *enemies*, pleaſed to behold his griefs, inſulted him, as if his religion was vain, or his profeſſions hypocritical, ſince God had forſaken him ; and, *mad* in their rage againſt him, united, and bound themſelves by an oath to ſeize this opportunity of his diſtreſs in order to deſtroy him, *v.* 8. But what above all his ſufferings lay the heavieſt upon him, was the ſenſe of God's *indignation*, and the fear of his *wrath*, who, from the height of proſperity to which he had been advanced, had caſt him thus into the depths of adverſity, *v.* 10. This was the gall in his cup, that embittered every pang, made his *bread* like *aſhes*, and and filled his cup with *tears*, *v.* 9. The ſhadows of death ſeemed ſtretching over him, his ſun of life faſt declining, and like the graſs, cut down, dried up, and withered, he ſaw himſelf dropping into the grave. Such were his complaints : we may not count it ſtrange, if we are brought into circumſtances where they may be our own. Diſeaſe may waſte our bodies, trouble prey on our ſpirits, friends prove faithleſs, enemies inveterate ; our fears of guilt be ſtrong, and death at our door. but whilſt there is life, there is hope ; and whilſt there is a God of all grace, we may not deſpair : He can ſtill hear and help, when all other help and hope ſhall fail us : truſt therefore in the Lord for ever, and pray without ceaſing.

[n] Lam. v. 19. 12. But [n] thou, O LORD, ſhalt endure for ever, and
[o] Pſ. cxxxv. 13. [o] thy remembrance unto all generations. 13. Thou ſhalt
ariſe, *and* have mercy upon Zion : for the time to fa-
vour her, yea, the ſet time is come. 14. For thy ſer-
[p] Pſ. lxxix. 1. vants take pleaſure in [p] her ſtones, and favour the duſt
thereof. 15. So the heathen ſhall fear the name of the
LORD : and all the kings of the earth thy glory.
16. When the LORD ſhall build up Zion, he ſhall ap-
pear in his glory. 17. He will regard the prayer of the
deſtitute, and not deſpiſe their prayer. 18. This ſhall
[q] Pſ. xxii. 31. Iſa. xliii. 21. be written for the generation to come : and [q] the people
which ſhall be created, ſhall praiſe the LORD. 19.
[r] Pſ. xiv. 2. & xxxiii. 13. For [r] he hath looked down from the height of his ſanc-
tuary : from heaven did the LORD behold the earth :
[s] Pſ. lxxix. 11. 20. [s] To hear the groaning of the priſoner, to looſe
† Heb. The children of death. † thoſe that are appointed to death ; 21. To de-
clare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praiſe in
Jeruſalem : 22. When the people are gathered toge-
ther, and the kingdoms to ſerve the LORD.

v. 12—22. Many and great are the troubles of the righteous, but out of all the Lord delivereth them : and herein the pſalmiſt expreſſes his own confidence, and that of all the redeemed in Zion.

1. The Lord Jeſus is an everlaſting Saviour ; for to him are the words addreſſed, (*See Heb.* i. 10.) *Thou, Lord, ſhalt endure for ever.* However long continued the afflictions of his church and people, becauſe he endureth for ever, they ſhall out-live and overcome them. The perpetuity of his mediatorial kingdom, and his fidelity in the conſtant diſcharge of his truſt, as our ceaſeleſs advocate, unchangeable friend, and almighty King, enſures us the victory at laſt : *and thy remembrance to all generations* ; ſeeing he ſhall be exalted to eternity in the praiſes of his redeemed, for all the great ſalvation begun, continued, and compleated by him, for them, and in them.

2. There is an appointed time fixed in his decrees for the continuance and removal of the afflictions of Zion, *v.* 13. and faith, that knows it certain, brings it near. *The time is come*, becauſe the deliverance is as ſure, as if it were already accompliſhed : and this may have reſpect to the ſeventy years of the Babyloniſh captivity, or to the period of the church's calamity under the perſecutions of Antichriſt ; or more generally to the caſe of every ſuffering ſaint of God, who is called to truſt and wait in patient hope for the ſalvation of God ; for it is fixed unalterably, and ſure eternally.

3. This will iſſue to the glory of God, and the great comfort of his people. *For thy ſervants take pleaſure in her ſtones, and favour the duſt thereof.* Though in ruins the temple lay, the faithful Jews loved the place, and reſpected the very duſt : and how great muſt their delight then be, to ſee theſe ſtones revived from the rubbiſh ; and growing into an holy temple ? And thus the miniſters of the goſpel, in all the deſolations of the church, long for the glorious day of reſtitution ; and whenever the Lord puts it into the hearts of his people to pray for, and labour to ſerve, the intereſts of his Zion, it is a gracious ſign that the promiſed mercy is at hand. Herein alſo God will be abundantly glorified ; his ſaints will admire and adore him for the grace manifeſted in that great day, *v.* 16. and the heathen, ſtruck with reverence at the ſight of God's interpoſition in behalf of his people, ſhall be converted unto him, and the *kings of the earth* behold his *glory*, and yield themſelves up to his ſervice.

4. The prayers of the faithful ſhall be anſwered, *v.* 17. They are *deſtitute* of human help and comfort, and in their own ſpirits forlorn and dejected, but not the leſs dear to him : he will not deſpiſe thoſe whom man deſpiſeth, but as the contrite heart is his delight, they ſhall be accepted by him, and receive from him a rich ſupply of every want.

5. The record of this mercy ſhewn to Zion at the humble prayer of God's people, will encourage the faith, and excite the praiſes of ſucceeding generations of the faithful, created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, *v.* 18. *Note*, (1.) The paſt experience of God's care of his people ſhould ever encourage our confidence of the like protection. (2.) Our fathers' mercies, as well as our own, deſerve the grateful return of praiſe.

6. Even the groans of the poor priſoners, doomed to death, he hears, reſcues them from ruin, and magnifies thereby his mercy. *He hath looked down from the height of his ſanctuary : from heaven did the Lord behold the earth*, and all that was done under the ſun, with an eye of eſpecial regard to his people, particularly when ſuffering for his name's ſake, under the power of oppreſſors. *To hear the groaning of the priſoner*, bound for the teſtimony of God, and the faith of Jeſus, as multitudes have been, and ſtill continue under the power of the antichriſtian tyranny, and tortured in their inquiſitorial dungeons. *To looſe thoſe that are appointed to death* ; either to reſcue them from the death of the body, or to ſave the ſouls of thoſe who were tied and bound with the chain of their ſins, and in their own fears apprehended themſelves expoſed to the eternal death of body and ſoul in hell, but under deep conviction of their loſt eſtate, groaning in bitterneſs, cry and are heard, pardoned through the blood of Jeſus, and ſaved by ſovereign grace. *To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praiſe in Jeruſalem* ; as the captives releaſed from Babylon did, and as the church of the redeemed, delivered from the yoke of Antichriſt, will do ; and which is now daily done by every poor ſinner reſcued from the bondage of corruption, and the jaws of hell, whoſe heart, big with thankfulneſs, adores the wonders of redeeming love, and aſcribes the praiſe of all to Jeſus his Lord. *When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms to ſerve the Lord*, which will be moſt eminently the caſe, when the Lord Jeſus in the latter day ſhall take to himſelf his great power and reign, and thoſe who are the ſubjects of his happy government, ſhall with exultation rejoice in his kingdom and glory.

23. He † weakned my ſtrength in the way ; he ſhort- † Or, afflicted.
ned my days. 24. [t] I ſaid, O my God, take me not [t] Iſa. xxxviii. 10.
away in the midſt of my days : thy years *are* throughout
all generations. 25. [u] Of old haſt thou laid the founda- [u] Heb. i. 10.
tion of the earth : and the heavens *are* the work of thy
hands. 26. [x] They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt ‡ endure : [x] Iſa. li. 6. & lxv. 17. & lxvi. 22. Rom. viii. 20. 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10.
yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a garment ; as a veſture
ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed. 27.
But thou *art* the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end. ‡ Heb. Stand.
28. [y] The children of thy ſervants ſhall continue, and [y] Pſ. lxix. 36.
their ſeed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee.

v. 23—28. Though reduced to deepeſt diſtreſs, the church of God, and every faithful ſoul, ſhall riſe ſuperior to their foes, and triumph at the laſt. We have here,

1. The low eſtate to which the church was reduced. *He weakned my ſtrength in the way.* In our journey to the heavenly Canaan every believer meets with many a diſcouragement from the length and difficulties of the road, and mortal ſtrength is ready often to fail; and the church itſelf, as when Iſrael was led captive to Babylon, is threatned frequently with extirpation, and her name to be had no more in remembrance; whilſt God ſeems to have withdrawn his protection: and *he ſhortned my days*; ſuch was his apprehenſion under the impending danger; and thus alſo the faithful ſoul under the preſſures of ſickneſs, with Hezekiah may be apt to conclude, that ere he hath compleated half the years of man's appointed time, he ſhall go down to the grave.

2. The pſalmiſt, in the name of the faithful, prays for a reſpite, *v.* 24. for though death is diveſted of its terrors by the Lord Jeſus, and every child of God may count it their mercy to have the days which might have been occupied in the labours of time, employed in the triumphs of eternity; yet there are reaſons why even good men, as Paul, may wiſh to abide in the fleſh. Or, if it be applied to the church, it is a prayer founded on the promiſe, that ſhe ſhall never fail, whilſt the eternal God endures, *whoſe years are throughout all generations.* Jeſus, (to whom theſe words belong, *See Heb.* i. 10—12.) is the ever-living and ever-loving Saviour of his redeemed: the worlds which he hath made, ſhall periſh; and the heavens his hands expanded, be changed as a veſture, *v.* 26, 27. but he, unchangeably the ſame, *v.* 27. ſhall be the everlaſting portion of his people. They may ſafely truſt him with all their concerns in time and eternity, and, when they do ſo, ſhall experience, to their unſpeakable comfort, his power, grace, and love, conſtantly and uniformly exerted to bleſs, preſerve, and keep them to his everlaſting kingdom. And this,

3. The pſalmiſt confidently expects. *The children of thy ſervants ſhall continue*; a ſucceſſion of faithful people ſhall ariſe in every age; *and their ſeed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee.* To the lateſt poſterity, amidſt the ſevereſt perſecutions, and the ſtrongeſt efforts of ſin and Satan, the church ſhall be preſerved, till her militant days on earth being compleated, ſhe ſhall reign triumphant for ever in heaven with her exalted head.

PSALM CIII.

The pſalmiſt, 1. *Stirs up himſelf and his own ſoul to praiſe God,* ver. 1, 2. *for his favour to him in particular,* ver. 3—5. *to the church in general, and to all good men, to whom he is and will be juſt, kind, and conſtant,* ver. 6—18. *and for his government of the world,* ver. 19. 2. *He deſires the aſſiſtance of the holy angels, and all the works of God in praiſing him,* ver. 20—22.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. [a] BLESS the LORD, O my ſoul: and all that is within me, *bleſs* his holy name. 2. Bleſs the LORD, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits. 3. [b] Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: [c] who healeth all thy diſeaſes. 4. [d] Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction: [e] who crowneth thee with loving-kindneſs and tender mercies. 5. Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good *things*: *ſo that* [f] thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

[a] Pſ. civ. 1. & cxlvi. 1.
[b] Ibid. cxxx. 8. Mat. ix. 2, 6. Luke vii. 47.
[c] Exod. xv. 26.
[d] Job xxxiii. 24.
[e] Pſ. v. 12.
[f] Iſa. xl. 31.

v. 1—5. When God opens our hearts to a real diſcovery of what he is to us, and hath done for us, we ſhall be overwhelmed with wonder, and filled with thankſgiving. Thus the pſalmiſt, and with him every living ſervant of God,

1. Stirs up his ſoul to the grateful work of praiſe. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul*; proclaim his goodneſs and grace; *and all that is within me,* let every faculty be engaged, and every nerve extended, to *bleſs his holy name,* ſo worthy to be praiſed. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul*; delay not, nor be ſluggiſh in the ſervice; *and forget not all his benefits,* the leaſt ſo infinitely beyond our deſerts, and yet ſo great and numberleſs, that they are more than we are able to expreſs. *Note,* (1.) It is good often to commune with our own hearts, and ſtir them up to the needful work of gratitude. (2.) God deſerves our heart, our whole heart; and every faithful ſoul grieves that he doth not more univerſally ſurrender it to his bleſſed ſervice. (3.) We are ſtrangely apt to forget God's benefits, and have much reaſon to be deeply humbled at all times, that we are ſo unduly affected with the ſenſe of them, and ſo little thankful for them.

2. He enumerates a variety of particulars, for which his ſoul was bound to bleſs and praiſe God. [1.] *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities*: great, numberleſs, aggravated as they have been, he forgives them through Jeſus, freely, fully, eternally; ſo that they ſhall never riſe up again to accuſe, or condemn us, in an hour of death or a day of judgment. [2.] *Who healeth all thy diſeaſes.* Sunk under a complication of miſeries is the fallen ſpirit; diſeaſed in every faculty; fatally ſick, beyond the power of human medicine to recover; but there is balm in Gilead, and a phyſician there. He who is able to forgive all our ſins, can heal all our ſpiritual maladies by the power of his effectual grace; and every redeemed ſoul feels this, in a meaſure, by bleſſed experience, and praiſes the divine phyſician. [3.] *Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction.* Eternal ruin, becauſe of our ſins, awaited us, and hell yawned ready to receive the guilty wretch; but Jeſus interpoſed, paid the immenſe ranſom, ſtayed us from going down to the pit, and opened the gates of life and immortality to the loſt and periſhing. For this great redemption praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul! [4.] *Who crowneth thee with loving-kindneſs and tender mercies*; with all the infinite bleſſings contained in the everlaſting covenant, that, like a royal diadem, adorn the brows of every redeemed ſoul. [5.] *Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things*; *ſo that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.* *Good things* of a temporal nature, health, proſperity, long life, and juvenile vigour, even to old age. *Good things* of a ſpiritual nature, ſatisfying the hungrings and thirſtings of the heart with thoſe rich ſupplies of righteouſneſs and grace in Jeſus, that enable us with vigour, delight, and zeal, to run the way of God's commandments; and when coldneſs and decay would creep upon us, he renews our ſtrength; ſo that in the livelineſs and activity of our ſouls, even in old age, we mount up with wings as eagles, *Iſa.* xl. 31.

6. [g] The LORD executeth righteouſneſs and judgment for all *that are* oppreſſed. 7. [h] He made known his ways unto Moſes, his acts unto the children of Iſrael. 8. [i] The LORD is merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. 9. [k] He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever. 10. [l] He hath not dealt with us after our ſins: nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11. [m] For as the heaven is high above the earth: *ſo* great is his mercy toward them that fear him. 12. As far as the eaſt is from the weſt: *ſo* far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us. 13. [n] Like as a father pitieth *his* children: *ſo* the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14. For he knoweth our frame: [o] he remembreth that we *are* duſt. 15. *As for* man, [p] his days *are* as graſs: [q] as a flower of the field, ſo he flouriſheth. 16. For the wind paſſeth over it, and it † is gone; and [r] the place thereof ſhall know it no more. 17. But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him: and his righteouſneſs [s] unto children's children: 18. [t] To ſuch as keep his covenant, and to thoſe that remember his commandments to do them.

[g] Pſ. cxlvi. 7.
[h] Ib. cxlvii. 19.
[i] Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18. Deut. v. 10. Neh. ix. 17. Pſ. lxxxvi. 15. Jer. xxxii. 18.
[k] Pſ. xxx. 5. Iſa. lvii. 16. Jer. iii. 5. Mic. vii. 18.
[l] Ezra ix. 13.
[m] Eph. iii. 18.
[n] Mal. iii. 17.
[o] Pſ. lxxviii. 39.
[p] Ib. xc. 5. 1 Pet. i. 24.
[q] Job xiv. 1, 2. Jam. i. 10, 11.
† Heb. is not.
[r] Job vii. 10. & xx. 10.
[s] Exod. xx. 6.
[t] Deut. vii. 9.

v. 6—18. Not only his own mercies excited the pſalmiſt's praiſes, but he felt the kindneſs ſhown to others as done to himſelf.

1. He praiſes God for his general care over the poor and oppreſſed, *v.* 6. whoſe patron he was ever found, and whoſe wrongs, ſooner or later, he would vindicate.

2. He adores him for the peculiar favour ever ſhewn to his Iſrael, [1.] In revealing to them his mind and will; committing to them his lively oracles; in all the divinely-inſtituted ordinances of his worſhip, which he delivered to Moſes, inſtructing them in the way of ſalvation; and in all his acts of power and grace exerted for them, engaging their truſt in him, and love towards him. [2.] In his patience and pardoning mercy ſhown to his people, notwithſtanding their provocations. His nature is mercy, and his boſom the ſeat of tender compaſſion, *v.* 8. Slow to anger, he bears long even with the veſſels of wrath; and though provoked ſo greatly and ſo often by his own people, is ever ready to forgive: yea, when for our good he is compelled to chide, to viſit our offences with the rod, and our ſin with ſcourges, his paternal heart yearns over our ſufferings; he is in haſte to fall on the necks of his returning prodigals, and turn away from his wrathful indignation; to reſtore comfort to his mourners, and ſeal their pardon and peace with the kiſſes of his love, *v.* 9. Had we our deſerts indeed, we had long ſince lain down in everlaſting burnings; but far other have been his dealings with us, *v.* 10. His rich grace pardons our innumerable offences. High as the heavens are above the earth, ſo vaſt and boundleſs is his mercy; and far as the eaſt is from the weſt, ſo far hath he put away our iniquities: they are forgiven, yea forgotten; ſunk as a ſtone in the abyſs of his infinite love, and never to riſe up again, *v.* 11, 12. He knows our feeble frame, the *weakneſs of our bodies,* that would be cruſhed as the moth, if he laid for a moment his heavy hand upon us: *the infirmity of our fleſh,* ſo impotent to good, ſo prone to evil; and therefore he pities us, as the tendereſt father the child of his love, *v.* 13, 14. *Note,* (1.) If God's pity to us be ſo great, let us learn of him to exerciſe the like compaſſion towards each other. (2.) They who have a real ſenſe of their own deſerts, muſt ever ſtand amazed at themſelves that they are

out of hell. (3.) God's pardons are free, full, everlaſting: the greateſt diſhonour we can ſhew him, is to diſtruſt his promiſes, and queſtion his grace. [3.] In his unchangeable faithfulneſs. Man is the creature of a day, a worm of earth, frail as the withering graſs, and paſſing as the fading flower: one ſharp blaſt diſhevels all its beauty, and ſtrews the ground with its ruins. So death diſſolves our mortal frame, and paſſing into the unſeen world, we are quickly forgotten in the duſt: but God is to everlaſting years the ſame, and his mercy towards his people enduring as his being. From everlaſting he hath choſen them, to everlaſting he will bleſs them; for not only through life will he be gracious to them, but in death he will be their comfort, extend his favour to their ſeed, and be in eternity their portion. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is a more humbling and profitable conſideration, than the ſenſe of our own vanity and mortality. (2.) God's love towards his people is for ever: where once his mercy hath been ſhown, it will be everlaſting mercy; *for having loved his own, he loveth them unto the end.*

3. The character of the people of God, towards whom this love and kindneſs is manifeſted, is ſet forth; or rather this mercy ſhewn them, engages their hearts to him. *They fear him*, *v.* 17. not with that fear that hath bondage, but with that filial fear which ſprings from the ſpirit of adoption. *They keep his covenant*; live upon the ineſtimably precious promiſes of it; make it all their ſalvation, and all their deſire; and renouncing every other hope and confidence, depend alone on the compleat fulfilment of it made in the perſon of their Redeemer, *v.* 18. And they withal *remember his commandments to do them*; faithful to their obligations, and deſiring to approve themſelves obedient children to the Father of Mercies.

19. The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens: and his kingdom ruleth over all. 20. [u] Bleſs the LORD, ye his angels, † that excel in ſtrength, [x] that do his commandments, hearkning unto the voice of his word. 21. Bleſs ye the LORD, all *ye* his hoſts, [y] *ye* miniſters of his that do his pleaſure. 22. Bleſs the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion: [z] bleſs the LORD, O my ſoul.

[u] Pſ. cxlviii. 2.
† Heb. Mighty in ſtrength. Pſ. lxxviii. 25.
[x] Mat. vi 10.
[y] Dan. vii. 9, 10. Heb. i. 14.
[z] Pſ. civ. 1, 35.

v. 19—22. We have here,

1. God's eternal kingdom and glory ſet forth as an engagement to univerſal adoration of him. In heaven his radiant throne is placed, *prepared*, or *eſtabliſhed*, fixed and immoveable, and his dominion univerſal; for *his kingdom ruleth over all*; angels, men, yea devils, and all in heaven, earth, and hell, are ſubject to his government, and muſt ſubmit to his diſpoſals.

2. A call to render to this glorious Jehovah the univerſal praiſe due unto his name. [1.] Let the brighteſt and nobleſt creatures lead the way, and angels and archangels, his waiting hoſts, his attendant miniſters, mighty in power to fulfil God's high beheſts, deep in attention to his commanding word, let them begin the ſong, and bleſs their great Creator. [2.] Let all the hoſts of earth, the great congregation of the redeemed, unite their hearts and voices in his praiſe; eſpecially his miniſters of flame, whom he hath put in truſt with his goſpel, and ſent to ſpread the knowledge of his grace and good will to men, *v.* 21. [3.] Let all his works ſpeak forth his glory; the heavens above, with all their ſhining orbs; the world beneath, with every creature, animate or inanimate, that moves or grows, or dwells in air, earth, or ſea, all, all muſt learn to bleſs and praiſe. [4.] Shall then my ſoul, O Lord, alone be ſolitary, and ſilent amidſt the univerſal ſhout of thankſgiving? No; *bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul!* every day, ſtill increaſing, more conſtant, more enlarged, whilſt life and breath endures, may my boſom ſwell with gratitude, my lips be filled with praiſe, the earneſt and beginning of thoſe unceaſing praiſes which ſhall be my everlaſting employment, and my unutterable joy in the regions of eternal bliſs and glory.

PSALM CIV.

The object of the pſalmiſt's praiſes is Jeſus, the great author of all. (*Compare* ver. 5. *with* Heb. i. 7.) *The pſalm contains a moſt ſublime deſcription of his works, his greatneſs, and his glory. It ſets forth,* 1. *The ſplendor of his majeſty in the upper world,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The creation of the ſea, and the dry land,* ver. 5—9. 3. *The proviſion he makes for the maintenance of all the creatures according to their nature,* ver. 10—18, *and again,* ver. 27, 28. 4. *The regular courſe of the ſun and moon,* ver. 19—24. 5. *The furniture of the ſea,* ver. 25, 26. 6. *His ſovereign power over all the creatures,* ver. 29—32. *And, laſtly, he concludes with a pleaſant and firm reſolution to continue praiſing him,* ver. 33—35. *With which we ſhould heartily join in ſinging this pſalm.*

1. BLESS the LORD, O my ſoul: O LORD, my God, thou art very great, [a] thou art clothed with honour and majeſty. 2. [b] Who covereſt *thyſelf* with light, as *with* a garment: [c] who ſtretcheſt out the heavens like a curtain. 3. [d] Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, [e] who maketh the clouds his chariot, [f] who walketh upon the wings of the wind. 4. [g] Who maketh his angels ſpirits: his miniſters a flaming fire. 5. † [h] *Who* laid the foundations of the earth, *that* it ſhould not be removed for ever. 6. [i] Thou coveredſt it with the deep as *with* a garment: the waters ſtood above the mountains. 7. [k] At thy rebuke they fled: at the voice of thy thunder they haſted away. 8. They go up by the mountains: they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou haſt founded for them. 9. [l] Thou haſt ſet a bound that they may not paſs over: [m] that they turn not again to cover the earth.

[a] Pſ. xciii.
[b] Dan. vii. 9.
[c] Iſa. xl. 22. & xlv. 12.
[d] Amos ix. 6.
[e] Iſa. xix. 1.
[f] Pſ. xviii. 10.
[g] Heb. i. 14.
† Heb. He hath founded the earth upon her baſes.
[h] Job xxvi. 7. & xxxviii. 4. Pſ. xxiv. 2. & cxxxvi. 6.
[i] Gen. vii. 19.
[k] Gen. viii. 1.
[l] Pſ. xxxiii. 7. Jer. v. 22.
[m] Gen. ix. 11, 15.

v. 1—9. One page of the holy ſcriptures contains more of the true ſublime, than is to be found in all the volumes of poets and philoſophers, of which this pſalm is a ſtriking inſtance, where majeſty of diction, vaſtneſs of idea, and the tranſcendantly dazzling brightneſs of the images, conſpire to fill the ſoul with ſacred reverence and awe of the Divine Majeſty, whoſe glory paſſes before us.

1. The pſalmiſt calls upon his own ſoul to awake, to praiſe Jehovah, Jeſus; *exceeding great* in his divine perſon; in his amazing works of creation, providence, and grace; in his diſtinguiſhed offices; in ſelf-exiſtent glory, *clothed with majeſty and honour*; the object of univerſal adoration in earth and heaven; and what above all engages the heart, *my God*, in all whoſe greatneſs and glory I am intereſted.

2. He deſcribes the exceeding greatneſs of his covenant God, before whoſe majeſtic preſence all human grandeur vaniſhes, as the glow-worm before the meridian ſun. What monarch ever appeared ſo clothed, ſo enthroned, ſo attended? Light itſelf is his garment, ſo bright and dazzling, that even angels themſelves veil their faces when they approach his footſtool, unable to bear the intolerable blaze. The vaſte expanſe of heaven is the curtain of his pavilion, as eaſily ſtretched out at his word, and, when he pleaſes, as inſtantly rolled together, *v.* 2. Above the firmament his radiant throne is fixed; and on thoſe waters that float in the ſkies are the beams of his chambers laid. If he comes forth, the clouds his chariots wait, and he walketh on the wings of the wind; ſo ſwift to ſuccour his people, or pour vengeance on their foes, *v.* 3. Bright angels, miniſters of flame, ſpirits diſencumbered from the fetters of material ſubſtance, ſtand ready, the creatures of his hand and the willing ſervants of his pleaſure, *v.* 4. Fixed by him on a baſis immoveable, the ſolid earth abides, *v.* 6. The vaſt abyſs of waters, that at creation covered it, at his command haſted to the hollow deep, fled over the mountains, and through the vallies retired to their appointed places: there ſhut up in bounds they cannot paſs, the billows toſs themſelves in vain; ſince God hath ſaid, Hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further, and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed. Meditate, my ſoul, on theſe wonders of power, and ceaſeleſs adore this glorious Jehovah.

10. He ſendeth the ſprings into the valleys, *which* run among the hills. 11. They give drink to every beaſt of the field: the wild aſſes quench their thirſt. 12. By them ſhall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* † ſing among the branches. 13. [n] He watereth the hills from his chambers: [o] the earth is ſatiſfied with the fruit of thy works. 14. [p] He cauſeth the graſs to grow for the cattle, and herb for the ſervice of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth: 15. And [q] wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* oil to make *his* face to ſhine, and bread *which* ſtrengtheneth man's heart. 16. The trees of the LORD are full *of ſap*: the cedars of Lebanon [r] which he hath planted. 17. Where the birds make their neſts: *as for* the ſtork, the fir-trees *are* her houſe. 18. The high hills *are* a refuge for the wild goats, *and* the rocks for the conies.

† Heb. Give a voice.
[n] Pſ. cxlvii. 8.
[o] Ibid. lxv. 9.
[p] Gen. i. 29, 30. & iii. 18. & ix. 3.
[q] Judg. ix. 13. Pſal. xxiii. 5. Prov. xxxi. 6, 7.
[r] Num. xxiv. 6.

v. 10—18. Having mentioned the more auguſt diſplays of the Divine Majeſty in heaven and earth, the pſalmiſt paſſes on to conſider his bountiful providential care over the world, and the creatures in it, the work of his hands.

1. He ſends his rain from the clouds, his chambers, to fill the vaſt reſervoirs in the hills and mountains, from whence the ſprings burſt forth, and deſcend into the vallies beneath, *v.* 10. affording grateful refreſhment to the thirſty cattle, and at which even the wild aſſes quench their thirſt. Shall God then ſo kindly relieve the wants of creatures ſo worthleſs; and can we dare diſtruſt him, or fear he will let us lack?

2. By the ſides of theſe flowing ſtreams the birds take up their grateful abode, and on the branches ſing, as if attempting

to articulate thankſgiving for the proviſion God hath made. Shall they ſing, and man be ſilent? forbid it, gratitude!

3. By theſe kind rains alſo the earth impregnated, teems with vegetative life, well-pleaſed to bear thoſe fruits which God cauſes to ſpring forth, *v.* 13. *graſs for the cattle, and herb for the ſervice of man*, for food or phyſic. A rich proviſion, not only for neceſſity but delight: corn, wine, and oil, to ſtrengthen his body, to chear his ſpirits, and beautify his countenance, *v.* 15. *Note*, (1.) Since we are daily fed by God's bounty, it becomes us to be thankful for the proviſion, and dependant on his providence. (2.) If God hath given us ſo many good things, and, far from tantalizing us merely with the ſight, bids us enjoy his bleſſings, let us beware we do not by our abuſe turn that into our curſe, which was deſigned for our comfort.

4. The trees, as well as animals, are fed with their proper nouriſhment: filled with ſap, under God's care they grow; his hand planted them, and he waters them with the dew of heaven. Such are his ſaints, planted by his grace, and watered with heavenly influences; full of ſap and ſpiritual life within; increaſing with the increaſe of God; tall as the cedars, and bringing forth the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt to the praiſe and glory of God.

5. By ſtrange inſtinct the birds are taught to build their neſts on the lofty trees, as the place moſt ſuitable and ſafe, *v.* 17. and the wild goats, ſenſible of their defenceleſs ſtate, chuſe the high hills and precipices for their abode and refuge; and the feeble and fearful rabbits burrow under the rocks for their ſhelter, *v.* 18. Shall theſe all ſhew wiſdom in their choice, and ſhall we be the only fools in nature? Inſtead of flying to Jeſus as our refuge, and making him our munition of rocks, ſhall we neglect his great ſalvation, and careleſsly ſtand expoſed to every ſpiritual enemy, till we fall a prey to the deſtroyer?

19. [s] He appointeth the moon for ſeaſons; the ſun knoweth his going down. 20. [t] Thou makeſt darkneſs, and it is night: wherein all the beaſts of the foreſt † do creep *forth*. 21. [u] The young lions roar after their prey, and ſeek their meat from God. 22. The ſun ariſeth, they gather themſelves together, and lay them down in their dens. 23. Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour until the evening. 24. [x] O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. 25. *So is* this great and wide ſea, wherein *are* things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts. 26. There go the ſhips: *there is* that leviathan, *whom* thou haſt ‡ made to play therein. 27. [y] Theſe wait all upon thee: that thou mayſt give *them* their meat in due ſeaſon. 28. *That* thou giveſt them, they gather: thou openeſt thine hand, they are filled with good. 29. Thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; [z] thou takeſt away their breath, they die, and return to their duſt. 30. [a] Thou ſendeſt forth thy ſpirit, they are created: and thou reneweſt the face of the earth.

[s] Gen. i. 14.
[t] Iſa. xlv. 7.
† Or, do trample on the foreſt.
[u] Job xxxviii. 39. Joel i. 20.
[x] Prov. iii. 19.
‡ Heb. Formed.
[y] Pſ. cxlv. 15. & cxlvii. 9.
[z] Job. xxxiv. 14, 15. Pſ. cxlvi. 4. Eccleſ. xii. 7.
[a] Iſa. xxxii. 15. Ezek. xxxvii. 9.

v. 19—30. New wonders of God's power and providence, afford new matter for our contemplation and praiſe.

1. The day and night, and the luminaries which preſide over them, are the work of his hands: if the ſun knoweth his ſtated ſeaſons of revolution, and the moon in regular order fills and empties her orb with light, it is by Divine appointment, and with the wiſeſt purpoſes. The night, which affords welcome repoſe to man, emboldens the creatures, on whom the fear of man is impreſſed, to ariſe in queſt of food; the lions roaring, roam about the foreſt, and ſeek their meat from God who feedeth them, and when the ſun begins to rear his head, they return again to their dens: the welcome morning breaks, and ſlumbering man ariſes; the day is his time for labour, till the ſhadows of the evening warn him to retire, and recruit with repoſe his exhauſted ſtrength for the labours of another day. *Note*, (1.) If God at the lion's roar provides fleſh for his hunger, can it be poſſible his own children ſhould cry to him and be refuſed bread? (2.) In the night of deſertion and temptation the roaring lion, Satan, fails not to endeavour to ſcare the poor diſtreſſed ſoul: but lo! the morning breaks, and before the beams of the ſun of righteouſneſs our fears are diſpelled, and our enemy driven away. (3.) The day is for labour; a ſluggard is an offence to the ſun, that waſtes on him his glorious light. (4.) The ſhadows of the evening of death will be welcome to thoſe who have, through Divine grace, finiſhed the work God had given them to do.

2. The earth with all its riches, and the ſea with all its ſwarms of inhabitants, diſplay the wiſdom and power of the great Creator; *there go the ſhips*, tranſporting to other lands the various produce of different climes; and there fearleſs plays on the ſurface the vaſt leviathan; whilſt all the watery brood that ſwim or creep, both ſmall and great, depend on their Maker's hand, are fed from day to day, the leaſt not diſregarded, the largeſt liberally ſupplied, and all filled with good, receiving the portion ſuited to their wants. Shall men then be leſs careful to ſeek their meat from God, or dare impatiently murmur againſt the proviſion made for them?

3. In his hands they are to live or die; if he with-holds their ſupplies, they pine with hunger; if he command the breath he gave to depart, they return to their duſt. Yet, though death ſeems to threaten univerſal deſolation, a new creation in ſucceſſion riſes, no ſpecies of animals fails; the earth is repleniſhed with inhabitants, renewed daily by the riſing ſun, and annually by the returning ſpring.

4. Well might theſe views make the pious pſalmiſt cry out, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works!* ſo vaſt and various, and withal ſo exquiſitely finiſhed; *in wiſdom haſt thou made them all:* the works of man will hardly bear inſpection, and the teleſcopic eye deſcries the fouleſt flaws in the moſt finiſhed pieces; but here examination raiſes the wonder, all is executed beyond the power of imagination to add thereto, or the poſſibility of finding fault: *as for God, his work is perfect.*

31. The glory of the LORD ſhall † endure for ever: the LORD ſhall rejoice in his works. 32. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; [b] he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoke. 33. [c] I will ſing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will ſing praiſe unto my God, while I have my being. 34. My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet: I will be glad in the LORD. 35. Let the ſinners be conſumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more: bleſs thou the LORD, O my ſoul. ‡ Praiſe ye the LORD.

† Heb. be.
[b] Pſ. cxliv. 5.
[c] Pſ. lxiii. 4. & cxlvi. 2.
‡ Heb. Hallelujah. Rev. xix. 1, 3.

v. 31—35. We have here,

1. The pſalmiſt's reſolution, whilſt he hath a being, to give praiſe unto God for all he is in himſelf, and for the wonders he hath wrought. His glory is everlaſting; it will appear not only through time, but to eternity, and ſaints and angels will for ever adore him. *The Lord ſhall rejoice in his works*, well-pleaſed on the ſurvey; for all he doth, is well done: and, if he pleaſed, with one frown he could diſſolve all created nature. *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth*, convulſed with earthquakes: *he toucheth the hills, and* ſtrait the fire kindles, *they ſmoke*, and burſt forth in flames. Moſt worthy therefore is he to be praiſed, who is ſo greatly to be feared. Let the ſinner tremble, who obſtinately refuſes, or careleſsly neglects, to give him the glory due unto his name. If but a touch, a frown, is ſo terrible, how will the guilty ſoul endure the fierceneſs of his wrath, and the lighting down of his indignation?

2. He determines with delight to meditate continually on all his wondrous works: his works of providence, and his yet more pleaſing works of redemption and grace; the ſweeteſt ſubject that can engage the believer's thoughts; and as the bleſt effect of ſuch contemplation, *I will be glad in in the Lord*; the reflections will fill his ſoul with joy, and his lips with praiſe to this divine and adored Jeſus.

3. He foreſees the end of the wicked, and prays for the appearing of God's glory in their deſtruction. *Let the ſinners*, who obſtinately reject God's government, and rob him of his glory, *be conſumed out of the earth*, by the ſtroke of judgment, and the brightneſs of the Saviour's coming; *and let the wicked*, whoſe ways are one continued ſcene of impiety and iniquity, *be no more*; cut off with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord. *Note*, The hour is near, when all God's patience with the ungodly ſhall have an end, and ruin terrible and eternal overtake them.

4. He concludes with calling on his own ſoul to bleſs the Lord for his judgments on the wicked, and invites all God's people to join his praiſes. Here firſt in the pſalms the word *Hallelujah* occurs, and this on occaſion of the deſtruction of the ungodly. It is in the New Teſtament only found in *Rev.* xix. 1—6. where it is uſed on a like occaſion. *Note*, The damnation of the finally impenitent will redound to God's glory, as well as the ſalvation of the faithful; and both afford matter for his ſaints everlaſting praiſes.

PSALM CV.

In the foregoing pſalm we are taught to praiſe God for his wondrous works of common providence, with reference to the world in general. In this we are directed to praiſe him for his ſpecial favours to his church. Here is the preface, ver. 1—7. *and the hiſtory of the church in ſeveral articles.* 1. *God's covenant with the patriarchs,* ver. 8—11. 2. *His care of them while they were ſtrangers,* ver. 12—15. 3. *His raiſing up Joſeph to be the ſhepherd and ſtone of Iſrael,* ver. 16—22. 4. *The increaſe of Iſrael in Egypt, and their deliverance out of Egypt,* ver. 23—38. 5. *The care he took of them in the wilderneſs, and their ſettlement in Canaan,* ver. 39—45.

1. O give

1. [a] O Give thanks unto the LORD: call upon his
name: [b] make known his deeds among the people.
2. Sing unto him, ſing pſalms unto him: [c] talk
ye of all his wondrous works. 3. Glory ye in his holy
name: let the heart of them rejoice that ſeek the LORD.
4. Seek the LORD and his ſtrength, ſeek his face evermore.
5. [d] Remember his marvellous works that he hath
done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.
6. [e] O ye ſeed of Abraham his ſervant, ye children of
Jacob his choſen. 7. He *is* the LORD our God, [f] his
judgments *are* in all the earth.

[a] 1 Chron. xvi. 8. Iſa. xii. 4.
[b] Jer. li. 10.
[c] Pſ. cxlv. 6, 11.
[d] Ibid. lxxvii. 11.
[e] 1 Chron. xvi. 13.
[f] Iſa. xxvi. 9.

v. 1—7. Before the Pſalmiſt enters on his ſubject, he prefaces his diſcourſe with an exhortation to all around him.

1. To exalt and magnify the great and glorious God, and this in a variety of ways. *Give him thanks* for all his mercies paſt and preſent, and all his promiſes ſo rich and gracious. *Call upon his name* in humble faith, aſſured of being heard and anſwered: *make known his deeds*, what great things he hath done for your ſouls and bodies, to encourage the hope, and excite the praiſes of all the faithful: *talk of all his wondrous works*, let it be the delightful daily ſubject of your converſation. *Sing unto him, ſing pſalms unto him*, in tongue as well as heart rejoice, ye *that ſeek the Lord*, as the grand object of your deſires, and the rock of your hopes. Yea, *glory in his holy name*, renouncing all glorying in yourſelves, to make mention only of his ineſtimably precious righteouſneſs and grace. *Seek the Lord and his ſtrength*, who alone can enable you to ſtand againſt your ſpiritual foes, and overcome them: *ſeek his face evermore* in ceaſeleſs prayer in this world, that you may behold the light of his countenance for ever in a better.

2. Abundant reaſon there is why we ſhould thus do, if we conſider, (1.) His paſt mercies, *v.* 5. works of providence and grace, wonderful and great, ſuch as Iſrael experienced in Egypt and the deſert, and as the people of God daily find in their journey through this world's wilderneſs; and *the judgments of his mouth*, his revealed word, according to which we muſt finally be judged, and which will bring upon us the heavieſt condemnation, if we forget or neglect the great ſalvation therein contained. (2.) Our relation to him, as *the ſeed of Abraham his ſervant*, peculiarly honoured in that title, and whoſe poſterity ſhould copy his bright example; *the children of Jacob his choſen*; elect, according to the fore-knowledge of God, as Jacob was, and thereby obliged, as obedient children, to approve ourſelves to him, who hath choſen us from the beginning unto ſalvation. (3.) Our intereſt in him, as *the Lord our God*, our Jehovah, all-ſufficient to ſupply every want of his people, worthy their moſt enlarged praiſe; and to engage them thereunto, offering himſelf to be their portion and exceeding great reward. (4.) His univerſal government; *his judgments are in all the earth*, and as the God of all the earth, he is moſt worthy to be obeyed and adored by all, and for ever: or it may refer to the judgments of his vengeance on the wicked, in the flood, in the deſtruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or the plagues of Egypt, the fame of which were ſpread abroad, and God's juſtice and holineſs therein manifeſted, for which praiſe ſhould be aſcribed to him.

8. He hath remembred his covenant for ever, the
word *which* he commanded to a thouſand generations.
9. [g] Which *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his
oath unto Iſaac: 10. And confirmed the ſame unto Jacob
for a law, *and* to Iſrael *for* an everlaſting covenant:
11. Saying, [h] Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan,
† the lot of your inheritance. 12. [i] When they were *but*
a few men in number: yea, very few, [k] and ſtrangers in
it. 13. When they went from one nation to another,
from *one* kingdom to another people. 14. [l] He ſuffered
no man to do them wrong: yea, [m] he reproved kings for
their ſakes: 15. *Saying*, Touch not mine [n] anointed,
and do [o] my prophets no harm. 16. Moreover, [p] he
called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole [q]
ſtaff of bread. 17. [r] He ſent a man before them, [s] *even*
Joſeph, *who* was ſold for a ſervant. 18. [t] Whoſe feet
they hurt with fetters: ‡ he was laid in iron. 19. Until
the time that his word came: the word of the LORD
tried him. 20. [u] The king ſent and looſed him: *even*
the ruler of the people, and let him go free. 21. [x] He
made him lord of his houſe, and ruler of all his ‖ ſubſtance:
22. To bind his princes at his pleaſure: and
teach his ſenators wiſdom. 23. [y] Iſrael alſo came into
Egypt: and Jacob ſojourned in the land of Ham. 24.
And [z] he increaſed his people greatly: and made them
ſtronger than their enemies.

[g] Gen. xvii. 2. & xxii. 16, &c. & xxvi. 3. & xxviii. 13. & xxxv. 11. Luke i. 73. Heb. vi. 17.
[h] Gen. xiii. 15. & xv. 18.
† Heb. The cord. Deut. xxxii. 9.
[i] Gen. xxxiv. 30. Deut. vii. 7. & xxvi. 5.
[k] Heb. xi. 9.
[l] Gen. xxxv. 5.
[m] Ibid. xii. 17. & xx. 3, 7.
[n] 1 John ii. 27.
[o] Gen. xx. 7.
[p] Ibid. xli. 54.
[q] Lev. xxvi. 26. Iſa. iii. 1. Ezek. iv. 16.
[r] Gen. xlv. 5. & l. 20.
[s] Gen. xxxvii. 28.
[t] Ibid. xxxix. 20. & xl. 15.
‡ Heb. His ſoul.
[u] Gen. xli. 14.
[x] Ibid. xl. 40.
‖ Or poſſeſſion.
[y] Gen. xlvi. 6. Pſ. lxxviii. 51.
[z] Exod. i. 7.

v. 8—24. The grand ſubject of the Pſalmiſt's thankſgiving is the everlaſting covenant eſtabliſhed in Chriſt Jeſus, from eternity, and ſure to all his ſpiritual ſeed to the lateſt ages, even to a thouſand generations, *v.* 8.

1. He revealed it to Abraham, confirmed it with an oath to him and his ſeed Iſaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the ſame promiſes; and as the type of the eternal inheritance deſigned for his ſpiritual children, aſſured him of the poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan, as the inheritance of his natural poſterity.

2. He fulfilled the promiſe in oppoſition to all human appearances, notwithſtanding the difficulties which ſeemed inſurmountable. They were few, very few; ſtrangers, not poſſeſſed of a foot of land: driven from place to place, ſojourning ſometimes in Egypt, ſometimes in Philiſtia, on account of the famine; but in all their wandrings, ſtill Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob experienced the Divine protection; reſtrained by Divine power, none dared lift their hand to hurt them, and even kings are reproved, *Gen.* xii. 17. xx. 6. and warned how dangerous it would be to touch God's anointed ones, or harm his prophets. *Note*, (1.) Whatever difficulties oppoſe God's promiſes they will vaniſh; when God will work, none can lett it. (2.) Few, very few, in every age are the faithful; yet is it the Father's good pleaſure to give them the kingdom. (3.) The people of God are indeed ſtrangers and pilgrims upon earth, but God hath prepared for them a city: when their wandrings here below are ended, there remaineth for them an eternal reſt. (4.) God's prophets are his peculiar care; he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye, ſo jealous is he to vindicate their wrongs.

3. In the extraordinary caſe of Joſeph, God, in a moſt aſtoniſhingly providential manner, opened a way for the accompliſhment of his deſigns of mercy towards them. He ſent a famine on the land of Canaan, and *brake the ſtaff of bread*, ver. 17. ſo that inſtant death and utter deſtruction ſeemed to threaten the holy ſeed; but he had made proviſion for their ſuſtenance, by means of Joſeph, whom though his envious brethren had wickedly ſold for a ſlave, God had deſigned to ſend as their deliverer, after having experienced the deepeſt diſtreſſes, under the moſt cruel and unjuſt accuſations of an enraged miſtreſs, whoſe embraces he rejected, doomed to the loweſt dungeon, bound in fetters of iron, and loaded with the moſt ignominious reproaches, but all wrought together for his good; when his faith and patience had been tried, God's word came to him, and divinely taught to interpret the dreams of his fellow-priſoners, the fame reached Pharoah's court, and he ſought the inſpired priſoner. Convinced by his interpretation of his dreams, that God's ſpirit dwelt in him, *Gen.* xli. 38. he looſed his bands, and vindicated his injured innocence from the accuſations laid againſt him, *v.* 20. advanced him to the higheſt poſt in his kingdom; delegated to him the exerciſe of his royal power to enact laws which all, even the greateſt muſt obey; and, wiſer than the aged ſenators, appointed him their teacher, whence probably flowed the ſuperior wiſdom of the Egyptians. By him, his aged father and all his family were brought to Egypt, and in the land of Goſhen richly provided for during the days of famine; where they increaſed exceedingly, and God's promiſes began to take effect. *Note*, (1.) Myſterious are the ways of Providence. When all things ſeem moſt againſt us, they are often really working for our good. (2.) Joſeph in his humiliation and exaltation is the type of Jeſus, whoſe ſufferings far exceeded, and whoſe glory infinitely excelleth. (3.) In every advancement we muſt remember whoſe hand hath raiſed us, and that we only then adorn our ſtation, when we ſeek to make it ſubſervient to the advancement of his kingdom and glory. (4.) Whatever calumnies and ſufferings the ſaints of God endure, when their faith is tried, they ſhall be diſcharged with honour. (5.) God's church will never want a friend; he can raiſe them protectors where they leaſt expect to find favour. (6.) We are ſojourners on earth, as Jacob in that ſtrange land: this is not our home nor our reſt; nay, though never ſo much increaſed in worldly goods, we would not ſit here below, but look for our promiſed Canaan, and long for our heavenly inheritance.

25. [a] He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal
ſubtilly with his ſervants. 26. [b] He ſent Moſes his ſervant,
and Aaron whom he had choſen. 27. [c] They
ſhewed † his ſigns among them, and wonders in the
land of Ham. 28. [d] He ſent darkneſs, and made it
dark: and [e] they rebelled not againſt his word. 29. [f]
He turned their waters into blood, and ſlew their fiſh.
30. [g] Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in
the chambers of their kings. 31. [h] He ſpake, and there
came divers ſorts of flies, *and* lice in all their coaſts.
32. [i] He gave them hail for rain: *and* flaming fire in
their land. 33. [k] He ſmote their vines alſo and their figtrees:
and brake the trees of their coaſts. 34. [l] He
ſpake, and the locuſts came: and caterpillars, and that
without number. 35. And did eat up all the herbs in
their land: and devoured the fruit of their ground.

[a] Exod. i. 8, &c.
[b] Ibid. iii. 10. & iv. 12, 14.
[c] Exod. vii. 9. Pſ. lxxviii. 43, &c.
† Heb. Words of his ſigns.
[d] Exod. x. 22.
[e] Pſ. xcix. 7.
[f] Exod. vii. 20.
[g] Ibid. viii. 6.
[h] Ibid. viii. 17, 24.
[i] Ibid. ix. 23.
[k] Pſ. lxxviii. 47.
[l] Exod. x. 4, 13.

36. [m] He ſmote alſo all the firſt-born in their land: [n] the
chief of all their ſtrength. 37. [o] He brought them forth
alſo with ſilver and gold: and *there was* not one feeble
perſon among their tribes. 38. [p] Egypt was glad when
they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.
39. [q] He ſpread a cloud for a covering: and fire to give
light in the night. 40. [r] *The people* aſked, and he
brought quails: [s] and ſatisfied them with the bread of
heaven. 41. [t] He opened the rock, and the waters
guſhed out, they ran in the dry places *like* a river. 42.
For he remembred [u] his holy promiſe, *and* Abraham his
ſervant. 43. And he brought forth his people with
joy, *and* his choſen with ‡ gladneſs: 44. [x] And gave
them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the
labour of the people: 45. [y] That they might obſerve
his ſtatutes, and keep his laws. [z] Praiſe ye the LORD.

[m] Ex. xii. 29. Pſ. lxxviii. 51.
[n] Gen. xlix. 3.
[o] Ex. xii. 35.
[p] Ibid. xii. 33.
[q] Ibid. xiii. 21.
[r] Ibid. xvi. 12.
[s] Pſ. lxxviii. 24, 25.
[t] Exod xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11. Pſ. lxxviii. 16. 1 Cor. x. 4.
[u] Gen. xv. 14. Exod. ii. 24.
‡ Heb. Singing.
[x] Deut. vi. 10, 11. Joſh. iii. 17.
[y] Deut. iv. 1, 40.
[z] Pſ. civ. 35.

v. 25—45. No ſooner became Iſrael a nation, than jealouſy at their increaſe aroſe in the heart of the Egyptians. God no longer reſtraining the native enmity of their minds, with cruelty and craft they ſought to deſtroy his people, but God was with them, and delivered them.

1. He ſent Moſes and Aaron to ſhew his ſigns, or *the words of his ſigns*, his miracles, accompanied with their explication, *and they rebelled not againſt his word*, no fear of Pharoah, nor diſtruſt of the Divine power accompanying them, nor pity for the Egyptians prevented the faithful execution of their commiſſion. *Note*, When God's work is to be done, no danger or difficulties muſt deter us.

2. His terrible plagues overtook their perſecutors. Thick darkneſs, which might be felt, covered them, *v.* 28. their waters became blood, their fiſh died, *v.* 29. the loathſome frogs filled even their houſes, *v.* 30. flies ſwarm around them, and lice torment them, *v.* 31. The battering hail broke down their trees, ſpoiled their vines, and the conſuming fire devoured around, *v.* 32, 33. The locuſts obſcured the ſkies, and the caterpillars conſumed every green thing the hail had left, *v.* 34. At laſt death, on his pale horſe, ſtalked through the land, and every houſe in bitterneſs lamented their firſt-born ſlain, *v.* 36. Who can ſtand before this holy Lord God? how fearful a thing to fall into his hands! Let us tremble before him, and never provoke, by our impenitence and hardneſs of heart, his intolerable wrath.

3. God enriched, as well as releaſed them with the ſpoils of the Egyptians. In haſte to diſmiſs them, they gladly gave them all they required, gold and ſilver; the wages they had indeed earned by long ſervitude, which God will now have repaid. Notwithſtanding their hard ſervitude, and dwelling in the midſt of a nation plagued with ſo many diſeaſes and deaths, *there was not a feeble perſon among their tribes*, all vigorous, ſtrong, healthy, and abounding with riches. Terrified with what they had felt, the Egyptians were glad of their departure, and honourably diſmiſſed thoſe whom they had treated with ſuch ignominy and ſeverity, *v.* 38. and Iſrael, happy in their deliverance, now turned the groanings of their ſervitude into ſongs of exultation and triumph. And ſuch changes ſtill doth the Lord often make in the ſtate of his afflicted people even here, turning their wants into abundance, their ſhame to honour, their mourning into gladneſs; and if not before, at death at leaſt, they ſhall be brought forth from the houſe of their priſon, and everlaſting joy be upon their heads.

4. He preſerved, protected, and provided for them richly, as he had reſcued them wonderfully. Over them he ſpread a cloud by day, to defend them from the ſultry beams: by night, the pillar of fire gave them light. He ſpread a table for them in the wilderneſs, furniſhed them with bread from heaven, and at their prayer added the moſt delicious fowls to their repaſt; whilſt by a continual miracle, the waters guſhing from the rock, followed them to ſlake their thirſt, amidſt the burning ſands, *v.* 39, 41. *Note*, With ſuch kind care are all the Iſrael of God ſtill watched over, in their journey through the wilderneſs of the world to the heavenly Canaan. Jeſus, *their cloud*, ſhelters them from the fierce wrath of God; *their fire*, he lightens their darkneſs in the night of deſertion and temptation, and warms their hearts when ſunk under diſcouragement. He is *the bread from heaven*, who ſtill gives life to his people, and on him, by faith, they daily feed, and find the ſweeteſt nouriſhment to their ſouls. He is the *rock of living waters*, where the thirſty ſinner may come and freely drink in conſolations, as out of a river.

5. He conducted them ſafe to the land of Canaan, the inheritance aſſigned to Abraham, and now poſſeſſed in virtue of that grant, by his poſterity, the heirs of the promiſe made unto their fathers. God is faithful; however long he may ſeem in the fulfilment of his word, the iſſue is certain: may we with faith and patience wait for it!

6. All this God did; not for their deſerts, but for the ſake of his covenant made to Abraham, and to prove them, whether ſuch amazing mercies would awaken their gratitude, and engage them to *obſerve his ſtatutes, and keep his laws*. Thus ſtill it is not for our worthineſs, but for the ſake of the covenant eſtabliſhed with Jeſus, that God ſhews reſpect to us vile ſinners; and highly it becomes us to teſtify our ſenſe of ſuch goodneſs, by yielding up to him ourſelves, our bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits, to ſerve him with all fidelity in the goſpel of his dear ſon. And when we do ſo, we ſhall eminently fulfil the word of exhortation with which the Pſalmiſt concludes, *Praiſe ye the Lord*, our lives, as well as lips, ſhewing forth his glory and our gratitude.

PSALM CVI.

The foregoing pſalm was a hiſtory of God's goodneſs to Iſrael: this is a hiſtory of their rebellions and provocations, and yet it begins and ends with hallelujah; for even ſorrow for ſin muſt not put us out of tune for praiſing God. In this pſalm we have, 1. *The preface to the narrative ſpeaking honour to God*, ver. 1, 2. *comfort to the ſaints*, ver. 3. *and the deſire of the faithful toward's God's favour*, ver. 4, 5. 2. *The narrative itſelf of the ſins of Iſrael, aggravated by the great things God did for them, an account of which is intermixed. Their provocations at the Red ſea*, ver. 6—12. *Luſting*, ver. 13—15. *Mutinyings* ver. 16—18. *Worſhipping the golden calf*, ver. 19—23. *Murmuring*, ver. 24—37. *Joining themſelves to Baal-peor*, ver. 28—31. *Quarrelling with Moſes*, ver. 32, 33. *Incorporating themſelves with the nations of Canaan*, ver. 34—39. *To which is added an account how God had rebuked them for their ſins, and yet ſaved them from ruin*, ver. 40—46. 3. *The concluſion of the pſalm with prayer and praiſe*, ver. 47, 48.

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD, [b] O give thanks unto the
LORD, for *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth*
for ever. 2. Who can utter the mighty acts of the
LORD? *who* can ſhew forth all his praiſe? 3. Bleſ-
ſed *are* they that keep judgment: *and* he that doth
righteouſneſs [c] at all times. 4. [d] Remember me, O
LORD, with the favour *that thou beareſt unto* thy peo-
ple: O viſit me with thy ſalvation: 5. That I may ſee
the good of thy choſen, that I may rejoice in the glad-
neſs of thy nation: that I may glory with thine inheri-
tance.

[a] Pſ. civ. 35.
[b] 1 Chron. xvi. 34. Pſ. cvii. 1. & cxviii. 1. & cxxxvi. 1.
[c] Acts xxiv. 16.
[d] Pſ. cxix. 132.

v. 1—5. This pſalm begins as the foregoing concluded, with *Hallelujah*, for praiſe is always comely; and amidſt every complaint we have to make, it *becometh well the juſt to be thankful*.

1. The Pſalmiſt calls on us to bleſs God, *for he is good*, eſſentially ſo in himſelf, and manifeſting it to us in acts of kindneſs ſo ſurpaſſing great: *for his mercy endureth for ever*, from everlaſting to everlaſting his people will experience his regard, and therefore are bound to render him the tribute of praiſe. Though *who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord*, recount the innumerable inſtances of his kindneſs, and wondrous interpoſition? *who can ſhew forth all his praiſe?* alas! our utmoſt efforts come infinitely ſhort, and the beſt of our ſongs are ſcarçe the liſpings of infancy.

2. He pronounces a bleſſing on God's faithful people. *Bleſſed are they that keep judgment*, make God's word their rule, and deſire to walk according thereunto, *and he that doth righteouſneſs at all times*, placing continually his ſole dependance for acceptance with God on the righteouſneſs of Jeſus; or with ſteady integrity and ſimplicity ſeeking before God and man to approve himſelf in all his ways, and at all ſeaſons.

3. He prays for himſelf, that by divine grace he may be enabled to approve his fidelity to God, and partake of the bleſſedneſs of his people. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou beareſt unto thy people*; God hath a choſen generation, that from eternity were the peculiar objects of his regard, and whom he decreed to bring through grace to glory: we need no more to make us bleſſed, than to be remembered by him as of that happy number. *O viſit me with thy ſalvation!* for this cometh from God alone, and in time and eternity is to be received as the gift of his boundleſs favour and ſovereign grace; and poſſeſſed of this, he may hope to ſhare in the felicity of God's choſen, to partake in their eternal inheritance, and join their everlaſting ſongs around the throne of glory. May this be ever my prayer and portion!

6. [c] We have ſinned with our fathers: we have com-
mitted iniquity, we have done wickedly. 7. Our fa-
thers underſtood not thy wonders in Egypt, they re-
membered not the multitude of thy mercies, [f] but provo-
ked *him* at the ſea, *even* at the Red ſea. 8. Neverthe-
leſs, he ſaved them for his name's ſake: [g] that he might
make his mighty power be known. 9. [h] He rebuked
the Red ſea alſo, and it was dried up: ſo he led them
through the depths as through the wilderneſs. 10. And
he ſaved them from the hand of him that hated *them*:
and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. 11.
And

[e] 1 Kings viii. 47. Dan. ix. 5.
[f] Exod. xiv. 11, 12.
[g] Ibid. ix. 16.
[h] Ibid. xiv. 21. Pſ. xviii. 15. Iſa. lxiii. 42.

And [i] the waters covered their enemies: there was not
one of them left. 12. [k] Then believed they his words,
they ſang his praiſe. 13. [l] They ſoon forgat his works,
they waited not for his counſel: 14. [m] But † luſted ex-
ceedingly in the wilderneſs, and tempted God in the de-
ſert. 15. And [n] he gave them their requeſt, but ſent
leanneſs into their ſoul. 16. [o] They envied Moſes alſo
in the camp, *and* Aaron the ſaint of the LORD. 17. [p]
The earth opened and ſwallowed up Dathan, and cover-
ed the company of Abiram. 18. And [q] a fire was kind-
led in their company; the flame burnt up the wicked.
19. [r] They made a calf in Horeb, and worſhipped the
molten image. 20. Thus [s] they changed their glory in-
to the ſimilitude of an ox that eateth graſs. 21. They
forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things
in Egypt: 22. Wondrous works [t] in the land of Ham,
and terrible things in the Red ſea. 23. [u] Therefore he
ſaid that he would deſtroy them, had not Moſes his
choſen [x] ſtood before him in the breach: to turn away
his wrath, leſt he ſhould deſtroy *them*. 24. Yea, they
deſpiſed the ‡ pleaſant land: they believed not his word:
25. [y] But murmured in their tents, *and* hearkned not un-
to the voice of the LORD. 26. [z] Therefore he lifted
up his hand againſt them, to overthrow them in the
wilderneſs: 27. To overthrow their ſeed alſo among the
nations, and [a] to ſcatter them in the lands. 28. [b] They
joined themſelves unto Baal-peor, and ate the ſacrifices
of the dead. 29. Thus they provoked *him* to anger with
their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.
30. [c] Then ſtood up Phinehas, and executed judgment:
and *ſo* the plague was ſtayed. 31. And that was count-
ed unto him for righteouſneſs, unto all generations for
evermore. 32. [d] They angred *him* alſo at the waters of
ſtrife, ſo that it went ill with Moſes for their ſakes: 33.
[e] Becauſe they provoked his ſpirit, ſo that he ſpake un-
adviſedly with his lips.

[i] Exod. xiv. 27. & xv. 5.
[k] Exod. xiv. 31. & xv. 1.
[l] Exod. xv. 24. & xvii. 2.
[m] Num. xi. 4, 33. Pſ. lxxviii. 18. 1 Cor. x. 6.
† Heb. Luſted a luſt
[n] Numb. xi. 31.
[o] Ibid. xiv. 1, &c.
[p] Num. xvi. 31. Deut. xi. 6.
[q] Num. xvi. 35, 46.
[r] Exod. xxxii. 4.
[s] Jer. ii. 11. Rom. i. 23.
[t] Pſ. lxxviii. 51. & cv. 27.
[u] Ex. xxxii. 10, 11, 32. Deut. ix. 19. & x. 10.
[x] Ezek. xiii. 5. & xxii. 30.
‡ Heb. Land of deſire.
[y] Num. xiv. 2.
[z] Ibid. xiv. 28. Ezek. xx. 15.
[a] Lev. xxvi. 33. Ezek. xx. 23.
[b] Num. xxv. 3. & xxxi. 16. Hoſ. ix. 10.
[c] Num. xxv. 10.
[d] Num. xx. 13. Deut. iii. 26.
[e] Num. xx. 10.

v. 6—33. We have here an account of God's mercies, and Iſrael's rebellions, which in their hiſtory was before at large recorded, and need be often brought to remembrance, both for a warning againſt their ſins, and an encouragement ſtill to hope in God's mercy.

1. With humbling confeſſions the people of God acknowledge their own and their fathers tranſgreſſions: their fathers had done bad, very bad; and they, too prone to copy their examples, have added to the immenſe account, and farther augmented the fierce anger of the Lord. *Note*, (1.) We have all reaſon to lament our firſt father's ſin as our own, for in him we fell. (2.) We cannot upbraid the ſinners before us; we are, if we know ourſelves, in juſt the ſame condemnation. (3.) True penitents never ſeek to palliate, or excuſe their provocation, but with holy indignation againſt themſelves, deſire to take utter ſhame to themſelves for their tranſgreſſions.

2. The ſins of their forefathers are here ſet forth, and they were many, great, and aggravated.

They were *ſtupidly inſenſible*, and *ſtrangely forgetful*, v. 7. they underſtood not the deſigns of God in the miracles they ſaw, which were intended, not merely to reſcue them from their bondage, but to fix them in his worſhip; and remembered not to-day the mercies of yeſterday, but the moment new difficulties aroſe, all their doubts returned, as at the Red ſea, when though ſo lately reſcued by God's mighty arm, they queſtioned his power, and diſtruſted his faithfulneſs. Juſtly might he have left them to periſh there, but for his own glory, to make his power and his faithfulneſs known, *v.* 8. Though they deſerved nothing at his hands, he opened a paſſage for them thro' the divided waters, and ſafely as on the dry ground led them through the depths of the ſea, *v.* 9. He interpoſed his cloud between them and their purſuing enemies; and the hatred Pharaoh and his hoſt bore them, only haſtened their ruin, whilſt daring to purſue the Iſraelites through the Red ſea, the waters overwhelmed them, and left not a man alive, *v.* 11. A deliverance ſo marvellous extorted momentary praiſe, and whilſt the wonder met their eyes, they credited God's promiſe, *v.* 12. but ſcarce the ſong had dropped from their lips, before they forgat the mercy; impatient to be in Canaan, they would not bear delay, nor wait God's time, nor take his counſel, *v.* 13.

They were *diſcontent* with God's proviſion; though he fed them with bread from heaven, they luſted after fleſh, and whilſt their inordinate appetite was raging, their unbelief bore equal pace with it, diſtruſting his power to ſatisfy their cravings, *v.* 14. but in diſpleaſure he granted their requeſts, and therewith *ſent leanneſs withal into their ſoul*, the curſe of God was upon their tables, terrors in their conſcience, and their delicious morſels ſurfeited inſtead of ſatisfying. Thus inordinate appetites gratified, bring their plague along with them, and the gifts God beſtows in anger, prove the moſt fatal ſnares to the ſoul.

Rebellious; they rejected God's government, refuſing to obey their divinely-appointed generals Moſes and Aaron, envying the dignity to which they were advanced, the one as the captain, the other as the high-prieſt of God's people. But God eſpouſed their cauſe; the arch-rebels Dathan and Abiram, with their families, fell alive from the eminence to which they aſpired, into the gaping pit, ſwallowed up by the earth, whilſt fire from God devoured their wicked adherents, and ſcattered their unhallowed cenſers, *v.* 16, 17, 18. *Note*, (1.) To be envied is the tribute merit and greatneſs muſt expect to pay. (2.) Reſiſtance againſt the powers ordained of God, is rebellion againſt himſelf, and will be puniſhed accordingly.

Idolatrous: nowithſtanding all the warnings they had received, and the wonders they had ſeen in the plagues executed on thoſe who thus offended in Egypt, they copied their manners, and choſe their Gods; even before Horeb, where God's viſible preſence appeared in their view on the mountain's top, there did the golden calf rear his hateful head, and received their ſhameful and impious adorations, paying the glory due to the incorruptible God, to a ſenſeleſs idol, even to the baſe image of an ox that eateth hay, *v.* 19—22. Fierce wrath aroſe, deſtruction utter and everlaſting threatned them, had not Moſes, their advocate, pleaded earneſtly for them, and ſtayed the deſcending arm of vengeance. Behold the mighty efficacy of fervent prayer: if Moſes thus prevailed, ſhall not that advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, whom God heareth always, effectually ſecure his redeemed people, notwithſtanding all their provocations, from the wrath they have deſerved? Aſſuredly.

Murmurers and *infidels*; they gave no credit to God's word, hearkened to the miſrepreſentations of the wicked ſpies, and neither believed the country worth the pains of conqueſt, nor themſelves able to cope with the children of Anak. With inſolent effrontery, they charged God with the baſeſt intentions, *Num.* xiv. 2, 3. and when reminded of his power and promiſe, were ready to ſtone their faithful monitor. Juſtly provoked, he ſwore in wrath they ſhould not enter into his reſt, and with his mighty arm ſlew all the men of that generation in the wilderneſs; and though he brought in their poſterity into the land they had deſpiſed, yet wrath was upon them, and they were ſcattered by repeated captivities, and to this day continue evidences of the truth of this prophecy in their preſent diſperſion. *Note*, (1.) Unbelief is among the moſt mortal ſins. (2.) God's people have a goodly heritage, and they who have neglected and deſpiſed it, will ſhortly wonder and periſh. (3.) They who murmur againſt God, and his diſpenſations, bring his fierce wrath upon their ſouls.

Adulterers, corporally and ſpiritually; they joined themſelves to Baal-peor, partaking in all the infamous rites of that obſcene and filthy idol: feaſting on the ſacrifices offered to the ſenſeleſs idol, or their deceaſed and deified heroes, provoking moſt highly the Divine diſpleaſure, by ſuch contempt for his inſtitutions, *v.* 28, 29. and ſoon they felt the ſcourge, the dreadful plague made havock through their hoſt, till Phinehas, filled with zeal, by one great act of juſtice on the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſinners Zimri and Cozbi, obtained a ceſſation of the judgment, and the plague was ſtayed; an atchievement, the fame of which will deſcend to lateſt ages, and for which the dignity of the prieſthood was conferred upon himſelf and his deſcendants. *Note*, (1.) The ſaints of God are jealous of God's honour, and zealous to oppoſe the progreſs of iniquity. (2.) Thoſe who honour God, he will honour.

Finally, by their perverſeneſs at the waters of ſtrife, *Numb.* x. 3—5. they angred God, and by exaſperating the ſpirit of the meekeſt of men, with their repeated provocations, drew him into ſin, which excluded him from the promiſed land, *Numb.* xx. 10—12. *Note*, (1.) When aggravated provocations urge us, it is hard, very hard, to reſtrain our lips from ſpeaking unadviſedly. (2.) They who draw others to ſin, are chargeable with the guilt they bring upon them. (3.) It will be no excuſe for ſin at God's bar, to plead the provocations or temptations which led us into it. (4.) They who ungratefully abuſe their beſt friends, by their fretfulneſs and perverſeneſs, are juſtly puniſhed by their removal, that they may feel the loſs of the bleſſing they ſo little knew how to value.

34. [f] They did not deſtroy the nations, [g] concerning
whom the LORD commanded them: 35. [h] But were
mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.
36. And they ſerved their idols: [i] which were a ſnare
unto them. 37. Yea, [k] they ſacrificed their ſons and their
daughters unto devils, 38. And ſhed innocent blood,
even the blood of their ſons and of their daughters,
whom they ſacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and
[l] the land was polluted with blood. 39. Thus were they
defiled with their own works, and [m] went a whoring with
their own inventions. 40. Therefore was the wrath of

[f] Judg. i. 21, 27.
[g] Deut. vii. 2.
[h] Judg. ii. 2. & iii. 5, 6. Iſa. ii. 6.
[i] Exod. xxiii. 33. Deut. vii. 16.
[k] 2 Kings xvi. 3. Iſa. lvii. 5. Ezek. xvi. 20. & xx. 26. 1 Cor. x. 20.
[l] Num. xxxv. 33.
[m] Lev. xvii. 7. Num. xv. 39.

the LORD kindled againſt his people, inſomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. 41. And [n] he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. 42. Their enemies alſo oppreſſed them, and they were brought into ſubjection under their hand. 43. [o] Many times did he deliver them, but they provoked *him* with their counſel, and were † brought low for their iniquity. 44. Nevertheleſs, he regarded their affliction when [p] he heard their cry. 45. And [q] he remembred them for his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies. 46. [r] He made them alſo to be pitied of all thoſe that carried them captives. 47. [s] Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, [t] to give thanks unto thy holy name, *and* to triumph in thy praiſe. 48. Bleſſed *be* the LORD God of Iſrael from everlaſting to everlaſting: and let all the people ſay, Amen. [u] Praiſe ye the LORD.

n Jude iii. 8. & iv. 2.
o Judges ii. 16. Neh. ix. 28.
† Heb. Or, impoveriſhed, or weakened.
p Judg. iii. 9. & iv. 3. & vi. 7. & x. 10.
q Deut. xxx. 3.
r Ezra ix. 9. Jer. xv. 11.
s 1 Chron. xvi. 35, 36.
t Pſ. cxv. 1.
u Ibid. civ. 35.

v. 34—48. Their rebellions and diſobedience againſt God ended not in the wilderneſs; the land of promiſe was a witneſs to the ſame provocations.

1. They repeated the iniquities of their fathers, *by diſobedience* to God's word, in not extirpating the people of Canaan, as he had enjoined them, *Deut.* vii. 1, 2. *by wicked connections with them*, not only ſuffering them to live, but making them their friends, contracting marriages, and mingling among the heathen. And as evil communication muſt ever neceſſarily corrupt the beſt manners, *they learned* all *their* wicked *works*; enſnared hereby, they ſoon *ſunk into idolatry*, forſook God to ſerve the idols they ſhould have deſtroyed; and now become *brutiſh* and *unnatural*, they who would not offer a lamb at God's altar, ſhed the blood of innocents, *and ſacrificed their ſons and daughters unto devils*, ſhocking to tell! polluting the land with human gore, and that even of their own children; their conſciences defiled, enſlaved by their adulterous and idolatrous hearts, and madly ſet upon their own horrid inventions. *Note*, (1.) The way into ſin is headlong; one compliance makes way for a greater, till the ſoul is plunged into perdition and deſtruction. (2.) There is nothing ſo unnatural, barbarous, and inhuman, but the heart of man is capable of it, when hardned in ſin, and enſlaved by ſuperſtition.

2. God's anger was kindled for their wickedneſs; his once choſen people became his abhorrence, *v.* 40. and as the puniſhment of their abominations, he made them ſlaves to thoſe whoſe gods they ſerved: they who hated them ruled over them, and with a rod of iron oppreſſed them. And though in pity he often mitigated their ſufferings, and gave them temporary deliverance by the hands of the judges, yet they returned to their provocations; and, as the natural conſequence, were again enſlaved, and brought low by their iniquities. *Note*, (1.) Sin is ever God's abhorrence, and when his own people provoke him, he will viſit iniquities with the rod. (2.) God juſtly makes our tempters to ſin the inſtruments of our ſufferings. (3.) Where one ſtroke is ineffectual, God will, if he has love to the ſoul, lay on a heavier ſcourge, till he has brought his people into the duſt of humiliation.

3. Their troubles drove them in prayer to God, and he who waited to be gracious, no ſooner heard the groans of penitence, than he regarded with the tendereſt compaſſion their ſufferings, remembered his covenant with their fathers, and, according to the riches of his grace and the multitude of his mercies, repented, or altered his method of dealing with him; he gave them to find pity in the eyes of their conquerors, and their yoke was broken. *Note*, (1.) God hath in his hands the hearts of all men, and can turn foes into friends. (2.) Whenever a ſinner returns unto God in penitent prayer, he will ſend an anſwer of peace. (3.) All the mercies we receive from God, are in conſequence of that everlaſting covenant of grace eſtabliſhed with Jeſus our Redeemer, whom we muſt ever plead, as the foundation of all our hopes.

4. The Pſalmiſt prays in the perſon of the captive people for ſpeedy deliverance, *Save us, O Lord our God*, to whom we cannot renounce our relation, and who art able to ſave to the uttermoſt, *and gather us from among the heathen*, where we are diſperſed, *to give thanks to thy holy name*, when we return once more to Zion, and *to triumph in thy praiſe*, exulting in his ſalvation, and giving him the glory of their redemption.

5. He concludes with bleſſing God, the God of Iſrael, who, as faithful to his promiſes from everlaſting to everlaſting, deſerved his and their everlaſting praiſe; and he calls on all God's redeemed ones to add their joyful Amen, Hallelujah, to the benediction.

PSALM CVII.

The pſalmiſt having in the two foregoing pſalms celebrated the wiſdom, power and goodneſs of God in his dealings with his church in particular, here obſerves ſome of the inſtances of his providential care of the children of men in general. 1. *He inſtances in ſome of the moſt common calamities of human life; and ſhews how God ſuccours thoſe that labour under them, in anſwer to their prayers.* (1.) *Baniſhment and diſperſion*, ver. 2—9. (2.) *Captivity and impriſonment*, ver. 10—16. (3.) *Sickneſs and diſtemper of body*, ver. 17—22. (4.) *Danger and diſtreſs at ſea*, ver. 23—32. *And theſe are put for all the like perils, in which thoſe that cry unto God have ever found him a very preſent help.* 2. *He inſtanceth in the varieties and viciſſitudes of events concerning nations and families; in all which God's hand is to be eyed by his own people with joyful acknowledgments of his goodneſs*, ver. 33—43.

1. [a] O Give thanks unto the LORD, for [b] *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 2. Let the redeemed of the LORD ſay *ſo*, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy: 3. And [c] gathered them out of the lands, from the eaſt and from the weſt, from the north and from † the ſouth. 4. [d] They wandred in the wilderneſs in a ſolitary way, they found no city to dwell in. 5. Hungry and thirſty, their ſoul fainted in them. 6. Then [e] they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he delivered them out of their diſtreſſes. 7. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. 8. [f] O that *men* would praiſe the LORD *for* his goodneſs, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! 9. For he ſatisfieth the longing ſoul, [g] and filleth the hungry ſoul with gladneſs.

a Pſ. cvi. 1. & cxviii. 1. & cxxxvi. 1.
b Pſ. cxix. 68.
c Ibid. cvi. 47.
† Heb. The ſea.
d Deut. viii. 15.
e Pſ. l. 15. Ver. 13, 19, 28. Hoſ. v. 15.
f Ver. 15, 21, 31.
g Luke i. 53.

v. 1—9. This pſalm opens as the foregoing, with a thankſgiving to God, and ſuggeſts the ſame argument for it, drawn from the goodneſs and mercy of God. And the redeemed of the Lord, whether temporally or ſpiritually, are bound to ſing the ſong. We have here,

1. The ſtate of the perſons ſpoken of; they lie under the power of their enemies; diſperſed, and outcaſt; wandring without a ſettled abode; ſuffering the deepeſt want; hungry and thirſty, and their ſoul fainting for want of nouriſhment: to ſuch ſore diſtreſſes the deareſt children of God are ſometimes reduced; and this is an emblem alſo of the ſtate of God's people, before the redemption of Jeſus is embraced by them; they are enſlaved by their ſins, outcaſts from God's favour, can find no true reſt for their ſouls in this diſordered world; convinced of their miſery and guilt, their ſoul is parched and ready to periſh, nor can any thing quench their intolerable thirſt, but the blood and righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. What methods they took. *They cried unto the Lord in their troubles*, who alone is able to deliver, and to whom the miſerable and guilty ſinner may fly, and find mercy and grace to help in time of need; for none ever ſought his face in vain.

3. What relief they found. *He delivered them out of their diſtreſſes*; recovered them from their wandrings, and reſtored them to a peaceable abode. Thus ſhall the poor bewildered ſoul that cries to God, be led by the hand of his grace to Jeſus his Saviour; find him the way, the truth, and the life; and by him be conducted to an eternal manſion of undiſturbed repoſe in glory.

4. What thanks they are bound to render. *O that men*, redeemed ſouls, who experience ſuch mercy from God, *would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs*, and *for the wonderful works* ſhewn to themſelves, and *to the children of men* in the like ſtate of diſtreſs.

10. Such as ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, [h] *being* bound in affliction and iron: 11. Becauſe they rebelled againſt the words of God, [i] and contemned the counſel of the moſt High: 12. Therefore he brought down their heart with labour, they fell down, and *there was* none to help. 13. [k] Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he ſaved them out of their diſtreſſes. 14. [l] He brought them out of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, and brake their bands in ſunder. 15. [m] O that *men* would praiſe the LORD for his goodneſs, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! 16. For [n] he hath broken the gates of braſs, and cut the bars of iron in ſunder.

h Job xxxvi. 8.
i Luke vii. 30.
k Ver. 6, 19, 28.
l Pſ. lxviii. 6. & cxlvi. 7.
m Ver. 8, 21, 31.
n Iſa. xlv. 2. Acts xii. 7.

v. 10—16. God deſpiſeth not the ſighing of the priſoners.

1. Their miſery is deſcribed; ſhut up in dark and diſmal dungeons, loaded with heavy irons, their ſouls afflicted, and the ſhadow of death extended over them. Such is man by nature, ſunk in ignorance, dwelling in the ſhadow of ſpiritual death, bound in the fetters of corruption, and ſitting down impotent to break the bands, or eſcape from the houſe of his priſon.

2. The cauſe of this ſuffering is their ſin, wilful rebellion againſt evident commands, and neglect of the faireſt warnings. God leaves not himſelf any where without witneſs, but pecu-

liarly inexcuſable are thoſe who ſin againſt the light of his revealed will, and reject a preached goſpel.

3. By his afflictive providence God made their proud ſpirit bend; conſcious of the deſperateneſs of their ſtate, they fell at his feet; unleſs he ſave, they periſh. Thus by affliction and deep conviction of ſin, doth God break the proud ſpirit of fallen man; and as a loſt and ſelf-deſpairing ſinner, force him to fall at the feet of Jeſus, out of whom there is no ſalvation.

4. In their diſtreſs *they cried unto the Lord*, as their alone refuge and help, and he delivered them from their diſtreſs; he broke their bands, opened their priſon-doors, and brought them to behold the light of the day, and from the ſhadow of death reſtored them to life and liberty. From chains of iron thus to be releaſed, how great the bleſſing? but how much more invaluable the redemption of our ſouls, when Jeſus, at our prayer, plucked us as from the belly of hell, looſed the bonds of corruption, reſcued us from death eternal, and brought us forth to the glorious life and liberty of the ſons of God. For this tranſcendent grace, bleſs the Lord, O my Soul.

5. Every reſcued captive is bound to aſcribe glory to his great deliverer, and to praiſe his name, *v.* 15. and the redeemed ſinner will not fail to render this tribute of his gratitude, and with delight to proclaim what God hath done for his ſoul to the children of men, that they may come and partake of the ſame goodneſs.

17. Fools, [o] becauſe of their tranſgreſſion, and becauſe of their iniquities, are afflicted. 18. [p] Their ſoul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they [q] draw near unto the gates of death. 19. [r] Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, he ſaveth them out of their diſtreſſes. 20. [s] He ſent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their deſtructions. 21. [t] O that *men* would praiſe the LORD *for* his goodneſs, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men: 22. And [u] let them ſacrifice the ſacrifices of thankſgiving, and declare his works with † rejoicing.

[o] Lam. i. 8.
[p] Job xxxiii. 20.
[q] Pſ. ix. 13. & lxxxviii. 3.
[r] Ver. 6, 13, 28.
[s] 2 Kings xx. 5. Mat. viii. 8.
[t] Ver. 8, 15, 31.
[u] Lev. vii. 12. Pſ. l. 14. & cxvi. 17. Heb. xiii. 15.
† Heb. Singing.

v. 17—22. In ſickneſs alſo God's mercy is proved, in anſwer to the prayer of the afflicted. We have,

1. Their dangerous ſituation. Through the power of diſeaſe their appetite fails, medicine is vain, and death hovers on their eyelids, ready to cloſe them for ever in the duſt.

2. The cauſe of their ſickneſs is ſin; that opened the door to death, with all his train of evils, and we have only our own folly and wickedneſs to blame for all the bitter pangs we feel. *Note*, (1.) Every ſuffering of our bodies ſhould remind us of, and humble us for the ſin of our ſouls. (2.) However wiſe ſinners may conceit themſelves, in caſting off the reſtraints of God's law, and indulging their paſſions, they will be found at the laſt the moſt wretched fools.

3. God at their cry reſcues them from the jaws of death, raiſes them from the bed of languiſhing, rebukes the diſeaſe, and by his word reſtores their loſt health and ſtrength again. *Note*, (1.) Is any ſick? let him pray. Prayer can do more than medicine. (2.) Sin is the ſickneſs of the ſoul; but when Jeſus by his word and ſpirit ſpeaks to the heart, he healeth our ſpiritual maladies, breaks the power of corruption, reſtores our ſouls to the life of grace below, and ſecures to us the eternal life of glory above. Great phyſician, let me daily feel thy healing power!

4. Gratitude is the bounden duty of thoſe, whoſe life thro' mercy is reſtored. Let them acknowledge the goodneſs of God they have taſted, and ſhew forth his praiſes, not only with thankful lips, but by devoting to his glory the days he hath prolonged; rejoicing in his ſalvation, and publiſhing to his praiſe the wonders of his grace.

23. They that go down to the ſea in ſhips, that do buſineſs in great waters: 24. Theſe ſee the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. 25. For he commandeth, and † raiſeth the ſtormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. 26. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, [x] their ſoul is melted becauſe of trouble. 27. They reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and ‡ are at their wits end. 28. [y] Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their diſtreſſes. 29. [z] He maketh the ſtorm a calm, ſo that the waves thereof are ſtill. 30. Then are they glad becauſe they be quiet; ſo he bringeth them unto their deſired haven. 31. [a] Oh that *men* would praiſe the LORD *for* his goodneſs, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! 32. Let them exalt him alſo in the congregation of the people, and praiſe him in the aſſembly of the elders.

† Heb. Maketh to ſtand.
[x] Pſ. xxii. 14. & cxix. 28. Neh. ii. 10.
‡ Heb. All their wiſdom is ſwallowed up.
[y] Ver. 6, 13, 19.
[z] Mat. viii. 26.
[a] Ver. 8, 15, 21.

v. 23—32. The mariners who plough the main, dwelling in the midſt of dangers, and daily beholding God's wonders in the deep, have peculiar obligations lying upon them to bleſs and praiſe him for the preſervations they experience.

1. Their dangers are great and imminent. At God's command the ſtormy winds ruſh from their hollow caverns, and with tremendous roar raiſe up the foaming billows. Mounting the dreadful ſteep, the veſſel ſeems to climb the ſkies: then ruſhing down the horrid precipice, appears ſunk within a watery grave. The affrighted ſeamen, unable to keep their feet, ſtagger on the deck; and, no longer able to guide the ſhip, give her up to the winds and waves, ready to abandon themſelves to deſpair. How prepared to die ought they to be, who are in deaths ſo often!

2. They cry unto God. How can they do otherwiſe, when death in this moſt tremendous form ſtands ghaſtly in their view! Then inſtant help appears: he who rides on the whirlwind, and directs the ſtorm, checks with a word its fury: the winds are huſhed, the waves ſubſide, and, like a molten looking-glaſs, not a dimple ruffles the ſurface of the late troubled ocean. *Note*, (1.) A ſeaman, above all others, ſhould be a man of faith and prayer. (2.) He who bids the ſtormy waves be ſtill, and they obey him, can as eaſily ſpeak peace to the tempeſtuous ſoul, and calm the diſtreſſes of the deſpairing ſinner.

3. With delight and joy the mariner beholds the danger paſt, and now the wiſhed-for haven in view, expects reſt from all his toils. Thus, after toſſing long on life's tempeſtuous ocean, the believer, at death's approach, deſcries the happy ſhore, and enters the fair haven of eternal reſt, where he would be.

4. For ſuch wondrous deliverance and diſtinguiſhed goodneſs, how can we but adore the hand that ſaves us, and in the great congregation offer up our thankſgivings, the expreſſion of our lively gratitude, and the encouragement for others in the like diſtreſs to call upon the God who heareth prayer.

33. He turneth rivers into a wilderneſs, and the water-ſprings into dry ground: 34. A fruitful land into barrenneſs, for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein. 35. [b] He turneth the wilderneſs into a ſtanding water, and dry ground into water-ſprings. 36. And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation; 37. And ſow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increaſe. 38. [c] He bleſſeth them alſo, ſo that they are multiplied greatly, and ſuffereth not their cattle to decreaſe. 39. Again they are miniſhed and brought low through oppreſſion, affliction, and ſorrow. 40. [d] He poureth contempt upon princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the † wilderneſs, *where there is* no way. 41. [e] Yet ſetteth he the poor on high ‡ from affliction, and maketh *him* families like a flock. 42. [f] The righteous ſhall ſee *it*, and rejoice; and all [g] iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth. 43. [h] Whoſo *is* wiſe, and will obſerve thoſe *things*, even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the LORD.

[b] Pſ. cxiv. 8. Iſa. xli. 18.
[c] Exod. i. 7.
[d] Job xii. 21, 24.
† Or void place.
[e] 1 Sam. ii. 8. Pſ. cxiii. 7, 8.
‡ Or after.
[f] Job xxii. 19. Pſ. lviii. 10.
[g] Job v. 16. Prov. x. 11.
[h] Pſ. lxiv. 9. Jer. ix. 12. Dan. xii. 10. Hoſ. xiv. 9.

v. 33—43. Various and ſurprizing are the changes which God worketh in the earth.

1. He makes the fruitful land barren for the iniquity of its inhabitants, turning the rivers into a wilderneſs, as in the caſe of Sodom. Again, when his bleſſings reſt on ſome favoured people, the wilderneſs changes its face, and bloſſoms as the roſe. Plenty there ſatisfies the hungry, and the riſing city affords a ſafe abode to the inhabitants. The vineyards ſpring, the corn flouriſhes, and the vintage and harveſt crown the happy year. Their families multiply under the divine bleſſing, and their flocks and lands greatly increaſe. On the other hand, when he turns the current of his favour back again, they wither and decay; oppreſſed, afflicted, and groaning under their ſorrows, their numbers and ſtrength decreaſe, till they become as a beacon on a hill. Thus, when princes abuſe their divinely delegated power, he, by whom kings reign, *pours contempt* upon them, hurls them from the throne, and makes them deſpicable in their ſubjects eyes; and fallen from their high eſtate, compels them to wander deſtitute, and bewildered in the trackleſs wilderneſs; whilſt by his providence he ſometimes raiſes the poor from the dunghil, ſetteth them on high, crowns them with dignity, bleſſes them with a numerous family, and puts all affliction far away from them. In all which diſpenſations we may admire and adore the ſovereignty, juſtice, and power of God. *Note*, (1.) Sinners are the plague of the earth; for their ſakes the land mourneth, whilſt the righteous procure perpetual bleſſings on their abode. (2.) If we are providentially exalted, or brought low, increaſed or diminiſhed, let us ſee and acknowledge God's hand in the matter.

2. The effects theſe changes will produce. *The righteous will ſee it, and rejoice*; happy to behold the humble exalted, the creſt of pride fallen, and God glorified in his providential diſpenſations: *and all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*; the ſinner confounded

ſhall be forced to lay his mouth in the duſt, and own the righteous judgment. *Whoſo is wiſe*, or, with an interrogation, *Who is wiſe?* let him ſhow it by his attentive regard to theſe ways of providence, and *obſerve theſe things*, to profit thereby; and then *they ſhall underſtand the loving-kindneſs of the Lord*, ſee it in all his diſpenſations, and experience it to their own ſouls.

PSALM CVIII.

This pſalm begins with praiſe and concludes with prayer, and faith is at work in both. 1. *David here gives thanks to God for mercies to himſelf*, ver. 1—5, 2. *He prays to God for mercies for the land, pleading the promiſes of God, and putting them in ſuit*, ver. 6—13. *The former part is taken out of pſalm* lvii. 7, &c. *the latter out of pſalm* lx. 5, &c. *and both with little variation.*.

¶ A ſong or pſalm of David.

1. [a] O God, my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe, even with my glory. 2. Awake, pſaltery and harp: I *myſelf* will awake early. 3. I will praiſe thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will ſing praiſes unto thee among the nations. 4. For [b] thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the clouds. 5. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.

a Pſ. lvii. 7, &c.
b Ibid. xxxvi. 5.

v. 1—5. For the fuller enlargement on theſe verſes, *ſee Pſal.* lvii. 7—11. The pſalmiſt diſcovers in them the bleſſed frame of his own ſpirit, and teaches us how our praiſes ſhould be offered up to God: with *hearts fixed* on the ſacred ſubject, *riſing early* to the pleaſing taſk, *uniting voice and inſtruments* to raiſe the ſound, and *openly*, with every warm expreſſion of grateful affection, proclaiming in the midſt of the people his mercy and faithfulneſs, his greatneſs and glory; mercy more extenſive than the heaven, truth which reaches to the clouds, and glory infinitely beyond all bleſſing and praiſe that men or angels can offer.

6. [c] That thy beloved may be delivered: ſave *with* thy right hand, and anſwer me. 7. God hath ſpoken [d] in his holineſs, I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. 8. Gilead *is* mine, Manaſſeh *is* mine, Ephraim alſo *is* the ſtrength of mine head, Judah *is* my lawgiver. 9. Moab *is* my waſhpot, over Edom will I caſt out my ſhoe: over Philiſtia will I triumph. 10. [e] Who will bring me into the ſtrong city? who will lead me into Edom? 11. *Wilt* not *thou*, O God, [f] *who* haſt caſt us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hoſts? 12. Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help of man. 13. Through God we ſhall do valiantly: for he *it is that* ſhall tread down our enemies.

c Pſ. lx. 5, &c.
d Ib. lxxxix. 35.
e Ibid. lx. 9.
f Ibid. xliv. 9.

v. 6—13. We had before theſe verſes, *Pſal.* lx. 5—12. They contain,

1. The Pſalmiſt's prayer in behalf of himſelf and people, *v.* 6. *Note*, Every believer is a David, a beloved, and may confidently expect to ſee the ſalvation of God.

2. He already triumphs, aſſured of ſucceſs, ſince he hath the truth of God engaged to bring him to Iſrael's throne, and put the neighbouring nations, their enemies, under his footſtool, *v.* 7—9. *Note*, (1.) What God promiſes, faith can rejoice in, as already done. (2.) The beloved Son of David hath an everlaſting kingdom, and before him all his enemies muſt lick the duſt.

3. Whatever difficulties were in the way, by human power inſurmountable, whatever diſcouragements he had met with, *v.* 11. and however numerous the hoſts of the enemies, he looks to God; if he be Iſrael's leader, not Edom's walls can withſtand, but ſtrong in his might, they ſhall be more than conquerors. Thus may the believer, in the view of the ſpiritual foes of his ſoul, and the ſtrong fortreſſes of corruption, be ready to ſtagger in the conſciouſneſs of his own weakneſs; but there is help laid on one mighty to ſave: through Chriſt ſtrengthening us, we can do all things; and it is he that ſhall tread down all our enemies, and bring us to ſhare his triumphs over ſin, death, and hell, in the eternal world of glory.

PSALM CIX.

Whatever particular perſon gave occaſion to the penning this pſalm, whether Saul or Doeg, or Abithophel, we are aſſured it hath a farther reſpect to the traitor Judas, to whom it is applied, Acts i. 20. 1. *David lodgeth a complaint in the court of heaven of the malice and baſe ingratitude of his enemies, and with it an appeal to the righteous God*, ver. 1—5. 2. *He prays againſt his enemies, and devotes them to deſtruction*, ver. 6—20. 3. *He prays for himſelf, that God would help and ſuccour him in his low condition*, ver. 21—29. 4. *He concludes with a joyful expectation that God would appear for him*, ver. 30, 31.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. [a] HOld not thy peace, O God of my praiſe. 2. For the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth † of the deceitful are opened againſt me: they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying tongue. 3. They compaſſed me about alſo with words of hatred: and fought againſt me [b] without a cauſe. 4. For my love, they are my adverſaries: but I *give myſelf unto* prayer. 5. And [c] they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

a Pſ. lxxxiii. 1.
† Heb. Of deceit.
b Pſ. lxix. 4. John xv. 25.
c Pſ. xxxv. 12. & xxxviii. 20.

v. 1—5. The Pſalmiſt in the perſon of the Meſſiah, addreſſes his prayer to God under the oppreſſions of the wicked.

1. He lodges his appeal with God, under the calumnies of his enemies. *Hold not thy peace*, as if diſregarding his ſufferings, *O God of my praiſe*, or *my glorying*, for even the Lord Jeſus, as man, regarded his Father, as the object of his worſhip and glory.

2. He deſcribes the invenomed malice of his enemies, from whom he ſought deliverance. *Wicked* in temper and practice, *deceitful*, with faireſt profeſſions covering the blackeſt deſigns; *liars*, whoſe tongues diſtilled poiſon into the incautious ear; filled with *hatred*, reſtleſly bent on miſchief, they compaſſed him about; and violent, they with cauſeleſs rage fought againſt him; returned his love with ingratitude and enmity, and rendered evil for the good he ſhewed them. Thus was Jeſus treated, reviled, traduced, attended by thoſe who called him maſter, and ſought only to enſnare him; things laid to his charge he knew not; perſecuted, though innocent, with the moſt implacable malice; all his love repaid with hatred, and the aſtoniſhing miracles of kindneſs he wrought, exaſperating their reſentment, and returned by an ignominious crucifixion.

3. Under theſe trials, prayer was his only recourſe. *I give myſelf unto prayer*, or *I am a man of prayer*; herein he exerciſed himſelf day and night, and even on the croſs ceaſed not to cry, Father, forgive them. May we learn of our divine Lord thus to pray for thoſe who deſpitefully uſe and perſecute us!

6. Set thou a wicked man over him: and let [d] † Satan ſtand at his right hand. 7. When he ſhall be judged, let him ‡ be condemned, and [e] let his prayer become ſin. 8. Let his days be few, *and* [f] let another take his || office. 9. [g] Let his children be fatherleſs, and his wife a widow. 10. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them ſeek *their bread* alſo out of their deſolate places. 11. [h] Let the extortioner catch all that he hath: and let the ſtranger ſpoil his labour. 12. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherleſs children. 13. [i] Let his poſterity be cut off, *and* in the generation following let their name be blotted out. 14. [k] Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembred with the LORD: and let not the ſin of his mother be blotted out. 15. Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may [l] cut off the memory of them from the earth. 16. Becauſe that he remembred not to ſhew mercy, but perſecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even ſlay the broken in heart. 17. [m] As he loved curſing, ſo let it come unto him: as he delighted not in bleſſing, ſo let it be far from him. 18. As he clothed himſelf with curſing like as with a garment: ſo [n] let it come § into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. 19. Let it be unto him as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually. 20. *Let* this *be* the reward of mine adverſaries from the LORD, and of them that ſpeak evil againſt my ſoul.

d Zech. iii. 1.
† i. e. an adverſary.
‡ Heb. Go out guilty.
e Prov. xxviii. 9.
f Acts i. 20.
|| Or charge.
g Exod. xxii. 24.
h Job v. 5. & xviii. 9.
i Job xviii. 19.
k Exod. xx. 5.
l Job xviii. 17. Pſ. xxxiv. 16.
m Ezek. xxxv. 6.
n Num. v. 22.
§ Heb. Within him.

v. 6—20. They who have blamed David's ſpirit, as if he appeared vindictive, have miſtaken him greatly. When he ſpeaks as a prophet, he foreſees and foretells what would be the end of the wicked; when he ſpeaks in the perſon of the Son of God, he denounces the juſt judgment due to the children of perdition. Terrible are the woes herein contained; Judas felt them: may we never, by like tranſgreſſions, provoke the ſame puniſhment.

1. We have the ſentence pronounced. Satan, as the executioner of vengeance, is permitted firſt to tempt, and then ſet over him to torment him, *v.* 8. At God's bar he is found guilty, and prayer then is vain, is ſinful, when mercy cannot be exerciſed, but to the diſhonour of God's juſtice. Cut off in the

midſt of his days, the office and apoſtleſhip, of which he is ſo unworthy, is transferred to another: his orphan family beggared and vagabonds, reduced to pine in wretchedneſs and ſolitude; whilſt the extortioner ſeized on all his poſſeſſions, and ſpoiled all his ſubſtance; and not ſo much as a tear is dropped over his fatherleſs children. His poſterity are doomed to extirpation, and, within one generation, his name to be blotted out of the earth. All which was probably literally fulfilled in the caſe of Judas, and, in a more general ſenſe, is applicable to the whole Jewiſh people, who, for their rejection of the Meſſiah, were rejected by him, as we ſee to this day.

2. God's righteouſneſs is obſerved in the judgment. He doth not in his puniſhment exact more than is due. The ſin of his fathers, and of his mother, are remembered, *v.* 14. For this God viſits upon the children, and his own ſins fill up the meaſure of their guilt. Unmerciful and cruel, perſecuting the poor, and needy, and broken-hearted Jeſus even unto death; pouring curſes on the innocent Lamb of God, and bringing him to the accurſed tree; rejecting all the kindneſs and good-will of Jeſus, and taking a pride and pleaſure in his blaſphemies, as if they were ornamental; but terribly they return upon his own head, and the curſe cauſeleſs falls on the wretch that uttered it, penetrating into the inmoſt ſoul, and ſticking cloſe to him as his garment and girdle. Such was the wickedneſs of Judas, ſuch was the ſin of the Jewiſh people, rejecting, blaſpheming, and crucifying the Lord of glory; and as we have ſeen the dreadful vengeance which have fallen upon them, let it ſerve for a warning to us not to deſpiſe and oppoſe Chriſt and his goſpel, leſt we ſhare in their plagues; for ſuch will be the dreadful puniſhment of all his adverſaries, and of all the revilers, perſecutors, and blaſphemers of himſelf and his members.

[o] Pſ. cvi. 8. 21. But do thou for me, O God the LORD, [o] for
thy name's ſake: becauſe thy mercy *is* good, deliver
thou me. 22. For I *am* poor and needy, and my heart
[p] Ibid. cii. is wounded within me. 23. I am gone [p] like the ſha-
11. & cxliv. dow, when it declineth: I am toſſed up and down as
4. the locuſt. 24. My knees are weak through faſting:
and my fleſh faileth of fatneſs. 25. I became alſo a
[q] Ibid. xxii. reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me, [q] they
7. Mat. ſhaked their heads. 26. Help me, O LORD my
xxvii. 39. God: O ſave me according to thy mercy: 27. That
they may know, that this *is* thy hand: *that* thou, LORD,
[r] 2 Sam. xvi. haſt done it. 28. [r] Let them curſe, but bleſs thou: when
12. they ariſe, let them be aſhamed: [s] but let thy ſervant
[s] Iſa. lxv. rejoice. 29. [t] Let mine adverſaries be clothed with
14. ſhame: and let them cover themſelves with their own
[t] Pſ. cxxxii. confuſion, as with a mantle. 30. I will greatly praiſe
18. the LORD with my mouth: yea, I will praiſe him
[u] Ibid. xvi. among the multitude. 31. For [u] he ſhall ſtand at the
8. & lxxiii. right hand of the poor, to ſave *him* † from thoſe that
23. & cxxi. 5. condemn his ſoul.

† Heb. From the judges of his ſoul.

v. 21—31. We have here, the Incarnate Redeemer's complaint and prayer, and his joy in being heard and anſwered.

1. His condition is very diſtreſſing: *poor and needy*, born in a ſtable, and having no place to lay his head; a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; his *heart wounded* with bittereſt indignities, and more deeply ſtill with the wrath of God due to the ſins he bore: hurried to the grave by a violent death, as the declining ſhadow: *toſſed* to and fro, from Pilate to Herod, from Annas to Caiaphas: *weak* with *faſting*, and his body emaciated: *reproached* as a Samaritan, a magician, a mover of ſedition, and, even on the croſs, inſulted by thoſe who ſhook their heads at him, mocking at his high pretenſions of being the Son of God. *Note*, If our Head thus ſuffered, let not his members murmur at their lot, under the preſſures of poverty, a wounded ſpirit, a decaying body, or a reviling world: Jeſus hath endured the croſs before us.

2. His prayer is very importunate. Deliver, help, and ſave me: and to this end he pleads God's own glory, *v.* 21. concerned in vindicating his righteous cauſe; his mercy, ever ready to ſuccour the poor deſtitute. Such interpoſition alſo would carry conviction of God's intereſting himſelf on his behalf; others would acknowledge his hand, and theſe enemies themſelves be confounded and aſhamed: *aſhamed*, as penitent; or *confounded* as criminals. Thus, if God helped and bleſſed him, he could ſit eaſy under the curſes of his enemies, well knowing how impotent they were, and only big with vengeance on themſelves. *Note*, (1.) If God bleſs us, we need not care how much men curſe us. (2.) All our hope muſt be placed on God's boundleſs mercy and grace: he alone can help and ſave us, not we ourſelves. (3.) They who take ſhame to themſelves for their ſins now as penitents, will prevent their ſuffering hereafter everlaſting ſhame and contempt in hell, as reprobates.

3. His joy is great in the Lord. Among the multitude he will lift up his voice; yea, aloud his praiſes ſhall be heard for this great ſalvation of God *For he ſhall ſtand at the right hand of the poor*, his Meſſiah, and all his poor people, to ſupport and protect them; *to ſave him from thoſe who condemn his ſoul*; as he did, when he raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand; and as he will do with all his perſecuted and ſuffering diſciples at the laſt day, when none ſhall appear to lay one charge againſt God's elect, and all their former adverſaries ſhall be found liars.

PSALM CX.

This pſalm is pure goſpel; it is only and wholly concerning Chriſt; ſo the Jews of old underſtood it, nor dared diſpute the application, Math. xxii. 41—46. *though they were aſhamed to own the truth. Chriſt, as our Redeemer, executes the office of a prophet, of a prieſt, and of a king, both in his ſtate of humiliation and exaltation; and of each of theſe we have here an account.* 1. *His prophetical office*, ver. 2. 2. *His prieſtly office*, ver. 4. 3. *His kingly office*, ver. 1, 3, 5, 6. 4. *His eſtates of humiliation and exaltation*, ver. 7.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. [a] THE LORD ſaid unto my LORD, Sit thou at [a] Mat. xxii.
my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy 44. Mark
foot-ſtool. 2. The LORD ſhall ſend the rod of thy xii. 36.
ſtrength [b] out of Zion: rule thou in the midſt of thine Luke xx. 42.
enemies. 3. [c] Thy people *ſhall be* willing in the day of Acts ii. 34.
thy power, [d] in the beauties of holineſs † from the womb 1 Cor. xv.
of the morning: thou haſt the dew of thy youth. 4. 25. Heb. i. 13.
The LORD hath ſworn, and will not repent, [e] Thou [b] Iſa. ii. 3.
art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. [c] Judg. v. 2. [d] Pſ. xcvi. 9.

† Or, more than the womb of the morning thou ſhalt have.

[e] Heb. v. 6. & vii. 17. 21. Zech. vi. 13.

v. 1—4. The glory of our incarnate Saviour is the great ſubject of the Pſalmiſt's praiſe.

1. He is exalted to the higheſt dignity in heaven, and David owns him his adored Lord. *The Lord*, Jehovah the Father, *ſaid unto my Lord*, Jeſus the Meſſiah, *Sit thou at my right hand*, advanced to the ſeat of moſt tranſcendant glory and honour, *until I make thine enemies thy foot-ſtool*; enemies innumerable hath our Lord to conflict with, the world, ſin, Satan, death, &c. but he ſits upon the throne, and they muſt bow before his foot-ſtool; ſome are already ſubdued, and ſhortly the conqueſt will be compleat, when the laſt enemy ſhall be deſtroyed, and all his redeemed people made to triumph with him in glory. Haſten, O Lord, this happy day!

2. All power is given him on earth. *The Lord ſhall ſend forth the rod*, or *ſceptre*, *of thy ſtrength*, the everlaſting goſpel, the power of God unto ſalvation; which by the ſpirits energy is made effectual to the converſion of the ſouls of ſinners, bowing them to ſubmit to the ſceptre of his righteouſneſs: and this went forth firſt *out of Zion*, and hath ſpread to the remoteſt corners of the earth: *rule thou*, or *thou ſhalt rule*, *in the midſt of thine enemies*; the Redeemer's kingdom will be eſtabliſhed in ſpite of all oppoſition, and his church riſe ſuperior to all the malice of men and devils: yea, ſuch will be the effectual working of his mighty power, that even thoſe whoſe minds were enmity againſt him, and their lives open rebellion, ſhall be convinced, humbled, ſue for mercy, and be converted unto him.

3. His ſubjects ſhall be *a willing people*, inclined to offer up themſelves, their bodies, ſouls, and ſpirits, to his bleſſed ſervice; chearfully liſting under his banners *in the day of his power*; when in the preaching of the word, accompanied with the demonſtration of the Spirit, they ſhould be drawn to him by cords of love irreſiſtible, and arrayed *in the beauties of holineſs*, meet to attend their glorious head, *from the womb of the morning*; as ſoon as ever the morning light of goſpel grace appears, they are converted; or their multitudes are as the drops of morning dew: *thou haſt the dew of thy youth*. *Note*, (1.) None ever chuſe Chriſt's ſervice till he firſt inclines their hearts: it is of grace that we become his willing people. (2.) There are tranſcendant beauties in Jeſus, effectual when ſeen to engage ſupremely the ſinners ſoul to him. (3.) Though Chriſt is to the believer all in all, it doth not make him neglect internal purity, but aſpire after perfect holineſs.

4. All is confirmed by the oath of God. *The Lord hath ſworn* by himſelf, ſince he can ſwear by no greater, *and will not repent*, for he is ever in one mind, without variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning; *Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedek*; *a prieſt*, to make reconciliation for the ſins of his people; *for ever*, the efficacy of the one oblation he offered abiding the ſame, and he at the right of God, ever living to plead it, and make interceſſion for us; *after the order of Melchizedek*, an order of prieſthood, prior to and greater than that of Aaron, unchangeable and eternal. *Note*, The believer's hope is fixed upon the moſt ſolid baſis, on the all-ſufficiency of Jeſus, and the oath of the eternal Jehovah. With what confidence then ſhould we expect pardon, grace, and all the bleſſings of ſalvation, from the great high prieſt of our profeſſion; and how great is the diſhonour we caſt upon him, when for a

moment we dare queſtion his power and grace, and ſtagger at promiſes confirmed by two immutable things, the word and oath of that God who cannot lie?

5. The LORD [f] at thy right hand ſhall ſtrike through kings [g] in the day of his wrath. 6. He ſhall judge among the heathen, he ſhall fill *the places* with the dead bodies: [h] he ſhall wound the head over † many countries. 7. He ſhall drink of the brook in the way: [i] therefore ſhall he lift up the head.

f Pſal. xvi. 8.
g Pſ. ii. 12. Rev. xi. 18.
h Pſ. lxviii. 21. Heb. iii. 13.
† Or, great.
i Phil. ii. 9.

v. 5—7. We have here,

1. The dreadful end of all the enemies of Chriſt and his people. *The Lord at thy right hand*, the Almighty Jeſus, *ſhall ſtrike through kings*, deſtroy the mightieſt who oppoſe his kingdom, *in the day of his wrath*, that great and terrible day, when no rock nor mountain can cover the guilty. *He ſhall judge among the heathen*, executing vengeance on the deſpiſers of his goſpel; *he ſhall fill the places with dead bodies*, at the great battle of Armageddon, *Rev.* xix. 17, 18. *He ſhall wound the heads*, or *head, over many countries*; Satan, the prince of this world, or Antichriſt, whoſe uſurped dominion extends over many people, and nations, and tongues, *Rev.* xvii. 2—10. *Note*, (1.) The greateſt men, who dare lift their rebel arm againſt the Lord's Chriſt, will ſoon be made to feel how unequal is the conteſt. (2.) There is a day of wrath appointed and approaching, when ſinners will find it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of him who ſitteth on the throne.

2. The glorious triumphs of our exalted Lord. *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way*: which ſome interpret of his humiliation and ſufferings in the execution of his mediatorial work, but rather ſeems to ſpeak the ſupplies of ſtrength afforded him, in order to the deſtruction of his enemies, or the delight and joy which would fill his heart on ſeeing the glorious victory gained, and the ſalvation of his people compleated: *therefore*, or *ſo*, *ſhall he lift up his head*, the conqueror of death and hell in the reſurrection-day, and aſcending to the throne of glory, where angels, principalities, and powers, are made ſubject unto him, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. Let his faithful people rejoice in his triumphs, and expect to ſhare them ſhortly with him; when he ſhall take them to ſit down with him on his throne, as he is ſat down with the Father on his throne.

PSALM CXI.

This, and divers of the pſalms that follow it, ſeem to have been penned by David for the ſervice of the church in their ſolemn feaſts; the title of it is Hallelujah, *Praiſe ye the Lord. It is compoſed alphabetically, each ſentence beginning with a ſeveral letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The pſalmiſt exhorting to praiſe God,* 1. *Sets himſelf for an example,* ver. 1. 2. *Furniſhes us with matter for praiſe from the works of God.* (1.) *The greatneſs of his works, and the glory of them.* (2.) *The righteouſneſs of them.* (3.) *The goodneſs of them.* (4.) *The power of them.* (5.) *The conformity of them to his word of promiſe.* (6.) *The perpetuity of them. Theſe obſervations are intermixed,* ver. 2—9. 3. *He recommends the holy fear of God, and a conſcientious obedience to his commands, as the moſt acceptable way of praiſing God,* ver. 10.

1. [a] PRAISE ye the LORD. I will praiſe the LORD with *my* whole heart, in the aſſembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation. 2. [b] The works of the LORD *are* great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein. 3. His work *is* honourable and glorious: and his righteouſneſs endureth for ever. 4. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: [c] the LORD *is* gracious and full of compaſſion. 5. He hath given † meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

a Pſ. civ. 35.
b Rev. xv. 3.
c Pſ. lxxxvi. 5. & ciii. 8.
† Heb. Prey.

v. 1—5. According to the title, Hallelujah, we find the pſalmiſt,

1. Profeſſing his purpoſe to praiſe God with *his whole heart*, with unfeigned ſincerity, and warm affection, *in the aſſembly of the upright, and in the congregation*, in ſocial worſhip, or the courts of the ſanctuary.

2. He would take the matter of his ſong from *the works of the Lord*, the works of creation, providence, and redemption, which *are* each of them ſo *great* and wonderful, and *ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein*; who make theſe the delightful ſubject of their contemplation, and long to increaſe their knowledge of them, that they may be more enlarged in love and praiſe. *His work is honourable and glorious* in itſelf, and ſuited to exalt the glory of the Divine artificer: *his righteouſneſs endureth for ever*; all the diſpenſations of his providence and grace are altogether and everlaſtingly righteous and true, and eſpecially that Divine righteouſneſs which Jeſus wrought out for his people abideth eternally the ſame, to juſtify all that truſt in it from every condemnation. *He hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*; they well deſerve to be treaſured up in our memories; and God hath graciouſly been pleaſed to tranſmit to us, in his word, his wonders of old time, to excite ſtill our wonder and praiſe: *the Lord is gracious and full of compaſſion*, as ſinners, to their unutterable comfort, experience in the ſalvation of Jeſus Chriſt, and the great and precious promiſes that are in him; and as appears alſo in all the inſtances of his providential care: for *he hath given meat to thoſe that fear them*, or *a prey*; the ſpoil of the Egyptians, and rather than they ſhould want, hath provided in the wilderneſs, for Iſrael, bread from heaven; and ſtill he continues to feed his choſen daily with that better bread from heaven, which giveth life unto the world: *he will ever be mindful of his covenant*, none of the promiſes of it ſhall ever fail, nor any of the bleſſings of it be with-held from his people; and therefore they are bound to ſay Hallelujah, for mercies ſo ineſtimably precious, and ſo ſovereignly free.

6. He hath ſhewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. 7. The works of his hands *are* verity and judgment; [d] all his commandments *are* ſure. 8. [e] They † ſtand faſt for ever and ever, *and are* done in truth and uprightneſs. 9. He ſent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend *is* his name. 10. [f] The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wiſdom: a good ‡ underſtanding have all they || that do *his commandments*: his praiſe endureth for ever.

d Pſal. xix. 7.
e Iſa. xl. 8. Mat. v. 18.
† Heb. Are eſtabliſhed.
f Deut. iv. 6. Job xxviii. 28. Prov. i. 7. & ix. 10. Eccleſ. i. 16.
‡ Or, ſucceſs.
|| Heb. That do them.

v. 6—10. The pſalmiſt inſtances various other particulars of God's works, which ſhould be matter of his people's praiſe.

1. The miracles he ſhewed them in their journey to the promiſed land, and his wonders in diſpoſſeſſing the heathen to make room for them, *v.* 6.

2. Herein he acted with the higheſt equity and judgment, as he doth in all his works; the meaſure of iniquity of theſe nations being full, and the time arrived to fulfil the promiſes he made unto Abraham and his ſeed. *Note*, In all God's works he will magnify his own juſtice and truth.

3. Immutable are all his counſels, unchangeable his word. *All his commandments are ſure*; whatever he commands muſt be accompliſhed, whatever he promiſes be fulfilled. *They ſtand faſt for ever and ever*, both his law and goſpel, and all the precepts and promiſes contained in them, *and are done in truth and uprightneſs*; they are conſonant to the rules of eternal righteouſneſs, and will be obeyed in ſimplicity by all that truly ſerve him.

4. *He hath ſent redemption unto his people*, delivered them from Egypt, and repeatedly reſcued them by their judges from the hands of their oppreſſors; and, above all, hath ſent that eternal redemption unto them which was wrought out by Jeſus Chriſt in the fulneſs of time: *he hath commanded his covenant for ever*; it is everlaſting, ordered in all things, and ſure to all the ſpiritual ſeed of David. *Holy and reverend is his name*; ſo it appears in all his works and ways, and worthy to be reverenced and adored by ſaints on earth, and angels in heavens.

5. For all theſe works of power he hath ſhewed, God is to be feared; and this is our higheſt wiſdom and bounden duty. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom*; a reverential, filial fear of offending a God ſo great, and withal ſo gracious, is *the beginning*, or *the ſummit*, of wiſdom: *a good underſtanding have all they that do his commandments*: this proves them indeed wiſe unto ſalvation; and by obedience to his will, as far as it is revealed to them, they arrive at higher degrees of ſpiritual knowledge and underſtanding: *his praiſe*, the Lord's, or *its praiſe*, i. e. of ſuch a converſation, *endureth for ever*; God will appear everlaſtingly glorious; and all his faithful people, who have approved themſelves to him, ſhall have praiſe of him. *Note*, (1.) They are the truly wiſe who fear God and keep his commandments. (2.) Though the beſt we can do is unworthy of God, yet, when done in faith and love, he is not unrighteous to forget our works, nor will fail to reward us accordingly.

PSALM CXII.

This pſalm is compoſed alphabetically as the former is, and is entitled, Hallelujah. *It deſcribes,* 1. *The character of the righteous,* ver. 1. 2. *The bleſſedneſs of the righteous.* (1.) *There is a bleſſing entailed on their poſterity,* ver. 2. (2.) *There is a bleſſing conferred upon themſelves.* [1.] *Proſperity outward and inward,* ver. 3. [2.] *Comfort,* ver. 4. [3.] *Wiſdom,* ver. 5. [4.] *Stability,* ver. 6—8. [5.] *Honour,* ver. 6, 9. 3. *The miſery of the wicked,* ver. 10.

a Pſal. civ. 35. b Ibid. cxxviii. 1. c Ibid. cxix. 16, 47. d Mat. vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8. e Eſth. viii. 16. Job xi. 17. Pſ. xcvii. 11. f Pſ. xxxvii. 26. Luke vi. 35. g Prov. xiii. 16. † Heb. Judgment.

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD. [b] Bleſſed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, [c] *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments. 2. His ſeed ſhall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright ſhall be bleſſed. 3. [d] Wealth and riches *ſhall be* in his houſe: and his righteouſneſs endureth for ever. 4. [e] Unto the upright there ariſeth light in the darkneſs: *he is* gracious, and full of compaſſion, and righteous. 5. [f] A good man ſheweth favour, and lendeth; [g] he will guide his affairs with † diſcretion.

v. 1—5. The pſalmiſt opens with an aſcription of praiſe to God, who is to be acknowledged in all he doth for his people and in them, for by his grace alone they are what they are.

1. He deſcribes the character of the truly bleſſed and happy man. *He feareth the Lord*, and only him; *he delighteth greatly in his commandments*; he counts obedience his higheſt privilege, and God's ſervice perfect freedom: he is *upright*, ſincere before God in his profeſſions, and in all his dealings with men juſt and true: *he is gracious*, *full of compaſſion*, ſenſibly touched with the diſtreſſes of others, and ready to relieve them, *and righteous*; what he beſtows on the neceſſitous is honeſtly come by: *he ſheweth favour, and lendeth*; not with a view to his own advantage, but of pure charity to aſſiſt the induſtrious poor, hoping for nothing again; *he will guide his affairs with diſcretion*, or *his words with judgment*; he is careful of what he ſpeaks, that neither haſtily, falſely, or imprudently, his tongue may offend, but that all he ſaith may be well-weighed, and the reſult of ſound reflection and judgment; and in the management of his affairs he acts with ſuch prudence and œconomy, as both to ſhew piety at home, in the becoming proviſion of his own houſe, and have withal a portion to ſpare for him that needeth.

2. Such an one is truly bleſſed and happy; he is the object of God's care and love, the bleſſings of grace and glory are laid up for him, and in time and eternity God himſelf will be his portion, and exceeding great reward; his poſterity ſhall partake of his bleſſing, exalted in earth, and mighty in the grace that is in Jeſus Chriſt, *v.* 2. *Wealth and riches*, as much as God ſees will be profitable for him and them, *ſhall be in his houſe*; nor ſhall his worldly proſperity turn away his heart from God, as it is too apt to do: *his righteouſneſs endureth for ever*; God will preſerve him faithful, and enable him to proſper in his ſoul, as his ſubſtance is increaſed, and never ſuffer him to decay or decline, *v.* 3. If at any time a dark cloud paſſes over him, either of deſertion, or temptation in his ſoul, or of affliction in his body, family, or ſubſtance, God will return and lift up the light of his countenance, and chear his heart with freſh viſits of his love, miniſter new ſtrength and conſolation to his ſoul, and make the moſt afflictive diſpenſations iſſue to his good.

h Prov. x. 7. i Ibid. i. 33. k Pſ. lvii. 7. l 2 Cor. ix. 9. m Pſ. lxxv. 10. n Pſ. xxxvii. 12. o Ibid. lviii. 7, 8. p Prov. x. 28. & xiii. 9.

6. Surely he ſhall not be moved for ever: [h] the righteous ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance. 7. [i] He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings: [k] his heart is fixed, truſting in the LORD. 8. His heart *is* eſtabliſhed, he ſhall not be afraid, until he ſee *his deſire* upon his enemies. 9. [l] He hath diſperſed, he hath given to the poor; his righteouſneſs endureth for ever; [m] his horn ſhall be exalted with honour. 10. The wicked ſhall ſee *it*, and be grieved; [n] he ſhall gnaſh with his teeth, [o] and melt away: [p] the deſire of the wicked ſhall periſh.

v. 6—10. The pſalmiſt goes on,

1. To inſtance in other particulars the bleſſedneſs of the man that feareth the Lord. [1.] His ſtability is enſured, firm as God's everlaſting love and power can make it. [2.] The memory of his piety ſhall deſcend to lateſt ages, and his righteouſneſs God will to all eternity remember and reward, *v.* 6. [3.] No dangers ſhall terrify, no evil tidings diſmay him; neither the world with all its ſnares and oppoſition, nor Satan with all his legions, nor corruption with all its indwelling traitors, nor death with all its terrors, ſhall be able to ſhake his confidence or deject his ſpirit; for *his heart is fixed*, *truſting in the Lord*. [4.] He *ſhall ſee his deſire upon his enemies*; expecting in faith the ſalvation of God, he ſhall ſee all his ſpiritual and temporal foes finally ſubdued and deſtroyed, and himſelf made more than conqueror. [5.] *He ſhall be exalted to honour*, *v.* 9. the higheſt honour, that which cometh from God, who will remember his labours of love, his charity, liberality, and perſevering continuance in well-doing; and at the reſurrection-day crown him with glory, honour, and immortality.

2. This bleſſedneſs of the righteous will be the envy and torment of the wicked; they ſhall ſee it with grief and bitter anguiſh, and through vexation ſhall pine away in their iniquities; till at laſt they ſhall be cut off from all the good things on which their deſires were placed, and doomed to that place of eternal torment, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth. Lord, gather not my ſoul with ſinners!

PSALM CXIII.

This pſalm begins and ends with Hallelujah. 1. *We are here called upon and urged to praiſe God*, ver. 1—3. 2. *We are here furniſhed with matter of praiſe, drawn from*, (1.) *His glory and greatneſs*, ver. 4, 5. (2.) *The condeſcenſions of his grace and goodneſs*, ver. 6—9.

a Pſal. civ. 35. b Pſ. xxxiii. 1. c Dan. ii. 20. Luke i. 68. d Iſa. lix. 19. Mal. i. 11. e Pſal. viii. 1. f Pſ. lxxxix. 6. † Heb. Exalteth himſelf to dwell. g Pſal. cxxxviii. 6. Iſa. lvii. 15. h 1 Sam. ii. 8. Pſ. cvii. 41. i Job xxxvi. 7. k 1 Sam. ii. 5. Pſ. lxviii. 9. l Pſal. civ. 35.

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD. Praiſe, [b] O ye ſervants of the LORD, praiſe the name of the LORD. 2. [c] Bleſſed be the name of the LORD, from this time forth and for evermore. 3. [d] From the riſing of the ſun unto the going down of the ſame, the LORD's name *is* to be praiſed. 4. The LORD *is* high above all nations, [e] *and* his glory above the heavens. 5. [f] Who *is* like unto the LORD our God, who † dwelleth on high? 6. [g] Who humbleth *himſelf* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and in earth? 7. [h] He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, *and* lifteth the needy out of the dung-hill: 8. That he may [i] ſet *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people. 9. [k] He maketh the barren woman to keep houſe, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. [l] Praiſe ye the LORD.

v. 1—9. This pſalm ſeems to refer to goſpel times, and to the great ſalvation accompliſhed by Jeſus our Redeemer.

1. The pſalmiſt, with repeated earneſtneſs, exhorts the ſervants of the Lord to the happy work of praiſe. In all ages redeeming love muſt be celebrated; and from the riſing to the ſetting ſun, whither the tidings of goſpel grace ſhall ſpread, the name of Jeſus ſhould reſound, *v.* 1—3.

2. He ſuggeſts the matter of their ſongs.

(1.) The glory of the Lord Jeſus, the great King of kings; to whoſe univerſal ſway all nations of the earth muſt bow, and in heaven angels, principalities and powers are made ſubject unto him, tranſcendently great without an equal, and above all compariſon; yea, exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe, *v.* 4, 5.

(2.) His condeſcenſion. *He humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in heaven and earth*; when he vouchſafes to accept the ſervices of archangels, and with his care to preſerve their beings, which he gave, vaſt is his condeſcenſion; yet more amazing is it, that he turns his eye on worms of earth, and ſinful worms withal, upholds them in life, and with his bounteous hand ſupplies their wants: but moſt aſtoniſhing of all, that he ſhould humble himſelf ſo far, as not only to behold us, but to take our nature, yea, humble himſelf for us to death, even the death of the croſs. Loſt in the ſtupenduous thought, the ſoul bows down in ſilent admiration, and can only wonder and adore.

3. The diſpenſations of his providence and grace. [1.] The poor and needy he liberally ſupplies, raiſes them from their low ſtate, and exalts them to honour and dignity, from the dunghill to the throne: ſuch outward changes God ſometimes ſovereignly works; but ſpiritually we ſee it more emphatically fulfilled; *the poor* in ſpirit, *the needy*, deſtitute of all righteouſneſs and ſtrength, lying on the dunghill of ſin, and in the duſt of ſpiritual death, by the Almighty power of his Spirit he raiſes from their low eſtate, pardons, and delivers them from guilt and ſin, adopts them into his royal houſe as Sons of God, cloaths them with the princely robes of righteouſneſs and ſalvation, and makes them reign in glory everlaſting, *with the princes of his people*; with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and all the ſaints, who are made kings and prieſts unto God. [2.] *He maketh the barren woman keep houſe, and be a joyful mother of children:* Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, proved this grace, and rejoiced in the precious gift: and this was in a beautiful ſenſe more nobly fulfilled, when the Gentile world, that had long been barren, and brought forth no fruit unto God, teemed with numerous converts, the joy of the church, and whoſe births were celebrated with the ſongs of earth and heaven. Well, therefore, in the view of theſe things, may the pſalmiſt repeat his exhortation, and we echo back the ſound, Hallelujah.

PSALM CXIV.

This pſalm is the celebration of Iſrael's deliverance from Egypt. 1. *They were brought out of ſlavery*, ver. 1. 2. *God ſet up his tabernacle among them*, ver. 2. 3. *The ſea and Jordan were divided before them*, ver. 3, 5. 4. *The earth ſhook at the giving the law, when God came down on mount Sinai*, ver. 4, 6, 7. 5. *God gave them water out of the rock*, ver. 8. *In ſinging this pſalm we muſt acknowledge God's power and goodneſs in what he did*

did for Iſrael, applying it to the much greater work of wonder, our redemption by Chriſt, and encouraging ourſelves and others to truſt in God in the greateſt ſtraits.

1. WHEN [a] Iſrael went out of Egypt, the houſe
of Jacob from [b] a people of a ſtrange language;
2. [c] Judah was his ſanctuary, *and* Iſrael his dominion.
3. [d] The ſea ſaw *it*, and fled; [e] Jordan was driven back.
4. [f] The mountains ſkipped like rams, *and* the little hills
like lambs. 5. [g] What *ailed* thee, O thou ſea, that thou
fleddeſt? thou Jordan, *that* thou was driven back?
6. Ye mountains, *that* ye ſkipped like rams; *and* ye
little hills like lambs? 7. Tremble thou earth at the
preſence of the LORD, at the preſence of the God of
Jacob. 8. [h] Which turned the rock *into* a ſtanding water,
the flint into a fountain of waters.

[a] Ex. xiii. 3.
[b] Pſ. lxxxi. 5.
[c] Ex. vi. 7. & xix. 6. Deut. xxvii. 9.
[d] Ex. xiv. 21. Pſal. lxxvii. 16.
[e] Joſh. iii. 13, 16.
[f] Pſ. xxix. 6. & lxviii. 16.
[g] Hab. iii. 8.
[h] Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11. Pſ. cvii. 35.

v. 1—8. The wonders of former days deſerve to be kept in everlaſting remembrance, both that God may be glorified for them, and we take encouragement from thence to hope ſtill in his mercy.

1. God brought his Iſrael from Egypt: *They went out*, with triumph, wealth, and honour, *from a people of a ſtrange language*, which they underſtood not, or *barbarous*, as they accounted the Egyptian tongue, compared with their own. The people of God are thus brought up out of ſpiritual Egypt, and called from this ſtrange country the world, to join thoſe who ſpeak the pure language of Canaan.

2. Among them his ſpecial preſence reſted, and he was in a peculiar manner their king. *Judah was his ſanctuary*; his preſence reſted viſibly in the midſt of them; or, *his holineſs*, ſeparated from all nations for his ſervice; and *Iſrael his dominion*, among whom he erected a theocracy, himſelf their lawgiver and judge, and exerciſing the power of civil government among them. Thus doth his preſence dwell in his living temples, the ſouls of his redeemed; holineſs is written upon their hearts, and obedient to all his commands and ordinances, they deſire to approve themſelves his faithful ſubjects.

3. To open a paſſage for them, the ſea affrighted fled, and Jordan backwards rolled his overflowing ſtreams. How was the mighty miracle effected? why fled the ſea? why ſkipped the mountains Horeb and Sinai? Why? They felt the preſent Deity; the powers of nature ſtood controuled before him, and earth to its centre ſhook. *Note*, (1.) Whatever difficulties are in the way of God's Iſrael, from ſeas of tribulation, and mountains of unbelief and corruption, as eaſily and certainly ſhall they be all removed. (2.) Did rocky Horeb tremble before God? and is thy heart, ſinner, more obdurate and inſenſible?

4. He gave them waters out of the rock, and all the deſert through cauſed the ſalutary ſtreams to follow them. That rock was Chriſt; from him ſtill flow, for every believer's uſe, full ſtreams of grace and conſolation, to chear them in their paſſage through this world's howling wilderneſs; nor will he ever leave or forſake them, till, from drinking at the ſtream below, he ſhall bring them to the fountain-head above, and fill them with eternal conſolations and glory in the heavenly Canaan.

PSALM CXV.

Many ancient tranſlations join this pſalm to that which goes next before it, the Septuagint particularly, and the vulgar Latin; but it is in the Hebrew a diſtinct pſalm. In it we are taught to give glory, 1. *To God, and not to ourſelves,* ver. 1. 2. *To God, and not to idols,* ver. 2—8. *We muſt give glory to God,* (1.) *By truſting in him, and in his promiſe and bleſſing,* ver. 9—15. (2.) *By bleſſing him,* ver. 16—18.

1. [a] NOT unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto
thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and*
for thy truth's ſake. 2. Wherefore ſhould the heathen
ſay, [b] Where *is* now their God? 3. But [c] our God *is*
in the heavens, he hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.
4. [d] Their idols *are* ſilver and gold, the work of men's
hands. 5. They have mouths, [e] but they ſpeak not;
eyes have they, but they ſee not. 6. They have ears,
but they hear not; noſes have they, but they ſmell not.
7. They have hands, but they handle not; feet have
they, [f] but they walk not; neither ſpeak they through
their throat. 8. [g] They that make them, are like unto
them; *ſo is* every one that truſteth in them.

[a] Iſa. xlviii. 11. Ezek. xxxvi. 32.
[b] Pſ. xlii. 3, 10. & lxxix. 10. Joel ii. 17.
[c] 1 Chron. xvi. 26. Pſ. cxxxv. 6. Dan. iv. 35.
[d] Deut. iv. 28. Pſal. cxxxv. 15, &c. Jer. x. 3, &c.
[e] Hab. ii. 18.
[f] Jer. x. 5.
[g] Pſ. cxxxv. 18. Hab. ii. 18, 19.

v. 1—8. The occaſion of this pſalm ſeems to be ſome diſtreſs of God's church and people, under which the pſalmiſt endeavours to comfort their hearts, encouraging them to exerciſe faith in God, ſhewing them the vanity of idols, and engaging them to give him praiſe for their ſure deliverance.

1. He bids the people of God aſcribe not to themſelves, but to him, the glory of their ſalvation, as derived from his boundleſs mercy, and ſecured by his unchangeable faithfulneſs and truth, *v.* 1. *Note*, We muſt be ever in our own eyes nothing, and Chriſt all in all: to his grace every good in us, or done by us, muſt be aſcribed, and at his feet our crowns in glory will be for ever laid.

2. He anſwers the taunts of the inſulting heathen, who, puffed up with their ſucceſs, ſpurned at Iſrael's God, as unable to deliver them. *But our God is in heaven*; and from his throne laughs them to ſcorn; *he hath done whatſoever he pleaſed*, able to ſave or deſtroy at his ſovereign pleaſure; whoſe will is law, his power omnipotent, and reſiſtance againſt it vain. How unlike their boaſted vanities! their rock is not as our rock; ſenſeleſs idols, the work of man, faſhioned after his form, but deſtitute of his faculties; they can neither hear, nor ſee, nor ſpeak, nor feel, nor walk; unable to help themſelves, much leſs their votaries, whoſe adorations prove them ſtupid, and ſenſeleſs as the ſtock and ſtone they worſhip.

9. [h] O Iſrael, truſt thou in the LORD: [i] he *is* their
help and their ſhield. 10. O houſe of Aaron, truſt in
the LORD: he *is* their help and their ſhield. 11. Ye
that fear the LORD, truſt in the LORD: he *is* their
help and their ſhield. 12. The LORD hath been
mindful of us, [k] he will bleſs *us*, he will bleſs the
houſe of Iſrael, he will bleſs the houſe of Aaron. 13.
[l] He will bleſs them that fear the LORD, *both* ſmall
and great. 14. The LORD ſhall increaſe you more
and more, you and your children. 15. You *are* bleſſed
of the LORD, [m] which made heaven and earth. 16.
The heaven, *even* the heavens *are* the LORD's: but
the earth hath he given to the children of men. 17.
[n] The dead praiſe not the LORD, neither any that go
down into ſilence. 18. [o] But we will bleſs the LORD,
from this time forth and for evermore. [p] Praiſe the
LORD.

[h] Pſ. cxv. 19, 20.
[i] Pſ. xxxiii. 20. Prov. xxx. 5.
[k] Eph. i. 3.
[l] Pſ. cxxviii. 1, 4.
[m] Pſ. xcvi. 5.
[n] Ibid. vi. 5. & lxxxviii. 10, 11, 12. Iſa. xxxviii. 18.
[o] Dan. ii. 20.
[p] Pſal. civ. 35.

v. 9—18. Having expoſed the vanities of the heathen, the Pſalmiſt,

1. Exhorts God's people to truſt in him. The houſe of Iſrael, however diſtreſſed; the houſe of Aaron, the peculiar ſervants of the ſanctuary, and therefore the eſpecial object of the heathen hatred: yea, all that fear the Lord, ſhall find him *their help and ſhield. Their help* in every time of need, to deliver them; *their ſhield* in every hour of danger, to defend them. *Note*, They cannot fail, whoſe faith doth not; this enſures the final victory.

2. Abundant reaſon there is, why we ſhould truſt in him. *He hath been mindful of us*, as paſt experience comfortably teſtifies, and which ſhould engage us ſtill to commit ourſelves to him, confident of finding the ſame kind remembrance, protection, and care. *He will bleſs us* with all needful things of this life, and all the ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus. *He will bleſs the houſe of Iſrael*, the congregation of his church in general, and *the houſe of Aaron*, his miniſters, who labour in the word and doctrine: yea, *all that fear the Lord, both ſmall and great*, every individual believer, whatever his circumſtances and condition may be, ſhall find the bleſſings of providence and grace exactly ſuited to his neceſſities. *The Lord ſhall increaſe you more and more*, ſo far as he ſees fit with worldly goods, and ſucceſs in earthly affairs; but eſpecially with that beſt increaſe of the gifts and graces of his ſpirit, enabling them to bring forth fruit unto God; and the mercy not be theirs alone, but deſcend upon their children: for *you are the bleſſed of the Lord*, and whom he bleſſeth muſt be bleſſed; he *who made heaven and earth* having all power to communicate the bleſſings he pronounces on his people.

3. They who truſt him will praiſe him, and find abundant matter for their ſongs. Great is he, and worthy to be praiſed; *the heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's*, not only the firmament ſpread over us, but all that is within that vail, ſecluded from mortal eye; the heaven of heavens, where the angelic hoſts take up their abode, and glorified ſpirits dwell, all own him their creator, preſerver, and rightful owner. And good as he is great: *the earth hath he given to the children of men*, appointed it for their uſe, and to be enjoyed to his glory and their comfort: juſtly therefore is the grateful tribute of thankſgiving due, and who ſhall pay it, if we do not? *The dead praiſe not the Lord, neither any that go down into ſilence*; thoſe who are gone down into the ſilent grave, can no more join the ſacred choir; thoſe who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, have no heart to praiſe him. *But we*, who are maintained in life by the bounties of his providence, and are by his ſpirit quickened to a better life of grace in our ſouls; we, as moſt bounden, *will bleſs the Lord from this time forth for evermore*; whilſt ſojourners below, in this delightful work will we be employed, and when removed to that better world, our ſervice there ſhall be everlaſting praiſe. *Hallelujah!*

PSALM CXVI.

This is a thankſgiving pſalm, wherein he obſerves, 1. *The great diſtreſs and danger that he was in, which almoſt drove him to deſpair,* ver. 3, 10, 11. 2. *The application he made to God in that diſtreſs,* ver. 4. 3. *The experience he had of God's goodneſs to him in anſwer to prayer*; *God heard him,* ver. 1, 2. *pitied him,* ver. 5, 6. *delivered him,* ver. 8. 4. *His care what acknowledgments he ſhould make of the goodneſs of God to him,* ver. 12. (1.) *He will love God,* ver. 1. (2.) *He will continue to call upon him,* ver. 2, 13, 17. (3.) *He will reſt in him,* ver. 7. (4.) *He will walk before him,* ver. 9. (5.) *He will pay his vows of thankſgiving, in which he will own the tender regard God had to him, and this publicly,* ver. 13—15. *and* ver. 17—19. *Laſtly, He will continue God's faithful ſervant to his life's end,* ver. 16. *Theſe are ſuch breathings of a holy ſoul as beſpeak it very happy.*

1. I Love the LORD, becauſe he hath heard my voice, *and* my ſupplications. 2. Becauſe he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* † as long as I live. 3. [a] The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and ſorrow. 4. Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beſeech thee, deliver my ſoul. 5. Gracious *is* the LORD, and righteous: yea, our God *is* merciful. 6. The LORD preſerveth the ſimple: I was brought low and he helped me. 7. Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul, for [b] the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee. 8. For [c] thou haſt delivered my ſoul from death, mine eyes from tears, *and* my feet from falling. 9. I will walk before the LORD [d] in the land of the living.

† Heb. In my days.
[a] Pſ. xviii. 5, 6.
[b] Ibid. xiii. 6.
[c] Ibid. lvi. 13.
[d] Ibid. xxvii. 13.

v. 1—9. We have here,

1. The Pſalmiſt's warm profeſſion of his love to God for the mercies he had taſted, and of his determined dependance upon him. *I love the Lord, becauſe,* &c. or, as the words ſtand in the original, *I love, becauſe the Lord hath heard my voice, and my ſupplications*; his gracious condeſcenſions in opening his ear to his requeſts, and ſpeedily anſwering his deſires, affected his ſoul with deepeſt gratitude, and engaged him to make the warmeſt returns of affection, and to perſevere in waiting ſtill upon him, *therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. Note,* (1.) Every anſwer to our prayers is a freſh obligation, and encouragement to pray without ceaſing. (2.) That ſoul is happy that can with David truly ſay, *I love the Lord.* (3.) In prayer ſhould our very parting breath expire, and then we ſhall go where all will be praiſe.

2. He mentions the deep diſtreſs from which God delivered him. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me,* ſuch as dying men feel in their agony; *the pains of hell,* ſuch as ariſe in the conſcience from the ſting of guilt, or *of the grave,* which brought me to its very gates, *gat hold upon me,* and ſeized me as their prey: *I found trouble and miſery*; *trouble* which none but God could aſſuage, and *miſery* which he alone could remove. *Note,* (1.) The faithful are ſometimes brought into great diſtreſs; a diſtempered body, and a more afflicted ſoul, make them groan, being burdened. (2.) Death is terrible indeed, when accompanied with the fears and pains of hell: bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt, who hath given us the victory over both.

3. His recourſe was to God, *Then,* in the midſt of the ſorrows I had in my heart, *I called upon the name of the Lord,* the Saviour of the miſerable and deſperate, and with importunity pleaded, *O Lord, I beſeech thee, deliver my ſoul,* that muſt infallibly periſh, unleſs thy power and grace reſcue me from deſtruction. Whenever the ſinner thus flies for refuge to the Divine mercy in Chriſt, he will not be caſt away, as,

4. David by bleſſed experience found. *Gracious is the Lord,* I have proved him ſo to my unſpeakable comfort, pardoning my guilty, delivering my helpleſs ſoul, *and righteous*; faithful to his promiſes, and juſt in all the diſpenſations of his providence and grace: *yea, our God is merciful,* infinite in compaſſions, as all his people muſt acknowledge. *The Lord preſerveth the ſimple*; thoſe who, without allowed guile, place on him their dependance: *I was brought low,* to the very brink of ruin; yet he magnified his grace the more in my deliverance, *and he helped me:* in conſequence of which *my ſoul* was *delivered from death,* from temporal, from eternal death, *mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling* into ſin, and the pit of death and hell. And cannot every believer witneſs this by his own bleſſed experience? but for theſe compaſſions of our God, long ſince conſigned to the grave, our bodies had ſeen corruption, and our ſouls had dropped into hell, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth. Well may we ſay, *Our God is merciful.*

5. He addreſſes his ſoul, and bids it now reſt in peace, under the guardian care of this gracious God. *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul;* whatever hath troubled thy repoſe, whither affliction, perſecution, temptation, or corruption, ſince all thy burdens are now caſt on the Lord, confidently expect, and quietly wait to ſee the ſalvation of God, *for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee* in all his paſt diſpenſations, and therefore deſerved to be truſted for all that is to come. Learn, my ſoul, thus to reaſon, and truſt ſtill in God!

6. He reſolves to devote to God's ſervice the life preſerved by his mercy. *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living,* ſeeking to glorify him upon earth, by letting his light ſhine before men, and telling of his ſalvation from day to day; or it is expreſſive of his faith, as looking to that better world where life eternal reigns, and in which he truſted to ſtand among the redeemed throng, and join their everlaſting ſongs of praiſe.

10. [e] I believed, therefore have I ſpoken: I was greatly afflicted. 11. [f] I ſaid in my haſte, [g] All men *are* liars. 12. What ſhall I render unto the LORD, for all his benefits towards me? 13. I will take [h] the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the name of the LORD, 14. [i] I will pay my vows unto the LORD, now in the preſence of all his people. 15. [k] Precious in the ſight of the LORD, *is* the death of his ſaints. 16. O LORD, truly [l] I *am* thy ſervant, I *am* thy ſervant, *and* [m] the ſon of thy handmaid: thou haſt looſed my bonds. 17. I will offer to thee [n] the ſacrifice of thankſgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. 18. [o] I will pay my vows unto the LORD, now in the preſence of all his people: 19. In the courts of the LORD's houſe, in the midſt of thee, O Jeruſalem. [p] Praiſe ye the LORD.

[e] 2 Cor. iv. 13.
[f] Pſal. xxxi. 22.
[g] Rom. iii. 4.
[h] Luke xxii. 17.
[i] Pſal. xxii. 25. Ver. 18.
[k] Num. xxiii. 10. Pſ. lxxii. 14. Rev. xiv. 13.
[l] Pſal. cxliii. 12.
[m] Pſ. lxxxvi. 16.
[n] Lev. vii. 12.
[o] Ver. 14.
[p] Pſ. civ. 35.

v. 10—19. The Septuagint, and other antient verſions, here begin a new pſalm, but the authority of the original, as well as the connection, ſhews it to be a part of the ſame.

1. He declares his unſhaken confidence in God. *I believed* the promiſes of his grace, of protection here, and glory hereafter, *therefore have I ſpoken,* to God in prayer, aſſured of being heard, to men with boldneſs, knowing the truth of what he declared. *Note,* Faith inſpires the heart with freedom of ſpeech, and no danger can diſcourage the faithful miniſter from proclaiming the goſpel truths, nor the faithful chriſtian from the profeſſion of them. *See* 2 *Cor.* iv. 13.

2. He owns the diſcouragements he was under. *I was greatly afflicted*; perſecuted by Saul, reviled, and reduced to the greateſt diſtreſs: and this is in a meaſure the lot of all the faithful. *I ſaid in my haſte,* raſhly, through the provocation I had received, or *in my flight,* when purſued by Saul or Abſalom, *All men are liars,* as having baſely forſaken and betrayed him. *Note,* (1.) In ſore provocations, and deep afflictions, the faith of God's ſtrongeſt ſaints have been ſometimes ſhaken, and they have ſpoken unadviſedly with their lips. (2.) There is a great difference between a ſurprize of temptation, and wilful and premeditate ſin. The words alſo will bear a different ſenſe, and ſpeak the language of his triumphant faith in his greateſt afflictions, yea, even when an exile, and all deſpaired of ever ſeeing him return, he could truſt God; and though all men concluded it was impoſſible he ſhould ever come to the throne, he could reſt on the promiſe. *Compare Rom.* iii. 4.

3. Overwhelmed with the ſenſe of the goodneſs of God, he ſeems at a loſs how to expreſs the infinite gratitude he owes, *v.* 12. and reſolves in his lips and life for ever to proclaim and exalt his great and glorious name. *I will take the cup of ſalvation*; the drink-offerings that ſhould attend his *ſacrifice of thankſgiving, v.* 17. and call upon the name of the Lord, praying to him; and praiſing him for all his mercies; in public, *in the preſence of all the people,* and the *courts of the Lord's houſe,* paying the *vows* he made in trouble, glorying in the profeſſion of his deep obligations to the God of his mercies, and encouraging others to the like open profeſſions of his ſervice; nor ſhould his lips only be employed in thankſgiving, his life ſhould be for ever devoted to his ſervice. *O Lord, truly I am thy ſervant,* in all fidelity and zeal; he repeats it to ſhew the heartineſs of his ſurrender, *I am thy ſervant, and the ſon of thy handmaid,* born of pious parents, and from early youth brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: *thou haſt looſed my bonds*; the bonds of ſin, corruption, affliction, had bound him; but now ſet free, he became the ſervant of God, and his ſervice is the moſt perfect freedom. *Note,* (1.) The ſacrifice of thankſgiving is the tribute we are ever bound to pay. (2.) To be the ſervant of God is the moſt honourable of all titles; ſo thought Iſrael's king. (3.) When grace hath looſed the bands of ſin, the powerful pleaſing cords of love ſhall for ever bind our hearts to God.

4. He can look forward without fear, or meet death with ſatisfaction. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord, is the death of his ſaints*; he will not ſuffer the wicked to deſtroy them, preſerves them when there ſeemed to be but a ſtep between them and death; and when in his appointed time the hour arrives of

their diſſolution, their laſt moments ſhall tell how dear they are to him who fall *aſleep* in Jeſus; yea, even in their graves they ſhall be remembered by him, and brought forth with glory at a reſurrection-day.

PSALM CXVII.

This pſalm contains a prophecy of goſpel grace to the Gentiles. 1. *They are called to praiſe God*, ver. 1. 2. *Proper matter for that praiſe ſuggeſted*, ver. 2.

1.[a] O Praiſe the LORD, all ye nations: praiſe him, [b] all ye people. 2. For his merciful kindneſs is great towards us: and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. [c] Praiſe ye the LORD.

a Rom. xv. 11.
b Luke ii. 10.
c Pſ. civ. 35.

v. 1, 2. This ſhort pſalm is full of the moſt bleſſed tidings to the Gentile world, who in the fulneſs of time ſhould be called into the fellowſhip of the goſpel, and with the converted Jews become one fold under one ſhepherd.

1. The redeemed out of all nations are called upon to praiſe the Lord: to them the goſpel was to be preached, and in conſequence of their obedience to the faith, they would be admitted into the aſſembly of the church, and join in the ſongs of redeeming love.

2. Rich matter for their praiſes is ſuggeſted, *v.* 2. *For his merciful kindneſs is great towards us*, or *hath abounded over us*; kindneſs and mercy, vaſt as the waters of the deluge, abounding to the chief of ſinners, extending to millions of loſt ſouls, ſecuring to them pardon, ſtrength, comfort, glory, *and* this eternally, becauſe *the truth of the Lord endureth for ever*, and his faithfulneſs is engaged to make good to all believers, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles alſo, the promiſes of the everlaſting covenant; therefore *praiſe ye the Lord.*

PSALM CXVIII.

Though David's peaceable poſſeſſion of the kingdom, after all his ſufferings, might give immediate occaſion to this pſalm, we are taught by him, who is truth itſelf, Matth. xxi. 42. *to ſee the more glorious accompliſhment of it in Jeſus our exalted Lord. In it,* 1. *David calls upon all about him to give to God the glory of his goodneſs*, ver. 1—4 2. *He encourageth himſelf and others to truſt in God from the experience he had had of God's power and pity in the great and kind things he had done for him*, ver. 5—18. 3. *He gives thanks for his advancement to the throne, as it was a figure of the exaltation of Chriſt*, ver. 19—23. 4. *The people, the prieſts, and the pſalmiſt himſelf, triumph in the proſpect of the Redeemer's kingdom*, ver. 24—29. *In ſinging this pſalm we muſt glorify God for his goodneſs, his goodneſs to us, and eſpecially his goodneſs to us in Jeſus Chriſt.*

1. [a] O Give thanks unto the LORD, for he *is* good: becauſe his mercy *endureth* for ever. 2. [b] Let Iſrael now ſay, that his mercy *endureth* for ever. 3. Let the houſe of Aaron now ſay, that his mercy *endureth* for ever. 4. Let them now that fear the LORD ſay, that his mercy *endureth* for ever. 5. [c] I called upon the LORD † in diſtreſs: the LORD anſwered me, [d] *and ſet me* in a large place. 6. [e] The LORD *is* ‡ on my ſide, I will not fear: what can man do unto me? 7. [f] The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore ſhall I ſee *my deſire* upon them that hate me. 8. [g] *It is* better to truſt in the LORD, than to put confidence in man. 9. [h] *It is* better to truſt in the LORD, than to put confidence in princes. 10. All nations compaſſed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I § deſtroy them. 11. [i] They compaſſed me about, yea, they compaſſed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will deſtroy them. 12. They compaſſed me about [k] like bees, they are quenched [l] as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will ‖ deſtroy them. 13. Thou haſt thruſt ſore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me. 14. [m] The LORD *is* my ſtrength and ſong, and is become my ſalvation. 15. The voice of rejoicing and ſalvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doth valiantly. 16. The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doth valiantly. 17. [n] I ſhall not die but live, and declare the works of the LORD. 18. The LORD hath chaſtned me ſore: [o] but he hath not given me over unto death.

a 1 Chron. xvi. 8. Pſ. cvi. 1. & cvii. 1. & cxxxvi. 1.
b Pſ. cxv. 9, &c.
c Ibid. cxx. 1.
† Heb. Out of diſtreſs.
d Pſ. xviii. 19.
e Ibid. xxvii. 1. & lvi. 4, 11. Iſa. li. 12. Heb. xiii. 6.
‡ Heb. For me.
f Pſ. liv. 4.
g Ibid. xl. 4. & lxii. 8, 9. Jer. xvii. 5, 7.
h Pſ. cxlvi. 3.
§ Heb. Cut them off.
i 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.
k Deut. i. 44.
l Eccleſ. vii. 6. Nat. i. 10.
‖ Heb. Cut them down.
m Ex. xv. 2. Iſa. xii. 2.
n Hab. i. 12.
o 2 Cor. i. 10.

v. 1—18. How great is the goodneſs of our God!

1. The pſalmiſt calls on all to give thanks unto him, Iſrael in general, the miniſters of the ſanctuary in particular, and thoſe that fear the Lord in every place, Jew or Gentile, muſt adore him the fountain of all good, and own his mercy everlaſting, *v.* 1—4.

2. He gives inſtances of this mercy in his own caſe. *I called upon the Lord in diſtreſs*, or *out of that ſtrait*, when compaſſed by Saul, or at the court of Achiſh, or Ziklag: and *the Lord anſwered me, and ſet me in a large place*, enabled me to riſe ſuperior to my foes, and brought me to the throne of Iſrael in ſpite of all oppoſition. Thus did Jeſus in the garden, and on the croſs cry out, and was anſwered in his reſurrection and aſcenſion to the right hand of God, to reign till his foes ſhould be made his footſtool.

3. He encourages his heart ſtill to truſt, and fear not; God eſpouſed his righteous cauſe, and therefore, though princes and people concurred with bitter hatred to perſecute him, he could confidently lean on his almighty arm, and doubted not but to ſee his deſire accompliſhed in their defeat and diſappointment: ſo much better is it to truſt in the Lord, than to put confidence in man, even the greateſt, *v.* 5—9. The Son of David in faith thus met the combined hatred of earth and hell, and more than conqueror triumphed over them; and every believer, dependant on his almighty ſtrength, need never fear what the world without, or corruption within, can do againſt him; he may boldly ſay, *Heb.* xiii. 6. *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me.*

4. The number, violence, and inveteracy of his foes but ſerved to magnify the glory of the victory, which by Divine power he had obtained. *All nations* around him, Philiſtines, Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, ſeverally or confederate, attacked him, but fell before his conquering arm, as the fire among thorns, which, though for a moment furiouſly blazing, is preſently extinguiſhed; yea, though one domeſtic enemy, more implacable and dangerous than the reſt, even Saul ſore thruſt at him, or Abſalom the ſon of his boſom; yet the Lord helped him, and he was ſtrengthened. The faithful ſoul is thus compaſſed with legions of temptations, from ſin, the world, and his own heart; and in a more dangerous manner thruſt at by the ſin that doth moſt eaſily beſet him; but almighty grace ſupports him, and then he can never faint nor fail.

5. He rejoices in this ſalvation of God. *The Lord is my ſtrength*, to uphold me, on him alone my ſoul truſteth, and is holpen, *and my ſong*; for ever am I bound to praiſe him for the power he hath beſtowed, and the comforts I have received; *and* aſſured I am now of never-failing ſupport, for he *is become my ſalvation*, undertakes for me, and then, temporally, ſpiritually, and eternally, all my intereſts are ſecure: therefore *the voice of rejoicing and ſalvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous*, in mine for the mercies I have received, whilſt others rejoice in theſe mercies conferred upon me, and by their own experience alſo have the ſame cauſe of joy; for every righteous ſoul, accepted in Jeſus, juſtified by his righteouſneſs, and renewed by his grace, hath ſalvation begun, and may reſt aſſured it ſhall be compleated; for which, therefore, he is called upon to rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

6. He aſcribes the glory of all to God; it was not his own power or policy, but *the right hand of the Lord* which ſaved him, and *was exalted* in the victory wrought on his behalf. *Note*, Whatever conqueſts we win over corruption, or ſucceſs attends our labours, we muſt remember that it is *not I, but the grace of God that was with me*; to him therefore be given the everlaſting praiſe.

7. Paſt experience emboldens his hope, that he *ſhall not die, but live*, notwithſtanding the perſevering malice of his foes, and *declare the works of the Lord*, ſtanding a living monument of his power, grace, and faithfulneſs: yea, though *the Lord hath chaſtned me ſore*, with the rod of parental correction; yet he *hath not given me over unto death*, but I live, and reign triumphant over all my foes. The Son of David lives, and death hath no more dominion over him; though for a moment, under the chaſtiſement of our peace, his ſoul was put to grief, and the humanity bruiſed to the duſt for our iniquities; yet he is now alive for evermore, to declare the great ſalvation of God accompliſhed; and in him every believer may ſay, I ſhall not die eternally; becauſe he liveth, I ſhall live alſo.

19. [p] Open to me the gates of righteouſneſs: I will go into them, *and* I will praiſe the LORD: 20. [q] This gate of the LORD, [r] into which the righteous ſhall enter. 21. [s] I will praiſe thee, for thou haſt heard me, and art become my ſalvation. 22. [t] The ſtone *which* the builders refuſed, is become the head *ſtone* of the corner. 23. This is † the LORD's doing, it *is* marvellous in our eyes. 24. This *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. 25. Save now, I beſeech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beſeech thee, ſend now proſperity. 26. [u] Bleſſed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have

p Iſa. xxvi. 2.
q Pſal. xxiv. 7.
r Iſa. xxxv. 8. Rev. xxi. 27. & xxii. 14, 15.
s Pſal. xviii. 48, 49.
t Mat. xxi. 42. Mark xii. 10. Luke xx. 17. Acts iv. 11. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7.
† Heb. From the Lord.
u Mat. xxi. 9. & xxiii. 39. Mark xi. 9. Luke xix. 38.

bleſſed you out of the houſe of the LORD. 27. God *is* the LORD, which hath ſhewed us [x] light: bind the ſacrifice with cords, *even* unto [y] the horns of the altar. 28. Thou *art* my God, and I will praiſe thee; *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee. 29. O give thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

x Eſth. viii. 16.
y Ex. xxvii.

v. 12—29. That the pſalmiſt here is ſpeaking not of himſelf, but of his more glorious Son, is evident, *Math.* xxi. 42. *Acts* iv. 11, 12.

1. The gates of righteouſneſs are required to be thrown open. The gate of heaven, now, through the Redeemer's blood and righteouſneſs, is opened for himſelf and all believers: he is entered into it to praiſe the Lord for his great ſalvation, and all his righteous ones muſt follow him; of which David's return to the temporal ſanctuary, in anſwer to his prayer, after he had been ſo long an exile, was a type and figure.

2. His humiliation and exaltation are foretold; *The ſtone which the builders refuſed, is become the head ſtone of the corner*; David the outcaſt, is exalted to Iſrael's throne; and what is better far, Jeſus, though rejected by the Jewiſh rulers and people, as the Meſſiah, and crucified on a tree, is become the headſtone of the corner; angels, principalities, and powers, are made ſubject unto him, and he is made head over all things to his church, uniting both Jew and Gentile in one glorious temple, and the everlaſting object of his people's praiſe. *This is the Lord's doing*, the contrivance of his infinite wiſdom and love, and executed by his Divine power, in order for the ſalvation of his people, and *it is marvellous in our eyes*; angels with admiration behold the undertaking of an incarnate Saviour; and men, for whom this great ſalvation is wrought, are more peculiarly called upon to wonder and adore. *This is the day the Lord has made*, the glorious day of goſpel grace, wherein the ſun of righteouſneſs, riſing from the grave, ſhines with brighteſt beams of light and love on his choſen, and all his redeemed cannot but ſay, *We will rejoice and be glad in it*.

3. Our praiſes muſt now be directed to him exalted at the right hand of God, and become the Prince and Saviour of his people. *Save now, I beſeech thee, O Lord*, Hoſanna! let the King of glory live for ever, cry all his loyal ſubjects: *O Lord, I beſeech thee, ſend now proſperity*: let our exalted Jeſus have the hearts of his people, and the necks of his enemies; be the conqueror of death, hell, and ſin, and his kingdom be extended from pole to pole. Or this may alſo be the prayer of the faithful, in virtue of the exaltation of their King Jeſus; who, having all power in heaven and earth, is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, to pardon, ſtrengthen, comfort, ſanctify, and glorify them eternally. *Bleſſed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, ordained of God to be the Mediator, appointed and enabled to execute the glorious work of redemption, and coming in the fulneſs of time to accompliſh it. Thus, *Luke* xix. 38. the people met him with praiſes; and thus with delight doth the ſinner welcome him to his ſoul, in all the riches of his love and grace, and cry with a tranſport of affection, "Come in, dear Lord, to me." *We have bleſſed you out of the houſe of the Lord*; *we*, the miniſters of the goſpel of Jeſus, declare to *you*, who believe in and praiſe him, that ye are bleſſed of him; we congratulate your happy lot, and ceaſeleſs add our prayers to yours, that every day ye may abound yet more and more, and receive increaſingly, out of his fulneſs, all bleſſings in time and in eternity: in anſwer to this prayer and ſacred benediction, the people, acknowledging their infinite obligations, reply, *God is the Lord*, the faithful, gracious, ever-living, and ever-loving God, *which hath ſhewed us light*, and hath ſhined on the face of his anointed Jeſus, and on us through him, with beams of mercy and grace; therefore are we bound to render the returns of gratitude: *bind the ſacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar*; the bodies of ſlain beaſts indeed are no more needful, now the body of Jeſus hath been once offered, but the ſpiritual ſacrifices of prayer and praiſe are the well-pleaſing oblation God now accepts; and the devoted heart, offered up a living ſacrifice, ſhall pleaſe him *better than the bullock that hath horns and hoofs*.

4. David cloſes with his own profeſſions of his confidence in God, and his thankfulneſs for ſuch an intereſt in his favour, exhorting every faithful ſoul to join his grateful praiſes. *Thou art my God*, my covenant God, and therefore, in heart, lip, and life, *I will praiſe* and *exalt thee*: and moſt bounden are we to follow his example. *O give thanks unto the Lord*, ſo worthy to be praiſed, *for he is good* beyond all we can conceive, *for his mercy endureth for ever*, from eternity it was, and to eternity will endure; therefore praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul!

PSALM CXIX.

This pſalm ſeems to be a collection of David's pious and devout ejaculations, the ſhort and ſudden breathings and elevations of his ſoul to God, which he wrote down as they occurred, and towards the latter end of his time gathered them out of his day-book, where they lay ſcattered, added to them many like words, and digeſted them into this order. 1. The compoſure of it is ſingular. It is divided into twenty-two parts, according to the number of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and each part conſiſts of eight verſes; all the verſes of the firſt part beginning with Aleph, all the verſes of the ſecond with Beth, and ſo on, without any flaw, throughout the whole pſalm. This might prove of uſe to the memory, and young people would the eaſier learn it by heart, and retain it the better even in old age. 2. The general ſcope and deſign of it is to magnify the law, and make it honourable; to ſet forth the excellency and uſefulneſs of divine revelation, and to recommend it to us, not only for the entertainment, but for the government of ourſelves, by the pſalmiſt's own example, who ſpeaks by experience of the benefit of it, and of the good impreſſions made upon him by it; for which he praiſeth God, and earneſtly prays, from firſt to laſt, for the continuance of God's grace with him, to direct and quicken him in the way of his duty. There are ten ſeveral words by which divine revelation is called in this pſalm; and they are expreſſive of the whole compaſs of it, informing us both what God expects from us, and telling us what we may expect from him. The things contained in the ſcripture, and drawn from it, are here called, (1.) God's law, becauſe they are enacted by him as our ſovereign. (2.) His way, becauſe they are the rule of our obedience. (3.) His teſtimonies, becauſe they are ſolemnly declared to the world, and atteſted beyond contradiction. (4.) His commandments, becauſe given with authority, and (as the word ſignifies) lodged with us as a truſt. (5.) His precepts, becauſe preſcribed to us, and not left indifferent. (6.) His word, or ſaying, becauſe it is the declaration of his mind, and Chriſt the eſſential eternal Word is all in all in it. (7.) His judgments, becauſe framed in infinite wiſdom, and becauſe by them we muſt both judge and be judged. (8.) His righteouſneſs, becauſe it is all holy, juſt, and good, and the rule and ſtandard of righteouſneſs. (9.) His ſtatutes, becauſe they are fixed and determined, and of perpetual obligation. (10.) His truth or faithfulneſs, becauſe the principles upon which the divine law is built, are eternal truths. And I think there is but one verſe (it is ver. 122.) *in all this long pſalm, in which there is not one or other of theſe ten words; only in three or four they are uſed concerning God's providence, or David's practice, as* ver. 75, 84, 121. *and* ver. 132, *they are called God's name. The whole expreſſes the affection David bore to God's word, and is deſigned to ſtir up our affection towards it, who enjoy ſo much more of divine revelation than ever he was favoured with.*

1. ALEPH.

1. BLeſſed *are* [a] the † undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. 2. Bleſſed *are* they that keep his teſtimonies, *and* [b] *that* ſeek him with the whole heart. 3. [c] They alſo do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. 4. Thou haſt commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently. 5. [d] O that my ways were directed to keep thy ſtatutes! 6. [e] Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I [f] have reſpect unto all thy commandments. 7. [g] I will praiſe thee with uprightneſs of heart, when I ſhall have learned † thy righteous judgments. 8. I will keep thy ſtatutes: O forſake me not utterly.

a Ezek. xxviii. 15.
† Or, ſincere.
b Deut. iv. 29. Jer. xxix. 13.
c 1 John iii. 9. & v. 18.
d 2 Cor. iii. 5.
e Job xxii. 26.
f Luke i. 6.
g Ver. 171.
† Heb. The judgments of thy righteouſneſs.

א Aleph. The Firſt Part.

v. 1—8. Whilſt happineſs is the univerſal purſuit, we might wonder to hear the general murmur of diſappointment, and to ſee thoſe who have moſt earneſtly engaged in the ſearch as far removed from it as at the beginning: the reaſon is, men miſtake eſſentially; and not knowing where the true joy is to be found, continue ſeeking reſt and finding none. The pſalmiſt here therefore points out the way, and they who are wiſe to follow him, will find therein happineſs preſent and eternal.

1. He deſcribes the truly happy. *They are undefiled in the way*; found in Chriſt the way to glory, waſhed in his blood from every ſpot of ſin, *perfect* and compleat in his righteouſneſs, and *ſincere* in their deſire to pleaſe God in all things; *and walk in the law of the Lord*, guided by it as their rule of duty: *they keep his teſtimonies*, his revealed will as a ſacred depoſit, ſolicitous to obey the commands, and obſerve the inſtituted ordinances, without daring to add thereto, or diminiſh therefrom, *and ſeek him with their whole heart*, in ceaſeleſs prayer looking for ſtrength and help from him; cleaving to him with undivided affection, and deſiring daily to love him more, and ſerve him better. *They alſo do no iniquity*, not that they are without a corrupted nature, or in their temper and conduct able to ſtand before the ſpirituality of God's law, but they have no allowed guile, nor make ſin their practice or delight; and their new man, the Divine nature of which they have partaken, doth not commit ſin: *they walk in his ways*, whatever trials, temptations, and allurements would diſcourage or enſnare them, they make ſtrait paths for their feet, and turn not aſide to the right hand or the left. My ſoul, ſay, is this character thine!

2. He prays, according to God's commands, that he may be able to approve himſelf faithful. *Thou haſt commanded us*, and thy authority is ſovereign, thy title to our obedience unqueſtionable, as, the Creator, Preſerver, and above all the Redeemer of man, and therefore we are bound *to keep thy commandments diligently*, with that ardor, perſeverance, and fidelity, which is ſo much our duty. O then *that my ways were made ſo direct*, will every true hearted believer ſay with the pſalmiſt, *to keep thy ſtatutes!* More than human ſtrength is neceſſary to enable us to walk and pleaſe God, and therefore to him muſt our prayer be directed, that he may lead us in the way he commands, and write on our hearts the law he enjoins.

3. He promiſes himſelf the comfort of ſuch a conduct. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed*, either of my hope towards God, as deluſive, or of appearing before him in his worſhip, or of my profeſſion before men, *when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments*, *look* at them as my directory, eſteem them all to be right, and, without reſerve or exception, deſire to have my will and ways conformed thereunto; *for this is our rejoicing, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, we have our converſation in the world.*

4. He reſolves to praiſe God *with uprightneſs of heart, when he ſhall have learned his righteous judgments*, or *the judgments of his righteouſneſs*, his commandments, which are altogether righteous, or the diſpenſations of his providence, which are conformable to the ſtricteſt juſtice. Much he had known, more he had yet to learn, and all would ſerve to miniſter matter for his praiſes.

5. He purpoſes, through God's grace, to approve his fidelity unſhaken. *I will keep thy ſtatutes*; ſuch is my fixed deſire and deſign: *O forſake me not utterly*; if but a moment left of thee, I cannot ſtand upright; if forſaken by thee, I inſtantly muſt prove an apoſtate; but leave me not, Lord, and then I ſhall walk and not be weary, and run and not be faint. May my ſoul thus ever purpoſe and pray!

2. BETH.

9. [h] Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?
by taking heed *thereto* [i] according to thy word. 10.
With my whole heart have I ſought thee: O let me
not wander from thy commandments. 11. [k] Thy word
have I hid in mine heart, that I might not ſin againſt
thee. 12. Bleſſed *art* thou, O LORD: [l] teach me thy
ſtatutes. 13. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. 14. I have rejoiced in the way
of thy teſtimonies, as *much as* in all riches. 15. [m] I will
meditate in thy precepts, and have reſpect unto thy
ways. 16. I will delight myſelf in thy ſtatutes: I will
not forget thy word.

[h] Mic. vi. 6.
[i] John xvii. 17.
[k] Pſ. xxxvii. 31. Luke ii. 19, 51.
[l] Ver. 26, 33, 64, 68, 108, 124, 135.
[m] Pſ. i. 2.

ב Beth. The Second Part.

v. 9—16. Youth is the time to ſerve the Lord, and happy they who ſeek him early.

1. The queſtion is put. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* the way of all fleſh is corrupt and polluted, and young perſons expoſed to eſpecial temptations from fleſhly luſts, that war againſt the ſoul, defile the conſcience, and plunge them into perdition and deſtruction; great need therefore have they to enquire how they may be preſerved from *the pollutions of the world.*

2. The anſwer is given. *By taking heed thereto according to thy word*, or *by obſerving what is according to thy word*; this chart will enable him to ſteer clear of the rocks, on which others make ſhipwreck of faith and a good conſcience.

3. David profeſſes his own attachment to God, and prays for wiſdom, direction, and ſupport. *With my whole heart have I ſought thee*; thy word to teach, thy grace to guide me: *O let me not wander*, as my poor ſinful heart is too prone to do, *from thy commandments.* A child of God is ever jealous, knowing his weakneſs and corruption, leaſt his falſe heart ſhould err from the way; and therefore to prevent it, he deſires to ſay with David, *Thy word have I hid within my heart*, mixed with faith, fixed in my memory, and treaſured up as the moſt valuable poſſeſſion, and the grand preſervative, *that I might not ſin againſt thee*; having an anſwer ready to every temptation, and a conſtant warning from it of the evil, danger, and baſeneſs of ſin. *Bleſſed art thou, O Lord!* for all thou haſt done for me; infinitely bleſſed in thyſelf, thou doſt delight to bleſs thy people: *teach me thy ſtatutes*, all I yet know is very imperfect, my own reſearches are weak and poor; thou, Lord, muſt teach me, or I ſhall never know as I ought to know, or be truly wiſe unto ſalvation.

4. He reflects with ſatisfaction on the paſt. *With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth*; telling of God's word, its doctrines and precepts; exhorting others to all holy obedience, and ſpeaking his own experience of the excellence of the good ways of God. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy teſtimonies*, as my ſupreme happineſs and delight, *as much as* any worldling doth *in all his riches*, or *above all riches*, counting them but dung and loſs, compared with a ſenſe of God's love, the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, the ineſtimably precious promiſes, and the joy ariſing from a faithful adherence to him.

5. He reſolves from the paſt experience of the bleſſedneſs of God's ways to perſevere in them. *I will meditate in thy precepts*, with them ſhall my thoughts be occupied riſing up and lying down; and inwardly digeſted, they ſhall not only be ſtored up in the memory, but afford the moſt ſweet refreſhment to my ſoul; *and have reſpect unto thy ways*, or *look* unto them, as the traveller eyes the path before him, careful not to deviate from the right way. *I will delight myſelf in thy ſtatutes*; they have been my joy, and every day the more I know of them, the farther I walk in them, the greater my delight ſhall be: *I will not forget thy word*, ever upon my heart I will keep it, ready to anſwer every emergence, to warn me when I err, to direct me when I doubt, to ſtrengthen me when I am tempted, to comfort me when I am dejected, to recover me when I am fallen, and to preſerve me when I ſtand. Reader, with ſelf-application enquire into thy experience, and ſee how far it correſponds with the bleſſed pſalmiſt.

3. GIMEL.

17. [n] Deal bountifully with thy ſervant, *that* I may
live, and keep thy word. 18. † Open thou mine eyes,
that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.
19. [o] I *am* a ſtranger in the earth, hide not thy commandments from me. 20. [p] My ſoul breaketh for the longing *that it hath* unto thy judgments at all times. 21.
Thou haſt rebuked the proud *that are* curſed, which do
err from thy commandments. 22. Remove from me [q]
reproach and contempt, for I have kept thy teſtimonies.
23. [r] Princes alſo did ſit, *and* [s] ſpeak againſt me: *but*
thy ſervant did meditate in thy ſtatutes. 24. [t] Thy
teſtimonies alſo *are* my delight, *and* ‡ my counſellors.

[n] Ibid. cxvi. 7.
† Heb. Reveal,
[o] Gen. xlvii. 9. 1 Chron. xxix. 15. Pſ. xxxix. 12. 2 Cor. v. 6. Heb. xi. 13.
[p] Pſ. xlii. 1. & lxiii. 1. & lxxxiv. 2.
[q] Pſ. xxxix. 8.
[r] Ibid. ii. 2.
[s] Ezek. xxxiii. 30.
[t] Ver. 77, 92.
‡ Heb. Men of my counſel.

ג Gimel. The Third Part.

v. 17—24. We have here,

1. The pſalmiſt's prayer. *Deal bountifully with thy ſervant*; every bleſſing we can hope for, comes from the mere bounty of God, who giveth liberally to thoſe who aſk him, and upbraideth not; as his ſervants we muſt depend upon him, and ſhall be directed and ſupported by him; *that I may live*; by ſin our natural life is forfeited, our ſouls ſunk in ſpiritual death, and liable to eternal death; well may we therefore cry, That I may live, *ſpiritually* by the quickning power of Jeſus, *eternally* through the free gift of God, and *temporally* as long as it ſhall be for God's glory; this being the only purpoſe for which a good man wiſhes to be here: *that I may keep thy word*, faithful myſelf, zealous to ſpread the knowledge of it, and to preſerve it pure and incorrupt from every adulteration: and that I may do ſo, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law*; we are by nature blind to ſpiritual objects; the wonders of God's word are far beyond the keeneſt eye of unenlightned reaſon, 1 *Cor.* xi. 14. till Jeſus opens our underſtandings, we cannot underſtand the ſcriptures aright, *Luke* xxiv. 4, 5. but in his light we ſhall ſee light, behold the myſtery unfolded, a righteous God juſt in pardoning, a holy law magnified to the uttermoſt, Chriſt the end of it, for righteouſneſs to the ſinner, and the guilty and helpleſs pardoned and ſaved, both from the condemnation and the bondage of the law. Lord, may I ſee daily more diſtinctly and clearly theſe wondrous things!

2. He pleads with God. *I am a ſtranger upon earth*, my abode is ſhort here, and quickly I am to paſs from this changing ſcene, having here no abiding city, therefore *hide not thy commandments from me*, but ſhew me how to act in this land of my pilgrimage, guide me ſafely through it, and teach me the neareſt road to that eternal home whither I deſire to go. *Note*, (1.) It is a reflection we ſhould often make, that we are ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth, that as ſuch our affections may be diſengaged from it. (2.) They who are moſt habitually living under the influence of this truth, will be moſt importunate to obtain ſtrength and ſupport from God in their journey through time into eternity, that they may never think of taking up their reſt in this ſtrange and polluted land.

3. He profeſſes his eager longings after God's word, *v.* 20. to know it more fully, to obey it more zealouſly: his *ſoul breaks* with the vehemence of the deſire, and *at all times*; it was not a ſudden fit of devotion, but his habitual temper. Ah! how unlike him are we!

4. He gives the character, and denounces the condemnation of the wicked, *v.* 21. They are *proud*, impiouſly rejecting God's government, deſpiſing his law, and contemning his threatnings; or they are vainly puffed up with the conceit of their own goodneſs and excellency above other men, of all ſins in God's ſight the moſt abominable. *They err from thy commandments*; whether openly profane, or proudly ſelf-righteous, they alike fatally err, and the wrath of God abideth on them; they are *curſed*, the rebukes of God purſue them, as the re-

bellious and proud of old have felt, whether angels or men, and as to eternity will be proved, when the Judge of quick and dead ſhall finally determine the ſinner's everlaſting doom.

5. He begs to be preſerved from the reproach and revilings of men, for ſuch have ever been the lot of the beſt and greateſt ſaints of God; let us then never think it ſtrange to ſhare with them. *Remove* it, or, *roll* it *from me*, as a heavy load; for *I have kept thy teſtimonies*: this is the cauſe for which I ſuffer, for my fidelity; and ſuffer what I may, to them will I ſtill adhere, in ſpite of all the ſcorn and oppoſition even of the greateſt. *Princes alſo did ſit and ſpeak againſt me*; the great men of Saul's court againſt David, and the rulers againſt Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* xi. 8. And thus the mighty and noble will generally ſtill be found to do againſt the poor and deſpiſed followers of Jeſus; *but* may we ever be enabled to ſay with him, *Thy ſervant did meditate in thy ſtatutes*; inattentive to their revilings, undiſturbed in his meditations, and ſteadily perſevering in the path of duty. Nay,

6. He found in them ſtill his ſupreme delight. *Thy teſtimonies alſo are my delight*; in them I find a joy the world can neither give nor take away: nay, as our tribulations abound, our conſolations will uſually abound alſo; ſo that the world's enmity contributes but the more to our comfort; *and my counſellors*, or *the men of my counſel*. He conſulted not with fleſh and blood, but with better adviſers, the ſcriptures of truth; and we are then ſure we are right, when God's word is thus our conſtant guide and rule, and ſhall ever find the comfort of following its bleſſed directions.

4. DALETH.

25. [u] My ſoul cleaveth unto the duſt: [x] quicken thou me according to thy word. 26. I have declared my ways, and thou heardeſt me: [y] teach me thy ſtatutes. 27. Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts: ſo ſhall I talk of thy wondrous works. 28. My ſoul † melteth for heavineſs: ſtrengthen thou me according unto thy word. 29. Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciouſly. 30. I have choſen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid *before me.* 31. I have ſtuck unto thy teſtimonies: O LORD, put me not to ſhame. 32. I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou ſhalt [a] enlarge my heart.

[u] Pſ. xliv. 25.
[x] Ver. 40, 88, 107, 149, 156, 159. Pſal. cxliii. 11.
[y] Ver. 12. Pſ. xxv. 4. & xxvii. 11. & lxxxvi. 11.
[z] Pſ. cvii. 26.
† Heb. Droppeth.
[a] Iſa. lx. 5.

ד Daleth. The Fourth Part.

v. 25—32. This portion begins,

1. With his complaint, and humble plea; for every redeemed ſoul muſt expect to meet with trials, and ſometimes to groan, being burdened. *My ſoul cleaveth to the duſt*; ſunk under diſeaſe of body, or dejection of mind, and ready to drop into the grave; or feeling the vile affections of a fallen nature, attached to ſome earthly good, light, vain, and unſatisfactory, as the duſt the wind ſcattereth. Ah, Lord! how often doth this fooliſh heart of mine thus cleave to the duſt! *Quicken thou me*; reſtore my body to health, raiſe up my drooping ſpirits, and eſpecially enliven my dead heart, that in warm affections it may aſcend to thee, and leave this vile earth, and all things in it, far behind; *according to thy word*, on the promiſes of which I place my dependance, and thence draw my encouragement to pray, and expect an anſwer of peace.

2. He caſts his care upon God, proved by paſt experience ſo kind to hear and help him, for which he reſolves to render continual praiſe. *I have declared my ways*; either his ſinful ways, which he lamented; or his diſtreſſes, which he ſpread before the Lord; or the holy purpoſes of his heart, which in prayer he had uttered to him; *and thou heardeſt me*, pardoning, pitying, relieving, confirming, ſtrengthening me. A gracious ſoul hath thus ever one to go to, who is as able to relieve all his wants, as he is ever ready to hear his prayer. What an unſpeakable comfort! *Teach me thy ſtatutes*, how I may walk and pleaſe thee, in gratitude for the mercy I have received. *Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts*; I want no higher teaching than thy word, opened by thy ſpirit: *ſo ſhall I talk of thy wondrous works*; thus inſtructed I ſhall be able to ſpeak of them with underſtanding, with boldneſs, with delight. *Note*, We ſhall then ſpeak of the things of God feelingly, and with effect, when we ſpeak experimentally, from what we have known in our own ſouls.

3. He prays for help in his diſtreſs, and preſervation of his ſoul from error and ſin. *My ſoul melteth*, or *drops*, *for heavineſs*; either through the preſſures of affliction, temptation, deſertion, or corruption; and feeling his own weakneſs, he turns his eyes to one mighty to ſave; *Strengthen thou me*, *according to thy word*, with ſuch might in the inner man, that I may be able to conflict with, and overcome the trials I meet; and this according to the promiſes which thou haſt given me, to engage my dependance, and be my ſupport. *Remove from me the way of lying*; for David had felt himſelf thus ſurprized, 1 *Sam.* xxi. 2, 13. xxvii. 10. or rather, *the way of falſhood*; keep me from all errors in principle and practice, that I may not deviate from the doctrines of truth, or inſtituted ordinances of worſhip. *Grant me thy law graciouſly*, which is the great preſervative; and matter of infinite favour it is, that this bleſſed word is ſo fully made known to us, ſo kindly vouchſafed to us. Moſt inexcuſable are thoſe, who go to hell with Bibles in their hands.

4. He declares what hath been his choice, and what is ſtill his purpoſe, and truſts in this way he ſhall know no ſhame. *I have choſen the way of truth, Chriſt*, who is eminently *the way and the truth*; and his *word*, this he choſe, convinced of the excellence of the way, and renouncing every other. *Thy judgments have I laid before me*, as the pattern after which I fain would fairly copy. *I have ſtuck to thy teſtimonies*, with unſhaken ſteadineſs, in ſpite of every effort of temptation to make me quit this hold. *O Lord, put me not to ſhame*; let me never be aſhamed of my confidence, as diſappointed of my hope; or a ſhame to my profeſſion, as unfaithful; and hereunto will every believer heartily ſay, Amen. *I will run the way of thy commandments*, with chearfulneſs, diligence, and delight, *when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart*; for from him all the ability is derived. It is his love ſhed abroad can alone give wings to our ſoul, and his quickening Spirit make our feet to move ſwift and ſteady in the way to glory.

5. HE.

33. [b] Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy ſtatutes, and I ſhall keep it *unto* the end. 34. Give me underſtanding, and I ſhall keep thy law, yea, I ſhall obſerve it with *my* whole heart. 35. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight. 36. Incline my heart unto thy teſtimonies, [c] and not to covetouſneſs. 37. [d] Turn away mine eyes from [e] beholding vanity: *and* [f] quicken thou me in thy way. 38. [g] Stabliſh thy word unto thy ſervant, who *is devoted* to thy fear. 39. [h] Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments *are* good. 40. Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: [i] quicken me in thy righteouſneſs.

[b] Ver. 12, 26.
[c] 1 Tim. vi. 10.
[d] Iſa. xxxiii. 15.
[e] Prov. xxiii. 5.
[f] Ver. 25.
[g] 2 Sam. vii. 25.
[h] Ver. 22.
[i] Ver. 25.

ה He. The Fifth Part.

v. 33—40. A wiſe and gracious man was the pſalmiſt; but he was ſenſible his attainments, both in knowledge and grace, were very low; and he earneſtly longed to increaſe in both with the increaſe of God. We have here,

1. What he prays for, *v.* 33—35. (1.) To be taught God's way, and bleſt with ſpiritual underſtanding. (2.) To be inclined and diſpoſed, yea, drawn with the cords of love, and *made to go in the way of God's commandments*; for unleſs a gracious violence were uſed with our ſtubborn hearts, we ſhould neither be willing nor able to walk before God.

2. What he promiſes. *I will keep thy law*, in the ſtrength of the grace thou doſt miniſter, *unto the end*, conſtantly and perſeveringly; and *with my whole heart*, cordially, ſincerely, and univerſally; *for therein do I delight*. *Note*, When our duty becomes our delight, then our ſoul truly proſpers.

3. What he prays againſt. (1.) *Covetouſneſs*, ver. 36. one of the moſt rooted and moſt dangerous of all evils; the love of gold, and the love of God, being utterly incompatible, and no man capable of ſerving two maſters. (2.) *Vanity*, the vain pomp and glory of the world; the honours, profits, and pleaſures, ſo tempting and enſnaring to the ſoul. He deſires he may be not only kept from the love of them in his heart, but removed from the beholding them: for they who would abſtain from evil, muſt turn away their eyes from the temptation; for by looking, concupiſcence is kindled as with a fire. (3.) *Reproach*, that God would *turn it away*, *v.* 39. He feared it, for ſometimes he had given ſad occaſion for it; and, among his bittereſt burdens, felt the diſhonour he had brought upon God thereby; and he feared leſt he ſhould again return unto folly, and give new occaſion to the adverſaries to ſpeak reproachfully. *For thy judgments are good*, and therefore it would be grievous to hear theſe good ways of the Lord blaſphemed, as they too often are through the falls of profeſſors.

4. What he truſts to; the faithful promiſes of God, *v.* 38. *Quicken thou me in thy way*; whilſt ten thouſand objects would divert me from it, and manifold temptations retard my courſe, let thy grace hold up my goings, and enable me to perſevere vigorouſly and ſteadily. *Stabliſh thy word*; enable me to truſt confidently upon it, and make me ſee the bleſſed fulfilment of it in the ſtrength, comfort, and ſalvation miniſtered *unto thy ſervant*, my moſt honoured title, higher than that of Iſrael's king, *who is devoted to thy fear*, to ſerve thee with filial awe, or *which leads to thy fear*, this being the bleſſed effect of that word, that it makes us jealous of offending.

5. What he longed for, *v.* 40. Thou ſeeſt my heart, and to thee I can appeal. *Behold*, and ſee, *I have longed after thy precepts*, that I may know them more diſtinctly, feel them graven upon my heart more deeply, and walk in the way of them more perfectly than I have ever yet done. *Quicken me in thy righteouſneſs*, in thy righteous ways, according to thy faithful

promiſes; and as thou haſt given me to will, give me to do alſo of thy good pleaſure.

6. VAU.

41. Let thy mercies come alſo unto me, O LORD; *even* thy ſalvation according to thy word. 42. † So ſhall I have wherewith to anſwer him that reproacheth me; for I truſt in thy word. 43. And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments. 44. So ſhall I keep thy law continually, for ever and ever. 45. And I will walk ‡ at liberty: for I ſeek thy precepts. 46. I will ſpeak of thy teſtimonies alſo [k] before kings, and will not be aſhamed. 47. And I will delight myſelf in thy commandments, which I have loved. 48. My hands alſo will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved: and [l] I will meditate in thy ſtatutes.

† Or, So ſhall I anſwer him that reproacheth me in any thing.
‡ Heb. At large.
k Dan. iii. 13, 16. Mat. x. 18, 19.
l Ver. 15.

ו Vau. The Sixth Part.

v. 41—48. We have here,

1. The prayer he offered. [1.] *Let thy mercies come alſo unto me*; the ſure mercies of David, flowing from the everlaſting covenant, and comprehending every bleſſing of pardon, grace, comfort, glory; *even thy ſalvation*, the fulneſs and perfection of it, *according to thy word*, which hath promiſed it, and therefore is the beſt plea to urge for the fulfilment of it. [2.] *Take not the word of thy truth utterly out of my mouth.* He deſired ever to feed on its ſweet contents; to be ſpeaking of the things contained therein without fear or ſhame; and to have an anſwer ready from it for every one who ſhould aſk him a reaſon of the hope that was in him.

2. The graces he exerciſed. [1.] *Faith. So ſhall I have wherewith to anſwer him that reproacheth me*; *for I truſt in thy word*; in the word of promiſe, which being ſure in its accompliſhment, he doubted not but he ſhould be able to anſwer the cavils of thoſe who ſuggeſted there was no help for him in his God; and they beholding his ſalvation ſo unlike what they looked for, would be confounded and aſhamed. [2.] *Hope. I have hoped in thy judgments*; either to ſee thine arm made bare in vindicating my wrongs, and avenging me of mine enemies; or, as expreſſive of his unſhaken hope in God's word, amidſt every diſcouragement. [3.] *Love, v.* 47. *I have loved* thy commandments, not only looked on them as my duty, but approved them as excellent, and delighted in them in the inner man as my richeſt treaſure. My ſoul, is ſuch thy ſtate!

3. The practice he propoſed to himſelf, and which, happy will it be for us if we follow. *So ſhall I keep thy word continually*; affected with a ſenſe of divine mercies, and exerciſing faith, hope, and love, in the ſure promiſes of God, I ſhall obey with conſtancy and perſeverance *for ever and ever. I will walk at liberty*, with readineſs and delight, delivered from the bondage of corruption, and engaged in that bleſſed ſervice which is perfect freedom. *Note*, No ſlavery like ſin; no liberty ſo invaluable as deliverance from it. Or, *I will walk at large*, in all the extent of God's holy will; *for I ſeek thy precepts*; I have done ſo, and through grace continue ſo to do. Nor will he only himſelf walk thus, but deſires to make all men know, and invite all to partake of his mercies. *I will ſpeak of thy teſtimonies alſo before kings*; *and*, though too frequently theſe great ones deſpiſe and ridicule religion, *I will not be aſhamed. Note*, (1.) If we are not a ſhame *to* our religion, we never need be aſhamed *of* it. (2.) God's word is the beſt topic of converſation; and though the world calls it cant to introduce that ſubject, the people of God muſt ſpeak what they have known and believed, and what they delight in, and makes them happy. *I will delight myſelf in thy commandments*, as my chief joy, *and lift up my hands to them*, eager to climb the ſummit of perfection, embracing them with cordial affection, and praying for power and grace to walk more conformably thereunto: *and I will meditate in thy ſtatutes*, that I may gain a more thorough acquaintance with them, and conſider how I may beſt fulfil them. Behold, and imitate! *This is the way*; *walk ye in it!*

7. ZAIN.

49. Remember the word unto thy ſervant, [m] upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope. 50. This *is* my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickned me. 51. The proud have had me greatly in deriſion: *yet* have I not declined from thy law. 52. I remembred thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myſelf. 53. [n] Horror hath taken hold upon me, becauſe of the wicked that forſake thy law. 54. Thy ſtatutes have been my ſongs in the houſe of my pilgrimage. 55. [o] I have remembred thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law. 56. This I had, becauſe I kept thy precepts.

m Ver. 74, 81, 147.
n Ezra ix. 3.
o Pſ. lxiii. 6.

ז Zain. The Seventh Part.

v. 49—56. The eyes of the ſervant are to the hand of his maſter.

1. He pleads, *Remember the word upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope*: not that God ever can or doth forget, but he will be enquired of by us, and is well-pleaſed to have his promiſes urged by us in prayer.

2. He profeſſes the *comfort* he found in this word, even in his *afflictions, v.* 50. David had a full cup of them, and every believer has his portion: but this word is a cordial for every fear, a balm for every wound. *For thy word hath quickned me*: it called me at firſt from death to life, and ever ſince it hath revived my fainting heart, and rouſed me up to freſh vigour, when my graces languiſhed.

3. The ſcorn he met with was one of his troubles, in which he found conſolation from this word. *The proud have had me greatly in deriſion*; for no eminence of ſtation, or purity of manners, can preſerve us from the revilings of men. They who live according to God's word, may expect the laugh of fools, and the ridicule of the ſcorners, who think contempt of godlineſs to be a mark of wit and wiſdom. *Yet have I not declined from thy law*: none of theſe things ever moved him a ſtep out of the way of duty: he knew the value of it too well to be laughed out of his religion; and indeed they can have very little love for Chriſt and his ways, who cannot bear for him the ſmile of contempt, or the ſcoff of folly. *I remembred thy judgments of old, O Lord*; thoſe executed on the proud, and the interpoſitions of his providence in behalf of his people; *and have comforted myſelf*, both in the conſciouſneſs of his ſimplicity, and God's regard, which infinitely overpaid the world's ſcorn; and in the expectation, that he who had formerly ſcattered the proud, and ſupported his people, would again appear for his help.

4. He expreſſes his dread on foreſeeing the deſtruction of the ungodly, ſo terrible would it prove, *v.* 53. Little as the wicked think of their danger, and trivial as they count their offences againſt God's law, a faithful ſoul trembles for them, ſhocked at their impiety, grieved for the miſchief they do, and with horror beholding the precipice of eternal ruin, to the brink of which ſo careleſly they are ruſhing.

5. In his loweſt eſtate he would ſtill rejoice. *Thy ſtatutes have been my ſongs in the days of my pilgrimage.* This world is the ſtrange land, through which, as pilgrims, the faithful travel, neither expecting nor ſeeking their reſt below: they uſe it as their inn, and ſtill haſten to their wiſhed-for home; while with ſongs of praiſe they beguile the tedious hours, and from God's word encourage each other in the way.

6. By night, as well as day, God's law was the ſubject of his thoughts. *I have remembred thy name, O Lord, in the night*: when waking on his bed, his heart went up to heaven, and ſtill maintained communion with God; *and have kept thy law*, in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, though not in perfection. *This I had*, this comfort in the days of his pilgrimage, or this remembrance of God in the night, *becauſe I kept thy precepts*; for in keeping them there is great reward. Or it may be rendered, *This was given unto me, that I have kept thy precepts*; it being wholly from God's grace that we are able to obey him, and to be acknowledged to his glory, not our own; for we have nothing we have not received, and can render to him but of his own.

8. CHETH.

57. [p] *Thou art* my portion, O LORD: I have ſaid, that I would keep thy words. 58. I intreated thy † favour with *my* whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word. 59. [q] I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies. 60. [r] I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy commandments. 61. The ‡ bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law. 62. [s] At midnight I will riſe to give thanks unto thee: becauſe of thy righteous judgments. 63. [t] I *am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts. 64. [u] The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: [x] teach me thy ſtatutes.

p Pſ. xvi. 5. & cxlii. 5. Jer. x. 16. Lam. iii. 24.
† Heb. Face.
q Lam. iii. 40.
r Gal. i. 16.
‡ Or, companies.
s Acts xvi. 25.
t Pſ. xvi. 3.
u Pſ. xxxiii. 5.
x Ver. 12, 26.

ח Cheth. The Eighth Part.

v. 59—64. We have here,

1. Every good man's portion. *Thou art my portion, O Lord*: not wealth, not honours, not pleaſures, not any ſublunary good: no; theſe are huſks, incapable of filling the boundleſs deſires of his ſoul, which God alone with his love and favour can ſatisfy.

2. His purpoſe. *I have ſaid, that I would keep thy words*, thy grace enabling me. All who have Chriſt for their portion to enjoy, cannot but yield themſelves to him as their maſter to ſerve him.

3. His prayer. *I intreated thy favour with my whole heart*; or *thy face*, the light of thy countenance, which is better than life

itſelf. *Be merciful unto me*; for every day we need cry for mercy, ſo much ſin cleaves to us; and for grace, ſo much indwelling corruption remains. Bleſſed be his name, there is, through Jeſus, mercy for the moſt miſerable, and help for the deſperate; and this *according to thy word*, the promiſes of God being ever the moſt prevalent plea.

4. His diligence to obey. *I thought on my ways*, reflected on the paſt, conſidered the path of preſent duty, *and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies*, wherein he had ſwerved: he rectified his walk, and with full purpoſe of heart, through grace, reſolved to make ſtrait paths for his feet, and that inſtantly, for delay is dangerous, and our good intentions ſhould not be ſuffered to cool, but be put into immediate execution. *I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy commandments. Note*, The ſinner that for a moment refuſes to comply with his convictions, and procraſtinates, is in great danger of being undone: the devil aſks for no more.

5. His complaint. *The bands of the wicked have robbed me:* United for his deſtruction, his enemies, who hated his good converſation, robbed him of his reputation by reproaches, of his goods by violence, and would have robbed him of life itſelf; *but* in the midſt of all he could ſay, *I have not forgotten thy law*; ſo as to be moved from the hope of its promiſes, or diſcouraged from obedience to its precepts. We may expect to ſhare with the pſalmiſt in his ſufferings; God grant we may be able to ſhew alſo our fidelity.

6. His thankſgiving. He not only prayed much, but praiſed too. *At midnight I will riſe to give thanks unto thee.* He not only darted up a warm ejaculation, but ſhook off ſleep, and even at midnight aroſe for the happy work of praiſe. How few have hearts ſo warm, as to leave their bed for ſuch divine employment! and the matter of his ſong was God's *righteous judgments*; either thoſe of his providence, executed on ſinners, or manifeſted for his people's ſalvation; or thoſe commands of his word, which are altogether righteous and true.

7. His company. He affected not the great, but the good; ſought not the worldly wiſe, but the truly gracious. *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.* He loved them for what he ſaw of God in them, delighted in their converſe, joined with them in religious exerciſes, communicated his own experience, enquired theirs, nor, though much his inferiors, withheld from them the hand of fellowſhip, or the heart of affection; grace, like the grave, in a meaſure making all diſtinctions void among thoſe who are one in Chriſt Jeſus.

8. He aſcribes glory to God, and directs his prayer to him. *The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy*, or *goodneſs*; his providential kindneſs and care extending to all his works, and his ſpecial regard to the children of his grace. *Teach me thy ſtatutes*, that in me another freſh inſtance may be given of thy mercy towards the ſons of men. *Note*, Whatever will redound to God's glory, we may warmly urge as an argument for the granting our petitions.

9. TETH.

65. Thou haſt dealt well with thy ſervant, O LORD,
according unto thy word. 66. Teach me good judgment
and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.
67. [y] Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray:
but now have I kept thy word. 68. [z] Thou *art* good,
and doſt good: [a] teach me thy ſtatutes. 69. The
proud have forged a lie againſt me: *but* I will keep thy
precepts with *my* whole heart. 70. [b] Their heart is as
fat as greaſe, *but* I delight in thy law. 71. [c] *It is*
good for me that I have been afflicted: that I might
learn thy ſtatutes. 72. [d] The law of thy mouth *is* better
unto me than thouſands of gold and ſilver.

[y] Ver. 71. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.
[z] Mat. xix. 17.
[a] Ver. 12, 26.
[b] Pſ. xvii. 10. Iſa. vi. 10.
[c] Ver. 67. Heb. xii. 10, 11.
[d] Ver. 127. Pſ. xix. 10. Prov. viii. 11.

ט Teth. The Ninth Part.

v. 65—72. We have,

1. David's grateful acknowledgment. *Thou haſt dealt well with thy ſervant, O Lord, according unto thy word.* His promiſes never fail; and they who truſt them will own, that God doth all things well; not only above what we deſerve, but exceeding all our deſires.

2. His prayer and plea. *Teach me good judgment and knowledge*, or, *a good taſte*, that as the tongue diſtinguiſhes ſavours, ſo his heart might diſcern between good and evil, and approve the things that are excellent: *for I have believed thy commandments*; receiving them not as the word of man, but as they are indeed the word of God; and therefore he deſired to have a deeper and more experimental acquaintance with them, which only God can teach.

3. He confeſſes his departure from God, and the bleſſing of affliction that brought him back again. *Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray.* Eaſe, affluence, and proſperity, are ſtrangely apt to ſteal away the heart from God, to make us forget this is not our reſt, and fooliſhly to attach our affections to the things that ſollicit our ſenſes. This David found to his coſt; but God will not ſuffer his people to lie down the ſervants of ſin; he viſits their iniquities with the rod; kind ſcourge of paternal tenderneſs! How deeply are we indebted for it! However grievous for the time, we ſhall own it the beſt of bleſſings in diſguiſe, when its effects are anſwered, and we can, by grace reſtored, ſay with the pſalmiſt, *But now have I kept thy law:* humbled into the duſt, and brought back to the boſom of that Father of Mercies, from whom we had ſo greatly departed.

4. He aſcribes glory to God. *Thou art good*, eſſentially in thyſelf, and the fountain of goodneſs to thy creatures; and *doſt good* to all, even to the evil and unthankful; ſo boundleſs is the emanation of his kindneſs. *Teach me thy ſtatutes*, that in this experience of thy goodneſs I may have freſh cauſe to praiſe thee.

5. He lodges a complaint againſt the proud, and profeſſes his own integrity. *The proud have forged a lie againſt me*; and againſt a lying tongue the pureſt innocence is no protection. Let it not ſeem ſtrange, if the groſſeſt falſhoods are ſpoken of us, or the moſt malignant interpretations made of our words and actions: it was ever ſo of old, and the enmity of the world againſt God's ſervants ſtill abideth. *But I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart*; not diſcouraged from the path of duty; not vindicating himſelf from their calumnies, ſo much as *living them down*; whilſt the holineſs and unblameableneſs of his conduct might be a confutation of their falſhood, who ſpake evil of his good converſation in Chriſt. *Their heart is as fat as greaſe*, wallowing in wealth and luxury, and by indulgence of every appetite ſtupifying their conſcience, making even their bodies lethargic, and their ſenſes blunted. *But I delight in thy law*; know no pleaſure equal to communion with thee; and find greater ſatisfaction in denying the perverſe cravings of concupiſcence, as that law enjoins, than they in the lawleſs indulgence of them.

6. In the ſchool of affliction he had learnt wiſdom, (as before, *v.* 6, 7.) and the diſcipline he had there undergone, was more than amply repaid in the benefits he received from an increaſed acquaintance with God, his word, his grace, his providences.

7. A high value did he ſet on God's word. *The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thouſands of gold and ſilver.* Vaſt poſſeſſions he enjoyed, vaſt riches he had acquired; but one page of God's book was better to him than theſe ſhining millions; one promiſe more valuable than the wealth of all the eaſt. Faith, that realized to him an eternal world, and the glories there, made him count every thing beſides comparatively to be dung and loſs. O that ſuch a mind were in us alſo!

10. JOD.

73. [e] Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me:
give me underſtanding, that I may learn thy commandments.
74. They that fear thee, [f] will be glad when
they ſee me: becauſe I have hoped in thy word. 75.
I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* † right,
and *that* [g] thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me. 76.
Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindneſs be ‡ for my
comfort, according to thy word unto thy ſervant. 77.
Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live:
for [h] thy law is my delight. 78. Let the proud be
aſhamed, for [i] they dealt perverſely with me, without a
cauſe; *but* [k] I will meditate in thy precepts. 79. Let
thoſe that fear thee turn unto me, and thoſe that have
known thy teſtimonies. 80. Let my heart be ſound in
thy ſtatutes; [l] that I be not aſhamed.

[e] Job x. 8. Pſ. c. 3. & cxxxix. 13—16.
[f] Pſ. xxxiv. 2.
† Heb. righteouſneſs.
[g] Heb. xii. 10.
‡ Heb. to comfort me.
[h] Ver. 24, 47, 174.
[i] Ver. 86.
[k] Ver. 15.
[l] Ver. 6.

י Jod. The Tenth Part.

v. 73—80.

1. The pſalmiſt gives God the glory of his creation. *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me*; the formation of our bodies in the womb being as much the work of Divine power, as the making the firſt man out of the duſt. *Give me underſtanding, that I may learn thy commandments.* It is not ſo much our being, as our well-being, which is matter of praiſe. A creature apoſtate from God, as fallen man is become, might curſe the day of his birth, unleſs by Divine Grace he was renewed in the ſpirit of his mind, and his ſoul reſtored to the ſervice of God here, and made capable of the enjoyment of him for ever.

2. Others would join his praiſes, when they beheld God's grace ſhown to him. *They that fear thee*, the character of thoſe who are God's dear children, *will be glad when they ſee me*; partaking in my proſperity, whether temporal or ſpiritual, as their own, and as members of the ſame body rejoicing with me, *becauſe I have hoped in thy word*, which hath not failed; and this they ſee, and are encouraged to truſt on the ſame promiſes.

3. He owns, whatever afflictions he ſuffered, they were no more than he deſerved; and that God therein had the moſt gra-

cious deſigns towards him. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right*; all the commands of thy word, and all the diſpenſations of thy providence, particularly the afflictive ones he had undergone; *and that thou in very faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me*; in conſequence of his unchangeable love and favour, and his covenant, wherein he had engaged to viſit the iniquities of his people with the rod, but never to take his loving-kindneſs from them, nor ſuffer his truth to fail. *Note*, The darkeſt diſpenſations of providence are but the frowns of paternal tenderneſs; and when moſt he appears diſpleaſed, he but corrects becauſe he loves.

4. He prays for a freſh diſcovery of God's merciful kindneſs, as a comfort to him in every affliction; a ſenſe of this would make every burden light: and he pleads the word of truth, *v.* 76. as an argument for being heard and anſwered. Yea, he redoubles his prayer; *Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live:* only for mercy can a ſinner plead; only on mercy can his hope be ſtayed; and there is mercy, tender mercy, abounding mercy with God, for all who ſeek it in Jeſus Chriſt. They ſhall live the life of grace on earth, and come to the eternal life of glory in heaven. *For thy law is my delight*, or *delights*; what I approve as moſt excellent, and fain would exerciſe myſelf in it day and night.

5. He prays for the confuſion of his enemies, and the company of his friends. [1.] *For the confuſion of his enemies.* Vile was their character; *proud* and arrogant, inſolent and overbearing. *They dealt perverſely with me*; by lies ſought to blacken his character, or by their ſnares to move him from his ſtedfaſtneſs: and this *without a cauſe.* It was unprovoked malice, and left them inexcuſable in their iniquity. Such enemies may every faithful ſoul expect to meet; *but* they will be diſappointed of their ends, and covered with ſhame preſent and eternal; whilſt, for himſelf unmoved, he can ſay, *I will meditate on thy precepts*; no more diverted by their clamour and perverſeneſs from his contemplations, than by the whiſtling of the winds. [2.] *For the company of his friends.* Their character is excellent; *they fear thee*, with filial reverential fear of his word and judgments, and *have known thy teſtimonies*, wiſe unto ſalvation; their underſtandings clear in the knowledge of the truth, and their hearts ſound in the practice of it; and therefore he cannot but wiſh that they would *turn unto him.* Perhaps, on his unfaithfulneſs in the matter of Uriah, they had ſhunned his acquaintance, to teſtify their abhorrence of his ſin; but now, on his repentance, he hoped with God's returning favour again to enjoy the pleaſure of their converſe and ſociety. *Note*, Though a good man may well abhor the ſin, and be grieved for the diſhonour brought upon God by his brother, he muſt not be implacable, but receive and comfort thoſe whoſe ſpitits are wounded, leſt they be ſwallowed up with overmuch ſorrow, and ſink into deſpair.

6. He prays, *Let my heart be ſound*, or *perfect*, *ſincere in thy ſtatutes*; in obedience to God's commands, and obſervance of the inſtituted ordinances of his worſhip; *that I be not aſhamed*; for when we are unfaithful, we are aſhamed to look men in the face, aſhamed to appear before God, and ſhocked at ourſelves; whilſt conſcious ſimplicity enables us to approach a throne of grace boldly, and our faces know no ſhame.

11. CAPH.

81. [m] My ſoul fainteth for thy ſalvation: *but* I hope in
thy word. 82. [n] Mine eyes fail for thy word, ſaying,
When wilt thou comfort me? 83. For [o] I am become
like a bottle in the ſmoke: *yet* do I not forget thy ſta-
tutes. 84. [p] How many *are* the days of thy ſervant?
when wilt thou execute judgment on them that perſecute
me? 85. [q] The proud have digged pits for me, which
are not after thy law. 86. All thy commandments *are*
† faithful: [r] they perſecute me wrongfully; help thou
me. 87. They had almoſt conſumed me upon earth:
but I forſook not thy precepts. 88. [s] Quicken me after
thy loving kindneſs, ſo ſhall I keep the teſtimony of thy
mouth.

m Pſ. lxxiii. 26. & lxxxiv. 2.
n Pſ. lxix. 3. Ver. 123.
o Job xxx. 30.
p Pſ. xxxix. 4.
q Ibid. xxxv. 7.
† Heb. Faithfulneſs.
r Ver. 78.
s Ver. 25, 40.

כ CAPH. The Eleventh Part.

v. 81—88. We have here,

1. His diſtreſs, and recourſe to God. *My ſoul fainteth for thy ſalvation*, when ready to ſink under the preſſures of affliction, or looking forward to the coming of the Meſſiah, ſo earneſtly longed for by every faithful ſoul: *but I hope in thy word*, to be delivered from all my threatning dangers, and to ſee the promiſe accompliſhed in the fulneſs of time. *Mine eyes fail for thy word*, weary with ſtraining, to deſcry the approach of the incarnate word, or as ready to give up the proſpect of relief, *ſaying, when wilt thou comfort me?* thus diſcouraged, tempted, and diſtreſſed was he; *for I am become like a bottle in the ſmoke*, which being made of the ſkins of beaſts, grew ſhrivelled; and ſo emaciated and wrinkled was his once ruddy viſage grown, worn down with the anguiſh and ſorrow which preyed upon him within; *yet* notwithſtanding all he ſuffered, *I do not forget thy ſtatutes*; but though thou ſlay me, yet will I truſt in thee. *Note*, (1.) A ſickly body, and a mind ſorely harraſſed with temptations, and afflictions, are often the lot of God's deareſt children. (2.) We are apt to count every moment of trial long, and to be impatient of relief; but if we wait for it, we ſhall ſee the ſalvation of God. (3.) The faireſt countenance, by diſeaſe becomes quickly haggered and wrinkled: what a folly to ſet a high value on ſo fading and uncertain a poſſeſſion!

2. He pleads with God the length of his trials, the wickedneſs of his enemies, and his own fidelity, as arguments for preſent help, and for juſtice to be done him on his perſecutors. *How many are the days of thy ſervant?* few, very few, and muſt they be all ſpent in the furnace of affliction? Lord, ſhorten the hour of temptation: *when wilt thou execute judgment on them that perſecute me?* the judgment of the ſinner is near, is terrible; yet a moment, and the righteous ſhall waſh their footſteps in the blood of their perſecutors: and this according to the higheſt equity, for *the proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law*, See *Exod.* xxi. 33, 34. They purſued him as if a wild beaſt, and with the moſt miſchievous deſign ſought to entrap him. *All thy commandments are faithful*, truſting thereon, I fear not their malice; *they perſecute me wrongfully*, without the leaſt provocation, with inveterate hatred, and unrelenting cruelty, and I have no power to reſiſt them. *Help thou me!* all other help is vain, all other hope I diſclaim, on thy everlaſting arms I hang; Lord, ſave; I periſh. *They had almoſt conſumed me upon earth*, ſo near they brought him to the brink of the grave; *but I forſook not thy precepts*; till death, determined never to quit my hold, and in death to make them my ſupport. *Note*, (1.) Faithful adherence to God is our grand ſecurity; from his hands none can pluck us. (2.) Terrible will be the end of the ungodly, when God, the judge of all, ariſes to execute vengeance.

3. He prays for quickening grace. *Quicken me after thy loving kindneſs*, let me experience the enlivening influence of thy grace, and that ſhall ſtrengthen me under all my difficulties; *ſo ſhall I keep the teſtimonies of thy mouth*, though in myſelf weaker than the bruiſed reed, yet able to do all things, thou ſtrengthening me. *Note*, All is of grace: it is as much an act of God's unmerited favour to quicken our ſouls for the performance of duty, as to pardon our ſins.

12. LAMED.

89. [t] For ever, O LORD, thy word is ſettled in hea-
ven. 90. Thy faithfulneſs *is* unto all generations: thou
haſt eſtabliſhed the earth, and it † abideth. 91. They
continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all
are thy ſervants. 92. Unleſs [u] thy law *had been* my de-
lights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.
93. I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou
haſt quickned me. 94. I *am* thine, ſave me: for I have
ſought thy precepts. 95. The wicked have waited for
me to deſtroy me: *but* I will conſider thy teſtimonies.
96. I have ſeen [x] an end of all perfection: [y] *but* thy
commandment *is* exceeding broad.

t Pſ. lxxxix. 2. Mat. xxiv. 34.
† Heb. Standeth.
u Ver. 24.
x Iſa. xl. 8.
y Mat. v. 18. & xxiv. 35.

ל LAMED. The Twelfth Part.

89—96. We have here,

1. The eternity and immutability of God's word and works. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is ſettled in heaven*, or *thou art for ever, O Lord:* from everlaſting to everlaſting, the ſame unchangeable Jehovah, *and thy word ſtands*, or *is firm in heaven*, the decrees of it immutable, and the execution of them ſure. *Thy faithfulneſs is unto all generations*; thy promiſes never fail, are like Jeſus, their author, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever; and every believer to the lateſt ages ſhall experience their ſtability. *Thou haſt eſtabliſhed the earth, and it abideth*, ſupported and preſerved by the hand that formed it; *they continue this day*, the heavens and the earth, with all the vaſt orbs that roll in the immenſity of ſpace, *according to thine ordinances*, obſerving with exacteſt regularity the track marked out for them, and running with uninterrupted and abiding perſeverance their appointed courſe: *for all are thy ſervants*, the creatures of thy hands, and obedient to thy will. *Note*, Men and devils are the only rebels in the whole creation of God.

2. The delight the Pſalmiſt took in God's law, and the ſupport he derived from it. *Unleſs thy law had been my delight, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction*; the ſtorm ran high, he was ready to deſpair of life, and in his ſpirit dejected, but in God's word a well of living waters ſprung up; this revived him when fainting, ſtrengthened him when weak, comforted him when afflicted; and may not every believer ſay this by experience? but for the word of goſpel-grace he had ſunk under his trials, and periſhed in deſpair. Abundant reaſon hath he therefore to ſay, *I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou haſt quickened me*; not the precepts of the law, for they are a miniſtration of death, but the powerful word of the goſpel a ſavour of life unto life, through the miniſtration of the ſpirit, to as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.

3. He pleads the intereſt God had in him, as a reaſon why he ſhould ſhew him his ſalvation. *I am thine*, thine by creation,

thine by redemption, thine by adoption and grace, thine by choice, wholly thine, only thine. *Save me* from every evil of ſin, or ſuffering, to which from the malice of earth or hell he might be expoſed; *for I have ſought thy precepts*, deſired to know them, delighted to obey them, and therein approve my fidelity to thee.

4. He complains of the wicked. *The wicked have waited for me to deſtroy me*, laid ſnares to entangle him, waited for his halting, and purpoſed to kill the body; or more terribly by ſeducing him into ſin, to ruin his ſoul; *but I will conſider thy teſtimonies*, ſteadfaſt in adhering to them, notwithſtanding all oppoſition, and by them preſerved from all the ſnares of the ungodly.

5. He mentions his own obſervations confirming the excellence of God's law. *I have ſeen an end of all perfection*, all the greatneſs, glory, and wiſdom of the world is limited, tranſitory and paſſing away, and all the perfection that man can arrive at is infinitely ſhort of the purity of God's law; *but thy commandments are exceeding broad*, beyond what created underſtanding ever fathomed, and proportionate and adequate to which, no works and righteouſneſs merely human were ever found: only by Jeſus Chriſt was it ever fully obſerved, and in him alone can we be compleat and perfect, lacking nothing, which this law requires. May my ſoul be found in him!

13. MEM.

97. O how I love thy law! [z] it *is* my meditation all the day. 98. Thou through thy commandments [a] haſt made me wiſer than mine enemies: for † they *are* ever with me. 99. I have more underſtanding than all my teachers: for thy teſtimonies *are* my meditation. 100. I underſtand more than the ancients: becauſe I keep thy precepts. 101. I have refrained my feet from every evil way: that I might keep thy word. 102. I have not departed from thy judgments; for thou haſt taught me. 103. [b] How ſweet are thy words unto my ‡ taſte! *yea, ſweeter* than honey to my mouth. 104. Through thy precepts I get underſtanding; therefore [c] I hate every falſe way.

[z] Pſ. i. 2.
[a] Deut. iv. 6.
† Heb. It is ever with me.
[b] Pſ. xix. 10. Prov. viii. 11.
‡ Heb. Palate.
[c] Ver. 128.

מ Mem. The Thirteenth Part.

v. 97—103. David had often ſpoken of his delight in God's word, and now in a rapture breaks forth, *O how I love thy law*, more than I am able to expreſs; ſo rich are the promiſes contained in it, ſo excellent the rule preſcribed by it: *it is my meditation all the day*, and nothing could be a ſtronger proof how greatly he delighted in it, than this. Several reaſons he gives why he was bound thus to love and meditate in God's law.

1. Becauſe of the wiſdom he had thereby attained, *v.* 104. God had taught him, and no marvel his proficiency was great; he was wiſer than his *enemies*, enabled to defeat their ſtratagems, and countermine their crafty deſigns. He *had more underſtanding than his teachers*, either thoſe who ſat in Moſes' ſeat; but were, as the Scribes and Phariſees in our Lord's day, very defectively verſed in thoſe ſcriptures they profeſſed to teach; or thoſe who had in youth inſtructed him, whoſe attainments he had far outſtripped. Nay, he underſtood more *than the ancients*, either the ſages of his own day, or thoſe of the preceding, and all this through God's commandments being *ever with him*; he conſulted them in every circumſtance, on every emergence; *his meditation* on them was ſweet and frequent, and his adherence to them faithful and ſincere. *Note*, (1.) To practice what we know, is the ſpeedieſt way to the higheſt attainments of ſpiritual wiſdom. (2.) The written word of God contains more treaſures of knowledge and a ſurer guide to glory, than all the volumes of philoſophers, the decrees of counſels, the deciſions of the fathers, or traditions of the church; theſe are fallible, and may deceive, that is the voice of truth itſelf.

2. Becauſe God's precepts made him refrain from, and hate every evil way, *v.* 101—104. The paths of ſin are ſtrewed with roſes, and tempt us to turn aſide, and taſte thoſe ſpecious delights, but God's word diſcovers the deluſion, the lurking ſerpent is pointed out, and the thorn that pierces at every ſtep, and we are warned to eſcape from the ways of the deſtroyer.

3. Becauſe by them he was kept ſteady in the path of duty. *I have not departed from thy judgments*, from the doctrines of truth, the ordinances of worſhip, or obedience to the commands; *for thou haſt taught me*, and none but God can teach effectually, ſo as to make wiſe unto ſalvation.

4. Becauſe of the comfort he found in God's word. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte, yea, ſweeter than honey to my mouth*, ſuch conſolation he ſucked in from thoſe breaſts of goſpel-grace, and every promiſe was as the flowers of ſpring, which afford ſweetneſs to the induſtrious bee. And if we have but the Pſalmiſt's ſpirit, we ſhall find the ſame delight in God's word, and confirm his experience by our own.

14. NUN.

105. [d] Thy word *is* a † lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. 106. [e] I have ſworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments. 107. I am afflicted very much: [f] quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word. 108. Accept, I beſeech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and [g] teach me thy judgments. 109. My ſoul *is* continually [h] in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law. 110. [i] The wicked have laid a ſnare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts. 111. [k] Thy teſtimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for [l] they *are* the rejoicing of my heart. 112. I have inclined my heart to ‡ perform thy ſtatutes alway, *even unto* the end.

[d] Prov. vi. 23.
† Or candle.
[e] Neh. x. 29.
[f] Ver. 25.
[g] Ibid. 12, 26.
[h] Judg. xii. 3. 1 Sam. xix. 5. & xxviii. 21. Job xiii. 14.
[i] Pſ. cxl. 5. & cxli. 9.
[k] Deut. xxxiii. 4.
[l] Ver. 77.
‡ Heb. Do.

נ Nun. The Fourteenth Part.

v. 105—112. We have here,

1. The uſe of God's word. It is *a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. The law* diſcovers the path of duty, points out the perfection of righteouſneſs God requires, convinces us of ſin, and opens the corruption and deceitfulneſs of our hearts. *The goſpel* holds forth Jeſus, the ſon of righteouſneſs; reveals the grace, mercy, and love of God manifeſted to ſinners in their Redeemer; points to him the way, the truth, and the life; and ſhews us how by faith to walk in him, ſo as to reach at laſt the eternal kingdom.

2. David's ſolemn dedication of himſelf to God's ſervice. *I have ſworn, and I will perform it*, through divine grace, *that I will keep thy righteous judgments*; the promiſes, vows, and reſolutions indeed made in our own ſtrength, are vain and deluſive; but the engagements we enter into, drawn by the cords of love, ſupported by the Lord's power, and under a ſenſe of our deep obligations, we ſhall be enabled to perform.

3. His afflicted ſtate, and recourſe to God therein. *I am afflicted very much*, either in body, under diſeaſe; in his circumſtances, through oppreſſion; or in his ſoul, under temptation or deſertion: *quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word*, but for the ſupports of which, I muſt have periſhed in my trouble.

4. His prayer for the acceptance of his ſervices, and direction in the way. *Accept, I beſeech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O Lord*, not the offering of ſlain beaſts, but the more pleaſing oblations of the calves of the lips, the ſpiritual ſacrifices of a grateful heart; *and teach me thy judgments*, for without divine teaching, we can offer no acceptable ſervice.

5. The danger to which he was expoſed, and the practice he perſevered in. *My ſoul is continually in my hand*, in jeopardy every hour, and ready to be killed all the day long; for *the wicked have laid a ſnare for me*, crafty, as well as powerful, they uſe every method to deſtroy me: *yet do I not forget thy law*, nor *err from thy precepts*; neither intimidated out of his profeſſions, nor diverted from the path of duty, nor through anxious care for his ſafety forgetful of God's law; nor, by any ſinful contrivances to extricate himſelf from his difficulties, erring from the way of truth. *Note*, (1.) Perſecution and ſuffering are every chriſtian's lot in this wicked world. (2.) Patient perſeverance will finally be crowned with ſucceſs.

6. He profeſſes his deliberate choice of God's word, as his abiding portion and joy. *Thy teſtimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever*, for the moſt invaluable poſſeſſions are thoſe which are held by promiſe from God; *they are the* preſent *rejoicing of my heart*, affording a ſatisfaction infinitely beyond what all the things on earth can give, and not ceaſing with our preſent tranſitory life, but abiding to the days of eternity. *I have inclined my heart to perform thy ſtatutes alway, unto the end*; not that it was of himſelf, but of divine grace, that he was thus diſpoſed and enabled; and he truſted he who had begun, would perfect what was lacking, and ſtrengthen him to perſevere even to the end.

15. SAMECH.

113. I hate *vain* thoughts: but thy law do I love. 114. [m] Thou *art* my hiding place, and my ſhield: I hope in thy word. 115. [n] Depart from me, ye evil doers; for I will keep the commandments of my God. 116. Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and [o] let me not be aſhamed of my hope. 117. Hold thou me up, and I ſhall be ſafe: and I will have reſpect unto thy ſtatutes continually. 118. Thou haſt troden down all them that err from thy ſtatutes: for their deceit *is* falſhood. 119. Thou † putteſt away all the wicked of the earth [p] *like* droſs: therefore I love thy teſtimonies. 120. [q] My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.

[m] Pſ. xxxii. 7. & xci. 1.
[n] Ibid. vi. 8. & cxxxix. 19. Mat. vii. 23.
[o] Rom. v. 5.
† Heb. Cauſeſt to ceaſe.
[p] Ezek. xxii. 18.
[q] Hab. iii. 16.

ס Samech. The Fifteenth Part.

v. 113—120. We have in theſe verſes,

1. David's hatred of ſin, and love of God's law, *v.* 113. He hated the very thoughts of evil, which he found riſing from the fountain of a corrupted heart. God who ſeeth them afar off,

abhors them, and we muſt do ſo to, and ſeek to ſmother them in the birth, before they are quickned into deſire, or perfected in the act. *Note*, If we watch not over our thoughts, we ſhall not long walk in God's ways.

2. He profeſſes his dependance on God. *Thou art my hiding-place*, whither I flee, when purſued by the malice of earth or hell, and find a ſure retreat; *and my ſhield*, to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and cover my head in the day of battle. *I hope in thy word*, and having this anchor of my ſoul ſure and ſteadfaſt, am enabled to ride out every ſtorm.

3. He bids the evil doers depart, reſolute to reject their enticements, and adhere to the commandments of his God, *v.* 115. *Note*, (1.) It requires great courage to deny the ſollicitations of ſinners. (2.) They who do not ſhun the company of evil doers, will not long keep from their ways. (3.) They who can truly ſay *my God*, cannot but ſay alſo, I will keep thy commandments.

4. He prays for ſupport from God. He felt his own weakneſs; he knew, left to himſelf, he could not but fall, and therefore cries, *Uphold me*; and again, *hold thou me up*, as one ſinking, unleſs the everlaſting arms were under him: he grounds his prayer upon the promiſe, *according unto thy word*, and confidently truſts that thus he *ſhall be ſafe*, ſhall *live* the life of grace amidſt manifold temptations, and *not be aſhamed of his hope*, ſo as to be diſappointed in time or eternity; and thus ſtrengthened, he promiſes for himſelf, *I will have reſpect unto thy ſtatutes continually*, ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, to perſevere in the path of duty, till he ſhould enter into the reſt of glory. Lord, evermore thus hold thou up my ſoul!

5. He foreſees, and trembles at the ruin coming on the ungodly. Their character is evil: they *err from thy ſtatutes*, deſire not the knowledge of the truth, and wilfully turn aſide. *Their deceit is falſehood*, they are hypocritical in their profeſſions to God and man: they are the *wicked of the earth*; in their tempers and practices earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh; and their end will be according to their works. God will *tread them down* in his wrath, and trample them in his fury; *will put them away like droſs*, proved vile and refuſe, ſeparated for deſtruction, and caſt into the fiery furnace of everlaſting burnings: ſuch judgments on the ungodly affected the Pſalmiſt's heart in a double reſpect, as it ſhould ours alſo. (1.) To fear before this holy God, trembling at the terrible caſe of the ungodly, and careful to avoid every occaſion that would kindle this wrath, which who for a moment can abide? (2.) To love God's teſtimonies the better, for in them only is the way of life, and in the path-way thereof there is no death.

16. AIN.

121. I have done judgment and juſtice: leave me not
r Heb. vii. 22. to mine oppreſſors. 122. [r] Be ſurety for thy ſervant for
s Ver. 81, 82. good: let not the proud oppreſs me. 123. [s] Mine eyes
fail for thy ſalvation, and for the word of thy righteouſneſs. 124. Deal with thy ſervant according unto thy
t Ver. 12. mercy, and [t] teach me thy ſtatutes. 125. I *am* thy ſervant, give me underſtanding, that I may know thy teſtimonies. 126. *It is* time for *thee*, LORD, to work:
u Pſ. xix. 10. Ver. 72. Prov. viii. 11. *for* they have made void thy law. 127. Therefore [u] I
love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine
gold. 128. Therefore I eſteem all *thy* precepts *concerning*
x Ver. 104. all *things to be* right; [x] *and* I hate every falſe way.

ע Ain. The Sixteenth Part.

v. 121—128. David, in theſe verſes,

1. Appeals to God for his integrity, and begs him to be his protector from wrong. *I have done judgment and juſtice*, whether in his private capacity acting ever uprightly, or as the king of Iſrael, miniſtring true judgment unto the people. *Leave me not to my oppreſſors*, for the moſt wicked and the moſt powerful can go not one ſtep farther to hurt us, than God permits. *Be ſurety for thy ſervant for good*, eſpouſe my quarrel, vindicate my innocence againſt my accuſers, and reſcue me out of their hands; *let not the proud oppreſs me*. *Note*, (1.) The more we are conſcious of our own weakneſs, and flee to God for help, the ſurer ſhall we ſtand. (2.) Jeſus is his people's ſurety; no arreſts of ſin can ſeize them, no accuſations of Satan ſtand againſt them; in him *they are juſtified from all things*.

3. He counts it long ere help arrives. *Mine eyes fail for thy ſalvation, and for the word of thy righteouſneſs*, for the fulfilment of the promiſe which aſſured him of ſalvation, but it now ſeemed ſo long deferred, that he was ready to deſpair; and this hath been the infirmity of many a faithful ſoul. Bleſſed be God, his truth and promiſes are not changeable as our faith.

3. He prays for divine teaching. *Deal with thy ſervant according unto thy mercy*, for that is the only thing we can reſt our hopes upon, and *teach me thy ſtatutes*, direct me in my doubts, ſupport me under my diſcouragements. *I am thy ſervant*, and deſire to approve my fidelity, if I knew the way; therefore *give me underſtanding, that I may know thy teſtimonies*, and obey them.

4. He begs God would ariſe for his own glory. *It is time for thee, O Lord, to work*, to ſtop the torrent of ungodlineſs, and ſilence the blaſphemies of the profane: *for they have made void thy law*, impiouſly caſting off the cords, and bidding defiance to the Almighty; or proudly ſetting up a righteouſneſs of their own, ſo little proportionate to its demands. *Note*, They who truſt on their own works for juſtification, as much make void the law, as thoſe who daringly caſt off every reſtraint, and indulge every lawleſs appetite.

5. He profeſſes his love to God's law, and proves it in the moſt effectual manner, *v.* 127, 128. no gold ſo precious in his eyes. *All God's precepts*, concerning *all things* he approved as juſt and good, the moſt difficult, to be obeyed without heſitation, and none ſo little as to be forgotten or ſlighted. And he *hated every falſe way*, whether falſe doctrine, falſe worſhip, or falſe practices, he utterly abhorred them. Would to God our ſouls gave each day ſuch proof of the ſincerity of our love.

17. PE.

129. Thy teſtimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth
my ſoul keep them. 130. [y] The entrance of thy words y 2 Pet. i. 19.
giveth light: [z] it giveth underſtanding unto the ſimple. z Pſ. xix. 7.
131. I opened my mouth, [a] and panted: for I longed for a Ibid. xlii. 1.
thy commandments. 132. Look thou upon me, and [b] b Ibid. cvi. 4.
be merciful unto me, as thou uſeſt to do unto thoſe that
love thy name. 133. [c] Order my ſteps in thy word: c Ibid. xvii. 5.
and [d] let not any iniquity have dominion over me. 134. d Ibid. xix. 13. Rom. vi 12.
Deliver me from the oppreſſion of man: [e] ſo will I keep e Luke i. 74.
thy precepts. 135. [f] Make thy face to ſhine upon thy f Pſ. iv. 6.
ſervant: and [g] teach me thy ſtatutes. 136. [h] Rivers of g Ver. 12, 26.
waters run down mine eyes: becauſe they keep not thy h Jer. ix. 1. & xiv. 17. Ezek. ix. 4.
law.

פ Pe. The Seventeenth Part.

v. 129—136. The Pſalmiſt here,

1. Expreſſes his admiration of God's teſtimonies, and his purpoſe to obſerve them. *They are wonderful*, contain aſtoniſhing diſcoveries of inviſible things, of the myſtery of God and of Chriſt, of the covenant of grace, of the way of godlineſs, and of the joys and miſeries of the eternal world: *therefore doth my ſoul keep them*, locked up in my heart as the richeſt treaſure, and with unreſerved devotedneſs obeyed. *Note*, It is not commending God's word, but doing the work it enjoins, which can ſhew our real eſteem for it.

2. The benefit of God's word. *The entrance of thy words giveth light*; the firſt three chapters of the Bible teach us more of God's works, and man's true condition, what he was, and what he is, than all the books in the world; and when by the Spirit of God our underſtandings are enlightned, we immediately, on the very entrance of divine light, know more of God's grace and love, than all human teaching ever could inform us. *It giveth underſtanding to the ſimple*, makes even fools in the eyes of men wiſe unto ſalvation; and thoſe who come to it with ſimplicity, and a child-like ſpirit, find from every peruſal, increaſing underſtanding in the things of God.

3. Like one gaſping for breath, or as a perſon famiſhed with hunger, the Pſalmiſt could ſay, *I opened my mouth, and panted; for I longed for thy commandments*, ſo intenſe were his deſires, ſo fervent the breathings of his ſoul after God, and his holy ways, and ſo eagerly he longed for the courts of his houſe, and the ordinances of his worſhip. Have we any thing of this ſacred fervor?

4. He cries for mercy. *Look upon me*, not as I am in myſelf, a polluted ſinner, but in Jeſus, my complete Saviour, *and be merciful unto me*, forgive my tranſgreſſions, and let me not meet the face of an angry, but a reconciled and pardoning God, *as thou uſeſt to do unto thoſe that love thy name*, ſuch looks of kind regard, ſuch favours and mercies beſtow upon me, for I am of that number, and hope to ſhare with them in their bleſſedneſs. *Note*, If we love God in truth, we can aſk for nothing a God of love will not beſtow.

5. He prays for direction and preſervation. 1. Direction; *order my ſteps in thy word*, for we ſhall be able to take no ſtep aright, unleſs God teach us by his ſpirit, and guide us by his grace. 2. Preſervation; *Let not any iniquity*, not the leaſt known and allowed ſin, *have dominion over me*, that I ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof. *Note*, Nothing is ſo terrible in the eye of an awakened conſcience, as to be brought again under the bondage of corruption, and the power of ſin.

6. He begs deliverance from his oppreſſors. *Deliver me from the oppreſſion of man*, whoſe power he feared, and whoſe malice he had experienced: *ſo will I keep thy precepts* with greater freedom and liberty, being reſcued out of the hands of his oppreſſors.

7. He ſeeks the light of God's countenance to chear him. *Make thy face to ſhine upon thy ſervant* with thy bright beams of love, make me to feel their enlivening influence, and to rejoice in the aſſurance of thy favour: *and teach me thy ſtatutes*, that I may know them, and do them, and have joy in beholding the

powerful effects of thy grace therein manifeſted. *Note*, (1.) If God ſmiles, no matter who frowns upon us. (2.) When we are found in the path of duty, God will meet us with the viſits of his love.

8. He teſtifies his deep concern for the diſhonour done to God, and the ruin brought on themſelves by the ſins of men. It was not a ſmall meaſure of grief that oppreſſed him; no: *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes: becauſe they keep not thy law. Note*, Every good man is a mourner in Zion; not only for his own ſins, but he weeps over thoſe that never drop a tear for themſelves.

18. TSADDI.

137. [i] Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments. 138. Thy teſtimonies *that* thou haſt commanded, *are* † righteous, and very faithful. 139. [k] My zeal hath ‡ conſumed me: becauſe mine enemies have forgotten thy words. 140. [l] Thy word *is* very ‖ pure: therefore thy ſervant loveth it. 141. I *am* ſmall and deſpiſed: *yet* do not I forget thy precepts. 142. Thy righteouſneſs *is* an everlaſting righteouſneſs, [m] and thy law *is* the truth. 143. Trouble and anguiſh have § taken hold on me: *yet* thy commandments *are* my delights. 144. The righteouſneſs of thy teſtimonies *is* everlaſting: give me underſtanding, and I ſhall live.

[i] Dan. ix. 7.
† Heb. Righteouſneſs and very faithfulneſs.
[k] Pſ. lxix. 9. John ii. 17.
‡ Heb. Cut me off.
[l] Pſ. xii. 6. & xviii. 30. Prov. xxx. 5.
‖ Heb. Tried or refined.
[m] John xvii, 17.
§ Heb. Found me.

צ TZADDE. The Eighteenth Part.

v. 137—144. David here,

1. Gives glory to God. *Righteous art thou, O Lord*, eſſentially ſo in himſelf, and in all the diſpenſations of his providence and grace; *and upright are thy judgments*, the afflictive viſitations he ſends on his own people, or the vengeance he executes on his enemies, all which are done with the higheſt equity. *The teſtimonies that thou haſt commanded, are righteous and very faithful*, his precepts flowing from the rectitude of his nature moſt fit for him to enjoin, for us to obey; and all his promiſes are yea and amen in Chriſt Jeſus, ſure, eternally ſure, to every believer.

2. Great was his zeal for God. *My zeal hath even conſumed me, becauſe mine enemies have forgotten thy word*; he could not be an unconcerned ſpectator, and calmly behold God's authority diſregarded, his word deſpiſed. That they were his enemies, he was leaſt affected with; that they were God's enemies, he could not bear, and therefore ſo zealouſly intereſted himſelf, that it preyed upon his ſpirits, and emaciated his body. *Note*, It is a good thing to be ever zealouſly affected in a good cauſe.

3. He highly commends God's word. *Thy word is very pure*, without any human mixture, holy men of old delivering it as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt, and its tendency being to promote purity in heart and life: *therefore thy ſervant loveth it*; for though a child of God finds much, very much of that evil in him which this word condemns, he never wiſhes the commandment leſs holy, but his own heart more conformed thereunto.

4. He complains. *I am ſmall and deſpiſed*, little in my own eyes, and ſuffering much contempt and ſcorn from men, as will ever be the portion of the faithful here below: *yet do not I forget thy precepts*, nothing moved him from his ſteadfaſt adherence to God's word and ways.

5. He exalts God's righteouſneſs and truth. *Thy righteouſneſs is an everlaſting righteouſneſs*; God is the ſame in all his glorious perfections for ever and ever; and in all his works and word he will eternally appear to be righteous; and that *righteouſneſs* of his Son, which he hath provided for the juſtification of the ſinner, is to everlaſting ages the ſame; their hope in time, their title in eternity. *And thy law is the truth*, like himſelf, who is the God of Truth, one jot or tittle of whoſe word can never fail, until the whole be fulfilled.

6. In his trouble God's word comforted him. *Trouble and anguiſh have taken hold on me*; outward afflictions and inward grief ſeemed to ſeize him as their prey, and every gracious ſoul may expect his portion in this bitter cup: *yet thy commandments are my delights*, delights that in the midſt of ſorrow can be enjoyed, and which as the world cannot give, neither can it take them away.

7. He acknowledges, as before, God's everlaſting righteouſneſs, and adds thereto his fervent prayer; *give me underſtanding, and I ſhall live*; they who know the Lord Jeſus, and his everlaſting righteouſneſs, and are acquainted with his eternal truths, live to and for God here, and will ſhortly live with him for ever in glory. *For this is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

19. KOPH.

145. I cried with *my* whole heart, hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy ſtatutes. 146. I cried unto thee, ſave me, † and I ſhall keep thy teſtimonies. 147. [n] I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word. 148. [o] Mine eyes prevent the *night* watches, that I might meditate in thy word. 149. Hear my voice according unto thy loving kindneſs: O LORD, [p] quicken me according to thy judgment. 150. They draw nigh, that follow after miſchief: they are far from thy law. 151. [q] Thou *art* near, O LORD: and all thy commandments *are* truth. 152. Concerning thy teſtimonies, I have known of old, that thou haſt founded them for ever.

† Or that I may keep.
[n] Pſ. v. 3. & lxxxviii. 13. & cxxx. 6.
[o] Pſ. lxiii. 1, 6.
[p] Ver. 25, 40.
[q] Pſ. cxlv. 18.

ק KOPH. The Nineteenth Part.

v. 145—152. We have,

1. David's prayer and purpoſe. His prayer was earneſt and importunate, and the object was ſalvation from the guilt, the power, the puniſhment of ſin, and from the oppreſſion, malice, and ſnares of his enemies: and in the ſtrength of God enabled, he reſolves to keep his ſtatutes and teſtimonies. *Note*, (1.) Cold prayers only beg denials; a few fervent words are better than a volume of lip labour. (2.) We may be aſſured our prayers are heard and anſwered, when our hearts are quickened to greater diligence in walking before God.

2. Early and late his mind was occupied in God's word. Before the dawn of day he was upon his knees, and in the night awake upon his bed, his heart went up to God, and his word was the pleaſing ſubject of his meditations, and the reviving hope of his ſoul, *v.* 147, 148. *Note*, (1.) A ſleepy body is uſually the proof of a ſleepy ſoul; vigorous chriſtians riſe early, and waking, redeem thoſe hours that others doſe away in uſeleſs ſloth. (2.) When we begin the morning with God, we ſhall be enabled to ſee him at our right hand all the day long. (3.) The more we read, mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt God's word, the more confirmed will be our faith, and the more enlivened our hope.

3. He begs for quickening grace. *Hear my voice according unto thy loving kindneſs*, for not our deſerts, but his grace can alone embolden our requeſts. *O Lord, quicken me according to thy judgment*, revive my ſoul from its decays, its deadneſs and lifeleſsneſs, and according to thy promiſes reſtore me to a more enlivened temper of mind. *Note*, It is a heavy burden to a faithful ſoul, when he perceives his heart heavy and backward in the ways of God, and he cries aloud for quickening grace.

4. In his danger David flies to God, and from his nearneſs to him, from the fidelity and immutability of his counſels, draws conſolation to his ſoul. *They draw nigh that follow after miſchief*, their reſtleſs hearts are ever bent on evil, and they preſſed hard upon him, ready to deſtroy him; reſtrained by no fear of God, *they are far from thy law*, caſting off all obedience to it, and careleſs about its threatnings: but however ſore thruſt at, David had a friend near, and able to help him. *Thou art near, O Lord*, ever at my right hand to ſave me, *and all thy commandments are truth*; the fulfilment of God's word his enemies ſought in vain to defeat, but it is inviolably true, and infallibly ſure; and this to eternity, *concerning*, or *from thy teſtimonies, I have known of old, that thou haſt founded them for ever*; from earlieſt youth acquainted with the ſcripture, he knew the truths were eternal, of perpetual obligation, and everlaſting endurance; not one tittle of the promiſe can fail until the whole be fulfilled. *Note*, (1.) We may meet with much enmity in the world, and God may permit the danger to be very threatning, but it is to drive us cloſer to his bleſſed ſelf, and engage our dependance more entirely upon him. (2.) In every trial he is near, and they who truſt him, ſhall find his promiſes for ever ſure: he never hath, never will, never can diſappoint his people's hopes, for he cannot deny himſelf.

20. RESH.

153. Conſider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law. 154. [r] Plead my cauſe, and deliver me: [s] quicken me according to thy word. 155. [t] Salvation *is* far from the wicked: for they ſeek not thy ſtatutes. 156. † Great *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD: [u] quicken me according to thy judgments. 157. Many *are* my perſecutors, and mine enemies: [x] *yet* do I not decline from thy teſtimonies. 158. I beheld the tranſgreſſors, and was grieved: becauſe they kept not thy word. 159. Conſider how I love thy precepts: [y] quicken me, O LORD, according to thy loving kindneſs. 160. ‡ Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

[r] Pſ. xxxv. 1. & xliii. 1. Mic. vii. 9.
[s] Ver. 25.
[t] Job v. 4.
† Or many.
[u] Ver. 40.
[x] Pſ. xliv. 17.
[y] Ver. 25.
‡ Heb. The beginning of thy word is true.

ר RESH. The Twentieth Part.

v. 153—160. Theſe verſes contain,

1. David's cry for help from God in his afflictions, particularly againſt the malice of his perſecutors. *Conſider mine affliction*, how great it is, and how weak I am to ſtand under it, *and deliver me*, for thou art able to ſave to the uttermoſt; and on thee I depend, *for I do not forget thy law*, neither moved by

my troubles to forſake it, nor unmindful of the ſtrength promiſed therein for my ſupport. *Plead my cauſe*, as the avenger of my wrongs, and the advocate of injured innocence, *and deliver me*; let my accuſers be put to ſhame, and *quicken me* with freſh ſtrength and courage, to ariſe to walk before thee, *according to thy word*, my hope, and never-failing refuge. *Many are my perſecutors, and mine enemies*, ſore thruſt at that I ſhould fall, *yet do I not decline from thy teſtimonies*, not aſhamed to make public profeſſion of the religion that expoſes me to their malice, nor diverted from the path of duty by their oppoſition. *Note*, (1.) In every affliction it is an ineſtimable privilege, that we have a God to go to, into whoſe boſom we may pour out our complaints, with aſſurance of a gracious hearing and help. (2.) All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution: the Lord enable us neither to be aſhamed nor afraid. (3.) However for a while the enemies of Chriſt and his people may prevail, he will ariſe ſhortly to plead his own cauſe, and render tribulation to thoſe that trouble us.

2. He deſcribes the character, and declares the hopeleſs ſtate of the ungodly. *Salvation is far from the wicked*, they have no part nor lot in the matter, continuing obſtinately impenitent; Chriſt, reſpecting them, hath died in vain; and however they may flatter themſelves with hopes of heaven, they will be terribly undeceived, when they come to lift up their eyes in torment: *for they ſeek not thy ſtatutes*, they neither know, nor deſire to know them; but wilfully and obſtinately perſevere and periſh in their iniquities. *Note*, The day will come, when the ſalvation ſinners deſpiſed, ſhall indeed be far from them, and the great gulph fixed for ever and ever.

3. He admires the riches of God's grace. *Great are thy tender mercies*, temporal mercies, great and numberleſs, but ſpiritual mercies in Chriſt ſtill infinitely ſurpaſſing, and more ineſtimably great and glorious: pardon, grace, eternal life flowing from boundleſs love, and ſovereign and unmerited favour: *quicken me according to thy judgments*, and add this to all thy other mercies. *Note*, The more we contemplate the tender mercies of our God, the more ſhall we be overwhelmed with wonder, love, and praiſe.

4. He declares the pain he felt for ſinners. *I beheld the tranſgreſſors* with a mixture of pity and indignation, *and was grieved* for *them*, that they were ſo inſenſible of their baſeneſs, hardened againſt fear, careleſs about the miſeries they were bringing upon themſelves: *for the diſhonour done to God* by their rebellious conduct, *becauſe they kept not thy word*: a gracious heart thus bleeds for human miſery; a zealous heart cannot, unmoved, look round on a world lying in wickedneſs. Bleſſed be God the day is near, when all this cauſe of grief and pain ſhall end.

5. Conſcious of the ſimplicity of his heart, the Pſalmiſt looks up to God. *Conſider how I love thy precepts*, how ardently, and therefore could not but grieve to ſee them violated: *quicken me, O Lord, according to thy loving kindneſs*, that I may be enabled to prove my love to them, by the enlivened diligence uſed in obſerving them. *Note*, The keeping God's commandments is the only ſolid proof of loving them.

6. He encourages his heart in the everlaſting faithfulneſs of God in his word. From the firſt promiſe given to Adam, one tittle hath not failed of being accompliſhed; and to eternity all who truſt in him ſhall find the word of promiſe ſure, and thoſe who impenitently provoke him, ſhall feel his judgments inexorable and eternal.

21. SCHIN.

[z] Ver. 23. 161. [z] Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe:
but my heart ſtandeth in awe of thy word. 162. I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great ſpoil. 163.
I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love. 164.
Seven times a day do I praiſe thee, becauſe of thy righte-
[a] Prov. iii. 2. ous judgments. 165. [a] Great peace have they which
Iſa. xxxii. 17. love thy law: and † nothing ſhall offend them. 166.
† Heb. They ſhall have no [b] LORD, I have hoped for thy ſalvation, and done thy
ſtumbling-block. commandments. 167. My ſoul hath kept thy teſtimo-
[b] Gen. xlix. nies: and [c] I love them exceedingly. 168. I have kept
18. Ver. 174. thy precepts and thy teſtimonies: for [d] all my ways *are*
[c] Rom. vii. 22. before thee.
[d] Job xxxiv. 21. Prov. v. 21.

ש Schin. The Twenty-firſt Part.

v. 161—168. David here,

1. Complains to God. *Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe*, the princes of Iſrael, under Saul and Abſalom, or of the Philiſtines at the court of Achiſh. Thus was the Son of David alſo perſecuted by the Jewiſh rulers; and thus have his people formerly been, and to this hour are, oppreſſed by the great men of the world, and the power of magiſtracy often employed to cruſh, or trouble them, though they are the quiet of the land: *but my heart ſtandeth in awe of thy word*, unmoved with their perſecution, and taught alone to fear him, who, when he hath killed, can caſt both ſoul and body into hell.

2. He profeſſes his delight in God's word. *I rejoice in thy word, as one that findeth great ſpoil*; in this field are hid the ineſtimable treaſures of grace, pardon, peace, righteouſneſs, ſalvation; and he who findeth theſe, hath indeed everlaſting cauſe for joy. This was his happy caſe, and therefore he could ſay, *Seven times a day do I praiſe thee*, frequently, every day, not only on his knees, but at his meals, in his buſineſs, *becauſe of thy righteous judgments*, the doctrines and precepts of his word, the providential mercies vouchſafed to his people, and the puniſhment executed on his foes, all which afforded matter for praiſe and joy. *Note*, If we do not want a heart, we never need want matter for God's praiſes.

3. He declares his deteſtation of *lying* or *falſehood*, *v.* 163. either in his ordinary converſation, his dealings in the world, his profeſſions before God; or he hated every thing contrary to the truth and word of God, whether falſe doctrine, worſhip, or ways. *Note*, There is but one thing we are permitted to hate, and that is ſin, and there we need not fear exceſs.

4. He profeſſes his love to God's law. *Thy law do I love*, in oppoſition to all doctrines of lies, and practiſes of falſehood; and great is the bleſſedneſs thence accruing, for *great peace have they which love thy law*, peace with God, peace in their conſcience, peace which the world can neither give nor take away; great peace, paſſing all underſtanding, and enduring uninterrupted to eternity: *and nothing ſhall offend them*, ſo that they ſhould finally ſtumble and fall, but their heavieſt afflictions ſhall work for good; the unfaithfulneſs of others ſhall not ſtagger them, and as they would not willingly offend themſelves, neither are the captious to take offence againſt their brethren, or rigid cenſurers of their conduct.

5. He profeſſes his hope in God's ſalvation; a good hope, through grace, which had the moſt bleſſed influence, engaging him to purify himſelf as he is pure. *Lord, I have hoped for thy ſalvation*, temporal, ſpiritual, eternal, and this hope hath been, and continues to be, the anchor of my ſoul, and enables me to ride out every ſtorm: *and done thy commandments*, if not in perfection, with ſimplicity and godly ſincerity. *Note*, Chriſtian hope will ever produce holy walking.

6. He appeals to God for his ſimplicity. *My ſoul hath kept thy teſtimonies*, embraced the doctrines, obeyed the precepts, *and I love them exceedingly*, out of a pure heart, fervently. *I have kept thy precepts and thy teſtimonies*, and this I ſhould not dare to repeat, if conſcious of known guile, in ſentiment or practice: *for all my ways are before thee*, thine eye is upon me, thou knoweſt the ſecrets of my heart, thou knoweſt that I love thee, and delight and deſire to pleaſe thee in all things. O that there were ſuch a heart in us! O that with confidence we could thus approach unto God in Chriſt!

22. TAU.

169. Let [e] my cry come near before thee, O LORD: [e] Luke xi. 8.
give me underſtanding according to thy word. 170.
Let my ſupplication come before thee: deliver me ac-
cording to thy word. 171. My lips ſhall utter praiſe, [f] Ver. 7.
when thou haſt taught me thy ſtatutes. 172. My tongue
ſhall ſpeak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are*
righteouſneſs. 173. Let thine hand help me: for [g] I [g] Joſh. xxiv.
have choſen thy precepts. 174. [h] I have longed for thy 22. Prov. i. 29.
ſalvation, O LORD: and [i] thy law *is* my delight. 175. [h] Ver. 166.
Let my ſoul live, and it ſhall praiſe thee: and let thy [i] Ver. 16, 24.
judgments help me. 176. [k] I have gone aſtray like a loſt [k] Iſa. liii. 6.
ſheep, ſeek thy ſervant: for I do not forget thy com- Luke xv. 4, &c.
mandments.

ת Tau. The Twenty-ſecond Part.

v. 169—176. We have here,

1. The Pſalmiſt's prayer. *Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord*, a poor ſupplicant at the footſtool of thy grace, unworthy notice, yet periſhing without thy kind regard: *give me underſtanding according to thy word*, to know thy will, that I may obey it. *Let my ſupplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word* of promiſe, which emboldened his prayer, and which he pleaded as the ground of his confidence in God, and the argument for preſent help, that God's faithfulneſs might be magnified. *Note*, What we aſk according to God's word, believing, we ſhall receive.

2. His reſolution to render his grateful returns for God's mercies. *My lips ſhall utter thy praiſe*, as a copious ſtream guſhing from a heart overflowing with gratitude, *when thou haſt taught me thy ſtatutes*, which will, the more I know them, enlarge my ſoul with love, and fill my lips with thankſgiving. *My tongue ſhall ſpeak of thy word*, commending from experience its excellence to others, and eager to ſpread the knowledge of it on every ſide; *for all thy commandments are righteouſneſs*, perfectly righteous in themſelves, the evangelical righteouſneſs of thoſe who obſerve them in love, and our righteouſneſs in Jeſus Chriſt, who hath fulfilled the law for us, and is the end thereof for righteouſneſs to every believer.

3. He pleads for help from God. *Let thine hand help me*

againſt mine enemies of every kind, within and without, for I cannot help myſelf, and all human help is vain. *Note*, When we are in our own eyes moſt weak and helpleſs, God's ſtrength will be made perfect in our weakneſs.

4. He declares what hath been his choice, his hope, and joy. *I have choſen thy precepts*, as my heritage for ever, approve them as moſt excellent, and wiſh to conform to them without reſerve. *I have longed for thy ſalvation*, for temporal deliverance from his foes, for the coming of the expected Meſſiah, who ſhould bring eternal redemption to his people, for the ſalvation of body and ſoul in the day of final recompence: *and thy law is my delight*; he took the right way, and therefore might well hope for a bleſſed iſſue. The Lord Chriſt will be aſſuredly the author of ſalvation to all that obey him.

5. He prays that he may live for God's glory. *Let my ſoul live*, my natural life be prolonged, or my ſpirit enlivened by divine grace, and put in tune for God's preſent and everlaſting praiſes, *and it ſhall praiſe thee*, this ſhall be my conſtant employment: *and let thy judgments help me*, teach me matter for my ſongs, and direct me in the acceptable manner. *Note*, Life is only deſirable to a good man, that he may employ it in God's praiſe and ſervice.

6. He concludes with a humbling confeſſion, a gracious prayer, and holy profeſſion. *I have gone aſtray like a loſt ſheep*, an animal ſtupid and fooliſh, the eaſieſt to err, the laſt to find his way back again; ſuch is the fit emblem of the ſinner's folly, ſo eaſily turned aſide, ſo unable to return to the God from whom he hath departed. May we not well adopt the Pſalmiſt's acknowledgment, with grief and ſhame lament our ſad departures from the God of our mercies, and cry with him, *ſeek thy ſervant*, for every departure from God doth not cut us off from our relation to him; nor doth he caſt us away, but, like a tender ſhepherd, ſeeks that which was loſt, bringing us back into the way, and reſtoring us again to the joys of his ſalvation, *for I do not forget thy commandments*. However, for a moment he ſeemed to be moved from his ſteadfaſtneſs, through the power of his enemies, or the deceitfulneſs of ſin, he ſtill remembered God's good ways, approved of them, and deſired to walk in them as the only ways of pleaſantneſs, and paths of peace.

PSALM CXX.

This and the fourteen following pſalms are entitled Songs of Degrees, *but why ſo called, is uncertain; a variety of conjectures have been advanced, but they are mere conjectures. This pſalm, from its affinity to the* Fifty-ſecond, *is ſuppoſed to refer to Doeg the Edomite. And herein,* 1. *He prays to God to deliver him from the miſchiefs deſigned him by falſe and malicious tongues,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *He threatens the judgments of God againſt ſuch,* ver. 3, 4. 3. *He complains of his ill neighbours that were quarrelſome and vexatious,* ver. 5—7. *In ſinging this pſalm we may comfort ourſelves, in reference to the ſcourge of the tongue, when at any time we fall unjuſtly under the laſh of it, that better than we have ſmarted by it.*

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1.[a] IN my diſtreſs I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me. 2. Deliver my ſoul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue. 3. † What ſhall be given unto thee? or what ſhall be done unto thee, thou falſe tongue? 4. [b] ‡ Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper. 5. Wo is me, that I ſojourn in [c] Meſech, *that* I dwell in the tents of [d] Kedar. 6. My ſoul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. 7. I *am* ‖ *for* peace: [e] but when I ſpeak, they *are* for war.

[a] Pſ. cxviii. 5. Jonah ii. 2. Luke xxii. 44.
† Or what ſhall the deceitful tongue give unto thee? or what ſhall it profit thee?
[b] Deut. xxxii. 23. Pſ. cxl. 10.
‡ Or, it is as the ſharp arrows, &c. Pſ. lxiv. 3.
[c] Gen. x. 2.
[d] Ibid. xxv. 13.
‖ Or a man of peace.
[e] Pſ. xxxv. 20.

v. 1—7. David was now an exile from his native country, fleeing from the malice of his enemies.

1. He complains of his ſad eſtate, which in prayer he ſpreads before God, *v.* 1. *In my diſtreſs I cried unto the Lord*; driven from his home, a ſtranger in a ſtrange land; and, as his prayer imports, *v.* 2. maligned, reproached, belied, betrayed. *Deliver my ſoul, O Lord, from lying lips and a deceitful tongue*: not his own, for he abhorred the ſin, but from other's, ſuch as Doeg and Saul's courtiers, who by flattery, falſehood, and miſrepreſentation, ſought his ruin. Thus was the innocent Lamb of God perſecuted, reviled, and falſe witneſſes laid to his charge things that he knew not of. Let it not ſeem a ſtrange thing to us if our characters, for his name's ſake, ſuffer under the falſeſt and moſt cruel aſperſions; the day of detection for lying lips will come.

2. He acknowledges God's kind attention to his prayer. *He heard me*, and diſappointed the malice of his enemies; with him we may ever contentedly leave our caſe.

3. He foreſees the miſerable end of theſe men. *What ſhall be given unto thee, or what will it give unto thee? or what ſhall be done unto thee, thou falſe tongue?* Did ſinners for a moment conſider the end of their ways, terrors would take hold of them, for their decreed portion is *Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper*; the wrath of an Almighty God, ſharper than arrows in the conſcience, and ſcorching with fiercer and more enduring torment than coals of juniper. *Note*, The everlaſting burnings are the deſtined place of abode for all who love or make a lie, *Rev.* xxii. 15.

4. He bemoans his preſent wretched abode. *Wo is me, that I ſojourn in Meſech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar?* among whom he was forced to take refuge, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 1. or among rude and idolatrous nations, like theſe deſcendants of Japhet and Iſhmael; or even in the court of Saul, he found his abode among the wicked courtiers there as irkſome as if he had dwelt among the heathen. *My ſoul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace*; either with Saul, whom no kindneſs could bend to friendly thoughts of him, or thoſe ſtrangers among whom he ſojourned, enemies to the God of peace, and to religion, the only true path of peace. *I am for peace*, or, *I peace*; a man of peace, purſuing it by every means, ready to bear and forbear any thing for the ſake of it, and however offended, the firſt to ſeek reconciliation: *but when I ſpeak, they are for war*, reject every kind overture, and implacable in their malice, fly to arms. *Note*, (1.) It is a grief to thoſe who love God to be removed from the public ordinances, and they cannot but ſigh for the courts of the Lord's houſe. (2.) Bad company, into which by neceſſity we may be forced, is a burden to the gracious ſoul. (3.) Every man of God muſt be a man of peace; envy, diſpute, and ſtrife, are all from hell. (4.) Though others continue inveterate, that muſt not reſtrain us from the exerciſe of Divine charity: this is truly Godlike.

PSALM CXXI.

This pſalm directs and encourageth us to repoſe ourſelves and our confidence in God, and by faith to put ourſelves under his protection, and commit ourſelves to his care. 1. *David here aſſures himſelf of help from God,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *He aſſures others of it,* ver. 3—8.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1.† I Will [a] lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. 2. [b] My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. 3. [c] He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved: [d] he that keepeth thee will not ſlumber. 4. Behold, he that keepeth Iſrael, ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep. 5. The LORD *is* thy keeper: the LORD *is* [e] thy ſhade [f] upon thy right hand. 6. [g] The ſun ſhall not ſmite thee by day; nor the moon by night. 7. The LORD ſhall preſerve thee from all evil: he ſhall preſerve thy ſoul. 8. The LORD [h] ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore.

† Or ſhall I lift up mine eyes unto the hills? whence ſhall my help come? Jer. iii. 23.
[a] Pſ. cxxiii. 1.
[b] Ibid. cxxiv. 8.
[c] 1 Sam. ii. 9.
[d] Pſ. cxxvii. 1. Iſa. xxvii. 3.
[e] Iſa. xxv. 4.
[f] Pſ. xvi. 8. & cix. 31.
[g] Pſ. xci. 5. Iſa. xlix. 10. Rev. vii. 16.
[h] Deut. xxviii. 6. Prov. iii. 6.

v. 1—8. In every diſtreſs David fled to a covenant God. We have,

1. His prayer. *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills*, the place of God's tabernacle, or to the heavenly hills, the place where his honour dwelleth, *from whence cometh my help*; or it may be read interrogatively, *Shall I lift mine eyes to the hills?* to idols, or the mighty men of the earth, *from whence ſhall my help come?* from theſe? No; in *vain is ſalvation hoped for* from theſe hills, *Jer.* iii. 23. *My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth*, his arm is my dependance, his grace my alone ſupport, and his power almighty; he who created all things, can and will preſerve me from the power of my enemies. *Note*, (1.) God is a ſure refuge to thoſe who fly to him. (2.) When human help is deſpaired of, with God nothing is impoſſible.

2. The anſwer. Either thus the Pſalmiſt replied to himſelf, or he ſpeaks to every humble petitioner in his circumſtances: *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved*; though earth and hell aſſail the believer's ſoul, and corruption within, like a traitor, is ever ready to betray our hearts to theſe enemies, God's power and grace are engaged to keep our ſouls from falling, at leaſt from final and fatal apoſtacy. *He that keepth thee will not ſlumber*, watchful over the choſen remnant of his grace, their ſure protector, and well and ſafely kept muſt they be, whom he keeps. *Behold, he that keepeth Iſrael*, his redeemed people, *ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, but ever attentive to their concerns, and careful for their good, ſhall preſerve them from the power of evil. *The Lord is thy keeper*, the Lord Jeſus, the great, the good ſhepherd of the ſheep, whoſe infinite love engages him to watch them with tendereſt care, and his power almighty enables him to lead and guide them ſafe to his eternal kingdom; and the leaſt lamb of his flock may confidently expect his conſtant kind regard. *The Lord is thy ſhade*, as the thick cloud which ſhelters from the ſcorching beams of day, ſo God will cover them with his wings from danger, and refreſh them, as *under the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land*, Iſa. xxxii. 2. and ever near to flee unto, even *upon thy right hand*, a very preſent

ſent help in trouble. Thus hid in God, *the ſun ſhall not ſmite thee by day, nor the moon by night*; the fierceſt blaſts of perſecution ſhall not ſcorch us up, as the ſeed on the rock, nor the cold and nipping froſts, or inclement dews of temptation blaſt, or cauſe us to wither. *The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all evil*, whether of ſin or ſuffering, at leaſt ſo as not to be mortally hurt by it; ſin ſhall not have dominion, and Satan ſhall not be able finally to prevail. *He ſhall preſerve thy ſoul*, either the life from death; or if he gives the enemy power over the body, the ſoul ſhall be precious in his ſight, and the glorious crown of martyrdom amply recompence all the pains this fleſh can ſuffer. *The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out and thy coming in*; in all our travels by land or water, in our traffick and buſineſs, and in all our affairs, this divine protection is over us, and God will proſper the work of our hands: *from this time forth, and even for evermore*, not only our guard through life, but our guide to death, in death our ſtay, and after death our everlaſting portion. Lord Jeſus, fulfil theſe thy promiſes to my ſoul, I beſeech thee!

PSALM CXXII.

This pſalm ſeems to have been penned by David for the uſe of the people of Iſrael, when they came up to Jeruſalem to worſhip at the three ſolemn feaſts. Obſerve, 1. *The joy with which they were to go up to Jeruſalem,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The great eſteem they were to have of Jeruſalem,* ver. 3—5. 3. *The great concern they were to have for Jeruſalem, and the prayers they were to put up for its welfare,* ver. 6—9. *And in ſinging this pſalm we muſt have an eye to the Goſpel church, which is called the* Jeruſalem that is from above.

¶ A ſong of degrees of David.

1. I Was glad when they ſaid unto me, [a] Let us go into the houſe of the LORD. 2. Our feet ſhall ſtand within thy gates, O Jeruſalem. 3. Jeruſalem is [b] builded as a city, that is compact together: 4. [c] Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto [d] the teſtimony of Iſrael, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. 5. For [e] there † are ſet thrones of judgment: the thrones of the houſe of David.

[a] Iſa. ii. 3. Zech. viii. 21.
[b] Eph. ii. 21.
[c] Exod. xxiii. 17. Deut. xvi. 16.
[d] Exod. xvi. 34.
[e] Deut. xvii. 8.
† Heb. Do ſit.

v. 1—5. They who love God, cannot but delight to draw near unto him in the ordinances of his worſhip.

1. The Pſalmiſt expreſſes his joy at the invitation given by other gracious ſouls like his own. *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go into the houſe of the Lord*, the earthly ſanctuary, typical of the church of God; where believers with gladneſs continue to aſſemble themſelves for public worſhip, ſtirring up each other to greater diligence and livelineſs in the bleſſed work. *Our feet ſhall ſtand within thy gates, O Jeruſalem*, and find there a happy reſt after our travels; but how much more delightful when we ſhall enter the ſtreets of the new Jeruſalem, and find the eternal reſt which there remaineth for the people of God.

2. He deſcribes this happy place. *Jeruſalem is builded as a city, that is compact together*, firm the foundation, the houſes regularly built, by art and nature ſtrongly defended. Thus is the church of God built on the rock of ages, the members cloſely united in love, and protected by the arms of Omnipotence: *whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord*, obedient to his commands, and thrice a year appearing before him at the temple, *to the teſtimony of Iſrael*, to the ark, the ſymbol of the divine preſence, to conſult his mind and will, and *to give thanks unto the name of the Lord*, offering their ſacrifices and praiſes before him. *For there are ſet thrones of judgment*, the courts of judicature, and the royal reſidence of Iſrael's kings, *the thrones of the houſe of David*. In the goſpel-church, Jeſus places his word, and promiſes his ſpirit, as the ark of the teſtimony, to direct and guide us; there he erects his throne alſo, reigning as king in the hearts of his people; preſcribing the rule of their conduct, and the ordinances of his worſhip; and with him their thrones will ſhortly be placed; when brought to the heavenly Zion, they ſhall reign with him in glory everlaſting.

6. [f] Pray for the peace of Jeruſalem: they ſhall proſper that love thee. 7. Peace be within thy walls, *and* proſperity within thy palaces. 8. For my brethren and companions ſakes, I will now ſay, Peace *be* within thee. 9. Becauſe of the houſe of the LORD our God, [g] I will ſeek thy good.

[f] Pſ. ii. 18.
[g] Neh. ii. 10.

v. 6—9. David calls upon every faithful Iſraelite,

1. *To pray for the peace of Jeruſalem*, for the proſperity of all who dwelt therein, and for the nation who reſorted thither. *Note*, (1.) We are bound to pray for our place and nation, for in the peace thereof we ſhall have peace. (2.) The proſperity and peace of God's church will be the firſt concern and prayer of all the friends of David's ſon.

2. The bleſſing of ſuch prayers will return on thoſe who offer them. *They ſhall proſper that love thee*, their ſouls ſhall be refreſhed with the graces they beg for others, and ſpiritually they ſhall increaſe with the increaſe of God.

3. The proper prayers are ſuggeſted; for a good form of ſound words is a moſt profitable way of worſhip for thoſe who ſtand in Zion's courts. *Peace be within thy walls*, outward peace from enemies, the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, and mutual peace and love, which no diſpute, diſcord, or diviſions may ever interrupt: oh when ſhall it yet be! *and proſperity within thy palaces*, for it will then go well with the church of God, when they, who by eminence of ſtation are moſt exalted, abound with gifts and graces, for the government and edification of the body.

4. He reſolves this ſhall be his own prayer and practice; *I will ſay, peace be within thee*, and not only with heart deſire it, but with hand labour for it; *I will ſeek thy good. Note*, To pray one way, and act another, is to be errant hypocrites. Two reaſons he ſuggeſts why he ſhould thus do, (1.) *For my brethren and companions ſake*; the ſaints of God, high or low, rich or poor; David counted them as brethren, delighted in their company, and ſought their happineſs, and ſo ſhould we. (2.) *Becauſe of the houſe of the Lord our God*; God's glory was ever his firſt purſuit, the enlargement of his church his great deſire, and therefore he could not but pray for it, and labour to promote it. The Lord help us to go and do likewiſe.

PSALM CXXIII.

This pſalm was penned at a time when the church of God was brought low and trampled upon; ſome think it was when the Jews were captives in Babylon; though that was not the only time that they were inſulted over by the proud. The pſalmiſt begins as if he ſpoke for himſelf only, ver. 1. *but preſently ſpeaks in the name of the church. Here is,* 1. *Their expectation of mercy from God,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Their plea for mercy with God,* ver. 3, 4.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1. [a] UNTO thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the heavens. 2. Behold, as the eyes of ſervants *look* unto the hand of their maſters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her miſtreſs: ſo our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, [b] until that he have mercy upon us. 3. Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for [c] we are exceedingly filled with contempt. 4. Our ſoul is exceedingly filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

[a] Pſ. xxv. 1. & cxxi. 1.
[b] Gen. xxxii. 26. Luke xviii. 1, &c.
[c] Pſ. lxxxviii. 3.

v. 1—4. We have here,

1. The Pſalmiſt's approach unto God. *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the heavens*, the place of his glorious abode, whither our prayer muſt be directed, and where with the eye of faith we muſt behold him, ready to hear and anſwer us.

2. The temper in which he approached God, he illuſtrates by the ſimilitude of a ſervant looking to their maſter or miſtreſs for direction, ſuſtenance, protection, chaſtiſement, wages; *ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God*, for his divine teaching how to walk and pleaſe him; for his continual ſupplies of living bread to nouriſh our ſouls; for ſupport againſt all thoſe who would obſtruct us in our bleſſed maſter's ſervice; for the wages of the eternal inheritance which God hath promiſed, not of debt indeed, but of grace; or for ſuch kind correction as he ſees we need, and under which we chearfully and patiently ſubmit, *until that he have mercy upon us*, which he infallibly will ſhow in time and eternity, to all thoſe who wait on him as their only refuge.

3. The plea he urges. *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us*; on this alone we muſt found our hope, for merit we have none; in one word it comprehends all our wants, which God knows better than we do ourſelves; and it is repeated to ſhew the fervent importunity which thoſe who are endued with the ſpirit of prayer uſe, when deeply ſenſible of the want of that mercy they ſeek; *for we are exceedingly filled with contempt*, the common lot of God's people, who are deſpiſed as poor, ignorant, deluded; their holy peculiarities in ſentiment and practice ridiculed, and their perſons treated as the ſcum and offſcouring of all things, by a ſenſual, proud, and adulterous generation. *Our ſoul is exceedingly filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, and with the contempt of the proud*; the ſcorners who ſet God at defiance, live after the indulgence of their luſts, careleſs and ſecure about futurity, puffed up with affluence and honour, taking pleaſure in vilifying and inſulting the deſpiſed people of God. But let ſuch know there is one who reſents theſe indignities, and will return them; the tables will quickly

change at the prayer of the faithful, the deſpiſed followers of Jeſus be exalted to the throne of glory, and thoſe proud ſenſualiſts thruſt down into the pit, an abhorring to all fleſh, and covered with everlaſting ſhame and contempt.

PSALM CXXIV.

Whatever was the particular occaſion wherein David penned this pſalm, it is highly applicable to every deliverance, which God vouchſafes to his church and people out of their diſtreſſes, and eſpecially to the great redemption obtained for them by Jeſus Chriſt. 1. *He here magnifies the greatneſs of the danger they were in*, ver. 1—5. 2. *He gives God the glory of their eſcape*, ver. 6, 7. *compared with* ver. 1, 2. 3. *He takes encouragement from thence to truſt in God*, ver. 8.

¶ A ſong of degrees of David.

1. IF *it had not been* the LORD who was on our ſide,
now may Iſrael ſay: 2. If *it had not been* the
LORD who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt
us: 3. Then they had ſwallowed us up quick, when
a Pſ. lxix. 2. their wrath was kindled againſt us. 4. Then [a] the wa-
ters had overwhelmed us, the ſtream had gone over
our ſoul. 5. Then the proud waters had gone over
ſoul. 6. Bleſſed *be* the LORD, who hath not given us
b Ibid. xci. *as* a prey to their teeth. 7. [b] Our ſoul is eſcaped as a
3. Prov. bird out of the ſnare of the fowlers; the ſnare is broken,
vi. 5. c Pſ. cxxi. 2. and we are eſcaped. 8. [c] Our help *is* in the name of
LORD, who made heaven and earth.

v. 1—8. The greater the danger is to which we are expoſed, the greater doth the power and grace of our God appear in our reſcue, and the more are we indebted to him in love and praiſe.

1. The enemies of God's church and people are many and mighty; riſing up fierce as a lion, and ready to devour them, *quick* and eager in the purſuit, and raging in their wrath to deſtroy them. *Then* in that day of trial we may truly ſay, *the waters had overwhelmed us, and the ſtream had gone over our ſoul; then the proud waters had gone over our ſoul*, the floods of perſecution, affliction, temptation had prevailed, and we had ſunk as a ſtone in the mighty waters, *if*, and a bleſſed *if* it is—

2. *If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide*, or *with us*, for our ſtrength is weakneſs, and we have no power to ſtand, either againſt our foes without or within; but having a friend cloſe to our ſide, one ſo faithful to ſtand by us, ſo almighty to ſave us, even Jehovah, we cannot ſink under theſe mighty waters; fixed, as upon a munition of rocks, we may look down ſecure, and mock their impotent rage.

3. The Pſalmiſt, in the perſon of the faithful, bleſſed God for their ſupport and deliverance. *Bleſſed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth*, he hath broken the teeth of the lions, our perſecutors; and as a bird from the fowler's ſnare, are we eſcaped from our wily foes, *v.* 7. *Note*, (1.) Power and policy in vain unite to deſtroy the ſoul which God will ſave. (2.) When we are neareſt in appearance to be overcome, and periſh, then ſhall we be made more eminently to experience the ſalvation of God.

4. Paſt experience encourages the faithful to ſtay themſelves ſtill upon God. *Our help is in the name of the Lord*; we have no other able or willing to ſave us, but he *who made heaven and earth*, and he can aſſuredly ſave to the uttermoſt, and preſerve the work of his own hands. Let Iſrael therefore truſt in the Lord.

PSALM CXXV.

This ſhort pſalm may be ſummed up in thoſe words of the prophet, Iſa. iii. 10, 11. Say ye to the righteous, It ſhall be well with him. Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him. 1. *It is certainly well with the people of God; for*, (1.) *They have the promiſes of a good God, that they ſhall be fixed*, ver. 1. *and ſafe*, ver. 2. *and not always under hatches*, ver. 3. (2.) *They have the prayers of a good man, which ſhall be heard for them*, ver. 4. 2. *It is certainly ill with the wicked, and particularly with the apoſtates*, ver. 5.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

a Mat, xvi. 1. THEY that truſt in the LORD *ſhall be* as mount
18. Zion, [a] *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth
b Zech. ii. 5. for ever. 2. *As* the mountains *are* round about Jeruſa-
c Prov. xxii. lem, ſo [b] the LORD *is* round about his people, from
8. Iſa. xiv. 5. henceforth even for ever. 3. For [c] the rod of † the
† Heb. Wickedneſs. wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous: leſt
the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. 4.
[d] Do good, O LORD, unto *thoſe that be* good, and to d Pſ. lxxiii.
them that are upright in their hearts. 5. As for ſuch as 1.
turn aſide unto [e] their crooked ways, the LORD ſhall e Prov. ii. 15.
lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: *but* [f] peace f Pſ. cxxviii.
ſhall be upon Iſrael. 6. Gal. vi. 16.

v. 1—5. They who have an almighty God to flee to, have nothing to fear, and his great and precious promiſes are a ſure ſupport to every faithful ſoul.

1. Their character. They are *his people*, choſen by his grace, redeemed by the Saviour, called by the Spirit, and ſeparated for his ſervice. *They truſt in the Lord*, on his blood, righteouſneſs and ſtrength, for pardon, acceptance, ſupport, and comfort, under every trial and difficulty. They are *righteous* in him; God regards them as ſuch in their exalted head, and their hearts and ways are ſanctified and renewed. Bleſſed are the people who are in ſuch a caſe, for to them all the promiſes of God are yea and amen in Chriſt Jeſus; which,

2. The Pſalmiſt enlarges upon, (1.) *They ſhall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever*; firm as that mountain they are rooted, immoveable as the rock of ages, their everlaſting ſtability ſecured, all the powers of ſin and corruption can never ſeparate them from the love of God, and their abidance with God to eternity is as ſure as everlaſting promiſes and almighty power can make it. (2.) God is himſelf their everlaſting guard, a ſurer defence than the mountains which ſtood about Jeruſalem, and rendered it ſo difficult of acceſs. Her palaces indeed and walls are laid in the duſt, but God's people are encompaſſed with ſalvation for walls and bulwarks; walls of everlaſting love, which no enemy can climb over, and bulwarks of impregnable defence, againſt which no power can prevail, *from henceforth even for ever*, for till God ceaſes to be, we cannot fail: our life is bound up with his own, *becauſe he lives, we ſhall live alſo.* (3.) The Lord will protect them from the power of oppreſſors: *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous*; afflicted they may be for a time, and ſuffering under the power of wicked men, but they ſhall not be left in their hands, God will open a way for them to eſcape, or preſerve them through their troubles: *leaſt the righteous put their hands unto iniquity*, as they might be tempted to do, if under too ſevere, or long continued afflictions or temptations; but God conſiders what is their feeble frame, will preſerve them from all iniquity, and under his keeping they muſt be ſafe.

3. He prays that God would fulfill what he promiſes. Do good, *O Lord, unto thoſe that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts*; ſuch they are by his grace, and ſuch he truſts they will continue, the God of all grace continuing to vouchſafe to them a continual rich ſupply of his ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus.

4. He foreſees and foretells the end of the ungodly. *As for ſuch as turn aſide to their crooked ways*, either the ſinners, who ruſh into the paths of error and immorality, or the falſe profeſſors, who in time of trial apoſtatize, and fly to ſinful expedients to extricate themſelves from their ſufferings, *the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity*, to the place of terrible execution, and caſt them into that eternal pit, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched: *but peace ſhall be upon Iſrael*; it is either a prayer that it may be, or a promiſe that it ſhall be ſo. The end of the righteous is as bleſſed as the end of the wicked is miſerable; peace, preſent and eternal, is their happy portion, and when the ſmoke of their torment, who have no reſt night nor day, aſcendeth, the ſaints in glory ſhall rejoice and ſing.

PSALM CXXVI.

It was with reference to ſome great and ſurpriſing deliverance of the people of God out of bondage and diſtreſs, that this pſalm was penned; moſt likely their return out of Babylon in Ezra's time. 1. *Thoſe that were returned out of captivity are here called upon to be thankful*, ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *Thoſe that were yet remaining in captivity are here prayed for*, ver. 4. *and encouraged*, ver. 5, 6.

A ſong of degrees.

1. WHEN the LORD turned again the captivity of
Zion, [a] we were like them that dream. 2. Then a Acts xii.
was [b] our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue 9.
with ſinging: then ſaid they among the heathen, The b Job viii.
LORD hath † done great things for them. 3. The 21.
LORD hath done great things for us: *whereof* we are † Heb. Magnified to do with
glad. 4. Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the them.
ſtreams in the ſouth. 5. [c] They that ſow in tears ſhall c Jer. xxxi.
reap in ‡ joy. 6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, 9, &c.
bearing precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with ‡ Or ſinging.
rejoicing, bringing his ſheaves *with him*.

v. 1—6. Great was the joy when, looſed from the Babyloniſh yoke, the captive Jews returned to Zion; greater will it be, when from their preſent diſperſion they ſhall turn unto the Lord; but greateſt will be the joy of God's Iſrael, when, by the redemption of Jeſus finally and eternally delivered from the bondage of corruption and the grave, they ſhall meet at the heavenly hill, and all become one fold, under one ſhepherd. We have,

1. The pleaſing ſurprize which ſeized them, on hearing liberty proclaimed by Cyrus, the inſtrument God employed to execute his purpoſes. Scarce they could believe the glad tidings true; and like men awaking from ſome pleaſing dream, heſitated whether it were fancy or reality; but ſoon convinced that God had remembered them, and turned their captivity, with ſongs of exultation they hailed the happy day, *v.* 2. Thus when the awakened conſcience, that poring over its guilt and miſery hath been ready to ſink into deſpair, hears the good news of pardon, grace, and glory, ſovereignly, richly, eternally beſtowed on the vileſt of ſinners, ſcarce can the heart receive the meſſage, it appears ſo much too great and good to be true, till, by divine faith aſſured of the veracity of the promiſes, the ſoul triumphs in God our Saviour, and is filled with joy and peace in believing.

2. Their neighbours admiration, and their own acknowledgments. *Then ſaid they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them*; they who had before deſpiſed them, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. 7. beheld with wonder and conviction God's peculiar care over his choſen: and when divine grace converts the ſinner's heart, the bleſſed change will often extort conviction even from the enemies of the truth, and force them to acknowledge that it is the finger of God. *The Lord hath done great things for us: whereof we are glad*; gladly they echo back the heathen's confeſſion, and aſcribe to their dear Lord the praiſe of his wondrous work, the gracious inſtance of his love, the glorious matter of their joy; or perhaps this may be the ſpeech of the heathen, looking forward to the great redemption of Jeſus, wherein they were to partake, and ſhare in the gladneſs of his people.

3. The church's prayer. *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the ſtreams in the ſouth,* which may be conſidered as their prayer, for their expected deliverance, or as the requeſt of thoſe who were returned, and deſired to have their brethren come up, who remained in Babylon: or as looking forward to their recovery from their preſent long captivity; or as the requeſt of the church of Chriſt, for deliverance from the antichriſtian yoke; or of every faithful ſoul for himſelf, deſiring deliverance from his in-dwelling corruptions, which would be more welcome than rivers of water in the parched deſerts of Arabia to the fainting traveller.

4. The promiſe in anſwer to their prayer. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy,* which is enlarged upon, *v.* 6. and may be applied, 1. To every believing ſoul, who, with tears of penitential ſorrow, returns unto God, *a precious ſeed* which God regards, and will give his bleſſing upon it, cauſing a plenteous harveſt of peace and joy to ſpring up, and ripen into an eternity of glory. 2. To every faithful miniſter who goes forth, bearing the precious ſeed of the goſpel word, and weeps over poor ſinners, who continue diſobedient, for whoſe immortal ſouls he prays and labours, and God gives him to ſee the travail of his ſoul in many ſeals given to his miniſtry, his joy now, and to be his crown of rejoicing in the day of the appearing of the great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

PSALM CXXVII.

Whether this pſalm was compoſed by David for *Solomon, or was his ſon's compoſition, as it may be rendered* of Solomon, *it is of general uſe, to teach us conſtant dependance on the providence of God, particularly in our families; who gives,* 1. *Wealth,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Heirs to poſſeſs it,* ver. 3—5.

¶ A ſong of degrees † for Solomon.

1. EXcept the LORD [a] build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it: except [b] the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain. 2. *It is* vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows: *for* ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep. 3. Lo, [c] children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* [d] the fruit of the womb *is his* reward. 4. As his arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man: ſo *are* children of the youth. 5. Happy *is* the man that ‡ hath his quiver full of them: [e] they ſhall not be aſhamed, but they ſhall ‖ ſpeak with the enemies [f] in the gate.

† Or of Solomon. Pſ. lxxii. Title.
[a] Exod. i. 21.
[b] Ibid. cxxi. 3—5.
[c] Gen. xxxiii. 5. & xlviii. 4. Joſh. xxiv. 3, 4.
[d] Deut. xxv. 4.
‡ Heb. Has filled his quiver with them.
[e] Prov. xxvii. 11.
‖ Or ſubdue. Pſ. xviii. 47.
[f] Job v. 4.

v. 1—5. The leſs we depend on our own ſchemes, or lean to our own underſtanding, and the more we look up to God, and ſeek help and direction from him, the ſurer will be the proſperity of every work of our hands.

1. *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it.* Whatever projects we may conceive for the advancement of ourſelves or families; whatever plans we may draw, for rearing up ſome noble pile for our abode, it is a Babel tower, and will be the family of an Hiel, unleſs the Lord give his bleſſing and ſucceſs. And if in temporals, much more in ſpirituals are we bound to depend upon him; the wiſeſt of miniſters, and the beſt of men, cannot ſquare one of the living ſtones to raiſe the church of God, unleſs his power and grace work effectually with them.

2. As vain is the watchman's care. It is not the multitude of guards, or their wakeful vigilance, but a greater Guardian who can preſerve the city. The moſt vigilant and active watchmen upon the walls of Zion, cannot prevent the irruption of hereſies, and the breaches of ungodlineſs; this muſt come from above.

3. Vain are all our anxious labours, without God's bleſſing. *It is vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows* earned by hard toil; all this care, aſſiduity, and diligence is fruitleſs; if God be not regarded, he will diſappoint the hopes of the worldly-minded, and mar all their labours. But where honeſt induſtry is employed in dependance upon him, *ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep*, no carking cares diſturb his repoſe, he ſleeps in peace, in the arms of the divine love, and riſes refreſhed and happy, to enjoy the new mercies which, with the returning day, are ſhowered upon him.

4. Children are God's gifts, *v.* 3. He that formed the firſt man from the clay, muſt form each embrio in the womb; and when they are given, from him alone it comes that theſe children are our bleſſings and reward: the moſt pious parent ſees a corrupted offspring, till God, by his grace, taking them for his own, makes them doubly our comfort and joy.

5. They are happy who have theſe gifts of God. *As arrows are in the hand of the mighty man, ſo are children of youth,* thoſe ſprung from parents in the prime of their youth; or who are themſelves grown up healthy and ſtrong, able to aſſiſt their parents in their declining age. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they ſhall not be aſhamed,* their ill conduct ſhall never reflect upon, or grieve their parents, *but they ſhall ſpeak with the enemies in the gate*; their children will be their advocates, and their number and ſtrength their ſupport and defence. Happy the parent bleſt with ſuch children! Happy ſuch children, as learn thus to ſhew piety at home, and to requite their parents.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The fear of God in it is the happineſs of every family, ver. 1, 2, 4. *They who live in it will prove it ſo.* 1. *God will proſper them,* ver. 2. 2. *Make their relations agreeable,* ver. 3. 3. *They ſhall live to ſee their families brought up,* ver. 6. 4. *They ſhall have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the church of God in a flouriſhing condition,* ver. 5, 6. *This is a wedding pſalm; it were well if all who heard it read, pondered its contents: then would there be fewer unhappy marriages.*

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1. [a] BLeſſed *is* every one that feareth the LORD: that walketh in his ways. 2. For thou ſhalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *ſhalt* thou *be*, and [b] *it ſhall be* well with thee. 3. Thy wife *ſhalt be* as a fruitful vine by the ſides of thine houſe: thy children like olive-plants round about thy table. 4. Behold, that thus ſhall the man be bleſſed, that feareth the LORD. 5. [c] The LORD ſhall bleſs thee out of Zion: and thou ſhalt ſee the good of Jeruſalem all the days of thy life. 6. Yea, thou ſhalt [d] ſee thy children's children, *and* [e] peace upon Iſrael.

[a] Pſ. cxii. 1. & cxv. 13. & cxix. 1.
[b] Iſa. iii. 10.
[c] Pſ. cxxxiv. 3.
[d] Job xlii. 16.
[e] Pſ. cxxv. 5.

v. 1—6. We have here,

1. The truly bleſſed character, *v.* 1 *He that feareth the Lord, and walketh in his ways,* making his will the rule of duty, deſiring to be obedient in all things, and fearing nothing ſo much as to offend him.

2. The happineſs promiſed. In general all the felicity of God's choſen ſhall be the portion of that ſoul. *Happy ſhalt thou be,* and *it ſhall be well with thee*; all needful bleſſings in time and eternity ſhall be thine: in particular, (1.) *Thou ſhalt eat the labour of thine hands*; he ſhall have ſtrength to labour, a bleſſing upon his honeſt induſtry, and a heart to enjoy the good things God beſtows. (2.) *Thy wife ſhall be as the fruitful vine by the ſides of thine houſe*; of earthly bleſſings, this is the chief; a wife, that adorns the houſe of her abode; a keeper at home, as a vine fixed to the walls, leaning for ſupport on him, to whom her deſire is, and fruitful in thoſe tendereſt pledges and cements

of connubial love. (3.) *Thy children like olive-plants round about thy table*, a flouriſhing offspring, riſing by ſteps like plants of different years; and round a table, which mercy plentifully ſpreads for their proviſion. If they but grow *up trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified*, then ſhall that father hang over them with delight, and pour forth his warmeſt benedictions upon them. (4.) *The Lord ſhall bleſs thee out of Zion*, the bleſſing of the baſket, the ſtore, and the family are great, but infinitely more valuable are the ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus; thoſe laſt but the paſſing days of time, theſe endure to the ages of eternity. (5.) *Thou ſhalt ſee thy children's children*, the crown of old age, *Prov.* xvii. 6. a riſing generation tranſmitting down from age to age, not only the reſemblance of the perſons, but alſo the piety of their fathers, who ſeem ſtill to live in them. (6.) *Thou ſhalt ſee the good of Jeruſalem all the days of thy life*, national proſperity, and *peace upon Iſrael*, or the flouriſhing ſtate of the church of God, and the abundance of ſpiritual peace and joy ſhed abroad upon the aſſemblies, and in the hearts of the Iſrael of God. Amen! So be it!

PSALM CXXIX.

This pſalm relates to the public concerns of God's Iſrael: It is not certain when it was penned, probably when they were in captivity in Babylon, or about the time of their return. 1. They look back with thankfulneſs on the former deliverances God had wrought for them and their fathers, ver. 1—4. 2. They look forward with a believing prayer for, and proſpect of the deſtruction of all the enemies of Zion, ver. 5, 8. And we may apply it both ways to the goſpel Iſrael, which like the Old Teſtament Iſrael, has weathered many a ſtorm, and is ſtill threatned by many enemies.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

[a] Hoſ. ii. 15. & xi. 1. 1. MAny a time have they afflicted me from [a] my
youth, may Iſrael now ſay: 2. Many a time
have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have
[b] Iſa. li. 23. not prevailed againſt me. 3. [b] The plowers plowed upon
[c] 1 Theſ. i. 6, 7. my back: they made long their furrows. 4. [c] The LORD
is righteous: he hath cut aſunder the cords of the wicked.
[d] Iſa. xxxvii. 37. 5. Let them all be confounded [d] and turned back that
[e] Pſ. xxxvii. 2. & lxxiii. 19. hate Zion. 6. Let them be [e] as the graſs *upon* the houſe
tops, which withereth afore it groweth up: 7. Where-
with the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bind-
eth ſheaves his boſom. 8. Neither do they which go
[f] Ruth ii. 4. by, ſay, [f] the bleſſing of the LORD *be* upon you: we
bleſs you in the name of the LORD.

v. 1—8. Afflictions are deſigned to prove the faith and patience of the ſaints. We have here,

1. The Pſalmiſt reflecting upon the paſt diſtreſſes of Iſrael: many a time had they been a prey to Philiſtines, Ammonites, Egyptians; yea, even now Iſrael, after the fleſh, lies under its ſaddeſt ſtate of captivity. From the days of their being firſt formed into a people, by their tranſgreſſions they often provoked God to leave them for a while under oppreſſion, when ploughers plowed their backs, and like the furrows of the field they were laid waſte and deſolate. This may alſo refer to Chriſt Jeſus, whoſe name is Iſrael, *Iſa.* xlix. 3. from the days of youth perſecuted and afflicted, and his back with ſcourges furrowed deep. And with him, every member of his body myſtical may expect to ſhare; for through much tribulation, we muſt enter into the kingdom of God.

2. He gratefully acknowledges, *They have not prevailed againſt me*; whatever perſecutions the church hath ſuffered, it hath riſen fairer for the floods which paſſed over it; and every faithful ſoul, though ſore troubled and tempted, by experience is enabled to ſay, they have not prevailed againſt me, ſo as that I ſhould fatally or finally periſh: and the reaſon is given, *the Lord is righteous*, hath compaſſion on his people, is faithful to his promiſes, and juſt to avenge their quarrels. *He hath cut aſunder the cords of the wicked*, the cords with which they enſlaved his people; or their traces, with which they ploughed up their backs, and their treacherous devices, which are diſappointed.

3. He prays that the enemies of Zion, of God's church and people, who hate and perſecute them, may be confounded and turned back, withering like graſs on the houſe top, deſtitute of moiſture, and expoſed to the ſcorching ſun, uſeleſs and fruitleſs: *the mower filleth not his hand therewith, nor he that bindeth up the ſheaves his boſom*; thus may all their deſigns be abortive, and their ſchemes be fruſtrated, and never ripen into execution: nor will any pious paſſenger pray for God's bleſſing upon them, as was uſually done to the reapers, *Ruth* ii. 4. but rather *curſe their habitation*, Job v. 3. and beg of God to defeat their malicious contrivances; that *their harveſt may be a heap in the day of grief*, Iſa. xvii. 11.

PSALM CXXX.

This pſalm relates not to any temporal concern, either perſonal or public, but it is wholly taken up in the affairs of the ſoul. The Pſalmiſt here expreſſeth, 1. His deſire towards God, ver. 1, 2. 2. His repentance before God, ver. 3, 4. 3. His attendance upon God, ver. 5, 6, 4. His expectations from God, ver. 7, 8. And as in water face anſwers to face, ſo doth the heart of one humble penitent to another.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1. [a] OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O [a] Lam. iii. 55. Jonah ii 2.
LORD. 2. Lord, hear my voice: let thine
ears be attentive to the voice of my ſupplications. 3. [b] [b] Pſ. cxliii. 2.
If thou, LORD, ſhouldſt mark iniquities: O LORD,
who ſhall ſtand? 4. But *there is* † forgiveneſs with † Or a propitiation.
thee: [c] that thou mayſt be feared. 5. [d] I wait for the [c] 1 Kings viii. 40. Pſ. ii. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 9.
LORD, my ſoul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.
6. [e] My ſoul *waiteth* for the LORD, more than they
that watch for the morning: ‡ *I ſay more than* they that [d] Pſ. xxvii. 14. & xxxiii. 20. & xl. 1. Iſa. viii. 17. & xxx. 18.
watch for the morning. 7. Let Iſrael hope in the
LORD: for [f] with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with
him *is* plenteous redemption. 8. And [g] he ſhall redeem [e] Pſ. lxiii. 6. & cxix. 147.
Iſrael from all his iniquities. ‡ Or which watch for the morning. [f] Pſ. lxxxv. 5, 15. Iſa. lv. 7. [g] Pſ. ciii. 3, 4.

v. 1—8. This is reckoned among the ſeven penitential pſalms, and indeed it is a moſt expreſſive deſcription of the humbled ſinner's return to God: deep laden with iniquity, his complaints are bitter. *Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord*; an awakened ſinner, brought to a ſenſe of his guilt, feels ſuch a load upon his conſcience, as ſeems to preſs him down into the belly of hell. He is ſunk under the floods of corruption; and but a ſtep from deſpair, periſhing he cries, Save *Lord! hear my voice, let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my ſupplications*; as long as a ſinner is out of hell, the door of hope is yet open, and the voice of prayer may be heard: it is never too late; if God ſtirs up our ſouls to cry importunately after him, it is becauſe he intends to be found by us in mercy: but it muſt only be hoped for in a way of mercy, and with ſelf-renunciation, and deepeſt confeſſions of our own vileneſs. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* not that our moſt ſecret thoughts paſs unobſerved by him; no, he ſees them afar off: and ſhould he in ſtrict juſtice call us to his bar, we cannot anſwer him for one of a thouſand of our days; we muſt lay our hands on our mouths, and our mouths in the duſt, plead utterly guilty, juſtify him in his judgments, and can only caſt our ſouls on the mercy of our judge. Thus deſperate is the caſe of every ſinner, and there is no difference; we are all in the ſame condemnation, unable either to bear the ſcrutiny of his law, or to endure the dreadful ſentence of his judgment. *But there is forgiveneſs with thee*, God hath himſelf contrived and accompliſhed that myſterious method of ſaving ſinners, in which, without impeachment of his juſtice, he might, to the uttermoſt, exerciſe his mercy: through the propitiation of Jeſus, a ranſom is found, and for his ſake God will be merciful to our unrighteouſneſs: *that thou mayeſt be feared*; nothing ſteels the heart againſt God like deſpair; men then ruſh into ſin with determined waywardneſs, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle; but a ſenſe of his forgiving love engages the heart to fear the Lord and his goodneſs, and bids us never again wilfully tranſgreſs againſt a God ſo gracious. *I wait for the Lord* at mercy's door, unworthy of notice, yet hoping for his kind regard; *my ſoul doth wait*, not with feigned profeſſions, but with heart-felt deſires, *and in his word do I hope*; emboldened by his promiſes, even when I can ſee nothing in myſelf, but what preaches deſpair. *My ſoul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I ſay more than they that watch for the morning*; as the Levites in the temple, who, with ſleepleſs eyes, had ſtood at their ſeveral poſts, longed for the morning to break, that they might be relieved; ſo eagerly did his ſoul long for the beams of God's reconciled countenance to ariſe upon him, and his ſad diſtreſs to be removed, by a ſenſe of pardoning love; nor was ever ſoul, who thus truſted in him, and waited on him, confounded. *Let Iſrael hope in the Lord*, the Iſrael of God, to the end of time, under all their guilt, fears, falls, backſlidings, and dejection: *for with the Lord there is mercy* for every miſerable ſinner that through Jeſus Chriſt draws near a throne of grace; and *with him there is plenteous redemption*, grace abounding to the chief of ſinners, for millions of the fallen race of Adam, comprehending the removal of every miſery, and including the gift of all conceivable bleſſedneſs; yea, more than eye hath ſeen, or ear heard, or it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. *And he ſhall redeem Iſrael from all his iniquities*, from the guilt, the power, the conſequences of them, preſent and eternal. Lord, may my ſoul be found among thy Iſrael, and partake of this rich, ſovereign, plenteous, eternal redemption!

PSALM CXXXI.

This pſalm is David's profeſſion of humility; but humbly made with thankfulneſs to God for his grace, and not in vain-glory. It is probable enough, that David made this proteſtation in anſwer to the calumnies of Saul and his courtiers, who repreſented David as an ambitious, aſpiring man, who under pretence of a divine appointment, ſought the kingdom in the pride of his heart. But he appeals to God, that on the contrary, 1. *He aimed at nothing high or great,* ver. 1. 2. *He was very eaſy in every condition which God allotted him,* ver. 2. *and therefore,* 3. *He encourageth all good people to truſt in God as he did,* ver. 3. *Some have made it an objection againſt ſinging David's pſalms, that there are many who cannot ſay, Their* heart is not haughty, *&c. It is true there are; but we may ſing it for the ſame purpoſe that we read it, to teach and admoniſh ourſelves, and one another, what we ought to be; with repentance that we have come ſhort of being ſo, and humble prayer to God for his grace to make us ſo.*

¶ A ſong of degrees of David.

1. LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: [a] neither do I † exerciſe myſelf in great matters, or in things too ‡ high for me. 2. Surely I have behaved and quieted myſelf [b] as a child that is weaned of his mother: my ſoul *is* even as a weaned child. 3. Let Iſrael hope in the LORD from henceforth, and for ever.

[a] Rom. xii. 16.
† Heb. Walk.
‡ Heb. Wonderful.
[b] Mat. xviii. 3. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

v. 1—3. We have here,

1. David's profeſſion of his integrity. *Lord, my heart is not haughty*; naturally it is ſo in every man, but by Divine grace he had been brought to entertain humble apprehenſions of himſelf, ſince a diſcovery of his ſin, helpleſſneſs, and corruption had, by the word and ſpirit of God, been made to him; *nor mine eyes lofty*, ſuperciliouſly looking down upon inferiors with diſdain, or looking up to ſuperiors with envy: he bowed before God, as the publican, in deep humility; and far from aſpiring thoughts, could have been content, if God ſo pleaſed, to have continued among the ſheep-folds: *neither do I exerciſe myſelf in great matters, or in things too high for me*; no ambitious projects filled his mind, nor did he affect to be wiſe above what is written, deſiring to pry into the ſecrets of providence and grace, which are too deep for our ſhallow line to fathom. *Surely I have behaved and quieted myſelf as a child that is weaned of his mother: my ſoul is even as a weaned child*; ſo far from proudly aſſuming ſtate, or being of a turbulent ſpirit, he had at Saul's court ever ſhewed the greateſt meekneſs, and harmleſs behaviour, and no more ſought the honours, wealth, and greatneſs of the world, than a child the breaſt from which it hath been weaned. *Note*, (1.) Humility is the great ornament of every ſtation. (2.) Proud looks ſhew a proud heart. (3.) To wade out of our depth, either in religion or learning, is dangerous. It is wiſdom enough to know the way to heaven, without intruding into the arcana of God's counſels. (4.) A child-like ſpirit is the beſt ſymptom of a gracious heart.

2. He encourages others from his example to truſt in the Lord. *Let Iſrael hope in the Lord from henceforth, and for ever.* The people many of them might be impatient of Saul's government, and eager to ſee him on the throne; but he exhorts them to leave the matter to God, who in his own time would fulfil all his deſigns. *Note*, They who hope in Jeſus, and wait for his ſalvation, may confidently expect to partake of it, not only in time but in eternity.

PSALM CXXXII.

Some think this pſalm was penned by Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, ver. 8—10. *being nearly the words with which he concludes his prayer,* 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42. *others that it was written by David, on his bringing up the ark from Kirjath-jearim, or when he had purpoſed to build the temple. We have here,* 1. *David's piety,* ver. 1—7. 2. *God's promiſe,* ver. 11—18.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1004.

1. LORD, remember David, *and* all his afflictions: 2. How he ſware unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto [a] the mighty *God* of Jacob. 3. Surely [b] I will not come into the tabernacle of my houſe, nor go up into my bed: 4. [c] I will not give ſleep to mine eyes, *or* ſlumber to mine eye-lids, 5. [d] Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty *God* of Jacob. 6. Lo, we heard of it [e] at Ephratah: [f] we found it in the fields of the wood. 7. We will go into his tabernacles: [g] we will worſhip at his footſtool. 8. [h] Ariſe, O LORD, into thy reſt: thou, and [i] the ark of thy ſtrength. 9. Let thy prieſts be [k] clothed with righteouſneſs: and let thy ſaints ſhout for joy. 10. For thy ſervant David's ſake, turn not away the face of thine anointed.

[a] Gen. lxix. 24.
[b] Hag. i. 4.
[c] Prov. vi. 4.
[d] Acts vii. 46
[e] Judge xviii. 31.
[f] 1 Sam. vii. 1. 1 Chron. xiii. 5.
[g] Pſ. v. 7. & cxix. 5.
[h] Num. x. 35. 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42.
[i] Pſ. lxxviii. 61.
[k] Job xxix. 14. Iſa. lxi. 10.

v. 1—10. The pſalm opens with a prayer to God. *Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions*; which may be the words of David himſelf, pleading God's faithfulneſs, and looking for ſupport under all his troubles; or of Solomon pleading the covenant eſtabliſhed with his father, and *his afflictions*, his ſufferings, or the toil and trouble he underwent in making preparations for the building of the temple; or *his humility*, which he ſo ſtrongly expreſſed, 2 *Sam.* vii. 2, 18. It may refer alſo to the Meſſiah, as the church's prayer, that God would remember the covenant of grace eſtabliſhed with him, and accept his ſufferings and humiliation in his people's ſtead.

1. The pſalmiſt recites David's ſolemn vow; ſo earneſtly bent was he on erecting a temple for the Lord, *the mighty God of Jacob*, whoſe protection he had ſo greatly experienced, that by an oath he bound his ſoul, either literally not to enter his houſe, or ſleep on his bed, till he had fixed on the place where the temple of God ſhould be erected; or figuratively, as others interpret it, that he ſhould enjoy no peace and ſatisfaction in any of his worldly comforts, till this grand affair was determined. *At Ephratah*, or Shiloh, the tabernacle had been heard of, for there formerly it had been placed, but now it was found *in the fields of the wood* at Kirjath-jearim: or this may be applied to the Meſſiah, the true tabernacle of God with men, who ſhould be born at Bethlehem Ephratah, and be found *in the fields of the wood*, in a low and abject condition, *Ezek.* xvi. 5. and wherever he is found, all true believers will take up their word and ſay, *We will go into his tabernacles*, the places of public worſhip, where this incarnate Lord manifeſts his preſence, grace, and love, towards his people: *we will worſhip at his footſtool*, as humble ſupplicants and dutiful ſubjects.

2. The pſalmiſt prays, [1.] That God would vouchſafe to take up his reſidence in the place erected for his honour. *Ariſe, O Lord, into thy reſt*, where he might fix his ſettled abode, and no more remove from place to place, as when in the tabernacle in the wilderneſs: *thou, and the ark of thy ſtrength*; the figure of him who is mighty to ſave his people, and their everlaſting help and hope. [2.] That God's prieſts might *be clothed with righteouſneſs*; in their preaching and practice adorning their high vocation and calling; and without this, their ſacred function ſerves but to aggravate the guilt of their unfaithfulneſs. [3.] That all God's ſaints may *ſhout for joy*, as they did, 2 *Sam.* vi. 15. and as all true believers continue to do, whilſt they behold the glory of the Lord Jeſus, and hear his goſpel diſpenſed by a faithful, zealous, and exemplary miniſtry. [4.] For himſelf he prays. *For thy ſervant David's ſake*, in conſequence of the covenant eſtabliſhed with him, *turn not away the face of thine anointed*; be gracious to Solomon, anointed to ſit on his throne. This may be regarded alſo as the believer's prayer in general, who is anointed with an unction from the holy One; and for Jeſus' ſake, the ſpiritual David, expects and prays for the light of God's countenance and regard.

11. [l] The LORD, hath ſworn *in* truth unto David, he will not turn from it, [m] Of the fruit of thy body will I ſet upon thy throne. 12. If thy children will keep my covenant and my teſtimony, that I ſhall teach them; their children alſo ſhall ſit upon thy throne for evermore. 13. For [n] the LORD hath choſen Zion: he hath deſired *it* for his habitation. 14. [o] This *is* my reſt for ever: here will I dwell, for I have deſired it. 15. [p] I will abundantly bleſs her proviſion: I will ſatisfy her poor with bread. 16. [q] I will alſo clothe her prieſts with ſalvation: and [r] her ſaints ſhall ſhout aloud for joy. 17. [s] There will I make the horn of David to bud: [t] I have ordained a † lamp for mine anointed. 18. His enemies will I clothe with ſhame: but upon himſelf ſhall his crown flouriſh.

[l] Pſ. lxxxix. 3, 35.
[m] 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings viii. 25. 2 Chron. vi. 16. Luke i. 69. Acts ii. 30.
[n] Pſ. xlviii. 1.
[o] Ibid. lxviii. 16.
[p] Ibid. cxlvii. 14.
[q] 2 Chron. vi. 41. Pſ. clxix. 4.
[r] Hoſ. xi. 12.
[s] Ezek. xxix. 21. Luke i. 69.
[t] 1 Kings xi. 36. & xv. 4. 2 Chron. xxi. 7.
† Or, candle.

v. 11—18. The great and precious promiſes here delivered, were not deſigned for the men of that generation only, but are equally applicable to us, with whom, in Chriſt, God's covenant ſtands faſt. We have,

1. The unchangeable oath of God, confirming to David the kingdom of Iſrael, and to his ſucceſſors. *Of the fruit of thy body will I ſet upon thy throne*; not only Solomon, but that glorious ſucceſſor the Lord Jeſus, *Acts* xi. 30. whoſe kingdom ſhould be an everlaſting kingdom.

2. The condition on which David's poſterity ſhall poſſeſs the throne of Iſrael is their fidelity: whilſt they continue true to God's law, he will ſhew them the faithfulneſs of his promiſe, *v.* 12. This they ſoon violated, and conſequently loſt the

earthly throne; but he who fulfilled all righteouſneſs, in behalf of his people, has ſecured for them the eternal kingdom, and his children, all believers, ſhall reign with him in glory everlaſting.

3. God's choice of Zion for his abode, *v.* 13, 14. There he fixed his reſidence in the temple, the figure of the goſpel church, where he continues to dwell; and in every believer's heart, in the moſt bleſſed ſenſe, is this verified, *This is my reſt for ever: here will I dwell, for I have deſired it.* Lord, in my heart thus take up thy bleſt abode!

4. The rich promiſes he makes to his Zion, [1.] Plenty ſhall bleſs the land; ſo abundant the proviſion, that even the poor ſhall eat and be ſatisfied, *v.* 15. but richer far the proviſion of his grace in his church, where all who hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs may come and be filled, and the pooreſt and moſt miſerable ſinner ſhall not go empty away, but find pardon, grace, and ſalvation, liberally provided for and beſtowed upon him in Jeſus Chriſt. [2.] He engages fully to anſwer the prayer which was made, *v.* 9. to clothe the prieſts with ſalvation, and to give joy to all his ſaints: and this he doth ſtill, when he ſends forth into the miniſtry men full of faith and of the Holy Ghoſt, by whoſe labours the knowledge of ſalvation is diffuſed, and the children of God, enlightned by their preaching, rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and the glorious goſpel of his grace. [3.] He promiſes to ſtrengthen the houſe of David. *There will I make the horn of David to bud*; a ſucceſſor ſhall be given him, whoſe throne ſhall be greater than his father's: *I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed*, that his light may never be extinguiſhed, but his poſterity continue. *His enemies will I clothe with ſhame*, their devices diſappointed, and themſelves vanquiſhed: *but upon himſelf ſhall his crown flouriſh*: all which, in the moſt eminent ſenſe, is true, and applicable to that Son of David, who ſhould be the horn of ſalvation to his people, *Luke* i. 69. ſaving them with a mighty and everlaſting ſalvation: a lamp ever burning, the light of the world, the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhining for ever and ever in the firmament of grace, according to God's eternal purpoſe. All his enemies muſt ſooner or later be clothed with ſhame; either the ſhame of penitents, returning to him in deep humiliation; or the ſhame of criminals, led forth to execution, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire: his crown muſt for ever flouriſh, he ſhall reign not only till all his enemies are fallen, but to the days of eternity; and what is our joy, he will make us kings with himſelf, and we ſhall reign with him in glory.

PSALM CXXXIII.

This pſalm is ſuppoſed to be penned on the union of the tribes, at making David king, 2 Sam. v. 1—3. *or on his reſtoration,* 2 Sam. xix. 9—14. *It teaches us the bleſſing of peace and unity, which in church, in ſtate, and in private, we are called upon by all means to cultivate and promote. Here is,* 1. *The doctrine laid down of the happineſs of brotherly love,* ver. 1. 2. *The illuſtration of that doctrine in two ſimilitudes,* ver. 2, 3. 3. *The proof of it in a good reaſon given for it,* ver. 3.

¶ A ſong of degrees of David.

1. BEhold how good and how pleaſant *it is*, [a] for brethren to dwell † together in unity. 2. *It is* like [b] the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the ſkirts of his garments. 3. As the dew of [c] Hermon, *and as the dew* that deſcended upon the mountains of Zion, for [d] there the LORD commanded the bleſſing, *even* life for evermore.

[a] Gen. xiii. 8. Heb. xiii. 1.
† Heb. Even together.
[b] Ex. xxx. 25, 30.
[c] Deut. iv. 48.
[d] Lev. xxv. 21. Deut. xxviii. 8. Pſ. xlii. 8.

v. 1—3. Among the deadlieſt evils which have befallen the church of God, we may juſtly reckon the diviſions, diſputes, and animoſities, which have from time to time ſo grievous rent it, disfigured its beauty, deſtroyed its peace. Oh that we had paſſed at laſt the waters of ſtrife, and begun to taſte the bleſſedneſs of loving one another out of a pure heart fervently. We have firſt,

1. The practiſe recommended, as *brethren to dwell together in unity*; for all God's children have one father, one inheritance, one intereſt, one purſuit, one home, and therefore ſhould have one heart and one mind, united in the ſame worſhip, affectionate in their regards, bearing and forbearing, forgiving and forgetting, and only jealous who ſhall ſhew the moſt abundant meekneſs, charity, and kindneſs to each other.

2. The bleſſedneſs of this conduct. *Behold how good*, God approves and delights in it, *and how pleaſant*, it is its own reward. *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the ſkirts of his garments*, which was compoſed of the ſweeteſt ſpices, diffuſed the moſt grateful fragance, and cauſed the countenance to ſhine in beauty. Such an unction from the Holy One have they who have this brotherly love ſhed abroad in their hearts; in the eyes of God and men they ſhine; this ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them is moſt pleaſing, and without it all our doings in God's ſight are nothing worth, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, 2. It is *as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that deſcended upon the mountains of Zion*, that allays the heat of the ſcorching ſun, and fertilizes the ſoil: thus doth charity ſeek to cool the heat of bigotry and angry diſpute, diffuſeth its gentle influences, and ſweetly inſinuates into the minds of the exaſperated, producing the happy fruits of peace and union; and wherever this temper dwells, there God's bleſſing abides, *for there the Lord commanded the bleſſing*; every bleſſing the ſoul can need, and which at his command inſtantly deſcends, *even life for evermore*, with God and in God; that life of love begun on earth, the earneſt and the foretaſte of eternal bleſſedneſs. Lord ſhed abroad this love in our hearts!

PSALM CXXXIV.

This is the laſt of the fifteen ſongs of degrees, penned probably when David appointed the Levites in their courſes, 1 Chron. xiii. 26—30.

¶ A ſong of degrees.

1. BEhold, [a] bleſs ye the LORD, all *ye* ſervants of the LORD, [b] which by night ſtand in the houſe of the LORD. 2. [c] Lift up your hands † *in* the ſanctuary: and bleſs the LORD. 3. [d] The LORD, that made heaven and earth, bleſs thee out of Zion.

[a] Pſ. cxxxv. 1, 2.
[b] 1 Chron. ix. 33.
[c] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
† Or, in holineſs.
[d] Pſ. cxxviii. 5.

v. 1—3. In the courts of the tabernacle the Levites kept conſtant watch and ward night and day; and in theſe hours of their attendance the pſalmiſt directs them,

1. How to employ their time in bleſſing, praiſes, and prayer to God, *v.* 1, 2. the happy occupation of all God's faithful ones who delight in the courts of his ſanctuary, ceaſeleſs watch unto prayer, and in every thing give thanks.

2. They thank and pray for him, who gives them this good advice, *The Lord, that made heaven and earth, bleſs thee out of Zion.* Or theſe words may be conſidered as an encouragement to engage their praiſes, becauſe the Lord out of Zion *ſhall bleſs thee*, returning in bleſſings upon themſelves the praiſes they offered up to him. *Note*, They who wait upon God ſhall find the bleſſedneſs of his ſervice; he will bleſs us, and we need nothing more to make us happy, now and for evermore.

PSALM CXXXV.

This is one of the Hallelujah pſalms. 1. *It begins with a call to praiſe God, particularly a call to the* ſervants of the Lord *to praiſe him, as in the foregoing pſalm,* ver. 1—3. 2. *It goes on to furniſh us with matter for praiſe. God is to be praiſed,* (1.) *As the God of Jacob,* ver. 4. (2.) *As the God of gods,* ver. 5. (3.) *As the God of the whole world,* ver. 6, 7. (4.) *As a terrible God to the enemies of Iſrael,* ver. 8—11. (5.) *As a gracious God to Iſrael, both in what he had done for them, and what he would do,* ver. 12—14. (6.) *As the only living God, all other gods being vanity and a lie,* ver. 15—18. 3. *It concludes with another exhortation to all perſons concerned to praiſe God,* ver. 19—21.

1. PRaiſe ye the LORD, praiſe ye the name of the LORD, [a] praiſe *him*, O ye ſervants of the LORD. 2. [b] Ye that ſtand in the houſe of the LORD, in the courts of the houſe of our God. 3. Praiſe ye the LORD, for [c] the LORD *is* good: ſing praiſes unto his name, [d] for *it is* pleaſant. 4. For [e] the LORD hath choſen Jacob unto himſelf, *and* Iſrael for his peculiar treaſure.

[a] Pſ. cxxxiv. 1.
[b] Luke ii. 37.
[c] Pſal. cxix. 68.
[d] Pſ. cxlvii. 1.
[e] Ex. xix. 5. Deut. vii. 6, 7. & x. 15.

v. 1—4. This pſalm is full of praiſe: and that the ſervants of God may never want matter for their ſongs, David ſuggeſts,

1. His great goodneſs. *He is good* in himſelf to all his creatures, eſpecially to the veſſels of mercy, who are peculiarly bound to praiſe him for the riches of his grace manifeſted to their ſouls.

2. The delightfulneſs of the ſervice. *It is pleaſant:* no pleaſure indeed can equal a ſenſe of the Divine love, warm upon the ſoul, and burſting forth in grateful acknowledgments to him who hath ſhed it abroad in our hearts.

3. The diſtinguiſhing privileges of God's Iſrael, and the obligations thence ariſing. *For the Lord hath choſen Jacob unto himſelf, and Iſrael for his peculiar treaſure.* God's people are his choſen, which in his ſovereign grace he ſeparated for his own, and in whom he delights, as men do in their treaſures; moſt bounden therefore are they in love and duty to adore him for his mercy.

5. For I know that [f] the LORD *is* great, and *that* our LORD *is* above all gods. 6. [g] Whatſoever the LORD pleaſed, *that* did he in heaven and in earth, in the ſeas, and all deep places. 7. [h] He cauſeth the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the earth, [i] he maketh lightnings for the rain: he bringeth the wind out of his treaſuries. 8. [k] Who ſmote the firſt-born of Egypt, both of man and beaſt. 9. [l] *Who* ſent tokens and wonders into the midſt of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharoah, and upon all his ſervants. 10.[m] Who ſmote great nations, and ſlew mighty kings: 11. Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Baſhan, and [n] all the kingdoms of Canaan: 12. [o] And gave their land *for* an heritage, an heritage unto Iſrael his people. 13. [p] Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever, *and* thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations. 14. For [q] the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himſelf concerning his ſervants.

f Pſ. xcv. 3. & xcvii. 9.
g Ibid. cxv. 3.
h Jer. x. 13. & li. 16.
i Job xxviii. 25, 26. & xxxviii. 24, &c. Zech. x. 1.
k Ex. xii. 29. Pſal. lxxviii. 51. & cxxxvi. 10.
l Ex. vii. & viii. & ix. & x. & xiv. Pſ. cxxxvi. 15.
m Num. xxi. 24, 25, 26, 34, 35. Pſ. cxxxvi. 17, &c.
n Joſh. xii. 7.
o Pſ. lxxviii. 55. & cxxxvi. 21, 22.
p Ex. iii. 15. Pſ. cii. 12.
q Deut. xxxii. 36.

v. 5—14. The greatneſs, as well as the goodneſs of God, opens a large field for his people's praiſes: this is here inſiſted upon;

1. In general. *I know that he is great* in his adorable perfections, and all the wonders of his power, manifeſted in the works of creation and providence; yea, there is neither meaſure nor end of his greatneſs, it ſurpaſſes all created underſtanding; *our Lord is above all gods*, whether the idols of the heathen, the kings of the earth, or the mighty angels, none can compare with him, leſs than nothing and vanity before him; his power is univerſal, what he wills he doth in heaven or earth, without controul, and with abſolute ſovereignty, *v.* 6.

2. In particular inſtances, [1.] The rain, lightning, and winds own his government. By his eſtabliſhed order in the courſe of nature, the heat of the ſun cauſes the exhalations to aſcend, and float in clouds; according to their different natures theſe kindle in the air and flaſh in lightning, and thoſe becoming too ponderous, fall in drops of rain: out of his treaſuries the winds iſſue, commanded by him when and where to blow, from what point, how long, how violently; all are his creatures, and wait and obey his orders. [2.] His people ſaw his greatneſs marvellouſly manifeſted to them in the plagues of Egypt, the death of the firſt-born, the ruin of Pharoah, the defeat of the Amorites, their conqueſt of Canaan, and peaceable poſſeſſion of that good land. *Note*, Greater conqueſts, and a nobler poſſeſſion, are enſured to God's ſpiritual Iſrael, and therefore they are bound to praiſe their mighty Lord and Saviour.

3. God's people will feel the everlaſting effects of his goodneſs and greatneſs: he is for ever the ſame, *v.* 13. to lateſt ages his people ſhall prove his power and his love, the memorial of which will be tranſmitted from one generation to another, and confirmed ſtill by the experience of the preceding. *For the Lord will judge his people*, rule over them, preſerve, protect them, plead their cauſe againſt their enemies, and at the laſt day crown them with glory, *and will repent himſelf concerning his ſervants*; if he chaſtiſes them for a while, he will change his method of procedure with them, and turn their mourning into joy; or, *he will be intreated for his ſervants*, being gracious to hear, and grant their prayer; or, *he will comfort himſelf concerning his ſervants*, delighting in their proſperity, and watching over them for good: and happy the people who are in ſuch a caſe!

15. [r] The idols of the heathen *are* ſilver and gold, the work of mens hands. 16. They have mouths, [s] but they ſpeak not; eyes have they, [t] but they ſee not. 17. They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths. 18. They that make them are like unto them: *ſo is* every one that truſteth in them. 19. [u] Bleſs the LORD, O houſe of Iſrael: bleſs the LORD, O houſe of Aaron. 20. Bleſs the LORD, O houſe of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bleſs the LORD. 21. Bleſſed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jeruſalem. [x] Praiſe ye the LORD.

r Pſ. cxv. 4—11.
s Hab. ii. 18.
t Deut. iv. 28.
u Pſ. cxv. 9, &c.
x Ibid. civ. 35.

v. 15—21. The pſalmiſt here,

1. Pours contempt on the vanities of the heathen, and on their worſhippers: their idols, though made of the moſt precious metals, were the creatures of their own hands, ſenſeleſs, and unable to hear or anſwer the prayers of their ſtupid votaries, who truſted in them, and thereby proved themſelves as void of underſtanding as the ſtock they adored.

2. He encourages the houſe of Iſrael to praiſe and truſt in their God, the only living and true God, who deſerved their higheſt thankſgivings, and was able to ſave them to the uttermoſt: the people in general, the miniſters of the ſanctuary in particular, and all that fear the Lord, Jews and proſelytes, aſſembled in Zion, muſt join to bleſs his name, ſo good, ſo great, and render him that tribute which they ſo deeply owed. *Note*, The greatneſs and goodneſs of our God will be the ſaints everlaſting ſong, and eternity ſhall never be able to exhauſt the ſubject.

PSALM CXXXVI.

The ſcope of this pſalm is the ſame with that of the foregoing, but there is ſomething very ſingular in the compoſure of it; for the latter half of each verſe is the ſame repeated throughout the pſalm, for his mercy endureth for ever, *and yet no vain repetition; all we enjoy in time, and hope for in eternity, flowing purely from this inexhauſted ſource. How ſignally God owned the ſinging of this pſalm we ſee* 2 Chron. v. 13. 2 Chron. xx. 21, 22. *and it ſhould encourage us to repeat the praiſes of his everlaſting mercy. We muſt praiſe God,* 1. *As great and good in himſelf*, ver. 1—3. 2. *As the Creator of the world*, ver. 5—9. 3. *As Iſrael's God and Saviour*, ver. 10—22. 4. *As our Redeemer*, ver. 23, 24. 5. *As the great Benefactor of the whole creation, and God over all bleſſed for evermore*, ver. 25, 26.

1.[a] O Give thanks unto the LORD, for he *is* good: [b] for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 2. O give thanks unto [c] the God of gods: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 3. O give thanks to [d] the LORD of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 4. To him [e] who alone doth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 5. To him [f] that by wiſdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 6. To him [g] that ſtretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 7. To him [h] that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 8. [i] The ſun to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 9. The moon and ſtars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

a Pſ. cvi. 1. & cvii. 1. & cxviii. 1.
b 1 Chron. xvi. 41.
c Deut. x. 17.
d Rev. xix. 16.
e Pſ. lxxii. 18.
f Gen. i. 1. Prov. iii. 19. Jer. li. 15.
g Gen. i. 9. Pſ. xxiv. 2. Jer. x. 12.
h Gen. i. 14.
i Ibid. i. 16.

v. 1—9. Repeated calls are needful for us, who are ſo backward to the work of praiſe. The object of our praiſe is Jehovah, the God of gods, the Lord of lords, tranſcendently great and glorious, whom angels and men adore: and moſt worthy is he to be praiſed,

1. Becauſe *he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.* This is his moſt delightful attribute; mercy in an ever-flowing, overflowing ſtream, deſcends from him the fountain, and all his people to eternity will prove his love unchangeable, and his covenant of promiſe ſure.

2. Becauſe he *alone doth great wonders:* in heaven above, *v.* 5. his wiſdom appears, vaſt the work, ſtupendous the contrivance, amazing the execution, in order, beauty, proportion, formed with exacteſt harmony, the ſun to rule the day, the moon and ſtars the night, in regular ſucceſſion: and in earth beneath his wonder-working hand is ſeen, riſing above the waters, and garniſhed with every neceſſary for man and beaſt, and this becauſe his mercy endureth for ever, as in his works of creation and providence abundantly appears, and therefore claims from all continual adoration, love, and praiſe.

10. To him [k] that ſmote Egypt in their firſt-born: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 11. [l] And brought out Iſrael from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 12. [m] With a ſtrong hand, and with a ſtretched out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 13. To him [n] which divided the Red ſea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 14. And made Iſrael to paſs through the midſt of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 15. [o] But † overthrew Pharaoh and his hoſt in the Red ſea: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 16. To him [p] which led his people through the wilderneſs: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 17. To him [q] which ſmote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 18. [r] And ſlew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 19. [s] Sihon, king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 20. [t] And Og, the king of Baſhan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 21. [u] And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 22. *Even* an heritage unto Iſrael his ſervant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

k Ex. xii. 29. Pſal. cxxxv. 8.
l Ex. xii. 51. & xiii. 17.
m Ibid. vi. 6.
n Ibid. xiv. 21, 22. Pſ. lxxviii. 13.
o Ex. xiv. 28.
† Heb. Shook off.
p Ex. xv. 22.
q Pſ. cxxxv. 10, 11.
r Deut. xxix. 7.
s Num. xxi. 23.
t Ibid. xxi. 33.
u Joſh. xii. 1, &c. Pſ. cxxxv. 12.

v. 10—22. From general mercies, of which all alike partake, the pſalmiſt paſſes on to the peculiar inſtances of God's regard to his own people, from whom he expects a peculiar tribute of praiſe, for ſpecial mercies beſtowed, as well as for the enduring mercy he hath yet in ſtore for them: various inſtances of theſe are here mentioned:

1. Their deliverance from Egypt, wrought with a ſtretched-out arm, after the moſt awful plagues executed on their oppreſſors;

preſſors; which cloſed with that moſt terrible judgment the death of their firſt-born. Yet more enduring are his mercies ſtill towards all his choſen, who have in Jeſus Chriſt a greater deliverance from the bondage of ſin and Satan, and eternal redemption from all the powers of evil.

2. Their paſſage through the Red ſea, divided by miraculous power, to let them ſafely through, then cloſing with tremendous roar on their purſuers, and overwhelming them under its mighty waters: and ſuch mercy for ever ſhall the redeemed find; in all their trials he will open them a way through a ſtormy world, bring them ſafe to the ſhore of eternal reſt, and from thence enable them to look back on all their enemies, deſtroyed for ever, as theſe Egyptians on the ſhore.

3. Forty years he led them through the wilderneſs, and fed them by repeated miracles; nor did repeated provocations ſtop the current of his favours, *for his mercy endureth for ever*, and he will never caſt away his people.

4. He brought them ſafe to the land of Canaan, after ſubduing mighty kings and their armies before them, according to the promiſe made unto their fathers, that they might ſee how ſure and enduring his mercies were, and be engaged to truſt on them for ever. A better land is prepared for God's choſen, and through grace, amidſt all the oppoſition of their ſpiritual enemies, they ſhall be preſerved to this everlaſting kingdom, where to eternity they will acknowledge that his mercy endureth for ever.

23. Who remembred us in our low eſtate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 24. And [x] hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 25. [y] Who giveth food to all fleſh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 26. O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[x] Luke i. 74.
[y] Pſ. civ. 27. & cxlv. 15. & cxlvii. 9. Mat. vi. 26.

v. 23—26. The more we reflect, the more cauſe we ſhall find to praiſe God's everlaſting mercy.

1. For his grace in redemption. *He remembred us in our low eſtate, and redeemed us from our enemies*; many a time he reſcued the Jewiſh people from their bonds when moſt oppreſſed; but he hath done infinitely more for his ſpiritual Iſrael, when ſunk under guilt, corruption, miſery, at the gate of the grave, and ready to ſink into the belly of hell, he hath ranſomed us by his blood, raiſed us from our ſtate of ſin and death, and ſaved us with an everlaſting ſalvation. Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul!

2. For his kind proviſion. He *giveth food to all fleſh*; the meaneſt reptile partakes of his care in common with the greateſt of his creatures; he openeth his hand, and they are filled with good; for his mercy is over all his works.

3. For all this are we moſt deeply obliged to give thanks unto the God of heaven; all other creatures on earth want the power to ſpeak his praiſe, from man alone that tribute is expected, as the tongue of this lower world, and as the peculiar object of that mercy which endureth for ever.

PSALM CXXXVII.

This pſalm was penned in the proſpect of the Babyloniſh captivity, or perhaps during its continuance. We have, 1. *The melancholy ſtate of the captives*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The taunts of their oppreſſors*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *Their tender remembrance of Jeruſalem*, ver. 5, 6. 4. *Their prayer and prophetic declaration concerning the doom of Edom and Babylon*, ver. 7—9.

1. BY the rivers of Babylon, there we ſat down, yea we wept, [a] when we remembred Zion. 2. We hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midſt thereof. 3. For there they that carried us away captive, required of us a ſong; and they that † waſted us, *required of us* mirth, *ſaying*, ſing *us one* of the ſongs of Zion. 4. How ſhall we ſing [b] the LORD's ſong in ‡ a ſtrange land? 5. If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*. 6. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jeruſalem [c] above my chief joy.

[a] Pſ. xlii. 4.
† Heb. Laid us on heaps, Pſal. lxxix. 1.
[b] Am. viii. 3.
‡ Heb. The land of a ſtranger.
[c] Neh. ii. 3.

v. 1—6. This pſalm is the compoſition of a mournful muſe, and whilſt we meditate thereon, ſcarce can the ſympathetic heart forbear to mingle her tears with thoſe of the afflicted captives. We have,

1. Their mournful condition. *By the waters of Babylon*, far from the gates of Zion, under a heavy yoke, employed in ſervile labours near theſe ſtreams, or ſtealing thither ſadly to muſe on their wretched ſtate, *we ſet down, yea we wept*, indulging their melancholy reflections, and ſwelling the torrent with their tears, *when we remembred thee, O Zion*; Zion, Zion, aroſe before their eyes, her palaces in ſmoky ruins lay, her temple in heaps, her altars overturned, her ſacrifices ceaſed, and ſullen ſilence reigned in the once thronged gates: ſuch deſolations pierced their hearts with anguiſh, whilſt deep reflection on their ſins, the cauſe of all, called forth ſtill bitterer ſorrows; their inſtruments of muſic on willows hung neglected by, their hearts untuned, their harps unſtrung, and all their ſongs turned into ſighs and groans.

2. Their oppreſſors inſulted over them; not content with plundering their ſubſtance, and enſlaving their perſons; they required ſongs from their heavy hearts, and ſcoffing at the ſongs of Zion, would turn theſe ſacred ſervices into profane mirth. *Note*, (1.) It is doubly cruel to inſult the afflicted. (2.) The ſongs of Zion have often been the butt of ſcoffers wit; but God is not mocked, he is jealous and avengeth.

3. Their reply. *How ſhall we ſing the Lord's ſong in a ſtrange land.* Theſe ſacred ſongs ill-ſuited the company of the profane; nor ought theſe holy things to be given to dogs; better exaſperate their maſters by a refuſal, than anger their God by ſinful compliance.

4. Their rooted affection to Jeruſalem. Deep engraven on their hearts, nor time, nor diſtance, baniſhed the loved image from their thoughts; they longed to be there, they hoped the time was near, and ceaſeleſs thitherward directed their faces and their prayers; they preferred it to their chief joy; all perſonal proſperity and comfort was nothing ſo near or dear to them as the intereſt of Zion: much rather therefore did they wiſh to forget their ſkill in muſic, or that their withered arm might ſhrink, and their tongue cleave to the roof of their mouth, than forget the city of their ſolemnities, ceaſe to remember her with honour and delight, or dare by baſe compliances to entertain the ſons of Babylon, or ſerve their gods, with Zion's ſacred muſic. *Note*, (1.) The intereſts of Chriſt's church and kingdom will be ever dearer to his people than their own. (2.) When the path of duty is clear, however dangerous, we are called to ſteadfaſt adherence to it; better loſe our limbs or life than loſe our ſouls.

7. Remember, O LORD, [d] the children of Edom, in the day of Jeruſalem; who ſaid, † Raſe *it*, raſe *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof. 8. O daughter of Babylon, [e] who art to be deſtroyed; happy *ſhall he be* ‡ that rewardeth thee as thou haſt ſerved us. 9. Happy *ſhall he be* that taketh and [f] daſheth thy little ones againſt the ‖ ſtones.

[d] Jer. xlix. 7. Ezek. xxv. 12. Lam. iv. 22. Obad. x. &c.
† Heb. Make bare.
[e] Iſa. xiii. 1. & xlvii. 1. Jer. xxv. 12. & l. 2.
‡ Heb. That recompenſeth unto thee thy deed which thou didſt to us. Jer. l. 15, 29. Rev. xviii. 6.
[f] Iſa. xiii. 16.
‖ Heb. Rock.

v. 7—9. Not revenge, but zeal for God's glory dictates theſe deſires.

1. Edom's malice in the day of Jeruſalem's affliction was cruel; they ſharpned the Chaldeans fury, and wiſhed them to raſe the city and temple to its foundations: for this, a complaint is lodged againſt them with that God, who is the avenger of his people's wrongs, and they ſhall not go unpuniſhed. The perſecutors of God's people will aſſuredly be reckoned with, and every hard ſpeech againſt them be remembered in the day of recompence.

2. The doom of Babylon is read. *O daughter of Babylon, who art to be deſtroyed*, ſuch is the divine decree, and nothing can prevent its execution: *happy ſhall he be that rewardeth thee as thou haſt ſerved us*, as Cyrus did, when executing the counſels of God, he entered that devoted city, and retaliated on them the cruelty they had ſhewn their captives. *Happy ſhall he be that taketh and daſheth thy little ones againſt the ſtones*; and as Babylon thus fell of old, Babylon myſtical ſhall meet the ſame deſtruction from the righteous judgment of God, and all antichriſtian oppreſſors of God's church and people ſink as a millſtone caſt into the ſea, and never riſe up again.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

It is ſuppoſed that David penned this pſalm on his advancement to the throne. 1. *He looks with thankfulneſs upon the experiences he had had of God's goodneſs to him*, ver. 1—3. 2. *He looks forward with comfort, in hopes*, (1.) *That others would go on to praiſe God like him*, ver. 4, 5. (2.) *That God would go on to do good to him*, ver. 6, 7, 8.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. I Will praiſe thee with my whole heart, [a] before the gods will I ſing praiſe unto thee. 2. I will worſhip [b] towards thy holy temple, and praiſe thy name, for thy loving kindneſs, and for thy truth: for thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name. 3. In the day when I cried, thou anſweredſt me: *and* ſtrengthnedſt me *with* ſtrength in my ſoul. 4. [c] All the kings of the earth ſhall praiſe thee, O LORD: when they hear the words of thy mouth. 5. Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

[a] Pſ. cxix. 46. or 1 Cor. xi. 10.
[b] 1 Kings viii. 29. Pſ. xxviii. 2.
[c] Pſ. lxxii. 11. & cii. 15. Rev. xxi. 24.

v. 1—5. David's harp is continually in tune.

1. He reſolves, with warm affection and ſimplicity of heart, to praiſe God, *before the gods*, in the preſence of kings or magiſtrates, or the angels, with boldneſs, not aſhamed to glory in his dependance upon God. *I will worſhip towards thy holy temple*, to the place of the ark did they always direct their faces, when aſſembled in the courts of the ſanctuary, or worſhipping in private. For the only prayers or praiſes which aſcend with acceptance, are thoſe which are offered with our eyes to him, who is the true tabernacle Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have acceſs unto God.

2. Abundant cauſe he had for thankſgiving. *For thy loving kindneſs*, manifeſted in all the temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings beſtowed, *and for thy truth*, having experienced the faithfulneſs of his promiſes: *for thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name*; great hath God's name appeared in the works of creation and providence, but greater in his word of grace, wherein the moſt tranſcendent diſplays of his glory are made: or this may refer to Chriſt, the eſſential word, who is exalted above every name, and in whom God's name is magnified, beyond all other revelations formerly made to his church. *In the day when I cried, thou anſweredſt me*, attentive to my prayer, and giving all I aſked, *and ſtrengthenedſt me with ſtrength in my ſoul*, that he was enabled to ſtand under the preſſures of affliction and temptation, and to overcome all his enemies; for which ineſtimable mercies, he juſtly owed the grateful return of praiſe. *Note*, (1.) They who truſt God's truth, will prove his faithfulneſs. (2.) When we fly to God in prayer, he will not leave us deſtitute. (3.) In all our trials, if God ſtrengthen us in our ſouls, we ſhall gain by our afflictions.

3. Others, even all the kings of the earth, ſhall join his ſongs, when, hearing the words of his mouth in the preaching of the goſpel, the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall come in, and their kings become nurſing fathers, ſinging in the church of the good ways of the Lord, his mercy, grace, and love in a Redeemer, and aſcribing to him the great glory which is his due. Haſten it, O Lord, in its ſeaſon.

6. [d] Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly: [e] but the proud he knoweth afar off. 7. [f] Though I walk in the mids of trouble, thou wilt revive me, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thine hand againſt the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand ſhall ſave me. 8. [g] The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: [h] forſake not the works of thine own hands.

[d] Pſ. cxiii. 5, 6. Iſa. lvii. 15.
[e] Prov. iii. 34. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.
[f] Pſ. xxiii. 3, 4.
[g] Ibid. lvii. 2. Phil. i. 6.
[h] Job x. 8.

v. 6—8. This is either the ſong the kings of the earth ſing, or the Pſalmiſt's profeſſion of his confidence in God.

1. The humble he will regard, the proud he will deſtroy. *Though the Lord be high* in glory, exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe, *yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly*, vile in their own eyes, conſcious of their ſin, weakneſs, and wretchedneſs, and caſting themſelves wholly on the riches of God's grace in the Redeemer; theſe God regards with love, and delights to bleſs: *but the proud*, who are puffed up with worldly advantages, or vain of their attainments in wiſdom, or highly elated with the conceit of their own righteouſneſs; ſuch doth God abhor: *he knoweth* them *afar off*, ſees their inmoſt ſoul, and will viſit them in his diſpleaſure.

2. The experience the Pſalmiſt had of God's care, encourages his confidence to truſt him at all times. *Though I walk in the midſt of trouble*, and that is often the bitter portion of the deareſt ſaints of God, whom he is pleaſed to exerciſe with afflictions, *thou ſhalt revive me* when ready to ſink under the burden, *thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thine hand againſt the wrath of mine enemies*, to reſtrain or deſtroy them, *and thy right hand ſhall ſave me*, thy power and grace, or Chriſt, the right hand of the Lord, the Saviour of all who truſt in him. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me*; in his hands all our concerns for time and eternity are ſafe; and he who hath begun the good work of his grace in our hearts, will perfect it until the day of his appearing and glory. *Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever*, and cannot fail me, nor any faithful ſoul that ever truſts thereon: *forſake not the works of thine own hands*, perfect the ſalvation of thy people; and as my ſoul is thine by creation, redemption, and grace, forſake me not, but love me to the end, that I may be thine for ever.

PSALM CXXXIX.

David under his calumnies looks to the heart-ſearching God, his approbation can over-balance the world's reviling. 1. *He aſſerts God's omniſcience*, ver. 1—6. 2. *He confirms it by two arguments.* (1.) *God is every where preſent, therefore he knows all*, ver. 7—12. (2.) *He made us, therefore he knows us*, ver. 13—16. 3. *Some inferences are drawn from this doctrine.* [1.] *It may fill us with pleaſing admiration of God*, ver. 17, 18. [2.] *With a holy dread and deteſtation of ſin and ſinners*, ver. 19—22. [3.] *With a holy ſatisfaction in our own integrity, concerning which we may appeal to God*, ver. 23, 24. *This great and ſelf-evident truth, that God knows our hearts, and the hearts of all the children of men, if we did but mix faith with it, and ſeriouſly conſider it, and apply it, would have a great influence upon our holineſs, and upon our comfort.*

¶ To the chief muſician,

A pſalm of David.

1. O LORD, [a] thou haſt ſearched me, and known *me*. 2. [b] Thou knoweſt my down-ſitting, and mine up-riſing, [c] thou underſtandeſt my thought afar off. 3. [d] Thou † compaſſeſt my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways. 4. For [e] *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but* lo, O LORD, thou knoweſt it altogether. 5. Thou haſt beſet me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. 6. [f] *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.

[a] Pſ. xvii. 3. Jer. xii. 3.
[b] 2 Kings xix. 27.
[c] John ii. 25.
[d] Job xxxi. 4.
† Or winnoweſt.
[e] Heb. iv. 13.
[f] Job xlii. 3. Pſ. xl. 5.

v. 1—6. Naked and open are all things to him with whom we have to do. This truth the pſalmiſt here, as deeply affected with it, acknowledges. *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me, and known me.* When I ſit in my houſe, or walk by the way; lye down on my bed, or riſe to my labour; every ſtep and motion thou ſeeſt, and my riſing thoughts are underſtood by thee, *v.* 2, 3. *Not a word is in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knoweſt it altogether*; whether uttered, or only formed ready for ſpeech. He is compaſſed around with God's preſence and providence, and his hand is ever near to help him if in danger, or hold him up if falling, *v.* 5. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me*; *it is high*; *I cannot attain unto it.* We cannot know ourſelves in any meaſure as God doth; much leſs can we by ſearching find out the Almighty to perfection, whoſe omnipreſence and omniſcience are myſteries to us unfathomable. But a practical ſenſe of theſe upon our hearts we ſhould labour to maintain: ſince God ſees our very thoughts, they ſhould be under reſtraint; ſince God hears, not an idle word ſhould drop from our tongues; ſince God is with us in company, or alone, on our beds, at our tables, in our buſineſs, and his eye on all our works and ways, how careful, how circumſpect ſhould we be before him, and how fearful of offending!

7. [g] Whither ſhall I go from thy ſpirit? or whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence? 8. [h] If I aſcend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*. 9. *If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea: 10. Even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me. 11. If I ſay, Surely the darkneſs ſhall cover me: even the night ſhall be light about me. 12. Yea, [h] the darkneſs hideth not from thee; but the night ſhineth as the day: the darkneſs and the light *are* both alike *to thee*. 13. For thou haſt poſſeſſed my reins: [i] thou haſt covered me in my mother's womb. 14. I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; marvellous *are* thy works, and *that* my ſoul knoweth right well. 15. [k] My † ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret; *and* curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth. 16. Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all *my members* were written, ‡ *which* in continuance were faſhioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

[g] Jer. xxiii. 24.
[h] Amos ix. 2—4.
[h] Job xxvi. 6. & xxxiv. 22. Dan. ii. 22. Heb. iv. 13.
[i] Job x. 11.
[k] Ibid. x. 8, 10. Eccleſ. xi. 5.
† Or body.
‡ Or what days they ſhould be faſhioned.

v. 7—16. Nothing can be conceived more ſublime and affecting, than the deſcription here given of God's univerſal preſence.

1. He filleth all things. There is no eſcaping his eye by flight, or concealment by darkneſs. Should we attempt by *flight* to elude his ſearch, whither ſhall we go? *If I climb up to heaven, God is there*, and filleth it with his preſence; *if I make my bed in hell*, hid in the ſilent grave, or even lying down in the everlaſting burnings, *he is there*, watching over the duſt of his people, and preſent in his wrath, even in the place of torment. *If I take the wings of the morning*, and meet the riſing ſun in the moſt diſtant eaſt, or *dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea*, or *of the weſt*, where the deſcending beam of day ſeems extinguiſhed in the waters of the ocean, *even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me*; far from eſcaping, thou muſt ſupport my ſteps; and there, as much as ever, I am in thy power, and under thine eye, nor can darkneſs conceal me from thee. *If I* am fool enough to *ſay*, Surely *the darkneſs ſhall cover me*, vain would be my hope; *even the night ſhall be light about me*; *yea, the darkneſs hideth not from thee, but the night ſhineth*

ſhineth as the day; the darkneſs and light to thee are both alike. Let the workers of iniquity then tremble at the thought; God's eye is upon them, nor is there any darkneſs, or ſhadow of death, where they can hide themſelves.

2. He made all things, and muſt needs therefore be acquainted with the work of his own hands. *Thou haſt poſſeſſed my reins*; acquainted with all that paſſeth in my inmoſt ſoul; *for thou haſt covered me in the womb*; when there an embrio, concealed as in the loweſt parts of the earth, thine eye beheld the unformed maſs, and by thy plaſtic hand curiouſly wrought, each limb reı ceived its nice proportion, and every veſſel diſcharged its ſeveral office. A miracle to ourſelves! ſo fearfully and wonderfully are we made: a myſtery inexplicable; all we know, (and that is glaringly evident) is this, that *Marvellous are thy works!* deſerving our higheſt praiſe and adoration, and worthy to be had in everlaſting remembrance.

17. [l] How precious alſo are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the ſum of them! 18. *If* I ſhould count them, they are more in number than the ſand: when I wake, I am ſtill with thee. 19. Surely thou wilt ſlay the wicked, O God: [m] depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. 20. For [n] they ſpeak againſt thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain. 21. [o] Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with thoſe that riſe up againſt thee? 22. I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies. 23. [p] Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts. 24. And [q] ſee if *there be any* † wicked way in me, and [r] lead me in the way everlaſting.

l Pſ. xl. 5.
m Ibid. cxix. 115.
n Jude xv.
o 2 Chron. xix. 2. Pſ. cxix. 158. Prov. xix. 27.
p Job xxxi. 6. Pſ. xxvi. 2.
q Pſ. vii. 3.
† Heb. Way of pain or grief.
r Pſ. v. 8. & cxliii. 10.

v. 17—23. We have here,

1. The Pſalmiſt's grateful acknowledgment of God's care over him. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God*, thoughts of mercy, peace, and grace, which David with great delight meditated upon. *How great is the ſum of them!* ſo innumerable, that the ſand of the ſea might be eaſier counted, and ſo continual, that every morning increaſed the ſum: *when I wake, I am ſtill with thee*, enjoy thy conſtant protection, and am happy in a ſenſe of thy reviving preſence. *Note*, A heart enlightened to know God's grace in Jeſus Chriſt, is loſt in wonder on the contemplation, and can only cry, *O the depth!*

2. He foreſees the deſtruction of the wicked. *Surely thou wilt ſlay the wicked, O God*: they are deſcribed as *bloody men, they ſpeak againſt thee wickedly*, proud and blaſphemers, and *thine enemies* in heart and practice, ſhewing their enmity againſt God's government and law; they *take thy name in vain*, perjured or profane; and juſt therefore it is, that their end ſhould be according to their works.

3. He profeſſes his own abhorrence of their practices and ways. *Depart from me*, I will have no fellowſhip with theſe unfruitful works of darkneſs, nor keep company with ſuch evil doers. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?* not their perſons, but their ſins; *and am not I grieved with thoſe that riſe up againſt thee?* grieved at the diſhonour brought on God by their rebellion, grieved at the miſery which they bring on themſelves by their ſins. *I hate them with a perfect hatred*, ſincerely deteſt their evil ways; *I count them mine enemies*, they muſt be enemies to me, becauſe enemies to thee. *Note*, (1.) The ways of ſinners we may hate, whilſt we have the trueſt love and pity to their ſouls. (2.) They who hate God, muſt hate his image, whereever it appears.

4. He appeals to God for his own ſimplicity, and a great rejoicing it is to have the teſtimony of a good conſcience. *Search me, O God*, for ſincerity ſtarts not at enquiry, *and know my heart*; *try me, and know my thoughts*, for I deſire to conceal nothing from thee, *and ſee if there be any wicked way in me*; I wiſh allowedly to be found in none, but who can underſtand his errors? diſcover it to me if I err, and ſhew me the evil, that it may be lamented and renounced; *and lead me in the way everlaſting*, lead me in the paths of holineſs, to the kingdom of everlaſting glory; guided by thy word, upheld by thy ſpirit, and enabled to perſevere faithfully unto the end. And to this every faithful ſoul will add his hearty Amen!

PSALM CXL.

This pſalm appears to have been penned during Saul's perſecution of David. In it, 1. *David complains of the malice of his enemies, and prays to God to preſerve him from them*, ver. 1—5. 2. *He encourageth himſelf in God, as his God*, ver. 6, 7. 3. *He prays for, and propheſies the deſtruction of his perſecutors*, ver. 8—11. 4. *He aſſures all God's afflicted people that their troubles would in due time end well*, ver. 12, 13.

¶ To the chief muſician,
A pſalm of David.

1. [a] DEliver me, O LORD, from the evil man: preſerve me from the † violent man. 2. [b] Which imagine miſchiefs in *their* heart; [c] continually are they gathered together *for* war. 3. They have ſharpned their tongues like a ſerpent: [d] adders poiſon *is* under their lips. Selah. 4. [e] Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked, preſerve me from the violent man, who have purpoſed to overthrow my goings. 5. [f] The proud have hid a ſnare for me, and cords, they have ſpread a net by the way-ſide: they have ſet gins for me. Selah. 6. I ſaid unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: hear the voice of my ſupplications, O LORD. 7. O God the LORD, the ſtrength of my ſalvation; thou haſt covered my head in the day of battle.

a Pſ. lxxi. 4. Ver. 4.
† Heb. Man of violence.
b Pſ. xxxviii. 12.
c Ibid. lvi. 6. & cxx. 7.
d Ibid. lviii. 4. Rom. iii. 13.
e Ver. 1.
f Pſ. xxxv. 7. & lvii. 6. & cxix. 110. & cxli. 9. Jer. xviii. 22.

v. 1—7. The way to glory lies through much tribulation; thus David came to the throne of Iſrael, and we may expect to meet with our portion of temptation, to ſuffer for Chriſt, before we reign with him. We have here,

1. The Pſalmiſt's complaints; many, mighty, and inveterate were his enemies; they were *evil* in their diſpoſitions, and *violent* in their rage againſt him, crafty and miſchievous, inceſſantly ſtudying his ruin, and united in ſtrict confederacy againſt him, *v.* 2. With tongues of malignant venom they aſperſed his character, *v.* 3. Hardned in wickedneſs, they ſtuck at no violence; and with full purpoſe of heart, determined his deſtruction, *v.* 4. Proud, and confident of ſucceſs, they laid their ſnares for him in all his paths, and expected quickly to ſee him their prey. Thus was Chriſt alſo beſet with the malice and perſecution of men, aſperſed by their envenomed tongues, and ſnares laid to deſtroy him; whilſt Herod and Pilate, prieſts and people, confederate againſt him, with ceaſeleſs enmity purſued him to the croſs. Let none of his ſervants count it ſtrange, if they meet with the like enmity, ſlander, and oppoſition. The diſciple is not above his maſter.

2. His prayer and confidence in God. *Deliver me* from their hands, *preſerve me* from their ſnares, *keep me*, for I cannot keep myſelf; *Thou art my God*, my rock, my refuge, on whom I depend, *the ſtrength of my ſalvation*, able to ſave to the uttermoſt, engaged to do it in that covenant that ſeals thee mine. *Hear the voice of my ſupplications*, and anſwer me in peace, according to the protection I have hitherto experienced; for *thou haſt covered my head in the day of battle*, and warded off every mortal blow, aimed at me by my enraged foes. In the conflict with the powers of darkneſs, the Son of David thus offered up prayers and ſupplications, and was heard in the day of trouble, made triumphant in his reſurrection, and his head exalted over all his foes. Behold here alſo every believer's warfare and ſtrength, 1. His recourſe is by prayer to God, for ſtrengthening and upholding grace. 2. He is enabled to exerciſe faith in God, as his God, and to find in him the ſtrength of his ſalvation. 3. Thus is he protected in every dangerous conflict, and though his ſpiritual foes thruſt ſore at him, that he ſhould fall, his head is covered, his ſoul preſerved, and all his foes at laſt ſhall be made his footſtool.

8. Grant, not, O LORD, the deſires of the wicked, further not his wicked device, † [g] *leſt* they exalt themſelves. Selah. 9. *As for* the head of thoſe that compaſs me about, [h] let the miſchief of their own lips cover them. 10. [i] Let burning coals fall upon them, let them be caſt into the fire; into deep pits, that they riſe not up again. 11. Let not ‡ an evil ſpeaker be eſtabliſhed in the earth: evil ſhall hunt the violent man to ‖ overthrow *him*. 12. I know that the LORD will maintain the cauſe of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor. 13. Surely the righteous ſhall give thanks unto thy name, the upright ſhall dwell in thy preſence.

† Or let them not be exalted.
g Deut. xxxii. 27.
h Pſ. vii. 16. & xciv. 23. Prov. xii. 13. & xviii. 7.
i Pſ. xi. 6.
‡ Heb. A man of tongue.
‖ Heb. Deſtructions.

v. 8—13. However prevalent for a time the wicked may ſeem, their triumphing is but for a moment.

1. David prays for the diſappointment of his enemies. *Grant not, O Lord, the deſires of the wicked, further not his wicked devices*, or let them not *come forth*: however deep laid, or eagerly purſued, diſconcert the enterpriſe when ready to be carried into execution, *leaſt they exalt themſelves*, and grow inſolent with ſucceſs.

2. He foreſees their ruin approaching. For as *let* may be rendered *ſhall*, what appears a prayer may be tranſlated as a prophecy; though that God ſhould be glorified in the deſtruction of the obſtinately impenitent, may, without any private enmity, be the ſubject of a believer's prayer. Their curſing and lies ſhall return upon their own heads, and their own miſchief cover them with confuſion, *v.* 9. The wrath of God ſhall fall

on them, as the fire that devoured the cities of Sodom; and, ſunk into the pit of torment, they ſhall never riſe again from the everlaſting burnings, *v.* 10. All lying tongues are but for a moment, and the gains of falſehood ſhall never be eſtabliſhed in the earth: like a beaſt of prey, evil ſhall hunt the violent man, till, at the laſt, deſtruction final and eternal ſhall overtake him, *v.* 11. And this might be particularly levelled againſt Saul, or Doeg, but it is univerſally true of all the enemies of Chriſt and his people, whoſe end ſhall be, that they ſhall be rooted out at the laſt.

3. He expreſſes his confidence in God's care over his own people. *I know that the Lord will maintain the cauſe of the afflicted*; he had experienced this himſelf, and was ſure it would be ſtill the caſe, reſpecting his ſuffering-ſervants, whoſe innocence he would vindicate, and whoſe quarrel he would eſpouſe; *and the right of the poor*, becauſe ſuch are liable to be oppreſſed; but God is the poor man's friend, to do him that juſtice, which on earth may be denied him. *Surely the righteous ſhall give thanks unto thy name*, acknowledging with gratitude his kind interpoſition on their behalf, and *the upright ſhall dwell in thy preſence*, as children under their father's care protected and preſerved, as ſervants in their maſter's houſe, to wait his orders, or as ſaints around his throne in glory, to follow him with their everlaſting praiſes.

PSALM CXLI.

David was in diſtreſs when he penned this pſalm; it is moſt likely purſued by Saul, that violent man. Is any diſtreſſed? Let him pray; David did ſo, and had the comfort of it. 1. *He prays for God's favourable acceptance*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *For his powerful aſſiſtance*, ver. 3, 4. 3. *That others might be inſtrumental of good to his ſoul, as he hoped to be to the ſouls of others*, ver. 5, 6. 4. *That he and his friends being now brought to the laſt extremity, God would graciouſly appear for their relief and reſcue*, ver. 7—10.

A pſalm of David.

1. LORD, I cry unto thee, [a] make haſte unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. 2. Let [b] my prayer be † ſet forth before thee [c] *as* incenſe; *and* [d] the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening ſacrifice. 3. Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips. 4. Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practiſe wicked works with men that work iniquity: and [e] let me not eat of their dainties.

[a] Pſ. lxx. 1.
[b] Rev. v. 8. & viii. 3, 4.
† Heb. Directed.
[c] Rev. viii. 3, 4.
[d] Pſ. cxxxiv. 2.
[e] Prov. xxiii. 6.

v. 1—4. David was a man of ſorrows, and therefore a man of prayer. We have him here very importunate with God,

1. For ſpeedy help. *Make haſte unto me*, as one ready to be overwhelmed, unleſs God appeared for his ſalvation. *Note*, They who have a lively ſenſe of their wants and danger, will be importunate in their ſupplications.

2. For gracious acceptance. *Give ear unto my voice*, as willing to grant my petitions; *let my prayer be ſet before thee as incenſe, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening ſacrifice*, which being offered on God's altar, were accepted before him. The incenſe of prayer muſt thus be offered on Chriſt our altar; and when, with our hands lifted up, our heart aſcends in a flame of holy love, then is it a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmell, acceptable and well-pleaſing to God.

3. For direction what and how to ſpeak. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth* in *prayer*, that I may not raſhly, unadviſedly, or negligently, utter what my heart doth not feel. In *trials*, that I may not drop a word of murmuring, complaint, or impatience; *among men*, that I may neither ſpeak falſely, fooliſhly, or paſſionately. *Keep the door of my lips*, which need continually a divine reſtraint, and without it can never be effectually bridled.

4. For preſervation from all evil. *Incline not my heart to any evil thing*: not that God ever tempts men to ſin, or inclines them to evil; but only leaves them to their own corrupted hearts, naturally inclined to evil; therefore we have need of his preventing and reſtraining grace *to* keep us, that we *practiſe* not *wicked works with men that work iniquity*, who make it their buſineſs and delight to ſin, and draw in others; and unleſs the Lord preſerve us, we are in danger of falling into their ſnares.

5. For a reſtraint from their luxuries. *Let me not eat of their dainties*; feaſting as an epicure at their tables, or partaking with them in their ſins; which, however to the corrupt appetite pleaſing, and ſweet in the mouth, in the belly are bitter as gall, and poiſonous as the viper's ſting. Keep me, Lord, from theſe deadly dainties!

5. [f] † Let the righteous ſmite me, *it ſhall be* a kindneſs; and let him reprove me, *it ſhall be* an excellent oil, *which* ſhall not break my head; for yet [g] my prayer alſo *ſhall be* in their calamities. 6. When their judges are overthrown in ſtony places, they ſhall hear my words, for they are ſweet. 7. Our bones are ſcattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth. 8. But [h] mine eyes *are* unto thee, O God the LORD: in thee is my truſt, leave not my ſoul deſtitute. 9. Keep me from [i] the ſnare *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity. 10. [k] Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilſt that I withal ‡ eſcape.

[f] Prov. ix. 8. & xix. 25. & xxv. 12.
† Or, Let the righteous ſmite me kindly, and reprove me; let not their precious oil break my head.
[g] Mat. v. 44.
[h] 2 Chron. xx. 12. Pſ. cxxiii. 1, 2.
[i] Pſ. cxix. 110. & cxl. 5. & cxlii. 3.
[k] Pſ. vii. 16. & xxxv. 8.
‡ Heb. Paſs over.

v. 5—10. Though David heartily prays againſt the malignity of his enemies, yet,

1. He earneſtly deſires the rebukes of the faithful. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs*; I ſhall eſteem it the beſt proof of real friendſhip: *and let him reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent oil, which ſhall not break my head*, but ſerve to heal the wounds of ſin; and, far from reſenting the correction, it would engage his affections and prayers in their behalf: *for yet my prayer alſo ſhall be in their calamities*; that God, in return for their kindneſs to him, may deliver them from their troubles. *Note*, (1.) Reproof is the moſt needful and kindeſt office of real friendſhip. (2.) To love reproof, and to be thankful for it, is among the ſureſt ſymptoms of a gracious ſpirit. (3.) That reproof will be moſt effectual, which comes from thoſe whoſe unſuſpected piety gives weight to their words, and whoſe tender manner of applying it, ſoft as oil, makes it more penetrating. (4.) They who pray to be right, and yet are diſpleaſed to be rebuked for what is wrong, prove their hypocriſy.

2. He hopes, when his wicked enemies are deſtroyed, the people will receive him, and hear him with pleaſure. *When their judges are overthrown in ſtony places*; as when Saul fell on the mountains of Gilboa, which he might foreſee; or the deſtruction of all his other foes, who would be puniſhed, as men *caſt down by the ſides of a rock*, as was ſometimes done by criminals; then *they ſhall hear my words, for they are ſweet*; either the words of his pathetic ſong, 2 *Sam.* i. 17—27. or thoſe divine compoſitions which would be publiſhed on his return from his exile, and which contained in them ſuch a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt.

3. He complains of his preſent wretched ſtate. *Our bones are ſcattered at the grave's mouth*: either literally ſo, ſuch of David's friends as fell into Saul's hand might be ſlain and left unburied, or their bones dug up as traitors; or, figuratively they ſeemed as at the brink of the grave, and their condition hopeleſs as that of dry bones. *As when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth*, like chips that fly off from the blow of the axe, ſo were they driven to and fro, and perſecuted by their enemies.

4. He in prayer commits his ſoul to God. *But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord*, the mighty Saviour and hope of my ſoul; *in thee is my truſt*, in thee alone: *leave not my ſoul deſtitute*; forſaken of thee I muſt needs periſh: *but keep me from the ſnare which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity*: though never ſo craftily concealed, preſerve me from the danger. *Let the wicked fall into their own nets*, the righteous retaliation for their iniquity; *whilſt that I withal eſcape*, unhurt by their miſchievous deſigns. *Note*, (1.) Whilſt our eye is to God, our feet ſhall not ſlip. (2.) The deſtruction of the wicked is determined, and their devices to hurt others ſhall only haſten their own deſtruction.

PSALM CXLII.

This pſalm is a prayer, the ſubſtance of which David offered up to God, when he was forced by Saul to take ſhelter in a cave, and afterwards penned it in this form. Here is, 1. *The complaint he makes to God*, ver. 1, 2. *of the ſubtilty, ſtrength, and malice of his enemies*, ver. 3—6. *and the coldneſs and indifferencey of his friends*, ver. 4. 2. *The comfort he takes in God, that he knew his caſe*, ver. 3. *and was his refuge*, ver. 5. 3. *His expectation from God, that he would hear and deliver him*, ver. 6, 7. 4. *His expectation from the righteous, that they would join with him in praiſes*, ver. 7.

[a] Maſchil of David; a prayer [b] when he was in the cave.

1. I [c] Cried unto the LORD with my voice: with my voice unto the LORD did I make my ſupplication. 2. [d] I poured out my complaint before him; I ſhewed before him my trouble. 3. When [e] my ſpirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou kneweſt my path: [f] in the way wherein I walked, have they privily laid a ſnare for me. 4. [g] I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but [h] *there was* no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man † cared for my ſoul. 5. I cried unto thee, O LORD, I ſaid, [i] thou *art* my refuge,

[a] Pſ. xxxii. tit.
[b] 1 Sam. xxii. 1. or xxiv. 3.
[c] Exod. xiv. 15.
[d] Pſ. cii. tit.
[e] Ibid. cxliii. 4.
[f] Ibid. cxl. 5.
[g] Pſ. lxix. 20.
[h] Ibid. xxxi. 11. & lxxxviii. 8, 18.
† Heb. Sought after.
[i] Pſ. xlvi. 1. & xci. 2.

fuge, *and* [k] my portion in the land of the living. 6. Attend unto my cry, for [l] I am brought very low : deliver me from my perſecutors, for they are ſtronger than I. 7. Bring my ſoul out of priſon, that I may praiſe thy name : [m] the righteous ſhall compaſs me about ; for [n] thou ſhalt deal bountifully with me.

k Pſ. xvi. 5. & lxxiii. 26. & cxix. 57. Lam. iii. 24.
l Pſ. cxvi. 6.
m Pſ. xxxiv. 2.
n Pſ. xiii. 6. & cxix. 17.

v. 1—7. No place or time is unſeaſonable for prayer. When Engedi, or Adullam was his oratory, David ſtill found ſweet communion with God, threatning as his danger ſeemed. We have,

1. His complaints, which out of the fulneſs of his heart he poured forth before the Lord. *I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and ſhewed him all my trouble*, to which from Saul his bloody perſecutor he was expoſed. It was enough to ſpread it before the Lord, whoſe tender mercies knew how to pity him, and his power to relieve him. *Note*, They who have a God of all grace to fly to, may ſafely leave in his hand all their troubles.

2. He appeals to God for his own ſimplicity. *When my ſpirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou kneweſt my path :* when reduced to the deepeſt diſtreſs, I ſtill fled to no wrong methods to extricate myſelf. *In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a ſnare for me*, ſeeking to entrap me every ſtep I take. *Note*, When our conſciences condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.

3. He was without help from man, *v.* 4. His friends grew ſhy, were aſhamed to own him, none opened their hoſpitable door ; and, abandoned as it were to ruin, *refuge failed me* ; *no man cared for my ſoul*. Thus was Jeſus forſaken, rejected, denied, when alone he trod the wine-preſs of the wrath of God.

4. When human help failed him, ſtill God was his *refuge, and portion in the land of the living*, and to him he directed his prayer, *v.* 5. and if God be our refuge, we need fear no danger ; if he be our portion, we need wiſh for nothing more in the land of the living. *Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low*, under affliction and diſtreſs : *deliver me from my perſecutors, for they are ſtronger than I*, and without divine help muſt be ſwallowed up by them utterly. *Bring my ſoul out of priſon*, out of my ſtraits and difficulties ; *that I may praiſe thy name. The righteous ſhall compaſs me about*, admiring the mercy ſhown in his deliverance, and joining with him in his praiſes ; *for thou ſhalt deal bountifully with me* ; ſaving him from his enemies, fixing him on the throne, and fulfilling all the deſires of his heart. *Note*, (1.) We cannot be brought ſo low, but God can help us ; and, though fettered in the bonds of corruption or temptation, he can open our priſon-doors. Let us never deſpair. (2.) The mercies our brethren enjoy ſhould excite our praiſes, as members of the ſame body.

PSALM CXLIII.

This pſalm ſeems penned during Abſalom's rebellion. 1. *David complains of his troubles*, ver. 3, 4, 5. 2. *He prays, and prays earneſtly*, ver. 6. 1. *That God would hear him*, ver. 1, 7. 2. *That he would not deal with him according to his ſins*, ver. 2. 3. *That he would not hide his face from him*, ver. 7. *but manifeſt his favour to him*, ver. 8. 4. *That he would guide and direct him in the way of his duty*, ver. 8—10. *and quicken him in it*, ver. 11. 5. *That he would deliver him out of his troubles*, ver. 9, 11. 6. *That he would in due time reckon with his perſecutors*, ver. 12. *We may the eaſier accommodate this pſalm to ourſelves in the ſinging of it, becauſe moſt of the petitions in it are for ſpiritual bleſſings, which we all need at all times, mercy and grace.*

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. HEAR my prayer, O LORD, Give ear to my ſupplications : [a] in thy faithfulneſs anſwer me, *and* in thy righteouſneſs. 2. And enter not into judgment with thy ſervant : for [b] in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified. 3. For the enemy hath perſecuted my ſoul, he hath ſmitten my life down to the ground ; he hath made me to dwell in darkneſs, as thoſe that have been long dead. 4. Therefore [c] is my ſpirit overwhelmed within me : my heart within me is deſolate. 5. [d] I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works : I muſe on the work of thy hands. 6. [e] I ſtretch forth my hands unto thee : [f] my ſoul *thirſteth* after thee, as a thirſty land. Selah.

a Pſ. xxxi. 1.
b Exod. xxxiv. 7. Job iv. 17. & ix. 2. & xv. 14. & xxv. 4. Eccleſ. vii. 20. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16.
c Pſ. cxlii. 3.
d Ib. lxxvii. 5, 10, 11.
e Ib. lxxxviii. 9.
f Ib. lxiii. 1.

v. 1—6. When we are in trouble, God permits us to pour our ſorrows into his boſom.

1. The pſalmiſt begs an audience to his prayers, and pleads, as the ground of his hope, God's *faithfulneſs* to his promiſes, and *his righteouſneſs* ; either his grace, or the divine righteouſneſs of Jeſus, the purchaſe of all our bleſſings. *Note*, If ever we hope for God's acceptance of us, it muſt be not for any thing in us, but purely of grace for his dear Son's ſake, according to the promiſes of his word.

2. He humbly prays, *Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant : for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified. Note*, (1.) The moſt righteous man alive cannot bear the ſeverity of God's juſtice. (2.) They who beſt know their own hearts, will ever be the firſt to condemn themſelves, and cry for mercy at God's hand. (3.) They who plead guilty before the law, and fly to the grace of the goſpel in Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall be juſtified from all things.

3. He complains of his afflicted ſtate. Perſecuted by his bitter foe ; brought to the gates of the grave ; compelled to hide himſelf in ſolitary caves, as if driven from the light, and already a companion of the dead, *v.* 3. his ſpirit melancholy as his circumſtances ; and his heart within him deſolate, dejected, and ready to ſink into deſpair. *Note*, (1.) When our own diſtreſs is greateſt, God's power and grace ſhall be the more magnified in our deliverance. (2.) The beſt of men have had their faith ſore ſhaken, *perplexed, but not in deſpair*.

4. Meditation and prayer are his chief recourſe. *I remember the days of old* ; the wonders God had wrought for his church and people, and for himſelf alſo, in former days. *I meditate on all thy works* ; on the power and goodneſs of God therein diſplayed, and draw from thence encouragement for my ſoul. *I muſe on the work of thy hands*, and *ſpeak thereof* to others, as the moſt pleaſing ſubject of diſcourſe. *I ſtretch forth my hands to thee*, in eager and importunate prayer : *My ſoul thirſteth after thee, as a thirſty land. Selah.* with ſuch longings as the parched ground, whoſe fiſſures ſeem to gape for the refreſhing ſhowers. *Note*, (1.) Remembrance of God's dealings with his people of old, and with ourſelves in time paſt, is moſt encouraging in our diſtreſſes. (2.) They who are athirſt for God, his love, and favour, ſhall never be ſent from a throne of grace empty away.

7. Hear me ſpeedily, O LORD, my ſpirit faileth : hide not thy face from me [g] † leſt I be like unto them that go down into the pit. 8. [h] Cauſe me to hear thy loving-kindneſs in the morning, for in thee do I truſt : [i] cauſe me to know the way wherein I ſhould walk, for [k] I lift up my ſoul unto thee. 9. Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies : I flee unto thee to hide me. 10. [l] Teach me to do thy will, for thou *art* my God : thy ſpirit *is* good, lead me into [m] the land of uprightneſs. 11. [n] Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's ſake : for thy righteouſneſs ſake bring my ſoul out of trouble. 12. And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and deſtroy all them that afflict my ſoul : for [o] I *am* thy ſervant.

g Pſ. xxviii. 1. & lxxxviii. 3.
† Or, For I am become like, &c.
h Pſ. xc. 14.
i Ib. v. 8.
k Ib. xxv. 1.
l Ib. xxv. 4, 5. & cxxxix. 24.
m Iſa. xxvi. 10.
n Pſ. cxix. 25, 37, 40.
o Pſ. cxvi. 16.

v. 7—12. Oppreſſed, and ready to faint under his trials, we have his fervent cries. *My ſpirit faileth* ; ſwooning with the weight of his affliction, or with the ſenſe of his ſins ; but a ſtep from the pit of death, or perhaps in his own apprehenſion from the belly of hell ; therefore, *Hear me ſpeedily*, or I am paſt recovery. His particular requeſts are,

1. *Hide not thy face from me* ; for the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure to a gracious ſoul is more bitter than death, and the hidings of his countenance the foreſt affliction.

2. *Cauſe me to hear thy loving-kindneſs in the morning* ; for God hath kindneſs ſtill in ſtore for his people in their deepeſt ſtate of anguiſh, and faith embraces it ; *for in thee do I truſt* ; and they who do ſo, can never periſh.

3. *Cauſe me to know the way wherein I ſhould walk* ; for in our afflictions our eyes are often ſo filled with tears, that we cannot ſee the path of duty ; but the faithful heart is conſcious that he hath but one deſire, and that is, to pleaſe God ; and therefore *I lift up my ſoul unto thee* for guidance and direction.

4. *Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies :* they are many ; they are mighty ; too mighty for me to oppoſe ; *but I flee unto thee to hide me* ; and they are ſafe from every foe, ſpiritual or temporal, who are covered with the ſhadow of his wings. My ſoul, flee ever thither for thy refuge !

5. *Teach me to do thy will* ; for we have neither underſtanding to know what it is, nor ability to follow it, till God inſtruct and guide us : *for thou art my God* ; I give myſelf up to thee as my covenant God, to be made ſuch as thou wouldſt have me to be.

6. *Thy ſpirit is good* ; or, *Let thy good ſpirit lead me into the land of uprightneſs*. It is not only the eſſential perfection of this Spirit to be good, but his office it is to ſanctify our ſouls, and lead us in the right way, that we may come through the paths of holineſs to the land of eternal purity and bleſſedneſs ; and hitherto every gracious ſoul longs to come.

7. *Quicken me, O Lord*, from my low and dejected ſtate, and revive my fainting ſoul, *for thy name's ſake*, for the glory of thy grace and faithfulneſs. *For thy righteouſneſs ſake bring my ſoul out of trouble* ; not only deliver my body from death, but my

ſpirit from the ſorer temptations which beſet me; for if our ſoul is ſafe, then our all is ſafe.

8. *And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and deſtroy all them that afflict my ſoul*; my perſecutors, who will meet juſt judgment from an avenging God, who eſpouſeth the quarrel of his oppreſſed people; *for I am thy ſervant*, who, engaged in thy ſervice, may hope for thy protection. And thus ſhall all the enemies of Chriſt and his people be cut off at the laſt, and tribulation in full meaſure be given to thoſe who troubled us.

PSALM CXLIV.

When David was come to the throne he had ſtill enemies to encounter. 1. *He acknowledgeth the great goodneſs of God to him in advancing him to the throne*, ver. 1—4. 2. *He prays to God to help him againſt the enemies that threatned him*, ver. 5—8. *and again*, ver. 11. 3. *He rejoiceth in the aſſurance of victory over them.* ver. 9, 10. 4. *He prays for the proſperity of his own kingdom, and pleaſeth himſelf with the hopes of it*, ver. 12—15.

¶ A pſalm of David.

1. BLeſſed *be* the LORD my † ſtrength, [a] which teacheth my hands to war, *and* my fingers to fight. 2. [b] My ‡ goodneſs and my fortreſs, my high tower and my deliverer, my ſhield, and *he* in whom I truſt: who ſubdueth my people under me. 3. [c] LORD, what *is* man, that thou takeſt knowledge of him? *or* the ſon of man, that thou makeſt account of him? 4. [d] Man is like to vanity: [e] his days *are* as a ſhadow that paſſeth away. 5. [f] Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: [g] touch the mountains, and they ſhall ſmoke. 6. [h] Caſt forth lightning, and ſcatter them: ſhoot out thine arrows, and deſtroy them. 7. [i] Send thine hand from above, [k] rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of [l] ſtrange children; 8. [m] Whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity; and their right hand *is* a right hand of falſhood.

† Heb. Rock. Pſal. xviii. 2, 31.
[a] 2 Sam. xxii. 35. Pſ. xviii. 34.
[b] 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3, 40, 48.
‡ Or, mercy.
[c] Job vii. 17. Pſ. viii. 4. Heb. ii. 6.
[d] Job iv. 19. & xiv. 2. Pſ. xxxix. 5. & lxii. 9.
[e] Ib. cii. 11.
[f] Ib. xviii. 9. Iſa. lxiv. 1.
[g] Pſ. civ. 32.
[h] Ib. xviii. 13, 14.
[i] Ibid. 16.
[k] Ver. 11. Pſ. lxix. 2, 14.
[l] Ib. liv. 3. Mal. ii. 11.
[m] Pſ. xii. 2.

v. 1—8. All the returns for mercies we can pay, are bleſſing and praiſe aſcribed to the gracious giver of all good. Of this the pſalmiſt ſets us the example.

1. He bleſſes God for all the goodneſs he had experienced. *Bleſſed be the Lord my ſtrength*, by whoſe power I have been upheld, and by his providence protected; *which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight*; and from a ſhepherd's crook enabled him to wield Goliah's ſword. *My goodneſs*, the author of all grace, and engaged to be mine, to bleſs me in a covenant of everlaſting love; *and my fortreſs*, where I am ſafe from the attacks of my enemies: *my high tower*, above the reach of human or Satanical malice; *and my deliverer* out of every danger: *my ſhield*, to guard me in the day of battle; *and he in whom I truſt*, who neither can nor will ever fail me, or diſappoint my confidence: *who ſubdueth my people under me*; bringing me, after all my wanderings, to the peaceable poſſeſſion of Iſrael's throne. *Note*, (1.) The perfections of an everlaſting God, and the ſtability of everlaſting promiſes, are every believer's ſecurity. (2.) The Lord Jeſus is now exalted to the throne, and God will give him the hearts of his people, and the necks of his enemies.

2. He expreſſes his admiration of God's condeſcenſion and kindneſs. *Lord, what is man*, ſo low in his original, and now become ſo vile by ſin, *that thou takeſt knowledge of him? or the ſon of man, that thou makeſt account of him?* ſhewing ſuch poor and wretched creatures ſuch kindneſs and regard; eſpecially ſending his Son to be incarnate to redeem them. *Man is like to vanity*; an empty nothing, or *a vapour*. *His days are as a ſhadow that paſſeth away*; ſo ſwift, ſo tranſitory. O that men were wiſe, that they pondered theſe things, that they conſidered their latter end. If their moment be ſo ſhort, and eternity depends on it, how diligently ſhould they redeem each hour!

3. He looks up to God for ſupport againſt all his remaining enemies; and calls on him to manifeſt his preſence in ſome tremendous diſplays of his power, as when he deſcended on Sinai's hoary top, *v.* 5. to ſcorch them with his lightnings, and ſhoot forth thoſe arrows of his vengeance, which no human powers can for a moment withſtand, *v.* 6. By this divine interpoſition he hopes for deliverance out of the deep waters of trouble, and the hoſts of enemies which ſurrounded him, *v.* 7. And their character called for ſuch righteous judgment againſt them: their *mouth ſpeaketh vanity*, falſe and deceitful; *and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood*; whether lifted up in prayer, or in a ſolemn oath; the one is hypocritical, the other faithleſs. *Note*, (1.) There is a terrible day approaching, when vengeance will overtake the enemies of God. (2.) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of the deepeſt waters of affliction; and they who call upon him will find him near to ſave them. (3.) Falſhood and lies may for a moment proſper, but in the end will iſſue in men's everlaſting confuſion.

9. I will [n] ſing a new ſong unto thee, O God: upon a pſaltery, *and* an inſtrument of ten ſtrings will I ſing praiſes unto thee. 10. [o] *It is he* that giveth † ſalvation unto kings: who delivereth David his ſervant from the hurtful ſword. 11. [p] Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of ſtrange children; whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falſhood. 12. That our ſons *may be* [q] as plants grown up in their youth; *that* our daughters *may be* as corner-ſtones, ‡ poliſhed *after* the ſimilitude of a palace: 13. *That* our garners *may be* full, affording all manner of ſtore; *that* our ſheep may bring forth thouſands, and ten thouſands in our ſtreets: 14. *That* our oxen *may be* § ſtrong to labour; *that there be* no breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our ſtreets. 15. [r] Happy *is that* people that is in ſuch a caſe: *yea*, happy *is that* people, whoſe God *is* the LORD.

[n] Pſ. xxxiii. 3. & xl. 3.
[o] Pſ. xviii. 50.
† Or, victory.
[p] Ver. 7, 8.
[q] Pſ. cxxviii. 3.
‡ Heb. Cut.
§ Heb. Able to bear burdens, or, loaden with fleſh.
[r] Pſ. xxxiii. 12. & lxv. 4. & cxlvi. 5.

v. 9—15. We have here,

1. David's praiſes for his deliverances in anſwer to his prayer. *I will ſing a new ſong unto thee, O God*, and join his muſic with his voice, to raiſe the ſound: *Upon a pſaltery, and an inſtrument of ten ſtrings, will I ſing praiſes unto thee.* And abundant reaſon he had; for *it is he that giveth ſalvation unto kings*, whoſe armies are not their ſafety, but the power of God giving ſucceſs to their enterprizes; *who delivereth David his ſervant from the hurtful ſword* of Saul, and all his ſecret and open enemies. The Son of David was thus enabled alſo to triumph, when God raiſed him from the dead, and exalted him to the throne, ſin, Satan, death, and every enemy of his people, being bruiſed under his feet.

2. The pſalmiſt prays for the continuance of the ſame care over himſelf; many enemies of the ſame ill character remained, from whom he deſires to be delivered, *v.* 11. and for his ſubjects, that proſperity, plenty, and peace, might reign among them; their families be increaſed; their ſons and daughters endowed with every corporal and mental accompliſhment, *v.* 12. their garners full with every kind of ſtore; their flocks multiplied exceedingly; their oxen ſtrong; no irruptions from an enemy; no leading out to captivity; no complaints of faction, famine, ſickneſs, or the ſword, ever heard; but all peaceful without, and quiet within, *v.* 13, 14. Such a ſtate cannot but denote a happy people: not that happineſs conſiſts in theſe outward bleſſings merely, but where beſtowed are marks of God's favour, which is the ſupreme felicity. *Happy* therefore, now and eternally ſo, *are the people who have the Lord for their God.* *Note*, (1.) The bleſſings of the baſket and the ſtore, ſo far as they come from God in a way of love, are doubly ſweet; and they twice enjoy this world's good things, who ſee and gratefully bleſs the hand which beſtows them. (2.) All that earth can give is but ſhadow, without God. He alone can truly ſatisfy the deſires of the ſoul. (3.) They who have God for their Lord, bound to them in a covenant of everlaſting love and peace, muſt needs be happy; for all his things are theirs, and to eternity his unchangeable regard ſecures their unchangeable bleſſedneſs.

PSALM CXLV.

In this pſalm, 1. *David engageth himſelf and others to praiſe God*, ver. 1, 2, 4—7, 10—12. 2. *He faſtens upon thoſe things that are proper matter for praiſe; God's greatneſs*, ver. 3. *His goodneſs*, ver. 8, 9. *The proofs of both in the adminiſtration of his kingdom*, ver. 13. *The kingdom of providence*, ver. 14—16. *The kingdom of grace*, ver. 17—20. *And then he concludes with a reſolution to continue praiſing God*, ver. 21. *with which reſolution our hearts muſt be filled and fixed in ſinging this pſalm.*

¶ David's [a] *pſalm* of praiſe.

[a] Pſ. c. tit.

1. I Will extol thee, my God, O King, and I will bleſs thy name for ever and ever. 2. Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy name for ever and ever. 3. [b] Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praiſed; and [c] his greatneſs *is* unſearchable. 4. [d] One generation ſhall praiſe thy works to another, and ſhall declare thy mighty acts. 5. I will ſpeak of the glorious honour of thy majeſty, and of thy wondrous † works. 6. And *men* ſhall ſpeak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatneſs. 7. They ſhall ‡ abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodneſs, and ſhall ſing of thy righteouſneſs. 8. [e] The LORD *is* gracious, and full of compaſſion; ſlow to anger, and

[b] Pſ. xcvi. 4.
[c] Job. v. 9. & ix. 10.
[d] Pſ. lxxviii. 4. Iſa. xxxviii. 19.
† Heb. Things, or words.
‡ Heb Pour out.
[e] Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18. Pſal. lxxxvi. 5, 15. & ciii. 8.

§ Heb. Great in mercy.
[f] Mat. v. 45.

§ of great mercy. 9. The LORD *is* [f] good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

v. 1.—9. This and the following pſalms to the end are full of praiſes: it is called David's Pſalm of Praiſe, as being probably often made uſe of by him.

1. He opens with his holy reſolution, *I will extol thee, my God, O King*; the glorious Jehovah, the King Meſſiah. Continual and perſevering ſhould be his ſong; *every day* his tongue ſhould not be ſilent; and not only through the years of time, but to the ages of eternity, he hoped to be engaged in this bleſſed employment. *I will bleſs thy name for ever and ever.*

3. Excited by his example, others would join his ſongs, *v.* 6. and from age to age the bleſſed work be tranſmitted to poſterity, and generations yet unborn perpetuate the ſound; for God ſhall never want a people to the end of time, and it ſhould be our deſire and delight to ſee the riſing generation improving on the piety of their forefathers.

2. The ſubject for their praiſes is boundleſs. *Great is the Lord*, in all his divine perfections, *and greatly to be praiſed*, tho' our higheſt expreſſions fall infinitely ſhort of *his greatneſs*, which *is unſearchable*. Tranſcendently *glorious is the honour of his majeſty*; whether conſidered as of the One Divine Eſſence, in his perſon the brightneſs of the Father's glory; or as mediator, exalted to be the head over all things, angels, principalities, and powers being made ſubject unto him. Glorious alſo are his *wondrous works* of creation, providence, but eſpecially of redemption, his incarnation, ſufferings, glory, and the great things he daily doth in behalf of his church and people. *Terrible* are *his acts* of judgment againſt his enemies; ſuch as he hath already executed upon his enemies in all the ages paſt, and greater ſtill are reſerved for the day of his appearing and glory. And withal *good as he is great*, in all his diſpenſations of providence and grace, eſpecially towards his people, becoming incarnate, living, dying, riſing, reigning to bleſs and ſave them. Goodneſs ſo great, that it is more than we are able to expreſs, but the memory of which ſhould ever be warm upon our hearts. *Gracious*, to pardon all our ſins; *full of compaſſion*, to pity the ignorant and the tempted; *ſlow to anger*, notwithſtanding the manifold provocations we daily give him; *and of great mercy* towards every miſerable ſoul that flies to him for ſuccour. *Good to all*, in a way of providential kindneſs; and *his tender mercies over all his works*, particularly over that workmanſhip of his hands, the ſouls of his redeemed people, and all in a way of ſtrict *righteouſneſs*, *v.* 7. he having, by his obedience unto death, fully ſatisfied the demands of God's law, and, without any impeachment of his holineſs or truth, he can now exerciſe his mercy and grace to the ſinful ſons of men: and theſe views of the grace and glory of our Immanuel furniſh ſubjects for our praiſe, that eternity can never exhauſt.

[g] Pſ. xix. 1.

10. [g] All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, O LORD: and thy ſaints ſhall bleſs thee. 11. They ſhall ſpeak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power. 12. To make known to the ſons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majeſty of his kingdom. 13. [h] Thy kingdom *is* † an everlaſting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations. 14. The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and [i] raiſeth up all *thoſe that be* bowed down. 15. [k] The eyes of all ‡ wait upon thee, and [l] thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon. 16. Thou openeſt thine hand, and [m] ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing. 17. The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and § holy in all his works. 18. [n] The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him [o] in truth. 19. [p] He will fulfil the deſire of them that fear him: he alſo will hear their cry, and will ſave them. 20. The LORD preſerveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he deſtroy. 21. My mouth ſhall ſpeak the praiſe of the LORD: and let [q] all fleſh bleſs his holy name for ever and ever.

[h] Pſ. cxlvi. 10. 1 Tim. i. 17. 2 Pet. i. 11.
† Heb. A kingdom of all ages.
[i] Pſ. cxlvi. 8.
[k] Ib. civ 27.
‡ Or, Look unto thee.
[l] Pſ. cxxxvi. 25.
[m] Ib. civ. 21. & cxlvii. 9.
§ Or, bountiful.
[n] Deut. iv. 7.
[o] John iv. 24.
[p] 1 John v. 14.
[q] Pſ. lxv. 2.

v. 10—21. New matter for our praiſe is here ſuggeſted from the adminiſtration of the divine government among men. *All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, O Lord*; all bear enſtamped upon them the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of their Creator. But they ſtand ſilent monuments of his praiſe: man is the tongue of this lower world; *and thy ſaints*, as many as by divine light have their eyes opened, and their hearts enlarged with divine love, they *ſhall bleſs thee*, aſcribing to him the honour of all his glorious works.

1. They ſhall ſpeak of the majeſty, glory, and power of his kingdom, quite different from that of the ſons of men, eſtabliſhed in the hearts of his people, and conſiſting in righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt: *his mighty acts*, the miracles he hath wrought of old for his church and people, and the wonders of his goſpel-word converting thouſands of ſouls in a day; and the perpetuity of his dominion, which through all generations ſhall endure, and run coeval with the days of eternity, *v.* 13.

2. His grace is as his power infinite. On him *the eyes of all wait*, and all their wants, from the leaſt to the greateſt, are liberally ſupplied, *v.* 15, 16. And with eſpecial care he watches over his people, *upholding thoſe who fall* into affliction or temptation, that they ſink not under their burdens; *and raiſing up thoſe that be bowed down* under a ſenſe of ſin and corruption, or groaning under their ſorrows; near to every poor ſinner that calls upon him *in truth*, really feeling his burdens, and ſighing to be relieved; and thoſe who *fear* and *love* him, have every deſire granted that faith can aſk, whether reſpecting the bleſſings of grace or glory, of time or eternity. Salvation preſent and everlaſting is their aſſured portion, and God will preſerve them from falling, and bring them to the reſt provided for his people: *but all the wicked will he deſtroy*, with everlaſting deſtruction of both body and ſoul in hell. In all which his diſpenſations, both of mercy to his people, and puniſhment of his enemies, *the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*: and he will appear to be ſo at the laſt day, when all will be obliged to own the equity of his procedure, his ſaints adore him, and ſinners be ſpeechleſs before him.

3. The pſalmiſt concludes with his fixed purpoſe to praiſe this great and gracious God, and exhorts all, as many as the Lord ſhall call, to join his praiſes, and to eternity adore his holy name. May my ſoul be ever engaged in this bleſſed work, Amen, and Amen!

P S A L M CXLVI.

This and all the reſt of the pſalms that follow, begin and end with Hallelujah. 1. *The pſalmiſt engageth himſelf to praiſe God*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He engageth others to truſt in him, which is one neceſſary and acceptable way of praiſing him: And,* (1.) *He ſhews why we ſhould not truſt in men*, ver. 3, 4. (2.) *Why we ſhould truſt in God*, ver. 5. *Becauſe of his power in the kingdom of nature*, ver. 6. *His dominion in the kingdom of providence*, ver. 7. *And his grace in the kingdom of the Meſſiah*, ver. 8, 9. *that everlaſting kingdom*, ver. 10. *to which many even of the Jewiſh writers refer this pſalm.*

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD. [b] Praiſe the LORD, O my ſoul. 2. [c] While I live, will I praiſe the LORD: I will ſing praiſes unto my God, while I have any being. 3. [d] Put not your truſt in princes, *nor* in the ſon of man, in whom *there is* no † help. 4. [e] His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth: in that very day his thoughts periſh.

[a] Pſ. civ. 35.
[b] Ib. ciii. 1.
[c] Ib. civ. 33.
[d] Ib. cxviii. 8, 9. Iſa. ii. 22.
† Or, ſalvation.
[e] Pſ. civ. 29. Eccleſ. xii. 7. Iſa. ii. 22.

v. 1—4. David's heart overflowed with gratitude, and therefore his lips were filled with praiſe. He could ſay, with deepeſt ſenſibility of the bleſſing, *My God*, and could not therefore but add, *I will praiſe him whilſt I have any being*. Senſible of the vanity of all beſides to help, and the inſignificance of every creature, he bids us put no truſt in any ſon of man, not even in the mightieſt princes. They are changeable, their favour precarious, their promiſes often deluſive: but be they never ſo able to help us, never ſo willing, the greateſt are dying worms, returning to the duſt from whence they came: their breath expires, their projects vaniſh, and all their thoughts of aggrandizing themſelves, or their friends, are at an end. *Note*, (1.) Whatever a man may poſſeſs in this world, all he can properly call *his earth*, is that pittance of a grave allotted for his laſt abode. (2.) Hope in man is deluſory; hope in God knows no diſappointment. (3.) Though in man there is no help, there is a Son of Man mighty to ſave; and bleſſed are they that put their truſt in him.

5. [f] Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whoſe hope *is* in the LORD his God: 6. [g] Which made heaven and earth, the ſea, and all that therein *is*: which keepeth truth for ever: 7. [h] Which executeth judgment for the oppreſſed, which giveth food to the hungry: [i] the LORD looſeth the priſoners. 8. [k] The LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind; [l] the LORD raiſeth *them that are* bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: 9. [m] The LORD preſerveth the ſtrangers; he relieveth the fatherleſs and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upſide down. 10. [n] The LORD ſhall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praiſe ye the LORD.

[f] Pſ. cxliv. 15. Jer. xvii. 7.
[g] Gen. i. 1. Rev. xiv. 7.
[h] Pſ. ciii. 6.
[i] Ib. lxviii. 6. & cvii. 10, 14. Iſa. lxi. 1.
[k] Mat. ix. 30. John ix. 7—32.
[l] Pſ. cxlv. 14. & cxlvii. 6. Luke xiii. 13.
[m] Deut. x. 18. Pſal. lxviii. 5.
[n] Exod. xv. 18. Pſ. x. 16. & cxlv. 13. Rev. xi. 15.

v. 5—10. What is the true happineſs of man? The queſtion is here reſolved. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help*, in all his trials, temptations, and afflictions; *whoſe hope is in the Lord his God*, the never-failing refuge of all who fly to him for ſuccour; their Saviour in every diſtreſs, and to the uttermoſt will never leave nor forſake them; for he is,

1. Able to ſave them. He is the creator of all things; heaven, and earth, and ſea, with all their inhabitants, are the work of his hands; and he that is the almighty Author of all, muſt needs be as almighty to preſerve.

2. He hath promiſed to help them. *He keepeth truth for ever*; he is the Amen, the faithful and true witneſs; and truth itſelf muſt fail, before his word of promiſe can diſappoint us.

3. He is juſt. *He executeth judgment for the oppreſſed*; vindicates their injured innocence, and brings deſerved vengeance on their enemies, as in the laſt day, if not before, will abundantly appear.

4. His tender mercies are over all his works. *He giveth food to the hungry*; not only the bread of earth to nouriſh their bodies, but himſelf, the bread of life, which cometh down from heaven, to nouriſh the immortal ſoul.

5. The diſtreſſed have ever found him their ready friend. He looſes the priſoners, bound of Satan with diſeaſe, or by death incloſed in their graves. He opens the eyes of the blind, and raiſes up thoſe that are bowed down with infirmity. Abundant inſtances of which appeared, when in the days of his fleſh he wrought ſuch miraculous cures, *Luke* xiii. 11, 12. *Mat.* xi. 5. *John* ix. 32. But greater works than theſe he doth. The priſoners of ſin are looſed by the preaching of his goſpel, and the power of Satan broken. The eyes of our mind, blinded by corruption, receive divine illumination; and the impotent faculties of our ſouls are delivered from their infirmities. The burdens of ſin, of ſorrow, of temptation, are looſed by him; and with the diſcoveries of his love, the heads bowed down as the bulruſh, under a ſenſe of guilt, are lifted up in praiſe and joy.

6. His love is upon his people, *the righteous*, completely ſuch in his bleſſed ſelf, by virtue of their union with him, and as ſuch the objects of his high regard; and by his Spirit alſo renewed, and enabled to walk before him and pleaſe him.

7. The deſtitute are relieved by him. The ſtrangers, whom no man careth for; the fatherleſs and widow, whoſe ſituation lays them open to oppreſſion, he preſerves. The Syro-phenician woman, the Samaritans, the widow of Nain, proved the truth of this: and the ſtrangers of the Gentiles, the ſpiritually deſtitute, have found him a merciful God.

8. The wicked will be deſtroyed by him. Their *way he turneth upſide down*; he will blaſt their deſigns, and break their power; and, if not prevented by a timely and penitent return to him, will turn them into hell, to receive the eternal puniſhment of their ſins.

9. The kingdom of Chriſt ſhall endure for ever. He ſhall reign, and therefore his people may be ſatisfied he will aſſuredly help them: *even thy God*, whoſe perfections are all engaged for their ſalvation, *unto all generations*: and ſuch reviving hope cannot but make their ſouls happy, and engage their everlaſting praiſes. *Hallelujah!*

PSALM CXLVII.

This is another pſalm of praiſe; perhaps on his coming to the kingdom, when thoſe who followed his fortunes, as outcaſts, were reſtored to honour and dignity. 1. *We are called upon to praiſe God*, ver. 1, 7, 12. 2. *We are furniſhed with matter for praiſe, for God is to be glorified*, (1.) *As the God of nature, and ſo he is very great*, ver. 4, 5, 8, 9, 15—18. (2.) *As the God of grace, comforting his people*, ver. 3, 6—10, 11. (3.) *As the God of Iſrael, Jeruſalem, and Zion, ſettling their civil ſtate*, ver. 2, 13, 14. *and eſpecially ſettling religion among them*, ver. 19, 20.

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD: for *it is* good to ſing
praiſes unto our God; [b] for *it is* pleaſant, *and*
[c] praiſe is comely. 2. The LORD doth build up Jeruſalem:
[d] he gathereth together the out-caſts of Iſrael.
3. [e] He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their
† wounds. 4. [f] He telleth the number of the ſtars: he
calleth them all by *their* names. 5. Great *is* our LORD,
and of great power: [g] his underſtanding *is* infinite. 6.
[h] The LORD lifteth up the meek: [i] he caſteth the
wicked down to the ground. 7. Sing unto the LORD
with thankſgiving: ‡ ſing praiſe upon the harp unto our
God: 8. [k] Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who
prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh graſs to grow
upon the mountains. 9. [l] He giveth to the beaſt
his food, [m] *and* to the young ravens which cry. 10.
[n] He delighteth not in the ſtrength of the horſe: he
taketh not pleaſure in the legs of a man. 11. The
LORD taketh pleaſure in them that fear him, in thoſe
that hope in his mercy.

a Pſ. civ. 35.
b Ib. cxxxv. 3.
c Ib. xxxiii. 1.
d Deut. xxx. 3.
e Pſ. li. 17. Iſa. lvii. 15. & lxi. 1.
† Heb. Griefs.
f Gen. xv. 5. Iſa. xl. 26.
g Iſa. xl. 28.
h Pſ. cxlvi. 9.
i Ib. lxxiii. 18.
‡ Heb. anſwer. Exod. xv. 21.
k Pſ. civ. 13, 14.
l Job xxxviii. 41. Pſ. civ. 27, 28. & cxxxvi. 25. & cxlv. 15.
m Job xxxviii. 41. Mat. vi. 26.
n Pſ. xxxiii. 16, 17. Hoſ. i. 7.

v. 1—11. He takes up this pſalm as he concludes the former, with *Hallelujah!* and abundant cauſe there is, why we ſhould continually ſing and give praiſe unto the Lord. He is *our God*; we have an intereſt in his favour: *It is good* to do ſo, our bounden duty, and higheſt intereſt. It is *pleaſant*, for this ſervice is eſpecially its own reward: it is *comely*; pleaſing to God, and moſt becoming us as his creatures, eſpecially as his choſen in a covenant of everlaſting love; and particularly we are bound to praiſe him,

1. For his kindneſs and care towards his city and people. *The Lord builds up Jeruſalem: he gathereth together the out-caſts of Iſrael*: literally, when David repaired the city, and thoſe who had ſuffered with him as out-laws, were reſtored; or ſpiritually, he buildeth up his goſpel-church, and prepares the heavenly Jeruſalem for their abode, who by ſin had made themſelves out-caſts; and whom the world, on their returning to God, rejected as the off-ſcouring of all things.

2. For his compaſſions towards the miſerable. *He healeth the broken in heart*, whoſe ſouls by ſin were ſore troubled, and, ſhocked at the remembrance of paſt tranſgreſſions, were ready to lie down in deſpair, and periſh. Theſe he healeth, pouring in the oil of his blood, that cleanſeth from all ſin, and with the tender hand of his grace *bindeth up their wounds*, ſpeaking peace to their conſciences, and filling them with his divine conſolations.

3. For his infinite power and wiſdom, *v.* 5. Innumerable as the ſtars are, to him they are known; for they are indeed his own workmanſhip, and *he calleth them all by their names*, appoints them their place, and they as ſervants are obedient to his orders. So great and glorious is the Lord; ſo great his power, ſo infinite his underſtanding. His ſaints are the ſtars in his right hand; he knoweth them, and in his book of life their names are written.

4. For his dealings towards the ſons of men. *The Lord lifteth up the meek*, who in their own eyes are little, and patiently endure the afflictions of providence, or the provocations of men. Theſe he comforts, and will exalt to the inheritance among the ſaints in light; but *he caſteth the wicked down to the ground*, with ſtrokes of heavy judgment in this world, by ſudden and untimely death, and at laſt will caſt them down into the pit of everlaſting deſtruction.

5. For his providential regard towards all the creatures. Drawn up in copious exhalations, thick clouds of water cover the ſkies: formed by his power into drops of rain, they empty themſelves on the mountains, cauſing the graſs to ſpring, and providing thereby plenty of food for all animals, the meaneſt and moſt uſeleſs of which are not forgotten or neglected; but even the cry of the young ravens is heard and anſwered. *Note*, (1.) The clouds of affliction, when darkeſt, ſerve but to prepare us for greater fruitfulneſs in our ſouls. (2.) If the ravens cry is heard, ſurely our prayer ſhall not be diſregarded; he that feedeth them, will much more provide all needful ſupplies for his own people. For,

6. In them is his delight, and therefore they owe him praiſe. *God delights not in the ſtrength of the horſe, or in any man's legs*: the fineſt cavalry, or the firmeſt infantry, are vain things to ſave a man without God's bleſſing; *but the Lord taketh pleaſure in them that fear him, and in thoſe that hope for his mercy*; filial fear and holy hope being the diſtinguiſhing characters of God's people; and that mercy, on which in Chriſt they alone depend, ſhall never, never fail them.

12. Praiſe the LORD, O Jeruſalem: praiſe thy
God, O Zion. 13. For he hath ſtrengthned the bars
of thy gates: he hath bleſſed thy children within thee.
14. † He maketh peace *in* thy borders: *and* [o] filleth thee
with the ‡ fineſt of the wheat. 15. [p] He ſendeth forth
his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very
ſwiftly. 16. [q] He giveth ſnow like wool: he ſcattereth
the hoar-froſt like aſhes. 17. He caſteth forth his ice
like morſels: who can ſtand before his cold? 18. [r] He
ſendeth out his § word, and melteth them: he cauſeth
his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow. 19. [s] He ſheweth
his word unto Jacob: [t] his ſtatutes and his judgments
unto Iſrael. 20. [u] He hath not dealt ſo with any nation:
and *as for his* judgments, they have not known
them. Praiſe ye the LORD.

† Heb. Who maketh thy border peace.
o Pſ. cxxxii. 15.
‡ Heb. Fat of wheat. Deut. xxxii. 14. Pſal. lxxxi. 16.
p Pſ. cvii.
q Job xxxvii. 6.
r Ver. 15. Job xxxvii. 10.
§ Heb. Words.
s Pſ. lxxvi. 1. & lxxviii. 5. & ciii. 7.
t Mal. iv. 4.
u Rom. iii. 1, 2. & ix. 4.

v. 12—20. Jeruſalem and Zion, the figures of the goſpel-church, are called upon to praiſe the Lord their God,

1. For their proſperity under the divine protection. *He hath ſtrengthned the bars of thy gates*: his ſalvation, his power, and faithfulneſs, ſtronger than walls and bulwarks, ſurround his people. *He hath bleſſed thy children within thee*; the ſpiritual ſeed of the church, begotten through the miniſtry of the goſpel, and enriched with all the ſpiritual bleſſings of grace and glory in Chriſt Jeſus. *He maketh peace in thy borders*; quieting all his Zion's enemies without, and beſtowing abundance of peace within; ſpiritual peace in their ſouls, and great union and harmony among the faithful; *and filleth thee with the fineſt of the wheat*; all needful temporal good, or the bread of life in the

goſpel, by which the ſouls of believers are ſupported and ſtrengthened. Mercies ineſtimable! and calling for louder praiſe than any merely temporal good vouchſafed to the inhabitants of Judea.

2. For God's providential government in the kingdom of nature. *He ſendeth forth his commandment upon earth*, and his will all things obey. *His word runneth very ſwiftly*: he ſpeaks, and it is done; which may reſpect either the word of his providence directing the rain and the ſnow to fall; or the word of his goſpel, which by the preaching of the apoſtles was quickly ſpread through the world. *He giveth ſnow like wool* for whiteneſs, and conveys warmth to the earth on which it falls. *He ſcattereth his hoar-froſt like aſhes*; the dew of night congealing, and covering, as aſhes ſpread abroad, the plants and trees. *He caſteth forth his ice like morſels*; either in hail-ſtones that fall, or when the iſicles ſhoot in the incruſted waters. *Who can ſtand before his cold?* the intenſeneſs of which would inſtantly deſtroy us, if God was pleaſed to expoſe us to its extremity. *He ſendeth out his word, and melteth them: he cauſeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow*, diſſolving the ice and ſnow, and making the verdure and flowers of ſpring ſucceed to the cold and dreary ſcenes of winter. *Note*, Like the frozen earth is the ſinner's heart, till God's Spirit breathes upon it; then ſoftened into deep contrition, the penitential tears begin to flow, and ſoon the whole ſoul puts on a new aſpect, filled with the bloſſoms of grace, and fruits of righteouſneſs, which are, thro' Jeſus Chriſt, to the praiſe and glory of God.

3. For that divine revelation, with which they were peculiarly favoured. *He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgments unto Iſrael.* Iſrael was peculiarly diſtinguiſhed by thoſe oracles of God committed to them, containing the promiſes and precepts, moral and ceremonial. *He hath not dealt ſo with any nation: and as for his judgments they have not known them*: as therefore the peculiar favourites of heaven, they of all others were bound to fidelity, bleſſing, and praiſe. *Note*, The caſe is our own: this happy land enjoys in its purity the goſpel-word: may we know our mercies, improve them, and be thankful; leſt, by neglect of our Bibles, it ſhould be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for us.

PSALM CXLVIII.

This pſalm is a moſt ſolemn and earneſt call to all the creatures, according to their capacity, to praiſe their Creator. 1. *He calls upon the creatures that are placed in the upper world, to praiſe the Lord, both thoſe that are intellectual beings, and are capable of doing it actively*, ver. 1, 2. *and thoſe that are not, and are therefore capable of doing it only objectively*, ver. 3—6. 2. *He calls upon the creatures of this lower world, both thoſe that can only miniſter matter of praiſe*, ver. 7—10. *and thoſe that being endued with reaſon, are capable of offering up this ſacrifice*, ver. 11—13. *eſpecially his own people, who have more cauſe to do it, and are more concerned to do it than any other*, ver. 14.

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD. Praiſe ye the LORD [b] from the heavens: praiſe him in the heights. 2. [c] Praiſe ye him, all his angels: praiſe ye him, all his hoſts. 3. [d] Praiſe ye him, ſun and moon: praiſe him, all ye ſtars of light. 4. Praiſe him, [e] ye heavens of heavens, and [f] ye waters that *be* above the heavens. 5. Let them praiſe the name of the LORD: for [g] he commanded, and they were created. 6. [h] He hath alſo eſtabliſhed them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which ſhall not paſs.

[a] Pſ. civ. 35.
[b] Rev. v. 13.
[c] Pſ. ciii. 20, 21.
[d] Ibid. xix. 1, &c.
[e] 1 Kings viii. 27.
[f] Gen. i. 7.
[g] Gen. i. 1, 6. Pſ. xxxiii. 6, 9.
[h] Pſ. lxxxix. 37. & cxix. 90, 91. Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. & xxxiii. 25.

v. 1—6. The pſalmiſt calls on heaven to begin the Hallelujah, and earth muſt echo back the ſound.

1. The heavens, and angelic hoſts who them inhabit, the firſt of God's creation, that in the heights of glory neareſt approach his throne of light inacceſſible, are addreſſed, as thoſe who with the moſt exalted praiſes ſhould lead the ſong. Not that theſe bright ſpirits are backward to the work, or ſilent, day or night, in the delightful ſervice; but the pſalmiſt would expreſs the fervency of his own deſires, that God ſhould be glorified by the higheſt and nobleſt of his creatures, and would ſtir up himſelf and others to the work, which is the happineſs and employment of all theſe ſons of God in glory. *Note*, We in nothing more reſemble angels, than when we ſing the high praiſes of our God.

2. Not only the intellectual beings of the upper world, but the creatures void of reaſon, muſt ſhew forth his praiſe. Thoſe orbs of light, that ſhed on this earth their benign influences; the ſun, the moon, and glittering ſtars, ſhine audibly, and in the ear of enlightened reaſon proclaim aloud the glory of their great Creator. *Praiſe him, ye heavens of heavens*; the ſtarry firmament, and all within that bright canopy, the radiant ſcene, where angels and the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect have their bleſt abode. *And ye waters that be above the heavens*, divided by the firmament from the waters beneath, all muſt *praiſe the name of the Lord*; for by his power they were made, by his providence they are upheld, and their duration fixed by his eternal decree.

7. Praiſe the LORD from the earth, [i] ye dragons and all deeps. 8. Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, [k] ſtormy wind fulfilling his word. 9. Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars. 10. Beaſts and all cattle, creeping things, and † flying fowl. 11. Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth. 12. Both young men and maidens, old men and children. 13. Let them praiſe the name of the LORD: for [l] his name alone is ‡ excellent, his glory *is* above the earth and heaven. 14. [m] He alſo exalteth the horn of his people, [n] the praiſe of all his ſaints; *even* of the children of Iſrael, [o] a people near unto him. Praiſe ye the LORD.

[i] Iſa. xliii. 20.
[k] Pſ. cxlvii. 15, 16.
† Heb. Birds of wing.
[l] Pſ. viii. 1. Iſa. xii. 4.
‡ Heb. Exalted.
[m] Pſ. lxxv. 10.
[n] Pſ. cxlix. 9.
[o] Eph. ii. 17.

v. 7—14. From the celeſtial world the pſalmiſt deſcends to this terreſtrial globe, from which a tribute of praiſe ſhould aſcend from every creature, whether intelligent, irrational, or inanimate.

1. The ſea and it's inhabitants are called on to praiſe the Lord. *The dragons*, or whales, *and all deeps*; the ſhoals of fiſh that ſwim beneath the waters, from the leaſt unto the greateſt, declare their Maker's work.

2. The meteors of the ſky, and exhalations, *fire*, *hail*, *ſnow*, *vapour*, *ſtormy winds*, all *fulfil his word*, go forth at his bidding, are ſtayed at his command.

3. The earth, and all that dwell therein; mountains, hills, trees, and cedars; creatures though inanimate, riſe up to praiſe him; whilſt every beaſt of the foreſt, the lowing herds, the bleating flocks, and every reptile, and every flying fowl, join in their adoration, all admirably ſuited for the ſtation they fill, and correſponding with their maker's great deſign.

4. The rational creatures, endowed with ſpeech, that as the tongue of this lower world they might preſent the tribute of all the creatures, are enjoined to raiſe the ſong. High and low, rich and poor, young and old, of either ſex, muſt unite their praiſes. None ſo great as to be excuſed, none ſo low as to be deſpiſed, from liſping infancy to decrepit age. And reaſon good there is for ſo doing; *for his name only is excellent*; none like him, none to compare with: *his glory is above the earth and heaven*, exalted far above all bleſſing and praiſe, which the creatures in both can render.

5. From his Iſrael he hath eſpecial demands of gratitude. They are his *people*, *exalted* to the higheſt ſtate of dignity, even to be called *ſaints*, and *brought near unto him*, in a covenant of grace through the Redeemer; admitted into a ſtate of communion with him, and enjoying the diſtinguiſhing tokens of his favour; and therefore moſt juſtly doth he deſerve to be their *praiſe*, the great and glorious object of it in time and in eternity. Amen. Hallelujah.

PSALM CXLIX.

This is a hymn of praiſe to the Redeemer; for whatever victory gave the immediate occaſion, we muſt in it look forward to the kingdom of the Meſſiah, who, in the chariot of the everlaſting goſpel, goes forth conquering and to conquer. Here is, 1. *Abundance of joy to all the people of God*, ver. 1—5. 2. *Abundance of terror to the proudeſt of their enemies*, ver. 6—9.

1. [a] PRaiſe ye the LORD. [b] Sing unto the LORD a new ſong, *and* his praiſe in the congregation of ſaints. 2. Let Iſrael rejoice in [c] him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in [d] their King. 3. [e] let them praiſe his name † in the dance: let them ſing praiſes unto him with the timbrel and harp. 4. For [f] the LORD taketh pleaſure in his people: [g] he will beautify the meek with ſalvation. 5. Let the ſaints be joyful in glory: let them [h] ſing aloud upon their beds.

[a] Pſ. civ. 35.
[b] Ib. xxxiii. 3.
[c] Ib. c. 3. Iſa. liv. 5.
[d] Mat. xxi. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[e] Pſ. lxxxi. 2.
† Or, with the pipe.
[f] Pſ. xxxv. 27. Prov. xi. 20.
[g] Pſ. cxxxii. 16.
[h] Job xxxv. 10.

v. 1—5. The contemplation on new wonders of God's hand calls for a new ſong of praiſe. The place appointed is *the congregation of the ſaints*; for when we aſſemble for public worſhip, praiſe is the nobleſt part of it, and therein ſhould all join. *Let Iſrael rejoice in him that made him*, or, *in his makers*, the eternal Three, whoſe work it is not only to make the perſons, or to form the people of Iſrael into a nation, but to create in righteouſneſs and true holineſs the ſpiritual Iſrael, which is the moſt enlarged matter of our joy; *and let the children of Zion*, the living members of Chriſt's church, *be joyful in their King*, Meſſiah, exalted to the throne of glory, and ever-living to bleſs and make his people happy. *Let them*, theſe redeemed ſouls, *praiſe his name in the ſacred dance*, which on ſolemn occaſions was uſed ; or *with the pipe : let them ſing praiſes unto him with the timbrel and harp*, as expreſſive of that ſweeter melody they made unto God in their hearts, and without which the other were but prophanation. *For the Lord taketh pleaſure in his people :* they are his in the Son of his eternal love ; he admits them into communion with himſelf, accepts their ſervices, delights in their perſons. *He will beautify the meek with ſalvation*, who, lowly in their own eyes, are led to Jeſus for ſalvation. Theſe he beautifies with the robe of the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, with the graces of his Spirit, and ſhortly will bring them where, perfected in holineſs and happineſs, they ſhall ſhine as the ſtars in the firmament for ever and ever. Therefore *let the ſaints*, for this is their honoured character, however in the world the name be ridiculed, let the ſaints *be joyful in glory* ; adorned as they are, and in hope of what they ſhall be ; or *gloriouſly*, with exceeding great joy. *Let them ſing aloud upon their beds*, not aſhamed of being heard, but triumphing in the ſalvation of God, when they awake at midnight, when they lie on beds of ſickneſs, or go down to the duſt of death ; and well may they ſing who have nothing to fear, every thing to hope, every foe vanquiſhed, the ſting of death removed, the gates of heaven opened, and glory, honour, and immortality in full proſpect before them. Lord give me to ſhare in this felicity of thy choſen ! Open thou my mouth, and my lips ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe !

6. *Let* the high *praiſes* of God *be* in their † mouth,
and [i] a two-edged ſword in their hand ; 7. To execute
vengeance upon the heathen, *and* puniſhments upon the
people ; 8. To bind their kings with chains, and their
nobles with fetters of iron ; 9. To execute upon them
[k] the judgment written : [l] this honour have all his ſaints.
Praiſe ye the LORD.

† Heb. Throat.
[i] Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16.
[k] Deut. vii. 1, 2.
[l] Pſ. cxlviii. 14.

v. 6—9. The victories of God's Iſrael are great and diſtinguiſhed, and therefore their praiſes are loud and joyful. *Let the high praiſes of God be in their mouth*, or, *the high things*, his glorious perfections, which are to be celebrated by them ; *and a two-edged ſword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and puniſhments upon the people* ; either literally to avenge the wrongs done to God's people by the neighbouring nations, now juſtly ſmitten with the irreſiſtible ſword of David and his army ; or, ſpiritually it may be interpreted of the ſword of the Spirit, *Eph.* vi. 17. *Heb.* iv. 12. which is ſharp and piercing, convincing the conſcience of ſin, cutting down all human righteouſneſs, and threatning eternal death to the ſoul. With this word in their mouths the apoſtles and preachers went forth, to fight againſt heathen idolatry and ſuperſtition, and to rebuke the people for their abominations : and the powerful effects of it ſoon appeared in the demolition of the idols and their temples, and the converſion of the Gentiles to God, who turned at their reproof. *To bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron*, as Joſhua and David had done by their conquered foes : or rather, as Chriſt hath done, and will do, by his enemies, binding Satan in chains from hurting his people, and deſtroying the antichriſtian powers that oppreſs them : or by the effectual power of his grace, drawing the hearts of ſinners, even ſome of higheſt rank, in chains of love to him, ſtronger than fetters of iron. *To execute upon them the judgment written* ; on the nations of Canaan, (*See Deut.* vii. 2.) or rather, upon all the enemies of Chriſt and his people, who reject the warnings of his word, and therefore muſt periſh everlaſtingly, *Mark* xvi. 16. *This honour have all the ſaints :* all the bleſſings in this pſalm recited are theirs ; they ſhall be glorious in the eyes of God ; rejoice in his ſalvation ; and, ſitting down with Chriſt on his throne, ſee all their enemies at the laſt become their footſtool ; and in the proſpect of that great day they may well cry, Hallelujah !

PSALM CL.

Filled with ſacred rapture, the pſalmiſt here breathes forth his ſoul in praiſes. He ſhews, 1. *For what, and upon what account God is to be praiſed,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *How, and with what expreſſions of joy God is to be praiſed,* ver. 3—5. 3. *Who muſt praiſe the Lord ; it is every one's buſineſs,* ver. 6.

1. † PRaiſe ye the LORD. Praiſe God in his ſanctuary :
praiſe him in the firmament of his power.
2. [a] Praiſe him for his mighty acts : praiſe him according
to his excellent greatneſs. 3. Praiſe him with the ſound
of the ‡ trumpet : [b] praiſe him with the pſaltery and harp.
4. Praiſe him with the timbrel and § dance : praiſe him
with ſtringed inſtruments and organs. 5. Praiſe him
upon the loud cymbals : praiſe him upon the high-
ſounding cymbals. 6. Let every thing that hath breath
praiſe the LORD. [c] ‖ Praiſe ye the LORD.

† Heb. Hallelujah. Pſ. civ. 35.
[a] Pſ. cxlv. 5, 6.
‡ Or, cornet.
[b] Pſ. lxxxii. 1. & cxlix. 3.
§ Or, pipe.
[c] Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.
‖ Heb. Hallelujah. Pſ. civ. 35.

v. 1—6. Thirteen times in the compaſs of ſix ſhort verſes doth the pſalmiſt repeat the exhortation to praiſe. His own heart glowed with gratitude ; he would inculcate upon us the great and delightful duty of praiſe ; and becauſe our cold hearts are ſo backward, he would rouſe us from our lethargy, and ſtir us up to join his ſongs. Obſerve,

1. Where God's praiſe is to be expected : *In his ſanctuary* below, where his worſhipping ſervants muſt unite their voices to adore his name ; or, *in his holy One*, Chriſt Jeſus, for whom, and through whom, all the ſacrifices of his people's praiſes aſcend, and are accepted before God ; and *in the firmament of his power* above, where angels ceaſeleſs adore him, and all glorified ſaints will ſhortly join them in this happy ſervice.

2. Abundant reaſon there is for praiſing him, becauſe of *his mighty acts* of creation, providence, redemption, and grace, wherein his *excellent greatneſs*, or *the multitude of his greatneſs*, appears. Excellence above conception, and greatneſs ſo ſurpaſſing, that all our praiſes come infinitely ſhort of his glory ; yea, the higheſt angels, after their moſt enlarged adorations, own him far exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe.

3. The manner of our praiſes. With all melody in our hearts, and ſacred joy, of which theſe inſtruments of muſic were typical, that were uſed in the ſervice of the ſanctuary : and as the union of various ſounds and inſtruments heightens the harmony, ſo muſt the people of God united in love, unite their voices, with one mind and one mouth glorifying God.

4. Who muſt praiſe ? *Every thing that hath breath.* The brute creation, though not with voice articulate, ſpeak his praiſe. The ſons of men throughout the world are called upon to uſe that ſpeech which God hath given them in this beſt employment of it ; eſpecially the living ſouls, quickned by the eternal Spirit, have peculiar cauſe for praiſe, whether conſidering the diſtinguiſhed privileges they enjoy, or the greater glories which are before them. In heaven, whither we are going, all will be praiſe : it is good to begin the happy ſervice here, and antedate our joys ; then, when our moment here below ſhall end, and this faultering tongue, unable longer to ſuſtain the notes, is ſilent on the bed of death, borne upon angels wings our ſouls ſhall take their flight, and with enraptured exultation join the Hallelujahs of the ſky. Amen, and Amen !

The End of the Book of PSALMS.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
PROVERBS.

The author of this volume before us is the wiſe ſon of **David**, *who, under the inſpiration of God's Spirit, was directed to commit to writing, for our admonition, thoſe maxims of heavenly wiſdom, which, whoever is enabled to follow, will be led into paths of everlaſting peace. They are called Proverbs, ſhort and ſententious, the more poignant, and eaſier remembered. They contain a complete body of divine ethics, politics, and œconomics, rebuking every vice, recommending every virtue, and directing how to act in every relation, condition, and circumſtance.*

The book conſiſts of five parts. (1.) *A preface, exhorting to the ſtudy of true wiſdom,* chap. i—ix. (2.) *The Proverbs of Solomon, put together by himſelf,* chap. x—xxiv. (3.) *Another book of his Proverbs, copied by the ſervants of Hezekiah,* chap. xxv—xxix. (4.) *The words of Agur,* chap. xxx. (5.) *The inſtructions his mother Bathſheba gave him,* chap. xxxi.

CHAP. I.

Before Chriſt 1000.

The Pſalms were full of devotion and rapture ; this book, of inſtruction for our conduct. Both muſt unite ; the fire of devotion, and the grace received in prayer muſt quicken and ſtrengthen us for the practice of duty. In this chapter we have, 1. *The title of the book, ſhewing the general ſcope and deſign of it,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The firſt principle of it recommended to our ſerious conſideration,* ver. 7—9. 3. *A neceſſary caution againſt bad company,* ver. 10—19. 4. *A faithful and lively repreſentation of wiſdom's reaſonings with the children of men, and the certain ruin of thoſe that turn a deaf ear to thoſe reaſonings,* ver. 20—33.

1. [a] THE proverbs of Solomon the ſon of David, king of Iſrael ; 2. To know wiſdom and inſtruction, to perceive the words of underſtanding ; 3. To receive the inſtruction of wiſdom, juſtice, and judgment, and † equity ; 4. To give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion. 5. A wiſe *man* will hear, and [b] will increaſe learning : and a man of underſtanding ſhall attain unto wiſe counſels : 6. To underſtand a proverb, and ‡ the interpretation ; the words of the wiſe, and their dark ſayings.

[a] 1 Kings iv. 32. Chap. x. 1. & xxv. 1. Eccleſ. xii. 9.

† Heb. Equities.

[b] Chap. ix. 9.

‡ Or, eloquent ſpeech.

v. 1—6. The book of Proverbs opens with an introduction, informing us,

1. Who was the author of them : *Solomon, the ſon of David, king of Iſrael* ; the wiſe ſon of a wiſe father ; a king, who thought it no diſparagement of his dignity to be a teacher of the ignorant ; and the type of him, who in the fulneſs of time ſhould ariſe to reign over the Iſrael of God.

2. What was the author's deſign. He ſought not fame by his works, but to make men wiſe unto ſalvation. *To know wiſdom*, the ſyſtem of divine truth revealed from God ; *and inſtruction*, the method of attaining it ourſelves, and communicating it to others. *To perceive the words of underſtanding* ; to diſtinguiſh truth from error, having this infallible teſt to appeal to. *To receive the inſtruction of wiſdom*, even the wiſdom of God, the dictates of the ſpirit of truth, teaching us *juſtice, judgment, and equity*, in all our concerns among men ; to render to all their due, according to the obligations, connections, and relation we ſtand in towards them. *To give ſubtilty to the ſimple* ; the inſtructions here given are level to the meaneſt capacities ; and the moſt illiterate, who receive them, will become wiſe as ſerpents ; wiſe in the beſt ſenſe, even unto ſalvation. *To the young man*, whoſe inexperience wants a guide, and his raſhneſs a check, *knowledge and diſcretion*, or *thought* ; how to think and act aright, and in theſe dangerous days to demean himſelf according to the rules preſcribed in God's bleſſed word. *A wiſe man will hear* ; not only the young and ſimple may find inſtruction, but there is here what the wiſe may attend with profit, and their attention hereunto will prove the reality of the wiſdom they profeſs, *and will increaſe learning* ; for thoſe who have made the higheſt attainments, are at beſt defective. There are treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge in the book of God far, very far beyond all we have yet reached. None may think themſelves too wiſe to learn, and too old to be taught : *and a man of underſtanding ſhall attain unto wiſe counſels* ; the counſels of God, the myſteries of his goſpel, wherein the wiſdom of God is moſt eminently diſplayed ; and being himſelf inſtructed, he will be enabled to aſſiſt others with his advice : *ſhall poſſeſs the helm*, as the words may be rendered, whether as a teacher in the church of God, or as the pilot of the ſtate. *To underſtand a proverb, and the interpretation*, or, *the elegance* ; both able to reſolve the truth intended to be conveyed, and point out the beauty of the manner and expreſſion in which it is couched : *the words of the wiſe, and their dark ſayings.* To a natural man, the greateſt truths of ſcripture are enigmatical, and often in his account fooliſhneſs ; yet are they the words of the wiſe, even of the all-wiſe God ; and when he gives an enlightened underſtanding,

ſtanding, then, like a mathematical problem ſolved, what ſeemed confuſion and nonſenſe to the unſkilful, appears evident, clear, and ſtriking.

c Job xxviii. 28. Pſ. cxi. 10. Chap. ix. 10. Eccleſ xii. 13.
† Or, principal part.
d Chap. iv. 1. & vi. 20.
e Chap. iii. 22.

7. ¶ [c] The fear of the LORD *is* the † beginning of knowledge: *but* fools deſpiſe wiſdom and inſtruction. 8. [d] My ſon, hear the inſtruction of thy father, and forſake not the law of thy mother: 9. For [e] they *ſhall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

v. 7—9. More true wiſdom is contained in one maxim of God's word, than in all the volumes of philoſophers.

1. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning*, or ſummit, *of knowledge.* This is the firſt principle to be laid down and received by all who would be truly wiſe. God muſt be the object of our fear; not as dreading his wrath, but with reverential awe affected before him, with holy jealouſy careful not to offend him, and in all his worſhip and ways ſollicitous to pleaſe him. *But fools deſpiſe wiſdom and inſtruction.* They may profeſs themſelves to be wiſe, but their contempt of God's word, and of divine teaching, ſhews their folly as great as their profaneneſs.

2. Next to the fear of God is the honour and attention due to our parents. *My ſon, hear the inſtruction of thy father.* That fathers will take pains to inſtruct their children in the good ways of God, is preſumed; for they are unnatural monſters, who can ſuffer their children to grow up in ignorance, and whoſe wicked examples embolden them to ſin. And to the inſtructions of a good father a dutiful ſon will lend an attentive ear: *and forſake not the law of thy mother*; for we owe the ſame reſpect to both our parents; and he is equally a diſobedient child, who rejects the advice of the one as of the other. *For they ſhall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck*; in God's ſight of great price, in whoſe eyes filial duty and early piety is infinitely more ornamental, than in ours the collar ſtudded with jewels, or the pendant chains of gold.

f Eph. v. 11.
g Jer. v. 26.
h Hab. ii. 9.
i Chap. iv. 14.
k Iſa. lix. 7. Rom. iii. 15.
† Heb. Every thing that hath wing.

10. ¶ My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, [f] conſent thou not. 11. If they ſay, Come with us, let us [g] lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe: 12. Let us ſwallow them up alive as the grave, and whole, as thoſe that go down into the pit: 13. We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, [h] we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil: 14. Caſt in thy lot among us, let us all have one purſe. 15. My ſon, [i] walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path. 16. For [k] their feet run to evil, and make haſte to ſhed blood. 17. Surely in vain the net is ſpread in the ſight of † any bird. 18. And they lay wait for their *own* blood, they lurk privily for their *own* lives. 19. So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain: *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

v. 10—19. Among the firſt and moſt dangerous ſnares for young perſons is bad company: to ſhun this, they can never enough be cautioned; and as this wicked world is full of tempters, we muſt watch indeed, if we would keep ourſelves unſpotted from them.

1. Their character is ſtrongly drawn. *Sinners* will *entice thee* from attending to the advice of aged, whom they call doating parents; will repreſent the paths of vice in every pleaſing colour; and promiſing plenty and impunity, ſollicit thy conſent to join in their deſtructive ways. *Come, ſay they, with us*; *let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe*, or, *with impunity*; to rob the harmleſs traveller, and, if he reſiſt, take his blood as well as his money. Nor ſhould they fear a diſcovery: *Let us ſwallow them up alive as the grave, and whole as thoſe that go down into the pit*; ſo that no traces of the blood ſhall remain, and in the pit they can tell no tales, ſo that we ſhall be ſafe from accuſation. *We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance*, earned thus without toil: *we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil*, and riot in the affluence. Come, *caſt in thy lot with us*, and be happy; or, *thou ſhalt caſt thy lot with us*, welcome to ſhare all our gains. *Let us all have one purſe*, or *we will*, and live jovially together on the prey we have taken. *Note*, (1.) Evil companions are ever ready to proffer their friendſhip, whilſt the prudent and pious are cautious with whom they are connected. (2.) The hope of ſecreſy is the great emboldening argument to ſin. (3.) Gain appears to be precious ſubſtance in a worldling's eye; but it is dearly bought at the price of the ſoul's eternal ruin. (4.) They who once give way to ſin, never know to what lengths they ſhall run. (5.) The love of money is the root of all evil.

2. The caution given is, *Conſent thou not* to their ſollicitations. *My ſon, walk not thou in the way of them*, to aſſociate with them, or follow their dangerous ſteps. *Refrain thy foot from their path*, when tempted thereunto, and to which corrupt nature is ſo prone; *for their feet run to evil*, offenſive to God, and hurtful to mankind; *and make haſte to ſhed blood*, the vengeance due to which will ſhortly bring down the heavieſt judgments upon them. *Surely in vain is the net ſpread in the ſight of any bird*: they no ſooner perceive the ſnare, than they fly away; but the ſinner, more infatuated, ſees the devil ſpread his toils, knows the end of theft or murder muſt be fatal to his body, and is aſſured, that hell muſt be his portion, yet ruſhes into the toils, and madly courts his ruin. *They lay wait for their own blood*; *they lurk privily for their own lives.* Blood will cry in ſpite of all their care to conceal it, and their deeds of darkneſs come to the light, and pull down deſtruction on their heads. *So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain*; ſo fatal to him, body and ſoul, *which taketh away the life of the owners thereof*: either the robber murders the poſſeſſor of it, to obtain his wealth; or the goods he hath ſtolen are found upon him, and produced as evidences to take away his life. *Note*, (1.) If we would keep from the deeds of the wicked, we muſt ſhun their ſociety. (2.) What is ſaid of robbery or murder is equally true of every other ſin, that it will prove the damnation of the ſinner at laſt. (3.) What folly, what madneſs is in the human heart, that can for a periſhing world deſtroy an immortal ſoul, and for a momentary pleaſure plunge into everlaſting burnings?

† Heb. Wiſdoms. Col. ii. 3.
l Chap. viii. 1. & ix. 3.
m John iii. 37.
n Joel ii. 28.
o Iſa. lxv. 12. & lxvi. 4. Jer. vii. 13. Ezek. viii. 18.
p Pſ. cvii. 11. Ver. 30. Luke vii. 30.
q Pſ. ii. 4.
r Chap. x. 24.
s Job xxvii. 9. & xxxv. 12. Iſa. i. 15. Jer. xi. 11, & xiv. 12. Mic. iii. 4, Zech. vii. 13. Jam. iv. 3.
t Job xxi. 14.
u Ver. 25.
x Job iv. 8. Chap. xiv. 14. & xxii. 8. Jer. vi. 19.
‡ Or, eaſe.
y Pſ. xxv. 12, 13.
z Pſ. cxii. 7.

20. ¶ † [l] Wiſdom crieth without, ſhe uttereth her voice in the ſtreets: 21. She [m] crieth in the chief place of concourſe, in the openings of the gates: in the city ſhe uttereth her words, *ſaying*, 22. How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity? and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge? 23. Turn you at my reproof: behold, [n] I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. 24. ¶ [o] Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded; 25. But ye have [p] ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof: 26. [q] I alſo will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; 27. When [r] your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind; when diſtreſs and auguiſh cometh upon you. 28. [s] Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me: 29. For that [t] they hated knowledge, and did not chooſe the fear of the LORD. 30. [u] They would none of my counſel: They deſpiſed all my reproof. 31. Therefore [x] ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. 32. For the ‡ turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay them, and the proſperity of fools ſhall deſtroy them. 33. But [y] whoſo hearkneth unto me, ſhall dwell ſafely, and [y] ſhall be quiet from fear of evil.

v. 20—33. As diligently as we are warned to fly the enticements of ſinners, as earneſtly are we admoniſhed to attend the calls and warnings of God.

We have,

1. The voice of wiſdom crying in the ſtreets, in the places of greateſt concourſe, and in the gates, that all who will may hear the divine admonitions. This wiſdom, or *wiſdoms* in the original, may be interpreted of the divine revelation in general, or rather ſignifies Chriſt Jeſus, who is the perſon here ſpeaking in the words of his everlaſting goſpel; rebuking the wickedneſs of thoſe to whom he preached, and foretelling their dreadful doom. And this voice is ſtill heard in the public miniſtration of the word, and theſe warnings are to us ſtill equally needful, and the danger of neglecting them equally fatal. *Note*, They that periſh under a preached goſpel, are left peculiarly without excuſe.

2. The words which wiſdom utters. [1.] He expoſtulates, *How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity?* indulge your own vain notions, and ſport in your own deceivings, in hopes of mercy unſupported by God's word, and in ways of folly which muſt end in miſery: *and ſcorners delight in ſcorning*; ſcoffing at ſerious godlineſs, and counting it high humour and wit to turn things ſacred into ridicule; contemning religion as a mean, low thing, as the Scribes and Phariſees did the great Author of it: *and fools hate knowledge*; averſe to hear the goſpel word, and chuſing darkneſs rather than light. With ſuch, with many ſuch, God bears long. He delighteth not indeed in the death of a ſinner, and therefore, [2.] He exhorts them earneſtly not to weary out his patience, or provoke his wrath. *Turn ye at my reproof*; attend to the calls of my word; and moſt encouraging is the invitation. *Behold*, ſinner, and wonder, after all thy provocations, at the grace revealed in Jeſus Chriſt, who hath gifts even for the rebellious; *behold, I will pour out my ſpirit unto you*, or *upon you*; upon ſome at leaſt, if others continued impenitent, and would not hear. *I will make known my words unto you*; in general to all, in the preaching of the goſpel, ſo as to leave them inexcuſable who reject it; and in a ſpecial manner to many, by enabling them to receive the truth in the light and in the love of it. [3.] He upbraids them

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them with their impenitence and hardneſs of heart: *I have called, and ye refuſed*; as the Jews rejected his word, and ſinners continue to do; either by withdrawing from the place of hearing, or by their inattention there, or by their obſtinacy notwithſtanding every warning, perſiſting in their ſins. *I have ſtretched out my arm, and no man regarded*; as Jeſus did in the temple, *John* v. 11. and as his zealous miniſters do in their importunate diſcourſes, but to many with ſmall effect; they continue a diſobedient and gainſaying people. *Ye have ſet at nought all my counſel*; the goſpel of their ſalvation, which the Jews deſpiſed, and which the ſelf-righteous and the careleſs ſinner ſtill reject: *and would have none of my reproof*; would neither hear nor obey it; nay, *they hated knowledge*, ver. 29. *and did not chooſe the fear of the Lord*, but rather preferred the perverſe ways of their own hearts. [4.] He therefore denounces their doom, which had a preſent fulfilment in the deſtruction of the Jewiſh people, and will moſt eminently be accompliſhed in the day of the final perdition of ungodly men. *I alſo will laugh at your calamity*; *I will mock when your fear cometh*: come it will; pain and ſickneſs will ſeize on their bodies, and terrors on their guilty ſouls. *When your fear cometh as a deſolation*, overwhelming as a flood; *and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind*, ſudden and irreſiſtible; *when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you*, as was terribly felt in the ſiege of Jeruſalem, and in the day of wrath will more fearfully overtake the impenitent ſinner; then, inſtead of the leaſt compaſſion, God, angels, and ſaints will mock at their torment, and aggravate their wretchedneſs. Too late then it will be to cry for mercy, when the door is ſhut. Now prayer can avail, and God will hear the cries of the miſerable; but *then*, ſays he, *they ſhall call upon me, but I will not anſwer*; deaf to their cries, though it were but for a drop of water to cool their flaming tongue. *They ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me*; all their importunity is vain; the ſentence is gone forth, the decree irrevocable, their damnation eternal. And this according to the ſtricteſt juſtice: they choſe their own deluſions, and were impenetrably hardened, *v.* 29, 30. *Therefore they ſhall eat of the fruit of their own way.* Sin and ſuffering are inſeparable: they who chuſe the one, muſt expect the other; *and be filled with their own devices*, in the ruin they have courted. Thus the Jews, who crucified Chriſt, were themſelves miſerably crucified, till trees were wanting to hang them on. *For the turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay them*: they who depart from Chriſt muſt periſh; or, *the reſt of the ſimple*, &c. whilſt they cry, Peace, peace, ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them; *and the proſperity of fools ſhall deſtroy them*; their poſſeſſions enabling them to give a looſe to the gratifications of their appetites, and begetting that fatal ſecurity which is the prelude to ruin. Let ſinners read theſe awful lines, and tremble. Reader, whoever thou art, may they never be fulfilled in thee. [5.] He declares the bleſſedneſs of thoſe who hear and obey the reproofs of God's word. *Whoſo hearkeneth unto me*, to Chriſt and his goſpel, and yields up his heart to him, *ſhall dwell ſafely*: no enemy ſhall approach to hurt him, neither Satan, ſin, nor death. Sprinkled with the blood, and cloathed in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus, his peace on earth is ſecured, and in heaven ſhall his abode for ever be: *and ſhall be quiet from fear of evil*; entered into that eternal reſt, which nothing can diſturb, and which remaineth ſure to all the people of God. Lord, may this be my lot and portion!

CHAP. II.

Solomon having foretold the deſtruction of thoſe that are obſtinate in their impiety, in this chapter applies himſelf to thoſe who are willing to be taught: And, 1. *He ſhews them, that if they would diligently uſe the means of knowledge and grace, they ſhould obtain of God that knowledge and grace which they ſeek*, ver. 1—9. 2. *He ſhews them of what unſpeakable advantage it would be to them.* (1.) *It would preſerve them from the ſnares of evil men*, ver. 10—15. *and of evil women*, ver. 16—19. (2.) *It would direct them into, and keep them in the way of good men*, ver. 20, 21, 22.

1. MY ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and [a] hide my commandments with thee: 2. So that thou incline thine ear unto wiſdom, *and* apply thine heart to underſtanding: 3. Yea, if thou crieſt after knowledge, [b] *and* lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding: 4. [c] If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as *for* hid treaſures: 5. Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. 6. For [d] the LORD giveth wiſdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and underſtanding. 7. He layeth up ſound wiſdom for the righteous: [e] *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly. 8. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and [f] preſerveth the way of his ſaints. 9. Then ſhalt thou underſtand righteouſneſs, and judgment, and equity: *yea*, every good path.

[a] Pſ. cxix. 11. Chap. iv. 21. & vii. 1.

[b] Jam. i. 5.

[c] Chap. iii, 14. Mat. xiii. 44.

[d] 1 Kings iii. 9, 12. Jam. i. 5.

[e] Pſ. lxxxiv. 11. Chap. xxx. 5.

[f] 1 Sam. ii. 9.

v. 1—9. Wiſdom is the principal thing; therefore by all means to be ſought after.

1. The way preſcribed is threefold: (1.) Serious attention to, and meditation upon the word of God. (2.) Fervent and importunate prayer, the beſt guide to the knowledge of the oracles of God. (3.) The diligent uſe of every appointed means, being as eager in the ſearch, as thoſe whoſe hearts are ſet upon riches, are in diſcovering the golden mines, and ranſacking the precious ore, *v.* 1—4.

2. Succeſs will crown theſe labours, when perſevered in. *Then ſhalt thou underſtand* that capital point, *the fear of the Lord*; wherein it conſiſts, and how it is to be evidenced in the converſation: *and find the knowledge of God*, of his grace and glory, particularly as manifeſted in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, whom to know is everlaſting life: and this is the gift of God, *v.* 6. not acquired by the exerciſe of our rational faculties, but communicated by the Spirit of truth, *out of whoſe mouth cometh knowledge and underſtanding*; in the ſcriptures, which he hath cauſed to be written for our learning, in which are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge: not the ſhew of it, but the reality, *ſound wiſdom*; and laid up there *for the righteous*, thoſe who by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt are ſo accounted of God, and whoſe hearts and ways are by the Spirit renewed in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly*, who make God's word their rule, and being under the divine protection, the ſhield of almighty love is ſtretched over them, that ſin, Satan, and the world may not come near to hurt them. *He keepeth the path of judgment*; doth what is right himſelf in the diſpenſations of his providence and grace; *and preſerveth the way of his ſaints*, that they may never periſh, but with perſeverance continue in the path of everlaſting glory. *Then ſhalt thou underſtand righteouſneſs and judgment*; diſtinguiſh truth from error; know how to act with juſtice in all thy dealings, and what is the duty of every ſtation and relation; *and equity*; *yea, every good path*, whether reſpecting God or man: and thus *the man of God ſhall be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed for every good work.*

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10. ¶ When wiſdom entreth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleaſant unto thy ſoul; 11. Diſcretion ſhall preſerve thee, [g] underſtanding ſhall keep thee: 12. To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that ſpeaketh froward things. 13. Who leave the paths of uprightneſs, to walk in the ways of darkneſs: 14. Who [h] rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardneſs of the wicked. 15. [i] Whoſe ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths. 16. To deliver thee from [k] the ſtrange woman, [l] *even* from the ſtranger *which* flattereth with her words: 17. [m] Which forſaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. 18. For [n] her houſe inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. 19. None that go unto her, return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. 20. That thou mayeſt walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous. 21. For [o] the upright ſhall dwell in the land, and the perfect ſhall remain in it. 22. [p] But the wicked ſhall be cut off from the earth, and the tranſgreſſors ſhall be † rooted out of it.

[g] Chap. vi. 22.

[h] Chap. x. 23. Jer. xi. 15.

[i] Pſ. cxxv. 5.

[k] Chap. v. 20.

[l] Chap v. 3. & vi. 24. & vii. 5.

[m] Mal. ii. 14, 15.

[n] Chap. vii. 27.

[o] Pſ. xxxvii. 29.

[p] Job xviii. 17. Pſ. civ. 35.

† Or pluckt up.

v. 10—22. The unſpeakable advantages of wiſdom are here enlarged upon. It is the great preſervative from ſin, the guide into the way of righteouſneſs, and life or death eternal hang upon our choice or neglect of it.

1. Wiſdom will be a preſervative from the ways and miſeries of ſin. *When wiſdom entereth into thine heart*; when Chriſt takes poſſeſſion of the heart by his grace, and his goſpel effectually influences the conſcience; *and knowledge is pleaſant to thy ſoul*; the knowledge of God reconciled in Chriſt, and of the great and precious promiſes of the word, ſweeter than honey and the honey-comb; *diſcretion ſhall preſerve thee, and underſtanding ſhall keep thee*; watchful againſt the ſnares laid for our ſouls, and careful to avoid the temptation and the tempters, whether wicked men, or abandoned women, both of which are here mentioned. *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man*, whoſe principles are as corrupt, as his practice is abominable; and the character of ſuch is ſtrongly marked, that we may take knowledge of them, and ſhun them. *They ſpeak froward things*, ridiculing whatever is ſacred; pointing their wit againſt the glorious truths of God; ſeeking with impious blaſphemy to bring religion and its precepts into contempt; and dreſſing up vice in harmleſſneſs and innocence. *They leave the paths of uprightneſs*; apoſtates from the truths they once profeſſed, and theſe ever grow the moſt abandoned; *to walk in the ways of darkneſs*; wilfully blind, hating the light, and fleeing from it, and hurrying downward into the regions of eternal darkneſs. *Who rejoice in evil*, ſinning without remorſe, and glorying in their ſhame; *and delight in the frowardneſs of the wicked*: they not only love ſin themſelves, but

have pleaſure in thoſe who commit it; hear their profaneneſs with ſatisfaction, and laugh at miſchief, eſpecially pleaſed when thoſe who made profeſſion of religion are drawn into iniquity. *Whoſe ways are crooked, and they froward in the path*; ever turning from the ſtrait path of truth, obſtinately determined in impenitence, and diſpleaſed and impatient under every rebuke or warning they may meet. From ſuch men and ſuch ways good Lord deliver us! Yet greater ſnares remain; ſnares, from which nothing but this divine wiſdom can preſerve the ſoul: *to deliver thee from the ſtrange woman*, the adultereſs, *who flattereth with her words*, enticing with ſoft blandiſhments, and pretending warm affection, when meaning nothing but the baſe gratification of lawleſs luſt. *Which forſaketh the guide of her youth*, treacherouſly leaving the huſband ſhe choſe, and ſacrificing every ſacred tie of duty, honour, and conſcience, to beſtial gratification: *and forgetteth the covenant of her God*, her plighted vows, which this all-ſeeing and all-righteous God was called to witneſs, and with perjured guilt ruſhing into another's arms. Weak youth, beware! believe not her hypocritical ſmiles, nor hope to find ſweetneſs in theſe ſtolen waters; there is poiſon in the cup, daſh it to the ground. *For her houſe inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead*, or *rephaim*, the giants of the old world, who periſhed in the flood: for by theſe vile affections and indulgences the ſoul is mortally wounded, the body often diſeaſed, and haſtened hereby to the grave, and both body and ſoul in the high road to eternal perdition, where, for a momentary pleaſure, everlaſting pain muſt be the puniſhment of the damned ſinner. *None that go unto her, return again*; at leaſt few, very few, recover from this ſnare; the conſcience grows callous, the ſoul is enſlaved, and recovery (if not impoſſible) yet moſt improbable: *neither take they hold of the paths of life*, returning with ſhame and remorſe to Jeſus Chriſt, who could yet ſave to the uttermoſt; but they continue hardned in ſin, and uſually periſh in their impenitence. Some interpreters have applied this to the great whore, the myſtical Babylon, againſt whoſe idolatries and adulteries, we have ſo many warnings in the book of Revelations.

2. Wiſdom will teach us not only to eſchew the evil, but to chuſe the good. *That thou mayeſt walk in the way of good men*, ſuch as the ſaints of God have trodden of old, and proved by bleſſed experience to be ways of pleaſantneſs; *and keep the paths of the righteous*, ſteadily perſevering therein, which will bring a man peace at the laſt.

3. The bleſſedneſs of the good ways of our God will be great. *For the upright ſhall dwell in the land, and the perfect ſhall remain in it*; the faithful and ſincere ſhall not be cut off as the ſinner, by an untimely death, but have a comfortable and peaceable abode here on earth; or rather ſhall have his eternal reſt in the better land of the heavenly Canaan, and dwell therein for ever.

4. Ruin will overtake the wicked. *They ſhall be cut off from the earth*, by death, or the ſword of civil juſtice, *and the tranſgreſſors ſhall be rooted out of it*; neither branch nor root of them ſhall remain in that new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs, but they ſhall be deſtroyed with an everlaſting deſtruction, and caſt as tares into the fire that never ſhall be quenched.

CHAP. III.

Excellent is the advice here given. May we be enabled to follow it. 1. *We muſt be conſtant to our duty, becauſe that is the way to be happy*, ver. 1—4. 2. *We muſt live a life of dependance upon God, becauſe that is the way to be ſafe*, ver. 6, 7. 3. *We muſt keep up the fear of God, becauſe that is the way to be healthful*, ver. 7, 8. 4. *We muſt ſerve God with our eſtates, becauſe that is the way to be rich*, ver. 9, 10. 5. *We muſt bear afflictions well, becauſe that is the way to get good by them*, ver. 11, 12. 6. *We muſt take pains to obtain wiſdom, becauſe that is the way to gain her, and to gain by her*, ver. 13—20. 7. *We muſt always govern ourſelves by the rules of wiſdom, becauſe that is the way to be always eaſy*, ver. 21—26. 8. *We muſt do all the good we can, and no hurt to our neighbours, becauſe according as men are juſt or unjuſt, charitable or uncharitable, humble or haughty, accordingly they ſhall receive of God*, ver. 27—35. *By all which it appears what a tendency religion has to make men both bleſſed and bleſſings.*

1. MY ſon, forget not my law; but [a] let thine heart keep my commandments: 2. For length of days, and long life, and [b] peace ſhall they add to thee. 3. Let not mercy and truth forſake thee: [c] bind them about thy neck, write them upon the table of thine heart. 4. [d] So ſhalt thou find favour, and good † underſtanding in the ſight of God and man. 5. ¶ [e] Truſt in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own underſtanding. 6. [f] In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths.

[a] Deut. viii. 1. & xxx. 16, 20.
[b] Pſ. cxix. 165.
[c] Exod. xiii. 9. Deut. vi. 8. Chap. vi. 21. & vii. 3.
[d] Pſ. cxi. 10. 1 Sam. ii. 26. Luke ii. 52. Rom. xiv. 18.
† Or ſucceſs.
[e] Pſ. xxxvii. 3.
[f] 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

v. 1—6. To be truly religious is not only our bounden duty, but our higheſt intereſt, as appears in the threefold bleſſedneſs here promiſed thereunto.

1. *My ſon, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments*, ſtore them up in thy memory, cleave to them with hearty affection, obey them with unreſerved ſurrender, and with that delight and love which ſtamps the obedience genuine, and childlike. *For length of days, and long life, and peace ſhall they add to thee*: on earth a life of uſefulneſs, continued to old age, with God's peace, and the comfortable enjoyment of his favour; *in heaven*, a life enduring through the ages of eternity, and perfection of peace and bleſſedneſs ſhall be the everlaſting portion of the faithful ſoul.

2. *Let not mercy and truth forſake thee*, ſhew every kindneſs to men's bodies and ſouls, compaſſionate their diſtreſſes, and haſten to relieve them. In truth let every word be ſpoken; and to the goſpel-word ſteadfaſtly adhere: *bind them*, the commandments and doctrines of wiſdom, *about thy neck*, as the richeſt ornament, *write them upon the table of thine heart* ſo deep, that the divine impreſſion may never be eraſed. *So ſhalt thou find favour*, or *grace, and good underſtanding*, or *ſucceſs, in the ſight of God and man*; God will approve and delight in the work of his own hands; for all good cometh from him, and the children of God will with pleaſure behold theſe tokens of genuine wiſdom, and give the right hand of fellowſhip, wiſhing thee proſperity in the name of the Lord.

3. *Truſt in the Lord*, rejecting all other dependance and falſe confidences, truſt him at all times, in every difficulty, for the accompliſhment of all that Father, Son, and Spirit have engaged to do for their redeemed, in the everlaſting covenant of grace; truſt him *with all thine heart*, unfeignedly and univerſally, *and lean not unto thine own underſtanding*, but on his wiſdom, grace, and providence, to direct and guide us; without which, all our contrivances will diſappoint us, and our underſtanding be fooliſhneſs. *In all thy ways acknowledge him*, conſult his word, ſet him ever before thee; by prayer commit thy ways to him, aſcribe to him the ſucceſs of every undertaking, and ſubmit with entire reſignation to his corrections, *and he ſhall direct thy path*, ſo that the end of it ſhall be peace: he will guide us here by his counſel, and afterwards bring us to his glory.

7. ¶ [g] Be not wiſe in thine own eyes: [h] fear the LORD, and depart from evil. 8. It ſhall be † health to thy navel, and ‡ [i] marrow to thy bones. 9. [k] Honour the LORD with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt-fruits of all thine increaſe. 10. [l] So ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new wine. 11. ¶ [m] My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtning of the LORD: neither be weary of his correction. 12. For whom the LORD loveth, he correcteth, [n] even as a father the ſon, *in whom* he delighteth.

[g] Rom. xii. 16.
[h] Job i. 1. Chap. xvi. 6.
† Heb. Medicine.
‡ Heb. Moiſtening.
[i] Job xxi. 24.
[k] Exod. xxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 26. Deut. xxvi. 2, &c. Mal. iii. 10, &c. Luke xiv. 13.
[l] Deut. xxviii. 8.
[m] Job v. 17. Heb. xii. 5. Rev. iii. 19.
[n] Deut. viii. 5.

v. 7—12. Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come. We have here the beſt counſel, and the ſtrongeſt motives to attend thereto.

1. *Be not wiſe in thine own eyes*, puffed up with a vain conceit of our own abilities; preſuming to be wiſe above what is written, and ſlighting the advice of others; *fear the Lord*, in true humility depending upon him, reverencing his word, and ſubmiſſive to his will, *and depart from evil*, from ſin, from the appearances of it, keep at the greateſt diſtance poſſible, as from the abominable thing which God hates. *It ſhall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones*; it will contribute to the health of body as well as ſoul, to have God's fear upon our hearts, and ſin far removed; temperance and compoſure of mind being the beſt preſervatives.

2. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt-fruits of all thine increaſe*, ſupporting the miniſters of the ſanctuary and the cauſe of truth, aſſiſting the induſtrious, and giving liberally, and according to our abilities, to the poor and needy. The only true enjoyment of worldly wealth is thus to employ it for the glory of God, and the good of mankind. *So ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new wine*; for he that lendeth to the Lord, ſhall never be a loſer; what he layeth out, it ſhall be paid him again, often overpaid in kind, always in comfort.

3. *My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord*, which the Apoſtle quotes, *Heb.* xii. 5. and intimates that the exhortation is addreſſed to every child of God. Proſperity had been ſpoken of above as their lot, but ſometimes God ſees it for their good, to make them feel the rod of correction; and under all their trials, of whatever kind, his hand muſt be acknowledged. It is the rod of parental tenderneſs, not to be deſpiſed, however light it falls, or to be paſſed over with inſenſibility or inattention: *neither be weary of his correction*, murmuring under the weight or continuance of the afflictions, deſpairing of their removal, or impatiently led to take undue methods to extricate ourſelves from them. *For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth,*

and that is the moſt powerful argument for our patient ſubmiſſion. It is love, not wrath, which directs the ſtroke; it is intended purely for our good, it is the proof of God's paternal heart towards us, *even as a father the ſon*, *in whom he delighteth*, and wiſhes therefore to remove whatever would render him unamiable, or make him more pleaſing, as thoſe fruits of righteouſneſs do, which grow out of patient ſuffering. Let no child of God therefore diſtreſs himſelf with fears, ariſing from the weight, or ſeverity of his trials; rather let him take comfort from them, as marks of God's regard, and evidences of his adoption.

13. ¶ [o] Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wiſdom, and
the man *that* † getteth underſtanding. 14. For [p] the
merchandiſe of it *is* better than the merchandiſe of ſilver,
and the gain thereof than fine gold. 15. She *is* more
precious than rubies: and all the things thou canſt deſire,
are not to be compared unto her. 16. [q] Length of
days *is* in her right hand: *and* in her left hand riches
and honour. 17. Her ways *are* ways of pleaſantneſs,
and all her paths *are* peace. 18. She *is* [r] a tree of life
to them that lay hold upon her; and happy *is every one*
that retaineth her. 19. [s] The LORD by wiſdom hath
founded the earth; by underſtanding hath he eſtabliſhed
the heavens. 20. [t] By his knowledge the depths are
broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

[o] Chap. viii. 34.
† Heb. Draweth out.
[p] Job xxviii. 15, &c. Pſ. xix. 10. Chap. viii. 11, 19. & xvi. 16.
[q] Chap. viii. 18.
[r] Gen. ii. 9. & iii. 22.
[s] Pſ. civ. 24. & cxxxvi. 5. Chap. viii. 27. Jer. x. 12. & li. 15. or John i. 3.
[t] Gen. i. 9.

v. 13—20. The unſpeakable advantages of true wiſdom are here reſumed, and the happineſs of the man aſſerted *who getteth underſtanding*, or draweth it out from the well of the ſcriptures, where this living water flows.

1. Wiſdom is the moſt valuable acquiſition; ſilver, gold, yea, even rubies, and all the delights of the ſons of men cannot compare with her: theſe are periſhing, that endures to everlaſting ages. The ſpiritual merchant, who, in the ſcriptures, hath found and embraced by faith the Lord Jeſus, is made partaker of his unſearchable riches of grace and glory; compared with which, the brighteſt jewels are but dung.

2. As a queen, ſhe ſits diſtributing her bounties to her ſubjects. *Length of days are in her right hand*, and *in her left hand riches and honour*, temporal bleſſings, ſuch as are generally moſt eſteemed; at leaſt, ſo much of them, as God knows will be good for his people: or eternal bleſſings, a glorious immortality, treaſures in the heaven that never periſh, and the tranſcendent honour of ſitting down with Jeſus on his throne. *Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, ana all her paths are peace.* Gloomy and melancholy as the ways of godlineſs are repreſented by the enemy of ſouls, and his ſervants, who, like the lying ſpies, would bring up an evil report on the good land; they who have made the experiment can teſtify, that in the ſenſe of God's love and favour, is the moſt ſubſtantial delight; in his ſervice, the trueſt freedom; and in the paths of his truth, that peace to be found which paſſeth all underſtanding: and if ſuch be the way, how unutterably excellent then muſt the end be, to which theſe paths of wiſdom conduct us!

3. *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her*, alluding to *Gen.* xi. 9. for as in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all, who believe, be made alive, and be reſtored to the privileges forfeited by one man's diſobedience. Yea, they ſhall eat, and live for ever, and know no ſecond death: *and happy is every one that retaineth her*, or *holds her faſt*, who, by faith, cleaves to the Lord Jeſus, and ſteadily perſeveres in the profeſſion and practice of his goſpel, which will iſſue in his eternal bleſſedneſs.

4. The excellence of wiſdom is ſeen in all the creation. *The Lord by wiſdom hath founded the earth*; by his Son, his eſſential wiſdom; *by underſtanding hath he eſtabliſhed the heavens*, with the vaſt orbs that roll in the immenſity of ſpace, where all is harmony and order: *by his knowledge the depths are broken up*, and a place provided for the ſwelling flood, *and the clouds drop down the dew*, formed by his power, and falling at his command. If we then are partakers of his wiſdom, and joined to this Lord in one ſpirit, then all things are ours, ſince we are Chriſt's, and happineſs preſent and eternal our aſſured portion.

¶ 21. My ſon, let not them depart from thine eyes:
keep ſound wiſdom and diſcretion. 22. So ſhall they
be life unto thy ſoul, and [u] grace to thy neck. 23.
[x] Then ſhalt thou walk in thy way ſafely, and thy foot
ſhall not ſtumble. 24. [y] When thou lieſt down, thou
ſhalt not be afraid: yea, thou ſhalt lie down, and thy
ſleep ſhall be ſweet. 25. [z] Be not afraid of ſudden fear,
neither of the deſolation of the wicked, when it cometh.
26. For the LORD ſhall be thy confidence, [a] and ſhall
keep thy foot from being taken.

[u] Chap. i. 5.
[x] Pſ. xxxvii. 24. & xci. 11, 12.
[y] Pſ. iii. 5. & iv. 8.
[z] Pſ. xci. 5. & cxii. 7.
[a] Pſ. cxxi. 3.

v. 21—26. Solomon had declared thoſe happy who walked in wiſdom's ways And he here,

1. Exhorts us to perſevere in ſo doing. *My ſon, let them not depart from thine eyes*, keep them ever in thy view, the words of wiſdom, or rather Chriſt and his goſpel, on which our hearts muſt abidingly be fixed: *keep ſound wiſdom and diſcretion*, maintain ſound principles, and adorn them by a ſuitable practice.

2. Our labour will not be in vain in the Lord. Wiſdom will be *the life of our ſouls*; when we were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, by this were we quickned, and hereby in the midſt of every trial are we carried ſafe to the life of glory: it will be *grace to our neck*, the nobleſt ornament of the ſoul; by this ſecured, we are enabled to walk without ſtumbling in the midſt of ſnares, *v.* 23. *to ſleep* undiſturbed with guilt or fear, *v.* 24. And whatever vengeance overtakes the ungodly, we ſhall be preſerved, as Noah, amidſt the deſolation that ſuddenly ſweeps away the ſinner from the earth; and all this becauſe God is our ſtrength and hope. *For the Lord ſhall be thy confidence*, and under his wings we ſhall be ſafe from fear of evil, either of ſin, or of ſuffering, *and* he *ſhall keep thy foot from being taken* in the traps, which Satan, the world, and ſin lay for us, and from which we never could eſcape, unleſs theſe everlaſting arms were under us, and the power and grace of our covenant God engaged for our ſupport.

27. ¶ Withhold not good from † them to whom it
is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do *it*.
28. [b] Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again,
and to-morrow I will give; when thou haſt it by thee.
29. ‡ Deviſe not evil againſt thy neighbour, ſeeing he
dwelleth ſecurely by thee. 30. ¶ Strive not with a man
without cauſe, if he have done thee no harm. 31.
¶ [c] Envy thou not ‖ the oppreſſor, and chooſe none of
his ways. 32. For the froward *is* abomination to the
LORD: [d] but his ſecret *is* with the righteous. 33.
¶ [e] The curſe of the LORD *is* in the houſe of the
wicked: but he bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt. 34.
¶ [f] Surely he ſcorneth the ſcorners: but he giveth grace
unto the lowly. 35. The wiſe ſhall inherit glory, but
ſhame § ſhall be the promotion of fools.

† Heb. The owners thereof.
[b] Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 15.
‡ Or practiſe.
[c] Pſ. xxxvii. 1. & lxxiii. 3. Chap. xxiv. 1.
‖ Heb. The man of violence.
[d] Pſ. xxv. 14.
[e] Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Mal. ii. 2.
[f] Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.
§ Heb. Exalteth fools.

v. 27—35. The conſcientious diſcharge of our duty towards our neighbour, is among the beſt proofs of our being poſſeſſed of the wiſdom which cometh from above. Many excellent inſtructions in that behalf are here laid down.

1. We muſt do juſtice, and love mercy. *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due*, tribute to magiſtrates, debts to creditors, wages to ſervants, or alms to the poor, *when it is in the power of thine hand to do it*, and therefore to withhold it would ſhew abhorred covetouſneſs; nor delay till to-morrow the good that may be done to-day: our time is ſhort and precarious, and need be redeemed: *Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou haſt it by thee*; but what thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

2. We muſt do him no evil, in body, name, or goods; *deviſe not*, or *plow not evil againſt thy neighbour, ſeeing he dwells ſecurely by thee*, his confidence in us lays freſh obligations upon us to anſwer the good opinion he hath conceived of us, and doubly criminal would it be to take advantage of that, to injure him.

3. Avoid all litigious ſuits. *Strive not with a man without cauſe, if he have done thee no harm*, never quarrel about trifles; ſuſpect not that affronts or injuries were meant, where none were intended; or if no real harm be done, it is malicious to take any advantage to harraſs others: nay uſually it is better ſit down by ſome conſiderable loſs, than fly to the law for relief: the remedy here is often worſe than the diſeaſe.

4. *Envy thou not the oppreſſor*, great and proſperous as he may be in his iniquity, *and chooſe none of his ways*, by covetouſneſs, rapine, or injuſtice, to increaſe thy ſtore; for unnumbered worlds would be dearly earned at the loſs of an immortal ſoul, and the condition of the pooreſt perſecuted ſaint of God is infinitely preferable to that of his proud oppreſſor. *For the froward is abomination to the Lord*; they who walk thus contrary to him, he will walk contrary to them, and make them feel his vengeance: *but his ſecret is with the righteous*, he makes them know the deſigns of his grace and love towards them, and the end he purpoſes in his providences; and admits them into ſweet communion with himſelf, as a man talketh with his friend. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked*, all he hath is under wrath, his poſſeſſions are embittered by it, and his comforts are turned into gall and wormwood: *but he bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt*, and that can make a cottage a palace, and a dry cruſt (like the pulſe of the three children) afford a more delicious meal, than all the luxuries of the great; no reaſon, therefore, have they to envy them their deceitful meat. *Surely he ſcorneth the ſcorners*; thoſe who treat religion with contempt ſhall themſelves meet with bitterer ſcorn, when he that ſitteth on the heavens ſhall have them in deriſion: *but he giveth grace unto the lowly*; it was by his grace they became ſo, and where this is improved, he increaſeth his gifts, and addeth more grace. *The wiſe ſhall inherit glory*; it is as ſure to them as an inheritance,

and whatever ſhame and diſgrace they may be expoſed to here, this eternal honour God will put upon them, ſhall abundantly recompenſe their ſufferings; *but ſhame ſhall be the promotion of fools*; they hoped for great things, and flattered themſelves with the fancies of their future honours; but lo! the ſcene is changed, death lays them in the duſt, in order to awake in a judgment day to *ſhame*, and *everlaſting contempt*.

CHAP. IV.

When the things of God are to be taught, precept muſt be upon precept, and line upon line. *Here is*, 1. *An earneſt exhortation to the ſtudy of wiſdom, that is, of true religion and godlineſs, borrowed from the good inſtructions which his father gave him, and enforced with many conſiderable arguments*, ver. 1—13. 2. *A neceſſary caution againſt bad company, and all fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs*, ver. 14—19. 3. *Particular directions for the attaining and preſerving of wiſdom, and bringing forth the fruits of it*, ver. 20—27. *So plainly, ſo preſſingly, is the caſe laid before us, that we ſhall be for ever inexcuſable, if we periſh in our folly.*

a Chap. i. 8. 1.[a] HEAR, ye children, the inſtruction of a father,
and attend to know underſtanding. 2. For I
give you good doctrine, forſake you not my law. 3.
b 1 Chron. xxix. 1. For I was my father's ſon, [b] tender and only *beloved* in
c Ibid. xxviii. 9. Eph. vi. 4. the ſight of my mother. 4. [c] He taught me alſo, and
ſaid unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: [d] keep
d Chap. vii. 2. my commandments, and live. 5. Get wiſdom, get underſtanding:
forget *it* not, neither decline from the
words of my mouth. 6. Forſake her not, and ſhe ſhall
preſerve thee: love her, and ſhe ſhall keep thee. 7.
Wiſdom is the principal thing, *therefore* get wiſdom:
e 1 Sam. ii. 30. and with all thy getting get underſtanding. 8. [e] Exalt
her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee: ſhe ſhall bring thee to
honour, when thou doſt embrace her. 9. She ſhall give
f Chap. i. 9. to thine head [f] an ornament of grace: † a crown of glory
† Or ſhe ſhall compaſs thee with a crown of glory. ſhall ſhe deliver to thee. 10. Hear, O my ſon, and receive
my ſayings: and [g] the years of thy life ſhall be
many. 11. I have taught thee in the way of wiſdom:
g Chap. iii. 2. I have led thee in right paths. 12. When thou goeſt,
h Pſ. xviii. 36. [h] thy ſteps ſhall not be ſtraitned, and [i] when thou runneſt,
i Ibid. xci. 11, 12. thou ſhalt not ſtumble. 13. Take faſt hold of
inſtruction, let *her* not go; keep her, for ſhe *is* thy
life.

v. 1—13. Nothing too great can be ſaid in the commendation of divine wiſdom.

1. Solomon earneſtly exhorts his children, and all like them of a teachable ſpirit, to attend the leſſons of inſtruction he was about to deliver. *Hear, ye children, the inſtruction of a father, and attend to know underſtanding*; fathers are bound to uſe every method to inculcate on their children the knowledge of divine things, and they are in duty bound to pay all deference and attention to their advice; but whether they hear, or forbear, it will be a parent's comfort to have done his beſt: *for I give you good doctrine*, which, if received, will make you both wiſe and holy; *forſake you not my law*.

2. He communicated to them what he had received from his father, and by experience had proved to be excellent. *For I was my father's ſon, tender and only beloved in the ſight of my mother*, the darling ſon, Jedediah, beloved of the Lord, and therefore beloved of them; for in this caſe, parental partiality may be admitted without a crime. *He taught me alſo*; though a king, not too great to be a teacher, and the impreſſion of his inſtructions, we find, was deep and abiding: *and ſaid unto me, let thine heart retain my words*, treaſure them up in thy memory, as the moſt invaluable riches; *keep my commandments, and live*, his obedience to them would, according to the promiſe, prolong his days on earth, or his fidelity to the inſpired inſtructions of his father, would lead him to life eternal. His pſalms were full of Chriſt, whom to know is everlaſting life. *Get wiſdom*, Chriſt the ſum and ſubſtance of it, and the knowledge of his grace, revealed in the word of truth; *get underſtanding*, in the diligent uſe of all inſtituted means; for though it is the gift of God, that doth not make our diligence the leſs needful, but rather engages us to exert it, in confidence of ſucceſs from God: *forget it not*, whatever meaſure is attained, *neither decline from the words of my mouth*, for when once we deviate but a ſtep from the paths of righteouſneſs, we know not where we ſhall ſtop. *Principiis obſta*, reſtrain the firſt wandrings, is the grand maxim and only ſecurity. *Forſake her not, and ſhe ſhall preſerve thee* from the ſnares and temptations that ſurround us; *love her*, as the moſt deſirable object, *and ſhe ſhall keep thee* from ſin, from ſorrow, from every evil way. *Wiſdom is the principal thing*; either Chriſt, who is the head of all principalities and power, and the prince of the kings of the earth; or his word, the knowledge of which is the higheſt wiſdom; *and with all thy getting, get underſtanding*; for this, of all gain, will moſt amply recompence our toils. An intereſt in Chriſt, and acquaintance with his truth, are the grand acquiſitions. *Exalt her*, aſcribe to Jeſus the honour due unto his excellent name, and highly value and eſteem the glorious truths of God, *and ſhe ſhall promote thee, ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour, when thou doſt embrace her*, the higheſt honour and promotion, even that of being ſons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, to which all, who by faith apprehend Chriſt, ſhall be advanced. *She ſhall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee*; not like earth's fading ornaments, or corruptible crowns, but ornaments that age will never tarniſh, and crowns of glory incorruptible, eternal in the heavens.

3. Solomon himſelf ſeconds the inſtructions his father had given him with his own. *Hear, O my ſon, and receive my ſayings, and the years of thy life ſhall be many*, often here, at leaſt hereafter life eternal will be the reward. *I have taught thee in the way of wiſdom, I have led thee in right paths*, and therefore if he turned aſide from them, he muſt be inexcuſable: ſins againſt light and conſcience, are doubly ſinful. *When thou goeſt, thy ſteps ſhall not be ſtraitned*, but in the glorious liberty of the ſons of God, thine heart ſhall be enlarged with love, and every obſtruction removed; *and when thou runneſt, thou ſhalt not ſtumble*, ſo as to fall or periſh, through any ſnares laid by the enemy of ſouls. *Take faſt hold of inſtruction, let her not go*, hang upon her as thy guide and ſupport, and let nothing ſeparate thee from Chriſt and his ways; *keep her*, by faith maintain a ſure intereſt in him, *for ſhe is thy life*, the author of the life of grace now, and the beſtower of the eternal life of glory, which all who are faithful to him will ſhortly enjoy with him.

14. ¶ [k] Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go k Pſ. i. 1. Chap. i. 10, 15.
not in the way of evil *men*. 15. Avoid it, paſs not by
it, turn from it, and paſs away. 16. For [l] they ſleep l Pſ. xxxvi. 4. Iſa. lvii. 20.
not except they have done miſchief: and their ſleep is
taken away unleſs they cauſe *ſome* to fall. 17. For they
eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence.
18. But [m] the path of the juſt *is* [n] as the ſhining m Mat. v. 14. Phil. ii. 15.
light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day. n 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.
19. [o] The way of the wicked *is* as darkneſs: They know o Iſa. lix. 9. Jer. xxiii. 12.
not at what they ſtumble.

v. 14—19. The way to keep from evil, is to ſhun temptation.

1. The caution here given is weighty, and ſtrongly urged. *Enter not into the path of the wicked*, the leaſt familiarity or compliance with them is dangerous; when we take one wrong ſtep, we know not where to ſtop: *and go not in the path of evil men*; if for a moment thou haſt yielded to their ſollicitations, haſten to retire from the deadly way. *Avoid it*, as you would the plague, *paſs not by it*, as you would ſhun an infected houſe, *turn from it, and paſs away*, keep at the greateſt poſſible diſtance: we can never be too far from ſin.

2. He enforces the warning, by pointing out,

(1.) The ſin and danger of the way of the wicked. *For they ſleep not, unleſs they have done miſchief*; it is their buſineſs, their delight, to lead others into ſin or ſuffering, and are uneaſy and reſtleſs, if their malicious deſigns are fruſtrated: *and their ſleep is taken away, unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall* into their ſnares, *for they eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence*, the ſpoils of fraud or oppreſſion, on which they regale themſelves, rejoicing in the fruits of their iniquities. Such as theſe how carefully ſhould we ſhun? for their end will be according to their works. *The way of the wicked is as darkneſs*; they walk in darkneſs, in ignorance, in error, in unbelief, and the iſſue of it will be outer darkneſs, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth. *They know not at what they ſtumble*, they are ignorant of their wretched ſtate, and when ſtumbling into the dreadful pit of ruin, ſee not their danger, till too late in torments they lift up their eyes.

2. The comfort and bleſſedneſs of the way of righteouſneſs, as much as the one is miſerable and to be avoided, the other is deſirable, and to be ſought. *But the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*; their character is *the juſt*, or *juſtified*, who, by faith in Chriſt Jeſus, are righteous before God. Their path is Chriſt himſelf, they walk in him, ſupported by his grace, and led by his word and ſpirit, their ſhining light; and as the beams of day firſt break through the darkneſs, then in the horizon deep the riſing ſun appears, till at the laſt, aſcending to his meridian heighth, his brighteſt glories are diſplayed, ſo increaſing with the increaſe of God, the awakened ſoul grows more and more enlightened with divine truth, enlivened with divine warmth, till perfected in holineſs, the full blaze of glory comes, and in eternity, without a cloud, we ſhall enjoy the tranſforming and beatific viſion of our God. Bleſſed therefore, and happy are they, who walk in this way.

20. ¶ My ſon, attend to my words, incline thine ear unto my ſayings. 21. [p] Let them not depart from thine eyes: [q] keep them in the midſt of thine heart. 22. For they *are* life unto thoſe that find them, [r] and health to all their fleſh. 23. ¶ Keep thy heart † with all diligence: for out of it *are* the iſſues of life. 24. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverſe lips put far from thee. 25. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look ſtraight before thee. 26. Ponder the path of thy feet, and ‡ let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed. 27. [s] Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

[p] Chap. iii. 3, 21.
[q] Ibid. ii. 1.
[r] Ibid. iii. 8.
† Heb. With, or above all keepings.
‡ Or all thy ways ſhall be ordered aright.
[s] Deut. v. 32. & xxviii. 14. Joſh. i. 7.

v. 20—27. The way of the juſt being ſo excellent, we are here exhorted and directed to walk in it.

1. He exhorts us to diligent attention, *v.* 20. for unleſs we are heartily engaged, we ſhall never make any conſiderable proficiency in whatever we take in hand. We muſt keep the path of duty ever in our eye, and the love of wiſdom warm upon our hearts, *v.* 21.

2. He gives a weighty reaſon to ſecond his advice. *For they are life unto thoſe that find them, and health to all their fleſh*; they are the means of ſpiritual life, the way to eternal life; by them the corrupt affections of our ſouls are mortified, and the deep diſeaſes of our fallen nature cured.

3. He gives full directions for our conduct, and begins,

(1.) With the heart, the fountain head, from whence good or evil flows. *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, deceitful it is above all things, and by nature deſperately wicked, and all our watchfulneſs and care will be little enough; yea, inſufficient, unleſs we are looking up to God for greater ſtrength than our own, to preſerve our underſtanding from error, our affections from concupiſcence, our conſcience from guilt: or, *keep thine heart above all keepings*, whatever care other things deſerve, this is the one thing needful, and demands the chief ſollicitude; for as that is kept or neglected, all goes well or ill; *for out of it are the iſſues of life*, it is the ſeat of ſpiritual life, from thence all our actions ſpring, as ſtreams from the fountain; and if the heart be kept in the love of God, then it will be a well of living waters, ſpringing up into everlaſting life. Lord, do thou keep it for me, and then it ſhall be well kept!

(2.) Our lips muſt be under reſtraint. *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverſe lips put far from thee*, let no profane, paſſionate, proud, falſe, raſh, corrupt communication proceed from them, but take heed to every ſentence that drops, knowing that there is not ſo much as an idle word, but we muſt give an account for it in the day of judgment.

(3.) Our eyes muſt be kept from wandring; fixed on the one object Chriſt and glory; on the ſtrait path of truth, never to be diverted from it, though this world's vanities, the pomp, the pleaſures, the glittering toys and viſionary beauties around ſollicit our attention. The eye is the neareſt inlet to the heart; they who would preſerve the caſtle from the enemy, muſt bar the gate againſt intruders.

(4.) We muſt *ponder the path of our feet*, *weigh it* in the balances of the ſanctuary; conſider the paſt, examine the preſent path of duty; and proving all things, hold faſt that which is good, determining ſedately, and purſuing it ſteadily: *let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed* in one uniform tenor of fidelity, according to the pattern of the divine word. *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left*, to formality or profaneneſs, to ſuperſtition or infidelity; *remove thy foot from evil*, from the evil of ſin, which leads to the evil of ſuffering; yea, abſtain from all appearances of evil, the farther removed from it, the ſafer: our care here can never be exceſſive.

CHAP. V.

The ſcope of this chapter is much the ſame with that of chap. ii. *To write the ſame things in other words ought not to be grievous, for it is ſafe*, Phil. iii. 1. *Here is*, 1. *An exhortation to get acquaintance with, and ſubmit to the laws of wiſdom in general*, ver. 2. 2. *A particular caution againſt the ſin of whoredom*, ver. 3—14. 3. *Remedies preſcribed againſt that ſin.* (1.) *Conjugal love*, ver. 15—20. (2.) *A regard to God's omniſcience*, ver. 21. (3.) *A dread of the miſerable end of wicked people*, ver. 22, 23. *And all little enough to arm young people againſt thoſe fleſhly luſts, which war againſt the ſoul.*

1. MY ſon, attend unto my wiſdom, *and* bow thine ear to my underſtanding. 2. That thou mayeſt regard diſcretion, and *that* thy lips may keep knowledge. 3. ¶ For [a] the lips of a ſtrange woman drop *as* an honey-comb, and her † mouth *is* [b] ſmoother than oil. 4. But her end is [c] bitter as wormwood, ſharp as a two-edged ſword. 5. [d] Her feet go down to death: her ſteps take hold on hell. 6. Leſt thou ſhouldſt ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, *that* thou canſt not know *them*. 7. [e] Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. 8. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe: 9. Leſt thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel. 10. Leſt ſtrangers be filled with thy ‡ wealth, and thy labours *be* in the houſe of a ſtranger, 11. And thou mourn at the laſt, when thy fleſh and thy body are conſumed, 12. And ſay, How have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproof? 13. And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me? 14. I was almoſt in all evil, in the midſt of the congregation and aſſembly.

[a] Chap. i. 16. & vi. 24.
† Heb. Palate.
[b] Pſal. lv. 21.
[c] Eccleſ. vii. 26.
[d] Chap. vii. 27.
[e] Pſ. xxxiv. 11.
‡ Heb. Strength.

v. 1—14. Among the moſt dangerous and fatal ſnares that lie in the way of the ſons of men, muſt be reckoned the inordinate love of women. Solomon, to his coſt, proved it by bitter experience; and wiſe are they who learn from his example and falls, that they may not bitterly be convinced of the truth of it by their own.

1. He gives a general exhortation to his ſon, and all whoſe youthful blood beats high, to curb their paſſions with the bridle of enlightned reaſon, and divine underſtanding; for which purpoſe, he exhorts them duly to attend, and deeply meditate upon the leſſons of inſtruction he read, that their conduct might be diſcreet, and their words flow tinctured with wiſdom and grace, from a heart well principled in the ſchool of Chriſt.

2. He draws a lively picture of a wicked and abandoned woman, the danger of yielding to her ſollicitations, and the miſery that muſt enſue.

(1.) Her character is drawn. *Her lips drop as an honeycomb*; ſoft blandiſhments, filled with every endearing word of ſoft addreſs; her careſſes fatally inſinuating, and from her kiſſes, unperceived, the ſweet poiſon deep infects the ſoul: *and her mouth is ſmoother than oil*, promiſing every joy in her embraces, and with the guiſe of innocence varniſhing the ſhocking guilt. *Her ways are moveable*, cunning to deſcry the method to pleaſe, and artful to perſonate the temper, manners, ways, the moſt engaging; *that thou canſt not know them*, diſcover the cheat, or extricate thyſelf from the winding mazes of her wiles: *leaſt thou ſhouldſt ponder the way of life*, and firm reſiſt her ſnares, or break from her fatal chain, ſenſible of the danger, and wiſely taught to reject a momentary pleaſure, bought at the loſs of eternal bliſs, and the pain of everlaſting burnings.

(2.) The iſſue of her ways is dreadful. *Her end is bitter as wormwood*, infamy, poverty, and often diſeaſe attack the body; bitter remorſe, horror, and dread ſeize the ſoul, *and, ſharp as a two-edged ſword*, every reflection pierces. *Her feet go down to death*, temporal and eternal; *her ſteps take hold on hell*, all who follow them are in the broad road thither, and the breath in their noſtrils only ſeparates them from exchanging the bed of whoredom and adultery, for a bed in flames unquenchable.

3. A ſolemn caution is given to abſtain from theſe fleſhly luſts, which war againſt the ſoul, and happy they who ponder theſe words of wiſdom. *Hear me now therefore, O ye children*, eſpecially ye children of God, who would be kept from the ways of the deſtroyer, *and depart not from the words of my mouth*, call them not grave leſſons, or moroſe reſtraints, but hear and cleave to them, as the only means of ſolid comfort. *Remove thy way far from her*, avoid the ſorcereſs, reſtrain the moſt diſtant approaches, never be alone with her, or admit the leaſt familiarities; fly for thy life, for flight is often the only ſafety, and reſolute abſence the only method of deliverance: *and come not nigh the door of her houſe*; our hearts are vile and corrupt, they are tinder that eaſily kindles with the ſpark of impure deſire, ſtruck from the eyes of wanton beauty; no reſolutions are to be truſted, nor can we ſtop, if but one ſtep is taken, one deſire entertained, deviating from the path of purity. Shun, therefore, the place of her abode, as the infected houſe, the diſtant approach to which may prove fatal.

4. He ſupports his warning with weighty arguments. *Leſt thou give thine honour unto others*, truſting it with a wretch that will betray thee; or, as a courſe of lewdneſs ſeldom is concealed, thy name will become contemptible, and branded with infamy; *and thy years unto the cruel*, the harlot, whoſe cruelty is often raging as her luſts, and having plundered the ſubſtance, hunts for the precious life, or *the cruel* ſin, that murders the immortal ſoul. Strangers ſhall riot on thy wealth, and the fruit of thy labours, *v.* 10. whilſt in poverty ſteeped to the lips, thou ſhalt feel, with bitterneſs, the loſs of that wealth ſo profuſely ſquandered on the covetouſneſs of ſuch an extravagant, more inſatiate than the grave. The conſequence of which will be, that *thou* wilt *mourn at laſt*, when it is too late, or *roar* as a lion, in pangs of diſtreſs, and horrors of guilt unutterable, in the rage of deſpair, not of repentance, for the ſufferings, not for the ſins. *When thy fleſh and thy body are conſumed* by the indulgence of theſe hurtful luſts, the conſtitution broken, the body emaciated, and diſeaſe rendering thee loathſome to others,

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and a burden to thyſelf. Then the bitter reflections and upbraidings of conſcience for deſpiſed reproof will return, and thou wilt curſe thy folly, and ſay, *How have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproof,* when warned ſo often, and ſo earneſtly, by God's word, by his miniſters, by my own convictions of the ruin of theſe ways; *and* yet obſtinately and wilfully bent on deſtruction, I *have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me,* deaf to their advice, and inſenſible to their admonitions. *I was almoſt in all evil,* nothing reſtrained my abandoned heart; for diſobedience to parents, and indulged lewdneſs, are two ſins which moſt effectually ſear the conſcience: even *in the midſt of the congregation and the aſſembly*; the moſt ſacred place, or the ſolemn ſervice of the houſe of God, excluded not the impure deſire, nor reſtrained the eyes full of adultery, that could not ceaſe from ſin; or it may refer to the evil of ſuffering. He was afflicted with a variety of miſeries, made a public example of, and his puniſhment infamous and notorious. Strange to think, that with ſuch warning and ſuch examples, others ſhould, notwithſtanding, follow theſe deſtructive ways.

15. ¶ [f] Drink waters out of thine own ciſtern; and running waters out of thine own well. 16. Let thy fountains be diſperſed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the ſtreets. 17. Let them be only thine own, and not ſtrangers with thee. 18. Let thy fountain be bleſſed: and rejoice with [g] the wife of thy youth. 19. [h] *Let her be as* the loving hind, and pleaſant roe, let her breaſts † ſatisfy thee at all times, and ‡ be thou raviſhed always with her love. 20. And why wilt thou, my ſon, be raviſhed with [i] a ſtrange woman, and embrace the boſom of a ſtranger? 21. For [k] the ways of a man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. 22. ¶ [l] His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſins. 23. [m] He ſhall die without inſtruction, and in the greatneſs of his folly he ſhall go aſtray.

[f] Ver. 19.
[g] Mal. ii. 14.
[h] Cant. iv. 5. & vii. 3.
† Heb. Water thee.
‡ Heb. Err thou always in her love.
[i] Chap. ii. 16. & vii. 4.
[k] Job xxxi. 4. & xxxiv. 21. Chap. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. & xxxii. 19. Hoſ. vii. 2. Heb. iv. 13.
[l] Pſ. ix. 16.
[m] Job iv. 21. & xxxvi. 12.

v. 15—23. Though God forbids the gratification of lawleſs luſt, he hath ordained and inſtituted the ordinance of marriage. The chaſte and innocent pleaſures and comforts of which, when the choice is made under the divine bleſſing, and the hearts united in genuine love, as far exceed all the beſtial pleaſures of lewdneſs, as the limpid ſtream the dirty puddle. Therefore,

1. He adviſes to chuſe a wife of youth, as the divinely appointed remedy againſt fornication, and as the ſtate wherein the purity of our ſouls may be beſt maintained; with her to enjoy the delights of connubial love, and ſee with joy our offſpring, as *fountains diſperſed abroad, and rivers of water in the ſtreet. Let them be only thine own,* not a ſpurious brood, ſuch as a harlot, or a wife of whoredoms brings, *v.* 17. *Let thy fountain,* thy wife, *be bleſſed,* ſtudy to make her happy, count thyſelf happy in her, and by prayer ſeek to engage the divine benediction; *and rejoice with the wife of thy youth,* for God wills we ſhould enjoy richly the comforts he beſtows. *Let her be as the loving hind, and pleaſant roe,* fondled with tendereſt affection; *let her breaſts ſatisfy thee at all times,* nor wiſh for any boſom but hers, on which to recline thy head: *and be thou raviſhed always with her love,* delighting in her company, and always happier to be with her than any where beſide; or *err in her love,* exceſs of affection here is ſcarcely to be feared. *And why wilt thou, my ſon, be raviſhed,* or ERR *with a ſtrange woman, and embrace the boſom of a ſtranger,* when ſo much purer joys, and more ſubſtantial bliſs, are to be found in the enjoyment of connubial love?

2. The ſenſe of God's all-ſeeing eye, and the wrath revealed againſt tranſgreſſors, muſt reſtrain us from evil. *For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings*; he ſees and approves thoſe, who in ſanctification and honour, poſſeſs their own veſſel, and from him are not hid the deeds of darkneſs: in vain the lewd wait for the twilight, or ſeek the covert of the night; no darkneſs, or ſhadow of death, can hide from him the workers of iniquity. *His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf*; he promiſed himſelf ſecreſy, but ſhall be detected; he hoped for impunity, but vengeance will overtake him, *and he ſhall be holden in the cords of his ſins*; he promiſed himſelf, perhaps, that he would leave them off ſoon, or hoped in time they would loſe their power, but every freſh indulgence rivets the chain the faſter, and renders him more the ſlave of vile affections. The terrible conſequence of which will be, *he ſhall die without inſtruction,* hardned, impenitent, and reprobate; *and in the greatneſs of his folly he ſhall go aſtray,* given up to his own heart, blinded by his luſt, and ruſhing into everlaſting perdition of body and ſoul in hell. The Lord grant we may never be thus given up to follow our own devices, for then our end muſt be miſery!

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CHAP. VI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A caution againſt raſh ſuretiſhip,* ver. 1—5. 2. *A rebuke to ſlothfulneſs,* ver. 6—11. 3. *The character and fate of a malicious miſchievous man,* ver. 12—15. 4. *An account of ſeven things which God hates,* ver. 16—19. 5. *An exhortation to make the word of God familiar to us,* ver. 20—23. 6. *A repeated warning of the pernicious conſequences of the ſin of whoredom,* ver. 24—35. *And we are here diſſuaded from ſin, very much by arguments borrowed from our ſecular intereſts, for it is not only repreſented as damning in the other world, but as impoveriſhing in this.*

1. MY ſon, [a] if thou be ſurety for thy friend, *if* thou haſt ſtricken thy hand with a ſtranger, 2. Thou art ſnared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth. 3. Do this now, my ſon, and deliver thyſelf, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend: go humble thyſelf, † and make ſure thy friend. 4. [b] Give not ſleep to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye-lids. 5. Deliver thyſelf as a roe from the hand *of the hunter,* and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

[a] Chap. xi. 15. & xvii. 18. & xx. 16. & xxii. 26.
† Or ſo ſhalt thou prevail with thy friend.
[b] Pſ. cxxxii. 4.

v. 1—5. God's word teaches us wiſdom in our temporal, as well as our eternal concerns. Nothing is more dangerous than ſuretiſhip; againſt this therefore, we are here admoniſhed: To engage for a ſtranger, were madneſs; to be bound, even for a friend, is dangerous; if therefore at any time over-perſuaded, or thoughtleſs, we have fallen into the ſnare, we cannot be in too great haſte to get out of it. *Go humble thyſelf,* ſpeak the creditor fair, and if poſſible obtain a releaſe, *and make ſure thy friend,* haſten him to diſcharge the debt, or to give thee an indemnification, and this without delay; for delays are dangerous, *v.* 4. Struggle as the roe in the hunter's ſnare, or the bird in the fowler's net, to get free, *v.* 5. not indeed but there may be circumſtances, in which it would be our duty to aſſiſt our friends, but it never ſhould be done inconſiderately, or for thoſe, whoſe neceſſitous circumſtances render their caſe deſperate, and never for more than we are able or willing to pay, without hurting our family, or diſabling us from the diſcharge of thoſe duties we owe to others.

6. ¶ [c] Go to the ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe: 7. Which having no guide, overſeer, or ruler, 8. [d] Provideth her meat in the ſummer, *and* gathereth her food in the harveſt. 9. [e] How long wilt thou ſleep, O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep? 10. *Yet* a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep. 11. [f] So ſhall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

[c] Job xii. 7.
[d] 1 Tim. vi. 19.
[e] Chap. xxiv. 33, 34.
[f] Chap. x. 4. & xiii. 4. & xx. 4.

v. 6—11. Solomon is here the ſluggard's monitor; raſh engagements may undo a man at once, ſloth operates as a ſlow poiſon, and ruins by degrees.

1. He ſends the idler to the buſy ants for inſtruction, that with ſuch ceaſeleſs diligence, without an overſeer, improve the days of harveſt, aſſiſt each other in their toil, lay up the needful proviſion againſt the winter; and in their cells enjoy, in that bleak ſeaſon, the fruits of their ſummer's toil. Taught by their example in our worldly concerns, we are called upon with prudent foreſight to provide for the days of old age, to labour diligently in our vocation and calling, and with wiſdom to improve the opportunities Providence affords us. And eſpecially in the concerns of our ſouls, to look to the approaching eternity, and give diligence to make our election ſure, working whilſt it is day, and obeying the exhortations of God's miniſters our overſeers. Should we, with all our peculiar advantages, be found idle, how inexcuſable ſhould we be!

2. He calls upon the ſluggard to awake. *How long wilt thou ſleep, when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* beds of ſloth are fatal ſnares; there time is ſquandered, opportunities loſt; whilſt early riſing is profitable for health, wealth, and godlineſs. Sinner, how long wilt thou ſleep in ſin? awake! leſt the flames of hell ſurround thee, and too late thou open thine eyes in torment.

3. The ſluggard pleads for a little indulgence. To quit his warm bed he is very loth, he will riſe by and by, it is time enough yet; *a little more ſleep,* or at leaſt a *little ſlumber,* to doze awhile, or, if no more, *a little folding of the hands to ſleep,* to ſtretch, and turn, and loiter, to prolong the time. Thus ſinners, when diſturbed and awakened, plead for a little reſpite or delay, then fall aſleep again in the arms of ſin, and wake no more.

4. The iſſue of this ſloth will be poverty, haſtening on like a traveller, and ruſhing upon the ſluggard, terrible and irreſiſtable, as an armed man; and but juſt it is, that they who will not work, ſhould want.

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12. ¶ A naughty perſon, a wicked man walketh with
a froward mouth. 13. [g] He winketh with his eyes, he
ſpeaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers.
14. Frowardneſs *is* in his heart, [h] he deviſeth miſchief
continually, [i] he † ſoweth diſcord. 15. Therefore ſhall
his calamity come ſuddenly; ſuddenly ſhall he be [k]
broken without remedy. 16. ¶ Theſe ſix *things* doth
the LORD hate; yea, ſeven *are* an abomination ‡ unto
him: 17. [l] || A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands
that ſhed innocent blood, 18. An heart that deviſeth
wicked imaginations, [m] feet that be ſwift in running to
miſchief; 19. [n] A falſe witneſs *that* ſpeaketh lies, and
him [o] that ſoweth diſcord among brethren.

g Job xv. 12. Pſ. xxxv. 19. Chap. x. 10.
h Mic. ii. 1.
i Ver. 19.
† Heb. Caſteth forth.
k Jer. xix. 11.
‡ Heb. Of his ſoul.
l Pſ. xviii. 27. & ci. 5.
|| Heb. Haughty eyes.
m Rom. iii. 15.
n Pſ. xxvii. 12. Chap. xix. 5.
o Ver. 14.

v. 12—19. The character of the ſlothful is bad, but here is one that exceeds him in wickedneſs.

1. We have his deſcription. *A naughty perſon*, *a man of Belial*, of his father the devil, a *wicked perſon*, *a man of iniquity*, whoſe habitual temper and conſtant practice is ſin; *frowardneſs is in his heart*, and out of the abundance of that his mouth ſpeaketh; he tips the wink, when miſchief is to be done, or ſlily ſneering, ridicules the infirmities of others. His very feet ſpeak, gently preſſing to give a hint, or furiouſly ſtamping to expreſs his rage; and his fingers communicate his thoughts: artful, deſigning; others ſuſpect not the plot which is formed againſt them: *he deviſeth miſchief continually*, it is his buſineſs, his delight; *he ſoweth diſcord*, ſeeking to ſeparate very friends, and blow the coals of ſtrife into a flame.

2. His end ſhall be according to his works. *Therefore*, as the righteous puniſhment of his iniquity, *ſhall his calamity come ſuddenly*; *ſuddenly ſhall he be broken without remedy*; unexpected, terrible, eternal, irreparable, will be his deſtruction; for the damnation of ſuch ſlumbereth not.

3. From the evil of this ſon of Belial, warning is given us of ſeven ſins that are God's abomination; and which, making us like the wicked, muſt expoſe us to the wrath denounced againſt them. *Theſe ſix things doth the Lord hate*; *yea*, *ſeven are an abomination unto him*: ſin of every kind is odious in the ſight of God, his very nature abhors it, and all who practice it muſt be the objects of his deteſtation. But ſome iniquities have in them greater aggravations than others, (1.) *A proud look*; pride is at the root of all ſin: by pride, the angels fell from heaven; by pride, man loſt his happy ſtate; by pride elated, in high conceit of our own importance or righteouſneſs, we provoke God's wrath againſt us, and aſſuredly theſe high looks of the proud will be brought low. (2.) *A lying tongue*, hateful to God, and moſt injurious to man. (3.) *Hands that ſhed innocent blood* in paſſion, revenge, or through falſe notions of honour, the name given to Satanical pride. (4.) *An heart that deviſeth wicked imaginations*, ſubtle and crafty in the contrivance of wickedneſs, as daring or cruel in the execution of it: and the more art is uſed to compaſs evil, the more malignity is in the ſin. (5.) *Feet that be ſwift in running to miſchief*, the eagerneſs to accompliſh which, ſhews how the heart is bent upon it. (6.) *A falſe witneſs that ſpeaketh lies*, either perjured in judgment, or that invents and propagates calumnies, to the hurt of his neighbour, againſt which, no innocence is a protection. (7.) *And him that ſoweth diſcord among brethren*; the mark of the ſon of Belial before deſcribed, who encourages factions in the ſtate; ſeeks to widen the breaches of eccleſiaſtical diſſention, or to make miſchief between the neareſt relations and friendly neighbours. It is amazing there ſhould be ſuch a character, and yet dire experience daily teaches us what abominations dwell in this fallen nature.

20. ¶ [p] My ſon, keep thy father's commandment, and
forſake not the law of thy mother. 21. [q] Bind them
continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy
neck. 22. [r] When thou goeſt, it ſhall lead thee; when
thou ſleepeſt, [s] it ſhall keep thee; and *when* thou awakeſt,
it ſhall talk with thee. 23. For [t] the commandment
is a † lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of
inſtruction *are* the way of life: 24. [u] To keep thee
from the evil woman, from the flattery ‡ of the tongue
of a ſtrange woman. 25. [x] Luſt not after her beauty in
thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eye-lids.
26. For [y] by means of a whoriſh woman *a man is brought*
to a piece of bread: and || the adultereſs [z] will hunt for
the precious life. 27. Can a man take fire in his boſom,
and his clothes not be burnt? 28. Can one go
upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt? 29. So he
that goeth in to his neighbour's wife: whoſoever toucheth
her, ſhall not be innocent. 30. *Men* do not deſpiſe
a thief, if he ſteal to ſatisfy his ſoul when he is
hungry: 31. But *if* he be found, [a] he ſhall reſtore ſeven
fold, he ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe. 32.
But whoſo committeth adultery with a woman, [b] lacketh
§ underſtanding: he *that* doth it, deſtroyeth his own
ſoul. 33. A wound and diſhonour ſhall he get, and
his reproach ſhall not be wiped away. 34. For jealouſy
is the rage of a man: therefore he will not ſpare
in the day of vengeance. 35. He will not † regard any
ranſom; neither will he reſt content, though thou giveſt
many gifts.

p Chap. i. 8.
q Ibid. iii. 3. & vii. 3.
r Chap. iii. 23, 24.
s Ibid. ii. 11.
t Pſ. xix. 8. & cxix. 105.
† Or candle.
u Chap. ii. 16. & v. 3. & vii. 5.
‡ Or of the ſtrange tongue.
x Mat. v. 28.
y Chap. xxix. 3.
|| Heb. The woman of a man.
z Gen. xxxix. 14.
a Exod. xxii. 1, 4.

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b Chap. vii. 7.
§ Heb. Heart.
† Heb. Accept the face of, &c.

v. 20—35. We have here,

1. A repeated exhortation to attend the leſſons of inſtruction, that as a wiſe and careful parent, this father inculcated on his ſon, *v.* 20. They ſhould be engraved on the fleſhly tables of hearts, and worn as the beſt ornaments, *v.* 21. and the bleſſed effects of ſo doing will be experienced in the direction, protection, and comfort which they will miniſter, guiding us in the right way: when we ſleep, preſerving us from fears and terrors; and when we walk, affording ſweet ſubject for conſtant meditation, *v.* 22. *For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light*; the world is a dungeon, without the light of God's word and ſpirit, and but for this, we muſt for ever be ſtumbling on the dark mountains of ignorance, error, and unbelief; but by this bright guide, we both ſee the way of truth, are cheared and comforted in walking therein; diſcover the ſnares and ſtumbling blocks of ſin and temptation, and eſcape them; *and* find the *reproofs of inſtruction* to be *the way of life*, of our ſpiritual and happy life on earth, and our eternal life in heaven.

2. A particular warning is again given, to guard againſt the wiles of the wanton, and to preſerve the temple of our bodies in purity and chaſtity; for againſt this generally beſetting ſin of uncleanneſs, too frequent and ſolemn cautions cannot be given. *To keep thee from the evil woman*, *from the flattery of the tongue of a ſtrange woman*, whoſe lips are more poiſonous than the venom of a ſerpent, and her words deceitful and enſnaring. *Luſt not after her beauty in thine heart*, for God accounts a laſcivious look, or impure deſire, adultery committed in the heart; therefore turn away thine eyes from the tempter's face, and *let her not take thee with her eye-lids*, with thoſe amorous glances that kindle the raging fire of lewdneſs, and bind our paſſions with cords ſtronger than links of iron. To deter us from this dreadful ſnare,

3. The dire conſequences are inſiſted upon: let him that readeth, underſtand.

(1.) Beggary attends her. *By means of a whoriſh woman*, *a man is brought to a piece of bread*, as was the prodigal ſon, and many others; who, enſlaved by ſuch a wretch, to gratify her extravagance, have ruined their families and themſelves.

(2.) Death is in her path. *The adultereſs will hunt for the precious life*; either leading a man into courſes, which end in an ignominious death, by the hand of the civil magiſtrate; or to rid herſelf of him, when tired of his company, and able to get no more out of him, ſhe gets him poiſoned or aſſaſſinated.

(3.) It will kindle a flame of guilt in his conſcience, that unleſs prevented by grace, will burn to all eternity. As impoſſible as it would be to take live coals into our boſom, and not be burnt, ſo impoſſible is it to commit adultery, and not kindle in our ſouls the fire of hell. Nay, every diſtant approach muſt be avoided, as we would ſhun the ſparks from the furnace; *for whoſoever toucheth her* in wanton dalliance, or with impure deſires, *ſhall not be innocent*, or *free*; he contracts guilt to burden his conſcience, or the ſinful liberties he take, will be diſcovered to his infamy and diſgrace. *Note*, They who would guard their hearts, muſt keep their eyes, their hands, their lips. *Touch not*, *taſte not*; the firſt approaches to ſin muſt be avoided, or, like the rolling ſtone on a declivity, each revolution accelerates the motion, and all the powers of reſtraint are loſt.

4. The infamy and puniſhment due to it, are greater than to theft. If a man ſteal, driven by hunger, we do not deſpiſe, but pity the miſerable object: nay, if he have no need, but ſteals out of pure knavery, the law provides he ſhall make full reſtitution. *He ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe*, nay, might be ſold, if he had not wherewithal to pay; but more villainous and infamous is the thief that ſteals the affections of a wife, that robs his neighbour of his honour, and by introducing into his family a ſpurious brood, commits the moſt atrocious kind of theft, for which there can be no reſtitution. *He lacketh underſtanding*, for otherwiſe he never would act ſo madly: *he that doth it*, *deſtroys his own ſoul*, his goods cannot repair the damage, his life is forfeited to juſtice, *John* viii. 5. or his ſoul in torment eternal muſt pay the penalty. *A wound and diſhonour ſhall he get*; ſome puniſhment inflicted by the ſecret hand of God, or by man, and *diſhonour* that will make him deſpicable in the eyes of all men of virtue and religion; *and his reproach ſhall not be wiped away*; the brand of it on his reputation is indelible, even though the blood of Chriſt ſhould have waſhed the guilt from his conſcience.

5. The jealous huſband will not fail to take condign vengeance for the injury done him. His rage is not to be pacified with intreaties, or to be bribed by gifts; he will ſpare no pains

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to proſecute the ſuit, and bring to public infamy and ſuffering the robber of his honour; or perhaps he will become the executioner of his own revenge, and take away, in bitter rage, the life of a wretch, that hath ſo juſtly forfeited it to divine juſtice. Be wiſe, ponder theſe things, and dread every approach that would lead to ſuch a fearful end.

CHAP. VII.

On this fatal rock of youthful luſts, ſo many have made ſhipwreck of their ſouls, that repeated admonitions are moſt neceſſary. In this chapter we have, 1. *A general exhortation to get our minds principled and governed by the word of God, as a ſovereign antidote againſt this ſin,* ver. 1—5. 2. *A particular repreſentation of the great danger which unwary young men are in, of being inveigled into this ſnare,* ver. 6—23. 3. *A ſerious caution inferred from thence in the cloſe, to take heed of all approaches towards this ſin,* ver. 24—27. *We ſhould all pray, Lord, lead us not into this temptation.*

1. MY ſon, keep my words, and [a] lay up my commandments with thee. 2. [b] Keep my commandments, and live: and my law [c] as the apple of thine eye. 3. [d] Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. 4. Say unto wiſdom, Thou *art* my ſiſter; and call underſtanding *thy* kinſwoman: 5. [e] That they may keep thee from the ſtrange woman, from the ſtranger *which* flattereth with her words.

[a] Chap. ii. 1.
[b] Lev. xviii. 5. Chap. iv. 4.
[c] Deut. xxxii. 10.
[d] Ibid. vi. 8. & xi. 18. Chap. iii. 3. & vi. 21.
[e] Chap. ii. 16. & v. 3.

v. 1—5. The way of life is only to be found in the word of God, and therefore Solomon inculcates on his ſon the neceſſity of treaſuring up God's commandments in his heart, *v.* 1. tender of them, and jealous of every thing that would lead him to offend, as he guards the apple of his eye, *v.* 2. *Bind them upon thy fingers*, as a memorial ever in view; or as an ornament the moſt graceful: *write them upon the table of thine heart*, engraven there in characters indelible. *Say unto wiſdom, thou art my ſiſter, and call underſtanding thy kinſwoman*, delight in it, love it, cultivate the moſt intimate acquaintance therewith: and this ſhall be the beſt preſervative from the wiles of the adultereſs, and detect the falſehood and flatteries of the harlot's words, *v.* 5.

6. ¶ For at the window of my houſe I looked through my caſement, 7. And beheld among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, a young man [f] void of underſtanding, 8. Paſſing through the ſtreet near her corner; and he went the way to her houſe, 9. [g] In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: 10. And behold, there met him a woman *with* the attire of an harlot, and ſubtle of heart. 11. [h] (She *is* loud and ſtubborn, [i] and her feet abide not in her houſe. 12. Now *is ſhe* without, now in the ſtreets, and lieth in wait at every corner) 13. So ſhe caught him and kiſſed him, *and* † with an impudent face ſaid unto him, 14. ‡ *I have* peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. 15. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to ſeek thy face, and I have found thee. 16. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapeſtry, with carved *works*, with [k] fine linen of Egypt. 17. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. 18. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning, let us ſolace ourſelves with loves. 19. For the good man *is* not at home, he is gone a long journey; 20. He hath taken a bag of money ‖ with him, *and* will come home at § the day appointed. 21. With [l] her much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him. 22. He goeth after her ſtraightway as an ox goeth to the ſlaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks: 23. Till [m] a dart ſtrike through his liver, [n] as a bird haſteth to the ſnare, and knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

[f] Chap. vi. 32. & ix. 16.
[g] Job xxiv. 15.
[h] Chap. ix. 13.
[i] 1 Tim. v. 13. Tit. ii. 5.
† Heb. Strengthened her face, and ſaid.
‡ Heb. Peace-offerings are upon me.
[k] Iſa. xix. 9.
‖ Heb. In his hand.
§ Or the new moon.
[l] Chap. v. 3.
[m] Num. xxv. 8.
[n] Eccleſ. ix. 12.

v. 6—23. Example often proves more prevalent and effectual, than mere precept or reaſoning. To enforce, therefore, the advice he had given, he produces a ſtriking inſtance of a harlot's wiles, and of an unhappy youth betrayed into the ſnare. And whilſt as a magiſtrate he ſat at his window, to obſerve the manners of his people, and bring tranſgreſſors to ſhame, as a prophet he writes to ſet us on our guard, and to make us wiſe by others harms. We have,

1. The unhappy victim; *a youth*, whoſe inexperience expoſed him the more eaſily to the ſnare, *void of underſtanding*, untutored in the principles of wiſdom, among *the ſimple ones*, the companion of weak and ſilly *youths* like himſelf; *paſſing through the ſtreet*, idly ſauntering and looking round him, or walking, as the word implies, with a foppiſh air, to attract notice, *near her corner*, where ſhe uſed to take her ſtand to pick up her gallants; *and he went the way to her houſe*, led on by his corrupted appetite, *in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night*, to prevent diſcovery, and when he flattered himſelf with the thought, that *no eye ſeeth me*. Read, thoughtleſs youth, and be wiſe! ſhun idleneſs, ſhun temptation, ſhun the deeds of darkneſs; there is an eye ſeeth thee brighter than the ſun.

2. The wily tempter. *Behold!* with aſtoniſhment, indignation, and abhorrence hear the tale; *there met him a woman*, a wife, diveſted of all that brighteſt ornament of woman, modeſty, *with the attire of an harlot*, flaunting, looſe, gaudy; beſpeaking in her dreſs the lewdneſs of her mind; *ſubtle of heart*, that knew each wheedling art, or *reſerved*, pretending coyneſs and modeſt diſtance (for they who are moſt deſtitute of modeſty, dare not avow it) yet flying only to be purſued. *She is loud and ſtubborn*; at home that voice, that to her paramour breathes now the ſofteſt accents of pretended love, is heard with ſhrilleſt note, and her turbulent, headſtrong, and ſelf-willed temper makes her houſe the ſcene of noiſe, ſtrife, and diſpute. *Her feet abide not in her houſe*; her home, in her eyes, is her priſon; viſiting, company, and an eternal round of diſſipation engage all her thoughts; for ever gadding abroad, *now ſhe is without*, to take the air, pay morning viſits, or idle round the ſhops; *now in the ſtreets* and public places, ſeeking ſome object to inveigle, *and lieth in wait at every corner*, to catch, with her amorous glances, the incautious weak gallant. Let every woman tremble at the diſtant approach to ſuch a character.

3. The ſnare ſpread. With barefaced lewdneſs, that ſtayed not to be wooed, *ſhe caught him* in her arms, *and kiſſed him*, to inflame impure deſire; *and with an impudent face*, as if the darkneſs had extinguiſhed modeſty, and that it was daylight only which made ſin; *ſhe ſaid unto him, I have peace-offerings with me*, her houſe afforded all plenty, ſhe wanted not hire, but his company; and having that day payed her vows, might begin another ſcore of ſins: ſad commutation! where the force of prayers, ſacraments, and profeſſion of piety can but aggravate the guilt and damnation of the hypocrite. *Therefore I came forth to meet thee*, to partake of her delicacies, her heart wholly taken up with him, and unable to reliſh the entertainment, if his preſence graced not the table: *diligently to ſeek thy face*; to her, as ſhe pretends, the lovelieſt object, *and I have found thee*; with a tranſport ſhe ſpeaks it, as if her life depended on it, and Providence had kindly favoured her deſign. Nor does ſhe conceal her foul intentions; but with alluring invitations courts him to her bed, adorned with tapeſtry, nicely carved, ſpread with the fineſt linen of Egypt, perfumed with the richeſt ſpices, to gratify every ſenſe. *Come*, ſays ſhe, drawing him nearer to her, *come, let us take our fill of love*, or be *inebriated with it till morning, let us ſolace ourſelves with loves*; horrid abuſe of that ſacred name, proſtituted to cover beſtial appetite: miſerable ſolace! ſo ſhort-lived the joy, ſo endleſs the ſorrow which ſucceeds it; and leaſt the fear of diſcovery, or interruption, might beget reluctance in her gallant, ſhe takes care to let him know that *the man*, (for huſband ſhe will not call him) the good man of the houſe is not at home, he is gone a long journey; hath taken a large ſum with him to trade, or bear his expences, and will make a conſiderable ſtay, till the day appointed for his return, which is yet at a diſtance; ſo that they have nothing to apprehend: thus ſecreſy and impunity are urged to embolden the fooliſh youth to ſin.

4. Her wiles at laſt prevailed. Probably at firſt he ſtartled at the crime, for conſcience will remonſtrate; but, vanquiſhed by her fond and flattering tongue, *with her much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield*; his corruptions ſilenced his convictions, and preſent pleaſure overcame the fears of future pain; *with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him*, bound in the chains of her enticing words, and ſurrendering himſelf her ſlave.

5. The youth is undone. *He goeth after her ſtraightway*, or *ſuddenly*, at all hazards reſolved to gratify his luſts, *as an ox goeth to the ſlaughter*, ſenſeleſs of his danger, when led by the butcher to the fatal ax, *or as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks*, who, in his drunken fit, is not aware of the ſhame or puniſhment: *Till a dart ſtrike through his liver*, a mortal blow, aimed by the enraged huſband, by the executioner of juſtice, or ſome fatal diſeaſe contracted by his ſin; and the arrows of divine and eternal vengeance are ready on the ſtring to pierce him through: *as a bird haſteth to the ſnare, and knoweth not that it is for his life*, caught with the flattering bait, and heedleſs of the danger; and too late perceives the irremediable ruin, when the immortal ſoul is drowned in perdition and deſtruction. May his fearful ſtate be our warning!

24. ¶ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. 25. Let not thine heart decline to her ways: go not aſtray in her paths: 26. For ſhe hath caſt down many wounded: yea, [o] many ſtrong *men* have been ſlain by her. 27. [p] Her houſe *is* the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

[o] Neh. xiii. 26.
[p] Chap. ii. 18. & v. 5. & ix. 18.

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v. 24—27. The application of the ſtory is here made, and we are called to hearken to the words of wiſdom before it is too late, and attend to theſe divine admonitions, *v.* 24. *Let not thine heart decline to her ways*; ſuppreſs the firſt wandrings of corrupt deſire, and never, but with abhorrence, think for a moment of deviating from the path of purity. *Go not aſtray*; let nothing prevail with thee to do it, for ruin is before thee. Thouſands have been undone by thoſe fatal tempters; wounded in their character with infamy, in their bodies with diſeaſe; but, above all, in their ſouls with guilt and horror. *Yea, even many ſtrong men have been ſlain by her*; as Sampſon, brought to a miſerable death; and thoſe who have been ſtrong in grace, as David, have ſcarce eſcaped with life. Who need not then tremble for himſelf, when ſuch have ſo foully fallen? *Her houſe is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.* The fire of luſt will kindle the fire of hell, and a ſhort life of guilty pleaſure be exchanged for an eternity of never-ending pain. *Whoſo is wiſe will ponder theſe things.*

CHAP. VIII.

This chapter is the voice of Chriſt, the wiſdom of God. It contains, 1. *The higheſt commendations of wiſdom*, ver. 1—21. 2. *The glory of the eternal* Logos, *the divine Redeemer, is ſet forth*, ver. 22—31. *And then it concludes with a repeated charge to the children of men, diligently to attend to God's word.*

[a] Chap. i. 20. & ix. 3. 1. [a] DOTH not wiſdom cry? and underſtanding
put forth her voice? 2. She ſtandeth in the
top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.
3. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the
[b] Pſ. xlix. 1. coming in at the doors. 4. [b] Unto you, O men, I call,
and my voice *is* to the ſons of man. 5. O ye ſimple,
underſtand wiſdom; and ye fools, be ye of an under-
[c] Chap. xxii. 20. ſtanding heart. 6. Hear, for I will ſpeak of [c] excellent
things; and the opening of my lips *ſhall be* right things.
7. For my mouth ſhall ſpeak truth, and wickedneſs *is*
† Heb. The abomination of my lips. † an abomination to my lips. 8. All the words of my
mouth *are* in righteouſneſs, *there is* nothing froward or
perverſe in them. 9. They *are* all plain to him that
underſtandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.
[d] Jam. i. 21. 10. [d] Receive my inſtruction, and not ſilver; and know-
[e] Job xxviii. 15. Pſ. xix. 10. & cxix. 27. Chap. iii. 14, 15. & iv. 7. & xvi. 16. ledge rather than choice gold. 11. For [e] wiſdom *is* bet-
ter than rubies; and all the things that may be deſired,
are not to be compared to it.

v. 1—11. When Jeſus came to teach poor mortals the way to life eternal, a voice from the Excellent Glory proclaimed, *This is my beloved Son; hear him.* Let therefore every ear attend the divine inſtructions he condeſcends to give.

1. His words are publicly proclaimed in the places of chief concourſe, that whoſoever will, may come and learn of him. Thus Jeſus in the days of his fleſh preached openly on mountains, in the city, at the gates of the temple; and his prophets of old, his apoſtles and evangeliſts, went forth publiſhing his word and goſpel through the land. All are addreſſed; high and low, rich or poor; and the fools and ſimple, the fallen ſinful ſons of men, whoſe underſtanding is darkened, are invited to come, and find wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption in him. *Note*, The goſpel excludes none who do not exclude themſelves. If ſinners periſh for lack of knowledge, it is becauſe they would not come to him, that they might have life.

2. The importance of the ſubject demands our moſt ſerious attention. *The things* ſpoken of are *excellent*; the doctrines of grace, the perſon, offices, and undertaking of the Redeemer, and the ineſtimable bleſſings obtained thereby; the knowledge of God and an eternal world, with all the glories there provided for wiſdom's children. They are *right*, moſt becoming God to command, moſt fit for us to obey. They are doctrines of *truth*, *v.* 7. they concern him who is the truth, and cannot deceive; for WICKEDNESS *is an abomination to his lips:* and as lying is his abhorrence, it ſhould be alſo ours. All his words are *in righteouſneſs*, ver. 8. perfectly correſponding thereunto; or, *concerning righteouſneſs*, the neceſſity and nature of that one divine righteouſneſs, which can only be our title to eternal life. *There is nothing froward or perverſe in them*, but the moſt entire harmony and ſuitableneſs in them. They are *plain*, and eaſy to be underſtood by all whoſe minds are ſpiritually enlightened, and really deſire without prejudice to come to the ſacred oracles of truth for information; though to the wiſeſt ſcholar, a ſtranger to divine teaching, they are fooliſhneſs and darkneſs; *and right to them that find knowledge*, who readily ſubmit to the dictates of wiſdom, and approve of the perfect path God's word points out to them. They are preferable to the riches of both the Indies, more deſirable than gold and ſilver, or rubies, and all the delights of the ſons of men, *v.* 10, 11. And in proportion as we have learned Chriſt, and been taught of him, in ſuch meaſure will our hearts be weaned from all inordinate delight in earthly things, and count them dung and loſs, compared with the excellency of the knowledge of him and his truth.

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12. I wiſdom dwell with † prudence, and find out † Or, ſubtilty.
knowledge of witty inventions. 13. The fear of the
LORD *is* to hate evil; pride and arrogancy, and the
evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate. 14. Coun-
ſel *is* mine, and ſound wiſdom: I *am* underſtanding, [f] I [f] Eccleſ. vii. 19.
have ſtrength. 15. [g] By me kings reign, and princes [g] Dan. ii. 21. Rom. xiii. 1.
decree juſtice. 16. By me princes rule, and nobles,
even all the judges of the earth. 17. [h] I love them that [h] 1 Sam. ii. 30. John xiv. 21
love me, and [i] thoſe that ſeek me early ſhall find me. [i] Jam. i. 5.
18. [k] Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable [k] Chap. iii. 16.
riches and righteouſneſs. 19. [l] My fruit *is* better than
gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice [l] Ibid. 14.
ſilver. 20. I ‡ lead in the way of righteouſneſs, in the ‡ Or, walk.
midſt of the paths of judgment: 21. That I may cauſe
thoſe that love me to inherit ſubſtance; and I will fill
their treaſures.

v. 12—21. Thus ſpeaks he, like unto whom never man ſpake. His own glory and excellence is the ſubject, and we may truly ſay, He is the chief of ten thouſand, and altogether lovely.

1. In him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge. *I wiſdom*, the eſſential wiſdom, the all-wiſe God, *dwell with prudence*, poſſeſs it in all its fullneſs, *and find out knowledge of witty inventions*; either detect the devices of the crafty, and ſearch into the hearts of the children of men; or *the inventions* here ſpoken of relate to the aſtoniſhing contrivance of the covenant of grace, wherein all the perfections of God, his ſovereign grace, and inexorable juſtice, inviolable truth, and boundleſs mercy, are ſo eminently diſplayed, and ſo highly magnified; and wherein the miſerable ſinner beholds in Jeſus Chriſt a holy God, righteous and juſt in forgiving his ſins.

2. He hath a perfect hatred of ſin, and all who are taught of him abhor the thing which is evil. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*; this is the conſtant effect produced wherever that fear is implanted, and this becauſe God hates it. *Pride and arrogancy*, high thoughts of our vile ſelves and ſinful ſervices, and conceit of our own righteouſneſs, he abhors. *The evil way*, ſin of every kind, *and the froward mouth*, that ſpeaks in violence or rage, or propagates the doctrines of error, *do I hate*; and ſo muſt we. If we are ſpiritually proud, and our paſſions and frowardneſs unmortified, we are not wiſdom's children, but of our father the devil.

3. In him reſides all wiſdom and ſtrength in perfection for the government of all things, and out of his fulneſs muſt we in every ſtation receive wiſdom and power for all the work and duty to which he calls us, *v.* 14. By him ordained, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, his vicegerents upon earth, kings, princes, and judges are commiſſioned to bear rule; and reſiſtance againſt their lawful authority is rebellion againſt God. He endues them with capacities for their high ſtation, and they then rule well, when their own hearts are brought under the guidance and government of his word and ſpirit.

4. He will ſhew all affection and favour to thoſe who love and ſeek him. *I love them that love me; and they that ſeek me early*, with eagerneſs, or in the morning of youth, the accepted time, *ſhall find me*, and therewith every bleſſing of grace and glory.

5. He hath all *riches* and *honour* to beſtow, *v.* 18. as much as is for their good in this world, and with that peculiar ſatiſfaction, that they are got in *righteouſneſs* under the divine bleſſing. But rather the riches of grace, and the honour that cometh from God only are intended: riches that are *durable*, not like the periſhing ſubſtance of earth, but incorruptible in the heavens; and honours tranſcendently great, and abiding to eternity; poſſeſſed in virtue of the divine *righteouſneſs* of Jeſus, the great meritorious cauſe of all our preſent and eternal happineſs. *My fruit is better than gold, yea, than much fine gold*; the fruits of his undertaking for us; ſuch as redemption, reconciliation, adoption, &c. the fruits of his Spirit in us, love, joy, peace, &c. Compared with theſe, the glittering tinſel of this world's wealth vaniſhes into nothing, and is leſs than nothing and vanity.

6. He guides his followers in the paths *of righteouſneſs, in the midſt of the path of judgment*; neither deviating from it to the right hand or the left, that he may bring them to an inheritance in glory; and gives thoſe that love him, manſions in the ſkies, filled with all the treaſures of immortal bliſs. Happy, for ever happy, the ſoul whom he leads in theſe bleſſed paths, and brings, as inheritors of his kingdom, to the thrones provided for them in heaven.

22. [m] The LORD poſſeſſed me in the beginning of
his way, before his works of old. 23. [n] I was ſet up
from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth
was. 24. When *there were* no depths, I was brought
forth: when *there were* no fountains abounding with
water. 25. [o] Before the mountains were ſettled; before
the hills was I brought forth: 26. While as yet he had
not made the earth, nor the † fields, nor the higheſt part
of the duſt of the world. 27. When he prepared the
heavens I *was* there: when he ſet a ‡ compaſs upon the
face of the depth: 28. When he eſtabliſhed the clouds
above: when he ſtrengthned the fountains of the deep:
29. When [p] he gave to the ſea his decree, that the waters
ſhould not paſs his commandment: when [q] he appointed
the foundations of the earth: 30. [r] Then I was
by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and [s] I was daily
his delight, § rejoicing always before him: 31. Rejoicing
in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights
were with the ſons of men.

[m] Ecclus xxiv. 9. John i. 1.
[n] Pſ. ii. 6.
[o] Pſ. xc. 2.
† Or, open places.
‡ Or, circle.
[p] Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 10, 11. Pſ. civ. 9. Jer. v. 22.
[q] Job xxxviii. 4.
[r] John i. 1, 2, 18.
[s] Mat. iii. 17. Col. i. 13.
§ Heb. Sporting greatly.

v. 22—31. That not a quality but a perſon is here meant, is evident; for to ſuch alone can theſe properties be aſcribed, and that perſon is the eternal Son of God. *Compare John* i. 1—4. We have,

1. His eternal co-exiſtence with the Father. In perſon diſtinct, in eſſence the ſame. *In the beginning*, before the earth had a being, before ever the mountains roſe, or the waters retired to the boſom of the deep, *the Lord poſſeſſed me*, in that myſterious union which ſubſiſts between the divine perſons in the Godhead. *I was ſet up from everlaſting*; appointed in the eternal counſels, or *anointed*, deſigned for, and inveſted with, the office of Mediator.

2. His agency in the creation of all things; for by him God made the worlds, and without him was not any thing made that was made, *Eph.* iii. 9. *Heb.* i. 2. In each day's work he was preſent, not as a ſpectator merely, but as the great agent, and was firſt the Creator of all things, before he became incarnate for the redemption of ſinners, *v.* 27—30.

3. He was his Father's delight; *brought up with him*; from everlaſting the relation ſubſiſted, co-eternal, and co-equal; *and I was daily his delight*, *rejoicing always before him*; which may refer to the fulneſs of delight ſubſiſting mutually between the ſacred perſons in the ever-bleſſed Trinity; or to the complacence of the Father in the Son, and of both in the work of creation, whereof they expreſſed their approbation, *Gen.* i. 31. or, to their ſatisfaction in the counſel of peace between them, reſpecting man's redemption, God the Father being well-pleaſed in the Saviour's undertaking, and God the Son rejoicing to fulfil the work the Father had given him to do.

4. Towards the ſons of men he entertained the moſt enlarged affection, *rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth*, beſtowing upon all in rich profuſion the bounties of his providence; and *his delights were with the ſons of men*; thoſe whom he had choſen in a covenant of everlaſting love to be to the praiſe of his glory, in whoſe hearts he purpoſed to take up his abode, and for whoſe ſake he was content to take our nature upon him, and, through a ſcene of the moſt aſtoniſhing ſufferings, with chearfulneſs accompliſhed our ſalvation, ſatisfied to ſee at laſt in us his redeemed people the travel of his ſoul. What amazing love and grace! how are we bound to praiſe him, truſt him, love him with all our hearts!

32. Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children:
for [t] bleſſed *are they that* keep my ways. 33. Hear inſtruction
and be wiſe, and refuſe it not. 34. [u] Bleſſed
is the man that heareth me, [x] watching daily at my
gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors. 35. For whoſo
findeth me, findeth life, and [y] ſhall obtain favour of the
LORD. 36. But he that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth
his own ſoul; all they that hate me, love death.

[t] Pſ. cxix. 1, 2, & cxxviii. 2. Luke xi. 28.
[u] Chap. iii. 13, 18.
[x] Luke x. 39.
[y] Chap. xii. 2.

v. 32—36. When one ſo great and glorious ſpeaks, yea, and to us withal ſo inexpreſſibly good and gracious, well may it be expected, that every ear ſhould be attention, and every heart obedience.

1. The exhortation is, *Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children*; my redeemed people, the children of the covenant of promiſe, whoſe ears are by divine grace opened to attend; *hear inſtruction, and be wiſe*; ſo hear, as to mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt the ſacred truths of goſpel grace, and from them obtain ſound wiſdom: *and refuſe it not*; however contrary to fleſh and blood the precepts may appear, and mortifying to our fallen nature, we ſhall find them moſt healthful to our ſouls good. *Watching daily at my gates*, in prayer, meditation, and all the ordinances and means of grace, public or private, where God diſpenſes liberally to all who lack and ſeek wiſdom, and upbraideth not, *Jam.* i. 5. *waiting at the poſts of my doors*, humbly, patiently, perſeveringly, for then he never will ſend the hungry empty away.

2. Great will be the bleſſedneſs of thoſe who hear and obey the dictates of wiſdom, and yield up themſelves to Chriſt, to be governed by his word and ſpirit. *Favour* with God, acceptance of their perſons, forgiveneſs of their ſins, a ſenſe of his love, the ſpirit of adoption, the grace of the Sanctifier, and the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt: theſe are the preſent bleſſings provided for the faithful in Chriſt Jeſus, *and life*, ſpiritual and eternal, *found in him*, derived from him, and to be enjoyed with him in the world of bliſs and glory. May this bleſſedneſs be mine!

3. Dreadful will be the miſery of all who reject the Lord Jeſus and his goſpel. *He that ſinneth againſt me*, by hardened impenitence refuſing to return, or in proud ſelf-dependance truſting on their own doings and duties, inſtead of his grace and righteouſneſs, *wrongeth his own ſoul*: they ſin againſt their own mercies, refuſe the only remedy that can heal them, and bring down upon themſelves wrath to the uttermoſt. *All they that hate me, love death.* Our fallen nature is enmity againſt God; every ſinner is practically a hater of God; yea, is avowedly ſo, when he murmurs againſt the reſtraints of God's law as ſevere, and againſt his threatnings as hard or cruel: but all ſuch *love death*, not intentionally indeed, but it is the neceſſary conſequence of their ways; they chuſe the paths of ſin, and thereby court their own deſtruction. They periſh, becauſe they will periſh, and in hell will have none to upbraid but themſelves.

CHAP. IX.

Chriſt and ſin are rivals for the ſoul of man, and here we are told how they both make their court to it. 1. Chriſt, under the name of wiſdom, invites us to accept of his entertainment, and ſo to enter into acquaintance and communion with him, ver. 1—6. *And having foretold the different ſucceſs of his invitation,* ver. 7—9. *he ſhews, in ſhort, what he requires from us,* ver. 10. *And what he deſigns for us,* ver. 11. *And then leaves it to our choice what we will do,* ver. 12. *2. Sin, under the character of a fooliſh woman, courts us to accept of her entertainment,* ver. 13—16. *Pretends it is very charming,* ver. 17. *But Solomon tells what the reckoning will be,* ver. 18. *And now chooſe you this day whom you will follow.*

1. WIſdom hath builded [a] her houſe, ſhe hath hewn
out her ſeven pillars. 2. [b] She hath killed
† her beaſts, [c] ſhe hath mingled her wine; ſhe hath alſo
furniſhed her table. 3. [d] She hath ſent forth [e] her maidens,
[f] ſhe crieth upon the higheſt places of the city, 4.
Whoſo *is* ſimple, let him turn in hither: *as* for him
that wanteth underſtanding, ſhe ſaith to him, 5. [g] Come,
eat of my bread, and drink of the wine *which* I have
mingled. 6. [h] Forſake the fooliſh, and live; and go
in the way of underſtanding. 7. He that reproveth a
ſcorner, getteth to himſelf ſhame: and he that rebuketh
a wicked *man*, *getteth* himſelf a blot. 8. [i] Reprove not
a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee: [k] rebuke a wiſe *man*, and
he will love thee. 9. Give *inſtruction* to a wiſe *man*, and
he will yet be wiſer: teach a juſt *man*, and he will increaſe
in learning. 10. [l] The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning
of wiſdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* underſtanding.
11. For [m] by me thy days ſhall be multiplied,
and the years of thy life ſhall be increaſed. 12.
[n] If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thyſelf: but *if*
thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear *it*.

[a] Mat. xvi. 18.
[b] Mat xxii. 3, &c.
† Her killing, or ſacrifice.
[c] Ver. 5.
[d] Rom. x. 15.
[e] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[f] Chap. viii. 3.
[g] Cant. v. 1. Iſa. lv. 1.
[h] 2 Cor. vi. 17.
[i] Mat. vii. 6.
[k] Pſ. cxli. 5.
[l] Job xxviii. 28. Pſ. cxi. 10. Chap. i. 7.
[m] Chap. x. 27.
[n] Chap. xvi. 26.

v. 1—12. When in the days of his fleſh the wiſdom of God appeared upon earth, he choſe for the moſt part to convey his divine inſtructions by parables, a method which he had uſed of old, to communicate the myſteries of his goſpel.

1. A rich entertainment is provided in a ſumptuous palace for wiſdom's gueſts. *She hath builded her houſe*, the church of the redeemed on earth, founded on Chriſt, the rock of ages, and glorioully adorned with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit therein abundantly diſpenſed; or the heavenly manſions provided for the ſaints everlaſting reſt, the houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. *She hath hewn out her ſeven pillars*; intimating the ſtability and perpetuity thereof, ſeven being the number of perfection; or referring to the conſtant proviſion of wiſe and able miniſters, qualified with gifts and graces for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, and the ſupport of the intereſts of his church and people. *She hath killed her beaſts*, or *her ſacrifice*; *ſhe hath mingled her wine*; *ſhe hath alſo furniſhed her table*. The ſacrifice is a crucified Jeſus, offering himſelf upon the croſs for ſinners. The wine is his blood, the richeſt cordial to the guilty ſoul. The table is furniſhed with all the bleſſings of grace, pardon, righteouſneſs, peace, ſtrength, conſolation.

ſolation; the proviſion Jeſus himſelf hath made, and freely offers to every poor and hungry ſinner.

2. An invitation is ſent to them. *She hath ſent forth her maidens*, the miniſters of the goſpel, ordained and ſent to publiſh the glad tidings of ſalvation. *She crieth upon the high places of the city*, as our Lord himſelf did at Jeruſalem, and his ſervants continue to lift up their voice, with zeal and earneſtneſs delivering their meſſage. *Whoſo is ſimple, let him turn in hither*; even every ſoul, who, conſcious of his ſpiritual ignorance, deſires to be taught the leſſons of divine truth. *As for him that hath no underſtanding*, at leaſt not diſtinguiſhed by any attainments of ſcience, *ſhe ſaith unto him, Come, eat of my bread*, feed upon the dainties provided, *and drink of the wine I have mingled*; welcome to the feſtal board, to the wine and milk of goſpel grace. *Eat, O my friends*; *yea, drink abundantly, O beloved*; for here no exceſs is to be feared. They who feed upon Chriſt and his love, cannot come with deſires too enlarged; yea, bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt, for they ſhall be filled.

3. An admonition is given to the gueſts. *Forſake the fooliſh, and live*; the company of ſinners, whoſe works are folly, and their wages death: theſe we muſt leave, have no fellowſhip with them, that we may live unto God, quickened by his Spirit, *and go in the way of underſtanding*; the way of grace, peace, holineſs, and glory, which the word of God lays open and plain before us, and in which all who come to Jeſus Chriſt ought henceforth to walk, even as he alſo walked.

4. Directions are given, to thoſe ſent forth to bid the gueſts, whom to addreſs, and whom to avoid. *Reprove not a ſcorner*, who ſcoffs at all religion, and ridicules the profeſſors of it; who, ſo far from hearkening to the warnings and calls of the miniſters of the goſpel, turn them and their meſſage into deriſion, or perſecute them for their zeal and importunity; *for he that reproveth a ſcorner, getteth to himſelf ſhame* and hatred, *v.* 8. Theſe ſwine regard not the pearls, but turn and rent thoſe who proffer them, ſending them away diſappointed and ill-uſed for their pains. *And he that rebuketh a wicked man, getteth himſelf a blot*: their evil ſpirits but the more exaſperated, will abuſe and revile, and caſt ſome infamous reflection on their kind reprovers. Some indeed would give their meſſage a more welcome reception: *Rebuke a wiſe man, and he will love thee*; thankful for ſuch an inſtance of friendſhip, and growing wiſer and better by the rebuke, *v.* 9. *Note*, (1.) None are too wiſe to learn, or too good to amend; for in the beſt there ſtill remains much ignorance and folly, and of this they who are deepeſt read in ſelf-knowledge, will be moſt ſenſible. (2.) They who are angry at rebuke, prove the defectiveneſs of their underſtanding, as well as their want of grace. (3.) Fidelity in reproving is the ſureſt proof of genuine friendſhip.

5. The inſtructions which wiſdom's ſervants muſt give are theſe: *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom*; a filial reverential fear of offending; *and the knowledge of the holy is underſtanding*; *of the Holy* Ones, the three divine perſons, their offices, and relation to us: or, *of holy things*, the goſpel, and all the myſteries of grace therein revealed. This is the beſt and moſt valuable knowledge; *for by me thy days ſhall be multiplied*; it being life eternal to know the true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent: *and the years of thy life ſhall be increaſed*. Often in this world ſuch is the bleſſed effect of true godlineſs, and certainly in the world to come, when life and immortality ſhall reign. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thyſelf*; thou wilt be thyſelf the gainer thereby. It is not that our goodneſs can profit God, that he invites us to come to him, but that we may be made happy: *but if thou ſcorneſt* the gracious invitation, *thou alone ſhalt bear it*; the guilt of rejecting the goſpel will lie on the ſinner's conſcience, and ruin everlaſting be brought on his fooliſh ſoul. The damned ſinner will have none to blame but himſelf for his miſery: God called, and he refuſed to anſwer: he would not come to Chriſt that he might have life; his blood therefore is upon his own head.

o Chap. vii. 11. ¶ 13. [o] A fooliſh woman *is* clamorous, *ſhe is* ſimple,
and knoweth nothing. 14. For ſhe ſitteth at the door
of her houſe, on a ſeat in the high places of the city,
15. To call paſſengers who go right on their ways. 16.
p Ver. 4. [p] Whoſo *is* ſimple, let him turn in hither: and as for
him that wanteth underſtanding, ſhe ſaith to him, 17.
q Chap. xx. 17. [q] Stolen waters are ſweet, and bread † *eaten* in ſecret is
† Heb. *of ſecrecies.* pleaſant. 18. But he knoweth not that [r] the dead *are*
r Chap. ii. 18. & vii. 27. there; *and that* her gueſts *are* in the depths of hell.

v. 13—18. Folly is here ſetting up her ſtandard in oppoſition to wiſdom, which ſome interpret of carnal reaſon oppoſing divine revelation; others, of the arch tempter Satan; others, of the antichriſtian church of Rome; but it ſeems to be the ſame perſon before ſpoken of, *chap.* ii. v. vii. the ſeducing ſorcereſs, whoſe wily tongue deceives the unſtable and unwary.

1. Her character is, that *ſhe is clamorous*; either talkative and noiſy at home and abroad, or importunate in urging her paramours to comply with her ſollicitations. *She is ſimple, and knows nothing*; nothing as ſhe ought to know; wiſe enough to work wickedneſs, but to do good hath no knowledge, nor deſire after it. *She ſitteth at the door of her houſe*, idly ſauntering, and gazing after her prey: *on a ſeat in the high places of the city*; frequenting all public places, and ſeen at the moſt thronged and faſhionable aſſemblies, to catch with her toils ſome unhappy object: *to call paſſengers who go right on their ways*; who have been trained up in the ways of truth, and ſeemed to promiſe fair to follow them: with a malicious pleaſure ſhe ſeeks to debauch ſuch, and turn them aſide from the paths of virtue and religion.

2. Her addreſs is moſt inviting and enſnaring, with every agreable pretence of profit and pleaſure. *Whoſo is ſimple*, fettered with the reſtraints of education, and weakly ſuperſtitious, as ſhe terms it; afraid to taſte the delights of pleaſure; *let him turn in hither*, and learn the joys which ſenſe can give. *And as for him that wanteth underſtanding*, and hath not ſeen or known the world, *ſhe ſaith to him, Stolen waters are ſweet*: unlawful pleaſures, ſuch is the perverſeneſs of man's fallen nature, are moſt tempting; not that they are really moſt ſatisfactory: *and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant*, where the confidence of ſecurity gives a reliſh to the indulgence. But let the ſinner know, whatever the tempter promiſes, ſhe cannot make good: the curſe of God will embitter the joy, and the eye of God will pierce the ſhades of darkneſs; yea, often the moſt ſecret iniquities ſhall be produced to the eye of day, to the perpetual ſhame and reproach of the deluded ſinner. And therefore,

3. A warning is given, as an antidote to the poiſon. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there*; that he who liveth in ſuch guilty pleaſures, is dead whilſt he liveth, and each day expoſed to eternal death, the wages of ſin; *and that her gueſts are in the depths of hell*. Thouſands thus beguiled are now in torments: all who continue under the power of theſe vile affections have a hell in their conſcience; or if ſeared, as with a hot iron, *v.* 4. their damnation is more inevitable and ſure: and as theſe deeds of lewdneſs brought down a deluge of water upon *the Rephaims*, the ſinners of the old world, ſo ſurely ſhall they bring a deluge of fire upon all who follow their deſtructive ways: they who burn together in their luſts, muſt burn together in hell.

CHAP. X.

Hitherto we have been in the porch or preface to the Proverbs, here they begin; they are ſhort but weighty ſentences: moſt of them are diſtichs, two ſentences in one verſe, illuſtrating each other; but it is ſeldom that there is any coherence between the verſes, much leſs any thread of diſcourſe, and therefore in theſe chapters we need not attempt to reduce the contents to their proper heads; the ſeveral ſentences will appear beſt in their own places. The ſcope of them all is to ſet before us good and evil, the bleſſing and the curſe. Many of the proverbs in this chapter relate to the good government of the tongue, without which men's religion is vain.

1. THE proverbs of Solomon. [a] A wiſe ſon maketh a glad father; but a fooliſh ſon *is* the heavineſs of his mother. a Chap. xv. 20. & xvii. 21, 25. & xix. 13. & xxix. 15.

v. 1. Nothing is a greater comfort to parents, than to ſee their children profiting by their inſtruction and examples, and growing in wiſdom and favour with God and man. This is a recompenſe for all their toil; though, if otherwiſe, it will be ſome ſatisfaction to them to have done their beſt. On the other hand, nothing is a bitterer burden to an aged parent's heart, than to ſee their children ſtubborn, diſobedient, and refractory, bringing down their grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave. The guilt of ſuch conduct before God is exceedingly aggravated.

2. [b] Treaſures of wickedneſs profit nothing: [c] but b Pſ. xlix. 6, &c. Chap. xi. 4.
righteouſneſs delivereth from death. 3. [d] The LORD c Dan. iv. 27.
will not ſuffer the ſoul of the righteous to famiſh: but d Pſ. x. 14. & xxxvii. 25.
he caſteth away † the ſubſtance of the wicked. † Or, the wicked for their wickedneſs.

v. 2, 3. The wicked have here uſually moſt of this world's wealth; yet, little are they to be envied; for *treaſures of wickedneſs*, either ſuch as are wickedly gotten, or ſpent in wickedneſs, *profit nothing*: they give no ſubſtantial ſatisfaction to the ſoul; the curſe of God is upon them, and he *caſteth* them *away*; either by ſome ſtrokes of his providence depriving men of what they abuſe, or at death removing them from their ſubſtance for ever.

Far different is it with the righteous. His *righteouſneſs delivereth from death*; *others*, by his charity relieving them; *himſelf*, as it prevents the judgments which ſinners provoke. Or, as it is a part of that divine nature which is poſſeſſed through faith in Chriſt, it is a preſervative from death eternal. *The Lord will not ſuffer the ſoul of the righteous to famiſh*; for their bodily proviſion he will take care, and eſpecially will feed their ſouls with the bread of life, which cometh down from heaven.

4. [e] He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a ſlack hand: e Chap. xii. 24. & xix. 15.
but [f] the hand of the diligent maketh rich. f Chap. xiii. 4. & xxi. 5.

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v. 4. Honeſty is the beſt policy, and induſtry the ſureſt way to proſper. *He becometh poor that dealeth with a ſlack* or *deceitful hand*; who is idle in his buſineſs, or backward to relieve the diſtreſſed; or making haſte to be rich by fraud and injuſtice, brings down God's anger, and loſes his reputation among men. *But the hand of the diligent*, or *acute*, who are active and induſtrious, *maketh rich.* And in the concerns of our ſouls it is equally true; they who give all diligence are thoſe who will be richeſt in grace, and make their calling and election ſure.

5. He that gathereth in ſummer, *is* a wiſe ſon: *but* he that ſleepeth in harveſt, *is* [g] a ſon that cauſeth ſhame.

[g] Chap. xvii. 2. & xix. 26.

v. 5. Time muſt be ſeized by the fore-lock: the ſeaſon of opportunity is precious; it is a mark of true wiſdom to improve it; but idleneſs, and neglect of the proper ſeaſon, bring want and ſhame to the fooliſh ſon, and his parents ſhare his reproach. Youth is our ſummer, to provide for the winter of age; if we ſleep this away, without furniſhing our minds with knowledge and grace, we ſhall live to be mere cumberers of the ground.

6. Bleſſings *are* upon the head of the juſt: but [h] violence covereth the mouth of the wicked. 7. [i] The memory of the juſt *is* bleſſed: but [k] the name of the wicked ſhall rot.

[h] Ver. 11.
[i] Pſ. cxii. 6.
[k] Pſ. ix. 5, 6. Eccleſ. viii. 10.

v. 6, 7. *The juſt*, or juſtified, who by faith in Jeſus are accounted righteous before God, are entitled to all the bleſſings of grace and glory, more ornamental than the diadem, and a ſafer protection than an helmet of poliſhed ſteel: and when they go hence, their *memory* is precious, they are ſpoken of with honour, and ſurvivors bleſs God for their good examples, and the ſweet ſavour of their graces which remains behind them, by which, though dead, they yet ſpeak. As for *the wicked*, it is not ſo with them: *violence covereth their mouth*; when ſpeechleſs under the conviction of evil deeds, they have not a plea to make in arreſt of judgment: or, *their mouth covereth violence*; they palliate with excuſes their evil deeds, or hypocritically labour to conceal them. Their *name ſhall rot*; either they ſhall be buried in oblivion, notwithſtanding their care to perpetuate their memory; or, if remembered, ſhall be mentioned with deteſtation, expreſſive of that abhorrence due to their wickedneſs.

8. The wiſe in heart will receive commandments: [l] but a prating fool ſhall † fall.

[l] Ver. 10.
† Or, be beaten.

v. 8. They are truly wiſe, who are *wiſe in heart*, whoſe heads are not merely ſtored with knowledge, but their hearts fraught with grace; who give this proof of their wiſdom, they *will receive commandments*, as obedient ſubjects, dutiful children, and in all fidelity approving themſelves to God. *But a prating fool*, that loves to hear himſelf talk, opinionated of his underſtanding, and conceiting himſelf very wiſe, *ſhall fall* into contempt among men; into ſin, which ever attends a multitude of words; and conſequently into hell, the end of thoſe who ſay and do not.

9. [m] He that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely: but he that perverteth his ways ſhall be known.

[m] Pſ. xxiii. 4. Chap. xxviii. 18.

v. 9. *He that walketh uprightly*, in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity cleaving to God's word and worſhip, and in his tranſactions with men ſpeaking the truth from his heart, and ſhewing all good fidelity; he *walketh ſurely*; ſafe under the divine protection, in the way to life and glory, and his end will be peace: *but he that perverteth his ways*; in crooked paths, doubles, and turns, diſſembles, and acts hypocritically with God or man; *ſhall be known*: in ſome unguarded moment the maſk will drop off, and his folly and ſin be manifeſted to his ſhame in this world; at leaſt, in the great day of recompenſe it ſhall be ſeen.

10. [n] He that winketh with the eye, cauſeth ſorrow: [o] but a prating fool ſhall fall.

[n] Chap. vi. 13.
[o] Ver. 8.

v. 10. *He that winketh with the eye*, to draw others into ſin with him, or as a ſignal to companions in miſchief, to carry on ſome ſcheme of wickedneſs, *cauſeth ſorrow* to the perſon againſt whom the deſign is laid; to thoſe who concur with him, bringing them to ſhare his guilt; and to his own ſoul, which muſt ſuffer for it: *but a prating fool*, leſs miſchievous and dangerous indeed, but moſt diſagreeable and troubleſome, *ſhall fall*, or *be beaten*, for his folly and impertinence.

11. [p] The mouth of a righteous *man is* a well of life: but [q] violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

[p] Chap. xiii. 14. & xviii. 4.
[q] Pſ. cvii. 42. Ver. 6.

v. 11. A man is known by his words; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life*, ſending forth the ſalutary ſtreams of a gracious converſation, and miniſtring edification to the hearers; *but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked*; his tongue is full of corrupt communication; or *covers violence*; ſpeaking lies in hypocriſy, and, under the guiſe of friendſhip, cloaking the moſt pernicious deſigns.

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12. Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrifes: but [r] love covereth all ſins.

[r] Chap. xvii. 9. 1 Cor. xiii. 4. 1 Pet. iv. 8.

v. 12. Where hatred is in the heart, there will never be wanting occaſion for ſtrifes; for every look and word will be miſinterpreted into a provocation; and where ſuch a temper reigns, it will be ever ſcattering inſinuations, calumnies, and lies, to kindle the fire of contention: *but love covereth all ſins*; draws the veil of oblivion over all affronts and injuries, conceals the evil which may be hid, and wiſhes to extenuate what cannot.

13. In the lips of him that hath underſtanding, wiſdom is found: but [s] a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of † underſtanding.

[s] Chap. xxvi. 3.
† Heb. Heart.

v. 13. Underſtanding in the heart will put wiſdom in the lips: the converſation of ſuch will be edifying, and their words heard with reſpect and advantage; *but a rod is for the back of him that is void of underſtanding*, or *wants a heart*; whoſe folly expoſes him to ſhame and ſcourges, as his preſent puniſhment here; or to everlaſting ſhame and ſuffering, the wages of ſin hereafter.

14. Wiſe *men* lay up knowledge: but [t] the mouth of the fooliſh *is* near deſtruction.

[t] Chap. xviii. 7.

v. 14. They who know the value of wiſdom, lay it up as the moſt precious treaſure, and by every means of prayer, reading, and meditation, ſeek to increaſe their ſtore, that they may be ready to uſe it for the good of others; but the fool raſhly blabs what brings ruin on others or himſelf.

15. [u] The rich man's wealth *is* his ſtrong city: the deſtruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

[u] Chap. xviii. 11.

v. 15. Worldly wealth is a defence from injuries, few caring to aſſault thoſe well able to defend themſelves; and the rich are apt to place too great confidence in their poſſeſſions, and to be elated thereby, though they profit not in a day of wrath. On the other hand, the poor are ready to be oppreſſed by every foot, and are in conſternation and diſtreſs often above meaſure, through fear of periſhing for want.

16. The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life; the fruit of the wicked to ſin.

v. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life*; his induſtry is bleſſed with a proviſion for himſelf and family; or his care for his ſoul ſucceeds in an increaſe of ſpiritual life, and eſtabliſhes his hope of eternal life: *but the fruit of the wicked*, whatever he poſſeſſes, whether by inheritance or acquired, all tendeth *to ſin*; hardens him in it, and is abuſed to ſerve his luſts, his pleaſures, and his pride.

17. He *is in* the way of life that keepeth inſtruction: but he that refuſeth reproof, † erreth.

† Or, cauſeth to err.

v. 17. The way to life eternal is the inſtruction the goſpel of Jeſus gives, and he that receiveth and keepeth it can never periſh; *but he that refuſeth reproof*, given in God's word, by his miniſters, parents, or maſters, *erreth* from the path of life, and, as the fruit of his perverſeneſs and obſtinacy, ruſhes upon his deſtruction.

18. He that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and he that uttereth a ſlander, is a fool.

v. 18. They may think themſelves very wiſe, who, when hatred boils in their heart, can ſmile, be gracious, and cover it with deceit; *and he that uttereth ſlander*, may think to do it in ſo artful a manner, that the author of it ſhall never be known; but in God's account they are fools; their wickedneſs will be detected, and their ſhame be made manifeſt at the laſt.

19. [x] In the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wiſe.

[x] Eccleſ. v. 3. Jam. iii. 2.

v. 19. Few words are beſt. They who muſt give an account for every idle word, need keep the door of their lips. Wiſdom is known by ſilence and thoughtfulneſs, folly by talkativeneſs.

20. The tongue of the juſt *is as* choice ſilver: the heart of the wicked *is* little worth. 21. The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of † wiſdom.

† Heb. Heart.

v. 20, 21. Though raſh and heedleſs talk is diſcountenanced, that is commendable which is for the uſe of edifying. The truly wiſe are not as dark lanthorns, that ſhine only to themſelves; but communicative out of the good treaſure of their hearts. *The tongue of the juſt is as choice ſilver*; pure from droſs, and precious, ſpeaking of thoſe truths of goſpel-grace that enrich the ſoul more than all treaſures: *and their lips feed many*; to whom they break the bread of life, and by it they are nouriſhed up in the words of ſound doctrine. But *the heart of the wicked is little worth*; evil, and only evil continually within, and from a fountain ſo corrupt nothing pure or profitable can be expected to flow. They may boaſt of the goodneſs of their heart, but he who knows it, aſſerts it to be deſperately wicked and worthleſs. No marvel therefore they *die for want of wiſdom*; obſtinate and unteachable, who neither know, nor deſire to know, the way of life and peace, but perſiſt in the devices of their own fooliſhneſs.

y Pſ. xxxvii. 22.

22. [y] The bleſſing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it.

v. 22. Thoſe are the truly valuable riches, which are acquired with God's bleſſing, and employed to his glory: no guilt attends the gain of them, no ſorrow embitters the enjoyment of them.

z Chap. xiv. 9. & xv. 21.

23. [z] *It is* a ſport to a fool to do miſchief: but a man of underſtanding hath wiſdom.

v. 23. Malicious wickedneſs takes a pleaſure *to do miſchief*; and in nothing do men more reſemble devils; or, *to commit ſin*, at which fools make a jeſt; or glory in their ſhame, which is the pinnacle of daring impiety: *but a man of underſtanding hath wiſdom*, to abhor ſuch wickedneſs; or, *ſo is wiſdom to a man of underſtanding*; it is his delight.

24. The fear of the wicked, it ſhall come upon him: but the deſire of the righteous ſhall be granted.

v. 24. The terrors of guilt often haunt the conſciences of the wicked; nor are they bugbear fears, but terrible realities, that in all their bitterneſs will quickly ſeize upon them: *but the deſire of the righteous*, his prayers for preventing, reſtraining, ſanctifying, comforting grace, *ſhall be granted*; no fear diſturb his peace, nor guilt terrify his ſpirit.

a Pſ. xxxvii. 36.
b Mat. vii. 24, 25. & xvi. 18.

25. As the whirlwind paſſeth, [a] ſo *is* the wicked no *more*: but [b] the righteous *is* an everlaſting foundation.

v. 25. Sudden and eternal deſtruction is ready to ſeize the wicked, ſecure as he may appear, and confidently as he boaſts himſelf: but the righteous, being built on Chriſt, the everlaſting foundation, ſtands faſt for ever, and no ſtorms or tempeſts can ever ſhake his confidence, or move him from the hope of the goſpel.

26. As vinegar to the teeth, and as ſmoke to the eyes, ſo *is* the ſluggard to them that ſend him.

v. 26. A ſluggard is a plague to thoſe who employ him: as vinegar ſets the teeth on edge, and ſmoke cauſes the eyes to water, ſo doth his dilatorineſs and neglects vex and provoke thoſe who ſend him.

c Chap. ix. 11.
† Heb. Addeth.
d Job xxii. 16. Pſ. lv. 23. Eccleſ. vii. 17.

27. [c] The fear of the LORD † prolongeth days: but [d] the years of the wicked ſhall be ſhortned.

v. 27. Though God hath fixed the days of our life by an unchangeable decree, yet he who ordains the end, ordains the means. A regard to God and his fear, by preſerving the body in temperance, ſoberneſs, and chaſtity, tends to prolong life; whilſt a courſe of wickedneſs brings on diſeaſes, and haſtens the ſinner to his grave.

e Job viii. 13. & xi. 20. Pſ. cxii. 10.

28. The hope of the righteous *ſhall be* gladneſs: but [e] the expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh.

v. 28. *The hope of the righteous ſhall be*, or *is*, *gladneſs*; it brings delight and ſatisfaction to the ſoul, and the iſſue of it will be eternal joy, when it ſhall be ſwallowed up in fruition: *but the expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh.* Whatever proſpects are before him, and however he flatters himſelf with confidence of ſucceſs, diſappointment ſhall blaſt his enterprizes, his hopes prove deluſion, and deſpair eternal cloſe the ſcene.

f Pſ. xxxvii. 22. & cxxv. 1.

29. The way of the LORD *is* ſtrength to the upright: but deſtruction *ſhall be* to the workers of iniquity. 30. [f] The righteous ſhall never be removed: but the wicked ſhall not inhabit the earth.

v. 29, 30. Say unto the righteous, It ſhall be well with them; but woe unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with them. The upright, who walk in God's way, find him their ſtrength; his providence is their protection, his grace their ſupport in every trial, temptation, and difficulty; and they *ſhall never be removed*; preſerved by God's unchangeable love, almighty power, and everlaſting faithfulneſs; and thus enabled to perſevere unto the end. But the wicked have no ſupport: deſtruction terrible and irreſiſtable awaits them, and out of that earth on which they place their affections, ſhall they be rooted, and cut off from the enjoyment of all their poſſeſſions.

g Pſ. xxxvii. 30.

31. [g] The mouth of the juſt bringeth forth wiſdom: but the froward tongue ſhall be cut out. 32. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable; but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh frowardneſs.

v. 31, 32. By a man's words he may be known. The righteous, knowing what is acceptable, out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things, ſuch as are ſuited to miniſter grace to the hearers, and make them wiſe unto ſalvation: *but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh frowardneſs*, offenſive to God, and hurtful to his neighbour; and therefore in juſt judgment his tongue ſhall be *cut out*, or ſilenced in everlaſting burnings.

CHAP. XI.

a Lev. xix. 35, 36. Deut. xxv. 13—16. Chap. xvi. 11. & xx. 10, 23.
† Heb. Balances of deceit,
‡ Heb. A perfect ſtone.

1. [a] † A Falſe balance *is* abomination to the LORD: but ‡ a juſt weight *is* his delight.

v. 1. Some appearances of honeſty there may be, without religion; but there can be no religion towards God, where there is not honeſty towards man. God abhors all fraudulent dealings, and however a man may by ſhort weights and meaſures increaſe his profits, he is only treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath: *but a juſt weight*, and conſcientious integrity in our dealings, is his delight, as being the evidence of his fear and love in our hearts.

b Chap. xv. 33. & xvi. 18. & xviii. 12.

2. [b] *When* pride cometh, then cometh ſhame: but with the lowly *is* wiſdom.

v. 2. Pride and ſhame are, like the body and ſhadow, inſeparable. Among men, every one wiſhes to mortify the arrogant; and God will certainly bring the lofty low in the day of recompenſe, when Satan's ſin will meet Satan's puniſhment: *but with the lowly*, who have a humble ſenſe of themſelves, and poor attainments, there *is wiſdom*; they judge rightly of themſelves, find favour with men, and acceptance with God.

c Chap. xiii. 6.

3. [c] The integrity of the upright ſhall guide them: but the perverſeneſs of tranſgreſſors ſhall deſtroy them.

v. 3. Where the heart is ſincere before God, there we ſhall never willingly deviate from the path of truth, and we may comfortably expect the Spirit of God to teach us the right way, and guide us in it; but deſtruction is in the ſinner's road, and his perverſeneſs in rejecting the teachings of God's word hurries him on to his ruin.

d Chap. x. 2. Ezek. vii. 19. Zeph. i. 18.

4. [d] Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteouſneſs delivereth from death.

v. 4. Whatever defence riches are now, they profit nothing in a day of wrath; unable to protect us from the ſtroke of death, or to buy us off at the bar of judgment; and therefore we ſhould put the leſs value on what can be of ſo little advantage to us, and be the more ſollicitous to obtain the true riches of grace, even that *righteouſneſs*, imputed and implanted, which *delivereth from death*; takes out ſin, the ſting of it, here, and ſaves us from eternal death hereafter.

† Heb. Rectify.
e Chap. v. 22. Eccleſ. x. 8, 9.

5. The righteouſneſs of the perfect ſhall † direct his way: but the wicked ſhall fall by his own wickedneſs. 6. The righteouſneſs of the upright ſhall deliver them: but [e] tranſgreſſors ſhall be taken in *their own* naughtineſs.

v. 5. 6. Perfect righteouſneſs and uprightneſs is indeed to be found in Chriſt alone; but by faith we are compleat in him, and, renewed by his grace, are enabled to make ſtrait paths for our feet, are preſerved from falling in the hour of temptation, and delivered from the power of death: whilſt the wicked and tranſgreſſors ſhall be cut off in the midſt of their career, and periſh by the very methods whereby they thought to avert their judgment.

7. When a wicked man dieth, *his* expectation ſhall periſh: and the hope of unjuſt *men* periſheth.

v. 7. Many flatter themſelves with deluſive hopes, whom death will quickly undeceive: then the worldling will ſee the fruits of his injuſtice flee from him; and the ſelf-righteous hypocrite,

crite, who dreamed of heaven, be terribly ſurpriſed to find his ſoul in hell.

[f] Chap. xxi. 18. [g] Eſth. vii. 9. Dan. vi. 24.

8. [f] The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and [g] the wicked cometh in his ſtead.

v. 8. Before death comes, God is pleaſed ſometimes even here to diſtinguiſh the righteous from the wicked, by the diſpenſations of his providence, delivering the one out of their troubles, and bringing the other into thoſe very miſeries they plotted againſt the juſt. Mordecai was advanced, but Haman hung on the very gallows he had erected for him.

[h] Job viii. 13.

9. [h] An hypocrite with *his* mouth deſtroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge ſhall the juſt be delivered.

v. 9. The tongue is a mortal poiſon. By flatteries, falſe doctrines, and artful ſeduction, *the hypocrite deſtroyeth his neighbour*, drawing him into ſin, and thereby into miſery; but *through knowledge* of God's word, *ſhall the juſt be guarded* againſt the tempter's wiles, and *delivered* from the deſtruction intended.

[i] Chap. xxviii. 12, 28. [k] Chap. xxix. 8.

10. [i] When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked periſh, *there is* ſhouting. 11. [k] By the bleſſing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

v. 10, 11. Whether others are like them or not, yet the proſperity and advancement of good men is matter of general joy, becauſe, as magiſtrates, they uſe their power, or as men of wealth, their ſubſtance, for the good of their fellow citizens. *By the bleſſing of the upright*, through God's bleſſing upon them, or their prayers, advice, and kindneſs, *the city is exalted*, and all who dwell with them fare the better for them: but the wicked are the plague and curſe of the places where they dwell; they corrupt their manners, and bring down God's wrath upon them. When they are cut off therefore by death, or their power, influence, and authority are broken, it is matter of general joy, and all who have any ſenſe of goodneſs, or knowledge of their own intereſts, ſhout at their fall.

† Heb. Heart.
[l] Lev. xix. 16. Chap. xx. 19.
‡ Heb. He that walketh, being a tale-bearer.

12. He that is void of † wiſdom, deſpiſeth his neighbour: but a man of underſtanding holdeth his peace. 13. [l] ‡ A tale-bearer revealeth ſecrets: but he that is of a faithful ſpirit concealeth the matter.

v. 12, 13. Two marks of folly and ſin are here cenſured, (1.) Contemptuous treatment of our neighbour, either in looks or words, proceeding from the conceit of our own ſuperior wiſdom or holineſs. (2.) Tale-bearing, going from houſe to houſe, revealing what was ſpoken in ſecreſy, ſowing diſcord, and doing miſchief irreparable. Far different is the conduct of the wiſe; if he can ſay no good of his neighbour, he will be ſilent; if provoked, will never anſwer in opprobrious language; what is truſted to his boſom, is ſacred; and he ſeeks to cover under the veil of oblivion, whatever might be to the prejudice of another.

[m] 1 Kings xii. 1, &c. Chap. xv. 22. & xxiv. 6.

14. [m] Where no counſel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counſellors *there is* ſafety.

v. 14. Without prudent counſel, neither a kingdom can be long preſerved, nor our private affairs proſper; but where many wiſe counſellors unite in their conſultations, *there is ſafety*, every precaution will be taken, all danger prevented, and the proſpereſt methods uſed to enſure ſucceſs.

[n] Chap. vi. 1.
† Heb. Be ſore broken.
‡ Heb. Thoſe that ſtrike hands.

15. [n] He that is ſurety for a ſtranger ſhall † ſmart *for it*: and he that hateth ‡ ſuretiſhip, is ſure.

v. 15. Againſt raſh ſuretiſhip we were warned before, *chap.* vi. 1. but we need repeated admonition, where the conſequence might be ſo injurious to ourſelves, and ſo hurtful to our families. To be ſurety for a ſtranger, were the heighth of folly; nay, even where we think we are ſafe, and know our man; ſo many ill conſequences have followed from engagements for others, that it were ſafeſt to keep ourſelves free of theſe incumbrances.

[o] Chap. xxxi. 30.

16. [o] A gracious woman retaineth honour: and ſtrong *men* retain riches.

v. 16. Grace is the moſt honourable and amiable diſtinction, and this will increaſingly engage affection and reſpect, when other accompliſhments are fading and loſt. As tenacious therefore ſhould a woman be of this beſt ornament, *as ſtrong men retain riches*, who hold faſt what they poſſeſs, and ſuffer none to rob them of their treaſures.

17. The merciful man doth good to his own ſoul: but *he that is* cruel, troubleth his own fleſh.

v. 17. Self-love too often makes us ſelfiſh, but if we would conſult our trueſt intereſt, to be merciful and liberal will prove our higheſt advantage; it will *do good to our own ſouls. But he that is cruel*, ſordid, unfeeling, and deſtitute of bowels of compaſſion, *troubleth his own fleſh*; ſtarving himſelf, rather than uſing what he hath; or denying to his family and friends, what their wants and neceſſities demand.

[p] Hoſ. x. 12. Gal. vi. 8. Jam. iii. 18.

18. The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but [p] to him that ſoweth righteouſneſs, *ſhall be* a ſure reward.

v. 18. Sin promiſeth much enjoyment, but terribly diſappoints the deluded ſoul, when the pleaſure and profit he propoſed to himſelf iſſues in his perdition. Not ſo the way of righteouſneſs; the harveſt there abundantly anſwers the moſt ſanguine wiſhes in the preſent ſure reward of peace and joy, and the eternal reward of glory.

19. As righteouſneſs *tendeth* to life: ſo he that purſueth evil, *purſueth it* to his own death.

v. 19. True righteouſneſs hath the moſt direct tendency to ſecure life everlaſting; it is the earneſt of it, the meetneſs for it, and, in a ſenſe, glory begun: *ſo he that purſueth evil* with eagerneſs and violence, *purſueth it to his own death*, and ruſhes headlong into miſery.

20. They that are of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD: but *ſuch as are* upright in *their* way, *are* his delight.

v. 20. As we are regarded of God, ſo will our ſtate be to eternity. *They that are of a froward heart*, perverſe in their ſpirit, or double-minded, as the word may ſignify, theſe *are abomination to the Lord: but ſuch as are upright in their way*, in temper and conduct diſpoſed and labouring to walk before God in truth, ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, theſe *are his delight*, and will be ſo to eternity.

[q] Chap. xvi. 5.

21. [q] *Though* hand *join* in hand, the wicked ſhall not be unpuniſhed: but the ſeed of the righteous ſhall be delivered.

v. 21. Strong is the conſpiracy of the wicked: multitudes, power, and policy, are on their ſide; yet *though hand join in hand, they ſhall not be unpuniſhed*; it is vain to oppoſe the arm of Omnipotence, for God will break the jaw bones of the lions; *but the ſeed of the righteous*, to whoſe children's children the love, mercy, and protection of a covenant God deſcend, *ſhall be delivered* from all their enemies, and ſee them laid low at their feet.

† Heb. Departeth from.

22. *As* a jewel of gold in a ſwine's ſnout, *ſo is* a fair woman which † is without diſcretion.

v. 22. Beauty is a jewel that glitters in every eye, but it is a dangerous poſſeſſion, and great grace and prudence are needful to keep its luſtre unſullied; for *as a jewel of gold in a ſwine's ſnout* is quite miſplaced, and that foul animal, regardleſs of its value, thruſts it into the mire and dunghill; *ſo is a fair woman which is without diſcretion*, or *taſte* for virtue or modeſty; given up to impurity, inflaming, and inflamed, ſhe makes herſelf quickly loathſome; and her beauty, ſo miſplaced and abuſed, proves her bane.

23. The deſire of the righteous *is* only good: *but* the expectation of the wicked *is* wrath.

v. 23. *The deſire of the righteous is only good*, that is his conſtant object: he deſires for himſelf God's favour and grace, and ſtudies to communicate bleſſing and happineſs to all around him: *but the expectation of the wicked is wrath*: they are imprecating, and wiſhing for vengeance on their enemies; and as the juſt retaliation, wrath to the uttermoſt ſhall overtake them.

[r] 2 Cor. ix. 8, 9, 10.
† Heb. The ſoul of the bleſſing.

24. [r] There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty. 25. [r] † The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat: and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.

v. 24, 25. No harveſt ſo ſure, or plenteous, as that which ſprings from the ſeed which charity ſcatters. God will give a great increaſe, and none ſhall be loſers by what is lent to him: *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat*, enriched with divine grace, and repaid in bleſſings temporal and ſpiritual, for whatever is diſperſed to the poor and deſtitute; *and he that watereth others* with the ſtreams of his benevolence, *ſhall be watered himſelf* with the abundance of God's goodneſs, ſo that we ſhall be gainers by our gifts; whilſt the covetous man, bent on hoarding, grows poor by ſparing. Deterred by the expence, he ſuſtains grievous loſſes, which might have been prevented; and defraud-

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ing his family, the poor, and God's altar of their portion, there is a curſe on his ſubſtance, and the want he is ſo anxious to prevent, overtakes him.

26. He that withholdeth corn, the people ſhall curſe him: but bleſſing *ſhall be* upon the head of him that ſelleth *it*.

v. 26. The bleſſing or curſe of the poor is of eternal conſequence, for God is the poor man's friend, and will not ſee him oppreſſed with impunity. To withhold corn, in order to enhance the price, and by a fictitious famine diſtreſs the needy, is highly criminal: and he, who by bringing his ſtores to the market, and content with a moderate profit, inherits the prayers of the poor, will be ſhortly found a much richer man than he who fills his pockets by oppreſſion, and goes to his grave under the curſes of the diſtreſſed.

[s] Pſ. vii. 15, 16. & ix. 15, 16. & x. 2. & lvii. 6.

27. He that diligently ſeeketh good, procureth favour: but [s] he that ſeeketh miſchief, it ſhall come unto him.

v. 27. *He that diligently ſeeketh good* for his own ſoul, and riſes early, to do every kind office for his neighbour, *procureth favour*; God is pleaſed with his labours of love, and men with gratitude acknowledge the kindneſs. *But he that ſeeketh miſchief*, God, in juſt retaliation for the hurt he deſigned againſt others, will by his providence ſo order, that *it ſhall come unto him*.

[t] Job xxxi. 34. Mark x. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
[u] Pſ. i. 3. & xcii. 12, &c. Jer. xvii. 8.

28. [t] He that truſteth in his riches ſhall fall: but [u] the righteous ſhall flouriſh as a branch.

v. 28. They who put their confidence in riches, will find them a broken reed that will break under them, and pierce them through with many ſorrows; *but the righteous*, who truſt on Chriſt alone, *ſhall flouriſh as a branch*, ingrafted by faith on him their living root, and receiving out of his fulneſs the abundant ſupplies of quickning grace.

[x] Eccleſ. v. 16.

29. He that troubleth his own houſe, [x] ſhall inherit the wind: and the fool *ſhall be* ſervant to the wiſe of heart.

v. 29. *He that troubleth his own houſe*, by a paſſionate and peeviſh temper; or ever eager after gain, is perpetually harraſſing them above meaſure; or by idleneſs, neglect, or prodigality, beggars them; or by avarice defrauds his family of neceſſaries, *ſhall inherit the wind:* all his ſubſtance ſhall breed him vexation, and vaniſh withal, and leave him deſtitute. *And the fool*, who knows not how to manage, and lives without thought, ſhall be reduced to want, and for a maintenance be glad to become ſervant to his wiſer neighbour.

[y] Dan. xii. 3.
† Heb. Taketh.

30. The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and [y] he that † winneth ſouls *is* wiſe.

v. 30. A good man is a bleſſing to all around him; his fruit is *a tree of life*; his graces, example, prayers, inſtructions, are the means of giving life to the ſouls of thoſe who are near him, and hear, learn, and imitate: *and he that winneth ſouls, wiſe*, wins them for Chriſt, engages them to yield up themſelves to him, as their Lord and maſter, *teaches* them his truth, *allures* them with the great and precious promiſes, *taketh* them by the mighty word, beating down the ſtrong-holds of Satan, or *catches* them with the net of goſpel grace; all which ſenſes the word bears, and comprehends all the means and methods the wiſe and diligent miniſters of Chriſt uſe to turn the hearts of the diſobedient unto the wiſdom of the juſt.

[z] 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

31. Behold, [z] the righteous ſhall be recompenſed in the earth: much more the wicked and the ſinner.

v. 31. God will be juſt in all his diſpenſations; he will make it appear oftentimes here on earth, and will certainly magnify his juſtice in the day of recompence. *Behold!* and note it as a certain and important truth, *the righteous ſhall be recompenſed in the earth*, either their good works ſhall meet a reward of earthly bleſſings, or their ſins and offences are corrected with the rod of affliction: and if God ſpareth not his own children, but viſits them, *much more the wicked and the ſinner*, whom on earth he ſometimes makes monuments of vengeance; or if they eſcape for a while here, let them not hope for impunity, their damnation ſlumbereth not: a judgment day will give them that they have deſerved.

CHAP. XII.

1. WHoſo loveth inſtruction, loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutiſh.

v. 1. A teachable ſpirit is among the beſt ſymptoms of a gracious heart. *Whoſo loveth inſtruction*, deſires to learn of Chriſt, and out of his word, or from thoſe whom he hath appointed to teach, whether miniſters, parents, or teachers, *loveth knowledge*, and proves it by ſuch a childlike ſpirit; *but he that hateth reproof*, and will not bear to be told of his faults, or warned to amend them, *is brutiſh*; void of ſenſe as grace, and ſtupid and hardned to his ruin.

Before Chriſt 1000.

[a] Chap. viii. 35.

2. [a] A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD; but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

v. 2. God's favour is towards the good and gracious, not that abſolutely there is any good but one; yet he makes ſome to differ from others: only let it be remembered, that whatever meaſure we have of grace or goodneſs, it is his gift. *But a man of wicked devices*, whoſe thoughts are bent on miſchief, *he will condemn*, to ſuffer the juſt deſert of his deeds.

[b] Chap. x. 25.

3. A man ſhall not be eſtabliſhed by wickedneſs: but [b] the root of the righteous ſhall not be moved.

v. 3. The proſperity of the wicked is ſhort-lived: though they may ſeem to flouriſh for a while, there is no ſolidity nor ſtability in their poſſeſſions; ſo ſoon ſhall they vaniſh as a dream when one awaketh: *but the root of the righteous*, deep ſtruck into the rock Chriſt, *ſhall not be moved*, whatever ſtorms of temptation, perſecution, affliction, or corruption blow upon them; though they may bow, they ſhall not break, or be rooted up, but ſtand faſt for ever and ever.

[c] Chap. xxxi. 23.

4. [c] A virtuous woman *is* a crown to her huſband: but ſhe that maketh aſhamed, *is* as rottenneſs in his bones.

v. 4. Among the greateſt of human bleſſings, is a virtuous wife; whoſe prudence, induſtry, modeſty, and ſubmiſſiveneſs, adorn her ſtation; whoſe chearfulneſs under trials enables us more ſteadily to ſuſtain them, and who is *a crown to her huſband*, a credit and honour to the relation ſhe bears: but of all plagues, the heavieſt is a bad wife, whoſe folly, extravagance, wantonneſs, peeviſhneſs, and ill humours, ſhame him when abroad, torment him at home; and like an inveterate and waſting diſeaſe, leave him no reſt, nor hopes of a cure.

5. The thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* the counſels of the wicked *are* deceit.

v. 5. God ſees and obſerves the riſing thoughts of our hearts; in the righteous they are right; being made partakers of a divine nature, his very thoughts are under divine government, and not an evil ſuggeſtion allowedly entertained: he ever means and purpoſes God's glory, and his neighbour's good; *but the counſels of the wicked are deceit*; he is ever caſting about in his mind how to accompliſh his crafty deſigns, and ſo to cover his purpoſes as to prevent ſuſpicion, but his detection is at hand.

[d] Chap. i. 11, 18.
[e] Ibid. xiv. 3.

6. [d] The words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: but [e] the mouth of the upright ſhall deliver them.

v. 6. A man's words will be as his thoughts. The malice of the wicked leads them to perſecute unto death, by perjury and oppreſſion, thoſe they hate; but the upright is the advocate of injured innocence, and pleads in its defence. *Note*, They who kill the body are bad, but they who by falſe doctrine murder the ſoul are worſe; againſt theſe, every faithful miniſter is bound to riſe up, and plead for God and truth.

[f] Pſ. xxxvii. 36, 37. Chap. xi. 21.
[g] Mat. vii. 25.

7. [f] The wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but [g] the houſe of the righteous ſhall ſtand.

v. 7. Like the rainbow, though the ſinner ſhone in wealth and affluence, it is a momentary greatneſs, and quickly vaniſhes away; *but the houſe of the righteous ſhall ſtand*, his ſeed be bleſſed upon earth, himſelf live long to ſee it, and when he is gone hence, he ſhall enter a houſe eternal in the heavens.

† Heb. Perverſe of heart.

8. A man ſhall be commended according to his wiſdom: but he that is † of a perverſe heart ſhall be deſpiſed.

v. 8. The love of fame is the univerſal paſſion, and here we are taught how to ſecure it in a right way; not by deſiring to be great, ſo much as to be good; not from riches, preferment, nobility, or ſcience, but from that wiſdom which maketh wiſe unto ſalvation, which God and all good men will highly honour; whilſt he that is fooliſhly perverſe, in following the ways of his own corrupted heart, ſhall bring himſelf into preſent and everlaſting contempt.

[h] Chap. xiii. 7.

9. [h] *He that is* deſpiſed and hath a ſervant, *is* better than he that honoureth himſelf, and lacketh bread.

v. 9. To

v. 9. To cut a figure in the world, and appear elegant in the eyes of men, with equipage and attendants, many are driven to miſerable ſhifts; to run in debt, and want bread rather than their finery. Far better is he, who though deſpiſed as poor or mean, content with a ſingle ſervant, or *a ſervant to himſelf*, keeps within the bounds of his income, and hath enough and to ſpare.

i Deut. xxv. 4.
† Or bowels.

10. [i] A righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beaſt: but the † tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

v. 10. God's compaſſions to the brute creation muſt engage ours. *The life of his beaſt*, and whatever is needful for the comfort of it, *is regarded by the righteous*; he provides it with proper food and reſt, neither works it too hard, nor ſtrikes it in anger: but ſo unfeeling are the wicked, and, without bowels, ſo cruel in their nature, that the very tender mercies they affect to ſhew, prove the innate barbarity of their minds.

k Chap. xxviii. 19.

11. [k] He that tilleth his land, ſhall be ſatisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain *perſons*, *is* void of underſtanding.

v. 11. Diligent induſtry will be crowned with abundance, but idleneſs and bad company will bring a man to want, and too late to rue the fruits of his folly.

† Or fortreſs.

12. The wicked deſireth the † net of evil *men*: but the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit*.

v. 12. All wicked men are not alike crafty; but they who are vile in ſpirit, look on the wiſer knave with ſecret envy, and long *for his net*, to be like him; or *his fortreſs*, to be as ſecure in iniquity: *but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit*, more excellent than what is got by knavery, and a more enduring ſubſtance.

† Heb. The ſnare of the wicked is in the tranſgreſſion of lips. Chap. xviii. 7.

13. † The wicked is ſnared by the tranſgreſſion of *his* lips: but the juſt ſhall come out of trouble.

v. 13. The tongue of the wicked often proves his ſnare; his treaſons, perjuries, lies, or calumnies, are detected and puniſhed; and as liars have not always the beſt memories, his own contradictions bring him to ſhame: *but the juſt*, though they may come into troubles, yet God will ſave them harmleſs, and extricate them out of them.

l Chap. xiii. 2.
m Rom. ii. 6.

14. [l] A man ſhall be ſatisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth, and [m] the recompenſe of a man's hands ſhall be rendred unto him.

v. 14. Not a gracious ſpeech, nor one labour of love ſhall be forgotten in the day of recompence: and even at preſent, the good advice we give to others, may not only prove a bleſſing to them, but inſtructive to ourſelves, and the works of faith produce a plenteous harveſt here below.

n Chap. iii. 7. Luke xviii. 11.

15. [n] The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkneth unto counſel *is* wiſe.

v. 15. Conceit is the moſt incorrigible folly. The ſelf-righteous and the careleſs flatter themſelves all is well, and ſcorn to be adviſed: but the wiſe are diffident of their own abilities, and willing to hear the counſels of age and experience.

o Chap. xxix. 11.
† Heb. In that day.

16. [o] A fool's wrath is † preſently known: but a prudent *man* covereth ſhame.

v. 16. The boſom of fools is full of wrath, and eaſily provoked; but he is twice a fool, who, inſtead of reſtraining it, burſts forth into rage and paſſion, and expoſes his own weakneſs. A prudent man, if he finds his anger riſing, will curb it, aſhamed to let it appear, or covers the provocation given him; willing rather to overlook the offence, than to reſent it.

p Chap. xiv.
q Pſ. lvii. 4. & lix. 7. & lxiv. 3.
r Pſ. lii. 5.

17. [p] *He that* ſpeaketh truth ſheweth forth righteouſneſs; but a falſe witneſs, deceit. 18. [q] There is that ſpeaketh like the piercings of a ſword; but the tongue of the wiſe *is* health. 19. The lip of truth ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever: but [r] a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.

v. 17—19. We have here the commendation of a good tongue, and the cenſure of a bad one.

1. A good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart, (1.) *Speaketh truth*, ſhewing all fidelity, repreſenting things as they are, whether before a magiſtrate on oath, or in private converſation. (2.) His words are healing, *v.* 18. ſeeking to compoſe diſputes, ſoften the ſpirits of the exaſperated, and bring about friendly reconciliation. (3.) Such *lips of truth ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever*, they will be our credit among men, and acceptable before God, and they who thus ſpeak, need fear no ſhame.

2. An evil man, out of the evil treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things. (1.) As *a falſe witneſs* in judgment, he prevaricates, conceals, or miſrepreſents the truth; in private tranſactions, uſes *deceit* in his dealings and in his converſation. (2.) His words are bitter, ſharp, and hurtful, as the piercings of a ſword, grieving thoſe to whom they are addreſſed; and wounding with ſtabs of calumny and evil ſurmiſes, againſt which no armour of innocence is proof. (3.) Though a liar may gain preſent credit, it is but for a moment; his falſehood and deceit will ſoon be detected, his own tongue will fall upon him with ſome inconſiſtence; or God in judgment bring to light his wickedneſs, at fartheſt in the day of recompenſe, when liars ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire.

20. Deceit *is* in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counſellors of peace *is* joy.

v. 20. They who imagine evil, ſeek by craft and deceit to gain their ends, but are often found to impoſe upon themſelves; whilſt to thoſe, who with openneſs of heart meditate no guile, conſult their neighbour's peace, and ſtudy to promote it, joy will be their happy portion.

s Rom. viii. 28.

21. [s] There ſhall no evil happen to the juſt: but the wicked ſhall be filled with miſchief.

v. 21. God will be the protection of the juſt; no evil ſhall happen to them; his grace ſhall preſerve them from ſin, his providence from ſuffering: yea, though they may fall into divers temptations, they ſhall all work together for their good. But miſery haunts the wicked, cloſe as their ſhadow; their miſchief ſhall be viſited on their own heads, and given up to their own evil hearts; they ſhall be left to fill up the meaſure of their iniquities, till wrath come upon them to the uttermoſt.

t Chap. vi. 17. Rev. xxii. 15.
u Chap. xi. 20.

22. [t] Lying lips *are* abomination to the LORD: but [u] they that deal truly *are* his delight.

v. 22. We cannot have too many warnings againſt lying, to which the fallen nature is ſo prone, and the conſequences of which are ſo fatal. *The lying lips are abomination to the Lord*, and he will ſharply rebuke them with hot burning coals: whilſt truth is his delight, and they who in all their words and dealings make conſcience to ſpeak it from their heart, will find God's bleſſing upon them.

x Chap. xiii. 16. & xv. 2.

23. [x] A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth fooliſhneſs.

v. 23. Though a wiſe man is not backward to communicate inſtruction, he is careful to avoid all oſtentation of knowledge, or his prudence appears in concealing what would not be proper to be divulged: but fools betray their ignorance, by their pompous affectation to appear wiſe.

y Chap. x. 4.
† Or deceitful.

24. [y] The hand of the diligent ſhall bear rule: but the † ſlothful ſhall be under tribute.

v. 24. Diligence is the way to riſe. Riches, and conſequently dominion, are the natural fruits thereof; but ſloth and ſlavery are twin ſiſters. *The ſlothful ſhall be under tribute*, or *the deceitful*, for they are cloſe allied; they who hate to work, uſually live by knavery.

z Chap. xv. 13.
a Iſa. l. 4.

25. [z] Heavineſs in the heart of man maketh it ſtoop: but [a] a good word maketh it glad.

v. 25. *Heavineſs in the heart of* MAN, ariſing from over anxiety about a worldly proviſion, the dread of want, the preſſures of adverſity, natural dejection of ſpirits, and above all, from a ſenſe of ſin lying upon the conſcience, *maketh it ſtoop*, unnerves the ſoul for labour, and keeps the miſerable wretch poring, diſconſolate, over his wretchedneſs; *but a good word*, encouraging, ſeaſonable, drawn from God's word, and applied by the ſpirit to the ſoul, *maketh it glad*, removes the fears of unbelief, revives the drooping ſpirits, and fills the ſoul with joy and peace in believing.

† Or abundant.

26. The righteous *is* more † excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked ſeduceth them.

v. 26. Men's excellence is to be rated not from their poſſeſſions, but their piety. *The righteous is more excellent than his* graceleſs *neighbour*, however in external ſhew and greatneſs he may be his inferior; or *more abundant*, not in worldly wealth indeed, but what is infinitely better, in the graces of God's ſpirit; *but the way of the wicked ſeduceth them*, they promiſe themſelves profit and honour in their evil ways, but in the iſſue find themſelves deceived and undone.

27. The ſlothful *man* roaſteth not that which he took in hunting: but the ſubſtance of a diligent man *is* precious.

Before Chriſt 1000.

v. 27. *The ſlothful*, or *deceitful man, roaſteth not that which he took in hunting*; if he goes to the field, he does not labour enough to get his game: or if he hath caught it, he is ſcarce at the pains to dreſs it; or figuratively, it may refer to the wealth of the ſlothful and deceitful, which drops through their fingers, and of which they have no enjoyment: *but the ſubſtance of a diligent man is precious*; be it little or much, he hath God's bleſſing therewith, enjoys it with comfort and thankfulneſs, and it is withal abiding.

28. In the way of righteouſneſs *is* life, and in the pathway *thereof there* is no death.

v. 28. *In the way of righteouſneſs*, which is faith in Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, producing holy walking before God, *is life*; the true life of our ſouls, communion with God, a ſenſe of his favour here, and life eternal hereafter: *and in the path way thereof there is no death*; they who are paſſed from death unto life, ſhall never know a ſecond death; glory, honour, and immortality will be their everlaſting portion.

CHAP. XIII.

1. A Wiſe ſon *heareth* his father's inſtruction: but a ſcorner heareth not rebuke.

v. 1. That ſon, who attentively regards his father's inſtruction, and ſubmits to his correction, as the word may be rendered, is wiſe, and ſhews true grace in his heart; but *a ſcorner*, a diſobedient child, *heareth not rebuke*, cannot bear to be told of his faults, and refuſes to amend them.

a Chap. xii. 14.

2. [a] A man ſhall eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth: but the ſoul of the tranſgreſſors *ſhall eat* violence.

v. 2. *A man ſhall eat good*, or *a good man ſhall eat of the fruit of his mouth*, the bleſſing of his gracious diſcourſe ſhall be repaid him: *but the ſoul of tranſgreſſors ſhall eat violence*; as he meted to others, it ſhall in juſt judgment be meaſured to him again.

b Chap. xxi. 23.

3. [b] He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips ſhall have deſtruction.

v. 3. It is wiſe to think before we ſpeak; a guard upon our tongue is the preſervative, both from much ſin and much ſorrow: whilſt laviſh diſcourſe brings *deſtruction or conſternation*; thoſe who are offended, reſent the injury; quarrels and duels enſue; and worſe, God is provoked, and his wrath threatens eternal perdition.

c Chap. x. 4.

4. [c] The ſoul of the ſluggard deſireth, and *hath* nothing: but the ſoul of the diligent ſhall be made fat.

v. 4. If wiſhing would do, the ſluggard would be wiſe and rich, but he hates the pains, without which neither can be attained, and therefore continues deſtitute of both. *But the ſoul of the diligent* ſhall enjoy the comfort of his labours; whether temporally, in the increaſe of his wealth, or ſpiritually, in the abundance of grace and conſolations miniſtered unto him, in anſwer to his unwearied prayers.

5. A righteous *man* hateth lying: but a wicked *man* is lothſome, and cometh to ſhame.

v. 5. A righteous man not only abſtains from lying, but abhors it as a ſin moſt offenſive to God, and injurious to man: *but a wicked man is loathſome*, like a putrid corpſe, ſending forth the peſtilential effluvia of ſin, *and cometh to ſhame*; his lies are detected, and he juſtly expoſed; or *makes himſelf to ſtink*, an object odious to God, and deteſted of all good men.

d Chap. xi. 3, 5, 6. † Heb. Sin.

6. [d] Righteouſneſs keepeth *him that is* upright in the way: but wickedneſs overthroweth † the ſinner.

v. 6. They who poſſeſs the grace of God in truth, will be preſerved *upright in the way*, ſound in the doctrine, and ſtedfaſt in the practice of the goſpel, unmoved by Satan's temptations, or the world's frowns or ſmiles: *but wickedneſs overthroweth the ſinner*, or *ſin*, for he is ſuch a maſs of corruption, that all he is and doth is evil, and only evil, and that continually; no wonder then, that he is overthrown with everlaſting deſtruction.

e Chap. xii. 9.

7. [e] There is that maketh himſelf rich, yet *hath* nothing: *there is* that maketh himſelf poor, yet *hath* great riches.

v. 7. They are not always the richeſt who make the greateſt figure in the world; but oftentimes men appear in all the extravagance of dreſs and equipage, when they are worſe than nothing, in debt, never intending, or able to pay it. Thus hypocrites, and talkative perſons, make large profeſſions of piety, when in fact they have only a name to live, and are really dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. On the other hand, ſome, with the ſhew and conſtant complaint of poverty, are really wallowing in wealth; yet, for fear of want, and through ſordid avarice, pine in the midſt of plenty. Thus alſo many truly rich in grace, and heirs of the kingdom, yet have ſometimes ſad complaints and fear for themſelves, whether ever they have been partakers of the bleſſing.

Before Chriſt 1000.

8. The ranſom of a man's life *are* his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.

v. 8. Riches are often a tempting bait, and bring the life of their poſſeſſor into danger, which he is glad to ranſom at the price of all his treaſures; but the poor having nothing to loſe, no accuſation is brought againſt them, as they have no bribes to pay, and no robber moleſts their empty coffers: or ſpiritually, the poor and lowly in heart are accepted of God, and have no rebukes in anger from him; whilſt the rich, who truſt on their wealth as their ranſom, will be utterly condemned.

9. The light of the righteous rejoiceth: [f] but the † lamp of the wicked ſhall be put out. f Job xviii. 6. & xxi. 17. † Or candle.

v. 9. Joy is ſown for the righteous: in time he ſhall walk in the reviving light of God's countenance; in eternity, his ſun ſhall never go down; but *the lamp of the wicked*, his glimmering ſhort-lived proſperity, the momentary pleaſures of ſin, *ſhall be put out* in eternal darkneſs.

10. Only by pride cometh contention; but with the well adviſed *is* wiſdom.

v. 10. Pride is the root of all quarrels. The opinionated cannot bear contradiction; the aſpiring, a rival; the ſelf-willed, oppoſition. Hence *come wars and fightings, but with the well adviſed*, who ſpeak or do nothing raſhly, but conſult their bibles, their able friends and their pillow, *is wiſdom*; they will not give a handle for contention, and avoid all occaſion of diſpute.

11. [g] Wealth *gotten* by vanity, ſhall be diminiſhed: but he that gathereth † by labour, ſhall increaſe. g Chap. x. 2. & xx. 21. Jer. xvii. 11. † Heb. With the hand.

v. 11. Light come, light go; *wealth gotten by vanity*, by tricking, fraud, gaming, &c. *will be diminiſhed*; ſoon it ſhall melt as ſnow before the ſun, for the curſe of God is upon it: but the fruits of honeſt induſtry will be an increaſing and laſting poſſeſſion.

12. Hope deferred maketh the heart ſick: but [h] *when* the deſire cometh, *it is* a tree of life. h Ver. 19.

v. 12. Suſpenſe is a ſtate of mind the moſt uneaſy, and the long delay of our hopes, almoſt as painful as their diſappointment: *but when the deſire cometh, it is a tree of life*, the ſoul is tranſported with joy, and in a temporary paradiſe. *Note*, (1.) It is good to have little expectation from creature good; then anxiety will give us no pain, or diſappointment vex us. (2.) Though the deſire of the ſaints after perfect holineſs and happineſs ſeem long delayed, it will be the ſweeter when it comes.

13. [i] Whoſo deſpiſeth the word, ſhall be deſtroyed: but he that feareth the commandment, † ſhall be rewarded. i 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. † Or ſhall be in peace.

v. 13. Many make light of God's word, deſpiſe his miniſters, and ſlight his warnings, who will quickly rue their folly; for they who refuſe to be ruled by it, muſt be ruined: deſtruction of body and ſoul in hell will be their judgment. Whilſt *he that feareth the commandment*, with reverence hears, trembles at God's word, and with diligence obeys, *ſhall be rewarded* with preſent comfort, and eternal glory.

14. [k] The law of the wiſe *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the ſnares of death. k Chap. x. 11. & xiv. 27 & xvi. 22.

v. 14. *The law of the wiſe*, the doctrines of truth they inculcate, taught by the all-wiſe Prophet, *is a fountain of life*, refreſhing, comforting, enlivening the ſoul, and a conſtant preſervative *from the ſnares of death*, from which we are warned thereby to depart.

15. Good underſtanding giveth favour: but the way of tranſgreſſors *is* hard.

v. 15. They will be reſpected in general, who ſhew themſelves intelligent, and particularly an underſtanding enlightned by the ſpirit to know the things of God, *giveth favour* with him, and all good men: *but the way of tranſgreſſors is hard*; ſin is the vileſt ſervitude, makes men a plague to others, a burden to themſelves. Strange! that we ſhould ever be ſo infatuated, as to prefer this hard way, to that ſervice which is perfect freedom!

Before Christ 1000.

[l] Chap. xii. 23. & xv. 2. † Heb. Spreadeth.

16. [l] Every prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but a fool † layeth open *his* folly.

v. 16. A prudent man is cautious; hears, examines, and weighs before he ſpeaks, and chuſes not to be engaged in any thing, till he has a thorough knowledge of the ſubject: *but a fool*, raſh and thoughtleſs, *layeth open his folly*, expoſing himſelf to the ridicule of every company.

[m] Chap. xxv. 13.

17. A wicked meſſenger falleth into miſchief: but [m] a faithful ambaſſador *is* health.

v. 17. Unfaithfulneſs in diſcharging his truſt, or delivering his meſſage, will bring the wicked ſervant to ſhame and puniſhment; and above all others, an unfaithful meſſenger of God's word, will fall into the deepeſt condemnation: *but a faithful ambaſſador is health*, profitable to thoſe who employ him, uſeful to others, and a credit to his character; and this is eminently true of thoſe who are faithful ambaſſadors for Chriſt.

[n] Chap. xv. 5, 31.

18. Poverty and ſhame *ſhall be to* him that refuſeth inſtruction: but [n] he that regardeth reproof, ſhall be honoured.

v. 18. They who are ſtubborn, and deaf to advice, will neceſſarily plunge themſelves into difficulties, and bring themſelves both to want and ſhame, as the fruit of their own perverſeneſs; *but he that regardeth reproof*, is thankful for it, and wiſely attends to it, *ſhall be honoured*; all good men will commend his ſpirit, and he will have that better honour which cometh from God's approbation.

[o] Ver. 12.

19. [o] The deſire accompliſhed is ſweet to the ſoul: but *it is* abomination to the fools to depart from evil.

v. 19. The deſires of the gracious heart are after God, the ſenſe of his favour, and the experience of his grace; and *ſweet* are they *to the ſoul* when *accompliſhed*, as they aſſuredly will be: but the wicked reject theſe joys, and are deſtitute of theſe deſires, obſtinately adhering to their ſins, and hating the thought of parting with them.

† Heb. Broken.

20. He that walketh with wiſe *men*, ſhall be wiſe: but a companion of fools ſhall be † deſtroyed.

v. 20. A man may be known by his company, and it is of the laſt importance with whom we connect ourſelves. They who aſſociate with the wiſe, and thoſe who excel in virtue, will profit by their converſation, and be quickened by their example: *but a companion of fools*, who joins in their levities, and follows their vices, is in the high road to ruin, ruſhing on an untimely death, or worſe, into everlaſting deſtruction.

[p] Pſ. xxxii. 10. Acts xxviii. 4.

21. [p] Evil purſueth ſinners: but to the righteous, good ſhall be repayed.

v. 21. Sinners may flatter themſelves with impunity, but their damnation ſlumbereth not; cloſer than their ſhadow the curſe of ſin purſues them: *but to the righteous, good ſhall be repayed*, in return for all they have ſuffered for righteouſneſs ſake; a reward, not indeed of debt, but of grace.

[q] Job xxvii. 17. Chap. xxviii. 8. Eccleſ. ii. 26.

22. A good *man* leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and [q] the wealth of the ſinner *is* laid up for the juſt.

v. 22. A good man, as in duty bound, is careful to make a proviſion for his family; and whilſt he leaves them withal the bleſſing of his prayers and piety, he thereby enſures to children's children the comfort and abiding poſſeſſion of his honeſt gains; whilſt the ſinner, however rich he grows, leaves a curſe in the entail of his abundance; and by God's righteous providence, the property is quickly transferred into the hands of the juſt, *Exod.* xii. 36.

[r] Chap. xii. 11.

23. [r] Much food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there is *that is* deſtroyed for want of judgment.

v. 23. Diligence and induſtry will make a little much; the poor need not want if they will work: but when men are without prudence to manage, and activity to execute, a great eſtate is eaſily made away with; extravagance, careleſſneſs, and over-graſping, hath ruined multitudes; or *there is that is deſtroyed through injuſtice*, diſhoneſty being the ready way to beggary.

[s] Chap. xix. 18. & xxii. 15. & xxiii. 13. & xxix. 15, 17.

24. [s] He that ſpareth his rod, hateth his ſon: but he that loveth him chaſtneth him betimes.

v. 24. Parents, by ſparing the rod from their children, often make a rod for themſelves; and their fooliſh fondneſs is in truth the greateſt injury they can do them. Every child of Adam needs correction; there is that folly bound up in the heart, which nothing but this rod can let out, and the ſooner the better: the tendereſt twig is moſt eaſily bent. This is the beſt mark of real love to them; indulgence is only ſelfiſhneſs, pleaſing ourſelves to their ruin, which is in fact to hate them: only in the ſeverity of chaſtiſement, let no paſſion appear, but let it be ſeen to be the rod of love, leaſt we provoke their wrath, inſtead of curing their wickedneſs.

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[t] Pſ. xxxiv. 10 & xxxvii. 3.

25. [t] The righteous eateth to the ſatisfying of his ſoul: but the belly of the wicked ſhall want.

v. 25. Godlineſs with contentment is great gain; this is the portion of the righteous. Whatever he hath, his ſoul is ſatisfied and thankful, and that is a continual feaſt; and the Lord takes care he ſhall want no manner of thing that is truly good for him; eſpecially he breaks the bread of life to his ſoul, filling his heart with this beſt food and gladneſs: *but the belly of the wicked*, inſatiate in their deſires, and extravagant in the abuſe of their plenty, *ſhall want*, indigent in the midſt of abundance, or reduced to the diſtreſſes of poverty; and as the prodigal ſon, there ſhall be none to pity or give unto them.

CHAP. XIV.

[a] Ruth iv. 11.

1. EVery wiſe woman [a] buildeth her houſe: but the fooliſh plucketh it down with her hands.

v. 1. The proſperity and comfort of every man's family depends on the choice of the woman he ſets at the head of it: a wiſe woman, by her prudence, œconomy, and diligent inſpection into her affairs, makes a little go far, lives in credit, and lays up for her children: *but a fooliſh woman*, extravagant, careleſs, pleaſure loving, ever abroad; viſiting, gaming, at public places, hath neither time, inclination, or underſtanding to look into her family affairs; and as the conſequence, waſte and want neceſſarily enſue, her huſband's credit, perhaps his heart, is broken under the remedileſs evil, and his family ruined.

[b] Job xii. 4.

2. He that walketh in his uprightneſs, feareth the LORD: but [b] *he that is* perverſe in his ways, deſpiſeth him.

v. 2. It is a ſure way of judging to mark men's ways, for by their fruits ye ſhall know them. It is evident, where the conduct is under the guidance of the divine word, there God's authority is revered, and his fear implanted in the heart; and as evident, that where the way is perverſe before God, and ſin indulged in oppoſition to his commands and threatnings, there all reſpect for his government is caſt off, and atheiſm practical, if not avowed, the temper.

[c] Chap. xii. 6.

3. In the mouth of the fooliſh *is* a rod of pride: but [c] the lips of the wiſe ſhall preſerve them.

v. 3. A proud, imperious, arrogant tongue is the evidence of a proud heart; and this rod, with which they ſo often ſmite others, will ſhortly break their own heads; provoked by their inſolence, ſome will be found who will take delight to chaſtiſe and mortify them; at leaſt in the end, the rod of pride will be broken: *but the lips of the wiſe ſhall preſerve them* from giving provocation to others, or being hurt by their perverſeneſs.

4. Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* clean: but much increaſe *is* by the ſtrength of the ox.

v. 4. They who would have plenty, muſt be content with the dirt which labour makes: a clean crib may be nicer, but the ox with all his litter, is far more eligible. In a ſpiritual ſenſe, the want of miniſters in the goſpel, neceſſarily brings a famine of the word, and ſouls periſh for lack of knowledge: but where they labour in the word and doctrine, there ſouls are fed and nouriſhed up in the truth, and increaſe with the increaſe of God.

[d] Exod. xx. 16. & xxiii. 1. Chap. vi. 19. & xii. 17. Ver. 25.

5. [d] A faithful witneſs will not lie: but a falſe witneſs will utter lies.

v. 5. A faithful man will neither in common diſcourſe, or a court of juſtice, bear witneſs to an untruth: he makes conſcience of every word; whilſt the falſe and faithleſs, deſtitute of the fear of God, ſtick at nothing to carry their point, and without heſitation or ſhame, lie on.

[e] Chap. viii. 9. & xvii. 24.

6. A ſcorner ſeeketh wiſdom, but *findeth it* not: but [e] knowledge *is* eaſy unto him that underſtandeth.

v. 6. Many affect to be wiſe who ſcorn divine teaching, and take reaſon, inſtead of revelation, for their guide. No marvel therefore, that their reſearches are fruitleſs, and they never come to the knowledge of the truth; indeed it is impoſſible they ſhould, nothing being ſo oppoſite thereto, as that proud wiſdom that exalteth itſelf againſt God. But where there is an underſtanding enlightened by the divine grace, and guided by the divine word, as a lamp to the feet, there *knowledge is eaſy*, the myſteries unintelligible to the reaſon of the proud are open and obvious; and the doctrines which this world's wiſe men deem abſurd and irrational, appear the wiſdom of God, perfectly conſiſtent, and admirably diſpoſed to exalt his glory, to engage our dependance, and ſecure our obedience.

7. Go from the preſence of a fooliſh man, when thou perceiveſt not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

v. 7. It is wiſe to get out of their company, from whom we can learn no good; we may by buſineſs, and the duties of our ſtation, indeed be ſometimes called to be with thoſe, whoſe diſcourſe is diſagreeable: but when it becomes indecent, profane, or blaſphemous, we ſhould teſtify our abhorrence, by an immediate and abrupt departure.

8. The wiſdom of the prudent *is* to underſtand his way: but the folly of fools *is* deceit.

v. 8. Our wiſdom muſt appear by the management of our affairs; either in the way of our calling, ſhewing ourſelves maſters of our buſineſs; or in the way of our duty, by underſtanding the right path, and purſuing it: *but the folly of fools is deceit*, they conceit they are wiſe and knowing; and wrong as all their ways are, deceive themſelves to their ruin.

[f] Chap. x. 23.

9. [f] Fools make a mock at ſin: but among the righteous *there is* favour.

v. 9. Inſenſible of the evil, malignity, and danger of it, *fools make a mock at ſin*, hardening themſelves in iniquity, pleaſed with others wickedneſs, ſporting at the miſchief occaſioned by it, and turning off all the rebukes of the wiſe with a jeſt, or a laugh; *but among the righteous there is favour*, they dare not make light of ſin, but ſeek God's favour, and find it; and inſtead of making a jeſt at miſchief, deſire to ſhew all kindneſs and regard, both to men's bodies and ſouls.

† Heb. The bitterneſs of his ſoul.

10. The heart knoweth † his own bitterneſs; and a ſtranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

v. 10. There is a bitterneſs none know but they who feel it: in worldly troubles, there are aggravations unknown to any but the ſufferer; and in the diſtreſſes of a troubled conſcience, an anguiſh which is heavier than our groaning. On the other hand, when God lifts up the light of his countenance, and heals the broken hearted with his conſolations, no joys are to compare with it: they are ſuch, as a ſtranger to divine light and love hath never taſted; they are unſpeakable, and full of glory.

11. The houſe of the wicked ſhall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright ſhall flouriſh.

v. 11. Firm as the wicked thinks he builds, both for time and eternity, his foundation is on the ſand, and ruin will enſue. His earthly greatneſs ſhall be brought low, and his hopes of heaven quickly be exchanged for deſpair in hell: *but the tabernacle of the upright*, though it appeared weak and deſpicable, *ſhall flouriſh*, eſtabliſhed here under the divine bleſſing, and growing into an houſe eternal in the heavens.

[g] Chap. xvi. 25.

12. [g] There is a way which ſeemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

v. 12. Such is the way of the worldling, who heapeth up riches; the way of the lovers of pleaſure, who live in a round of indulgence; and eſpecially of the ſelf-righteous and rigid obſervers of outward forms, who affect great zeal for the rituals of religion, but are ſtrangers to the power of it: but all theſe paths tend alike to perdition, and the more ſanguine their hopes of happineſs, the more terrible will be their diſappointment in eternal miſery.

[h] Eccleſ. ii. 2. Luke xvi. 25.

13. Even in laughter the heart is ſorrowful; and [h] the end of that mirth *is* heavineſs.

v. 13. The countenance that ſmiles, often covers a heart that writhes with vexation, envy, and anguiſh. All are not happy that appear ſo; and particularly they who affect to laugh off their convictions, and are aſhamed to acknowledge what they feel, will pay dear for their reſiſtance againſt the Holy Ghoſt, either in bitter penitential tears, or what is worſe, the weepings and wailings of eternal deſpair.

[i] Chap. i. 31.

14. The backſlider in heart [i] ſhall be filled with his own ways: and a good man *ſhall be ſatisfied* from himſelf.

v. 14. Backſliding ariſes from an evil heart of unbelief; and though it iſſues not in apoſtacy, will be the cauſe of bittereſt anguiſh, when the ſenſe of baſe unfaithfulneſs ſhall fill the ſoul with ſharper remorſe than was even felt in the firſt pangs of the awakened conſcience. Whilſt *a good man*, who ſtands faſt, not moved away from the hope of the goſpel, *ſhall be ſatisfied from himſelf*, comforted in conſcious ſimplicity, and in the expectation of his eternal happineſs, the foretaſtes of which he feels begun.

15. The ſimple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

v. 15. The credulous are eaſily impoſed upon, but in this lying world, ſuſpicion is needful. It is prudent to try before we truſt, and not be haſty in crediting men's profeſſions, or reports. We muſt look well to our way, if we would not err from the truth, for deceivers abound.

16. A wiſe *man* feareth, and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth and is confident.

v. 16. *A wiſe man feareth* to offend God, *and departeth from evil*, is upon his guard againſt temptation, and keeps at a diſtance from the appearance of evil; it is dangerous coming too near the fire: *but the fool rages* againſt rebuke, and *confident* of his ſafety, preſumptuouſly perſiſts in his rebellion, and ruſhes on his ruin.

17. *He that is* ſoon angry dealeth fooliſhly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

v. 17. They who on every provocation fly out, and are eaſily heated with contradiction, ſhew their folly, and will uſually be the more teazed and laughed at in the world: but whilſt the warm expoſe themſelves to contempt, the wicked and malicious are the objects of hatred.

18. The ſimple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

v. 18. Folly is the natural inheritance of fallen man, and he delights in it: *but the prudent are crowned with knowledge*, they eſteem it their nobleſt ornament, and labour after higher attainments; or *they crown knowledge*, are a credit to their profeſſion, and an honour to the religion they profeſs.

19. [k] The evil bow before the good: and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

[k] Iſa. lx. 14.

v. 19. It is thus ſometimes the caſe here below; but this will moſt eminently be fulfilled in the future day, when the abaſement of the wicked, and the exaltation of the righteous ſhall be compleat.

20. [l] The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but † the rich *hath* many friends.

[l] Chap. xix. 7.

† Heb. Many are the lovers of the rich.

v. 20. This ſpeaks not what ought to be, but what is. No ſhame in the world like poverty; be but reduced to want, and your neareſt neighbour often will grow ſtrange; whilſt every one bows at the rich man's feet, and profeſſes friendſhip, where he hopes for advantage. *Note*, (1.) A true friend is a ſcarce commodity in this world. (2.) Chriſt never forſakes his choſen, he is a friend born for adverſity.

21. He that deſpiſeth his neighbour, ſinneth: but [m] he that hath mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.

[m] Pſ. xli. 1. & cxii. 9.

v. 21. It is an affliction to be poor, a greater to be deſpiſed for it; yet this is the world's way, and a very ſinful one it is. We ſhould learn a different leſſon; to be merciful and kind to the diſtreſſed, condeſcending, ready to every good office, which by our purſe, our counſel, or countenance, we can ſhew them: for *happy is he*, nothing is more truly its own reward, than ſuch a gracious ſpirit: the immediate ſatisfaction thence reſulting, is great, and the eternal bleſſedneſs which is in ſtore for ſuch, far greater.

22. Do they not err that deviſe evil? but mercy and truth *ſhall be* to them that deviſe good.

v. 22. Many think their craft ſhall iſſue to their comfort, but they greatly err; the evil they deviſe ſhall fall upon themſelves: *but mercy and truth ſhall be to them that deviſe good*, who make it their ſtudy and delight to be extenſively uſeful, and lay themſelves out to ſerve men's bodies and ſouls: the mercies they ſow, they ſhall reap; and a reward, not of debt indeed, but of grace, which the truth of God is engaged for, ſhall be given them.

23. In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.

v. 23. They who would thrive, muſt take pains, and diligent induſtry ſcarce ever fails of being crowned with abundance; whilſt great talkers are uſually little doers, and they who boaſt moſt over their cups how much they are worth, and what they can get, ſeldom fail of coming to poverty. Thus it is alſo with the ſoul; the thriving chriſtian is ſilent and induſtrious, ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak; whilſt talkative diſputers, are all tongue and no heart, mere ſounding braſs and tinkling cymbals.

24. The crown of the wiſe *is* their riches: *but* the fooliſhneſs of fools *is* folly.

v. 24. Riches, when under the management of a wiſe head, and gracious heart, become ornamental as a crown, and give us a longer field to be ſerviceable to the intereſts of religion and mankind; *but the fooliſhneſs of fools is folly*, no ſtate, no condition alters them: nay, the more of this world's wealth they have, they ſtand only on a higher pedeſtal, to have their folly and wickedneſs more notorious.

[n] Ver. 5.

25. [n] A true witneſs delivereth ſouls, but a deceitful *witneſs* ſpeaketh lies.

v. 25. *A true witneſs delivers ſouls*, boldly bearing teſtimony, when by falſe accuſations, his neighbour's life or property was in danger: *but a deceitful witneſs*, hardened in villainy, *ſpeaketh lies*; and when ſuch a one riſeth up, no man's life is ſafe. Thus it is with true miniſters and falſe; the one preach the free grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt, bear witneſs to the truth of the goſpel-promiſes, to ſave periſhing ſinners by faith only: the others ſet up the damnable doctrine of human works and righteouſneſs, to juſtify ſinners before God, to the ruin of immortal ſouls, who believe their lies.

[o] Chap. xiii. 14.

26. In the fear of the LORD *is* ſtrong confidence: and his children ſhall have a place of refuge. 27. [o] The fear of the LORD *is* the fountain of life, to depart from the ſnares of death.

v. 26, 27. The fear of God comprehends the ſubſtance of true godlineſs, and great is the bleſſedneſs thereof. (1.) It gives *ſtrong confidence*; for they who walk in God's fear, may be aſſured of his protection. (2.) In every day of trial, God's children have a *ſure refuge* from all the ſtorms of wrath, and the rage of earth and hell. (3.) This fear is a *fountain of life*, it is what brings preſent comfort and ſatisfaction to the ſoul, and will ſpring up to everlaſting life hereafter. (4.) All who are governed by it, *depart from the ſnares of death*; it keeps us from ſin with all its allurements, and thereby ſhields us from the ſufferings which are the wages of ſin. Lord, put this fear in my heart!

28. In the multitude of people *is* the king's honour: but in the want of people *is* the deſtruction of the prince.

v. 28. As numbers are the great ſecurity of a kingdom, it is the labour of every good king, by the mildneſs and equity of his adminiſtration, to encourage trade, manufactures, and agriculture; and the flouriſhing condition of his ſubjects redounds to his honour. Whilſt, where the government is rigorous, tyrannical, and arbitrary, property is inſecure, the ſpur to induſtry is loſt, the land uncultivated and deſerted, and the nation's forces weakened, leave it a prey to every invader.

† Heb. Short of ſpirit.

29. *He that is* ſlow to wrath *is* of great underſtanding: but *he that is* † haſty of ſpirit, exalteth folly.

v. 29. They ſhew *great underſtanding* who curb their paſſions, reſtrain their anger, continue undiſturbed under provocations, and in their patience poſſeſs their ſouls; but a man *haſty of ſpirit*, that fires in a moment, and in looks, words, or actions, betrays his anger, *exalteth folly*, the ſlave of his paſſion, and expoſing himſelf to contempt.

[p] Pſ. cxii. 10.

30. A ſound heart *is* the life of the fleſh: but [p] envy the rottenneſs of the bones.

v. 30. *A ſound heart*, right with God, and truly turned to him, or a *healing heart*, that ſeeks to compoſe all differences, or a *light heart*, good humoured and chearful, *is the life of the fleſh*, or *fleſhes*, contributes to our own and other's health and comfort; *but envy the rottenneſs of the bones*, it waſtes the body, preys upon the ſpirits, and brings men to be walking corpſes, before they go into the grave.

[q] Chap. xvii. 5. Mat. xxv. 40, 45.

31. [q] He that oppreſſeth the poor, reproacheth his maker: but he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the poor.

v. 31. God is the poor man's patron, and regards with indignation, every unkindneſs ſhewn them as an affront done to himſelf, who made them what they are. Whoever therefore means to honour God, muſt ſhew it in mercy to the poor; and the kindneſs done to them ſhall be rewarded by him, who is the friend of their friends, and the enemy of their enemies.

† Or for. [r] Job xiii. 15. & xix. 26. Pſ. xxiii. 4. 2 Cor. i. 9.

32. The wicked is driven away † in his wickedneſs: but [r] the righteous hath hope in his death.

v. 32. Death will make ſtrange alterations. *The wicked*, who lived thoughtleſs and careleſs, will be ſurpriſed thereby, and no gifts can bribe, no perſuaſions delay this executioner of judgment: *he ſhall be driven away in his wickedneſs*, in the midſt of his ſins; ſudden as the whirlwind, and terrible as the thunderbolt, ſhall the ſtorm of wrath overtake him; his ſtruggles are vain: reluctantly as he parts with earth, go he muſt; God's patience is at an end, the laſt hour is come: *but the righteous hath hope in his death*, a hope full of immortality, that enables him to riſe ſuperior to his fears, and count it his privilege to die: no longing, lingering looks are caſt behind on a world he is loath to part with, but gladly he quits a ſcene of ſorrow for eternal joys, a miſerable abode on earth for a manſion of glory, and weeping friends for congratulating angels.

[s] Chap. xii. 16. & xxix. 11.

33. Wiſdom reſteth in the heart of him that hath underſtanding: but [s] *that which is* in the midſt of fools is made known.

v. 33. In the deep receſſes of his heart, the wiſe man ſtores up divine knowledge and underſtanding, abidingly fixed on the purſuit, and making no oſtentation of his gains: but all that is in the fool's heart drops out at his mouth; he takes a pride in diſplaying the pittance he is poſſeſſed of, and by his vanity diſcovers his folly.

34. Righteouſneſs exalteth a nation: but ſin *is* a reproach to any people.

v. 34. *Righteouſneſs exalteth a nation*; either the profeſſion and practice of pure religion, which, ſecuring God's bleſſing, brings proſperity along with it; or the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, which contributes greatly to national ſecurity and felicity; or the faithful obſervance of treaties with foreigners without, and honeſty and charity exerciſed by the fellow-ſubjects within: *but ſin is a reproach to any people*, it offends God, whoſe ſupport withdrawn, their own vices quickly ruin them, expoſe them for a prey, and render them deſpicable in the eyes of their neighbours.

[t] Mat. xxiv. 45—47.

35. [t] The king's favour *is* toward a wiſe ſervant: but his wrath is *againſt* him that cauſeth ſhame.

v. 35. When kings reign in wiſdom, real worth and merit, not favour and partiality, will be the road to diſtinction; the unqualified, the negligent, and the infamous, will be diſgraced; and under the marks of diſpleaſure driven from the Royal preſence. Happy the nation that finds ſuch a Monarch!

CHAP. XV.

[a] Chap. xxv.

1. [a] A Soft anſwer turneth away wrath: but grievous words ſtir up anger.

v. 1. It is wiſer when the ſtorm is high, to bend under it, than ſtiffly reſiſt it. A ſoft word will diſarm thoſe, that a ſharp reply would exaſperate.

[b] Ver. 28. Chap. xii. 23. & 13. 16.
† Heb. Belcheth, or bubbleth up.

2. The tongue of the wiſe uſeth knowledge aright: but [b] the mouth of fools † poureth out fooliſhneſs.

v. 2. The right uſe of knowledge is to communicate it for others' inſtruction, comfort, and edifying; and thus the tongue of the wiſe is employed: but the folly bound up in the heart of a fool, guſhes out at his lips as a fountain, offenſive to God, hurtful to others, and a reproach to himſelf.

[c] Job xxxiv. 21. Chap. v. 21. Jer. xvi. 17. & xxxii. 19. Heb. iv. 13.

3. [c] The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

v. 3. This is an awful truth, which ſhould be ever deep impreſſed on our minds, as the great means of deterring us from evil, and quickening us to duty. Shall we be aſhamed to ſin in the eye of the ſun, and not be more confounded to offend, when under that eye, which is brighter than ten thouſand ſuns?

† Heb. The healing of the tongue.

4. A † wholſome tongue *is* a tree of life: but perverſeneſs therein *is* a breach in the ſpirit.

Before Chriſt 1000.

v. 4. As a man's tongue is, he proves a bleſſing or a plague to ſociety. *A wholſome tongue is a tree of life*, pouring conſolation into the troubled conſcience, yielding inſtruction to the ignorant, healing the breaches among brethren, and ſoftening the exaſperated: but the very oppoſite is the tongue of perverſeneſs, whoſe paſſion, brutality, impurity, profaneneſs, falſehood, malicioufneſs, wound like the piercings of a ſword, making the hearts of many ſad, and bringing deſtruction on its poſſeſſor.

[d] Chap. x. 1. [e] Chap. xiii. 18. Ver. 31, 32.

5. [d] A fool deſpiſeth his father's inſtruction: [e] but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

v. 5. Inattention to the inſtruction of ſuperiors, whether parents or miniſters, and diſregard of their reproofs, is egregious folly: but the wiſe ſon hearkeneth and ſubmits; for though reproofs may be bitter phyſic, they are neceſſary, and, when coming recommended by a father's love, are moſt thankfully to be received.

6. In the houſe of the righteous *is* much treaſure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

v. 6. When God ſees it good, even in this life, the righteous have an abundant portion; and whether they have little or much, it becomes a rich treaſure in the thankfulneſs and contentment with which they enjoy it: and what is better than all worldly wealth, their ſouls are ſtored with the riches of divine grace: but vexation and trouble embitter all the revenues of the wicked; they are got with anxiety, employed in the ſervice of ſin, enjoyed under a curſe, and tending to their ruin.

7. The lips of the wiſe diſperſe knowledge: but the heart of the fooliſh *doth* not ſo.

v. 7. Knowledge, like the light, ſhould be diſperſed, and a wiſe man will ſhine as the ſun, a univerſal bleſſing: not ſo the fool, his heart is darkneſs and his talk folly.

[f] Chap. xxi. 27. Iſa. i. 11. & lxi. 8. & lxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. & vii. 22. Am. v. 22.

8. [f] The ſacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

v. 8. It is not the expenſiveneſs of the ſacrifice, but the ſpirit of the offerer which ſtamps its real value. The prayers and devotion of formality, and the moſt liberal almſgiving of thoſe who continue to ſerve ſin, and think this a kind of commutation, or depend on theſe ſervices as meritorious; God, ſo far from regarding, abhors them and their ſacrifices; whilſt the widow's mite, or the fervent prayer out of a pure heart, are *his delight*.

[g] Chap. xxi. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 11.

9. The way of the wicked *is* an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him [g] that followeth after righteouſneſs.

v. 9. Where the heart is naught, and the way perverſe before God, it were folly to think any ſacrifices can be pleaſing; they who would have their ſervices accepted, muſt firſt have their ſouls right with him; and where this is the labour and prayer, there his love will be placed.

† Or, inſtruction. [h] Chap. v. 12. & x. 17.

10. † Correction *is* grievous unto him that forſaketh the way: *and* [h] he that hateth reproof ſhall die.

v. 10. They who forſake God's ways, which they have once known, can leaſt bear reproof, and reſent every warning, however kindly given; and the caſe becomes deſperate when the only remedy is loathed and rejected, the patient then muſt infallibly die.

[i] Job xxvi. 6. Pſ. cxxxix. 8. [k] 2 Chron. vi. 30. Pſal. vii. 9. & xliv. 21. John ii. 24, 25. Acts i. 24.

11. [i] Hell and deſtruction *are* before the LORD: how much more then [k] the hearts of the children of men?

v. 11. Deep and univerſal is God's knowledge; the grave to him hath no covering, and hell itſelf is naked; the place of departed ſpirits, and the tophet of the damned are open to him; *much more the hearts of the children of men*, with the ſecrets of which he muſt be acquainted, and from him no darkneſs or ſhadow of death can hide the workers of iniquity. Let the guilty tremble! God ſees and minutes his every thought, word, and work.

[l] Am. v. 10.

12. A ſcorner [l] loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wiſe.

v. 12. A ſcorner hates reproof, or *to reprove himſelf*; to reflect upon his conduct, and take ſhame for his ſin: he thruſts out every uneaſy thought, ſilences the whiſpers of conſcience; and ſhuns the door of the wiſe, where he ſuſpects he ſhall meet the admonition he abhors.

Before Chriſt 1000.

[m] Chap. xvii. 22. [n] Ibid. xii. 25.

13. A merry heart maketh a chearful countenance: but [n] by ſorrow of the heart the ſpirit is broken.

v. 13. They have moſt abundant reaſon to ſhew a chearful countenance whoſe hearts are joyful in Chriſt Jeſus and his ſalvation. A down-caſt gloomy look ſavours more of ſuperſtition than piety, and is utterly unbecoming thoſe who are commanded to rejoice always: but where melancholy preys upon the ſpirits, it unfits us for both the duties of devotion and our ſtation, leavens all our comforts, makes us diſagreeable to others, and a burden to ourſelves.

14. The heart of him that hath underſtanding ſeeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on fooliſhneſs.

v. 14. The heart that hath taſted of true underſtanding, finds its appetite whetted by every freſh attainment; and that of this fountain it is always true, the deeper the ſweeter: but the fool, inſenſible of the bleſſings of wiſdom, hath no reliſh for any thing above the gratification of ſenſual appetite, and feedeth on theſe huſks.

[o] Chap. xvii. 22.

15. All the days of the afflicted *are* evil: but [o] he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feaſt.

v. 15. Vaſt is the difference between the eſtates of men below, ſome ſeem born for a ſucceſſion of miſeries, and go mourning all their days, naturally of a dejected ſpirit, and burdened with afflictions; others are bleſt with chearfulneſs of temper, and enjoy *a continual feaſt*, which no croſſes or loſſes are able to embitter, eſpecially where the true grace of God in the heart miniſters matter for abiding joy.

[p] Pſ. xxxvii. 16. Chap. xvi. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 6. [q] Chap. xvii. 1.

16. [p] Better *is* little with the fear of the LORD, than great treaſure, and trouble therewith. 17. [q] Better *is* a dinner of herbs where love is, than a ſtalled ox, and hatred therewith.

v. 16, 17. A man's happineſs conſiſts not in the abundance of the things he poſſeſſes, but in the temper with which he uſes them. *A little with the fear of the Lord* (and God's people expect no great things here) *is better than great treaſure, and trouble therewith*, the uſual attendant on wealth, which increaſes our cares, and multiplies our vexations: and *a dinner of herbs, where love is*, whether among our friends or in our own houſe, *is better than a ſtalled ox, and hatred therewith*: where love ſweetens the entertainment, coarſe fare will have a delicious reliſh; but where there is diſcontent, bickerings, diſpute, and, though doomed to dwell together, perſons have a hearty averſion to each other, there muſt be miſery in the midſt of plenty.

[r] Chap. xxvi. 21. & xxix. 22.

18. [r] A wrathful man ſtirreth up ſtrife: but *he that is* ſlow to anger appeaſeth ſtrife.

v. 18. A paſſionate man is ever in broils, quarrelſome himſelf, and unable to let others reſt in quiet: but a gentle ſpirit allays the warmth which was kindling, ſoothes the exaſperated, and ſoftens the obſtinate. A bleſſed ſpirit this!

[s] Chap. xxii. 5. † Heb. Raiſed up as a cauſey.

19. [s] The way of the ſlothful *man is* an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous *is* † made plain.

v. 19. *The way of the ſlothful man is an hedge of thorns*; in ſuch difficulties he involves himſelf by his idleneſs, or he fancies inſurmountable obſtacles in the way of his duty, and that the path of godlineſs is ſtrewed with briers and thorns, and therefore is diſcouraged from entering upon it: *but the way of the righteous is made plain*; he finds none of the difficulties the ſlothful ſuggeſt, the way of righteouſneſs is both plain and pleaſant.

[t] Chap. x. 1. & xxix. 3.

20. [t] A wiſe ſon maketh a glad father: but a fooliſh man deſpiſeth his mother.

v. 20. Nothing rejoices a parent's heart ſo much as to behold their children growing up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and as dutifulneſs and obedience is their wiſdom, ſo to deſpiſe their advice, act contrary to their commands, and refuſe their corrections, will be found as much their own ſhame and ſin, as their parent's grief.

[u] Chap. x. 23. † Heb. Void of heart.

21. [u] Folly *is* joy to *him that is* † deſtitute of wiſdom: but a man of underſtanding walketh uprightly.

v. 21. Sin is the delight of a fool; he boaſts of his own ſhame, and takes pleaſure in the iniquities of others: but where the ſpirit of wiſdom hath enlightned the underſtanding, there ſin is abhorred, and God's perfect word made the conſtant rule.

[x] Chap. xi. 14. & xx. 18.

22. [x] Without counſel, purpoſes are diſappointed: but in the multitude of counſellors they are eſtabliſhed.

v. 22. Raſh reſolves, without mature deliberation, or *without ſecreſy*, are uſually defeated. To ſucceed in our ſchemes they ſhould be well weighed, abler heads than our own conſulted, objections foreſeen, and difficulties obviated.

[y] Chap. xxv. 11.
† Heb. In his ſeaſon.

23. A man hath joy by the anſwer of his mouth: and [y] a word *ſpoken* † in due ſeaſon, how good *is it?*

v. 23. It is a credit and comfort to a man himſelf to have a ready and pertinent anſwer when his advice is aſked; and that word is doubly welcome and profitable, which, in time, circumſtance, and manner, is exactly ſuited to the ſtate of the hearer: here is the mind that hath wiſdom, in men in general, and in miniſters particularly, to know how to give to every one his portion in due ſeaſon.

[z] Phil. iii. 20. Col. iii. 1, 2.

24. [z] The way of life *is* above to the wiſe, that he may depart from hell beneath.

v. 24. The wiſe man looks above this periſhing world; he ſeeks a life more enduring than the paſſing days of time, to be enjoyed in glory through the ages of eternity; and *that he may depart from hell beneath*; whilſt ſinners are haſtening downward, his affections are aſcending in faith, love, and hope to God; and every day he grows nearer the eternal reſt, after which his ſoul aſpires.

[a] Chap. xii. 7. & xiv. 17.
[b] Pſ. lxviii. 5, 6. & cxlvi. 9.

25. [a] The LORD will deſtroy the houſe of the proud: but [b] he will eſtabliſh the border of the widow.

v. 25. Pride, men's capital ſin, will prove their ruin: God delights to abaſe ſuch, overturn the lofty fabricks their vanity reared, and ruin their families, whoſe grandeur they meant to eſtabliſh: but for the poor, the oppreſſed, and the widow, he will appear, protect them from injuries, avenge their wrongs, and eſtabliſh them in the earth. The church of God, though at preſent in its widowed ſtate, ſhall riſe ſhortly above the power of the enemy, and every proud antichriſtian foe be deſtroyed for ever.

[c] Chap. vi. 18.
† Heb. Words of pleaſantneſs.

26. [c] The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD: but *the words* of the pure *are* † pleaſant words.

v. 26. Though thoughts are inviſible to us, yet God trieth the hearts, and ſees and abhors the imaginations of the wicked, which are only evil, and that continually: but the thoughts of the pure, being cleanſed by the inſpiration of his holy ſpirit, their words pleaſe him, they are edifying and acceptable, the fruit of the root of grace he hath implanted.

[d] Chap. xi. 29.

27. He that is greedy of gain, [d] troubleth his own houſe: but he that hateth gifts ſhall live.

v. 27. They who are in haſte to be rich, and with anxious and ceaſeleſs purſuit ſlave for the world, both weary themſelves, and plague and harraſs all around them; bringing withal the curſe of God upon their gains, that like the worm at Jonah's gourd, will cauſe it to wither: *but he that hateth gifts*, and for no advantage can be bribed to ſpeak a falſe word, or do a wrong thing, *ſhall live*; his comfort ſhall be ſecured, and his real intereſt be thereby advanced, for honeſty will in the end be found ever the beſt policy.

28. The heart of the righteous ſtudieth to anſwer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

v. 28. A good man takes heed to his words; knowing he muſt be accountable for them, he thinks before ſpeaks, and weighs a queſtion before he anſwers it: but the wicked, thoughtleſs of conſequences, lets go what is uppermoſt, and the evil of his heart guſhes forth as a fountain, without thought of the miſchief done to others, the diſhonour caſt on God, or the ruin he is bringing on himſelf.

[e] Pſ. xxxiv. 16.
[f] Ibid. cxlv. 18, 19.

29. [e] The LORD *is* far from the wicked: but [f] he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

v. 29. Though God be near the wicked, to ſeize them for vengeance, he is far from them reſpecting any favour or communion, and hears or grants none of their prayers, and ſhortly they will be eternally baniſhed from his preſence: but no prayer of the righteous is offered in vain; more ready to give than we to aſk, he is a ſure and preſent help to all that call upom him faithfully.

30. The ſight of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: *and* a good report maketh the bones fat.

v. 30. As the beautiful proſpect gladdens the eye and makes the heart gay, ſo doth good news enliven, and is heard with pleaſure: but the heart's greateſt joy is to behold a reconciled God in Chriſt, and the proſpect of eternal glory; and the beſt report is that which the goſpel brings, diffuſing preſent gladneſs in the ſoul, the foretaſte of eternal bliſs.

31. The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wiſe.

v. 31. *The reproofs of life* are thoſe which are drawn from the life-giving word, urged with affectionate warmth upon the conſcience, and tending to the ſpiritual and eternal life of thoſe who receive them; they that with attentive ear regard them, are in the way to be numbered with the wiſe.

† Or, correction.
‡ Or, obeyeth.
§ Heb. Poſſeſſeth an heart.

32. He that refuſeth † inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own ſoul: but he that ‡ heareth reproof, § getteth underſtanding.

v. 32. *He that refuſeth inſtruction*, or *correction*, whether from God, or thoſe ſet in authority over him, *diſpiſeth his own ſoul*; ſhows his ignorance of the value of it, and for the indulgences of the periſhing fleſh, wilfully deſtroys his ſpirit, which is immortal: *but he that heareth reproof*, and ſubmits to it, *getteth underſtanding*, and grows wiſer and better thereby.

[g] Chap. i. 7.
[h] Ibid. xviii. 12.

33. [g] The fear of the LORD *is* the inſtruction of wiſdom; and [h] before honour *is* humility.

v. 33. *The fear of the Lord is the inſtruction of wiſdom*, by it we are taught how to walk and pleaſe God; *and before honour is humility*; the lower we lie in our own eyes, the more certain and eminent will be our exaltation of God.

CHAP. XVI.

[a] Ver. 9. Chap. xix. 21. & xx. 24. Jer. x. 23.
† Or, diſpoſings.

1. [a] THE † preparations of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the tongue *is* from the LORD.

v. 1. All is from God; to think, ſpeak, or act aright is ſolely his gift, and without him we can do nothing to pleaſe him: or it may be rendered as a conceſſion, *that* though *the preparations of the heart are in man*, and he hath the *marſhalling*, as the word ſignifies, of his thoughts; yet, unleſs God gives him utterance, his memory will fail, his tongue heſitate, or his ſpeech be confounded.

[b] Chap. xxi. 2.

2. [b] All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes: but the LORD weigheth the ſpirits.

v. 2. We are too apt to be partial to ourſelves, and the ſelf-righteous eſpecially, ignorant of the perfection of God's law, are ready to think they can and do obey it, ſo as to obtain life thereby: but our ſelf-deceit will appear when God weighs us in the balances of his ſanctuary; he trieth the heart, and all the righteouſneſs in fallen man will be found utterly defective, both in principle and practice.

[c] Pſ. xxxvii. 5. & lv. 22. Mat. vi. 25. Luke xii. 22. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7.
† Heb. Roll.

3. [c] † Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed.

v. 3. Whilſt we take the helm into our own hands, our affairs both of body and ſoul will be in a dangerous way, and ready each moment to ſuffer ſhipwreck; but all is ſafe when our care is caſt upon him, the ſtorm of anxiety then will be calmed, and our voyage to the ſhores of eternal reſt ſure to be ſafe and proſperous.

[d] Iſa. xliii. 7.
[e] Job xxi. 30. Rom. ix. 22.

4. [d] The LORD hath made all *things* for himſelf: [e] yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

v. 4. The great Author of all deſigned in all his works to ſhew forth his own glory, nor ſhall the apoſtacy of angels, or the ſins of men, defeat his purpoſes; the creatures that glorify not the riches of his grace in their ſalvation, ſhall glorify the ſeverity of his juſtice and the greatneſs of his power in their damnation.

[f] Chap. vi. 17. & viii. 13.
[g] Ibid. xi. 21.

5. [f] Every one *that is* proud in heart, *is* an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he ſhall [g] not be unpuniſhed.

v. 5. Pride of heart, whether on worldly greatneſs, or conceit of our own excellence above other men, is God's abomination; nor let the ſtout-hearted be ſecure in their numbers, power, or policy; he is able to abaſe them, his truth hath engaged for it, his holineſs demands, and his power will execute upon them condign puniſhment.

Before Chriſt 1000.

h Dan. iv. 27. Luke xi. 41.
i Chap. iv. 16.

6. [h] By mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and [i] by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.

v. 6. Two things man a ſinner needs from God: to be cleanſed from the guilt, to be delivered from the power of his ſins; and both are accompliſhed *by* the *mercy* of God in ſending his Son Chriſt Jeſus for a propitiation, and *by* his *truth* in fulfilling the promiſes of the everlaſting covenant *iniquity is purged*; and there is no condemnation lying againſt the believing ſoul, whilſt by *the fear of the Lord*, implanted in the heart, the power of evil is broken, and we are enabled to depart from the bondage of corruption.

7. When a man's ways pleaſe the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

v. 7. God hath in his hands the hearts of all men, and ſtrange changes he can effect, turning the bittereſt foes into the warmeſt friends; and thoſe who pleaſe him may ſafely truſt him; he will preſerve them, and gain them reſpect and favour from thoſe with whom they leaſt expected to find it.

k Pſ. xxxvii. 16. Chap. xv. 16.

8. [k] Better *is* a little with righteouſneſs, than great revenues without right.

v. 8. It is not abundance, but God's bleſſing, which can give us enjoyment of worldly goods. *A little*, got in an honeſt way, and uſed in a gracious manner, *is better*, does more good, gives more content, and will laſt longer, *than great revenues without right*, which are often ſquandered as profuſely as they were acquired unjuſtly, are embittered with wrath, and muſt be brought to a fearful account in the day of recompenſe.

l Ver. 1.
m Pſ. xxxvii. 23.

9. [l] A man's heart deviſeth his way: but [m] the LORD directeth his ſteps.

v. 9. As reaſonable creatures, but eſpecially as redeemed and renewed in the ſpirit of our minds, it becomes us to deviſe our way, and conſider how to walk and pleaſe God; but when we have done all, we muſt look above for ſtrength, ſeeing it is the Lord alone who can direct our ſteps; and when we depend on his grace, we may be aſſured he will guide us in the right way.

† Heb. Divination.

10. † A divine ſentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth tranſgreſſeth not in judgment.

v. 10. This is only literally true of the King of kings, the divine Meſſiah, but it ſpeaks what ſhould be the conduct of every ruler: *A divine ſentence, or divination*, ſhould be in their lips, their wiſdom ſhould be oracular, and their deciſions never influenced by paſſion or favour, but guided by the rule of the unerring truth of God.

n Lev. xix. 36. Chap. xi. 1.
† Heb. Stones.

11. [n] A juſt weight and balance *are* the LORD's: all the † weights of the bag *are* his work.

v. 11. In commercial dealings, and the adminiſtration of juſtice, God hath appointed a ſtandard of truth, by which every weight and meaſure muſt be tried, and every cauſe decided with impartiality; and though in this world the fraudulent practices of the wicked may paſs unnoticed, the day is coming when God will lay judgment to the line and righteouſneſs to the plummet.

o Chap. xxv. 5. & xxix. 14.

12. *It is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedneſs: for [o] the throne is eſtabliſhed by righteouſneſs.

v. 12. As kings are by their ſtation more exalted, they ſhould in piety be more exemplary, and ſhew their abhorrence of all wickedneſs, not only by abſtaining from the practice of it themſelves, but by diſcountenancing it in others; and this is much for the ſecurity of their throne, as under ſuch a government the ſubjects will pay ready obedience, and the bleſſing of God will be around them as a protection.

p Chap. xiv. 35. & xxii. 11.

13. [p] Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings: and they love him that ſpeaketh right.

v. 13. About courts ſincerity and truth are too rarely found; therefore value the more a faithful adviſer, and love thoſe beſt, not who make their approach with flatteries, but who *ſpeak right*, what is moſt conducive to the people's good, which is the monarch's trueſt glory.

q Chap. xix. 12. & xx. 2.

14. [q] The wrath of a king *is as* meſſengers of death, but a wiſe man will pacify it.

v. 14. In deſpotic governments, as thoſe are in the Eaſt, life and property are more immediately at the mercy of the king; a frown or an angry word were therefore as meſſengers of death: yet ſuch is the force of wiſdom and ſoft addreſs, that it can pacify even a tyrant's rage. *See* 1 *Sam.* xix. 6.

Before Chriſt 1000.

r Chap. xix. 12.
s Job xxix. 23. Pſ. lxxii. 6.

15. In the light of the king's countenance *is* life, and [r] his favour *is* [s] as a cloud of the latter rain.

v. 15. As fearful as is the wrath, ſo deſirable is the favour of a king; if he ſmiles graciouſly on thoſe who have offended him, it is as life given to the dying malefactor, and his favour ſhowers down honour and affluence, as the cloud of the latter rain covered the land with plenty: but if ſo terrible the wrath, ſo deſirable the favour of a dying worm like ourſelves, how much more to be feared is the King of kings, whoſe wrath extends to body and ſoul in hell? and much more eagerly to be ſought the light of his countenance, which enſures all bleſſings to us in time and eternity!

t Chap. viii. 11, 19.

16. [t] How much better *is it* to get wiſdom than gold? and to get underſtanding, rather to be choſen than ſilver?

v. 16. Chriſt and his grace are the invaluable treaſures; get them, you get all; compared with this, gold is as droſs, and ſilver as dung; yet few there are who do not prefer gold to godlineſs, and riches on earth to treaſures in heaven. Amazing folly! In eternity at leaſt men will be undeceived.

17. The high-way of the upright *is* to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way, preſerveth his ſoul.

v. 17. The highway of holineſs is the path of the upright, and whilſt they keep in this road, the ſaints of old have trod, *they depart from evil*, neither fall into the evil of ſin, nor provoke the evil of puniſhment; but perſevering ſteadily, through Divine grace, in this ſtrait road, they preſerve their ſouls from the pollutions of the world, from the paths of the deſtroyer, and for the eternal enjoyment of God. In this way may my ſoul be kept a follower of thoſe who now, through faith and patience, inherit the promiſes.

u Chap. xi. 2. & xvii. 19. & xviii. 12.

18. [u] Pride *goeth* before deſtruction, and an haughty ſpirit before a fall.

v. 18. The proud are often too high for the arm of fleſh to humble, but the arm of Omnipotence ſhall ſeize them; God delights in humbling the lofty looks of man, and when moſt elated arrogance hurls him down the precipice of deſtruction, *Dan.* iv. 30, 31. Are we by grace exalted? let us fear to abuſe God's gifts to vain glorying, it will be the ſure prelude of ſome mortifying fall.

19. Better *it is to be* of an humble ſpirit with the lowly, than to divide the ſpoil with the proud.

v. 19. The world looks down in general on the meek as mean, and on the lowly as deſpicable; yet their ſtate is to be envied. *Better it is to be of an humble ſpirit with the lowly*; content in our ſtation, ſubmiſſive to God's will, deſiring not high things, but ſeeking to be diligent followers of the humble Jeſus; this will afford us a more ſolid ſatisfaction now, and be infinitely more happy for us hereafter, *than to divide the ſpoil* of oppreſſion, or worldly gain and preferment, *with the proud*, who are ever graſping after theſe, and prize them as their chief good.

† Or, underſtandeth.
x Pſ. ii. 12. & xxxiv. 8. & cxxv. 1. Iſa. xxx. 18. Jer. xvii. 7.

20. He that † handleth a matter wiſely, ſhall find good: and [x] whoſo truſteth in the LORD, happy *is* he.

v. 20. They who ſpeak, write, or act with acuteneſs and wiſdom, *find good*, are eſteemed, and ſucceſsful in their undertakings: *and whoſo truſteth in the Lord*, renouncing his own wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and ſtrength, and depending on Chriſt alone, *happy is he* in the preſent ſupport and comfort he experiences, and in the glorious hopes which are before him.

21. The wiſe in heart ſhall be called prudent, and the ſweetneſs of the lips increaſeth learning.

v. 21. *The wiſe in heart*, deep read in the knowledge of themſelves, the myſteries of grace, and experimental acquaintance with the word of God, *ſhall be called prudent*; all who converſe with them will reſpect and reverence them; *and the ſweetneſs of the lips*, that, with pleaſing elocution, and clearneſs of expreſſion, communicate inſtruction, *increaſeth learning*, their diſciples improve faſt under their tuition.

y Chap. xiii. 14. & xiv. 27.

22. [y] Underſtanding *is* a well-ſpring of life unto him that hath it; but the inſtruction of fools *is* folly.

v. 22. *Underſtanding*, to know Chriſt Jeſus and his ſalvation, *is a well-ſpring of life*: from this fountain ſtreams of wiſdom flow continually, and the poſſeſſor of it hath in himſelf the beginning and earneſt of life eternal; but from a fool nothing can be got; when he pretends to read lectures of wiſdom he but expoſes his own emptineſs.

† Heb. Maketh wiſe.
z Pſ. cxix. 103.
a Pſ. li. 8.

23. The heart of the wiſe † teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. 24. Pleaſant words *are as* an honey-comb, [z] ſweet to the ſoul, [a] and health to the bones.

v. 23, 24. A ſweet elocution was before commended; but without wiſdom in the heart it would be but as a pleaſant ſong: this gives weight to the diſcourſe, and ſolidity to the reaſoning; and thus it becomes profitable as pleaſing, ſweet to the ſoul as the honey-comb, and nouriſhing as marrow to the bones.

b Chap. xiv. 12.

25. [b] There is a way that ſeemeth right to a man: but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

v. 25. When the deluſion is in its nature ſo dangerous, and withal ſo common, repeated warnings are the more needful, *chap.* xiv. 12. The word of God is the only touchſtone, and diligent ſelf-examination to be daily made: the moſt take up with the form of godlineſs, ſit down content with their religion, as they call it, though ſtrangers to the grace of God in truth, having never experienced a change of heart, or been born again of the ſpirit. Reader, is the caſe thine own, conſider well the warning; thou mayſt have a good opinion of thyſelf, and the world admire thee as the beſt ſort of perſon in it, and yet thou mayſt be in the path of death and hell.

† Heb. Boweth unto him.

26. He that laboureth, laboureth for himſelf; for his mouth † craveth it of him.

v. 26. Nature is craving; we muſt work, that we may eat; but the wants of our ſouls are more urgent than thoſe of our bodies, and need be more attended to; our miſery and folly is, that acutely as we feel the one, we are too inſenſible to the other, and whilſt we labour enough, perhaps too much, for the meat which periſheth, we uſe no pains to obtain that which endureth unto life eternal.

† Heb. A man of Belial.
c Chap. vi. 14, 19. & xv. 18. & xxvi. 21. & xxix. 22.
‡ Heb. Sendeth forth.
d Chap. xvii. 9.

27. † An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire. 28. [c] A froward man ‡ ſoweth ſtrife, and [d] a whiſperer ſeparateth chief friends.

v. 27, 28. The wicked reſt not except they have done miſchief. *An ungodly man diggeth up evil* as if it was his treaſure, prying into men's characters in order to find ſome ground for calumny, and inſinuating ſome malicious ſuggeſtion to their prejudice: *and in his lips there is as a burning fire*, kindled from hell, and with lies and ſlander devouring around. *Froward* himſelf, he envys others the peace and comfort they enjoy, and fain would interrupt it by ſowing ſeeds of ſtrife, whiſpering things to their prejudice, and going between friends with ill-natured and miſrepreſented ſtories, to create ſuſpicions, cool their affections, and exaſperate them againſt each other. A dire proof of the deſperate wickedneſs of man's nature, that ſuch a character ſhould exiſt.

e Chap. i. 10, &c.

29. A violent man [e] enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good. 30. He ſhutteth his eyes to deviſe froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to paſs.

v. 29. 30. Men often do the devil's work, and turn tempters to each other. *A violent man*, reſtleſs to carry his point, *enticeth his neighbour* with fair ſpeeches, promiſing him I know not what pleaſure and advantage, and undertaking to be his guide, *leads him into the way that is not good*, the way of ſin and ruin. *He ſhutteth his eyes* againſt the light of truth, or to avoid interruption from any object, whilſt he ſets himſelf *to deviſe froward things*, how he may execute his diabolical deſigns; *then moving his lips* in ſome flattering diſcourſe, or as a ſignal to his accomplices, *he bringeth evil to paſs*, ſeducing men to ſin, or plaguing them with ſome miſchief and vexation.

f Chap. xx. 29.

31. [f] The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteouſneſs.

v. 31. Thoſe locks are venerable indeed that are grown old in virtue's ſchool; ſuch aged diſciples are well-honoured as fathers, and heard as oracles, and their ſilver hairs are ready to receive that crown of glory which fadeth not away.

g Chap. xix. 11.

32. [g] *He that is* ſlow to anger, *is* better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than he that taketh a city.

v. 32. The greateſt conqueſt is to ſubdue ourſelves; though we held a captive world under our feet, if our paſſions reigned we ſhould ſtill be ſlaves at home; to ſubdue theſe, our labours and prayers therefore muſt be directed. Anger is among our moſt beſetting ſins; againſt this therefore we are called to ſtruggle, to *rule our ſpirit*, to *be ſlow to wrath*, amidſt every provocation; and if we feel the riſing warmth, to repreſs it; firſt emotions. In patience thus to poſſeſs our ſouls, is to be truly greater than if nations were led in chains behind our triumphal car.

33. The lot is caſt into the lap: but the whole diſpoſing thereof *is* of the LORD.

v. 33. Events to us are fortuitous as the lot; but to God all are known, all decreed, and nothing happens but according to his eternal counſels: if therefore on ſolemn occaſions, with a view to Divine direction, *ſee* 1 *Sam.* xiv. 41. *Acts* i. 24. an appeal be thus made to God, it becomes us to ſubmit to his diſpoſal, and in all the diſpenſations of his providence to acknowledge his hand, and refer ourſelves entirely to his ſovereign will and pleaſure. O for ſuch a ſpirit at all times!

CHAP. XVII.

a Chap. xv. 17.
† Or, good cheer.

1. [a] BETTER *is* a dry morſel, and quietneſs therewith, than a houſe full of † ſacrifices with ſtrife.

v. 1. The great ſecret of family comfort is to live in love and peace, then a dry cruſt is ſweet, a cottage a palace; and every meal a feaſt. But ſtrife embitters all our enjoyments, and a houſe full of ſacrifices affords no delight where mutual diſguſt and diſcord reign.

b Chap. x. 5. & xix. 26.

2. A wiſe ſervant ſhall have rule over [b] a ſon that cauſeth ſhame: and ſhall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

v. 2. It is not birth but wiſdom which makes the nobleſt diſtinction. A wiſe ſervant will be made tutor over a fooliſh ſon, and, as the reward of his fidelity, be adopted, to receive an inheritance among the brethren.

c Pſ. xxvi. 2. Chap. xxvii. 21. Jer. xvii. 10. Mal. iii. 3.

3. [c] The fining-pot *is* for ſilver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

v. 3. God is the only ſearcher of hearts, and he is pleaſed to prove his people in the furnace of affliction: as gold and ſilver are tried and purified in the fire, he proves and refines them from the droſs of corruption.

4. A wicked doer giveth heed to falſe lips: *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

v. 4. A wicked man bent on miſchief is glad to catch at every thing which can further his deſigns; his ears are open to any falſe ſtory, and he is pleaſed to hear and propagate the lies of others, as well as invent falſhoods himſelf.

d Chap. xiv. 31.
e Job xxxi. 29.
† Heb. Held innocent.

5. [d] Whoſo mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker: *and* [e] he that is glad at calamities, ſhall not be † unpuniſhed.

v. 5. It is a reflection upon God to mock the poor, and inſult him becauſe of his indigence: ſeeing this is the condition God hath been pleaſed to allot him, and he, as the poor man's friend, will be the avenger of his wrongs: as wicked alſo is it to ſport with the calamities of others, and take pleaſure in their fall. Such a malignant ſpirit *ſhall not be unpuniſhed.*

f Pſ. cxxvii. 3. & cxxviii. 3.

6. [f] Childrens children *are* the crown of old men; and the glory of children *are* their fathers.

v. 6. It is a ſingular bleſſing ſhown to old men, to ſee their childrens children; and twice fathers, they are often doubly fond of them, eſpecially when their gracious diſpoſitions render them amiable; and reciprocally as children to parents, ſo are godly parents the glory of their children, ſpared to watch over them, inſtruct and guide them; and a good child, ſo far from wiſhing their removal to enjoy their eſtate, thinks it the greateſt bleſſing, that God is pleaſed to continue them ſo long, and makes it his ſtudy and delight to requite them in filial duty and affection for all their parental care.

† Heb. A lip of excellency.

7. † Excellent ſpeech becometh not a fool: much leſs do lying lips a prince.

v. 7. If a wicked man affects to ſpeak excellently on divine ſubjects, his life gives the lie to his doctrine; and if a fool pretends to make a fine harangue, it is abſurd, ſeeing his underſtanding is defective: as therefore theſe things are unſuitable, much more are lying lips unbecoming a prince, or a great man, whoſe truth and integrity ſhould be an example for inferiors to imitate.

g Chap. xviii. 16. & xix. 6.
† Heb. A ſtone of grace.

8. [g] A gift *is as* † a precious ſtone in the eyes of him that hath it: whitherſoever it turneth, it proſpereth.

v. 8. Riches are the grand idol; men value them as their greateſt ornament; they ſparkle in their eyes like the diamond; and to this mammon they expect every knee ſhould bow; nor expect in vain, for few are found proof againſt its dazzling charms: for this, conſcience, honour, juſtice, are too often bartered; and they who can bid up to the price are generally ſure to ſucceed. Such is this wicked mercenary world.

h Chap. x. 12.
† Or, procureth.
i Chap. xvi. 28.

9. [h] He that covereth a tranſgreſſion, † ſeeketh love: but [i] he that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth *very* friends.

v. 9. Mutual forbearance is the only way to preſerve the union of friendſhip inviolate: we are corrupted creatures, the beſt have much to be borne with; it is the great ſecret of happineſs, and the exerciſe of true love, *to cover tranſgreſſion*, over look it, excuſe it to others, become apoligiſts for the offences given ourſelves, and never repeat what might breed variance, for by ſuch vile tale-bearing the deareſt friends have been ſeparated.

† Or, aweth a wiſe man more than than to ſtrike a fool a hundred times.

10. A reproof † entreth more into a wiſe man, than an hundred ſtripes into a fool.

v. 10. A word, a hint, a look, is more effectual to awaken the conſcience of a good man, or warn him of his danger, than the ſevereſt afflictions are to the impenitent ſinner. *Thou art the man*, pierced David's heart, whilſt, after all the plagues of Egypt, Pharoah continued but the more hardened.

11. An evil *man* ſeeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him.

v. 11. Sin is rebellion againſt God, and that the evil man ſeeks continually; or *rebellion*, the rebellious man *ſeeketh only evil*; how to overturn the government, and execute his traiterous deſigns: *therefore a cruel meſſenger ſhall be ſent unto him*; when his conſpiracy againſt the peace of the kingdom being diſcovered, he is ſeized and executed: or for his ſin againſt God, death, the meſſenger of evil, drags him to the priſon of the grave, and delivers him over to Satan, the tormentor to execute God's wrath on body and ſoul in hell.

12. Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.

v. 12. The wrath of a fool is violent and brutiſh, and when rouſed, a bear robbed of her whelps is not ſo dangerous, for the firſt object he meets becomes the unhappy victim of his paſſion, whether it be friend or foe. From ſuch men's company withdraw thyſelf.

k Rom. xii. 17. 1 Theſ. v. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

13. [k] Whoſo rewardeth evil for good, evil ſhall not depart from his houſe.

v. 13. Ingratitude God abhors, and though human laws cannot puniſh it, he will, in the entail of his curſe on the family of ſuch baſe ungenerous ſouls.

l Chap. xx. 3.

14. The beginning of ſtrife *is as* when one letteth out water: therefore [l] leave off contention before it be meddled with.

v. 14. The leaſt aperture in the river's bank widens with every drop that paſſeth, till the mound is thrown down, and the country deluged: ſuch is the beginning of ſtrife; one warm word brings on another, and every reply exaſperates the more: it is wiſdom therefore to ſtop the ſmalleſt breach, and check the firſt riſings of anger, before paſſion gets head, and reſiſtance is vain.

m Ex. xxiii. 7. Chap. xxiv. 24. Iſa. v. 23.

15. [m] He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt; even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.

v. 15. Two abominations are here rebuked. [1.] *Juſtifying the wicked*, either by abſolving them through bribes or corrupt influence from the charges proved in court againſt them, or by pleading for the harmleſsneſs of ſin, and ſeeking for arguments to vindicate iniquity. [2.] *Condemning the juſt*, either by an oppreſſive ſentence, under the formalities of juſtice, or by laying to his charge, and cenſuring him for, things of which he is utterly innocent. Of ſuch wrongs God will be the avenger.

16. Wherefore *is there* a price in the hand of a fool to get wiſdom, ſeeing *he hath* no heart *to it*.

v. 16. Myſterious are God's diſpenſations; we may now wonder at them, but they will be all at laſt unfolded: he gives to the fool, the wicked, *a price to get wiſdom*, natural abilities, worldly ſubſtance to procure inſtructors, and opportunity ſufficient to learn his good ways; but he *hath no heart to it*, chuſing rather to ſpend his time and talents in the ſervice of his luſts, than in the ſchool of wiſdom, in the word of God, and attending the miniſters of his goſpel: if we aſk wherefore God is ſo good to give them advantages he knows they will abuſe, the anſwer is, thou knoweſt not now, but thou ſhalt know hereafter.

n Chap. xviii. 24.
o Eſth. iv. 14.

17. [n] A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born [o] for adverſity.

v. 17. A true friend is rare to be found; advantage, intereſt, ſelfiſhneſs, or caprice, are the general bands of worldly friendſhip: no wonder therefore they are ſo eaſily looſed by adverſity, a peak, or mere humour: *but a true friend loveth at all times*, and diſtreſs or unkindneſs warps not his affections, *and a brother*, where the bonds of blood ſtrengthen the bond of friendſhip, *is born for adverſity*; then his warm regard has eſpecial opportunity of being diſplayed: and emphatically is this ſcripture fulfilled in Jeſus the friend of ſinners.

p Chap. vi. 1. & xi. 15.

18. [p] A man void of underſtanding ſtriketh hands, *and* becometh ſurety in the preſence of his friend.

v. 18. Friendſhip hath bounds; to aſſiſt a friend in diſtreſs is duty; to ruin ourſelves and family by raſh ſuretyſhip is folly and injuſtice. *A man void of underſtanding ſtriketh hands, and becometh ſurety in the preſence of his friend*; which implies that he is not worthy of credit, but ſuſpected of inſolvency or knavery; and therefore we need be cautious in ſuch a caſe how we involve ourſelves, leaſt we ſmart for it.

q Chap. xvi. 18.

19. He loveth tranſgreſſion, that loveth ſtrife: *and* [q] he that exalteth his gate, ſeeketh deſtruction.

v. 19. A quarrelſome ſpirit loves to be in ſtrife, flying to the law for every trifling offence, captious in company, and delighting in diſpute: much ſin is hereby committed. *And he that exalteth his gate*, in proud and arrogant ſpeeches, or builds magnificent palaces to outvie his neighbours, *ſeeketh deſtruction*; ſuch pride God will abaſe, and his enormous expences will be the ruin of his fortune.

† Heb. The froward of heart.

20. † He that hath a froward heart, findeth no good: and he that hath a perverſe tongue, falleth into miſchief.

v. 20. By miſchief nothing is got; they who hope to make their advantage of it will be diſappointed; God's favour, and the regard of all good men, will be loſt thereby: and a *perverſe tongue*, falſe, deceitful, and not conſiſtent with itſelf, will prove the ruin of its owner.

r Chap. x. 1. Ver. 25.

21. [r] He that begetteth a fool, *doth it* to his ſorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.

v. 21. Children at their birth are the joy of their parents; but they need rejoice with trembling, the day may come when they may wiſh they had never been born, for wicked children are their parents greateſt plague, and their ill conduct embitters all their other comforts. How grievous a caſe! Let children be aſhamed of ſuch ingratitude, and tremble at the thought of giving their aged parents ſuch cauſe of ſorrow.

s Chap. xv. 13, 15. & xii. 25.
t Pſ. xxii. 15.

22. [s] A merry heart doth good *like* a medicine: [t] but a broken ſpirit drieth the bones.

v. 22. Not ſenſual mirth, but ſpiritual joy is here meant; naturally indeed ſome are more chearful than others, and this is a bleſſing, and contributes to a man's eaſe and health; but that which is the beſt medicine, the richeſt cordial, is the ſenſe of the Divine love making glad the heart; whilſt *a broken ſpirit*, pierced with a ſenſe of wrath, or ſunk under afflictions, emaciates the body with grief, and dries up the very marrow of the bones.

23. A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the boſom to pervert the ways of judgment.

v. 23. Both he that gives and he that takes bribes are alike evil; if it be done never ſo ſecretly God ſeeth; and though now the ways of juſtice be perverted by falſe witneſſes, or partial judges, every cauſe will have a rehearing, when judgment will be adminiſtred according to truth.

u Chap. xiv. 6. Eccleſ. ii. 14. & viii. 1.

24. [u] Wiſdom *is* before him that hath underſtanding: but the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.

v. 24. The wiſe man keeps the book of God, as the pilot his compaſs, ever in his eye; and Chriſt, his polar ſtar, guides all his motions: but the fool lives at large, *his eyes are in the ends of the earth*, unſettled, without rudder or compaſs, toſſed to and fro, and wandering about as the various paſſions of his heart drive him.

[x] Chap. x. 1. & xv. 20. & xix. 13. Ver. 21.

25. [x] A fooliſh ſon *is* a grief to his father, and bitterneſs to her that bare him.

v. 25. This is an unhappy, though too common caſe; and much is that parent to be pitied, much that child to be condemned, that gives occaſion for ſuch grief and bitterneſs to thoſe, whoſe tenderneſs and care to him deſerved far other returns.

[y] Chap. xviii. 5.

26. Alſo [y] to puniſh the juſt *is* not good, *nor* to ſtrike princes for equity.

v. 26. Magiſtrates muſt beware that they abuſe not their power, nor employ that to oppreſs the juſt, which ſhould be exerted for their protection. And let not ſubjects murmur or rebel againſt their rulers. Though they were evil, it were their duty to ſuffer and ſubmit; and how much more criminal to reſiſt them when they govern in righteouſneſs, and to quarrel with them as ſevere, becauſe they impartially execute juſtice on offenders.

[z] Jam. i. 19.
† Or, cool.

27. [z] He that hath knowledge ſpareth his words: *and* a man of underſtanding is of an † excellent ſpirit.

v. 27. The wiſe think much, and ſpeak little, at leaſt not in an oſtentatious way; or, *he reſtrains his words* from raſh or angry ſpeeches, and herein he proves himſelf of an *excellent ſpirit*, is highly to be valued, and ſhews the goodneſs and underſtanding of his heart; or *of a cool ſpirit*, as in the margin, not eaſily provoked, able to curb his anger, and, even under provocation, compoſed and ſedate.

[a] Job xiii. 5.

28. [a] Even a fool when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe: *and* he that ſhutteth his lips *is eſteemed* a man of underſtanding.

v. 28. Silence is a mark of wiſdom; even a fool, whilſt he holds his peace, gains the reputation of being wiſe; and, till he ſpeaks, the defects of his underſtanding are covered; but it is the ſummit of his folly, that he hath not the ſenſe to hold his tongue.

CHAP. XVIII.

† Or, He that ſeparateth himſelf, ſeeketh according to his deſire, and intermeddleth in every buſineſs. Jude 19.

1. † THrough deſire a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermeddleth with all wiſdom.

v. 1. This may be interpreted in a bad ſenſe, as deſcriptive of a conceited perſon, who affects ſingularity, and the ſhew of univerſal learning; forward in every company to advance his own opinions: or, in a good ſenſe, it may reſpect the man who, ardent in his thirſt for knowledge, ſeparates himſelf from all other avocations, that he may be at leiſure to give himſelf up to the ſtudy of univerſal wiſdom.

2. A fool hath no delight in underſtanding, but that his heart may diſcover itſelf.

v 2. All the little pains a fool is driven to take, is not thro' the love of wiſdom, for that he hath no delight in; but merely to be able to make a parade of it, and appear knowing. Thus a hypocrite in religion takes no real pleaſure in communion with God in prayer, or the ſcriptures: all his labour is by fair ſpeeches to keep up a creditable profeſſion.

3. When the wicked cometh, *then* cometh alſo contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

v. 3. Either the ſenſe is, That when the wicked hath advanced far in evil, he begins to ſcoff at and contemn the glorious truths of God, and treats its profeſſors with ignominy and reproach: or, That the wicked themſelves are contemptible and vile in the eyes of God and of all good men; are a reproach to their families and friends, and will ſhortly awake to everlaſting ſhame and contempt.

[a] Chap. x. 11. & xx. 5.
[b] Pſ. lxxviii. 2.

4. [a] The words of a man's mouth *are as* deep waters, *and* [b] the well-ſpring of wiſdom *as* a flowing brook.

v. 4. A wiſe man's heart is full of wiſdom; his words, as deep waters, flow ſilently, and cannot be eaſily fathomed when he ſpeaks the deep things of God; and as a flowing brook from the good reſervoir within, he is ever ſending forth thoſe ſtreams of inſtruction, which are refreſhing, quickening, and conducive to the fruitfulneſs of all around him.

[c] Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. & xvi. 19. Chap. xxiv. 23.

5. [c] *It is* not good to accept the perſon of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

v. 5. It is exceeding great wickedneſs to pervert juſtice, and, through favour or intereſt, to connive at, and acquit the wicked; or to give the cauſe againſt a righteous man, through prejudice, reſpect of perſons, party, or partiality. Woe to ſuch unjuſt judges!

[d] Chap. x. 14. & xii. 13. & xiii. 3. Eccleſ x. 12.

6. A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for ſtrokes. 7. [d] A fool's mouth *is* his deſtruction, and his lips *are* the ſnare of his ſoul.

v. 6, 7. To meddle in other people's quarrels, or by idle and inſolent prating to give provocation, is the height of folly; and they who do ſo will ſmart for it with many a hard blow. Caught in his own contradictions, a fool often here ruins himſelf, and eternal deſtruction aſſuredly awaits him.

[e] Chap. xii. 18. & xxvi. 22.
† Heb. Chambers.

8. [e] The words of a tale-bearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the † innermoſt parts of the belly.

v. 8. Vile and deteſtable is the character of the tale-bearer. His words are *as wounds*, mortal and incurable, ſinking into the heart, and rankling there: or, *as of thoſe that are wounded*; pretending to be bitterly affected with what they repreſent, and that it gives them pain to be obliged to mention it: or, *as cruſts greedily ſwallowed* by a hungry man; ſo eagerly heard, and ſo incorporating with us as our food.

9. He alſo that is ſlothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter.

v. 9. Idleneſs and prodigality are near allied, and the effects the ſame, iſſuing in the ruin of the ſlothful and extravagant. Thus negligence about the ſoul is as fatal as open and avowed ungodlineſs. He that will not pray, muſt periſh, as ſurely as the profane.

[f] 2 Sam. xxii. 51. Pſ. xviii. 2. & xxvii. 1. & xci. 2. & cxliv. 2.
† Heb. Is ſet aloft.

10. [f] The name of the LORD *is* a ſtrong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and † is ſafe.

v. 10. *The name of the Lord* includes all his perfections, by which he makes himſelf known to us; and all who fly to him through Chriſt, by whom alone he is approachable, as their ſtrong tower, will find deliverance from the power of evil. Whatever enemies attack, or dangers threaten, his almighty power, his unchangeable faithfulneſs, his infinite love, will be their ſupport, ſtability, and comfort. No guilt can condemn, no corruption enſlave, no wrath overtake, no fear diſmay them: they are ſafe, eternally ſafe, leaning on his everlaſting arms. My ſoul, ſeek this ſure refuge.

[g] Chap. x. 15.

11. [g] The rich man's wealth *is* his ſtrong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

v. 11. How poor and wretched a defence is the rich man's wealth, compared with the righteous man's refuge! In conceit indeed he thinks his riches an impregnable fortreſs, and a wall ſo high that no enemy can ſcale it, and therefore ſays to his ſoul, Take thine eaſe; till late conviction detects his folly; the flood of providential judgments here deſcends, and ſweeps away his refuge of lies: or, in a day of wrath hereafter, to his terrible diſappointment he finds that riches profit not.

[h] Chap. xi. 2. & xv. 33. & xvi. 18.

12. [h] Before deſtruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour *is* humility.

v. 12. Pride is the prelude of perdition. They who are puffed up with worldly wealth, high conceit of their own attainments, either of nature or grace, ſtand on ſlippery ground, and are on the precipice of ruin: whilſt humility, a low opinion of ourſelves, and a humble uſe of what we poſſeſs, is the preſage and preparative for true honour both before God and man.

[i] John vii. 51.
† Heb. Returneth a word.

13. [i] He that † anſwereth a matter before he heareth *it*, it *is* folly and ſhame unto him.

v. 13. A precipitate anſwer expoſes a man's folly; a weakneſs, into which quick parts are apt to betray us. It is wiſe to hear every circumſtance before we decide, and not judge by the repreſentation of one party, leſt we ſhould afterwards have reaſon to take ſhame for our raſhneſs.

[k] Job i. 21.
[l] Job vi. 4.

14. [k] The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtain his infirmity; but [l] a wounded ſpirit who can bear?

v. 14. All outward evils, whether afflictions of our bodies, croſſes in our families, loſſes of our goods, reproaches on our character, &c. are ſupportable, by thoſe at leaſt who are endued with power from on high, and, as good ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, are inured to hardſhip. But the ſevereſt of our trials are within, when the ſpirit, which ſhould ſuſtain outward infirmity, is itſelf wounded with melancholy, dejection, or that ſharpeſt ſword, the intolerable wrath of God, a ſenſe of which is ready to ſink us into deſpair, till Jeſus comes with his blood and grace to heal the broken-hearted.

15. The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wiſe ſeeketh knowledge.

v. 15. The wiſe and prudent, whatever their attainments are, continually deſire an increaſe therein; and attentive to every means of improvement, in private converſation, or the public miniſtry of the word, hear, that their ſouls may live, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

16. [m] A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

m Chap. xvii. 8. & xxi. 14.

v. 16. In this wicked world money goes much farther than merit: *it maketh room*, or *enlarges* a man; will often buy off puniſhment, and open his priſon-doors, or procure him a favourable hearing in a bad cauſe. It gains him acceſs at the gates of the great, when, but for the fee, the door would be but half opened; or puts him in the way for preferment, ſooner than every qualification.

17. *He that is* firſt in his own cauſe, *ſeemeth* juſt; but his neighbour cometh and ſearcheth him.

v. 17. *Audi alteram partem*, Hear the other ſide, is an approved maxim both in law and private converſation. A matter may be very plauſibly told, which, on croſs examination, enquiring into circumſtances, and hearing other witneſſes, may appear groſly miſrepreſented, or utterly falſe.

18. The lot cauſeth contentions to ceaſe, and parteth between the mighty.

v. 18. When contentions ariſe, and the mighty quarrel, where the caſe is of difficult determination, an appeal to God by lot ſhould end the ſtrife. By lot was Canaan divided; and if in ſome important concerns we ſolemnly, by prayer, as *Acts* i. 26. referred the matter to the divine determination, we ſhould have cauſe to rejoice in our quiet acquieſcence in his deciſions. In matters of doubtful right, the lot may be a wiſer recourſe, than the law or the ſword.

19. A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a ſtrong city: and *their* contentions *are* like the bars of a caſtle.

v. 19. Where love is turned to hatred, and neareſt relations quarrel, the reſentment is ever moſt exaſperated, and the anger moſt implacable. Let near relatives cultivate a ſpirit of forbearance and forgiveneſs, and, ſeeing the evil which would ariſe from a breach, be more careful to maintain the bonds of peace.

20. [n] A man's belly ſhall be ſatisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increaſe of his lips ſhall he be filled.

n Chap. xii. 14. & xiii. 2.

v. 20. A gracious heart will appear in gracious ſpeech, which will not only yield ſatisfaction and edification to others, but be a teſtimony for good to our own ſouls; for by our own words we ſhall be juſtified, and as we ſow we ſhall reap the comforts of our good converſation.

21. [o] Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue; and they that love it, ſhall eat the fruit thereof.

o Mat. xii. 37.

v. 21. Much good, or much evil, neceſſarily enſues from a right or wrong uſe of our tongues. By the tongues of falſe teachers and falſe witneſſes, the bodies and ſouls of men are deſtroyed; whilſt lips full of grace are the life of thoſe who hear, and the comfort of thoſe that ſpeak. As men love the one or the other, ſo will the iſſue be to them, either life or death.

22. [p] *Whoſo* findeth a wife, findeth a good *thing*, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

p Chap. xix. 14. & xxxi. 10.

v. 22. Of all earthly bleſſings a good wife is the chief; and a ſingular inſtance it is of God's favour, when, guided by his providence, we meet with ſuch an helpmate.

23. The poor uſeth intreaties, but the rich anſwereth [q] roughly.

q Jam. ii. 3.

v. 23. *Note*, (1.) It becomes thoſe who are poor, to have their ſpirit humbled to their condition; and when we draw near to God, we cannot have too lowly a ſenſe of our ſpiritual wants and diſtreſſes. (2.) Affluence is apt to elate; and they who grow rich, too often grow arrogant; but then their greatneſs becomes their ſnare and curſe.

24. A man *that hath* friends muſt ſhew himſelf friendly: and [r] there is a friend *that* ſticketh cloſer than a brother.

r Chap. xvii. 17.

v. 24. Friendſhip muſt be mutual: they who love, have ſome title to a return in kind; and where true regard is in the heart, it will make us ready for every act of kindneſs. And we ſhall find the comfort of ſo doing; for the bands of affection are even ſtronger than thoſe of blood; and we ſhall often find from a faithful friend inſtances of kindneſs and zeal for our welfare, which we never met from our neareſt relations. But the beſt of friends is *the friend of ſinners*, whoſe ſurpaſſing faithfulneſs and regard all who cleave to him prove by bleſſed experience.

CHAP. XIX.

1. [a] BEtter *is* the poor that walketh in his integrity, than *he that is* perverſe in his lips, and is a fool.

a Chap. xxviii. 6.

v. 1. Poverty is uſually deſpiſed; yet, *better is the poor that walketh in his integrity*, upright before God, and honeſt towards men; *than he that is of perverſe lips*, however great his affluence may be, *and is a fool*, deſtitute of that divine wiſdom the poor man poſſeſſes, and therefore deſpicable.

2. Alſo, *that* the ſoul be without knowledge, *it is* not good; and he that haſteth with *his* feet ſinneth.

v. 2. Two things are here condemned, ignorance and precipitation. He that knoweth not the way, cannot but err; and he who doth not allow himſelf time to conſider, will take many a falſe ſtep.

3. The fooliſhneſs of a man perverteth his way: and his heart [b] fretteth againſt the LORD.

b Pſ. xxxvii. 7.

v. 3. All our miſery comes from our perverſeneſs: we go out of God's way, and thereby involve ourſelves in trouble. And ſuch is our corruption, that we are ever ready to lay the blame upon God, and fret and murmur againſt thoſe diſpenſations of his providence which are the puniſhment of our own ſin and folly.

4. [c] Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is ſeparated from his neighbour.

c Chap. xiv. 20.

v. 4. Mammon is the ſhrine at which men bow. All affect to be friends of thoſe from whom they hope to gain: but, is a man reduced? his neighbour grows ſhy of him. Like leaves in autumn, worldly friends fall off; and every one is willing to paſs by on the other ſide, and overlook wants he hath no inclination to relieve.

5. [d] A falſe witneſs ſhall not be † unpuniſhed, and *he that* ſpeaketh lies ſhall not eſcape.

d Exod. xxiii. 1. Deut. xix. 16, 19. Chap. vi. 19. & xxi. 28. Ver. 9.
† Heb. Held innocent.

v. 5. Perjury and lying ſhall meet their recompenſe. However undetected the authors of them may now paſs, the day is near, when they will be unveiled, and eternal vengeance overtake the perjured and the lying tongue, *Rev.* xxi. 8.

6. [e] Many will intreat the favour of the prince; and [f] every man *is* a friend to † him that giveth gifts. 7. [g] All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he purſueth *them with* words, *yet* they are wanting to him.

e Chap. xxix. 26.
f Ibid. xvii. 8. & xviii. 16. & xxi. 14.
† Heb. A man of gifts.
g Chap. xiv. 20.

v. 6, 7. Theſe are maxims too ſadly verified by the experience of all ages. The great are courted, flattered, careſſed; and, becauſe they have much to give, crowds of petitioners attend their levee, profeſſing affection and ſervice, whilſt meaning only to ſerve themſelves. But the poor, neglected and deſpiſed, is univerſally ſlighted: his very relations look upon him as a ſcandal to the family, would fain diſown him, and rid themſelves of the burden of providing for him; and no marvel therefore, if other friends, bound by leſs ties, forſake him. Vain are his entreaties; they turn a deaf ear: or if he can get a fair word, or a promiſe, they are mere evaſions to be rid of his importunity, and will be found to mean nothing. Let it be our care then to make the bleſſed God our friend, who is greater than the greateſt, and able to ſupply all our wants, and ſo gracious and kind, that he will never turn away the prayer of the poor unanſwered.

8. He that getteth † wiſdom, loveth his own ſoul: he that keepeth underſtanding, ſhall find good.

† Heb. An heart.

v. 8. *He that getteth wiſdom*, the true knowledge of God's mind and will, or *a heart*, a right ſpirit, a renewed heart, *loveth his own ſoul*; for he thereby provides for its preſent and eternal bleſſedneſs. *He that keepeth underſtanding*, holds faſt God's truth, and acts under the influence of it, *ſhall find good*, both now and for ever.

h Ver. 5.

9. [h] A falſe witneſs ſhall not be unpuniſhed, and *he that* ſpeaketh lies ſhall periſh.

v. 9. Lying and ſlander are ſins ſo common, ſo offenſive to God, ſo prejudicial to ſociety, and ſo eternally deſtructive to men's ſouls, that we need repeated admonitions againſt them.

i Chap. xxx. 22. Eccleſ. x. 6, 7.

10. Delight is not ſeemly for a fool: much leſs [i] for a ſervant to have rule over princes.

v. 10. *Delight is not ſeemly for a fool*; he hath more reaſon to weep than laugh, to mourn than rejoice; and all his mirth is madneſs, the wrath of God abiding on him: *much leſs for a ſervant to rule over princes*; for the inſolence of mean ſpirits in office is uſually intolerable.

k Chap. xiv. 29. † Heb. prudence. l Chap. xvi. 32.

11. [k] The † diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and [l] *it is* his glory to paſs over a tranſgreſſion.

v. 11. To feel the riſings of anger is natural to every boſom; to reſtrain and ſuppreſs it, is the proof of a wiſe man. Cool reflection can only dictate the proper method to rectify real injuries. Nothing can be right that is done in a paſſion: nor ſhould we be haſty to take offence. The greateſt glory of man is not to reſent injuries, but with charity paſs them over; not to revenge, but to forgive them.

m Chap. xvi. 14, 15. & xx. 2. & xxviii. 15. n Pſ. lxxii.

12. [m] The king's wrath *is* as the roring of a lion; but his favour *is* [n] as dew upon the graſs.

v. 12. As terrible as the wrath, and deſirable as the favour of an earthly prince may be; yet, infinitely more terrible is the wrath, and more deſirable the favour of the King of kings: not to offend him therefore, but by every means to engage and ſecure his regard, muſt appear our higheſt wiſdom.

o Chap. x. 1. & xv. 20. & xvii. 21, 25. p Chap. xxi. 9, 19. & xxvii. 15.

13. [o] A fooliſh ſon *is* the calamity of his father; and [p] the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dropping.

v. 13. From what we promiſed ourſelves would afford us the moſt ſubſtantial comfort, often proceeds our bittereſt anguiſh, and the diſappointment aggravates our miſery. A great calamity is a fooliſh ſon, impoveriſhing his father by his extravagance, bringing a reproach on his family, and breaking his aged parent's heart with his diſobedience and wickedneſs: but a greater ſtill is a ſtubborn, ſelf-willed, fretful, ſcolding wife. This is *a continual dropping*; for ſuch a one's tongue will never reſt, nor matter be wanting to exerciſe it. Miſerable is the man unequally yoked with ſuch a mate!

q Chap. xviii.

14. Houſe and riches *are* the inheritance of fathers; and [q] a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

v. 14. Parents are in duty bound to lay up for their children, and from them by deſcent the inheritance comes; but the comfort of enjoying it muſt be from God, who only can give *the prudent wife*, without which we are but half ourſelves. And herein God muſt be eſpecially acknowledged; for with all the circumſpection we can uſe, it is eaſy to deceive, and be deceived; and we muſt own it a ſingular bleſſing from God, if on experience we find a gracious partner, circumſpect in her conduct, careful in her family, making it her ſtudy and delight to pleaſe.

r Chap. x. 4. & xx. 13. & xxiii. 21.

15. Slothfulneſs caſteth into a deep ſleep, and [r] an idle ſoul ſhall ſuffer hunger.

v. 15. Sloth is deſtructive both to ſoul and body: the ſoul by it is kept in ſtupid inſenſibility; the faculties unemployed; the time idled away; opportunity loſt; and want, the neceſſary conſequence, enſues: but the ſleep of ſloth will be at laſt diſturbed by the pinchings of hunger, or by thoſe ſharper pains, which will give the ſinner no reſt day nor night for ever.

s Luke x. 28. & xi. 28.

16. [s] He that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own ſoul; *but* he that deſpiſeth his ways, ſhall die.

v. 16. The path of duty is the way both of comfort and ſafety, and whoever hath a real regard to his ſoul's true good, will make conſcience of obſerving God's commandments, and will find the preſent and eternal advantage of it: whilſt the careleſs ſinner, who regards not his ways, but lives at large, unconcerned whether God's laws are kept or broken, is in the road to ruin, and will die eternally.

t Chap. xxviii. 27. Mat. x. 42. & xxv. 40. 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7. † Or, his deed.

17. [t] He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the LORD; and † that which he hath given, will he pay him again.

v. 17. The beſt hands in which we can place our money, are thoſe of the poor, for then God graciouſly regards himſelf as our debtor, and we ſhall not fail of being repaid with intereſt. Not that it is merely the money given, but the temper with which we give, that makes the work real charity. A compaſſion to them, wrought by a ſenſe of the divine compaſſions to us, makes the acceptable ſervice.

u Chap. xiii. 24. & xxiii. 13. & xxix. 17. † Or, to his deſtruction.

18. [u] Chaſten thy ſon while there is hope, and let not thy ſoul ſpare † for his crying.

v. 18. Ill weeds muſt not be ſuffered to take deep root; the ſooner we begin to uſe the rod of correction, the likelier is the hope of ſucceſs in reſtraining thoſe evils in a child, which indulgence and habit would render inveterate. Nor ought any fooliſh fondneſs and pity at their tears or intreaties to reſtrain us, but rather by the needful ſeverity ſhould we ſhow true love to their ſouls, and conſult their beſt intereſts, and our own as well as their future comfort.

19. A man of great wrath ſhall ſuffer puniſhment: for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou muſt do it again.

v. 19. An angry man will be ever in broils: extricate him from them to-day, and he will be involved again to-morrow. So uſeleſs is every kind interpoſition, where the ſpirit remains unſubdued and unmortified.

20. Hear counſel, and receive inſtruction, that thou mayſt be wiſe in thy latter end.

v. 20. They are truly wiſe, who are wiſe *in their latter end*, and ſhew they have made a proviſion for eternity their great concern. The way to be ſo is to poſſeſs an obedient ear, attentive to the advice and injunctions of parents, miniſters, maſters, and, above all, to Jeſus Chriſt and his word, for that ſhall bring a man peace at the laſt.

x Job xxiii. 13. Pſal. xxxiii. 10, 11. Chap. xvi. 1, 9. Iſa. xlvi. 10.

21. [x] *There are* many devices in a man's heart: nevertheleſs the counſel of the LORD, that ſhall ſtand.

v. 21. Deep laid and ſecret are often the devices of men, oppoſing God's will, or without any regard to his bleſſing, as if the ſucceſs depended on their cunning. Nay, when, as in duty bound, in the ordinary affairs of life, we uſe our reaſon to plan the propereſt method of accompliſhing our deſigns, God overrules all, according to the counſels of his own will; and his eternal decrees the craft of men or devils can never diſappoint; his people therefore may be comforted, and his enemies deſpair.

22. The deſire of a man *is* his kindneſs: and a poor man *is* better than a liar.

v. 22. *The deſire of a man is his kindneſs*; either God's kindneſs and love, which is to the gracious ſoul moſt highly deſireable; or he wiſhes to have it in his power to ſhew kindneſs to others, his ſoul, like God, delighting in doing good: *and a poor man is better than a liar*, however rich and great, who hath the ability without the deſire to do good, and is liberal of promiſes which he never means to perform.

23. The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life, and *he that hath it* ſhall abide ſatisfied: he ſhall not be viſited with evil.

v. 23. The advantages accruing from *the fear of the Lord* are repeated, to engage our hearts in the purſuit of real godlineſs. It *tendeth to life*; hath the promiſe of this life, as well as that which is to come. It affords the moſt ſubſtantial ſatisfaction, as bringing an habitual and abiding evidence of the divine love and favour, and that contentment which is the greateſt gain: and it is a preſervative from every *evil*, from ſin and ſuffering, God being the keeper of his people, and therefore under the ſhadow of his wings they are ſafe.

y Chap. xv. 19. & xxvi. 13, 15.

24. [y] A ſlothful *man* hideth his hand in *his* boſom, and will not ſo much as bring it to his mouth again.

v. 24. Sloth is a moſt beſetting and moſt pernicious evil, ruinous to ourſelves, as well as offenſive to God. The ſlothful, averſe to every labour, loves to ſaunter with his hand *in his boſom*; and, when he hath meat before him, will not be at the pains of raiſing it from *the platter* (as the word we read *boſom* may be rendered) to his mouth.

z Chap. xxi. 11.

25. [z] Smite a ſcorner, and the ſimple will beware; and reprove one that hath underſtanding, *and* he will underſtand knowledge.

v. 25. Incorrigible ſinners ſhould be puniſhed, if for no good to themſelves, yet as a warning to others: and they who ſcoff at religion, though our reproofs may be loſt upon them, yet may they ſerve to warn others in company, and prevent the evil ſuch men might otherwiſe do. But on a man of underſtanding no rebuke is loſt; he will hear and fear, and grow wiſer and better by the admonition.

26. He that waſteth *his* father, *and* chaſeth away *his* mother, *is* [a] a ſon that cauſeth ſhame, and bringeth reproach.

[a] Chap. xvii.

v. 26. The ſin and ſhame of a prodigal ſon are great. By his extravagance he beggars his parents, waſtes their ſubſtance, alienates their affections: if they have put themſelves in his power, they are perhaps turned out of doors, and their grey hairs brought with ſorrow to the grave. All cry out ſhame upon him; he is a ſcandal to his relations, abhorred of man, and odious in the ſight of God.

27. Ceaſe, my ſon, to hear the inſtruction, *that cauſeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

v. 27. Falſe teachers are ever ready to inſtil their pernicious doctrines, and the factors for Satan can colour over every pleaſurable vice with the ſmootheſt appellations: we need take heed how we hear. Flight is a young man's beſt ſecurity from ſuch company; for evil communications are moſt corrupting.

28. † An ungodly witneſs ſcorneth judgment: and [b] the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity. 29. Judgments are prepared for ſcorners, and ſtripes for the back of fools.

† Heb. A witneſs of Belial.
[b] Job xv. 16. & xx. 12. & xxxiv. 7.

v. 28, 29. When men are hardened in ſin, they ruſh on without fear. Thus *an ungodly witneſs* forſwears himſelf, advances lies, or falſe doctrine, and *ſcorneth judgment*; deſpiſing alike the laws of man, and the wrath of God: and with as much pleaſure as the hungry eats, ſo greedily doth he ſwallow down iniquity: but his career is ſhort, for vengeance is ready to overtake *ſcorners*, when they will find the wrath of an offended God is not to be mocked; and with the ſtripes of human puniſhment, or the ſtrokes of divine and inexorable juſtice, they ſhall eternally ſuffer the juſt reward of their folly and wickedneſs.

CHAP. XX.

1. [a] WINE *is* a mocker, ſtrong drink *is* raging: and whoſo is deceived thereby is not wiſe.

[a] Chap. xxiii. 29. Iſa. xxviii. 7. Hoſ. iv. 11.

v. 1. Drunkenneſs is a vice moſt odious; expoſes a man to be the jeſt and ſport of others; brings him into broils; diſorders his body with feveriſh heat; and though the liquor at firſt ſeems to exhilerate his ſpirits, he is deceived thereby; it drowns his reaſon and his conſcience together, and tends to the ruin of body and ſoul both here and for ever.

2. [b] The fear of a king *is* as the roring of a lion: *whoſo* provoketh him to anger, ſinneth *againſt* his own ſoul.

[b] Chap. xvi. 14. & xix. 12.

v. 2. Let evil doers tremble. God hath not committed the ſword to kings in vain: they are to puniſh the diſobedient, as his delegates upon earth; and the preſent wages of ſin they inflict, is but the earneſt of the eternal wrath which remains for impenitent tranſgreſſors.

3. [c] *It is* an honour for a man to ceaſe from ſtrife: but every fool will be meddling.

[c] Chap. xvii. 14.

v. 3. To ceaſe from ſtrife is ever wiſe: if we are in the wrong, it is our honour and wiſdom to acknowledge it: if we are right, better be ſilent, or give way, than provoke others, and grow warm ourſelves: but to be meddling with what we have no concern, is the ſure proof of folly.

4. [d] The ſluggard will not plough by reaſon of the † cold; *therefore* ſhall he beg in harveſt, and *have* nothing.

[d] Chap. x. 4.
† Or, winter.

v. 4. Sloth and beggary go together. Glad of every excuſe, the ſluggard will not even plough his own land, becauſe he pretends it is too cold, when indeed his work would keep him warmer than the fire-ſide. Juſtly therefore when others bring their ſheaves in harveſt, is he reduced to beg, and is refuſed; for ſturdy beggars are the peſt of ſociety, and they who will not work, ſhould not eat. It is the ſame with our ſouls: if we get not the oil of grace in our lamps, we ſhall beg too late when the bridegroom cometh.

5. [e] Counſel in the heart of man *is like* deep water; but a man of underſtanding will draw it out.

[e] Chap. xviii. 4.

v. 5. Some men are naturally cloſe, reſerved, and uncommunicative; others with deep deſign conceal the ſchemes they are plotting: but *a man of underſtanding*, by diſtant enquiries and obſervation on men and things, will draw out the ſecret, or inſinuate themſelves into the heart, and unlock the lips of thoſe who are moſt reſerved.

6. [f] Moſt men will proclaim every one his own † goodneſs: but a faithful man who can find?

[f] Chap. xxv. 14.
† Or, bounty.

v. 6. *Moſt men will proclaim every one his own goodneſs*; how friendly, humane, charitable, generous, he is; but the greateſt boaſters are uſually the leaſt doers: *but a faithful man who can find?* really ſuch as he profeſſes himſelf; a friend in adverſity; a father to the diſtreſſed; true to his word; pious without parade; in ſhort, an Iſraelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. A rare character this!

7. The juſt *man* walketh in his integrity: [g] his children *are* bleſſed after him.

[g] Pſ. cxii. 2.

v. 7. Uprightneſs of conduct is the conſtant effect of that faith which juſtifies; and the children of ſuch gracious parents fare the better for their unfeigned faith and piety.

8. [h] A king that ſitteth in the throne of judgment, ſcattereth away all evil with his eyes.

[h] Ver. 26.

v. 8. Kings that are intruſted with the throne of judgment, muſt be impartial in the execution of it, laborious in the diſcharge of their truſt, vindicating the innocent, and puniſhing the offenders. Where ſuch ſtrict care is obſerved, flagrant evil will be made to hide its head; and though no human coercive power can cure the deſperate wickedneſs of the heart, ſuch ſharp eyes of juſtice will ſcatter away what is openly and ſcandalouſly offenſive.

9. [i] Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from ſin?

[i] 1 Kings viii. 46. 2. Chron. vi. 36. Job xiv. 4. Pſ. li. 5. Eccleſ. vii. 20. 1 John i. 8.

v. 9. Not a living man can reply to the challenge. Corruption is in our nature; we are born in ſin; as unable of ourſelves to cleanſe ourſelves, as the Ethiopian to change his ſkin. To attempt it in our own ſtrength would be madneſs; to conceit ourſelves pure and ſinleſs, would be pride and folly: nor can we ever be made clean, till we are made ſenſible of our filthineſs, and deſpair of being able to help ourſelves: then the fountain of a Saviour's blood and grace is open; there we may waſh and be clean.

10. [k] † Divers weights, *and* divers meaſures, both of them *are* alike abomination to the LORD.

[k] Deut. xxv. 13, &c. Chap. xi. 1. & xvi. 11. Ver. 23. Mic. vi. 10, 11.
† Heb. A ſtone and a ſtone.

v. 10. God hates injuſtice of every kind. To buy by a greater meaſure, and ſell by a leſs; to diminiſh the weight below the ſtandard; theſe and the like frauds, too common in trade, are his abomination; and gain thus made will prove at laſt our greateſt loſs.

11. Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work *be* pure, and whether *it be* right.

v. 11. By their fruits ye ſhall know them, is the ſure rule of judgment; and even from the earlieſt days of infancy, the genious and diſpoſition of a child diſcover themſelves, and give an opportunity to an attentive parent to correct what is evil, and improve what is promiſing. Some take the words in a different ſenſe: *Even a child plays the diſſembler in his doings*; hypocriſy is natural to them, and they can ſhew their little wiles even in arms; and ſtrict attention to them is neceſſary to diſcover their real turn.

12. [l] The hearing ear, and the ſeeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

[l] Exod. iv. 11. Pſ. xciv. 9.

v. 12. All our faculties, both of body and ſoul, are from God's gift, and to be employed to his glory.

13. [m] Love not ſleep, leſt thou come to poverty: open thine eyes, *and* thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with bread.

[m] Chap. vi. 9. & xii. 11. & xix. 15.

v. 13. Immoderate ſleep is a great waſte of our time, a ſure proof of ſloth indulged, and the road to poverty. They who would thrive, muſt riſe early: and this is true in the concerns of our ſouls as well as of our bodies; they who lie in bed late, will uſually riſe to lazy prayers.

14. *It is* naught, *it is* naught, ſaith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boaſteth.

v. 14. Buy cheap, is the world's maxim; and therefore the buyer labours to undervalue the goods, finds fault with the price, and pretends how much cheaper he can buy them elſewhere; but no ſooner hath the trick ſucceeded, and the gainful bargain is drove, through the ignorance or neceſſity of the ſeller, than he boaſts of what is truly his ſhame, and calls his craſt, judgment.

[n] Chap. iii. 15. & viii. 11.

15. There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but [n] the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

v. 15. Fine feathers, in the world's eye, make fine birds; but no chains of gold, not the richeſt embroidery, or the profuſion of jewels, are to be compared with that more precious ornament, *the lips of knowledge*, where a pleaſing elocution diffuſes that divine wiſdom, which is treaſured up in the heart.

[o] Chap. xxii. 27. & xxvii. 13.

16. [o] Take his garment that is ſurety *for* a ſtranger: and take a pledge of him for a ſtrange woman.

v. 16. It is dangerous truſting thoſe who are taking the moſt direct means to beggary, engaging in raſh ſuretyſhip, and companions of looſe and abandoned women. Ere we trade with, or lend to ſuch, we need ſecure ourſelves, or may expect they will break, or run away, and leave us to ſtand by the loſs.

[p] Chap. ix. 17.
† Heb. of lying.

17. [p] Bread † of deceit *is* ſweet to a man: but afterwards his mouth ſhall be filled with gravel.

v. 17. Sin in general promiſes much ſatisfaction; eſpecially the ſins of lewdneſs, and of fraud, that fill the coffers faſt: but it is all deceit; what is ſo ſweet in the mouth, will make the belly bitter, and the conſcience ake, (as gravel in the teeth makes them jar) either here in the pangs of penitence, or eternally in the torments of deſpair.

[q] Chap. xv. 22. & xxiv. 6.
[r] Luke xiv. 31.

18. [q] *Every* purpoſe is eſtabliſhed by counſel: and [r] with good advice make war.

v. 18. Deliberation with ourſelves, and adviſing with the wiſe, is the way to obtain ſucceſs in our undertakings, and prevent the reproaches which otherwiſe would ariſe on their miſcarriages. And war eſpecially, whether with an enemy without, or at the litigious bar, requires much conſultation; ere it be begun, to prepare for it; and, when commenced, how to be carried on, and brought to a happy concluſion.

[s] Chap. xi. 13.
† Or, enticeth.

19. [s] He that goeth about *as* a tale-bearer, revealeth ſecrets: therefore meddle not with him that † flattereth with his lips.

v. 19. Suſpect the man that flatters you, and turn a deaf ear to the tale-bearer, who, by revealing the ſecrets of others, wants to inſinuate into your confidence, and betray you. Theſe are peſts of ſociety, and to be ſhunned by every wiſe man.

[t] Exod. xxi. 17. Lev. xx. 9. Mat. xv. 4.
[u] Chap. xxiv, 20.
† Or, candle.

20. [t] Whoſo curſeth his father or his mother, [u] his † lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſs.

v. 20. Under the law this was a capital offence; and though that at preſent ceaſes to be the caſe, there is a Law-giver and Judge, who takes cognizance of the baſeneſs, ingratitude, and impiety of undutiful children, advanced to ſuch a pitch of wickedneſs, as to curſe their parents, and wiſh them in their graves. The curſe of God is upon their devoted heads; here their name ſhall be infamous, and death quickly rid the earth of ſuch monſters; and hereafter the blackneſs of darkneſs muſt be their eternal abode.

[x] Chap. xxviii. 20.

21. [x] An inheritance *may be* gotten haſtily at the beginning: but the end thereof ſhall not be bleſſed.

v. 21. He that maketh haſte to be rich, cannot be innocent; and therefore, though his deſigns ſucceed, there is a worm at his gourd; the wrath of God embitters his gains; they often melt as quickly as they are amaſſed; and, in the end, will eat up his fleſh like fire.

[y] Deut. xxxii. 35. Chap. xvii. 13. & xxiv. 29. Rom. xii. 17. 1 Theſ. v. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 9

22. [y] Say not thou, I will recompenſe evil: *but* wait on the LORD, and he ſhall ſave thee.

v. 22. *Vengeance is mine, I will repay*, ſaith the Lord. To him therefore we muſt refer ourſelves, when provoked, oppreſſed, or injured; wait in patient well-doing for the fulfilment of his promiſes, and be aſſured he will vindicate our wrongs in his own good time and way. Hard is this precept to our proud hearts, and obedience to it among the beſt proofs of our adoption of God.

[z] Ver. 10.
† Heb. Balances of deceit

23. [z] Divers weights *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and † a falſe balance *is* not good.

v. 23. This is repeated from *v.* 10. and not unneceſſarily; for againſt a practice ſo common, ſo wicked, and ſo fatal, we cannot be too often warned.

[a] Pſ. xxxvii. 23. Chap. xvi. 9. Jer. x. 23.

24. [a] Man's goings *are* of the LORD, how can a man then underſtand his own way?

v. 24. God's over-ruling hand governs all, both in the concerns of our bodies and our ſouls. *In him we live and move*; guided by his providence, or ſupported by his grace. He alone can proſper our undertakings, whilſt we can neither foreſee the iſſue, nor ſecure the ſucceſs of them. Needful therefore it is, that conſtantly and humbly we ſhould wait on him for direction, and follow the leadings of his providence, and the dictates of his word.

[b] Eccleſ. v. 4, 5.

25. *It is* a ſnare to the man *who* devoureth *that which is* holy: and [b] after vows to make inquiry.

v. 25. Two great ſins are here rebuked, that are a ſnare and ruin to men's ſouls.

1. Sacrilege, embezzling to a man's own uſe what was dedicated to the ſervice of God: and however long cuſtom and poſſeſſion may countenance the abuſe, they who fatten upon the ſpoils of the churches, where ſcarce bread is left for thoſe who ſerve at the altar, muſt give an account to God.

2. Covenant-breaking. What we vow to God or man, it lieth upon us to diſcharge. It is too late to make inquiry, when we have opened our mouth; and to ſeek excuſes, when none can exculpate us.

[c] Pſ. ci. 5, &c. Ver. 8.

26. [c] A wiſe king ſcattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

v. 26. Severity is often needful, and wiſe magiſtrates will with vigour put the laws into execution. The diſturbers of the public peace deſerve to be broken with the wheel of public juſtice.

[d] 1 Cor. ii. 11.
† Or, lamp.

27. [d] The ſpirit of a man *is* the † candle of the LORD, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly.

v. 27. *The ſpirit of a man*, either his rational ſoul, or rather his renewed ſpirit enlightened and enlivened by the Holy Ghoſt, *is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly*; diſcovering, judging, accuſing, or approving whatever paſſes within, according as it is conformable or oppoſite to the perfect rule of God's revealed will.

[e] Pſ. ci. 1. Chap. xxix. 14.

28. [e] Mercy and truth preſerve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

v. 28. Theſe are the qualifications of a good king, and the great ſtability of his throne: *Mercy*, towards his ſubjects, eaſing them of every unneceſſary burden, and ſoftening with clemency, where the caſe calls for it, the rigour of the law: *and truth*, religiouſly obſervant of all his engagements, whether thoſe he made to his own ſubjects, or treaties with his neighbours. This will make him beloved and revered at home, and formidable abroad.

[f] Chap. xvi. 31.

29. The glory of young men *is* their ſtrength: and [f] the beauty of old men *is* the gray head.

v. 29. Youth is deſigned for action, age for wiſdom: each reciprocally needs, and each muſt therefore honour the other. Strength without counſel would deſtroy itſelf; counſel, without power to execute, would be uſeleſs; united, they reflect a glory on each other.

† Heb. Is a purging medicine againſt evil.

30. The blueneſs of a wound † cleanſeth away evil: ſo *do* ſtripes the inward parts of the belly.

v. 30. Corroſives are often highly neceſſary, and nothing but ſevere chaſtiſement will work on ſome ſtubborn tempers. They muſt be beaten blue ere their frowardneſs will depart from them, and their obſtinacy muſt be broken with many a ſtripe. Thus God ſees it often needful, reſpecting his deareſt children, to lay his heavy hand upon them, and to purge them in the furnace of affliction, from the droſs of vile affections. The operation is painful indeed, but the peaceable fruits which ariſe from it may well reconcile us to the ſuffering.

CHAP. XXI.

1. THE king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whitherſoever he will.

v. 1. The hearts of all men, even the greateſt; all their purpoſes and deſigns, whether unſtable, or impetuous as water, are under divine direction; and by his powerful though unperceived operation upon their minds, they are made ſubſervient to the purpoſes of his glory, as by canals the river takes that direction which we pleaſe to give it.

[a] Chap. xvi. 2.

2. [a] Every way of man *is* right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

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v. 2. Partial to ourſelves, we are ever apt to flatter ourſelves we are right. The ſelf-righteous, the lover of pleaſure, the worldling, all concur in this ſelf-deceit; but God's deciſions are made from intimate knowledge of the heart, and widely differ from our fond and falſe conceits: and what men highly eſteem and value themſelves upon, is in his eyes often an abomination.

[b] 1 Sam. xv. 22. Chap. xv. 8. Iſa. i. 11, &c. Hoſ. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 7, 8.

3. [b] To do juſtice and judgment, *is* more acceptable to the LORD than ſacrifice.

v. 3. The moſt pompous devotions, the moſt expenſive benefactions, or the moſt liberal alms, commend us not to God, when ſet in the place of moral duties. *Juſtice and judgment*, uprightneſs, and integrity of heart before God and man, are more acceptable than any ſacrifice; nay, without theſe the other is an abomination.

[c] Chap. vi. 17. † Heb. Haughtineſs of eyes. ‡ Or, the light.

4. [c] † An high look, and a proud heart, *and* ‡ the plowing of the wicked *is* ſin.

v. 4. Haughty looks ſhew a proud heart; and where ſuch a ſpirit reigns, all is naught. The moſt innocent, nay, the moſt commendable actions, are tainted by the evil temper from whence they flow: ſo that even *the ploughing of the wicked is ſin:* he means only himſelf in all his labours, and leaves God far above out of his ſight.

[d] Chap. x. 4. & xiii. 4.

5. [d] The thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteouſneſs: but of every one *that is* haſty, only to want.

v. 5. Prudent contrivance and diligent induſtry are the ſure road to plenty and affluence: but raſh ſchemes, haſty reſolutions, and precipitate meaſures, involve men in trouble and loſs, and leave them in poverty to lament their folly.

[e] Chap. x. 2. & xiii. 4.

6. [e] The getting of treaſures by a lying tongue, *is* a vanity toſſed to and fro of them that ſeek death.

v. 6. *The getting treaſures by a lying tongue*, by falſe pretences, deceit in trade, or fraudulent contracts, *is a vanity toſſed to and fro of them that ſeek death.* Light as vanity, and eaſily diſperſed as ſtubble, are ſuch treaſures; and death eternal is found at laſt to be the end of their deſtructive ways.

† Heb. ſaw them aſunder.

7. The robbery of the wicked ſhall † deſtroy them; becauſe they refuſe to do judgment.

v. 7. All injuſtice will by and by prove the ſinner's deſtruction; or *ſaw them*, pierce their conſcience with penitential anguiſh, or ſink them into hell, where they will have no reſt, night nor day; *becauſe they refuſe to do judgment*, which is the worſt of robbery; for againſt an avowed thief you may be on your guard; but from a lying tongue, and falſhood in dealings, there is no defence.

8. The way of man *is* froward and ſtrange: but *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.

v. 8. By nature every man's way is froward, ſtrange, and contrary to God's will, till divine grace renews the heart, and purifying the conſcience through the blood of ſprinkling, and the powerful operations of the Spirit, makes the ſoul pure within, and the way directed to pleaſe God.

[f] Ver. 19. Chap. xix. 13. & xxv. 24. & xxvii. 15. † Heb. A woman of contentions.

9. [f] *It is* better to dwell in a corner of the houſe-top, than with † a brawling woman in a wide houſe.

v. 9. A brawling and contentious woman may juſtly be reckoned among the bittereſt afflictions. Her din is ever heard; the largeſt houſe echoes throughout with it; the leaſt accident or wry word cauſes her fury to riſe, and all authority or argument to reſtrain her rage is as uſeleſs as talking to the wind. A wiſe man, burdened with ſuch a croſs, chuſes therefore rather to retire, than anſwer railing for railing; and rather ſits *in a corner of the houſe-top*, where he can be quiet, though expoſed to all the inclemency of the ſky without, than under ſuch a perpetual ſtorm within.

[g] Jam. iv. 5. † Heb. is not favoured.

10. [g] The ſoul of the wicked deſireth evil: his neighbour † findeth no favour in his eyes.

v. 10. It is the very heart's deſire of a wicked man, to ſee his neighbour fall into ſin or misfortune; and ſo hard-hearted is he, that in the greateſt need he will afford him no aſſiſtance; or if any expoſtulate with him on his conduct, they will receive for it only abuſe.

[h] Chap. xix. 25.

11. [h] When the ſcorner is puniſhed, the ſimple is made wiſe: and when the wiſe is inſtructed, he receiveth knowledge.

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v. 11. This was obſerved, *chap.* xix. 25. The puniſhment of *ſcorners*, ſcoffers at religion, and blaſphemers of God and godlineſs, either by divine judgment or the ſword of the magiſtrate, will ſerve to deter the ſimple, who might have been influenced by their wickedneſs: and a wiſe man, when inſtructed, far from ſcorning to be taught, ſenſible of his own deficiencies, hears attentively, and grows in knowledge. Or, *when the wiſe is inſtructed*, he, the ſimple, who is a by-ſtander, *receiveth knowledge*, and profits by what is ſpoken.

12. The righteous *man* wiſely conſidereth the houſe of the wicked: *but God* overthroweth the wicked for *their* wickedneſs.

v. 12. Theſe words bear a twofold interpretation. *The righteous*, the good man, when looking upon the affluence of the wicked he might be tempted to envy, wiſely conſidereth how ill it was got, and how fearfully it will end, when God will utterly overthrow the place of their abode, and puniſh them for their wickedneſs. Or, *the righteous* magiſtrate *examines the houſe of the wicked*, for ſtolen or contraband goods, or to diſcover his treaſonable practices; and, convicting him of his wickedneſs, executes deſerved judgment upon him.

[i] Mat. xviii. 30, &c.

13. [i] Whoſo ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he alſo ſhall cry himſelf, but ſhall not be heard.

v. 13. The hard-hearted and uncharitable ſtop their ears to the cry of the poor; drive them from their door empty; nor can be moved by the importunity of want: but God will make ſuch feel the miſeries they diſregard: reduced to abject wretchedneſs, themſelves ſhall cry; either on earth, and be refuſed a bit of bread; or, like Dives, in hell, and be denied a drop of water.

[k] Chap. xvii. 8. & xviii. 16.

14. [k] A gift in ſecret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the boſom, ſtrong wrath.

v. 14. Raging is the paſſion of anger; yet, ſtronger is the love of money. Few, however offended, are proof againſt a well-judged preſent, by way of ſatisfaction, when given ſecretly, and timed opportunely. Some refer it to a bribe, to pervert the execution of juſtice; but the firſt ſenſe ſeems preferable.

15. *It is* joy to the juſt to do judgment: but deſtruction ſhall be to the workers of iniquity.

v. 15. It is a pleaſure to a good man to do good; to a juſt magiſtrate, to adminiſter juſtice; and they rejoice in ſeeing others do the ſame: *but deſtruction ſhall be to the workers of iniquity*; either when judgment is miniſtred by upright magiſtrates, or at laſt, when God ſhall recompenſe them according to their deeds.

16. The man that wandreth out of the way of underſtanding, ſhall remain in the congregation of the dead.

v. 16. The way of underſtanding is the path of life, marked out in the goſpel-word, from which whoever departs, through unbelief and the love of ſin, will meet his ruin. *He ſhall remain in the congregation of the dead*; ſpiritually dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and doomed to eternal death. And great is this congregation; for wide is the gate that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be that go in thereat.

† Or, ſport.

17. He that loveth † pleaſure, *ſhall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil, ſhall not be rich.

v. 17. Inordinate love of pleaſure, and luxurious indulgence of appetite, are the way to ruin both of body and ſoul. To reliſh and enjoy the bleſſings God beſtows, he never forbids; to abuſe them to exceſs, or to place our chief happineſs in them, is to provoke him to deprive us of them. He will make thoſe feel in pining want the loſs of what they ſquandered away in ſenſuality and profuſion.

[l] Chap. xi. 8. Iſa. xliii. 3.

18. [l] The wicked *ſhall be* a ranſom for the righteous; and the tranſgreſſor for the upright.

v. 18. By the puniſhment inflicted by the ſword of juſtice on the wicked, the wrath of God is averted from the nation, as in the caſe of Achan: and God himſelf by his providence turns upon the malicious their own devices; and ranſoms his upright ones, by bringing the wicked into the pit they have digged, as Haman was hung on the gallows erected for Mordecai.

[m] Ver. 9. † Heb. the land of the deſart.

19. [m] *It is* better to dwell in † the wilderneſs, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

v. 19. This is ſimilar to *v.* 9. It were well if thoſe whom this character ſuits, were admoniſhed of the great ſinfulneſs of their conduct, and led to amend it. Wretched beyond expreſſion

ſion is the man thus unequally yoked with *a contentious and angry woman*: every comfort in his family is embittered; the ſolitude of the deſart is preferable to ſuch perpetual brawling; and the company of wild beaſts more eligible than ſuch a termagant.

n Pſ. cxii. 3.

20. [n] *There is* a treaſure to be deſired, and oil in the dwelling of the wiſe; but a fooliſh man ſpendeth it up.

v. 20. The wiſe preſerve with care what they gain by induſtry. In their houſe there is abundance of good things; enough, and to ſpare: yea, though but *a cottage*, as the word ſignifies, there is that moſt deſirable of all treaſures, grace; and that greateſt gain, godlineſs with contentment; *but a fooliſh man ſpendeth it up*; either ſquandering the ſtore which his wiſer father had provided; or, by living up to the height of his income, depriving his children of the proviſion he ought to make for them.

o Chap. xv. 9.

21. [o] He that followeth after righteouſneſs and mercy, findeth life, righteouſneſs, and honour.

v. 21. Behold,

1. The buſineſs of the wiſe; *to follow after righteouſneſs and mercy*; *righteouſneſs*, both that which is by faith in Jeſus Chriſt imputed to us, and by the Spirit of Jeſus implanted in us. *Mercy*, or *grace*, which, as poor and periſhing, we need, and muſt ſeek at God's hands, and, according to our ability and meaſure, exerciſe towards our brethren.

2. The bleſſing of ſo doing. Such an one *findeth life*; for none thus earneſtly ſeek in vain: life ſpiritual, with all the bleſſings and comforts of it, is their preſent portion; life eternal, hereafter ſecured to them. *Righteouſneſs* in Jeſus Chriſt, both his title to glory, and his meetneſs for it, is given him; and *honour*, the higheſt conceivable, even to reign with God in glory, is his ſure reward.

p Eccleſ. ix. 14, &c.

22. [p] A wiſe *man* ſcaleth the city of the mighty, and caſteth down the ſtrength of the confidence thereof.

v. 22. *Wiſdom is better than ſtrength*, Eccleſ. ix. 16. Nothing is impregnable where conſummate prudence plans, and cool fortitude with ſteady perſeverance executes the deſign. The ſinner's heart is like this city of the mighty, kept by the power of Satan and in-dwelling ſin; but Chriſt caſts down the ſtrong-holds, and, by the power of the Spirit of wiſdom and grace which he implants, brings the whole man, body, ſoul, and ſpirit, into ſubjection to his bleſſed ſelf.

q Chap. xii. 13. & xiii. 3. & xviii. 21.

23. [q] Whoſo keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his ſoul from troubles.

v. 23. The tongue is a world of iniquity, and needs a ſharp reſtraint, that nothing impure, falſe, profane, raſh, injurious, may be uttered. Its ungovernableneſs is the fruitful ſource of moſt of our preſent troubles, and God hath threatened it with eternal condemnation; and there is no way of avoiding theſe but by keeping that with all diligence.

† Heb. the wrath of pride.

24. Proud *and* haughty ſcorner *is* his name, who dealeth in † proud wrath.

v. 24. Pride is uſually the parent of paſſion; and they who are high in their own conceit, conſtrue every inadvertence into a ſlight, and a miſplaced word is an affront. Thus wrath is their trade, ſo habitually are they given to it. But though they may think their hectoring and hard words make them look great and be feared, they are deceived; it will only procure them an ill name, and render them truly contemptible.

r Chap. xiii. 4.
s Pſ. cxii. 9.

25. [r] The deſire of the ſlothful killeth him: for his hands refuſe to labour. 26. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but [s] the righteous giveth and ſpareth not.

v. 25, 26. Vexed with unſatiſfied deſires, the ſlothful pines away, becauſe he refuſeth to labour to ſupply his wants: or coveting greedily what is the property of others, to ſave himſelf from labour, he robs, or ſteals, and that brings him to an untimely end. *But the righteous*, having by honeſt induſtry obtained enough and to ſpare, giveth to the truly neceſſitous with a liberal hand.

t Pſ. l. 9. Chap. xv. 8. Iſa. lxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. Am. v. 22.
† Heb. in wickedneſs.

27. [t] The ſacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it † with a wicked mind?

v. 27. Though ſacrifice was of divine appointment, it never was becauſe of any delight God had in the blood of bulls or goats, or any outward forms of ritual devotion; but becauſe they were typical of the one great oblation of Jeſus; and without faith and ſimplicity of heart in the offerer, were not only uſeleſs, but an abomination. Thus all the prayers, alms, and outward appearances of piety, in the wicked and ſelf-righteous, are merely hypocritical; and their perſons being not accepted, their ſervices muſt be rejected of God, eſpecially when offered *with a wicked mind*, as Balaam's ſacrifices, or the Phariſee's prayers were, in order to be ſubſervient to their wickedneſs.

u Chap. xix. 5, 9.

28. [u] A falſe witneſs ſhall periſh: but the man that heareth, ſpeaketh conſtantly.

v. 28. A deliberate liar is an undone ſoul; but a man of integrity ſpeaketh the truth from his heart; teſtifies what he hath heard and knows, without wavering or variation.

† Or, conſidereth.

29. A wicked man hardneth his face: but *as for* the upright, he † directeth his way.

v. 29. Impenitent ſinners ceaſe to bluſh at their abominations, and deſpiſe alike the terrors of the law, and the wrath of the Almighty: no rebuke confounds, no correction humbles him; *but the upright, he directeth his way*, according to the rule of God's word.

x Jer. ix. 23.
y Pſ. xx. 7. & xxxiii. 17.
z Pſ. iii. 8.
† Or, victory.

30. [x] *There is* no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the LORD. 31. [y] The horſe *is* prepared againſt the day of battle: [z] but † ſafety *is* of the LORD.

v. 30, 31. Many are the devices that human and diabolical craft have planned againſt the kingdom of Jeſus and his people; but vain are the deepeſt politics, or the moſt ſubtle deſigns; God mocks at the efforts of impotent malice: and as no counſel can prevail againſt him, neither can any ſtrength protect without him. However juſt the cauſe, or great the preparations made, the iſſue of the battle depends upon him who giveth it not always to the ſtrong. Under his protection we are ſafe in the midſt of danger: and as in all human conteſts the *victory* or *ſalvation* is of the Lord; ſo in all our ſpiritual conflicts alſo, his power and grace alone are our ſtability, and ſecure our eternal ſalvation amidſt the attacks of corruption, earth, and hell.

CHAP. XXII.

a Eccleſ. vii. 1.
† Or, Favour is better than, &c.

1. [a] A Good name *is* rather to be choſen than great riches, *and* † loving favour rather than ſilver and gold.

v. 1. *A name* among the ſons of God, to be reſpected by the wiſe, and eſteemed by the good, is far preferable to any wealth the wicked may poſſeſs; and to have the affectionate regard of thoſe around us, conduces more to real happineſs than ſilver or gold. Or, as the words may be rendered, *Grace is better than ſilver or gold*; a ſubſtance both more precious and more enduring.

b Chap. xxix. 13.
c Chap. xiv. 31.

2. [b] The rich and poor meet together: [c] the LORD *is* the maker of them all.

v. 2. Whatever difference ſubſiſts between men's outward ſtate, the Lord is to be acknowledged as the author of it; and before him there is no reſpect of perſons; both are alike welcome to a throne of grace; both muſt meet together in the grave; the righteous, whether rich or poor, will meet in glory; and the wicked, of whatever condition, muſt lie down in hell.

d Chap. xiv. 16. & xxvii. 12.

3. [d] A prudent *man* foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf: but the ſimple paſs on, and are puniſhed.

v. 3. *The prudent man foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf*; ſhuns the temptation which would draw him into ſin, and provides againſt the miſchief which threatens him: *but the ſimple*, thoughtleſs of their danger, never look before them, nor conſider conſequences, and plunge themſelves into ſin and ſorrow here and for ever.

e Pſ. cxii. 3.
‡ Or, the reward of humility, &c.

4. [e] ‡ By humility *and* the fear of the LORD, *are* riches, and honour, and life.

v. 4. Humility, and the fear of the Lord, are the great characteriſtics of true godlineſs; and wherever theſe are found, there *riches*, as much as is needful of this world, and the abundance of divine grace; *honour*, the moſt exalted, which comes from God; *and life* ſpiritual and eternal, with all the comforts of both, will be the portion of ſuch an humble ſoul.

f Chap. xv. 9.
g 1 John v. 18.

5. [f] Thorns *and* ſnares *are* in the way of the froward: [g] he that doth keep his ſoul ſhall be far from them.

v. 5. They who make for themſelves crooked paths, ſhall be plagued in them. The ways of ſin, however pleaſing in appearance, will be found full of vexation, anguiſh, and ſorrow; whilſt he who carefully takes heed to walk and pleaſe God, finds reſt to his ſoul, and is delivered from all thoſe miſeries which embitter the ways of wickedneſs.

‡ Or, catechize. [h] Eph. vi. 4. § Heb. in his way.

6. ‡ [h] Train up a child § in the way he ſhould go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

v. 6. The bleſſing of a good education is ineſtimable, and parents will never have cauſe to regret the pains they beſtow in early inculcating upon their children the fear of the Lord, and inſtructing them in the word of his truth. God often bleſſes ſuch labours with immediate good effect, and they ſee their children growing in wiſdom as ſtature: nay, if they turn away, as too many do, they cannot ſin ſo eaſily as others; their conſcience is more tender, and open to divine conviction, in order to their recovery.

[l] Jam. ii. 6.

7. [l] The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower *is* ſervant to the lender.

v. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor.* Such is the conſtitution of this world by the divine Providence; and if ſuperiors rule well, and conſult the good of their inferiors, they would have no cauſe to complain: but if, taking advantage of their meanneſs and wants, they trample on them ſevere and tyrannical, then is this among the great evils under the ſun: *and the borrower is ſervant to the lender*, muſt ſpeak him fair, and do as he bids. *Note*, They who would maintain their independance muſt keep out of debt.

[k] Job. iv. 8. Hoſ. x. 13. ‡ Or, With the rod of his anger he ſhall be conſumed.

8. [k] He that ſoweth iniquity, ſhall reap vanity: and ‡ the rod of his anger ſhall fail.

v. 8. As a man ſows, he muſt reap; and the harveſt of iniquity will be vanity and vexation, deceiving the expectations of thoſe who promiſed themſelves they ſhould reap much profit and pleaſure thereby; and their abuſed power, which was exerciſed with anger and ſeverity, ſhall be taken from them, and they degraded with ſhame.

[l] 2 Cor. ix. 6. ‡ Heb. The good of eye.

9. [l] ‡ He that hath a bountiful eye ſhall be bleſſed: for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

v. 9. The eye is the door to the heart; the charitable and compaſſionate are ever ſeeking objects to relieve, and no ſooner behold diſtreſs, than they melt over it, and the pleaſure and kindneſs they expreſs in their countenance makes the relief they offer doubly obliging. Nor ſhall they loſe their reward: this man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed; bleſſed with the prayers of the poor, bleſſed with favour of a gracious God, bleſſed in time, bleſſed in eternity.

[m] Pſ. ci. 5.

10. [m] Caſt out the ſcorner, and contention ſhall go out; yea, ſtrife and reproach ſhall ceaſe.

v. 10. Scorners are the troublers of ſociety: ſcoffing at godlineſs and good men, they ſeek to raiſe perpetual ſtrife in the church, the ſtate, and among friends. The only way to be ſafe and at peace, is to be ſeparate from them.

[n] Pſ. ci. 6. Chap. xvi. 13. ‡ Or, and hath grace in his lips.

11. [n] He that loveth pureneſs of heart, ‡ *for* the grace of his lips, the king *ſhall be* his friend.

v. 11. When the heart is purified by the ſpirit of holineſs, grace will be in the lips; and ſuch a man a wiſe king will prefer for his friend, the ſweetneſs of whoſe converſation, and the frankneſs and honeſty of his heart, render him truly amiable; and withal he ſhall fare better ſtill, and find a warmer affection and friendſhip ſhewn him by the King of kings.

‡ Or, matters.

12. The eyes of the LORD preſerve knowledge, and he overthroweth the ‡ words of the tranſgreſſor.

v. 12. By the providential care of God, his word, the great means of wiſdom, is preſerved pure and uncorrupt, and a goſpel miniſtry in ſucceſſion maintained to ſpread the knowledge of it. His people are kept alſo by him increaſing in ſpiritual underſtanding, amidſt the darkneſs and errors around them; *and he overthroweth the words of the tranſgreſſor*, who would corrupt or handle his word deceitfully to the perverſion of men's ſouls, and thereby brings on himſelf ſwift deſtruction.

[o] Chap. xxvi. 13.

13. [o] The ſlothful *man* ſaith, *There is* a lion without, I ſhall be ſlain in the ſtreets.

v. 13. They who have a love for lazineſs, will ſeldom be at a loſs for an excuſe; and the moſt abſurd and improbable ſuggeſtions are to them as inſurmountable difficulties in the path of duty.

[p] Chap. ii. 16. & v. 3. & vii. 5. & xxiii. 27. [q] Eccleſ. vii. 26.

14. [p] The mouth of ſtrange women *is* a deep pit: [q] he that is abhorred of the LORD, ſhall fall therein.

v. 14. Nothing ſo dangerous, ſo eternally dangerous to the ſoul, as thoſe fleſhly luſts which war againſt it. *The mouth of a ſtrange woman*, an harlot, or adultereſs, *is a deep pit*, fairly covered with ſmooth and flattering words, but beneath is the abyſs of miſery. *He that is abhorred of the Lord*, and for his ſins hath provoked God to give him up to a reprobate and abandoned ſpirit, *ſhall*, in juſt judgment, *fall therein*, as his puniſhment, as well as his ſin, permitted thus to fill up the meaſure of his iniquity, till wrath come upon him to the uttermoſt.

[r] Chap. xiii. 24. & xix. 18. & xxiii. 13, 14. & xxix. 15, 17.

15. Fooliſhneſs *is* bound in the heart of a child, *but* [r] the rod of correction ſhall drive it far from him.

v. 15. Natural and deep-rooted is the corruption of the fallen heart; it is born with us, and what is thus bred in the bone, will not eaſily come out of the fleſh. Early chaſtiſement therefore, when ſin and folly begin to bud, is abſolutely neceſſary; and nothing but this can cut off the ſhoots, which, each moment they are ſpared, will grow more luxuriant.

16. He that oppreſſeth the poor to increaſe his *riches*, *and* he that giveth to the rich, *ſhall* ſurely *come* to want.

v. 16. They who are in haſte to be rich, often take thoſe methods that moſt effectually diſappoint their own deſigns. The fruits of oppreſſion are gotten with a curſe, and in expenſive entertainments of the rich, or bribes to obtain their protection, are quickly waſted, and that want they thus wickedly ſought to ſhun, in all its miſery overtakes them.

‡ Heb. In thy belly. [s] Eph. i. 13. [t] Chap. viii. 6. [u] 1 Pet. iii. 15. § Or, to thoſe that ſend thee.

17. Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wiſe, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. 18. For *it is* a pleaſant thing if thou keep them ‡ within thee; they ſhall withal be fitted in thy lips. 19. [s] That thy truſt may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. 20. Have not I written to thee [t] excellent things in counſels and knowledge? 21. That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; [u] that thou mighteſt anſwer the words of § truth to them that ſend unto thee.

v. 17—21. The inſpired penman here changes his ſtile, and, as in the beginning, addreſſes himſelf to his ſon in a way of exhortation; and what he ſaith unto him, he ſaith unto all who are called upon to hear and learn. Diligent attention, and heart-application, are neceſſary, *v.* 17. if we would come to the knowledge of the truth, and underſtand *the words of the wiſe*, thoſe inſpired writers, whom God hath employed to communicate to us his mind and will. And in order hereunto, various arguments are ſuggeſted to engage our minds in the purſuit.

1. *It is a pleaſant thing if thou keep them within thee*; for heart-religion only, not formality, can bring us to taſte the comforts of true godlineſs; and they who are moſt faithful, will be moſt happy, and find that joy *a ſtranger intermeddleth not with.*

2. It will be highly becoming. *They ſhall withal be fitted in thy lips*, or, *be ordered by thy lips*; ſpoken ſo as to miniſter grace to the hearers, and gain their regard and reverence.

3. Hereby our hearts will be eſtabliſhed in faith and confidence in God, *v.* 19. this being the bleſſed effect of his word, and the great end for which it was written, and is preached; and when we are enabled to truſt, we ſhall ſee the great ſalvation of God.

4. The matter is clear, the ſubject infinitely important, and highly excellent, deſigned to promote our eternal bleſſedneſs, written to convey perpetual inſtruction, and particularly addreſſed to us by name: *to thee*, reader, *even to thee*; therefore *to-day*, whilſt it is called to-day, may the word of goſpel-grace ſounding in thine ears, ſink down into thine heart, as *an engrafted word, able alſo to ſave thy ſoul!*

5. The truths are certain, *v.* 21. *not cunningly deviſed fables*, but delivered by the inſpiration of God; and by the peruſal of them, with fervent prayer, we ſhall arrive at *the full aſſurance of underſtanding*; ſhall have an evidence of the certainty of the objects of our faith, ſtrong as that of our being, ſo that not a doubt remains.

6. They will enable us to give an anſwer to every one that aſketh us a reaſon of the hope that is in us, and out of the good treaſure of our heart to communicate to them the leſſons we have been taught of God.

[x] Zech. vii. 10. [y] Job xxxi. 21. Pſal. lxviii. 5. Chap. xxiii. 11. Jer. li. 36. [z] Iſa. xxxiii. 1.

22. Rob not the poor, becauſe he *is* poor: [x] neither oppreſs the afflicted in the gate. 23. For [y] the LORD will plead their cauſe, and [z] ſpoil the ſoul of thoſe that ſpoiled them.

v. 22, 23. Poverty ſhould plead for compaſſion: it is doubly cruel to take advantage of their diſtreſs to oppreſs the needy, by vexatious law-ſuits, in which they have not ability to defend themſelves; by impoſitions levied on their neceſſities, or by perverting their judgment in the gate, and, through bribes or favour, robbing them of their right. God himſelf, the poor man's advocate, will vindicate theſe wrongs, and, either in time or eternity, ſeverely retaliate theſe ſpoils of oppreſſion.

24. Make no friendſhip with an angry man: and with a furious man thou ſhalt not go: 25. Leſt thou learn his ways, and get a ſnare to thy ſoul.

v. 24, 25. It is of vaſt importance with whom we aſſociate; for we readily learn their ways, and their evil ones are moſt eaſily copied. It is wiſe therefore to avoid all near connection with ſuch, whoſe ſinful examples and communications would corrupt our manners: particularly, never to make a paſſionate man our boſom-friend, nor to be often in his company, leſt by his ill temper our own be exaſperated, or we learn to be like him, imbibe his ſentiments, grow froward, and ſo *get a ſnare to our ſouls*, involving them in guilt, and expoſing ourſelves thereby to eternal ruin.

[a] Chap. vi. 1. & xi. 15.

26. [a] Be not thou *one* of them that ſtrike hands, *or* of them that are ſureties for debts. 27. If thou haſt nothing to pay, why ſhould he take away thy bed from under thee?

v. 26, 27. Many cautions we have had againſt raſh ſuretiſhip, and more are neceſſary to deter us from it. We muſt have nothing to do with thoſe extravagants, who, having ruined themſelves, ſeek to maintain their credit a little longer, by engaging others to be bound for them. It were folly to ſtrike hands with ſuch, if we have any thing to loſe; and if we have not, then it were the height of injuſtice; for it is the vileſt of all knavery, when we know our own inſolvency, to run in debt ourſelves, or give our word for another, in order to defraud the creditor, who is unacquainted with our deſperate circumſtances. Provoked by ſuch impoſition, no marvel he ſhould be ſevere, and not ſpare even the bed we lie on.

[b] Deut. xix. 14. & xxvii. 17. Chap. xxiii. 10.
‡ Or, bound.

28. [b] Remove not the ancient ‡ land-mark which thy fathers have ſet.

v. 28. The boundaries of property are ſacred, and never to be intrenched upon, by open violence or ſecret fraud. Antient cuſtoms claim preſcription, and the ſettled conſtitution of the government, eſtabliſhed by our forefathers, we ſhould maintain inviolate.

‡ Heb. the obſcure.

29. Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs? he ſhall ſtand before kings, he ſhall not ſtand before ‡ mean *men*.

v. 29. Diligence, attention, and diſpatch in buſineſs, are the great commendation to wiſe rulers, and the way to riſe; for he that is active and faithful in the improvement of a little, ſhews he is fit to be entruſted with more; ſuch therefore they chuſe to employ. In our ſpiritual concerns this will be alſo eminently verified: the King of kings will advance thoſe who have been faithful in that which is leaſt, commend their diligence, and cauſe them to enter into his everlaſting preſence and joy.

CHAP. XXIII.

1. WHEN thou ſitteſt to eat with a ruler, conſider diligently what *is* before thee. 2. And put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite. 3. Be not deſirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.

v. 1—3. Senſuality is, in many, a ſore beſetting ſin; directions are therefore laid down how to behave when at the great man's table, where delicacies of meat and drink of every kind invite to indulge the appetite; the more tempting to thoſe who are leſs uſed to ſuch dainty fare.

1. *Conſider diligently what is before thee*; the company, that nothing may offend them: the table; what is moſt proper, not what is moſt luxurious: eſpecially conſider whoſe eye is there, that, whether we eat or drink, we may do all to the glory of God.

2. *Put a knife to thy throat*; refrain from all exceſs, as being mortally dangerous: the more temptations are before us, the more watchful need we be. And this is eſpecially needful, *if thou be a man given to appetite*, and naturally inclined to indulge, and reliſhing highly theſe delicacies; deny thyſelf, and mortify the cravings of inordinate appetite.

3. *Be not deſirous of his dainties*; culling every nice bit, and eating to pamper luſt, not to relieve hunger; *for they are deceitful meat*. Sweet as they are to the taſte, they will turn ſour on the ſtomach. By them men are betrayed to divulge their ſecrets; and, what is worſe than all the other evils, they ſteal away the heart from God, ſenſualize the ſoul, and render it utterly unfit for the ſervice or the enjoyment of God.

[a] Chap. xxviii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.
[b] Chap. iii. 5.

4. [a] Labour not to be rich: [b] ceaſe from thine own wiſdom. 5. Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themſelves wings, they flee away as an eagle towards heaven.

v. 4, 5. Covetouſneſs is as common and as dangerous as ſenſuality; and to be overcharged with the cares of this life, is equally pernicious to the ſoul, as to be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs. Earneſtly therefore Solomon diſſuades from inordinate love of money: *Labour not to be rich*; eager in the purſuit, till weary and out of breath, as the word implies. A diligent care for a family is commendable, and to grow rich by honeſt induſtry, far from criminal; but to make wealth our object and firſt concern, and for the ſake of it to be ſo immerſed in the world, as to be diſqualified for caring for the ſoul, this is fatal. *Ceaſe therefore from thine own wiſdom*; regard not the acquiſition of riches, as the proof of wiſdom; depend not on thy own ſchemes and contrivances; ceaſe from all anxious and diſquieting thoughtfulneſs and ſollicitude; for it is loſt labour to riſe up early, and lie down late, unleſs God give ſucceſs to the undertaking. Two things he urges to ſupport his exhortation:

1. The vanity of riches, when they are gotten. *Why wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not?* Glittering as they appear in the eye of ſenſe, they are really mere nothings; can neither eaſe an aching head, much leſs relieve a wounded heart. They can no more ſatisfy the cravings of an immortal ſoul, than the huſks could relieve the prodigal's hunger; and as they daily periſh in the uſing, at death they vaniſh as a dream.

2. They are highly precarious; *for riches certainly make themſelves wings*; by a thouſand methods the providence of God may deprive us of them: ſcarce have we feaſted our eyes upon them, ere they take flight *as an eagle towards heaven*, ſuddenly, haſtily, irrecoverably, and leave thoſe who, like Micah, make them their god, to lament their miſery, deſtitute of all other conſolation.

[c] Pſ. cxli. 4.

6. [c] Eat not thou the bread of *him that hath* an evil eye, neither deſire thou his dainty meats. 7. For as he thinketh in his heart, ſo *is* he: Eat and drink, ſaith he to thee, but his heart *is* not with thee. 8. The morſel *which* thou haſt eaten, ſhalt thou vomit up, and loſe thy ſweet words.

v. 6—8. This world is full of deceit; many are very free of their compliments, who never mean to have their profeſſions put to the proof.

1. The perſon is deſcribed. One who pretends to give the heartieſt welcome, invites you to eat and drink freely, and affects to entertain you with the higheſt politeneſs, yet eyes every morſel; and, however his lips ſpeak fair, his niggard heart grudges the entertainment; and, whilſt he affects liberality, his covetouſneſs does penance to his pride.

2. The admonition given. *Eat not his bread, neither deſire his dainties*: refuſe his invitations, nor ſit down at his table; for if thou doſt, his inſincerity and ſordidneſs will appear, and embitter the entertainment. The conſciouſneſs of being an unwelcome gueſt will make the ſtomach nauſeate the food, and thou wilt grieve to have thrown away ſo many thanks for his civilities, when they are found to be utterly inſincere, and mere unmeaning compliments.

[d] Chap. ix. Mat. vii. 6.

9. [d] Speak not in the ears of a fool; for he will deſpiſe the wiſdom of thy words.

v. 9. When we have proved a man profane, and a ſcoffer at godlineſs, the wiſeſt admonitions are uſeleſs, and our pearls not to be caſt before ſuch ſwine: ſo far from knowing their value, they will trample them under their feet.

[e] Deut. xix. 14. & xxvii. 17. Chap. xxii. 28.
[f] Job xxxi. 21. Chap. xxii. 23.

10. [e] Remove not the old land-mark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherleſs. 11. For [f] their redeemer *is* mighty; he ſhall plead their cauſe with thee.

v. 10, 11. They who are moſt helpleſs ſhould be treated with tendereſt compaſſion. It is aggravated guilt to oppreſs the fatherleſs, incroach on their property, treſpaſs on their lands, or plunder their ſubſtance. Nor ſhall it be done with impunity, unable as they are to defend themſelves; *their Redeemer is mighty*, yea, almighty; *he ſhall plead their cauſe with thee*, and woe to thoſe againſt whom he riſes up in judgment.

[g] Chap. xiii. 24. & xix. 18. & xxii. 15. & xxix. 15, 17.

12. Apply thine heart unto inſtruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. 13. [g] Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beateſt him with the rod, he ſhall not die. 14. Thou ſhalt beat him with the rod, and ſhalt deliver his ſoul from hell. 15.

My ſon, [h] if thine heart be wiſe, my heart ſhall rejoice, ‡ even mine. 16. Yea, my reins ſhall rejoice, when thy lips ſpeak right things.

[h] Chap. xxix. 3.
‡ Or, Even I will rejoice.

v. 12—16. We have here the duty of parents and children, and the comfort ariſing from the mutual diſcharge of the relation they bear to each other.

1. A parent muſt inſtruct, a child attend, and *apply his heart* to learn *the words of knowledge*, the doctrines and precepts of the divine word, whereby he may become wiſe unto ſalvation.

2. A parent muſt correct, a child ſubmiſſively bow under the chaſtening rod. It is as painful to the tender father's heart to inflict, as it can be to the ſon to ſuffer the correction; but it is abſolutely neceſſary, when their evil tempers call for this check, and muſt not be with-held; only it muſt be done without paſſion, and accompanied with the gracious expoſtulation, and then *he ſhall not die*, the ſtroke will not be ſo ſevere as to hurt him: it will be the means of preſerving him from thoſe evil courſes, which might bring him to an ignominious death; and, under God's bleſſing, effect a reformation of heart, and ſave his ſoul from hell. For this ſhould be every parent's chief deſign, deſire, and prayer, reſpecting their children, that God would make both his inſtructions and corrections effectual to this great end, the ſalvation of their ſouls.

3. The bleſſing will be mutual. When he ſees his labours ſucceed, the parent will rejoice in beholding the wiſdom of his ſon's heart, evidenced in his whole converſation and conduct, thank God for ſuch a child, and depart in peace, comfortably aſſured he ſhall leave thoſe behind him, who will tread in his ſteps, and ſerve his father's God. And thus to be made wiſe in heart, and learn to ſpeak and act aright, will be a ſon's greateſt joy: he will reap the benefit of the inſtructions and corrections he hath received, and count it among his chief mercies to have had ſuch a parent.

17. [i] Let not thine heart envy ſinners: but [k] *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long. 18. [l] For ſurely there is † an end, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off.

[i] Pſ. xxxvii. 1. & lxxiii. 3. Chap. iii. 31. & xxiv. 1.
[k] Chap. xxviii. 14.
[l] Ibid. xxiv. 14.
† Or a reward.

v. 17, 18. When we ſee the proſperity of ſinners, we are too apt to envy them their abundance, but it is our folly; for we have a better portion infinitely than they enjoy, when *walking in the fear of the Lord all the day long*; the ſenſe of his love and favour, is better than all manner of riches; and if we mark the end, ſhall never wiſh an exchange, ſince all our momentary trials ſhall quickly have their period, and our faith and hope be loſt in the fruition of eternal bleſſedneſs; but the wicked ſhall lie down in torments intolerable, uninterrupted, everlaſting.

19. Hear thou, my ſon, and be wiſe, and guide thine heart in the way. 20. [m] Be not amongſt wine-bibbers; amongſt riotous eaters † of fleſh. 21. For the drunkard and the glutton ſhall come to poverty: and [n] drowſineſs ſhall clothe *a man* with rags.

[m] Iſa. v. 22. Luke xxi. 34. Rom. xiii. 13. Eph. v. 18.
† Heb. Of their fleſh.
[n] Chap. xix. 15.

v. 19—21. Repeated calls to engage our attention, intimate how prone we are to let our minds wander.

1. We are in general exhorted to *hear* the inſtructions of parents, miniſters, or others, who kindly wiſh to direct us right; *and be wiſe*, not merely hearing, but receiving the words of knowledge, and that evidenced by *guiding our hearts in the way*, the way of faith and holineſs, which leads to glory.

2. In particular we are warned againſt gluttony and drunkenneſs; vices moſt odious to God, moſt hurtful to ſociety, and moſt deſtructive to ourſelves, both to body and ſoul, fame and fortune, in time and in eternity: to avoid which, we muſt ſhun the company of drunkards, and refuſe to join in the entertainments of the luxurious; for unleſs we avoid the temptation, we ſhall not long keep from the ſin. To deter us from theſe vices, the immediate evil conſequences are inſiſted upon, ſince preſent danger influences the moſt, beyond any fear of future recompenſe: they are the high road to ruin, will waſte our ſubſtance, enfeeble our bodies, ſtupify our faculties, diſqualify us for buſineſs, and bring us to a ſtate wretched, contemptible, in want and rags to ſuffer, the fruit of our folly and wickedneſs.

22. [o] Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and deſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe is old. 23. [p] Buy the truth, and ſell *it* not; *alſo* wiſdom, and inſtruction, and underſtanding. 24. [q] The father of the righteous ſhall greatly rejoice: and he that begeteth a wiſe *child* ſhall have joy of him. 25. Thy father and thy mother ſhall be glad, and ſhe that bare thee ſhall rejoice.

[o] Chap. i. 8. & xxx. 17.
[p] Chap. iv. 5, 7.
[q] Chap. x. 1. & xv. 20. Ver. 15.

v. 22—25. We have here,

1. Parental reverence enjoined. The father who begat, and the mother who brought us forth, as they have peculiar authority over us, and poſſeſs the tendereſt regard for us, therefore, attention to them is not more our duty than our intereſt; nor muſt we deſpiſe them when old, or jeſt at the grave advice of our aged mothers; experience is beſt learnt by years, and grey heads the wiſeſt counſellors.

2. An exhortation to prize highly *the truth*, the revealed word of God, the goſpel of our ſalvation, with all *the wiſdom, inſtruction, and underſtanding* therein contained. We muſt *buy* it as the moſt deſirable acquiſition, which we ſpare no labour or price to purchaſe; reading, hearing, meditating on the ſcriptures, praying over them, conferring with thoſe, whoſe knowledge and experience is moſt eminent; and, when poſſeſſed of the truth, holding it faſt in profeſſion and practice, never ſelling it for the riches, honours, or pleaſures of the world; or parting with it through any fears of reproach, loſs, or ſuffering.

3. The ſatisfaction this will afford to pious parents, and to give them joy, will be the delight of every gracious child. They greatly will rejoice to ſee their offſpring thus *wiſe* in the knowledge, and *righteous* in the practice of the truth; and it will be their comfort and credit in their old age, and ſerve to chear *thoſe evil days*, when they would otherwiſe have ſaid, *there is no pleaſure in them.*

26. My ſon, [r] give me thine heart, and let thine eyes obſerve my ways. 27. For [s] an whore *is* a deep ditch; and a ſtrange woman *is* a narrow pit. 28. [t] She alſo lieth in wait † as *for* a prey, and increaſeth the tranſgreſſors among men.

[r] 2 Cor. viii. 5.
[s] Chap. xxii. 14. Eccleſ. vii. 26.
[t] Chap. vii. 12.
† Or as a robber.

v. 26—28. The great thing Chriſt requires of his children is their heart; for without this, all beſides is nothing worth; and moſt reaſonable is the demand, when his title to it is ſo evident: and where the heart is right with God, our ways will be directed to pleaſe him; we ſhall eye the path of duty to walk in it, and the leadings of his providence, to improve under every diſpenſation, and in this way ſhall be preſerved from evil; eſpecially from that moſt fatal ſnare of youthful luſts, in which dreadful whirlpool ſo many ſouls are drowned eternally. *For an whore is a deep ditch, and a ſtrange woman is a narrow pit*, whoſe lewdneſs and covetouſneſs are inſatiable; and thoſe who fall therein, ſink for the moſt part irrecoverably, never to riſe again. *She alſo lieth in wait as for a prey*, ravenous as a beaſt of the foreſt, and practiſing every wile to draw men to her toils, and plunder them, not only of their money, but what is infinitely more precious, of their virtue, honour, and peace of mind: *and increaſeth the tranſgreſſors among men*; drunkenneſs, theft, lying, ſwearing, and all the train of abominations naturally flow from ſuch a connection; or *ſhe increaſeth the perfidious*; for her they break the covenant of marriage, are faithleſs to men; and worſt of all, treacherouſly depart from God, to their everlaſting deſtruction. Let him that readeth, underſtand, and fly the fatal toil; be deaf to enticement, and mark the end of thoſe ways.

29. [u] Who hath woe? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cauſe? who hath redneſs of eyes? 30. [x] They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to ſeek [y] mixt wine. 31. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itſelf aright. 32. At the laſt it biteth like a ſerpent, and ſtingeth † like an adder. 33. Thine eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, and thine heart ſhall utter perverſe things. 34. Yea, thou ſhalt be as he that lieth down in ‡ the midſt of the ſea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a maſt. 35. They have ſtricken me, *ſhalt thou ſay, and* I was not ſick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: [z] when ſhall I awake? I will ſeek it yet again.

[u] Iſa. v. 11, 12.
[x] Chap. xx. 1.
[y] Pſ. lxxv. 8. Chap. ix. 2.
† Or a cockatrice.
‡ Heb. The heart.
[z] Deut. xxix. 19. Iſa. lvi. 12.

v. 29—35. Drunkenneſs is the door at which all miſery and miſchief enters, and therefore we have,

1. The fatal effects of it ſet before us, in order to deter us from the ſin.

(1.) It is the cauſe of endleſs quarrels. Inflamed with wine, and reaſon loſt, the tongue is let looſe, ſcurrilous, abuſive, provoking; contentions ariſe on the moſt frivolous grounds, or none; blows and bloodſhed enſue, and long woe and ſorrow are the dire conſequences. Whilſt in the redneſs of eyes, beaten in the fray, or inflamed with the debauch, men carry about with them their brand of infamy, and pain and deformity are their preſent puniſhment.

(2.) It excites to all manner of lewdneſs. The bottle ends with a whore, or ſends the drunkard neighing after his neighbour's wife, ready for every ſcene of guilt, and inſenſible to every danger.

(3.) In their cups men utter *perverſe things*; reveal their ſecrets, betray their truſts, their talk is obſcene, rude, profane, abſurd; at which, in ſoberer hours, they will be overwhelmed with ſhame.

(4.) They are giddy, their feet ſtagger, their heads ſwim, their eyes roll, as a ſhip in a ſtorm; and as a man aſleep on the top of a maſt, they are ſecure, and thoughtleſs of the impending danger, though ready to ruſh into the abyſs of miſery: they are deaf to rebuke, and corrections make no impreſſion.

(5.) They are hardned. Notwithſtanding all that is paſt, no ſooner is the drunkard awake, than, like the dog, he returns to his vomit again; and perhaps it is his language of boaſting to his companions, *v.* 35. how well he came off the night before, unhurt amidſt the blows and beating; thus glorying in his ſhame.

(6.) Men muſt feel at laſt the dire effects of drunkenneſs in this world, when their bodies, bloated as with poiſon, grow loathſome with diſeaſe, and tormented with the palſy, dropſy, gout, and all the train of miſeries drinking brings on; and their ſouls, with horror, reflect upon the paſt, and are terrified with the fearful looking-for of judgment to come. But if ſuch men live and die ſtupid, their damnation ſlumbereth not; the worm that never dies, and the fire that never ſhall be quenched, awaits them; when they ſhall lie down in torments, and nothing be able to allay the fierceneſs of theſe everlaſting burnings.

2. The admonition given us. We muſt fly from the temptation, if we mean to eſcape the ſin: we are ſafe only by keeping out of harm's way: and three directions are here given; (1.) Not to ſeek ſuch company, but avoid them, and ſhun the taverns which the drunkards haunt. (2.) Not to tarry long at the wine; when men ſit in company, one glaſs is apt to draw on another; and if the ſenſes are not drowned, yet the ſoul is hurt, and the precious hours of life idly ſquandered. (3.) Not to *look upon the wine* with inordinate deſire and delight, *when it is red*, which was moſt prized in Canaan, *when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itſelf aright*, ſparkles in the glaſs, its colour beautiful, its flavour exquiſite. The more tempting the bait, the leſs it will bear to be tampered with: ſipping and taſting draws on to drinking.

CHAP. XXIV.

1.[a] BE not thou envious againſt evil men, neither deſire to be with them. 2. For [b] their heart ſtudieth deſtruction, and their lips talk of miſchief.

a Pſ. xxxvii. 1, &c. & lxxiii. 3. Chap. iii. 31. & xxiii. 17. Ver. 19.
b Pſ. x. 7.

v. 1, 2. The ſinner's proſperity is little to be envied, and their company far from deſirable; their preſent ſtudy and talk is miſchievous and deſtructive, and their end is perdition; they are therefore rather to be ſhunned than courted, and ſhould raiſe our indignation, not our envy.

3. Through wiſdom is an houſe builded, and by underſtanding it is eſtabliſhed: 4. And by knowledge ſhall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleaſant riches. 5.[c] A wiſe man *is* † ſtrong, yea, a man of knowledge increaſeth ſtrength. 6. For [d] by wiſe counſel thou ſhalt make war: and in multitude of counſellors *there is* ſafety.

c Chap. xxi. 22. Eccleſ. ix. 16.
† Heb. In ſtrength.
d Chap. xi. 14. & xv. 22. & xx. 18. Luke xiv. 31.

v. 3—6. However by unjuſt methods the wicked may haſtily amaſs wealth, yet honeſty will be found the beſt policy, and what is wiſely acquired under God's bleſſing, will wear beſt, and laſt longeſt.

1. In our temporal concerns, wiſdom and prudent management will build up our families; make our circumſtances flouriſhing, bring us riches, *pleaſant* as *precious*, becauſe got under the divine bleſſing, and doubly enjoyed under a ſenſe of God's love. It will give us ſtrength to preſerve and defend what we have acquired; and if war be neceſſary, whether in the field, or at the bar, we ſhall be ſafe, having with other wiſe counſellors foreſeen and provided for every emergence.

2. In our ſpiritual concerns, wiſdom is moſt needful: our ſoul is our houſe, and the foundation muſt be laid on Jeſus the rock of ages; the chambers of all our faculties furniſhed with precious and pleaſant graces, the moſt durable and invaluable riches: thus wiſe unto ſalvation, we ſhall be ſupported againſt all the attacks of our ſpiritual enemies, ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might; yea, we ſhall be enabled to go from ſtrength to ſtrength, and, ſafe from all the powers of evil, be made more than conquerors at laſt, through him, who is the wonderful counſellor, and the everlaſting refuge of his people.

7. [e] Wiſdom *is* too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.

e Pſal. x. 5. Chap. xiv. 6.

v. 7. *Wiſdom is too high for a fool*, he has no capacity for attaining it, eſpecially divine wiſdom; which, though deep read in the ſciences and philoſophy, the natural man cannot know, being deſtitute of that ſpiritual diſcernment, without which the myſteries of God appear fooliſhneſs. *He openeth not his mouth in the gate*, he is not qualified to ſpeak in the preſence of the wiſe, and if he doth, is diſregarded.

8. He that deviſeth to do evil, ſhall be called a miſchievous perſon.

v. 8. They who do ill things, deſerve an ill name; and the more art and contrivance there is in ſin, the greater the malignity, and the more miſchievous the author.

9. [f] The thought of fooliſhneſs *is* ſin: and the ſcorner *is* an abomination to men.

f Acts viii. 22.

v. 9. God is the ſearcher of hearts. *Thoughts of fooliſhneſs* are ſins already committed in his eye; or, *the thoughts of the fooliſh are ſin*, evil continually; *and a ſcorner*, who ſcoffs at God and godlineſs, and ridicules its profeſſors, *is an abomination to men*, juſtly abhorred as a dangerous man, and a peſt to ſociety.

10. *If* thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength *is* † ſmall.

† Heb. Narrow.

v. 10. Days of adverſity are trying ſeaſons; and under diſeaſe and pain of body, deep providential afflictions, fierce perſecutions, or more burdenſome ſpiritual diſtreſſes, we are too apt to faint, and prove how ſmall was that ſtrength, of which, when at eaſe, we thought ourſelves poſſeſſed. Need have we therefore to be looking up for greater ſtrength than our own, to him *who giveth ſtrength to the weak, and to thoſe who have no might, increaſeth ſtrength.*

11. [g] If thou forbear to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *thoſe that are* ready to be ſlain: 12. If thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he [h] that pondereth the heart conſider *it?* and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth *not* he know *it?* and [i] ſhall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?

g Pſ. lxxxii. 4. Iſa. lviii. 6, 7. 1 John iii. 16.
h Jer. xvii. 9.
i Job xxxiv. 11. Pſ. lxii. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Rom. ii. 6. Rev. xxii. 12.

v. 11, 12. Injured innocence demands our interpoſition, and the more imminent the danger, the more forcible the obligation to haſten our aſſiſtance. Whether they are born down by falſe accuſations, their lives endangered by fraud or violence, by perils of robbers at land, and ſtorms at ſea, or their ſouls led away by ſeducers, and expoſed to eternal death, we are bound to fly to their reſcue, and ſpare no pains or labour to extricate them from their diſtreſs. Nor muſt we think to get off with plauſible excuſes, pretending *we knew it not*, becauſe we turned away our face, and paſſed by on the other ſide; or *knew him not*, as if becauſe he was perſonally unknown, he might be unnoticed and neglected. The law of univerſal charity, and the love of juſtice, obliges us to regard every man as our neighbour; and though among men our excuſes may paſs, yet God's ſcrutiny is not to be thus evaded. *He pondereth the heart*, and knows the evil principles which ſwayed our conduct; *and will render to every man according to his works*, when they who ſhewed no mercy, may expect to find none.

13. My ſon, eat thou honey, becauſe *it is* good; and the honey-comb, *which is* ſweet † to the taſte: 14. [k] So *ſhall* the knowledge of wiſdom *be* unto thy ſoul: when thou haſt found *it*, then [l] there ſhall be a reward, and thy expectation ſhall not be cut off.

† Heb. Upon thy palate.
k Pſ. xix. 10. & cxix. 103.
l Chap. xxiii. 18.

v. 13, 14. To uſe and enjoy the creatures of God, is good; he who gave honey its ſweetneſs, intended it to pleaſe the palate, as well as nouriſh the body. So ſweet, ſo ſtrengthening is wiſdom to the ſoul, as they by experience find, who feed by faith on the great and precious promiſes of the goſpel; and all the pains employed in ſearching after it, in the uſe of the appointed means, will be amply recompenſed, and our expectations fully anſwered; yea, exceeded in the preſent ſatisfaction enjoyed here, and more abundantly in the glory which ſhall follow hereafter.

15. Lay not wait, O wicked *man*, againſt the dwelling of the righteous: ſpoil not his reſting-place. 16. For [m] a juſt *man* falleth ſeven times, and riſeth up *again*: [n] but the wicked ſhall fall into miſchief.

m Job v. 19. Pſ. xxxiv. 19. & xxxvii. 24.
n Amos v. 2. & viii. 14.

v. 15, 16. Vain and impotent are the attempts of malicious wickedneſs. *Lay not in wait, O wicked man, againſt the dwelling of the righteous*, looking for ſome opportunity *to ſpoil his reſting-place*, and by fraud, or force, to oppreſs and plunder him, as the wolf devours the harmleſs ſheep: but if the wicked will not hear, the faithful need not fear; God will preſerve them, and puniſh their enemies. *For* though *a juſt man falleth ſeven times*, either into affliction, which ſeems principally intended, or into ſin, ſeduced by the power of temptation; yet God will not leave him; by his grace he is renewed unto repentance, or extricated from his troubles, *and riſeth up again*, perhaps ſtrengthened by his fall; *but the wicked ſhall fall into miſchief*, from one evil to another, from the troubles on earth to the torments of hell, and ſhall never riſe up again.

Before Chriſt 1000.

17. [o] Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth: 18. Leſt the LORD ſee *it*, and it † diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

o Job xxxi. 29. Pſ. xxxv. 15. Chap. xvii. 5.
† Heb. Be evil in his eyes.

v. 17, 18. Rejoice not in the ſins or ſufferings of thy bittereſt enemy. It is the proof of a revengeful ſpirit, and highly diſpleaſing to God, who knows the ſecrets of the ſoul, and ſees the malicious pleaſure, when it but riſes in the heart; and in juſt puniſhment of ſuch an evil temper, *turns away his anger from him*, removing the evils he was about to inflict, and by an unexpected reverſe, will bring them upon thee, and change thy joys into bitter ſorrows.

19. [p] † Fret not thyſelf becauſe of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked. 20. For there ſhall be no reward to the evil *man*, [q] the ‡ candle of the wicked ſhall be put out.

p Pſ. xxxvii. 1. Chap. xxiii. 17. Ver. 1.
† Or keep not company with the wicked.
q Job xviii. 5, 6. & xxi. 17. Chap. xiii. 9. & xx. 20.
‡ Or lamp.

v. 19, 20. To envy the wicked, and fret at the diſpenſations of God's providence towards them, is both ſinful and unreaſonable. For glittering as their proſperity appears, *there ſhall be no reward to the evil man*, their poſſeſſions miniſter no ſubſtantial good, and they have no reward to expect hereafter, but the very contrary: *the candle of the wicked ſhall be put out*, their good things are often conſumed in this world; at fartheſt, death at leaſt will extinguiſh it, and rob them of all their comfort, and into outer darkneſs they will be caſt, where is weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth; and ſhall we envy ſuch a ſtate?

21. My ſon, fear thou the LORD, [r] and the king: *and* meddle not with them that are given to change. 22. For their calamity ſhall riſe ſuddenly, and who knoweth the ruin of them both?

r Rom. xiii. 1, &c.

v. 21, 22. 1. We cannot be good chriſtians, unleſs we are loyal ſubjects. Nor will thoſe be long loyal ſubjects, who are deſtitute of the fear of God; for where conſcience engages not obedience from principle, intereſt will ſway; and rebels againſt God will eaſily turn traitors to their king.

2. All innovations are dangerous, and in days like ours, the caution is peculiarly needful: when in the church, even of her pretended ſons, ſo many are diſcontented with thoſe ſtandards of divine truth, *the articles of religion*, and fain would alter them, to ſquare with their Arminian, Socinian, or deiſtical opinions. And in the ſtate, factious and turbulent ſpirits, pretending the good of the people, labour after changes, whereby their own ambition, or avarice, merely may be gratified: from ſuch, turn away.

3. The ruin of ſuch is near. They who encourage the cabals of faction, labour to bring in the damnable doctrines of man's merit, ſufficiency, and free-will, totally ſubverſive of the grace of the goſpel, ſhall meet ruin ſudden and terrible, when God ariſeth to judge; and how ſoon that may be, *who knoweth?*

23. Theſe *things* alſo *belong* to the wiſe. [s] *It is* not good to have reſpect of perſons in judgment. 24. [t] He that ſaith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; him ſhall the people curſe, nations ſhall abhor him. 25. But to them that rebuke *him* ſhall be delight, and † a good bleſſing ſhall come upon them. 26. *Every man* ſhall kiſs *his* lips ‡ that giveth a right anſwer.

s Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. & xvi. 19. Chap. xviii. 5. & xxviii. 1. John vii. 24.
t Chap. xvii. 15. Iſa. v. 23.
† Heb. A bleſſing of good.
‡ Heb. That anſwereth right words.

v. 23—26. Let wiſe men ſhew the wiſdom they profeſs, by their attention to theſe admonitions, eſpecially judges and magiſtrates, to whom they are particularly addreſſed.

1. Their duty. *To ſhew no reſpect of perſons*, never influenced by favour, affection, or intereſt, to pervert juſtice, to condemn the innocent, or acquit the guilty; but to pronounce ſentence without partiality, and rebuke the wicked as he deſerves, without connivance at his crimes.

2. The inducement for ſo doing. *It is good*, pleaſing to God, and right in his eyes. To act with injuſtice, will bring the abhorrence of all good men, and the curſe of the people; whilſt every mouth will praiſe, commend, bleſs, and pray for thoſe beſt friends and trueſt patriots, who, with unſhaken fidelity and uprightneſs, diſcharge the truſts committed to them.

27. [u] Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyſelf in the field; and afterwards build thine houſe.

u Luke xiv. 28.

v. 27. Before we begin to build, it is prudent to calculate our expence, and make the neceſſary proviſion of materials; leaſt enlarging our foundation beyond what we can afford, we are undone by our folly. The rage of building hath ruined many, and brought men to ſuch difficulties and debts, that they had been much happier in a cottage, than now in the great houſe.

Before Chriſt 1000.

28. Be not a witneſs againſt thy neighbour without cauſe: and deceive *not* with thy lips. 29. Say not, [x] I will do ſo to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

x Chap. xx. 22. Mat. v. 29. Rom. xii. 17, 19.

v. 28, 29. Without charity, there can be no religion. The exerciſe of it is here enjoined.

1. *Be not witneſs againſt thy neighbour without cauſe*, either in private company, or at the bar of juſtice.

2. *Deceive not with thy lips*, either thy neighbour, by flattering words and falſe pretences; or others, by reports to his prejudice; or the judge and jury, by partial repreſentations, concealment of the truth, or peremptory falſhood.

3. Retaliate no injuries; think it not a ſufficient reaſon to return evil, becauſe you have received it: all private revenge is criminal, however great the provocation. It is not our buſineſs to puniſh; *God ſays, Vengeance is mine*; and we intrench on his prerogative, when we refuſe to refer our caſe to him, and will be the executioners of our own wrath: he will not ſuffer it with impunity.

30. I went by the field of the ſlothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of underſtanding: 31. And lo, it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, and the ſtone-wall thereof was broken down. 32. Then I ſaw, *and* † conſidered it well: I looked upon *it*, *and* received inſtruction. 33. [y] *Yet* a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep: 34. [z] So ſhall thy poverty come, *as* one that travelleth; and thy want as ‡ an armed man.

† Heb. Set my heart.
y Chap. vi. 9. &c.
z Chap x. 4. & xiii. 4. & xx. 4.
‡ Heb. A man of ſhield.

v. 30—34. The obſervations and reflections which this wiſe king makes, are daily verified.

1. In worldly affairs, ſloth and poverty are inſeparably connected. See the picture of a negligent huſbandman; he ſleeps when others wake; his field, uncultivated, is covered with weeds, the hedge broken down, no revenue ariſing to the owner; and, as the neceſſary conſequence of his neglect, want and wretchedneſs ſeize him as an armed man. And this will be the caſe in every trade and buſineſs with thoſe, who, inſtead of diligence and activity, leave their affairs at random, live careleſs and negligent, expoſe themſelves, and neceſſarily ruſh on their ruin. When ſuch objects ſtrike us, we muſt ſtay and pauſe, and learn wiſdom by the reflections we make on their folly.

2. In our ſpiritual concerns, the ſame obſervations hold good. The ſoul of the careleſs ſinner is like this field of the ſlothful, overrun with the rank weeds of corrupt and vile affections; open to the inroads of every temptation; no fruit produced to God's glory, or his own comfort: yet, ſecure he ſleeps on in the devil's arms, and cares not to be diſturbed in his fatal dream; till ſeized at laſt by death, and hurried to a throne of judgment, too late he diſcovers his miſerable plight, and receives the doom of the ſlothful in the place of torment. Such negligence in others, ſhould quicken our diligence, to break up the fallow ground of our hearts, to root up the thorns and nettles of corrupt deſires, which are natives of the ſoil, to guard againſt the entry of temptation; and, watching unto prayer, daily to be working out our ſalvation, and bringing forth thoſe fruits of faith and holineſs, whereby ourſelves may be enriched, and which, through Jeſus Chriſt, are to the praiſe and glory of God.

CHAP. XXV.

1. THESE *are* alſo proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

700.

v. 1. Here begins a new collection of proverbs, ſpoken by Solomon, the author of the former, and copied at the command of King Hezekiah, from ſome public record, or from thoſe mentioned, 1 *Kings* iv. 32. and perhaps with a particular view to his own uſe and improvement; many of them having eſpecial regard to kings, and their government.

2. [a] *It is* the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings *is* to ſearch out a matter.

a Deut. xxix. 29. Rom. xi. 33.

v. 2. The firſt verſe contained the title; here begins the ſubject.

1. It is *the glory of God to conceal a thing*; his counſels are unfathomable, his decrees ſecret, he needs no advice in his government, and it were preſumption in us to queſtion his reaſons, who giveth an account of none of his matters. Some apply this to the pardon of ſin, which is indeed God's ſole prerogative and great glory.

2. *The honour of kings is to ſearch out a matter.* The omniſcient God needs no enquiry, for all things are naked and open to him; but his delegates upon earth muſt be at much pains,

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muſt know thoroughly the rule of his word, and ſift out every circumſtance of the caſes which come before them, if they would miniſter impartial juſtice.

3. The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings † *is* unſearchable.

† Heb. There is no ſearching.

v. 3. Wiſe kings plan their deſigns with deep conſideration, and conceal them with impenetrable ſecreſy; on this the ſucceſs of them often depends. It is not for ſubjects to pry into the reaſons of ſtate, or pretend to cenſure haſtily thoſe proceedings, the motives and deſign of which they cannot diſcover.

4. Take away the droſs from the ſilver, and there ſhall come forth a veſſel for the finer. 5. [b] Take away the wicked *from* before the king, and his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs.

[b] Chap. xx. 8.

v. 4, 5. Magiſtrates muſt not bear the ſword in vain. The wicked, like droſs, muſt be taken away, by the wholeſome ſeverity of well executed laws; and eſpecially all evil counſellors and miniſters ſhould be baniſhed from the royal preſence, and then the nation will flouriſh, as ſilver ſhines purified in the fire, and the ſtability of the throne be ſecured, God's bleſſing and protection upholding and maintaining ſuch a righteous government.

6. † Put not forth thyſelf in the preſence of the king, and ſtand not in the place of great *men.* 7. For [c] better *it is* that it be ſaid unto thee, Come up hither: than that thou ſhouldſt be put lower in the preſence of the prince whom thine eyes have ſeen.

† Heb. Set not out thy glory.
[c] Luke xiv. 8—10.

v. 6, 7. Bold intruſion, or a vain-glorious diſplay of our wealth before our betters, is diſguſting, and call for ſome mortification; whilſt genuine modeſty and humility is the higheſt recommendation to favour, in the eyes of a wiſe king: and much more for our honour will it be, to be called up from the lower place we have modeſtly taken, than thruſt out with ſhame, as an impertinent intruder, in the midſt of all the company, and in the preſence of the prince. To this, our Saviour ſeems to allude, *Luke* xiv. 9.

8. Go not forth haſtily to ſtrive, leſt *thou know not* what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to ſhame. 9. [d] Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour *himſelf*; and † diſcover not a ſecret to another: 10. Leſt he that heareth *it*, put thee to ſhame, and thine infamy turn not away.

[d] Mat. v. 25. & xviii. 15.
† Or diſcover not the ſecret of another.

v. 8—10. If we would take the wiſe man's advice, how many lawſuits might be prevented!

1. Do nothing raſhly. Commence not the ſuit whilſt paſſion is high; take the advice of thoſe who are impartial; conſider whether the loſs we have ſuſtained, is not leſs than the certain expence and trouble we muſt incur, beſide the uncertainty of the iſſue.

2. Try firſt every amicable method. *Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour himſelf*, hear what he hath to plead in his defence, and ſee if, when with calmneſs the affair is canvaſſed, it may not better be finiſhed by a friendly compromiſe, than driven to extremities: and if the matter be a ſecret, not fit to be divulged, the more need there is to keep it from the eyes of the public: or it may be rendered, *reveal not the ſecret of another*; if there be a quarrel, take not this revenge to betray his ſecrets, that in time of intimacy he may have confided to thee, for this were baſe and ungenerous.

3. This will both prevent loſs, and ſecure our reputation; for the cauſe may at laſt be decided againſt us, and the coſts lie at our own door; and not only we ſhall ſuffer the mortification of being vanquiſhed, but gain the infamous character of being litigious; a blot that never may be wiped away.

11. [e] A word fitly ſpoken *is like* apples of gold in † pictures of ſilver. 12. *As* an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *ſo is* a wiſe reprover upon an obedient ear.

[e] Chap. xv. 23.
† Or net-work.

v. 11, 12. We have here,

1. The excellence of a word ſeaſonably ſpoken; pertinent to the caſe, and ſatisfactory to the hearer: it is as pleaſing *as apples of gold*, reſembling them in colour, ſerved up in *net-work*, or *baſkets of ſilver*.

2. The preciouſneſs of a wiſe rebuke. It is moſt highly ornamental; as a jewel of gold, both to him who gives it, and him who receives it, when adminiſtered with tenderneſs, yet fidelity, and heard with deep acknowledgment of the kindneſs, and inſtant correction of the fault.

13. [f] As the cold of ſnow in the time of harveſt, *ſo is* a faithful meſſenger to them that ſend him: for he refreſheth the ſoul of his maſters.

[f] Chap. xiii. 17.

v. 13. As *the cold of ſnow* (which, in the Eaſtern countries was preſerved, as ice with us, to cool their liquors) is moſt refreſhing in the ſultry days of harveſt, ſo pleaſing to thoſe who ſend him, is a faithful meſſenger; who, zealous for his maſter's good, diſcharges the truſt repoſed in him, to his fulleſt ſatiſfaction. They who have ſo great a maſter as the Lord of glory, and ſo important a meſſage as that, on which the ſalvation of immortal ſouls depends, need approve their fidelity, and will then find gracious acceptance, 2 *Cor.* xi. 15.

14. [g] Whoſo boaſteth himſelf † of a falſe gift, *is like* [h] clouds and winds without rain.

[g] Chap. xx. 6.
† Heb. In a gift of falſehood.
[h] Jude xii.

v. 14. All boaſting is a ſure ſign of emptineſs. They who puff their own great benevolence, and make a talk of what they intend to do, when in fact they do nothing, are like the clouds that paſs away, raiſe our expectations of rain, but let down not a drop.

15. [i] By long forbearing is a prince perſuaded, and a ſoft tongue breaketh the bone.

[i] Gen. xxxii. 4, &c. 1 Sam. xxv. 24, &c. Chap. xv. 1. & xvi. 14.

v. 15. The good advice which princes reject in heat, if we wait a while, and humbly offer our reaſons with patience, may prevail at laſt. And when anger riſes, a ſoft anſwer does more than the moſt obſtinate reſiſtance, and bends the moſt violent to yield.

* * *

16. [k] Haſt thou found honey? eat ſo much as is ſufficient for thee, leſt thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

[k] Ver. 27.

v. 16. The creature comforts we poſſeſs, God wills we ſhould enjoy, not abuſe; enough is a feaſt, exceſs is its own puniſhment. This muſt be extended to all lawful pleaſures; with temperance uſed, they are good; when inordinately, they engage our affections, or waſte our time; they ceaſe to be innocent, and ſurfeit the ſoul.

17. † Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's houſe: leſt he be ‡ weary of thee, and *ſo* hate thee.

† Or let thy foot be ſeldom in thy neighbour's houſe.
‡ Heb. Full of thee.

v. 17. To maintain a friendly intercourſe with our neighbours, is pleaſing; but too frequent viſits are troubleſome, and will render our room more agreeable than our company.

18. [l] A man that beareth falſe witneſs againſt his neighbour, *is* a maul, and a ſword, and a ſharp arrow.

[l] Pſal. xii. 4. Chap. xii. 18.

v. 18. The moſt dangerous and mortal weapon is the tongue of a falſe witneſs, againſt which, the pureſt innocence affords no protection.

19. Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble, *is like* a broken tooth and a foot out of joint.

v. 19. Such a one will not only diſappoint our expectations from him, but our truſt upon him will add to our anguiſh; or the words may be rendered, *the confidence of an unfaithful man*, whatever was the object of it, his wealth, his wiſdom, or his righteouſneſs, *in time of trouble*, and that time is near, will fail, and leave him in anguiſh to bewail (too late) his folly. They who would have a ſupport which will not fail them, muſt ceaſe from all beſides, and ſtay themſelves on the rock of ages; none ever truſted in him, and were confounded.

20. *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, *and as* vinegar upon nitre: [m] ſo *is* he that ſingeth ſongs to an heavy heart.

[m] Dan. vi. 18.

v. 20. It is cruel to exaſperate the griefs of the afflicted, and mock at their miſeries; and abſurd with unſeaſonable mirth to entertain the heavy heart. We muſt rather weep with thoſe that weep, and with ſympathetic tenderneſs ſeek to alleviate the ſorrows of the miſerable.

21. [n] If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirſty, give him water to drink: 22. For thou ſhalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and [o] the LORD ſhall reward thee.

[n] Exod. xxiii. 4. Mat. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20.
[o] 2 Sam. xvi. 12.

v. 21, 22. To love our enemies, is no new commandment; and that not in word and tongue only, but expreſſed in every act of kindneſs to them, in the time of their diſtreſs: and hard muſt that heart be, that is not melted with ſuch generoſity; at leaſt, our labour ſhall not be in vain: if they continue inveterate, God will reward us with a ſenſe of his love here, and an inheritance in his kingdom hereafter.

23. [p] The north-wind † driveth away rain: *ſo doth* an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

[p] Job xxxvii. 22.
† Or bringeth forth rain; ſo doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.

v. 23.

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v. 23. It is the countenance too commonly given to the tales of the ſlanderer, that emboldens him to proceed; but a good man cannot bear to hear the abſent reviled, and therefore with a frown, if he can do no more, teſtifies his diſpleaſure: a ſufficient check often to ſilence the tongue of calumny, and drive ſuch away, as the north wind doth the rain, confounded and aſhamed.

24. [q] *It is* better to dwell in a corner of the houſe-top, than with a brawling woman and in a wide houſe.

[q] Chap. xix. 13. & xxi. 9, 19.

v. 24. This obſervation is repeated, *chap.* xxi. 9. and much to be pitied is that miſerable man, thus yoked to contention and wretchedneſs.

25. *As* cold waters to a thirſty ſoul: ſo *is* good news from a far country.

[r] Luke ii. 10.

v. 25. *Good news from a far country*, where our friends or fortunes are, is with impatience expected, with delight heard, pleaſant to the ear as cold waters to the parched tongue. The goſpel is the beſt of tidings, ſent from heaven to comfort miſerable ſinners; with what delight ſhould we hear, with what eagerneſs welcome, the bleſſed meſſage of pardon, grace, and ſalvation, which it brings!

26. A righteous man falling down before the wicked, *is as* a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring.

v. 26. Either when he is run down by the power of oppreſſors, and the fountains of juſtice are corrupted; or when, thro' fear or ſhame, he gives way, not daring to reprove the wicked, or making ſome baſe compliances with them, to the diſcredit of his profeſſion, and the troubling the hearts of the ſincere: or worſt of all, when he is drawn by the enticements of the abandoned into ſome open and ſcandalous ſin, that diſhonours God, wounds his own conſcience, grieves the faithful, diſcourages the weak, and hardens the impenitent. Lord, keep thy ſervants from preſumptuous ſin; let not the adverſary triumph with malicious joy, and cry, There! there! ſo would we have it!

27. [s] *It is* not good to eat much honey: ſo *for men* to ſearch their own glory, *is not* glory.

[s] Ver. 16.

v. 27. The pleaſures of ſenſe are dangerous, and appetite indulged to exceſs, breeds ſickneſs, and turns the moſt wholeſome food into poiſon. So, to be vain-glorious, and uſing every means to ſecure popular applauſe, is to render ourſelves deſpicable inſtead of reſpected: or as the latter clauſe may be rendered more conformable to the words, *but the ſearching out of their glory*, is *glory*; for though honey, ſweet as it is, will nauſeate when too much is eaten, not ſo is it with the ſearch after divine wiſdom; the more of this we acquire, the more glorious for us: here we need not fear exceſs.

28. [t] He that *hath* no rule over his own ſpirit, *is like* a city *that is* broken down, *and* without walls.

[t] Chap. xvi. 32.

v. 28. Every man's heart is his caſtle: it is aſſaulted with enemies without, and full of traitors within; and nothing but ſtrict reſtraint over our vile affections and unruly appetites, and watchfulneſs and prayer againſt temptation, can enable us to keep poſſeſſion of our ſouls: but when paſſion, not conſcience, governs, and luſt, inſtead of God's law, rules; then, like a city broken down, the ſpirit lies open to the inroads of every temptation, and is taken captive by the devil at his will.

CHAP. XXVI.

1. AS ſnow in ſummer, [a] and as rain in harveſt; ſo honour is not ſeemly for a fool.

[a] 1 Sam. xii. 17.

v. 1. As unſeaſonable *as ſnow in ſummer, and* as hurtful *as rain in harveſt, ſo honour is not ſeemly for a fool*; who, when he is advanced, if he is a weak man, will be a ſcandal to his dignity; and if a wicked man, will abuſe his authority, and no wiſe ruler will employ ſuch weak or wicked miniſters.

2. As the bird by wandring, as the ſwallow by flying, ſo the curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not come.

v. 2. When fools are exalted, they affect to keep thoſe around them in fear, ſtorming and ſwearing at them; and tho' no provocation be given, thunder forth their curſes: but they are impotent and vain, and can do us no more hurt, than the bird that flies over us. And ſuch are the anathemas of the church of Rome, whoſe cauſeleſs curſes ſhall return upon the mouths that utter them.

3. [b] A whip for the horſe, a bridle for the aſs, and a rod for the fool's back.

[b] Pſ. xxxii. 9. Chap. x. 13.

v. 3. Obſtinate, ſtupid, or refractory as the horſe, or wild aſſes colt, the wicked muſt be broken with correction, and ſharp reſtraints laid upon him. Diſgrace, not honour; the rod of chaſtiſement, not the ſtaff of office, are his deſert.

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4. Anſwer not a fool according to his folly, leſt thou alſo be like unto him. 5. Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own † conceit.

† Heb. Eyes.

v. 4, 5. There is a time to ſpeak, and a time to keep ſilence, and wiſdom is profitable to direct.

1. Sometimes a fool is beſt anſwered by ſilence and contempt. It would be to reſemble him, to return railing for railing, or anger for anger.

2. Sometimes it is neceſſary to *anſwer a fool according to his folly*, leaſt he conceit his arguments unanſwerable, interpret ſilence as a conceſſion of victory, and himſelf be confirmed in his folly, or others ſuffer ill impreſſions thereby. Therefore, expoſe his futility, detect his fallacies, and turn his arguments upon him; that if he be not convinced, he may be at leaſt confounded, aſhamed, and his pride mortified.

6. [c] He that ſendeth a meſſage by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh damage. 7. The legs of the lame † are not equal: ſo *is* a parable in the mouth of fools. 8. ‡ As he that bindeth a ſtone in a ſling: ſo *is* he that giveth honour to a fool. 9. *As* a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, ſo *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

[c] Num. xiii. 31.

† Heb. Are lifted up.

‡ Or as he that putteth a precious ſtone in an heap of ſtones.

v. 6—9. The fooliſh and the wicked are good for nothing, and will mar the work in which they are employed.

1. They who employ a fool on a meſſage, might as well have ſent a man without legs; ſo loitering, idle, and negligent is he, and by his blunders and ignorance, both damages and diſcredits thoſe who employ him: for many will judge of the maſter by the meſſenger.

2. When they affect to appear wiſe, and take upon them to deliver ſome weighty apothegms of their own, ſo abſurd is the obſervation, and delivered with as ill a grace, as a cripple pretending to dance, whoſe infirmities are more expoſed, and his affectation more ridiculous. Thus alſo, when a wicked man pretends to talk of religion, whoſe life is a lie to his lips, the abſurdity is glaring, and his diſcourſe treated with juſt contempt.

3. All honour beſtowed on a fool is uſeleſs, or hurtful: it is like putting a precious ſtone in a ſling, where any common pebble would be more ſuitable; or like the ſtone when ſlung out of it, that does miſchief.

4. As a drunkard meddling with thorns, thruſts them into his hand; ſo a fool wounds himſelf, and hurts others, when, taking the word of God into his mouth, he affects to turn it into ridicule; or, pretending to explain it, takes God's name in vain, and leads others into dangerous errors. Some give it another ſenſe; that the wicked are inſenſible to the ſharpeſt admonitions of God's word, as a man, when drunk, feels not the thorn that pierces him.

10. † The great *God* that formed all *things*, both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth tranſgreſſors.

† Or a great man grieveth all; and he hireth the fool, he hireth alſo tranſgreſſors.

v. 10. The great God will not ſuffer ſinners to go unpuniſhed. The day is near when the judgment ſhall ſit, and then ſhall every man receive according to his work. Some render the words differently; *A great one*, who is oppreſſive and tyrannical, *grieveth all* his ſubjects, *and he hireth the fool, and he hireth the tranſgreſſors*, employing weak and wicked inſtruments to execute his vile deſigns.

11. [d] As a dog returneth to his vomit; [e] *ſo* a fool † returneth to his folly.

[d] 2 Pet. ii. 22.

[e] Exod. viii. 15.

† Heb. Iterateth.

v. 11. Many have pangs of remorſe, and no ſooner commit ſin, than their loathing is violent as their luſt; they reſolve againſt the evil, and ſeem to deteſt it for a while, but ſoon their conſciences grow quiet, and they return, like the dog, to their vomit again.

12. Seeſt thou [f] a man wiſe in his own conceit? [g] *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

[f] Luke xviii. 11. Rom. xii. 16.

[g] Mat. xxi. 31.

v. 12. Folly is bad, and conceit renders the diſeaſe deſperate. They that think themſelves ſomething when they are nothing, and dogmatical and opinionative deſpiſe others, and are above being taught, will die inveterate in their ignorance: and eſpecially is this the caſe with thoſe, who, vainly puffed up of their fleſhly mind, think themſelves righteous, and placing their dependance on the rituals of religion, perſuade themſelves, that, by their own doings and duties, they can recommend themſelves to God's favour; ignorant of their ſinfulneſs, and the corruption of their nature, and ſtrangers to the power of changing grace:

of theſe, there is little hope; publicans and harlots will go into the kingdom of God before them; their pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs is an eternal bar to their converſion, *John* ix. 41.

h Chap. xxii. 13.

13. [h] The ſlothful *man* ſaith, *There is* a lion in the way, a lion *is* in the ſtreets.

v. 13. This wretched excuſe of the ſlothful we had before, *chap.* xxii. 13. It ſhews, that they who want an excuſe, will never be at a loſs; and that what is never ſo abſurd and improbable, will ſatisfy thoſe who chuſe to raiſe difficulties againſt what they have no mind to do. The pretended difficulties of a religious life, are the arguments the devil uſes to a ſlothful ſoul; when in fact, if we would but go forth, and try, the way would be found pleaſantneſs, and all the paths peace.

14. *As* the door turneth upon his hinges, ſo *doth* the ſlothful upon his bed.

v. 14. A lively image this of the ſlothful. He turns upon his bed, as if he made efforts to riſe, but only changes ſides; his buſineſs is neglected, all his affairs at a ſtand, and no ground got: ſuch is the lazy profeſſor; he moves in the ſame round of formal duties, as regularly as the door turns on its hinges, but never advances one ſtep heavenward; his heart is ſtill unrenewed as ever.

i Chap. xix. 24.
† Or he is weary.

15. [i] The ſlothful hideth his hand in *his* boſom, † it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

v. 15. The like obſervation ſee before, *chap.* x. 19—24. He hides his hand for fear of the cold, or pretends it is hurt, or weak, and unable to work; as they who hate labour, often ſham inability. Yea, ſo infamous is his ſloth, that it is a burden to be compelled to lift his hand to his mouth to feed himſelf; even then let him ſtarve. *Note*, They who have the word of God in their hands, yet refuſe to be at any pains in opening it, to find bread for their ſouls, deſerve to periſh for lack of knowledge.

16. The ſluggard *is* wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon.

v. 16. Thoſe who have the leaſt reaſon, are uſually the moſt conceited. The ſluggard, who hath taken no pains to acquire knowledge, yet rates high his attainments, and his inſolence equal to his ignorance, he fancies himſelf *wiſer than ſeven men who can render a reaſon:* all the arguments they can urge, to convince him of his miſtake and danger, he treats with contempt, and hugs himſelf in his own ſelf-ſufficiency.

† Or is enraged.

17. He that paſſeth by, *and* † meddleth with ſtrife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

v. 17. It is dangerous meddling in other people's quarrels, and interfering in diſputes that do not belong to us. It is like taking a ſnarling cur by the ears, and being bit and laughed at for our folly. They who are diligent to mind their own affairs, will find enough to do, without concerning themſelves in thoſe of other people.

† Heb. Flames, or ſparks.

18. As a mad *man* who caſteth † fire-brands, arrows and death: 19. So *is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, and ſaith, Am not I in ſport?

v. 18, 19. When miſchief is done, it is a poor excuſe to ſay, I was in jeſt. Lies are fire-brands; though told in ſport, they may have fatal conſequences. It is dangerous meddling with edged tools. It would be no joke to ſet our neighbour's houſe on fire over his head, much leſs to hurt his character, or draw him into ſin, and then turn it off with a laugh. Such mocking is madneſs.

† Heb. Without wood.
k Chap. xxii. 10.
‡ Or whiſperer.
‖ Heb. Is ſilent.

20. † Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: [k] ſo where *there is* no ‡ tale-bearer, the ſtrife ‖ ceaſeth.

v. 20. Tale-bearers are the bane of ſociety. By their vile inſinuations, the fire of contention is kept up, words are miſrepreſented, ſtories repeated, exaggerated; ſuſpicions inſtilled, and deareſt relatives alienated in their affections from each other: from ſuch, therefore, turn away, diſcountenance, caſt them out, and the fire of contention will ſoon go out.

l Chap. xv. 18. & xix. 22.

21. [l] *As* coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; ſo *is* a contentious man to kindle ſtrife.

v. 21. The contentious are ever kindling ſtrife; if but a ſpark of provocation be given, they inſtantly blow it into a flame, by their quick and haſty reſentments. It is dangerous to aſſociate with thoſe, who are thus quarrelſome.

m Chap. xviii. 8.
† Heb. The chambers.

22. [m] The words of a tale-bearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into † the innermoſt parts of the belly.

v. 22. The wounds of calumny are more eaſily made than healed; even when the lie is detected, there is often a ſcar remaining.

n 2 Sam. xv. 3, 4. Mat. ii. 8.

23. [n] Burning lips, and a wicked heart, *are like* a potſherd covered with ſilver droſs.

v. 23. Hypocritical lips, full of profeſſions of kindneſs, that cloak the wickedneſs of an evil heart, are like a potſherd covered with ſilver droſs, which ſhines at a diſtance, but is found utterly worthleſs.

† Heb. Maketh his voice gracious.
o Jer. ix. 8. Mic. vii. 5.
‡ Or hatred is covered in ſecret.

24. He that hateth, diſſembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him. 25. When he † ſpeaketh fair, [o] believe him not: for *there are* ſeven abominations in his heart. 26. ‡ *Whoſe* hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedneſs ſhall be ſhewed before the *whole* congregation.

v. 24—26. This is a diſſembling world. Nothing fairer than many from the teeth outward, yet rancour often lies under the guiſe of civility, and deceit knows no cloak more effectual than the ſhew of friendſhip: it is good not to be too credulous, to try before we truſt; not that the event anſwers the crafty deſign: God is pleaſed often to detect the hypocrite, and expoſe him to deſerved ſhame in this world; at fartheſt, he will be covered with everlaſting ſhame and contempt, before the great congregation of men and angels at the laſt day.

p Pſ. vii. 15, 16. & ix. 15. & x. 2. Chap. xxviii. 10. Eccleſ. x. 8.
q Eſth. vii. 10.

27. [p] Whoſo diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein: [q] and he that rolleth a ſtone, it will return upon him.

v. 27. Miſchief will return upon the contriver's head, cloſe as the deſign is laid, and with much toil carried on; the pit that he digged for others ſhall be his grave, and the ſtone he rolled, return and cruſh him to death.

28. A lying tongue hateth *thoſe that are* afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

v. 28. Injure a man, and you never forgive him. *A lying tongue hateth thoſe that are afflicted by it*; becauſe he hates them, he maligns them; and having injured them, the hatred becomes irreconcileable; *and a flattering mouth* betrays the unwary into ſin, or a ſnare, *and worketh ruin*, the more inevitable, becauſe unſuſpected.

CHAP. XXVII.

a James iv. 13, &c.

1. [a] BOAST not thyſelf of to-morrow; for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.

v. 1. When we are in jeopardy every hour, it were folly to preſume on days to come; but what our hand findeth to do, eſpecially in the concerns of our ſouls, we muſt do it with our might: this moment we can call our own, but it is uncertain whether the next belongs to time or eternity.

2. Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth; a ſtranger, and not thine own lips.

v. 2. Nothing is ſo diſguſting as ſelf-commendation; nothing makes a man appear ſo deſpicable in the eyes of his company. We muſt ſtudy to deſerve praiſe, not court it; let our works ſpeak, and that will be truly to our honour.

w Heb. Heavineſs.
‡ Or wrath is cruelty, an anger an overflowing.
‖ Or jealouſy. Chap. vi. 34.

3. A ſtone *is* † heavy, and the ſand weighty: but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both. 4. ‡ Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who is able to ſtand before ‖ envy?

v. 3, 4. Two great evils are here obſerved. Unbridled paſſion, and rooted envy; the former, dangerous as the fall of a heavy ſtone, or a load of ſand, that threatens to cruſh us to death; yet the latter ſtill more to be dreaded. A ſudden guſt of paſſion we may avoid, but where envy reigns, we are never ſafe, and the opportunity will be continually ſought to do us a miſchief.

b Pſ. cxli. 5.
c Luke xxii. 47, 48.
w Or earneſt, or frequent.

5. Open rebuke *is* better than ſecret love. 6. [b] Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but [c] the kiſſes of an enemy *are* † deceitful.

v. 5, 6. That is a ſelfiſh regard which would, for fear of offending, ſuffer ſin upon our brother; true friendſhip will dictate the faithful reproof, and every wiſe man will eſteem it the beſt evidence of ſincere affection; *but the kiſſes of an enemy are deceitful*, their ſmiles are more to be feared than their frowns;

and when their profeſſions are warmeſt, they are moſt deeply meditating ſome malicious ſtroke.

† Heb. Treadeth under foot.
d Job vi. 7.

7. The full ſoul † lotheth an honey-comb; but [d] to the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet.

v. 7. Appetite makes the feaſt; the ſauce of hunger cauſes the dry cruſt of the poor to be more palatable, than any thing the pampered appetite feels, in all the provocatives to luxury.

8. As a bird that wandereth from her neſt, ſo *is* a man that wandereth from his place.

v. 8. A rolling ſtone, they ſay, gathers no moſs; an unſettled mind, that is ever roving, ſticks long to no buſineſs, nor ſtays long in any place; ever ſcheming, yet bringing nothing to perfection, is in the way to be undone; as the bird that hops from ſpray to ſpray, leaves her neſt, expoſes her young, and falls into the fowler's ſnare.

9. Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: ſo *doth* the ſweetneſs of a man's friend † by hearty counſel.

† Heb. By, or from the counſel of the ſoul.

v. 9. Sweet are the joys of real friendſhip, and precious the bleſſing of *hearty counſel* as rich perfume; rejoicing the heart, when unboſoming our difficulties, we gain a reſolution of our doubts, and direction in our emergencies; eſpecially when, as the word ſignifies, it relates to *counſel of the ſoul*, to the promoting our eternal intereſts, and aſſiſting us in our ſpiritual diſtreſſes.

10. Thine own friend and thy father's friend forſake not; neither go into thy brother's houſe in the day of thy calamity: *for* [e] better *is* a neighbour *that is* near, than a brother far off.

e Chap. xvii. 17. & xviii. 24.

v. 10. When we profeſs friendſhip, we muſt approve our own fidelity, and not be changeable in our regards; and our father's friend, proved by long experience, merits our peculiar confidence. When a day of calamity, of poverty, or affliction comes, we ſhall find ſuch a neighbour ſtick faſter than a brother, and receive often that relief and cordial affection from them, which our own kindred are backward to ſhew.

f Chap. x. 1. & xxiii. 24.
g Pſ. cxxvii. 5.

11. [f] My ſon, be wiſe, and make my heart glad, [g] that I may anſwer him that reproacheth me.

v. 11. Gracious children are an honour to their parents, do credit to their education, and ſilence the reproaches of thoſe, who would be glad to impute any miſcarriages in the ſon, to the father's ill conduct, or neglect; or who blamed that ſtrictneſs of reſtraint, which now, by experience, is proved the greateſt bleſſing.

h Chap. xxii. 3.

12. [h] A prudent *man* foreſeeth the evil, *and* hideth himſelf: *but* the ſimple paſs on, *and* are puniſhed.

v. 12. *A prudent man foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf*, ſhuns the temptation which would draw him into ſin, and knowing the dreadful conſequences of it, prudently declines the path of ruin, however enſnaring; *but the ſimple paſs on, and are puniſhed*; thoughtleſs, ruſh into the ſnare; heedleſs, advance to the precipice of ruin, and never think of the danger, till ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them.

i Exod. xxii. 26. Chap. xx. 16.

13. [i] Take his garment that is ſurety for a ſtranger, and take a pledge of him for a ſtrange woman.

v. 13. When a man by his folly, or abandoned conduct, is taking the unavoidable ſteps to ruin himſelf, it were imprudent to lend him a farthing, without a ſufficient pledge, to ſecure ourſelves, as we can otherwiſe never expect to be reimburſed, *chap.* xx. 16.

14. He that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voice, riſing early in the morning, it ſhall be counted a curſe to him.

v. 14. A ſycophant is a deteſtable character; pretending friendſhip, loud and extravagant in his commendations, and early in his adulations, fearful leaſt any ſhould ſupplant him; he will be counted accurſed of God, and be abhorred of the wiſe; and, inſtead of rendering an acceptable ſervice to his pretended friend, he will do him the greateſt prejudice, by provoking the envy of others; or worſe, puffing him up in pride, and flattering him to his deſtruction. *See* Acts xii. 22, 23.

k Chap. xix. 13.

15. [k] A continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike. 16. Whoſoever hideth her, hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand *which* bewrayeth *itſelf*.

v. 15, 16. From the wrath, or clamour of others, we can fly for ſhelter, as from a haſty ſhower; but from the perpetual dropping of a contentious woman's tongue, there is no covering: wretched is the man with ſuch a wife. To affect to reſtrain her, is as fruitleſs as attempting to bind up the raging winds, and to conceal her ſhame from others, is impracticable; as the ointment held in the hand ſends forth its perfume, and the cloſer preſſed, the more heated, the ſtronger its ſmell; thus reſiſtance makes her often rage the more, and in ſpite of every effort to conceal it, ſhe will bewray her own ſhame.

17. Iron ſharpneth iron, ſo [l] a man ſharpneth the countenance of his friend.

l Acts xxviii. 15. Heb. x. 24.

v. 17. Man is made ſocial; and the greateſt bleſſings, or the greateſt miſchiefs flow from this diſpoſition, according to the company we chuſe. The ſociety of the wiſe and gracious quickens, enlivens, and chears the heart, to walk in the good ways of God, whilſt companions in iniquity ſharpen each other for miſchief.

18. [m] Whoſo keepeth the fig-tree, ſhall eat the fruit thereof: ſo [n] he that waiteth on his maſter ſhall be honoured.

m 1 Cor. ix. 7.
n 1 Sam. ii. 30. John xii. 26.

v. 18. Though our ſtation be mean, and our work laborious, diligence and fidelity will bring their own reward with them. They who dig and prune the fig-tree, ſhall eat of its fruit, and the truſty ſervant ſhall be honoured, preferred, and rewarded of his maſter; and better ſtill, be graciouſly regarded by that greater maſter in heaven, with whom there is no reſpect of perſons.

19. As in water face *anſwereth* to face: ſo the heart of man to man.

v. 19. As we are all one man's children, the corrupted offſpring of a corrupted parent, we have each the ſame ſtrong traces of his fallen image; and whatever difference conſtitution, education, ſituation, and circumſtances may make in our conduct, the heart is the ſame in all, deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, as the reflection of the features in the glaſs exactly correſponds with the real face. And in renewed men, the caſe is exactly parallel; they partake of the ſame divine nature, their experience in general correſponds; and looking into the ſame glaſs of goſpel-grace, where they behold the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the ſame image, by the ſpirit of the Lord, *Cor.* iii. 18.

20. [o] Hell and deſtruction are † never full; ſo [p] the eyes of man are never ſatisfied.

o Chap. xxx. 16. Hab. ii. 5.
† Heb. Not.
p Eccleſ. i. 8. & vi. 7.

v. 20. Our corrupt appetites are inſatiable. The more indulged they are, the more craving: like the grave and hell, they are never full; but ſtill are crying, give, give, and nothing can ever ſatisfy the vaſt deſires of an immortal ſoul, but the fulneſs of God.

21. [q] *As* the fining-pot for ſilver, and the furnace for gold; ſo *is* a man to his praiſe.

q Chap. xvii. 3.

v. 21. A man is proved to be wiſe or fooliſh, wicked or gracious, according to the perſons from whom his praiſe cometh, as like loves like: or the ſenſe is, praiſe, like the fining-pot, will try a man's ſpirit; if he is fond of it, and proud, and conceited upon it, then he appears reprobate ſilver; if ready, with genuine modeſty, to diſclaim the commendation, humbled under it, as ſenſible of his unworthineſs, and made more careful to avoid every thing that would forfeit men's good opinion, then is this a gracious teſtimony of a right ſpirit within him.

22. [r] Though thou ſhouldſt bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a peſtil, *yet* will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him.

r Jer. v. 3. & vi. 29.

v. 22. If the grace of God does not change a man's heart, the ſevereſt corrections will be ineffectual. Were a ſinner even plunged into the belly of hell, and brought back to earth again, it would not cure one of his evil tempers; ſo deſperately corrupt, and fully ſet on evil, is the natural heart.

s 1 Pet. v. 1, 2.
† Heb. Set thy heart.
‡ Heb. Strength.
‖ Heb. To generation and generation.
t Pſ. civ. 14. & cxlvii. 8, 9.
u Mat. vi. 31. Heb. xiii. 5.

23. [s] Be thou diligent to know the ſtate of thy flocks, *and* † look well to thy herds. 24. For ‡ riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* ‖ to every generation? 25. [t] The hay appeareth, and the tender graſs ſheweth itſelf, and the herbs of the mountains are gathered. 26. The lambs *are* for thy cloathing, and the goats *are* the price of the field. 27. [u] And *thou ſhalt have* goats milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy houſhold, and *for* maintenance for thy maidens.

v. 23—27. Diligence is neceſſary in every vocation and calling, and the maſter's eye is eſſential to the proſperity of his affairs. As the wealth of the eaſt conſiſted chiefly in their flocks, and the fruit of the field, theſe are particularly inſtanced, and reaſons given to enforce the needful care over them.

1. Riches are a periſhable thing; even crowns are not ſecured to poſterity: therefore, it becomes every man to take care of what God hath given him, that it be not waſted by his negligence, but tranſmitted entire to his ſucceſſors.

2. The liberal proviſion providence hath made, leaves the negligent inexcuſable. The earth, under the divine bleſſing, ſpontaneouſly produces food for the cattle in abundance, and herb for the ſervice of man; we have therefore only to ſeize the moment of opportunity, and gather in our winter's ſtore.

3. The benefit accruing from thence, will amply repay our labours. We ſhall have a ſufficiency of cloaths, meat, and money for ourſelves and our families; and though plain and homely the fare, perhaps the more wholeſome. *Note*, (1.) If we muſt look thus to our flocks, that they may thrive, how much more needful is it for us, to ſearch often into the ſtate of our ſouls, whether they proſper: for without this, what would it profit a man to gain the whole world, if, after all, he loſt his immortal ſoul. (2.) If a ſheep is of ſuch value, and requires ſuch attendance, how much more the glorious flock, which Chriſt hath purchaſed with his blood, and committed to our care? Negligence of this truſt, would be attended with aggravated ruin.

CHAP. XXVIII.

1. [a] THE wicked flee when no man purſueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

[a] Lev. xxvi. 17, 36. Pſ. liii. 5.

v. 1. Guilt makes men cowards. Their conſcience ſtartles at the appearance of danger, and their own fears make them fall. But conſcious integrity knows no diſmay, and in the way of duty ſtartles at no menaces. Where God is made the refuge and hope of the ſoul, and faith reſts on Jeſus, neither the fears of guilt, the power of corruption, the might of our ſpiritual enemies, no, not the terrors of death itſelf can affright, deject, or prevail againſt us.

2. For the tranſgreſſion of a land, [b] many *are* the princes thereof: [c] but † by a man of underſtanding *and* knowledge, the ſtate *thereof* ſhall be prolonged.

[b] 1 Kings xvi. 8, &c. [c] Job xxii. 30. † Or by men of wiſdom and underſtanding ſhall they likewiſe be prolonged.

v. 2. National ſins provoke national judgments, and none more ſevere than civil wars, where contending parties ſtruggle for the ſovereignty; or in quick ſucceſſion, as 1 *Kings* xvi. 8. one paves the way to the throne over the corpſe of his predeceſſor; *but by a man of underſtanding and knowledge, the ſtate thereof ſhall be prolonged*; one great man has often ſaved a ſinking nation; and, by his wiſdom, influence, and authority, cemented the broken ſhreds of faction, calmed the popular diſcontents, and reſtored ſtability to the tottering throne.

3. [d] A poor man that oppreſſeth the poor, *is like* a ſweeping rain which leaveth no food.

[d] Mat. xviii. 28.

v. 3. They who have known the pinchings of poverty, ſhould be moſt compaſſionate to others in the like diſtreſs; but often we obſerve the very reverſe. We ſee the poor, rapacious and over-reaching one another; and thoſe who have riſen from circumſtances the moſt indigent, are moſt covetous, oppreſſive, and deſtitute of compaſſion: like the ſtorm of rain, which, inſtead of watering the furrows, ſweeps away the ſeed ſown, and deſolates the field.

4. [e] They that forſake the law, praiſe the wicked: but ſuch as keep the law, [f] contend with them.

[e] Pſ. x. 3. & xlix. 18. Rom. i. 32. [f] Mat. iii. 7. & xiv. 4.

v. 4. They who forſake God's law, deſire to ſtrengthen their hands in wickedneſs, by mutual commendations. Covetouſneſs is called frugality; pride, ſpirit; intemperance, a chearful glaſs; and infidelity, freedom of thought. Thus iniquity is countenanced, and made reputable; but they who ſerve God themſelves, cannot bear to ſee him thus diſhonoured, and therefore boldly ſtand in the gap, ſtrip off the maſk of ſin, bear teſtimony againſt the evil doers, and ſee the law executed upon them.

5. [g] Evil men underſtand not judgment: but [h] they that ſeek the LORD underſtand all *things*.

[g] Pſ. xcii. 6. [h] 1 Cor. ii. 15. 1 John ii. 20, 27.

v. 5. Sin blinds the eyes, and hardens the heart: the plaineſt path of duty is overlooked, the moſt ſtriking judgments of God diſregarded; *but they who ſeek the Lord* by ceaſeleſs prayer, by reading and hearing his revealed word, they *underſtand all things*, all things at leaſt neceſſary for ſalvation; he will not ſuffer them to be deceived by falſe doctrine, nor to be ſeduced into ſinful practices; but they ſhall hear *the voice behind them, ſaying, this is the way, walk in it; when they would turn to the right hand, or to the left.*

6. [i] Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightneſs, than *he that is* perverſe *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

[i] Chap. xix. 1. Ver. 18.

v. 6. It is not plenty, but piety, that makes a man acceptable to God, a bleſſing to ſociety, or comfortable to himſelf. *A poor man that walketh in his uprightneſs*, nor, however hard preſſed, ſwerves from the path of juſtice, *is a better man*, both more happy and honourable in this world, excluſive of his portion in eternity, than he who, with all his riches, *is perverſe in his ways*, or walketh *in two ways*, would be thought a good man, but walks in wickedneſs, and thereby brings guilt on his conſcience, the curſe of God upon his poſſeſſions; and by his abundance, is enabled to do more miſchief than others.

7. [k] Whoſo keepeth the law, *is* a wiſe ſon: but he that † is a companion of riotous *men*, ſhameth his father.

[k] Chap. xxix. 3. † Or feedeth gluttons.

v. 7. Obedience to God's law, ſhews true wiſdom; and ſuch a gracious ſon is a credit to his parents: but *he that is a companion of riotous men*, is ſure to learn their wicked ways; and by his extravagance, intemperance, and riot, brings not only ſhame upon himſelf, but reflects the greateſt diſcredit on his father, who will be ſuſpected of indulging him to his ruin.

8. [l] He that by uſury and † unjuſt gain increaſeth his ſubſtance, he ſhall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

[l] Job xxvii. 16, 17. Chap. xiii. 22. Eccleſ. ii. 26. † Heb. By increaſe.

v. 8. We ſee often ſtrange revolutions in the courſe of divine providence, and we know in general all is right; but ſome of God's diſpenſations eſpecially lead us to own his finger evident, and to admire his juſtice. As when he for a while permits the griping uſurer and unjuſt oppreſſor to proſper and increaſe their ſubſtance, then cuts them off at a ſtroke, and tranſmits their acquiſitions to ſuch as make themſelves friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs, and employ it in ſerving the poor.

9. [m] He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *ſhall be* abomination.

[m] Pſ. lxvi. 18. & cix. 7. Chap. xv. 8.

v. 9. Prayer and practice muſt go together. It were folly, hypocriſy, and inſult on God, to pray one way, and live another: yet, many who continue to live in their ſins, and turn a deaf ear to the word of the goſpel, continue ſtill their ſtated ſeaſons of worſhip, and ſalve their conſcience with their devotions, whereas their prayers are as great an abomination, or greater, than any of their other ſins.

10. [n] Whoſo cauſeth the righteous to go aſtray in an evil way, he ſhall fall himſelf into his own pit: but the upright ſhall have good *things* in poſſeſſion.

[n] Chap. xxvi. 27.

v. 10. They who do the devil's work, and turn tempters to the righteous, to ſeduce them to ſin, and plunge them into ſorrow, ſhall have the devil's wages, and fall into the pit of deſtruction. *But the upright*, whom God will not ſuffer to be deceived, or periſh, *ſhall have good things in poſſeſſion*, the bleſſings of grace in time, of glory in eternity.

11. The rich man *is* wiſe in his own † conceit: but the poor that hath underſtanding ſearcheth him out.

† Heb. Eyes.

v. 11. Riches are fuel to vanity; and he who hath this world's wealth, is too apt to conceit he hath all excellence, and flatterers will never be wanting to fan the coals of pride: but whilſt he reckons himſelf oracular, and ſycophants admire his wiſdom, *a poor man that hath underſtanding*, and dares not act the mean part of a ſycophant, *ſearcheth him out*, obſerves his folly, and expoſes the vanity of his pretenſions.

12. [o] When righteous *men* do rejoice, *there is* great glory: but when the wicked riſe, a man is † hidden.

[o] Ver. 28. Chap. xi. 10. & xxix. 2. Eccleſ. x. 6. † Or ſought for.

v. 12. When good men proſper, and are advanced in the ſtate, *there is great glory*, the nation flouriſhes, religion lifts its head, and there is a pleaſant proſpect that this people will be great, gracious, and happy. But the reverſe is the caſe, when the wicked ſtep into the ſeat of office; then every good man is diſcountenanced, and obliged to retire into obſcurity, to be ſheltered from perſecution.

13. [p] He that covereth his ſins, ſhall not proſper: but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh *them* ſhall have mercy.

[p] Pſ. xxxii. 3, 5. 1 John i. 9, 10.

v. 13. There may be circumſtances when it would be of no uſe, yea, rather of great diſſervice in the cauſe of God, to publiſh a man's tranſgreſſions. But before God they muſt be ſpread con-

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continually, and a really penitent never deſires to palliate a ſingle circumſtance: and before men alſo, when duty calls, he is ready to accuſe himſelf, and take all the ſhame his ſin deſerves. And without this, neither pardon nor peace of conſcience can be obtained; whilſt both are promiſed to thoſe who, with true repentance, turn to God, confeſſing and forſaking the iniquities they bewail.

[q] Chap. xxiii. 17. [r] Rom. xi. 20.

14. Happy *is* the man [q] that feareth alway: but [r] he that hardneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief.

v. 14. Servile fear is as contrary to all happineſs in God, as filial fear tends to promote and increaſe it. Jealouſy over our ſouls, leaſt we ſhould offend, will preſerve our rejoicing in the teſtimony of our conſcience; and every day we ſhall deſire to keep at a greater diſtance from ſin: *but he that hardneth his heart* in preſumptuous wickedneſs, *ſhall fall into miſchief*, go from evil to worſe, till he ſinks into the abyſs of miſery.

[s] Exod. i. 13. Eſth. iii. 9. Mat. ii. 16.

15. *As* a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; [s] *ſo is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.

v. 15. Woe to the unhappy people curſed with tyrannical rulers! haraſſed by oppreſſion, unable to reſiſt, and terrified with fears of greater evils than they feel.

16. The prince that wanteth underſtanding, *is* alſo a great oppreſſor: *but* he that hateth covetouſneſs, ſhall prolong *his* days.

v. 16. It is as unwiſe, as wicked, for a prince to abuſe his power, in plundering his ſubjects. For he is much richer on any emergence, who gains the affections of his people, than he who fills his treaſury with exorbitant taxes. To dethrone a tyrannical king, few ſcruple to lend a helping hand; to ſupport a mild adminiſtration, every purſe is open, every perſon ready.

[t] Gen. ix. 6. Exod. xxi. 24.

17. [t] A man that doth violence to the blood of *any* perſon, ſhall flee to the pit, let no man ſtay him.

v. 17. Blood cries for blood. No compoſition muſt be received, no pardon granted; the life is forfeited to juſtice, and none muſt ſtay the murderer from going down to the pit.

[u] Chap. x. 9, 25. [x] Ver. 6.

18. [u] Whoſo walketh uprightly, ſhall be ſaved: but [x] *he that is* perverſe *in his* ways ſhall fall at once.

v. 18. He that walketh uprightly, in all good conſcience before God and man, walketh ſurely; ſhall be ſaved from the preſent power of his enemies, and ſee the eternal ſalvation of God: *but he that is perverſe in his ways*, without piety to God, or honeſty to men; or *in two ways*, a hypocritical profeſſor, whoſe lips go one way, his heart another, *ſhall fall at once*; when moſt ſecure, and crying peace to his ſoul, deſtruction ſudden as terrible ſhall overtake him, and he ſhall not eſcape.

[y] Chap. xii. 11.

19. [y] He that tilleth his land, ſhall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain *perſons*, ſhall have poverty enough.

v. 19. Induſtry and affluence are cloſe allied. They will have bread in plenty, who take pains to till their ground: but the idle and extravagant, the companions of others, vain and idle as themſelves, *ſhall have poverty enough*, *be filled with it*, reduced to the moſt abject ſtate of want and wretchedneſs.

[z] Chap. xiii. 11. & xx. 21. & xxiii. 4. Ver. 22. 1 Tim. vi. 9. † Or unpuniſhed.

20. A faithful man ſhall abound with bleſſings: but [z] he that maketh haſte to be rich, ſhall not be † innocent.

v. 20. Fidelity in our tranſactions, both with God and man, is the way to ſolid proſperity. We ſhall *abound with bleſſings*; thoſe of the baſket and ſtore, ſo far as are good for us, with the richer grace of God, the more ſubſtantial good: *but he that maketh haſte to be rich*, ſets his heart upon it, and labours with reſtleſs anxiety, or is determined, by right or wrong, to increaſe his wealth, *ſhall not be innocent*. Though no direct injuſtice may be diſcovered, riches haſtily gotten will awaken ſuſpicion in the minds of men, and God, at leaſt, will not hold him guiltleſs.

[a] Chap. xviii. 5. & xxiv. 23. [b] Ezek. xiii. 19.

21. [a] To have reſpect of perſons, *is* not good: for, [b] for a piece of bread *that* man will tranſgreſs.

v. 21. Partiality in the adminiſtration of juſtice, is highly criminal. A magiſtrate muſt forget the man; no ties of friendſhip, acquaintance, obligation, favours received or expected, muſt be in the leaſt attended to; right alone muſt rule. Where this is violated, and bribes influence, there iniquity will grow habitual, and for the meaneſt gratification that man will tranſgreſs.

† Or he that hath an evil eye haſteth to be rich. Ver. 20.

22. † He that haſteth to be rich, *hath* an evil eye, and conſidereth not that poverty ſhall come upon him.

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v. 22. Behold the evils of covetouſneſs. They who will be rich, will be ruined. *He that haſteth to be rich, hath an evil eye*, envious, and coveting what is another's, and grudging every farthing laid out in abſolute neceſſaries on himſelf, or family, *and conſidereth not that poverty ſhall come upon him*: he is poor in the midſt of his poſſeſſions, not daring to uſe them; and God in juſt judgment cauſes the riches, he ſo eagerly ſcraped together, to be plundered or waſted unaccountably, and the want he feared, to come upon him.

[c] Chap. xxvii. 6.

23. [c] He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

v. 23. Rebukes are the genuine produce of friendſhip; they muſt be affectionate, free, private: and though bitter at firſt, and hardly to be digeſted, yet are afterwards acknowledged as real kindneſſes, and bind a man to be your friend for ever. Whilſt however pleaſant the words of flattery may be to the ear, we ſhall, when we ſee the dangerous tendency of them, abhor the ſycophant, and be aſhamed of our own folly, in having ever been delighted with it.

24. Whoſo robbeth his father or his mother, and ſaith, *It is* no tranſgreſſion; the ſame *is* the companion of a deſtroyer.

v. 24. Children are too apt to conſider what is their parents as their own, and that it is no tranſgreſſion to make uſe of their property; whereas it is doubly criminal to be unjuſt to thoſe, to whom they have ſuch peculiar obligations: and the immediate road to the gallows; for the bad company ſuch a wicked ſon keeps, leads him into ſuch wickedneſs, and by and by it will end in robbery, or murder, perhaps of his own parents.

[d] Chap. xiii. 10.

25. [d] He that is of a proud heart, ſtirreth up ſtrife; but he that putteth his truſt in the LORD, ſhall be made fat.

v. 25. *He that is of a proud*, or *large heart*, either covetouſly graſping, or inſolently overbearing, *ſtirreth up ſtrife*; ever quarrelling with his neighbours, at law, or impatient of contradiction, and violent on the leaſt provocation: *but he that putteth his truſt in the Lord*, content with his proviſion, dependant on his providence, and coveting no man's abundance, ſhall *be made fat*; God will proſper him in his worldly affairs, even as his ſoul proſpereth, and make him happy and eaſy in whatſoever ſtate he is.

26. He that truſteth in his own heart, is a fool: but whoſo walketh wiſely, he ſhall be delivered.

v. 26. Thoſe who know their own hearts, will place no dependance upon them; perſuaded their beſt wiſdom is folly, their ſtrength, weakneſs; their deſert, damnation; and therefore that they muſt look out of themſelves for all to Jeſus Chriſt, if they would be delivered from the power and guilt of ſin here, or the puniſhment of it hereafter. To truſt in an heart deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, were the heighth of folly, and muſt iſſue in miſery.

[e] Deut. xv. 7, &c. Chap. xix. 17. & xxii. 9.

27. [e] He that giveth unto the poor ſhall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes, ſhall have many a curſe.

v. 27. No man was ever the poorer for what he lent to the Lord, in relief of the indigent; God will ſupply all his lack: whilſt the hard hearted and covetous, who would not look towards a poor man, or caſt an eye over his piteous caſe, ſhall have many a curſe from the poor, who complain of his uncharitableneſs, from all who condemn ſuch niggardly conduct, and above all, from God, who, as the patron of the poor, will not, with impunity, ſuffer them to be treated unkindly.

[f] Chap. xxix. 2. [g] Job xxiv. 4.

28. [f] When the wicked riſe, [g] men hide themſelves: but when they periſh, the righteous increaſe.

v. 28. This is ſimilar to v. 12. and ſhews the unhappy ſituation of a people, when wicked men rule, and the wiſe and juſt are baniſhed into obſcurity: and how bleſſed the reverſe is, when hurled from their abuſed eminence, the wicked periſh, and better men ſucceed, to the encouragement of piety and juſtice, and by whoſe influence and examples *the righteous increaſe*.

CHAP. XXIX.

1. HE that being often reproved hardneth *his* neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.

v. 1. It is a bad ſymptom in the caſe of many, that inſtead of being ſoftened by reproofs, from the ſpirit, from miniſters,

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from parents, they obſtinately reject the admonition, and harden their necks, like bullocks, that refuſe the yoke, and the conſequence cannot but be fatal. Sudden and irremediable deſtruction awaits them: there is and can be *no healing*, as the word ſignifies, for thoſe who refuſe the only remedy that can cure their diſeaſe. They who continue in impenitence, muſt ſink into eternal perdition.

a Chap. xi. 10. & xxviii. 12, 28. Eccleſ. x. 5. † Or, increaſed.

2. [a] When the righteous are † in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

v. 2. And with abundant reaſon; becauſe they who themſelves are governed by God's word, will rule with mildneſs and equity. Whilſt they, who have caſt off regard to his authority, have no reſtraint upon their paſſions and pride; and under ſuch rulers, neither religion, liberty, nor property are ſecure, *chap.* xi. 10. xxviii. 12, 28.

b Chap. x. 1. & xv. 20. & xxvii. 11. c Chap. v. 9, 10. & vi. 26. & xxviii. 7. Luke xv. 13.

3. [b] Whoſo loveth wiſdom, rejoiceth his father: but [c] he that keepeth company with harlots, ſpendeth his ſubſtance.

v. 3. Tutored in the ſchool of wiſdom, a gracious youth delights in the good ways of God, and his pious parents behold with joy the pleaſing proſpect of his temporal and eternal welfare. But when appetite takes the reins, and the company of abandoned women is ſought, miſery and beggary enſue; the parent's heart is broken, and in body and ſoul the unhappy victim of his paſſions is undone.

† Heb. A man of oblations.

4. The king by judgment eſtabliſheth the land: but † he that receiveth gifts, overthroweth it.

v. 4. Where juſtice is impartially executed, and liberty and property ſecure, there a king *eſtabliſheth the land*, it grows great, proſperous, and happy under his ſway: but when avaricious princes ſuck the blood of their ſubjects, by heavy taxes; or magiſtrates for bribes connive at the wicked, and oppreſs the innocent, that nation is on the verge of ruin.

5. A man that flattereth his neighbour, ſpreadeth a net for his feet.

v. 5. Beware of the man that flatters you; he hath ſome ill deſign: either he means to make a property of you, or wants to draw you into ſin. Deteſt the artful inſinuations, and turn from him with indignation: thus ſhall the net ſpread for you entangle himſelf.

6. In the tranſgreſſion of an evil man, *there is* a ſnare: but the righteous doth ſing and rejoice.

v. 6. Miſerable are the ways, as well as the end of evil men. There is *a ſnare* in them, one ſin draws on another; and troubles and plagues, the fruit of their tranſgreſſions, perpetually torment them: *but the righteous*, who have Chriſt for their portion, his word for their rule, his ſpirit their guide, his love their comfort, *ſing and rejoice*, all their ways are pleaſantneſs, their paths peace, and on earth they begin the ſongs of eternity.

d Job xxix. 16. Pſ. xli. 1.

7. [d] The righteous conſidereth the cauſe of the poor: *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it*.

v. 7. Though as poor, no man is entitled to favour; yet juſtice is a debt due to the meaneſt, and both council and judge are bound to ſee right done, and the cauſe of the poor throughly inveſtigated, and fairly decided. It is the mark of the wicked that the love of the fee, not of juſtice, influences his conduct; and that where little or nothing is to be got, he cares not to be at any trouble in examining, or pleading the cauſe of the indigent.

e Chap. xi. 11. † Or, ſet a city on fire.

8. [e] Scornful men † bring a city into a ſnare: but wiſe *men* turn away wrath.

v. 8. *Scornful men*, who ſcoff at religion, and ſpeak evil of dignity, neither fearing God, nor regarding man, theſe *bring a city into a ſnare*, or *blow upon a city*; breath faction among the people, enflame their minds againſt their governors, and bring ſome heavy ſcourge upon themſelves: *but wiſe men*, who are quiet in the land, and follow peace with all men, *turn away wrath*, ſooth the exaſperated ſpirits of the populace, extinguiſh the riſing flame, cement the diſunited members, and prevent the the impending ruin.

9. *If* a wiſe man contendeth with a fooliſh man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no reſt.

v. 9. It is abſurd and fruitleſs to ſpend our breath on fools that are incorrigible; whether we uſe ſharpneſs or pleaſantry, they are alike inſenſible, and all the return they will make, will be to abuſe, or laugh at us for our pains; there is *no reſt*, no good to be done, nor end of the diſpute.

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† Heb. Men of blood. f 1 John iii. 12.

10. † The blood-thirſty [f] hate the upright: but the juſt ſeek his ſoul.

v. 10. The enmity between the ſeed of the ſerpent and the ſeed of the woman is inveterate and perpetual: good men are the objects of hatred to the wicked; they thirſt for their blood; and eſpecially they abhor thoſe upright magiſtrates, who are their terror: *but the juſt ſeek his ſoul*; either of the ſinner, praying for him, and labouring after his converſion; or of the upright, interpoſing to ſave his life from the hands of the blood-thirſty perſecutors.

g Judge xvi. 17. Chap. xii. 16. & xiv. 33.

11. [g] A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wiſe *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

v. 11. Prudent reſerve is wiſe; to make every perſon we meet our confidant, or on every provocation to let looſe the tongue without reſtraint, is folly.

12. If a ruler hearken to lies, all his ſervants *are* wicked.

v. 12. Liars are to be abhorred of all, eſpecially of princes, round whom flatterers throng; and if they give ear to their reports and repreſentations, each will ſtrive to gain it by adulation and calumnies, and wickedneſs univerſally prevail: the ruler who thus loves and encourages, will be equally criminal with the ſervants who make the lie.

h Chap. xxii. 2. † Or, the uſurer.

13. [h] The poor and † the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lightneth both their eyes.

v. 13. In this world there is a mixed multitude; *the poor and deceitful man*, or *uſurer*, who grows rich by uſury and fraud, *meet together* in the concerns of buſineſs: *the Lord lightneth both their eyes*; either cauſing his ſun to ſhine upon them, and beſtowing the common bleſſings of his providence, or by his grace calling them into the light of his goſpel, from which the rich are no more excluded than the poor, and ſometimes they who have been the vileſt publicans, become the moſt ſhining chriſtians.

i Chap. xx. 28. & xxv. 5.

14. [i] The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever.

v. 14. Nothing ſerves to eſtabliſh the throne, and perpetuate it to the poſterity of the prince, as an upright adminiſtration of juſtice to the meaneſt, which will engage the affections of all, and render them zealous to ſupport his crown and dignity, under whom they enjoy ſuch a diſtinguiſhed bleſſing.

k Ver. 17. l Chap. x. 1. & xvii. 21, 25.

15. [k] The rod and reproof give wiſdom: but a child left *to himſelf*, [l] bringeth his mother to ſhame.

v. 15. The neceſſity of correcting a child hath been repeatedly obſerved. *The rod and reproof* muſt go together, and then both are twice effectual; and when they are applied without anger, and with an evident deſign not for our pleaſure, but their profit, they *give wiſdom: but a child* indulged and *left to himſelf* is a child ſpoiled, *and will bring his* fond *mother to ſhame*, doing what will reflect diſhonour upon his parents, and perhaps by and by inſolently flying in her face.

m Pſ. xxxvii. 36. & lviii. 10. & xci. 8.

16. When the wicked are multiplied, tranſgreſſion increaſeth: [m] but the righteous ſhall ſee their fall.

v. 16. Iniquity countenanced by multitudes becomes impudent, and one wicked man emboldens another, and increaſes both the number and enormity of tranſgreſſions: but however many or mighty they are to work wickedneſs, their ruin approaches: the righteous need neither envy nor fear them, but ſhall behold their fall, either in this world, thruſt down with ſhame from their high eſtate, or in the next doomed to the place of eternal ſhame and contempt.

n Chap. xiii. 24. & xix. 18. & xxii. 15. & xxiii. 13, 14.

17. [n] Correct thy ſon, and he ſhall give thee reſt: yea, he ſhall give delight unto thy ſoul.

v. 17. Though it be a painful thing to a parent's heart to uſe ſeverity, yet the bleſſed effects of the correction, in his child's improvement, will afterwards afford great ſatisfaction and delight to his ſoul, both from the conſciouſneſs of having diſcharged his duty, and from the pleaſing proſpect of their well-doing in time and eternity.

o 1 Sam. iii. 1. Am. viii. 11, 12. † Or, is made naked. p John xiii. 17. James i. 25.

18. [o] Where *there is* no viſion, the people † periſh: but [p] he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

v. 18. Miſerable is the ſtate of that people who are left deſtitute of revelation, and the miniſtry of the word; they *periſh* for lack of knowledge in their ſins; or are *made naked*, as in the margin, ſtripped both of their armour and ornaments; or *become idle*, careleſs in their walk for want of warning; or *go backward*, as is uſually ſeen where the goſpel is taken away from a place, that many fall away quickly from their profeſſions; or *are rebellious*, deſtitute of the fear of God, they have no reſtraint, but caſt off the yoke of authority, and grow factious and turbulent; for all theſe ſenſes the wórd bears: *but he that keepeth the law*, not only hears, but obeys it, finds the bleſſing and comfort of his fidelity.

19. A ſervant will not be corrected by words: for though he underſtand, he will not anſwer.

v. 19. We have here the character of an idle and incorrigible ſervant; words, even ſharp ones, make no impreſſion upon him, and though he underſtands what you ſay, yet ſo ſullen and perverſe, he will not deign to make anſwer, or promiſe to rectify what was amiſs; a rod, and a ſmart one, muſt be laid on ſuch a fool's back.

q Chap. xxvi. 12.

20. Seeſt thou a man *that is* haſty in his words? [q] *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

v. 20. Slow parts, with application, will make a ſcholar ſooner than the volatile and flighty genius, that ſticks long at nothing; and much more hope is there that he will grow wiſe who modeſtly is ſilent, than the man whoſe talkativeneſs and conceit makes his tongue run faſter than his wits.

21. He that delicately bringeth up his ſervant from a child, ſhall have him become *his* ſon at the length.

v. 21. Indulged ſervants are often ſpoiled; they forget their diſtance, and abuſe the kindneſs ſhown them; grow inſolent and aſſuming, and by and by affect to be treated as the ſon, and claim the inheritance.

r Chap. xv. 18. & xxvi. 21.

22. [r] An angry man ſtirreth up ſtrife, and a furious man aboundeth in tranſgreſſion.

v. 22. Paſſionate men are the plague of ſociety; every trifle exaſperates them, and where they are, there is perpetual contention; whilſt in their fury they ſtick at nothing, and by ſwearing, curſing, and violence, add ſin unto ſin.

s Job xxii. 29. Chap. xv. 33. & xviii. 12. Iſa. lxvi. 2. Mat. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. & xviii. 14. James iv. 6, 10. 1 Pet. v. 5.

23. [s] A man's pride ſhall bring him low: but honour ſhall uphold the humble in ſpirit.

v. 23. Pride and poverty are near allied; they who affect to live, to dreſs, to appear above their ſtation, are in the high-road to beggary, and worſe than that, to hell; *whilſt the humble*, who are little in their own eyes, *honour ſhall uphold them*, or they ſhall *lay hold* of it; their lowly opinion of themſelves will be their recommendation to the wiſe, and God will exalt them to the honour of his preſent favour, and to his eternal kingdom in glory.

24. Whoſo is partner with a thief, hateth his own ſoul: he heareth curſing, and bewrayeth *it* not.

v. 24. The receiver of ſtolen goods is as bad as the thief, and brings the ſame guilt and ruin upon his ſoul: he hears the villain with ſolemn imprecations denying the fact, yet ſits ſilent and will not convict him; or though ſummoned to give evidence, perjures himſelf to conceal his accomplice.

t Gen. xii. 12, 13. & xx. 2.
† Heb. Set on high.

25. [t] The fear of man bringeth a ſnare: but whoſo putteth his truſt in the LORD, ſhall be † ſafe.

v. 25. Nothing is a more dangerous ſnare to the ſoul than the fear of man; through this many are led to make ſinful compliances, to be aſhamed of their profeſſion, or deterred from the path of duty: *but whoſo putteth his truſt in the Lord*, riſes ſuperior to his fears, and daring to be faithful to God in the face of every danger and diſcouragement, *ſhall* find Divine ſupport, and *be ſafe* from the power and threatnings of man, that is a worm.

u Chap. xix. 6.
x Gen. xliii. 14. Eſth. iv. 16. Chap. xxi. 1.

26. [u] Many ſeek the ruler's favour, but [x] every man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

v. 26. This is the way of the world; they who are great will be careſſed, and at their feet all bow down, in hopes of advantage; *but every man's judgment cometh of the Lord*, and therefore his favour ſhould be ſought in the firſt place, who alone can make us truly happy; can order the diſpenſations of his providence ſo as to give us ſucceſs in our purſuits here; and what is of infinitely greater moment, by him our eternal judgment muſt be determined hereafter.

y Pſ. xv. 4.

27. [y] An unjuſt man *is* an abomination to the juſt: and *he that is* upright in the way, *is* abomination to the wicked.

v. 27. Light and darkneſs are not more contrary to each other, than the unjuſt and the upright; there is a natural and irreconcileable antipathy between them. *The unjuſt man is an abomination to the juſt*; not his perſon indeed, but his ways; he ſhuns his ſociety, teſtifies againſt his ſins, and would have all men take knowledge of it; that he abhors the unfruitful works of darkneſs: the like averſion to goodneſs dwells in the boſom of the wicked; they hate both the men and their manners, cannot endure the reproach which the conduct of the upright caſts upon them, and therefore, to the utmoſt of their power, would extirpate them from the earth.

CHAP. XXX.

This and the following chapter are an appendix to Solomon's proverbs; but they are both expreſly called prophecies, in the firſt verſes of both; by which it appears, that the penmen of them, whoever they were, were divinely inſpired. This chapter was penned by one that bears the name of Agur Ben Jakeh; what tribe he was of, or when he lived, we are not told: What he wrote, being indited by the holy Ghoſt, is here kept upon record. We have here, 1. *His confeſſion of faith*, ver. 1—6. 2. *His prayer*, ver. 7—9. 3. *A caution againſt wronging ſervants*, ver. 10. 4. *Four wicked generations*, ver. 11—14. 5. *Four things inſatiable*, ver. 15, 16. *to which is added, fair warning to undutiful children*, ver. 17. 6. *Four things unſearchable*, ver. 18—20. 7. *Four things intolerable*, ver. 21—23. 8. *Four things little and wiſe*, ver. 24—28. 9. *Four things ſtately*, ver. 29. ad finem.

a Chap. xxxi. 1.
b Pſ. lxxiii. 22.
c Mat. xvi. 17.
† Heb. Know.
d John iii. 13.
e Job xxxviii. 4, &c. Pſ. civ. 3, &c. Iſa. xl. 12, &c.
f Pſ. xii. 6. & xviii. 30. & xix. 8. & cxix. 140.
g Pſ. lxxxiv. 11. & cxv. 9, 10, 11.
h Deut. iv. 2. & xii. 32. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

1. THE words of Agur the ſon of Jakeh, *even* [a] the prophecy: the man ſpake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal. 2. [b] Surely I *am* more brutiſh than *any* man, and have not the underſtanding of a man. 3. [c] I neither learned wiſdom, nor † have the knowledge of the holy. 4. [d] Who hath aſcended up into heaven, or deſcended? [e] who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? what *is* his name, and what *is* his ſon's name, if thou canſt tell? 5. [f] Every word of God *is* pure: [g] he *is* a ſhield unto them that put their truſt in him. 6. [h] Add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

v. 1—6. Who this Agur was is immaterial for us to enquire; it is enough that he wrote under prophetic inſpiration, either directing his diſcourſe to Ithiel and Ucal, his children or his diſciples; or ſpeaking *concerning Ithiel and Ucal*; the names applicable to the great Meſſiah, *God with me*, and *the mighty one*, able to ſave to the uttermoſt; or addreſſed to him as the Redeemer of his people, who hears their prayers, and delivers them out of all their troubles.

1. He humbly confeſſes his ſin and ignorance. *Surely I am more brutiſh than any man*, or *a brute* rather *than a man*; ſuch blindneſs and ignorance is in man's fallen nature, ſuch perverſeneſs and corruption in his heart; and they who have the deepeſt knowledge of themſelves diſcovering more of the folly and ſin of their own hearts, than they can poſſibly ſee in others, will adopt with deepeſt ſenſibility the confeſſion; *and have not the underſtanding of a man*, of Adam, in innocence, or of men in general, in compariſon with whom we are confounded and aſhamed, and ready to think there never was another in the human nature ſo vile and ſo abominable. *I neither learned wiſdom*, by any power of my own, nor can I underſtand it unleſs taught of God; *nor have I knowledge of the holy ones*, for imperfect are the higheſt attainments of knowledge, reſpecting the divine Being, and his glorious perfections; and the things of God can no man know but by the ſpirit of God.

2. He exalts the glory of Ithiel and Ucal, the great Creator and Redeemer of men: none but he ever could reveal the deep things of God, who came down from heaven, and is aſcended thither, *John* iii. 13. By his power the ſtormy winds are reſtrained, the clouds are wrapped up as in a garment, the deep in ſwaddling bands: the earth, founded upon the flood, ſpoken into being at his word, and upheld by his providence: but who can declare his generation whoſe hands have made all theſe things? *what his is name, and what his is ſon's name, if thou canſt tell?* we are loſt the moment we ſet ourſelves to the enquiry; for who by ſearching can find out God, his nature, perfections, the Divine paternity or filiation, and all the other myſteries hid in the triune God? Here we muſt bow and ſilently adore.

3. He commends the excellence of God's word. *It is pure*, without the leaſt human mixture, or adulteration, and tending to produce purity of heart and life in all who receive the ſcriptures in the light and love of them: it is *faithful*, none ever

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truſted the promiſes and were diſappointed; but they, who according to his word have made God their refuge, have ever found him their ſhield to ward off every danger: it is *perfect*, incapable of improvement; it were daring preſumption in man to add thereto, and ſuch arrogance would provoke God's rebukes, and iſſue in the confuſion of thoſe who pretending to ſet up their traditions or fancies on a level with the revelation of God, would be detected as deceivers, be branded as liars, and ſuffer the doom of ſuch in the lake that burneth with fire.

† Heb. withhold not from me.
[i] Mat. vi. 11.
‡ Heb. Of my allowance.
[k] Deut. viii. 12. & xxxii. 15. Hoſ. xiii. 6.
§ Heb. Belie thee.

7. Two *things* have I required of thee, † deny me *them* not before I die. 8. Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; [i] feed me with food ‡ convenient for me: 9. [k] Leſt I be full, and § deny *thee*, and ſay, Who *is* the LORD? or leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

v. 7—9. We have here Agur's prayer, often mentioned, yet in truth ſeldom made.

1. He is importunate, and hath two ſhort requeſts to make, for ſhort prayers that are vehement are more effectual than many words without fervency of heart. He cries, *Deny me not before I die*, that is, as long as I live let me have an anſwer to my petitions, and be ever under the care of thy kind providence, and the guidance of thy grace.

2. The requeſts he makes are,

[1.] For ſpiritual mercies, the moſt valuable, and to be ſought in the firſt place. *Remove far from me vanity and lies*; deliver me from ſin, from the guilt and the power of it, from corrupt principles and practices, from error and deluſion, from the love of the world and its vanities; in ſhort, from whatever would be diſhonourable to God, and hurtful to the ſoul.

[2.] For temporal mercies. A moderate competence, not affluence, but *convenient food*, ſuch as nature needs, and the wants of a family may crave; or *the food of my allowance*, ſuch as the Divine providence allots, and with which, in whatever ſtate we are, it becomes us to be content: and as there are peculiar temptations attendant on abject want, and great wealth, he prays to be preſerved from both extremes, leaſt in affluence he ſhould grow proud, and deny God by the abuſe of his riches, or his unthankfulneſs for them; or through the pinchings of poverty be tempted to ſteal, and take the name of God in vain, murmuring againſt his providence, or forſwearing himſelf to conceal the theft; or giving occaſion, by ſuch wickedneſs, to the enemies of God to blaſpheme. *Note*, (1.) We are allowed to pray for daily bread, but for no more, having food and raiment, though it be coarſe and plain, we muſt be therewith content. (2.) We have as much need to cry *in all time of our wealth*, as under our deepeſt wants, *Good Lord, deliver us.* (3.) They who are poor, need often, and earneſtly, pray they may be kept honeſt; for poverty is a ſtrong temptation to ſteal. (4.) When we know how weak we are, we ſhall deſire to keep out of the way of temptation. (5.) No man may think himſelf ſafe from the moſt ſcandalous ſins; left to ourſelves there is no evil we may not fall into.

† Heb. Hurt not with thy tongue.

10. † Accuſe not a ſervant unto his maſter, leſt he curſe thee, and thou be found guilty.

v. 10. To tell the faults of a ſervant to his unſuſpecting maſter, whoſe buſineſs is neglected, or his property injured, is but duty, and we need not fear the curſes that ſuch may liberally beſtow; but we may not accuſe them wrongfully, raſhly, or for trifles exaſperate their maſters againſt them, for this would be cruel, conſidering their ſtate of ſervitude, which need not be made more heavy; and alſo *leſt he curſe thee*, complain to God of the injuſtice, or report it to thy diſcredit, *and thou be found guilty*; proved to have acted a malicious part, and puniſhed of him who is the avenger of the oppreſſed.

[l] Luke xviii. 11.
[m] Tit. i. 16.
[n] Chap. vi. 17.
[o] Job xxix. 17. Pſ. lii. 2. & lvii. 4. Chap. xii. 18.
[p] Pſ. xiv. 4. Am. viii. 4.

11. *There is* a generation *that* curſeth their father, and doth not bleſs their mother. 12. [l] *There is* a generation *that are* pure in their own eyes, [m] and *yet* is not waſhed from their filthineſs. 13. *There is* a generation, O how [n] lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up. 14. [o] *There is* a generation whoſe teeth *are as* ſwords, and their jaw-teeth *as* knives, [p] to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.

v. 11—14. We have here a deſcription of four ſorts of perſons, juſtly abhorred of God and man.

1. Unnatural and diſobedient children, who, inſtead of thankfulneſs for the kindneſs they have received, and which they never can requite, fly in their parents faces, and abuſe thoſe from whom they have received their being; curſing their father, and cannot give a good word even to their tender mother.

2. Phariſaical and ſelf-righteous profeſſors of godlineſs, who, making a ſhew of outward piety and devotion, are *pure in their own eyes*, and yet none farther in fact from real purity, for they are not *waſhed from their filthineſs*; they feel not the guilt of their ſins, nor are conſcious of the corruption of their nature, and therefore do not carry their ſouls to the blood of Jeſus, to be cleanſed from the pollution of their ſins, nor to the ſpirit of Jeſus to be ſaved from the power of them: their religion is mere outſide, like the whited ſepulchre; the uncleanneſs of an unregenerate heart remains the ſame within.

3. The purſe proud, and ſcornful, that look with diſdain upon their inferiors, and treat them as beings of a different ſpecies.

4. Cruel and covetous oppreſſors of the poor, who, like beaſts of prey, with teeth ſharp as ſwords, devour the ſubſtance of the needy, and let them pine away in want. God will be the avenger of all ſuch.

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† Heb. Wealth.
[q] Chap. xxvii. 20. Hab. ii. 5.
[r] Gen. xxx. 1.

15. The horſeleech hath two daughters, *crying*, Give, give. There are three *things that* are never ſatisfied, *yea*, four *things*, ſay not, † *It is* enough! 16. [q] The grave, and [r] the barren womb, the earth *that* is not filled with water, and the fire *that* ſaith not, *It is* enough.

v. 15, 16. Like *the horſeleech* are the oppreſſors of the poor, inſatiable in cruelty and covetouſneſs, the *two daughters*, that ever cry, *Give, give:* and herein they reſemble four things; *the grave*, that is never full, but yawning for more; *the barren womb*, impatient as Rachel for children, or the barren womb of harlots; *the earth*, which ſoaks up the rain as faſt as it falls; and *the fire*, which devoureth all the fuel which can be heaped on it, and never ſaith, *It is enough.*

[s] Lev. 20. 9.
‡ Or, the brook.

17. [s] The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and deſpiſeth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of ‡ the valley ſhall pick it out, and the young eagles ſhall eat it.

v. 17. Not only are they wicked and diſobedient children, who curſe their parents, but to mock them, their infirmities or weakneſs, or to deſpiſe their inſtructions or commands, even thoſe of a mother, is highly criminal; and God will in judgment bring them to an untimely or ignominious death, when, their corpſes expoſed unburied, or hung up in chains for their crimes, the ravens ſhall pick out thoſe eyes that ſcornfully and with contempt glanced at their aged parents. *Note*, Many who have come to the gallows have confeſſed, that undutifulneſs to their parents led the way to all their wickedneſs.

† Heb. Heart.
‡ Heb. Of a ſtrong man with a virgin.
[t] Chap. xix. 10. Eccleſ. x. 7.

18. There be three *things which* are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: 19. The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a ſerpent upon a rock, the way of a ſhip in the † midſt of the ſea, and the way ‡ of a man with a maid. 20. Such *is* the way of an adulterous woman; ſhe eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and ſaith, I have done no wickedneſs. 21. For three *things* the earth is diſquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear: 22. [t] For a ſervant when he reigneth, and a fool when he is filled with meat, 23. For an odious *woman* when ſhe is married, and an handmaid that is heir to her miſtreſs.

v. 18—23. We have here,

1. Four things unſearchable: *The way of an eagle in the air*, which leaves no track of her paſſage; *the way of a ſerpent upon a rock*, that moves without feet, and no traces remain; *the way of a ſhip in the midſt of the ſea*, the waters ſtill cloſing as it ſwims, and no path is left behind; *and the way of a man with a maid*, whoſe defilement is not known, or whoſe wiles are ſo ſubtle, and perſuaſions ſo artful, in order to rob her of her virgin honour. And like to it is the way of an *adulterous woman*, whoſe guilt is unperceived by her huſband, and whoſe artful methods of carrying on her criminal amours, are hid from every eye: ſhe looks as demure as if ſhe had done no wickedneſs, and none entertain, it may be, a ſuſpicion of her infidelity: but God ſees, and will ſhortly pluck off all theſe vain coverings, to the everlaſting confuſion of all ſuch workers of iniquity.

2. Four things intolerable; or rather four ſorts of perſons that are a plague to the place where they dwell, and a burden on the earth they tread: *A ſervant when he reigneth*, whoſe pride and arrogance riſe in proportion to his meanneſs, and make him inſolent and overbearing to all around him; *a fool when he is filled with meat*, purſe proud, or overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, whoſe tongue is a diſturbance to the company, abuſes friend or foe, indecent, aſſuming, or profane; *an odious woman*, whoſe temper is as crooked and deformed as her perſon, who, however ſhe might conceal it before, *when ſhe is married* leads her huſband a weariſome life, and is croſs and ill-natured to every body who comes near him; *and an handmaid that is heir to her miſtreſs*, who wheedled herſelf into favour, and gets all that ſhe has when ſhe dies, and hereupon gives herſelf airs, and ſets up for a gentlewoman:

nothing more offenſive than ſuch upſtart pride. Let thoſe who riſe, bring the humility of their former ſtate along with them, or they had better have remained in it.

24. There be four *things which are* little upon the
earth, but they *are* † exceeding wiſe; 25. [t] The ants
are a people not ſtrong, yet they prepare their meat in
ſummer; 26. [u] The conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet
make they their houſes in the rocks; 27. The locuſts
have no king, yet go they forth all of them ‡ by bands;
28. The ſpider [x] taketh hold with her hands, and is in
kings palaces.

† Heb. Wiſe, made wiſe.
[t] Chap. vi. 6, &c.
[u] Pſ. civ. 18.
‡ Heb. Gathered together.
[x] Chap. xxii. 29.

v. 24—28. The meaneſt creatures have much in them worthy of imitation. Four things are inſtanced, deſpicable in our eyes, but yet ſhewing a wiſdom thoſe who deſpiſe them are ſtrangers to: *The ants are a people not ſtrong, yet they prepare their meat in the ſummer*; more provident than many a ſluggard, who neglects to provide for the concerns of time, and is careleſs about eternity. *The conies*, or *mountain mice*, *are but a feeble folk*, and therefore they ſeek a ſhelter, and *make their houſes in the rocks*, where they cannot be purſued, to teach us, who have ſo many ſpiritual enemies, ſo much ſtronger than we are, to contend with, to fly to Jeſus the rock of ages, that under his ſhadow we may be ſafe. *The locuſts have no king*, *yet they go forth all of them in bands*, nicely marſhalled by implanted inſtinct; or *gathered together*, united among themſelves: an emblem of that unity and concord Chriſtians ſhould maintain, and which conduces ſo greatly both to their mutual comfort and ſupport. *The ſpider taketh hold with her hands*; untaught, her web exceeds what the fineſt wheel ever ſpun, and diſpoſed with an exactneſs equal to the rule and plummit, *and is in kings palaces*; whatever care is taken to keep them nicely ſwept, ſhe will ſtill find admittance; and though often deſtroyed, renews again her toils. They who imitate her diligence, are fit to ſtand before kings.

29. There be three *things* which go well, yea, four
are comely in going: 30. A lion *which is* ſtrongeſt
among beaſts, and turneth not away from any, 31. A
† grey-hound, an he-goat alſo, and a king [y] againſt whom
there is no riſing up.

† Or, horſe. Heb. Girt in the loins.
[y] Eccleſ. viii. 4.

v. 29—31. The majeſty and ſtatelineſs of theſe four things are remarkable: *A lion, which is ſtrongeſt among beaſts*, and conſcious of his might, *turneth not away from any*: ſuch ſhould every chriſtian be in the way of duty, never diſmayed at any danger or difficulty, knowing he hath the ſtrength of Omnipotence engaged for him. *A grey-hound*; or *an horſe*, as others rather interpret the words, which ſignify *girt in the loins*, which muſt needs be reckoned among the moſt noble animals. *An he-goat alſo*, who heads the flock: *And a king, againſt whom there is no riſing up*; his majeſty confounds, his power cruſhes thoſe who would riſe up againſt him. How will rebel ſinners then be confounded, when the King of kings, cloathed in terrible majeſty, ſhall ariſe to judgment?

32. If thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting up thyſelf,
or if thou haſt thought evil, [z] *lay* thine hand upon thy
mouth. 33. Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth
butter, and the wringing of the noſe bringeth forth
blood: ſo the forcing of wrath bringeth forth ſtrife.

[z] Job xxi. 5. & xl. 4. Mic. vii. 16.

v. 32, 33. Nothing needs a ſeverer reſtraint than that anger which is ſo eaſily kindled in our boſom: we are here cautioned to reſtrain it, eſpecially if we have to do with ſuperiors offended; to quarrel with whom, is only to puniſh ourſelves: *If* therefore *thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting up thyſelf*, vainly conceited, or perverſely reſiſting thoſe who had the rule over thee; *or if thou haſt thought evil*, and it hath not yet broke forth, *lay thy hand upon thine mouth*, ſuppreſs the riſing evil, and take ſhame for what hath fooliſhly been ſaid or done; for elſe damage and hurt may enſue: for as *ſurely* as *the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the noſe* violently *bringeth forth blood*; *ſo the forcing of wrath bringeth forth ſtrife*; one hot word brings on another; men's paſſions are inflamed, and the weakeſt are ſure to be worſted. *Note*, (1.) As ſinners before God, we need ever lay our hand on our mouth, and our mouth in the duſt, taking ſhame to ourſelves for our ſin and folly in daring to contend with our maker. (2.) Thoughts not uttered, though evil, are our ſin alone: if a looſe be let to the tongue, the poiſon becomes diffuſed, the miſchief endleſs. (3.) They who are wiſe, will ever give way. Nothing is got by quarrels and paſſionate oppoſition, but bloodſhed and damage.

CHAP. XXXI.

Here is, 1. *An exhortation to Lemuel, a young prince, to take heed of the ſins he would be tempted to, and to do the duties of the place he was called to*, ver. 1—9. 2. *The deſcription of a virtuous woman, eſpecially in the relation of a wife, and the miſtreſs of a family, which Lemuel's mother drew up, either as an inſtruction to her daughters, as the foregoing verſes were to her ſon, or as a direction to her ſon in the choice of a wife; ſhe muſt be chaſte and modeſt, diligent and frugal, dutiful to her huſband, careful of her family, diſcreet in her diſcourſe, and in the education of her children, and, above all, conſcientious in her duty to God; ſuch a one as this, if he can find her, will make him happy*. ver. 10—31.

1. THE words of king Lemuel, [a] the prophecy that
his mother taught him. 2. What, my ſon?
and what, the ſon of my womb? and what, the ſon of
my vows? 3. [b] Give not thy ſtrength unto women, nor
thy ways to [c] that which deſtroyeth kings. 4. [d] *It is*
not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drink
wine, nor for princes ſtrong drink: 5. [e] Leſt they
drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment
of † any of the afflicted. 6. [f] Give ſtrong drink unto
him that is ready to periſh, and wine to thoſe that ‡
be of heavy hearts. 7. Let him drink and forget his
poverty, and remember his miſery no more. 8. [g]
Open thy mouth for the dumb, [h] in the cauſe of all
ſuch as are appointed to deſtruction. 9. Open thy
mouth, [i] judge righteouſly, and plead the cauſe of the
poor and needy.

[a] Chap. xxx. 1.
[b] Ibid. x. 9.
[c] Deut. xvii. 17. Chap. vii. 26.
[d] Eccleſ. x. 17.
[e] Hoſ. iv. 11.
† Heb. All the ſons of affliction.
[f] Pſ. civ. 15. 1 Tim. v. 23.
‡ Heb. Are bitter of ſoul.
[g] Job xxix. 15.
[h] 1 Sam. xix. 4. Eſth. iv. 16.
[i] Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 16.

v. 1—9. Interpreters are divided concerning the perſon of king Lemuel: but the two moſt probable opinions are, either that he was the king of ſome bordering country of Judea, whoſe mother was an Iſraelite, and taught him thoſe leſſons; or that it was another name of Solomon, which his fond mother gave him, intimating his being devoted *to God*, as the word ſignifies: and what, by the inſpiration of God, this gracious woman delivered to him, he took care to tranſmit in writing for future generations. We have firſt,

1. Her addreſs. *What, my ſon?* either it intimates the tender concern with which ſhe ſpoke; or, as wanting words to enforce the leſſons ſhe was about to deliver; or, as deſigned to awaken his attention; or as an expoſtulation, having obſerved in him a tendency to the evils from which ſhe would diſſuade him, and which were ſo unbecoming a prince: and hereunto the following words ſeem moſt ſuited: *What, the ſon of my womb?* have I brought thee forth with ſorrow, and educated thee with ſuch parental care? and ſhall it be fruitleſs? hear what the tendereſt affection dictates; and grant me, it is all I aſk, this ſmall return for all my pains: *and what, the ſon of my vows?* devoted to God from earlieſt infancy; the ſon of many prayers; and doubly criminal it would be in ſuch to be unfaithful. *Note*, (1.) That mother ſhews true tenderneſs to her children, who labours from earlieſt infancy to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and the more exalted their ſtation, the more carefully their education deſerves to be attended to. (2.) We muſt plead with our children the many prayers that have been offered for them, and the obligations they are under of being early devoted to God, and acquainted with his word, as what will render their unfaithfulneſs more ungrateful and inexcuſable.

2. Her warning. [1.] Againſt lewdneſs: *Give not thy ſtrength to women*, for by indulgence with harlots, both the ſtrength of the body is impaired, and the faculties of the mind debilitated; *nor thy ways unto that which deſtroyeth kings*; one falſe ſtep had nearly ruined his father; and by this ſin, kingdoms have been overturned. [2.] Againſt drunkenneſs: The moderate uſe of wine, and other good things, is not forbidden; but all exceſs in a king were doubly criminal and ſcandalous; it is a profanation of their dignity, diſqualifies them for the diſcharge of their high eſtate, gives the moſt pernicious example to their ſubjects, makes God's law forgotten, and lays them open to exerciſe wanton tyranny and cruel injuſtice. *Note*, If drunkenneſs be ſo unbecoming a king, how ought thoſe who are anointed kings and prieſts unto God, to be eſpecially careful of exceſs, and ſhun whatever would lead them to ſo diſhonourable a deed.

3. Her advice: To be liberal, compaſſionate, the advocate of the oppreſſed, and the upright magiſtrate; theſe are the things that exalt a king. Inſtead of abuſing affluence, employ it for the uſe of the needy; *give ſtrong drink unto him that is ready to periſh*, to ſupport his fainting ſpirits, *and wine to thoſe that be of a heavy heart*, to revive them when dejected, low, and in diſtreſs. *Let him drink* moderately *and forget his poverty*, his ſpirits being cheared and refreſhed, *and remember his miſery no more*. Wine thus employed is well beſtowed. How much better thus to put our bottle to our indigent neighbour's mouth to revive his fainting ſoul, than in exceſs to drown his ſenſes, and diſcover the ſhame of his nakedneſs? Spiritually this repreſents the ſtate of a ſinner's ſoul, diſtreſſed under a ſenſe of guilt, periſhing under the apprehenſions of the Divine wrath,

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conſcious of his abject ſpiritual poverty: to them the ſweet wine of goſpel promiſes ſhould be freely given, that a ſenſe of the love of God in Chriſt may chear their drooping hearts; and by faith, drinking in a rich ſupply of mercy and grace, they may forget their poverty, and no more conſider their miſery, God having forgiven their iniquity, and promiſing to heal all their infirmities. Inſtead of negligence or oppreſſion, *open thy mouth for the dumb*, be the advocate of the diſconcerted or ignorant, who cannot plead their own cauſe, and reſcue them from their cruel proſecutors, who ſeem bent on their deſtruction. *Open thy mouth* with boldneſs and zeal, *judge righteouſly*, without reſpect to perſons, unawed by any conſideration, and *plead the cauſe of the poor and needy*, whoſe meanneſs might expoſe them to be trampled upon, their cauſe neglected, or their right over-ruled.

[k] Chap. xii. 4. & viii. 22. & xix. 14. 10. ¶ [k] Who can find a virtuous woman? for her
price *is* far above rubies. 11. The heart of her huſ-
band doth ſafely truſt in her, ſo that he ſhall have no
need of ſpoil. 12. She will do him good, and not
evil, all the days of her life. 13. She ſeeketh wool, and
flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. 14. She is
like the merchant ſhips, ſhe bringeth her food from afar.
[l] Rom. xii. 11. 15. [l] She riſeth alſo while it is yet night, and giveth
[m] Luke xii. 42. meat to her houſhold, [m] and a portion to her maidens.
† Heb. Taketh. 16. She conſidereth a field, and † buyeth it: with the
fruit of her hand ſhe planteth a vineyard. 17. She
girdeth her loins with ſtrength, and ſtrengthneth her
‡ Heb. Taſteth. arms. 18. She ‡ perceiveth that her merchandiſe *is*
good: her candle goeth not out by night. 19. She
layeth her hands to the ſpindle, and her hands hold the
[n] Heb. xiii. 16. diſtaff. 20. [n] She ſtretcheth out her hand to the poor;
yea, ſhe reacheth forth her hands to the needy. 21.
She is not afraid of the ſnow for her houſhold: for all her
§ Or, double garments. houſhold *are* clothed with § ſcarlet. 22. She maketh her-
ſelf coverings of tapeſtry, her clothing *is* ſilk and pur-
ple. 23. Her huſband is known in the gates, when he
ſitteth among the elders of the land. 24. She maketh
fine linen, and ſelleth *it*, and delivereth girdles unto
the merchant. 25. Strength and honour *are* her cloth-
[o] Col. iv. 6. ing, and ſhe ſhall rejoice in time to come. 26. [o] She
[p] 1 Cor. xiii. 4. openeth her mouth with wiſdom, and in her tongue [p] *is*
the law of kindneſs. 27. She looketh well to the ways of
her houſhold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs.
28. Her children ariſe up, and call her bleſſed; her
huſband *alſo*, and he praiſeth her: 29. Many daughters
‖ Or, gotten riches. have ‖ done virtuouſly, but thou excelleſt them all. 30.
[q] 1 Pet. iii. 4, 5. Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* [q] a woman
that feareth the LORD, ſhe ſhall be praiſed. 31. Give
[r] Acts ix. 39. her of the fruit of her hands, and let [r] her own works
praiſe her in the gates.

v. 10—31. This is the deſcription of what good wives ſhould be; it is a pattern they ought to copy, and if they reach not the ſummit of perfection, yet ſhould be deſirous of advancing towards it. We have,

1. The enquiry made after ſuch a virtuous woman: The ſcarcer they are, the more diligently are they to be ſought out. Many appear well at a diſtance, ſet off with every genteel accompliſhment, and in perſon and manners engaging, who, when proved, often deceive men's expectations, and leave them without remedy to mourn the raſhneſs and folly of their choice: but where God in mercy is pleaſed to beſtow on us a helpmeet, truly excellent, whoſe amiableneſs appears greateſt the nearer ſhe is viewed, and the more ſhe is tried; *her price* indeed *is far above rubies.*

2. Her deſcription:

[1.] She behaves ſo as to engage and deſerve the entire confidence of her huſband: ſhe never gives him the leaſt occaſion for jealouſy, nor reaſon to doubt her diſcretion in the management of his domeſtic affairs; has no ſeparate intereſts, nor ever waſtes on herſelf in needleſs expence his ſubſtance, *ſo that he ſhall have no need of ſpoil*; driven to extortion to ſupply her extravagance. *She will do him good*; ſtudy his temper, make it her delight to pleaſe him, ſeek his advantage, and do every thing that may contribute to his comfort, profit, and honour in this world and in the next, and this *all the days of her life.*

[2.] She is active and induſtrious, and looks narrowly into her affairs; *neither eats the bread of idleneſs*, nor loves the bed of ſloth: her houſe is the ſcene of order, diligence, and frugality. She does not love to dreſs and viſit, and card and ſaunter at public places; her houſe is her happineſs, and her domeſtic employments her delight. Her family is up before the day, and breakfaſted, ready for their work as ſoon as the light ariſes, and each have their allotted portion, and know their proper employment, *v.* 15. herſelf in the midſt of them ſets the encouraging example; and having provided *flax and wool* at the moſt advantageous market, *worketh willingly with her hands*, not regarding it as a burden, but counting her duty her pleaſure, *v.* 13. and this ſhe doth with her might, *v.* 17. Her work is not ſome fooliſh finery, that may be more properly called idleneſs than labour, but what will be of uſe to her family. She is not aſhamed of the ſpindle and the diſtaff, *v.* 19. and with the candle light lengthens out the day, till the fit time of repoſe arrives, *v.* 18.

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[3.] She is wiſe in the diſpoſition of what ſhe hath wrought, and knows how to turn it to the beſt advantage, *v.* 18. whether for domeſtic uſes, or to exchange with the merchants, *v.* 24. *for food brought from afar*, v. 14. to ſupply the wants of her houſhold; or for money: and with this, having *conſidered a field*, how convenient or improvable it may be, *ſhe buyeth it*; and with the ſavings of her induſtry *planteth a vineyard*, to improve her purchaſe, and increaſe her huſband's poſſeſſions.

[4.] She is charitable. Though ſhe lays up a proviſion for her family, it is not at the expence of the poor; her hands are open to relieve their neceſſities, and the indigent ever find in her a bountiful friend: her diligence and œconomy enables her both to provide for her own, and have enough beſides to ſpare.

[5.] Her family appears in the greateſt credit. *Her huſband is known in the gates, when he ſitteth among the elders of the land*; her good conduct advances his reputation; his wealth increaſes by her management: even his very dreſs, and that of his attendants, beſpeak her care, and his honour; for all *her houſhold are clothed in ſcarlet*; and he is able to appear in ſplendor by her means; or, *in double garments*, having two ſuits for winter and ſummer; ſo that in every ſeaſon they are nobly clad. Her houſe is elegantly adorned with tapeſtry of her own work; and though her dreſs is neither her vanity nor her concern, ſhe appears ſuitable to her ſtation; and can afford, becauſe ſhe earns, the ſilk and purple which ſhe wears.

[6.] To enhance her character, *She openeth her mouth with wiſdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindneſs*; never haughty, aſſuming, ſullen, peeviſh, contentious; but her language is tender endearment, and dutiful ſubmiſſion; ſhe would rather hear than ſpeak: when ſhe offers her advice to her huſband, ſhe pretends not to dictate, but refers herſelf to his determination; avoids every occaſion of diſpute, or wiſely yields to his ſuperior judgment; and all her family are hearers of her gracious diſcourſe. As ſhe wiſhes to govern her houſhold by love, not by threatening, her very commands are obliging, and her corrections tempered with gentleneſs.

[7.] To crown the whole. She is truly religious: *ſhe feareth the Lord*; is governed in all her conduct by the principles of his word, and a regard for his glory, and this adds double luſtre to all her other excellencies. Beauty of perſon is pleaſing, but it is a fading tranſient good, compared with the more ſubſtantial beauty of the mind: diſeaſe may ſoon crop, and age muſt quickly wither this fair flower; but time ſhall more improve the graces of the ſoul, and render the union of kindred ſpirits, heirs together of the grace of life, more intimate and endeared.

3. The bleſſedneſs of ſuch conduct will be great.

(1.) It will procure praiſe and honour from all around: her huſband will thank God, and count himſelf happy in ſuch a partner; her children will bleſs her care, and grow up to acknowledge and adorn her gracious inſtructions: every eye will own her virtues; and *ſhe ſhall be praiſed*, as worthy a name among the moſt excellent and honourable of women, *v.* 29. whilſt her own ſpouſe will not allow her equal to be found, and admires her as the flower of her ſex.

(2.) She will have cauſe to rejoice in all time to come, *v.* 25. her works continuing to ſpeak her excellence, ſhe ſhall reap the fruit of her hands, ſtrength and honour be her conſtant clothing in this world, and in the world to come ſhe ſhall receive the reward of fidelity, and rejoice eternally there, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but the ſouls of the glorified ſaints are advanced to a ſtate of higher bleſſedneſs than mortality ever knew, and are made like unto the angels.

Some have thought this deſcription is purely myſtical, and applicable to the ſpouſe of Chriſt, the church, whoſe inviolable purity and fidelity render her dearer to him than rubies; yea, he proved how highly he valued her, when he bought her with his blood: he truſts her with his goſpel, his ordinances, his children, aſſured of her care over them, *v.* 11. his honour and intereſts are her conſtant concern for ever, *v.* 12. The external garments of profeſſion, and the white linnen, the righteouſneſs of ſaints, are, through grace, her conſtant labour, *v.* 13. By prayer and communion with God ſhe goes out, as merchant ſhips, to heaven, and returns, fraught with the bread of life, from that far country, *v.* 14. the ſtewards of her myſteries, riſing early, diſpenſe to each their portion, feeding each member of the family with thoſe words of truth which are ſuited to their ſtate and condition, *v.* 15. The ſcripture is the field ſhe purchaſes, and is enriched thereby: a purchaſe indeed, made without money, and without price, *Matt.* xiii. 44. *Iſa.* lv. 1, and in her vineyard new converts are daily planted, and grow up to bring forth fruit unto God, *v.* 16.

She labours for the glory of her lord, and the good of the ſouls intruſted to her, with all her might, *v.* 17. Her merchandiſe of grace is better than ſilver; her lamp of profeſſion ever burning; and in the darkeſt night of adverſity her hope is never extinguiſhed, *v.* 18. She is inceſſant in well-doing, *v.* 19. and her ſpirit is charity itſelf, *v.* 20. The double garments, beautiful and ſhining, of righteouſneſs imputed and implanted, adorn her houſhold, which no change of ſeaſons or trials can affect, *v.* 21. Her houſe is decently adorned, and her ordinances adminiſtered with dignity, *v.* 22. Her huſband, the great bridegroom of ſouls, is known, honoured, and adored, both by his ſaints below, and by angels above, *v.* 23. Her miniſters receiving of her ſtores, make a rich return of precious ſouls, *v.* 24. Strong in grace, and honourable, ſhe ſhall rejoice in all the ages of time and eternity, *v.* 25. The doctrines of Divine wiſdom, and goſpel grace, are by her diſpenſed, *v.* 26. Her diſcipline is exact, and no idleneſs ſuffered under her roof, *v.* 27. The members of Chriſt, her children, bleſs God for their mercies, and pray for her peace and proſperity; and the Lord himſelf approves her fidelity, *v.* 28. and gives her the higheſt commendation, *v.* 29. All other beauty, and human glory, ſhall fade, but to eternity ſhall the church of the redeemed be for a praiſe, *v.* 30. when her works follow her to the gates of heaven, and Chriſt ſhall beſtow upon her the promiſed recompenſe of eternal bliſs.

The End of the Book of PROVERBS.

THE
EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;
OR, A
PRACTICAL COMMENT
Upon the BOOK of
ECCLESIASTES.

The account we have of Solomon's apoſtaſy from God in the latter end of his reign, 1 Kings xi. 1. *is the tragical part of his ſtory: we may ſuppoſe he ſpake his Proverbs in the prime of his time, while he kept his integrity, but delivered his Eccleſiaſtes when he was grown old (for of the burdens and decays of age he ſpeaks feelingly,* chap. xii.) *and was, by the grace of God, recovered from his backſlidings: there he dictated his obſervations, here he wrote his own experiences. The title of the book and the penman we ſhall meet with in the firſt verſe, and therefore ſhall here only obſerve,*

1. *That it is a Sermon, a Sermon in print: the text is,* chap. i. 2. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity; *and the ſcope of it is to convince us of the vanity of the world, and its utter inſufficiency to make us happy; the vileneſs of ſin, and its certain tendency to make us miſerable; of the wiſdom of being religious, and the ſolid comfort and ſatisfaction that is to be had in doing our duty both to God and man; and this ſhould be intended in every ſermon, and that is a good ſermon by which theſe points are in any meaſure gained.*
2. *That it is a penitential ſermon, as ſome of David's pſalms are penitential pſalms; it is a recantation ſermon, in which the preacher ſadly laments his own folly and miſtake, in promiſing himſelf ſatisfaction in the things of this world, and even in the forbidden pleaſures of ſenſe, which now he finds more bitter than death. His fall is a proof of the weakneſs of man's nature;* Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, *nor ſay, I ſhall never be ſuch a fool as to do ſo and ſo, when Solomon himſelf, the wiſeſt of men, played the fool ſo egregiouſly; nor* let the rich man glory in his riches, *ſince Solomon's wealth was ſo great a ſnare to him, and did him a great deal more hurt than Job's poverty did him. His recovery is a proof of the power of God's grace, in bringing one back to God that had gone ſo far from him, and the riches of God's mercy in accepting him, notwithſtanding the many aggravations of his ſin, purſuant to the promiſe made to David, that* if his children ſhould commit iniquity, *they ſhould be corrected, but not abandoned and diſinherited,* 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15. *Let him therefore that* thinks he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall, *and let him that is fallen, make haſte to get up again, and not deſpair either of aſſiſtance or of acceptance therein.*
3. *That it is a practical, profitable ſermon: Solomon being brought to repentance, reſolves, like his father, to* teach tranſgreſſors God's way, *Pſal.* li. 13. *and to give warning to all to take heed of ſplitting upon thoſe rocks which had been fatal to him; and theſe were* fruits meet for repentance. *The fundamental error of the children of men, and that which is at the bottom of all their departures from God, is the ſame with that of our firſt parents, hoping to be* as gods, *by entertaining themſelves with that which ſeems* good for food, pleaſant to the eyes, *and* deſirable to make one wiſe. *Now the ſcope of this book is to ſhew, that this is a great miſtake; that our happineſs conſiſts not in being as gods to ourſelves, to have what we will, and do what we will, but in having him that made us to be a God to us. The moral philoſophers diſputed much about man's felicity or chief good; various opinions they had about it; but Solomon in this book determines the queſtion, and aſſures us, that* to fear God and to keep his commandments is the whole of man. *He tried what ſatisfaction might be found in the wealth of the world, and the pleaſures of ſenſe, and at laſt pronounced* all vanity and vexation; *yet multitudes will not take his word, but will make the ſame dangerous experiment, and it proves fatal to them. He,* (1.) *Shews the vanity of thoſe things in which men commonly look for happineſs, as human learning and policy, ſenſual delights, honour and power, riches and great poſſeſſions. And then,* (2.) *He preſcribes remedies againſt the vexation of ſpirit that attends them.*

Though we cannot cure them of their vanity, we may prevent the trouble they give us, by ſitting looſe to them, enjoying them comfortably, but laying our expectations low from them, and acquieſcing in the will of God concerning us in every event, eſpecially by remembring God in the days of our youth, and continuing in his fear and ſervice all our days, with an eye to the judgment to come.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The inſcription or title of the book,* ver. 1. 2. *The general doctrine of the vanity of the creature laid down,* ver. 2. *and explained,* ver. 3. 3. *The proof of this doctrine, taken,* (1.) *From the ſhortneſs of human life, and the multitude of births and burials in this life,* ver. 4. (2.) *From the inconſtant nature, and conſtant revolutions of all the creatures,* ver. 5—7. (3.) *From the abundant toil man has about them, and the little ſatisfaction he has in them,* ver. 8. (4.) *From the return of the ſame things again, which ſhews the end of all perfection, and that the ſtock is exhauſted,* ver. 9, 10. (5.) *From the oblivion to which all things are condemned,* ver. 11. 4. *The firſt inſtance of the vanity of men's knowledge, and all the parts of learning, eſpecially natural philoſophy and politics. Obſerve,* [1.] *The trial Solomon made of theſe,* ver. 12, 13, 16, 17. [2.] *His judgment of them; that all is vanity,* ver. 14. *For,* 1. *There is labour in getting knowledge,* ver. 13. 2. *There is little good to be done with it,* ver. 15. 3. *There is no ſatisfaction in it,* ver. 18. *And if this is vanity and vexation, all other things in this world being much inferior to it in dignity and worth, muſt needs be ſo too. A great ſcholar cannot be happy unleſs he be a true ſaint.*

1. THE words of [a] the preacher, the ſon of David, king of Jeruſalem. 2. [b] Vanity of vanities, ſaith the preacher, [c] vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity. 3. [d] What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the ſun?

a Ver. 12. Chap. vii. 27. & xii. 8, 9, 10.
b Pſ. xxxix. 5, 6. & lxii. 9. & cxliv. 4. Chap. xii. 8.
c Rom. viii. 20.
d Chap. ii. 22. & iii. 9.

v. 1—3. Solomon upon the throne never appeared ſo auguſt and venerable, as here he doth in the pulpit. We have,

1. The titles he aſſumes. *The preacher,* or *koheleth*; which ſome render *gathered,* and ſupplying the word *ſoul,* make it a deſcription of his own ſtate, recovered from his grievous backſlidings; for ſuch monuments of mercy doth the Divine grace ſometimes make; and they who are thus reſtored, are everlaſtingly bound to keep up a grateful memorial of the mercy: or *the gatherer,* to whom the people reſorted to hear his leſſons of inſtructions; or perhaps he now collected his ſubjects together, who had been juſtly offended at his unfaithfulneſs, that they might hear his recantation, that he might take ſhame to himſelf for the offence he had given, and caution others by his ſad experience to avoid the paths of ſin in which he had walked. Thus true penitents deſire ever to take ſhame to themſelves publickly, where their offence was publick; and as far as lies in them, ſeek to recover thoſe whom their influence or ill example led aſtray. *The ſon of David,* an honourable relation; but which rendered his ſin the more aggravated, conſidering the education he had received under ſuch a father; yet the everlaſting covenant made with David emboldened his hopes, and encouraged his return: *king of Jeruſalem*; the dignity of his ſtation made his example more pernicious, and *in Jeruſalem* alſo, where God's preſence dwelt, and his ſeat of worſhip was fixed, which rendered his ſins more infamouſly ſcandalous: thus, as true penitents do, he dwelt upon the aggravation of his guilt; or perhaps he mentions his ſtation as what ſhould engage attention from the people, and give weight to his diſcourſe.

2. The text of his diſcourſe is, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*; and this is redoubled, to ſhew his own deep conviction of the truth, and affect his hearers with a ſenſe of it. The world, and all the things of it, are utterly unſatisfactory; they periſh in the uſing, afford no ſolid comfort to the ſoul, and diſappoint all thoſe who place their confidence in them, or expect happineſs from them; and they who have with greateſt eagerneſs ſtrove to quench their thirſt at theſe broken ciſterns, by ſad experience have found them vanity of vanities: none had ever greater abilities to gratify his deſires, none ever with more boundleſs indulgence ſought ſatisfaction in earthly things, than Solomon, and after long proof this is his deliberate concluſion.

3. He appeals to univerſal experience for confirmation of the truth. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the ſun?* ſuppoſing there is ſomething ſubſtantial in the riches, honours, and pleaſures of this inferior world, poor mortals toil and labour, and when they thought to find a reality, graſp a ſhadow: even here man's life is often embittered by his abundance, and his pleaſures prove his torment; at death nothing he poſſeſſes can profit him to gain a moment's reſpite, or paſs with him into the grave; and after death how inſignificant will all thoſe things appear, unable to purchaſe the pardon of one ſin, or ſtand us in any ſtead at the bar of judgment? We muſt labour for a better portion above the ſun, if we would be happy to eternity.

4. *One* generation paſſeth away, and *another* generation cometh: [e] but the earth abideth for ever. 5. [f] The ſun alſo ariſeth, and the ſun goeth down, and † haſteth to his place where he aroſe. 6. The wind goeth toward the ſouth, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. 7. [g] All the rivers run into the ſea; yet the ſea *is* not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they ‡ return again. 8. All things *are* full of labour, man cannot utter *it*: the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. 9. [h] The thing that hath been, it *is that* which ſhall be: and that which is done, *is* that which ſhall be done: and *there* is no new *thing* under the ſun. 10. Is there *any* thing, whereof it may be ſaid, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. 11. *There is* no remembrance of former *things,* neither ſhall there be *any* remembrance of *things* that are to come, with *thoſe* that ſhall come after.

e Pſ. civ. 5. & cxix. 90.
f Ibid. xix. 5.
† Heb. Panteth.
g Job xxxviii. 10. Pſ civ. 8, 9.
‡ Heb. Return to go.
h Chap. iii. 15.

v. 4—11. To prove the vanity of all things he had aſſerted, he ſhews,

1. The ſhortneſs and uncertainty of all our earthly enjoyments; we are poſting faſt to the grave, and treading upon the heels of thoſe who are now ſtepping into it, and muſt quickly follow them; our abode here is but a moment, and that continually in jeopardy: a ſhort-lived pleaſure therefore can the creature afford us.

2. When we are gone, *the earth abideth for ever*; we can carry nothing out of it: the world muſt endure it's appointed time, and then, with all the works upon it, be burnt up.

3. All the things in the world are in a ſtate of revolution; the ſun riſes and ſets; the winds veer round the compaſs; the rivers ceaſeleſs roll: an emblem of man's fluctuating ſtate, ſeeking reſt and finding none, and haſting with full ſpeed to the duſt, from whence he came; as theſe return again to the ſame place, and point from whence they ſet forth: nor in all his career can he find,

4. The leaſt ſolid ſatisfaction; the ſea will ſooner overflow, than the heart be filled with creature good; all the rivers of proſperity are inſufficient; the fineſt proſpect, the moſt melodious airs, ſoon pall the ſenſes; we want new objects to ſatisfy curioſity, and grow tired of them as ſoon as they are familiar. *All things are full of labour,* nothing can be obtained without it, and when we have toiled in the purſuit, we find we have wearied ourſelves for very vanity; *man cannot utter it,* how weariſome a world this is, and how empty all its enjoyments.

5. There is nothing new; we are apt to flatter ourſelves with being able to diſcover arcana in nature unknown before, and improvements in arts and ſciences, ſuch as would ſhame all former generations; but it is only what *hath been*; the courſe of nature is the ſame, men's hearts the ſame, their intellectual faculties the ſame; and what we call new, is only ſo to us, for want of records of former ages, or through our confined knowledge of the world at preſent: we muſt look above if we would have *all things new,* Rev. xxi. new hearts, faſhioned by Divine grace here, and a new world, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs, and where vanity ſhall be no more.

6. Do what we will to make ourſelves memorable, we ſhall be diſappointed, and not live even in fame; few of the great perſonages that have appeared, and the wonders they have wrought, have found an hiſtorian to tranſmit their remembrance to poſterity; they are ſunk in the lake of oblivion, and thoſe in future ages who ſucceed us, will perhaps never ſo much as hear that ſuch perſons as we are ever exiſted. The only way to ſecure deathleſs fame, is to have our names written in the book of life of the Lamb, among his worthies, whoſe memorial ſhall endure not only through all the generations of time, but through the ages of eternity.

12. ¶ I [i] the preacher was king over Iſrael in Jeruſalem. 13. And I gave my heart [k] to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven: [l] this ſore travel hath God given to the ſons of man, to be exerciſed therewith. 14. I have ſeen all the works that are done under the ſun, and behold,

i Ver. 1.
k Pſ. cxi. 2.
l Gen. iii. 19. Chap. iii. 10.

all

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all *is* vanity and vexation of ſpirit. 15. [m] *That which is* crooked cannot be made ſtraight: and † that which is wanting cannot be numbred. 16. I communed with mine own heart, ſaying, Lo, I am come to great eſtate, and have gotten [n] more wiſdom than all *they* that have been before me in Jeruſalem: yea, my heart ‡ had great experience of wiſdom and knowledge. 17. And [o] I gave my heart to know wiſdom, and to know madneſs and folly: I perceived that this alſo is vexation of ſpirit. 18. For [p] in much wiſdom *is* much grief: and he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow.

m Chap. vii. 13.
† Heb. Defect.
n 1 Kings iii. 12. & iv. 30. & x. 7, 23. Chap. ii. 9.
‡ Heb. Had ſeen much.
o Chap. ii. 12. & vii. 23, 25.
p Chap. xii. 12.

v. 12—18. Having aſſerted in general the vanity of all ſublunary good, he paſſes on to the grand particulars that engage men's purſuits, in order to confirm the truth he had advanced: he begins with wiſdom, of earthly things the moſt excellent, and proves the vanity of this by experience and argument.

1. He tried what happineſs human wiſdom in its moſt refined and exalted ſtate would bring; and he poſſeſſed ſuch advantages to make the experiment compleat, that none after him will preſume to be a more competent judge. He was a *preacher*, endued with gifts of nature the moſt ſingular; a *king*, who had it in his power to furniſh himſelf with all poſſible aſſiſtance in the proſecution of his ſtudies; he was *over Iſrael*, a wiſe and underſtanding people, and *in Jeruſalem*, the very ſeat of wiſdom, where he had opportunity of converſing with God's prophets and prieſts, and with the wiſeſt of men, not only of his own nation, but from all the earth, who reſorted to him; and his application was as indefatigable as his advantages were ſingular: *he ſet himſelf to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom all things that are done under heaven*; the depths of philoſophy, the ſecrets of nature; the qualities of animals, vegetables, foſſils, and all that is above or beneath the earth, 1 *Kings* iv. 33. the myſteries of politics, trade, manufactures; the hiſtory of mankind, ancient and modern, their manners, cuſtoms, and ways; nor was the purſuit unſucceſsful, he attained aſtoniſhing heights of ſcience; *I have ſeen all the works that are done under the ſun*, whether of nature or of art, and none who had been before him, even in Jeruſalem the ſeat of learning, had ever gone ſo far; and withal, his knowledge deeply digeſted, and the fruit of *great experience*. And that by contraries he might the better know the value of wiſdom, *he ſet his heart to know madneſs and folly* alſo; to obſerve the follies and vices, as well as virtues of mankind. Thus furniſhed, as far as the human underſtanding could ſoar, he was fully qualified to judge what happineſs all the attainments of human literature and ſcience could afford. But,

2. The experiment anſwered not at all the pains it coſt; *the purſuit* was attended with ſore travel; for no labour is more fatiguing than that of the mind, intenſely engaged; the juſt puniſhment of God, for man's daring to affect a wiſdom which was forbidden him: the *poſſeſſion* afforded him only a view of the vexation, as well as vanity of the world: the more he knew of men and things, the more he ſaw that grieved and vexed him; whilſt he felt his own inability withal to rectify any of the wretchedneſs and wants of this diſordered world. *That which is crooked cannot be made ſtraight*; ſuch is the corruption of human nature, that no attainments of wiſdom can mend it, even when we ſee what is fit and right; the biaſs to evil is ſo ſtrong, that reaſon and philoſophy remonſtrate in vain; nothing but Divine grace, which changes the heart, can make our paths ſtraight: *and that which is wanting cannot be numbred:* the more we know, the more we are convinced we know nothing, diſcover the endleſs defects in our own underſtanding, and wants which can neither be numbred nor ſupplied: ſo that upon the whole, we cannot but conclude, *in much wiſdom is much grief*; it is painful to acquire; ſerves to excite our thirſt, without being able to ſatisfy it; enlarges our knowledge of human miſeries, and makes us more ſenſibly affected with them. In ſhort, *he that increaſeth knowledge, only increaſeth ſorrow*; and every new attainment affords freſh cauſe of diſquietude and diſſatisfaction. But there is a wiſdom that will not thus diſappoint the attentive enquirer; the knowledge of Jeſus, the wiſdom of God, and the myſtery of godlineſs; the more we are acquainted with it, the more ſatisfaction will it afford to our ſouls; and however defective our meaſure of it may be here, the leaſt attainment contains an earneſt and aſſurance, that hereafter it will be compleat and perfect, *when we ſhall know even as we are known.*

CHAP. II.

Solomon having pronounced all vanity, and particularly knowledge and learning, which he was ſo far from giving himſelf joy of, that he found the increaſe of it did but increaſe his ſorrow; in this chapter, he goes on to ſhew what reaſon he had to be ſick of this world, and with what little reaſon the moſt of men are fond of it. 1. *He ſhews, that there is no true happineſs and ſatisfaction to be had in mirth and pleaſure, and the delights of ſenſe,* ver. 1—11. 2. *He re-conſiders the pretenſions of wiſdom, and allows it to be an excellent uſeful thing; yet ſees it clogged with ſuch diminutions of its worth, that it proves inſufficient to make a man happy,* ver. 12—16. 3. *He inquires how far the buſineſs and wealth of this world will go towards making men happy, and concludes, from his own experience, that, to thoſe who ſet their hearts upon it, it is* vanity and vexation of ſpirit, *ver.* 17—23. *and if there be any good in it, it is only to thoſe that ſit looſe to it,* ver. 24—26.

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1. I Said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleaſure: and behold, this alſo *is* vanity. 2. I ſaid [a] of laughter, *It is* mad: and of mirth, What doth it? 3. [b] I ſought in mine heart to give myſelf unto wine ([c] yet acquainting mine heart with wiſdom) and to lay hold on folly, till I might ſee what *was* that good for the ſons of men, which they ſhould do under the heaven, † all the days of their life. 4. [d] I made me great works, I builded me houſes, I planted me vineyards. 5. I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits. 6. I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees 7. I got *me* ſervants and maidens, and had ‡ ſervants born in my houſe; alſo I had great poſſeſſions of great and ſmall cattle, above all that were in Jeruſalem before me. 8. [e] I gathered me alſo ſilver and gold, and the peculiar treaſure of kings, and of the provinces: I gat me men-ſingers and women-ſingers, and the delights of the ſons of men, *as* muſical inſtruments, and that of all ſorts. 9. So [f] I was great and increaſed more than all that were before me in Jeruſalem; alſo my wiſdom remained with me. 10. And whatſoever mine eyes deſired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy: for my heart rejoiced in all my labour, and [g] this was my portion of all my labour. 11. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold, [h] all *was* vanity and vexation of ſpirit, and *there was* no profit under the ſun.

a Prov. xiv. 13. Chap. vii. 6.
b Chap. i. 17.
c 1 Kings xviii. 21. Mat. vi. 24.
† Heb. The number of the days, &c.
d 1 Kings ix. 15—19.
‡ Heb. Sons of my houſe.
e 1 Kings ix. 28. & x. 10, 14, 21, &c.
f Chap. i. 16.
g Chap. iii. 22. & v. 18. & ix. 9.
h Chap. i. 3, 14.

v. 1—11. Since the purſuit of wiſdom diſappointed all his hopes, behold the ſyſtem changed, and that happineſs ſought in the indulgencies of ſenſe, and the flowery paths of pleaſure, which the regions of ſcience could not give.

1. In mirth the jocund hours are paſſed; no joy withheld, no amuſement forgotten; the poignancy of wit, and flights of humour, keep the gay circle in a burſt of laughter: in dance and ſong, and *all the delights of the ſons of men*, the live-long day is ſpent; whilſt muſic's enchanting ſound, with vaſt variety of inſtruments, pours forth a flood of harmony, and pleaſure reigns throughout the palaces of Sion: but is this man's proper good? no, in no wiſe; the event declared it: *behold this alſo is vanity*, poor and unſatisfactory. *I ſaid of laughter, It is mad*; it diverts the ſoul from the ways of ſerious godlineſs; and what can be greater madneſs, than for momentary mirth to plunge our ſouls into eternal mourning? *What doth it?* it can ſcarce afford a tranſient reſpite from preſent griefs; for even in laughter, often the heart is ſad; and the end of that mirth, which tends to blunt the edge of Divine conviction, or to diſſipate the impreſſions which God's word hath made on our minds, muſt be heavineſs: the time will come when none of theſe can afford the leaſt ſatisfaction; the witty jeſt can no longer brighten the countenance, ghaſtly in the convulſions of death; the ſongs of vanity are pangs to the ear, that, lying on the bed of ſickneſs, can ſcarce bear the lighteſt foot that treads the floor; and the gay circle can afford no delight to the eye ready to cloſe in death.

2. From wine he tried to find the joy which pleaſure had denied: the board is filled; the ſparkling glaſs goes round; and though with reluctance he deſcended from the intellectual pleaſures of a man, to the enjoyments of a beaſt, he reſolved to try the experiment, *and to lay hold of folly*; yet even when he made the attempt, he could not ſoberly but condemn the indulgence, and purpoſed to abſtain from groſſer exceſſes, and keep folly, as it were, at bay, *acquainting himſelf yet with wiſdom*; maintaining ſuch a guard over his appetite, that he might not be enſlaved by drunkenneſs or exceſs, and only taſte enough to ſatisfy him what was *that good for the ſons of men, which they ſhould do under the ſun, all the days of their life*; and as he owns the attempt folly, ſo he found it; for to ſeek from the intoxication of our ſenſes, any real good to our ſouls, muſt be indeed the fooliſhneſs of folly.

3. The board is cleared, the ſongs of mirth are ſilent, another ſcheme of happineſs purſued, and promiſing greater ſatisfaction: the noble plans are drawn, the materials ready, the gorgeous palace riſes majeſtical to view; the vineyards planted, the gardens laid out with taſte, the lawns extended, the woods

diſpoſed with niceſt judgment; the trees, for fruit or ſhew, exquiſite of their kind; large pieces of water collected for uſe and beauty, to pleaſe the eye and fertilize the ſoil: a vaſt retinue ever waited his commands in all the various offices of his houſhold; and far from being impoveriſhed with all his works, his income exceeded his expence: his treaſuries were filled; his cabinet ſtored with jewels, and whatever was exquiſite and curious; and from the diſtant provinces the richeſt preſents courted his acceptance, ſent from tributary kings, or governors, or from ſuch as ſought ſolution of their difficulties, or counſel in their emergences from his tranſcendant wiſdom. Thus in riches, magnificence, and ſplendor, he quite obſcured all his predeceſſors; and ſtill *his wiſdom remained*; amidſt all his other purſuits he kept poſſeſſion of himſelf, and was not ſo enſlaved by any of them, as not to be able to form a right judgment of them; though he gave the moſt unbounded ſcope to the gratification of his deſires, kept back his heart from no joy, taſted his pleaſures with the higheſt reliſh of delight, and enjoyed all the fruits of his labours without a diſappointment, or check to allay the ſatisfaction: yet on the review, revolving all his works, the thought, the care, the expence they coſt him, and how little real happineſs they afforded him, he ſolemnly declares all to be *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; and neither the employments, nor enjoyments under the ſun, afforded the leaſt real *profit*. They muſt look higher than the ſun who would ſecure ſubſtantial good.

[l] Chap. i. 17. & vii. 25.

12. And I turned myſelf to behold wiſdom, [l] and madneſs, and folly: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king? *even* that which hath been already done. 13. Then I ſaw that wiſdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkneſs. 14. [k] The wiſe man's eyes *are* in his head, but the fool walketh in darkneſs: and I myſelf perceived alſo, that [l] one event happeneth to them all. 15. Then ſaid I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, ſo † it happeneth even to me; and why was I then *more* wiſe? Then I ſaid in my heart, that this alſo *is* vanity. 16. For *there is* no remembrance of the wiſe more than of the fool for ever; ſeeing that which now *is*, in the days to come ſhall all be forgotten: and how dieth the wiſe *man*? [m] as the fool.

[k] Prov. xvii. 24. Chap. viii. 1.
[l] Pſ. xlix. 10. Chap. ix. 2, 3.
† Heb. It happeneth to me, even to me.
[m] 2 Sam. iii. 33.

v. 12—16. Behold this wiſeſt of men.

1. Re-aſſuming his purſuit of wiſdom, though he had found it unſatisfactory: he might perhaps have overlooked ſomething, or been haſty in his concluſion; at leaſt he was reduced to this, becauſe on reflection he was convinced that all his other ſchemes of happineſs were comparatively madneſs and folly, and the pleaſures of ſcience as much ſuperior to the joys of ſenſe, as light excelleth darkneſs: and in all his deciſions we may ſafely acquieſce; nor vainly eſſay by our own experience, to prove thoſe things madneſs and folly, which one, ſo much abler both to make the experiment, and ſo much wiſer to determine upon the caſe, hath already reſolved.

2. The repeated trial confirmed his former concluſion; for though wiſe men ſeem to have ſome advantages over fools, yet all their foreſight often ſtands them in as little ſtead as the fool's blunders: *One event happeneth to them all*, their bodies liable to the ſame diſeaſes, the ſame diſaſters attend them both, the ſame grave awaits them, and when dead, they will be alike forgotten; even he himſelf, great as wiſe, was not exempt from this common fate, *As it happeneth to the fool, ſo it happeneth to me, even to me*, as the original emphatically expreſſes it; and therefore he concludes, *Why was I then more wiſe?* why take ſo much pains? What profit is there of my labour, when I ſtand on the ſame level, and am expoſed to the ſame diſaſters as others? *Then I ſaid, this alſo is vanity*, and the purſuit of worldly wiſdom unprofitable and uſeleſs. Let all the proud of this world, on learning, abilities, wealth, or ſtation, hear and weigh this mortifying truth, The fool and the beggar in the grave muſt be their equals; there no diſtinction is known, but what Divine grace makes alone.

17. Therefore I hated life, becauſe the work that is wrought under the ſun *is* grievous unto me: for all *is* vanity and vexation of ſpirit. 18. ¶ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had † taken under the ſun: becauſe [n] I ſhould leave it unto the man that ſhall be after me. 19. And who knoweth whether he ſhall be a wiſe *man* [o] or a fool? Yet ſhall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have ſhewed myſelf wiſe under the ſun. This *is* alſo vanity. 20. Therefore I went about to cauſe my heart to deſpair of all the labour which I took under the ſun. 21. For there is a man whoſe labour *is* in wiſdom and in knowledge and in equity: yet to a man that hath not laboured therein ſhall he ‡ leave it *for* his portion. This alſo *is* vanity, and a great evil. 22. For [p] what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart wherein he hath laboured under the ſun. 23. For [q] all his days *are* ſorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh not reſt in the night. This is alſo vanity. 24. [r] *There is* nothing better for a man *than* that he ſhould eat and drink, and *that* he ſhould ‖ make his ſoul enjoy good in his labour. This alſo I ſaw, [s] that it *was* from the hand of God. 25. For who can eat, or who elſe can haſten *hereunto* more than I? 26. For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good in his ſight, wiſdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the ſinner he giveth travel, to gather and to heap up, [t] that he may give to *him that is* good before God. This alſo *is* vanity and vexation of ſpirit.

† Heb. Laboured.
[n] Pſ. xlix. 10.
[o] 1 Kings xii. 14.
‡ Heb. Give.
[p] Chap. i. 3. & iii. 9.
[q] Job xiv. 1.
[r] Chap. iii. 12, 13, 22. & v. 18. & viii. 15.
§ Or, delight his ſenſes.
[s] Deut. viii. 18.
[t] Job xxvii. 16, 17. Prov. xxviii. 8.

v. 17—26. There ſeems to be ſomething of impatience as, well as diſſatisfaction, expreſſed in theſe words.

1. He appears heartily tired of all the ſchemes he had purſued, and the works in which he had been engaged; not only *he hated his labour*, was diſappointed in, and weary of the vanities he had ſought, *but hated life* itſelf, becauſe of the troubles and vexations with which it is embittered, and wanted a reſt he could not find on earth. *In deſpair* he quitted all his toils, cloſed his books, diſmiſſed his builders, forſook his pleaſures; and, now aſſured no happineſs could be found beneath the ſun, began, with holy indifference about creature vanities, to ſeek the ſubſtantial bliſs, which is to be found in a better world. *Note*, It is happy for us, when the conviction of the inſufficiency of the creature, leads us up to the all-ſufficiency of the Creator. God in Chriſt is the only portion which can fill the reſtleſs deſires of an immortal ſoul.

2. He gives ſubſtantial reaſons why he was tired of life and its toils. *The work under the ſun* was *grievous*, v. 17. not only the employments of the body, but the more fatiguing application of the mind, the *labour* of *wiſdom, knowledge, and equity*, v. 21. how to tranſact the buſineſs of our ſtation with greateſt advantage and integrity; the care and concern about which occaſions many ſorrows, through the diſappointments and perplexities in which we are involved; and what in the day dwells thus anxiouſly on our minds, at night drives ſleep from our eye-lids: ſuch a vanity and vexation of ſpirit do they find this world to be who are moſt occupied in it. And for whom do they toil? not for themſelves, but for thoſe who come after them, *v.* 18. At death all muſt be left behind, to one who enters into poſſeſſion of what coſt him no pains, *v.* 21. and light come, light go; or he takes it as *his portion*, v. 21. and thinks he has thereby obtained a preſcription to be idle and uſeleſs in his generation; for *who knoweth whether he ſhall be a wiſe man or a fool* who inherits the fruit of their labours? The eſtate raiſed by equity and prudence, is perhaps waſted in extravagance; and what the wiſe laboured all their days to erect, the fool that follows wantonly pulls down, *v.* 19. as was the caſe with Solomon himſelf; and perhaps he in the ſpirit of prophecy foreſaw how unworthy Rehoboam would prove. *What* therefore *hath a man of all his labour?* nothing that yields him ſubſtantial joy, or abiding ſatisfaction.

3. He declares what is the proper uſe of creature comforts: To enjoy them in moderation, poſſeſs them with thankfulneſs, and improve them to God's glory; and this muſt be the gift of God, who alone can give us a heart to ſpend freely, what we have gained wiſely; with a ſenſe of his love enable us to reliſh the good he beſtows, and make even our worldly enjoyments the means of drawing us nearer to his bleſſed ſelf: to this Solomon haſtened, *v.* 25. and the wiſe will ſeek to follow his example.

4. He concludes with obſerving the miſery of the wicked, who have no heart to uſe aright the bleſſings God beſtows upon them: They are curſed with perpetual anxiety and toil, both to amaſs and to preſerve their gains; they have no comfort in them, but pine in the midſt of plenty; and uncharitable and cruel, have no heart to open their ſtores for the relief of the needy; till God at laſt cuts them off, or takes from them what they ſo abuſe, to give it to others who will employ their abundance to a better purpoſe: *and this alſo is vanity and vexation of ſpirit* to the wicked, who cannot bear the thoughts of parting with his poſſeſſions; and grieves at the proſpect of ſeeing his beloved riches liberally ſpent, or in the hands of thoſe who will devote them to the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures.

CHAP. III.

Solomon having ſhewed the vanity of ſtudies, pleaſures, and buſineſs, and made it to appear, that happineſs is not to be found either in the ſchools of the learned, in the gardens of Epicurus, or upon the exchange, he proceeds in this chapter further to prove his doctrine, and the inference he had drawn from it, that therefore we ſhould *chearfully content ourſelves with, and make uſe of, what God has given us, by ſhewing,* 1. *The mutability of all human affairs,* ver. 1—10. 2. *The immutability of the divine counſels concerning them, and the unſearchableneſs of thoſe counſels,* ver. 11—15. 3. *The vanity of worldly honour and power, which is abuſed for the ſupport of oppreſſion and perſecution,* ver. 16. *And for a check to proud oppreſſors, and to ſhew them their vanity, he minds them,* (1.) *That they will be called to account for it in the other world,* ver. 17. (2.) *That their condition in reference to this world (for of that he ſpeaks) is no better than that of the brutes,* ver. 18—21. *And therefore he concludes, that it is our wiſdom to make uſe of what power we have for our own comfort, and not to oppreſs others with it.*

1.[a] TO every *thing there is* a ſeaſon, and [a] a time to every purpoſe under the heaven: 2. A time † to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted: 3. A time to kill, and a time to heal: a time to break down, and a time to build up: 4. [b] A time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance: 5. A time to caſt away ſtones, and a time to gather ſtones together: a time to embrace, and [c] a time to ‡ refrain from embracing: 6. A time to get, and a time to loſe: a time to keep, and a time to caſt away: 7. A time to rent, and a time to ſew: [d] a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak: 8. A time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace. 9. [e] What profit hath he that worketh, in that wherein he laboureth? 10. [f] I have ſeen the travel which God hath given to the ſons of men, to be exerciſed in it.

[a] Ver. 17. Chap. viii. 6.

† Heb. To bear.

[b] Mat. ix. 15.

[c] Joel ii. 16. 1 Cor. vii. 5.

‡ Heb. Be far from.

[d] Am. v. 13.

[e] Chap. i. 3.

[f] Chap. i. 13.

v. 1—10. Known to God from the beginning are all his works, and fixed in his eternal mind his infinitely wiſe deſigns. Though we live in a changing world, where many things happen ſtrange, unexpected, and, as to us they appear, merely accidental; yet God hath left nothing uncertain. The diſpenſations of his providence and grace are governed by an unalterable decree; all events predetermined in his counſel and foreknowledge; and can neither be a moment delayed beyond, or anticipated before, their appointed time; and this ſhould give ſatisfaction to the child of God amidſt all the changes and chances of this mortal life, and engage him to wait the Lord's leiſure; for we know, that all things muſt work together for good to thoſe who love him. In a variety of particulars he proceeds to confirm the general truth, that *to every thing there is a ſeaſon.*

1. *There is a time to be born, and a time to die:* both were fixed ere we had our being; the moment, the manner, the place, the condition, and every circumſtance both of our lives and death.

2. *A time to plant*; either a tree; or an immortal ſoul, by the miniſtry of the word; or a nation, by divine providence; *and a time to pluck up that which is planted*; either the tree that is paſt bearing, or fruitleſs; or the ſoul, when its work is done, and it is ripe for glory; or when twice dead, and fuel for the flames of hell; or a nation, when the meaſure of its iniquities are full, *Jer.* xviii. 7—9.

3. *A time to kill*, by divine judgments, or the ſword of war, or the ſentence of the civil magiſtrate; *and a time to heal*, when thoſe who appeared incurable under the power of ſin in their ſouls, or diſeaſe in their bodies, are wonderfully reſtored to health; or when the affairs of a kingdom, that ſeemed haſting to ruin, are retrieved.

4. *A time to break down*, the ſtrength of the body, the proſperity of a family or nation; *and a time to build up*; when our private affairs ſeem moſt deſperate, and the church of God reduced to the moſt abject ſtate, he can, as of old, revive the ſtones of his temple out of the duſt.

5. *A time to weep and mourn*, when our own, our friends, or the church's afflictions, call forth our tears; *and a time to laugh and dance*, when God beſtowing proſperity on our bodies and ſouls, and on his Zion, requires us to ſerve him with gladneſs of heart.

6. *A time to caſt away ſtones*, when proud palaces and wicked cities are levelled to the ground; *and a time to gather ſtones together*, when God raiſeth the poor from the duſt, and giveth them cities to dwell in.

7. *A time to embrace*, with conjugal affection, the wife of our boſom, or with warm affection the friend of our heart; *and a time to refrain from embracing*; by choice, for a ſeaſon, to give ourſelves to prayer, *See* 1 Cor. vii. 3—5. or by neceſſity, when ſeparated from thoſe who are dear to us, through buſineſs, or in times of trouble and perſecution.

8. *A time to get*, when God's providence bleſſes, and we enjoy the moſt favourable opportunities of enriching ourſelves with temporal or ſpiritual good things; *and a time to loſe*, when unforeſeen events deprive us of our worldly ſubſtance, or ſad decays creep upon our ſouls.

9. *A time to keep*, when our increaſing families call for an increaſing proviſion, or when in peace we are permitted to enjoy our poſſeſſions; *and a time to caſt away*, when by God's gift our abundance enables us to ſupply the wants of the poor; or, for the teſtimony of a good conſcience, we are called upon to ſuffer the loſs of all things.

10. *A time to rent* our garments, in token of deep mourning, or in deteſtation of ſome atrocious wickedneſs; *and a time to ſew*, when the cauſe of our ſorrow is removed, and we may no longer be inconſolable.

11. *A time to keep ſilence*, under afflictive providences dumb before God, not daring to utter a murmuring word; or in the preſence of the wicked, when even from God's words we muſt refrain, nor caſt theſe pearls before ſwine: *and a time to ſpeak*, when duty calls for our boldneſs in the cauſe of God and truth, and prudence will dictate the fit ſeaſon and proper manner.

12. *A time to love*, when faithful friendſhip and mutual regard engage our affections; *and a time to hate*, when thoſe who behave unſuitably, forfeit our regard, oblige us to treat them with diſtance, and ſhun their company.

13. *A time of war*, in a juſt cauſe, when a nation's wrongs cannot be otherways redreſſed; or during our whole lives, whilſt our ſpiritual warfare laſts; *and a time of peace*, when the end for which the war was undertaken is anſwered; or at death, when the believer will enter into eternal reſt and peace.

Finally, As the inference from this view of the mutable and changing ſtate of the things in which we are engaged, he concludes the unprofitableneſs and vanity of all our purſuits. No poſſeſſion is ſure to us for an hour; and, inſtead of expecting our happineſs in any creature, we ſhould regard theſe labours rather as a part of the curſe denounced on the firſt man's ſin, and that God deſigns, as the word ſignifies, *to afflict and humble us thereby. Note,* (1.) This world is not our reſt: it was never deſigned to be ſo. Man is born in it to ſorrow and trouble, as the ſparks fly upwards. (2.) Our curſe of labour may be made eventually our mercy, as it prevents us from that idleneſs which would be highly dangerous to our ſouls, and ſerves to excite greater longings after that better world, *where there remaineth a reſt for the people of God.*

11. He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: alſo he hath ſet the world in their heart, ſo that [g] no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. 12. [h] I know that *there is* no good in them, but for a *man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life. 13. And alſo [i] that every man ſhould eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it *is* the gift of God. 14. I know that whatſoever God doth, it ſhall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doth *it*, that *men* ſhould fear before him. 15. [k] That which hath been, is now; and that which is to be, hath already been, and God requireth that which is † paſt.

[g] Chap. viii. 17. Rom. xi. 33.

[h] Ver. 22.

[i] Chap. ii. 24.

[k] Chap. i. 9.

† Heb. Driven away.

v. 11—15. In all the changes and viciſſitude we meet with in this vain world, God's hand muſt be regarded, who doth all things according to the counſel of his own will.

1. We muſt reſt aſſured, that he doth all things well. *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time*: all the variety in nature, and the turns of providence, however ſome things may ſeem to us undeſirable, disjointed, uſeleſs, or afflictive, yet are connected in the greateſt beauty and harmony, and conſpire together to advance God's glory, and to promote the good of thoſe who love him. *He hath ſet the world in their heart*; expanded the volume of nature for our obſervation; yet, ſuch is the darkneſs of our fallen minds, *that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.* We know at beſt but in part, and the ſhallow line of human reaſon cannot fathom the abyſs of his providences. And perhaps the former clauſe may ſuggeſt alſo the reaſon, through the prevailing love of *the world in our hearts,* which takes off our minds from divine contemplation. But whatever veil now covers the deep things of God, it will ſhortly be done away: tho' we know not now, we ſhall know hereafter, and for ever admire and adore the perfection, excellence, and beauty of all his works and ways, in creation, providence, and grace, and not a flaw be found.

2. We muſt chearfully acquieſce in our ſtate, whatſoever it be, and ſet ourſelves diligently to diſcharge the duties thereof.

[1.] *To rejoice* in our portion, whether it be leſs or more, knowing it exceeds all we deſerve: nor ſordidly covetous, thro' fear of future want, to ſpare what we at preſent need, but eat and drink what God hath given. And this alſo muſt come from his gift, who only can beſtow on us the heart to enjoy the good of our labour, without which we may be diſcontented, unthankful, and pine in the midſt of plenty.

[2.] *To do good in this life.* The time is ſhort, and we ſhould give the greater diligence to improve it; employ the portion God beſtows, in all thoſe works of faith, and labours of love, that our relations in life, the houſhold of faith, and the neceſſitous in general, call for at our hands; and this is the way to *do good* to ourſelves, for what is thus laid out, will turn to our beſt account hereafter.

[3.] To ſubmit entirely to the divine diſpoſals, and that becauſe neceſſity is laid upon us. *What God doth, it ſhall be for ever*; to quarrel with his diſpenſations, is but to kick againſt the pricks. He is in one mind, and his eternal decrees cannot be reverſed or altered: nor ſhould we wiſh it, if we knew the wiſdom and goodneſs of all his works and ways. *Nothing can be put to it*, for his work is perfect; *nor any thing taken from it*; there is nothing ſuperfluous, or unneceſſary, but the whole compleat in excellence; ſo that it is our higheſt intereſt, as well as duty, to ſay, *Thy will be done.*

[4.] *To fear God*, all his diſpenſations of providence and grace being deſigned to affect our ſouls with greater reverence of his majeſty, engage us to truſt him in every emergence, to fear offending, to be ſollicitous to pleaſe him, and to quicken us in the more diligent uſe of every means of grace, that we may be enabled for all he doth command, and prepared for whatever he hath prepared for us.

[5.] To acknowledge the ſteadineſs and uniformity of the divine government. The ordinances of heaven, the ſun, moon, and ſtars, perform the ſame revolutions; the events of providence are exactly ſimilar; *that which hath been, is now.* Nor may we think the world fuller of croſſes or of ſin than formerly: *that which is to be, hath already been*; the ſame changes will ſtill mark the rolling years; and *God requireth that which is paſt*, repeats what he had done before. Let us not therefore think our lot hard, or our trials uncommon: in adverſity, hope for ſuch a change as Job experienced; in proſperity, rejoice with trembling; and in every ſtate remember the ſolemn account of our behaviour in it, which we muſt one day make. This is wiſdom.

16. And moreover, [l] I ſaw under the ſun the place of judgment, *that* wickedneſs *was* there; and the place of righteouſneſs, *that* iniquity *was* there. 17. I ſaid in my heart, [m] God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked: for *there is* [n] a time there for every purpoſe, and for every work. 18. I ſaid in my heart, concerning the eſtate of the ſons of men, † that God might manifeſt them, and that they might ſee that they themſelves are beaſts. 19. For [o] that which befalleth the ſons of men, befalleth beaſts, even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea, they have all one breath, ſo that a man hath no preeminence above a beaſt: for all *is* vanity. 20. All go unto one place, [p] all are of the duſt, and all turn to duſt again. 21. Who knoweth [q] the ſpirit ‡ of man that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of the beaſt that goeth downward to the earth? 22. Wherefore I perceive that [r] *there is* nothing better, than that a man ſhould rejoice in his own works; for that *is* his portion: for who ſhall bring him to ſee what ſhall be after him?

l Chap. v. 8.
m 2 Cor. v. 10.
n Ver. 1.
† Or, That they might clear God, and ſee, &c. Rom. iii. 4.
o Pſ. xlix. 12, 20. Chap. ii. 16.
p Gen. iii. 19.
q Chap. xii. 7.
‡ Heb. Of the ſons of man.
r Ver. 12. Chap. ii. 24. & v. 18. & xi. 9.

v. 16—22. A wicked as well as vain world is this in which we live, and, becauſe of wickedneſs, made ſubject to vanity. Left deſtitute of the fear of God, the whole would be a ſcene of miſery and wretchedneſs; and it had been preferable to have been a beaſt, rather than a man.

1. The world is full of oppreſſion: even in the ſeat of judgment, where righteouſneſs ſhould influence every decree, iniquity often reigns; corrupt influence, bribery, or favour, perverts the adminiſtration of juſtice, and renders the wickedneſs, under the form of law, more intolerable. This Solomon had remarked in his obſervations on other nations, and perhaps, notwithſtanding all his care, could not expel from his own dominions.

2. However judgment may be perverted by men, there is a day coming, when all ſhall be reviſed, and juſtice miniſtered to every man according to truth; when God will vindicate the cauſe of the righteous, and condemn the wicked; and the unjuſt judges muſt be called to a terrible account for their unrighteous decrees. The time is fixed in the eternal counſels; it is advancing; it is near: let ſuch as are oppreſſed with wrong patiently wait for it: the eternal *Judge ſtandeth before the door.*

3. God, in all his diſpenſations towards the ſons of men in their preſent ſtate, deſigns *to manifeſt them*; either *to ſeparate them*, the righteous from the wicked, or, *that they might clear God*, as the word may be rendered, whoſe ways are equal all, but ours unequal; for we have only ourſelves to blame: or, to ſhew us what a creature man is when left to himſelf, even like *the beaſts*, ſtupid, untractable, cruel, brutiſh in his appetites, and mortal, like them, in his end, *v.* 19. Some make theſe the objections raiſed by an infidel againſt the judgment to come, and pleading for indulgence, becauſe all man is, ends at death. But it may very well be conſidered as Solomon's ſentiments, and intended to ſhew the vanity of man in general, and of the worldly-minded, ſenſual, and wicked in particular. Men and beaſts are liable to the ſame diſorders, accidents, calamities, and are ſupported by the ſame providential care. They have the ſame animal life, preſerved by the breath, which paſſes thro' their noſtrils; they lie down together in the duſt, and man, alike ſubject to vanity, knows *no preeminence* there; the ſame putrid corpſe, and returning to the ſame earth from whence they came, *v.* 20. Nor is there any viſible difference after death concerning their ſpirits; for though by the light of revelation we are told, that man is immortal; that his ſoul returns to God to be judged, and receive his eternal doom; whilſt the ſpirit of the beaſt is extinguiſhed with his body; yet, who *knoweth this?* It is not the object of our ſenſes; and I greatly queſtion, whether the reaſon of fallen man would ever come to the knowledge of his own immortality, unaſſiſted by traditionary revelation or the ſcriptures: certain however it is, few conſider the difference; the moſt live and die as the beaſts that periſh.

4. The concluſion he draws from theſe obſervations is, That ſince ſuch is man's preſent ſtate of wretchedneſs and vanity, his higheſt wiſdom is to make the beſt uſe he can of what he now poſſeſſes, for *that is his portion*; and ſince he muſt quickly leave earth, and all the things of it, and knows not how his ſucceſſors may prove, he ſhould wiſely lay out his ſubſtance as is moſt comfortable to himſelf, moſt to God's glory, and beneficial to mankind.

The whole may teach us, (1.) A very humbling leſſon of our preſent ſtate, and how little reaſon we have to be proud on any bodily accompliſhments, when the putrid carcaſe of a beaſt ſhall be ſhortly juſt as amiable. (2.) Since it is in our ſouls the great difference lies, to make the concerns of them our greateſt care. It is a trivial conſideration how we fare in time; the grand object is, to ſecure our well-being in eternity.

CHAP. IV.

Solomon having ſhewed the vanity of this world, in the temptation which thoſe in power are in to oppreſs and trample upon their ſubjects, here further ſhews, 1. *The temptation which the oppreſſed are in to diſcontent and impatience*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The vanity of ſeeking happineſs in gain, which only excites envy*, ver. 4. *Or*, 3. *In ſloth and eaſe*, ver. 5, 6. *Or*, 4. *In covetouſneſs*, ver. 7, 8. 5. *The comforts of ſocial life commended*, ver. 9—12. 6. *The mutability even of royal dignity, not only through the folly of the prince himſelf*, ver. 13, 14. *but through the fickleneſs of the people, let the prince be never ſo diſcreet*, ver. 15, 16.

1. SO I returned, and conſidered all [a] the oppreſſions that are done under the ſun: and behold, the tears of *ſuch as were* oppreſſed, and [b] they had no comforter; and on the † ſide of their oppreſſors *there was* power, but they had no comforter. 2. [c] Wherefore I praiſed the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive. 3. [d] Yea, better is *he* than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not ſeen the evil work that is done under the ſun.

a Chap. v. 8.
b Lam. i. 2.
† Heb. Hand.
c Job iii. 17, &c. Chap. vi. 3.
d Job iii. 11, 16, 21.

v. 1—3. He had before conſidered the caſe of proud oppreſſors, and foreſeen their judgment; here he turns his eyes to the oppreſſed, and bewails their miſery.

1. Their condition is deplorable, and often helpleſs; for might here often overcomes right. The tears of the poor, the orphan, the perſecuted, cry out againſt their ſevere and covetous maſters, their treacherous guardians, and tyrannical governors; *and they have no comforter*, few caring to expoſe themſelves in the cauſe of injured innocence, eſpecially where the *power in the hands of oppreſſors* makes it dangerous to oppoſe their iniquitous proceedings, or even to ſhew compaſſion to thoſe who ſuffer under their wickedneſs.

2. The judgment he formed concerning this ſtate of oppreſſion is, that death itſelf were preferable to ſuch a continued ſcene of miſery; and never to have had a being, more deſirable, than merely to come thus into the world, to ſee *the evil that is done under the ſun*, and ſuffer. And this is ſpoken as the concluſion of ſenſe, without reſpect to a future ſtate; for elſe, as it is a great truth, that they who in Chriſt have finiſhed their warfare, are in a much more deſirable eſtate than thoſe militant ſaints who ſtill bear the burden and heat of the day; ſo to have a being, however miſerable upon earth, can never make a good man wiſh he had never been born, ſince God is glorified in his ſufferings, and an eternity of happineſs is before him. Nor ought any man to quarrel with his being, becauſe of the evil he ſees or feels; it is his own fault if the iſſue be not for his good.

4. ¶ Again, I conſidered all travel, and every right work, [e] that † for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This *is* alſo vanity and vexation of ſpirit. 5. [f] The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own

e 1 John iii. 12.
† Heb. This is the envy of a man from his neighbour.
f Prov. vi. 10. & xxiv. 33.

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[g] Prov. xv. 16, 17. & xvi. 8.

own fleſh. 6. [g] Better *is* an handful *with* quietneſs, than both the hands full *with* travel and vexation of ſpirit.

v. 4—6. The more he conſiders, the more the conviction is evident, that all beneath the ſun is vanity and vexation of ſpirit.

1. Is a man induſtrious, ingenious, and ſucceſsful? ſtrait he is the butt of envy. Though with hard travel he laboured in the ſchool of learning, or in the buſineſs of life, and all the ſteps he took were unexceptionably upright; yet, ſuch is the vile nature of fallen man, that, inſtead of rendering the deſerved praiſe, and rejoicing in his neighbour's proſperity and honour, his evil eye is upon him, and his malignant tongue ready to traduce his merit. Even his good works ſhall draw upon him the bittereſt hatred, 1 *John* iii. 12. But though men make us ſo ungrateful a return, we muſt not be diſcouraged: we ſhall have praiſe of God, and that will overbalance the world's envy and hatred.

2. The oppoſite conduct is yet attended with greater vexation. Inſtead of being induſtrious, and to avoid being envied, *the fool*, the ſlothful man, *foldeth his hands together*; and the conſequence of ſuch idleneſs is, that *he eateth his own fleſh*; emaciated through hunger, and famiſhed for want; or waſting the ſubſtance his family ſhould inherit; and ſuggeſts, in vindication of himſelf, that a little with eaſe, and without labour, is better than abundance which muſt be hardly earned; as if ſloth was quietneſs, diligent induſtry intolerable toil, and indolence contentment. Or the words, *v.* 6. may expreſs the wiſe man's judgment, directing us to the golden mean between reproachful indolence and reſtleſs labour and anxiety; for the moderate gains of honeſt induſtry, enjoyed with contentment, are infinitely a more ſatisfactory portion, than the exorbitant wealth that is gotten with ſore travel, kept with anxiety, and embittered in the uſing.

[h] Iſa v. 8.

[i] Pſ. xxxix. 6.

[k] Gal. vi. 1.

[l] Heb. x. 24.

7. ¶ Then I returned, and I ſaw vanity under the ſun. 8. There is one *alone*, [h] and *there is* not a ſecond; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all his labour, neither is his eye ſatisfied with riches, [i] neither *ſaith he*, For whom do I labour, and bereave my ſoul of good? This *is* alſo vanity, yea, it *is* a ſore travel. 9. ¶ Two *are* better than one; becauſe they have a good reward for their labour. 10. For [k] if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but wo to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up. 11. Again, [l] if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone?* 12. And if one prevail againſt him, two ſhall withſtand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

v. 7—12. He that walks about under the ſun, will ever be obſerving more and more of the vanity of the creature; a freſh inſtance of which is produced,

1. In the character of the miſer, who, though he hath none but himſelf to provide for, and neither *child or brother*, to whom he may bequeath the riches he hath amaſſed; yet is indefatigable in his labours, inſatiable in his deſires of wealth, fears to increaſe his family, ſhuns the joys of ſociety, nay, grudges the neceſſaries his own body craves, becauſe of the expence; and never once conſiders, (ſo wretchedly is he infatuated) *for whom do I labour?* neither for the glory of God, my own comfort, or others good; perhaps, for thoſe who will never thank me, and ſquander in extravagance, and thoughtleſs diſſipation, the fruits of ſo much toil and care. This is indeed *a vanity* and *ſore travel*, the folly great as the ſin.

2. The wiſe man ſhews how much preferable ſociety and the enjoyment of our labours is to this unnatural ſolitude and niggardlineſs. The comforts and advantages of marriage and friendſhip amply overpay us for all they coſt. *Two are better than one*; more happy than they could be ſeparate; *becauſe they have a good reward for their labour*; enjoy mutual aſſiſtance and counſel, and communicate mutual pleaſure. If one falls as they travel, the other is ready to lend his helping hand; if into errors or ſin, a faithful friend will ſeek to reſtore ſuch one in the ſpirit of meekneſs: if into ſorrow, he will be near to comfort him. *But woe to him that is alone when he falleth*: where he lies he is in danger of being loſt. Again, they communicate mutual warmth: *If two lie together, they have heat*; which is alſo true ſpiritually, for nothing warms the heart more than Chriſtian fellowſhip, as the diſciples going to Emmaus experienced; whilſt ſolitude, inſtead of raiſing our affections, as ſecluded monks and hermits boaſt, removes us from one of the moſt effectual means of heavenly-mindedneſs. As uſeful will ſociety be in time of danger: the robber will attack a ſingle traveller, that dares not attempt it when he hath company. Satan thus beſet Eve, and falſe teachers thus ſingle out their prey; but a faithful friend is a guard againſt temptation, which, even by communicating it, is ſometimes overcome; *and a threefold cord*, where Chriſtians unite in ſociety, and Chriſt is in the midſt of them, *is not quickly broken*; none of the powers of earth or hell ſhall be able to prevail againſt them.

† Heb. Who knoweth not to be admoniſhed.

[m] Gen. xli. 14.

13. ¶ Better *is* a poor and a wiſe child, than an old and fooliſh king, † who will no more be admoniſhed. 14. For [m] out of priſon he cometh to reign, whereas alſo *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor. 15. I conſidered all the living which walk under the ſun, with the ſecond child that ſhall ſtand up in his ſtead. 16. *There is* no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: they alſo that come after, ſhall not rejoice in him. Surely, this alſo *is* vanity and vexation of ſpirit.

v. 13—16. Crowns ſeem the moſt ſubſtantial goods, yet they are held by a precarious tenure, and cumbered with much vanity and vexation of ſpirit.

1. If they are on the heads of the fooliſh, they totter; for though inherited by deſcent, and worn to old age, yet, if the king, whoſe age ſhould add veneration and weight to his dignity, be *fooliſh*, unable to manage the reins of government, and perverſe and conceited withal; who will not bear *to be admoniſhed*, nor adviſe with the counſellors of wiſdom; he *becometh poor*, dethroned by his ſubjects, or conquered by invaders. So that even a child, though poor and low in the world, yet, if wiſe, is a more reſpectable perſonage, and will riſe from the dunghill, as Joſeph from the dungeon, to the higheſt honours; whilſt the other is hurled from the ſummit of dignity and affluence, to the depths of infamy and want.

2. The very fickleneſs of the people will ſometimes be enough to bring about revolutions in the ſtate. Solomon obſerved in his reſearches, that the riſing ſun was uſually adored, and the ſucceſſor more careſſed than the reigning monarch. They are in haſte to ſee his child ſtand up in his ſtead, and think to alter their condition for the better in transferring the crown from the father to the ſon. Thus without end are they reſtleſsly given to change, *v.* 16. as thoſe who went before them were, and thoſe who come after them will be; diſſatisfied quickly with their new king, and willing to pull him down to-day, whom they ſat up yeſterday. And it cannot but afford much grief to a prince to ſee this inconſtancy in his ſubjects, and to hear thoſe hiſs him in contempt, who late received him with huzza's, and ſhouts of praiſe. It were well if this taught him to ſeek a richer and more enduring crown than that of gold, even a crown of glory, which fadeth not away

CHAP. V.

Solomon in this chapter diſcourſeth concerning the worſhip of God. All beſides religion hath been proved vanity; but if our religion be a vain religion, how great is that vanity! Let us therefore take heed of vanity, 1. *In hearing the word, and offering ſacrifice,* ver. 1. 2. *In prayer,* ver. 2, 3. 3. *In making vows,* ver. 4—6. 4. *In pretending to divine dreams,* ver. 7. *Now,* (1.) *For a remedy againſt theſe vanities, he preſcribes the fear of God,* ver. 7. (2.) *To prevent the offence that might ariſe from the preſent ſufferings of good people, he directs us to look up to God,* ver. 8. (3.) *Concerning the wealth of this world, and the vanity and vexation that attends it. The fruits of the earth indeed are neceſſary to the ſupport of life,* ver. 9. *but as for ſilver and gold, and riches,* 1. *They are unſatisfying,* ver. 10. 2. *They are unprofitable,* ver. 11. 3. *They are diſquieting,* ver. 12. 4. *They often prove hurtful and deſtroying,* ver. 13. 5. *They are periſhing,* ver. 14. 6. *They muſt be left behind when we die,* ver. 15, 16. 7. *If we have not a heart to make uſe of them, they occaſion a great deal of uneaſineſs,* ver. 17. *And therefore he recommends to us the comfortable uſe of that which God hath given us, with an eye to him that is the Giver, as the beſt way both to anſwer the end of our having it, and to obviate the miſchiefs that commonly attend great eſtates,* ver. 18—20.

[a] Exod. iii. 5. Iſa. i. 12.

[b] 1 Sam. xv. 22. Pſ. l. 8. Prov. xv. 8. & xxi. 27. Hoſ. vi. 6.

† Or, word.

[c] Prov. x. 19. Mat. vi. 7.

[d] Prov. x. 19.

1. [a] KEEP thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of God, and be more ready to hear, [b] than to give the ſacrifice of fools: for they conſider not that they do evil. 2. Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter *any* † thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore [c] let thy words be few. 3. For a dream cometh through the multitude of buſineſs, and [d] a fool's voice *is known* by multitude of words.

v. 1—3. Since in the world all is vanity, the ſubſtantial good muſt be ſought, and can only be found, in the ways of godlineſs, in the worſhip and ſervice of God. But even here we muſt beware of vanity in our approach to him, leſt our very prayer be turned into ſin. He directs us therefore whither

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to go, *to the houſe of God*; and how to behave in the congregation, ſo as to profit thereby.

1. We muſt draw near with reverence and godly fear, jealous over our hearts, that our corrupt affections may be put off, our thoughts ſolemn and recollected, and our devotions heart-felt and ſincere.

2. We muſt beware that we *offer not the ſacrifice of fools.* The prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, and their moſt expenſive ſacrifices a ſtench in his noſtrils. Whilſt they think to recommend themſelves to God by their pompous and hypocritical devotions, the ſervices of the lip and knee, not of the heart, *they conſider not that they do evil*; they deceive themſelves, and inſult the heart-ſearching God. Or, *they know not but to do evil*; for to do good they have no knowledge. How many a ſelf-righteous formaliſt in the day of judgment will be aſtoniſhed to ſee their very prayers and devotions, on which they truſted, riſing up to their condemnation!

3. That we may not offer the ſacrifice of fools, theſe neceſſary cautions are to be attended to.

[1.] We muſt *be ready to hear* God's word read and preached, that we may be inſtructed in the knowledge of his holy will, and directed how to ſerve him acceptably, and worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth. *Note*, They who place all their dependance on the form of public prayer, and are inattentive to the word of God read, or expect no benefit from the ſermon preached to them, are certainly ſelf-deceivers, and ſtrangers to the power of godlineſs.

[2.] We muſt not *be raſh with our mouth, nor our heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* Serious meditation muſt prepare the matter; the heart be engaged; the preſence of God felt; a ſenſe of our wants deep; and our words breathing the language of fervent deſire. And the ſame may be ſaid of ſpeaking *for* God, as well as *to* him: the ſubject muſt be well-digeſted, and not the crude effuſions of haſty lips.

[3.] Our *words* muſt be *few*, and fervent, rather than prolix tautology: not that when the heart is full we are ſtraitened; it is not the length of prayers, but the vain repetition, and dry formality of them, which God condemns. And abundant reaſon there is for theſe cautions, if we conſider the God with whom we have to do, and our own vanity and vileneſs before him. *He is in heaven*, enthroned in glory and light inacceſſible; omniſcient, and almighty; the object of eternal adoration of ſaints and angels; and far exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe; *and we are upon earth*, worms and duſt before him, yea, ſinful duſt and aſhes, unworthy to open our polluted lips, or lift up our eyes to him. Highly profane and ſtrangely ignorant would it be therefore in us, to be uttering a multitude of words before him, unmeaning, crude, and indigeſted, like the ravings of a dream that cometh through the multitude of buſineſs, *v.* 3. In common converſation a fool is known by his talkativeneſs, but to approach God with ſuch noiſe and nonſenſe is not only the fooliſhneſs of folly, but the height of impiety.

4. [e] When thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to
pay it: for *he hath* no pleaſure in fools; [f] pay that
which thou haſt vowed. 5. [g] Better *is it* that thou
ſhouldſt not vow, than that thou ſhouldſt vow and not
pay. 6. Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin,
neither ſay thou [h] before the angel, that it *was* an error:
wherefore ſhould God be angry at thy voice, and de-
ſtroy the work of thine hands? 7. For in the multi-
tude of dreams and many words, *there are* alſo *divers*
vanities: but [i] fear thou God. 8. ¶ If thou ſeeſt the
oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of judg-
ment and juſtice in a province, marvel not at the
† matter: for [k] he *that is* higher than the higheſt, re-
gardeth, and *there be* higher than they.

[e] Num. xxx. 2. Deut. xxiii. 21. Pſ. l. 14. & lxxvi. 11.
[f] Pſ. lxvi. 13, 14.
[g] Prov. xx. 25. Acts v. 2, 5.
[h] 1 Cor. xi. 10.
[i] Chap. xii. 14.
† Heb. Will or purpoſe.
[k] Pſ. lviii. 11. & lxxxii. 1.

v. 4—8. From the ſervice of prayer the wiſe man paſſes on to vows, wherewith a man ſhall bind his ſoul.

1. We muſt be conſcientious in fulfilling our vows. *Defer not to pay it*; preciſely and punctually perform the engagement, and that without delay; for delays are dangerous, where the path of duty is evident. To play the fool with God, is to bring ruin on our ſouls; *for he* will not be mocked, and *hath no pleaſure in fools*; abhors ſuch lightneſs and falſhood; and far better not vow, than not pay, *v.* 5. Every vow ſuppoſes that we were not under an antecedent obligation, and therefore need not bind our ſouls; but, when once made, it were highly criminal not to fulfil them. Therefore,

2. We ſhould be cautious of making vows, *v.* 6. However frequent under the law, they ſeem leſs ſuited to the goſpel diſpenſation, and tend to enſhare and bring the ſoul into bondage. *Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin*, by vowing what is evil, and not fit to be obſerved; or what, through the frailty of our nature, we are not likely to perform; leſt too late we ſhould be driven to a fooliſh and ſinful excuſe, and *ſay before the angel, It was an error*; either before the prieſt, the miniſter of God repreſented by the cherubim, or the great angel of the covenant Chriſt Jeſus; for ſuch levity and vain pretences will provoke God, and bring down his curſe upon the work of our hands, for the ſucceſs of which perhaps the vows were made.

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3. We muſt fear God, and that will prevent haſty words, and vain terrors from our dreams. They may be ſtrange, confuſed, frightful, and often perplex the minds of the ſuperſtitious; but in general are no more to be regarded, than the multitude of words in the mouth of a fool, which are not fit to be repeated. They who fear God, need fear nothing beſide.

4. We may not queſtion the equity of Divine Providence, becauſe of the injuſtice too commonly practiſed among men. It is a grievous and melancholy ſcene to behold the poor oppreſſed, and the form of law cloaking the moſt arbitrary and unrighteous decrees; but we may not think God hath therefore forſaken the earth. *Marvel not at the matter*, as ſtrange; or *at the will* of God in permitting it; *for he that is higher than the higheſt*, the omnipotent and eternal Judge, *regardeth*; obſerves the wickedneſs of the proud and the oppreſſor, and will reckon with them ſhortly, when every cauſe ſhall be reviſed at his bar. *And there be higher than they*; either ſuperior courts, wherein appeals may be lodged; or the holy angels, the miniſtring ſpirits who wait on the heirs of ſalvation to defend them, and are the executioners of divine vengeance on their enemies; or the eternal Three, before whom the proudeſt and moſt exalted of the ſons of men are leſs than nothing and vanity, more eaſily cruſhed than a moth under the finger.

9. ¶ Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all:
the king *himſelf* is ſerved by the field. 10. He that
loveth ſilver, ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver; nor he
that loveth abundance, with increaſe: this *is* alſo vanity.
11. When goods increaſe, they are increaſed that eat
them: and what good *is there* to the owners thereof,
ſaving the beholding *of them* with their eyes? 12. The
ſleep of a labouring man *is* ſweet, whether he eat little
or much: but the abundance of the rich will not ſuffer
him to ſleep. 13. There is a ſore evil *which* I have
ſeen under the ſun, *namely*, [l] riches kept for the owners
thereof to their hurt. 14. But thoſe riches periſh by
evil travel: and he begetteth a ſon, and *there is* nothing
in his hand. 15. [m] As he came forth of his mother's
womb, naked ſhall he return to go as he came, and
ſhall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry
away in his hand. 16. And this alſo is a ſore evil,
***that* in all points as he came, ſo ſhall he go: and [n] what**
profit hath he [o] that hath laboured for the wind? 17. All
his days alſo [p] he eateth in darkneſs, and *he hath* much
ſorrow, and wrath with his ſickneſs.

[l] 1 Kings xxi. 7, 13.
[m] Job i. 21. Pſ. xlix. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 7.
[n] Chap. i. 3.
[o] Prov. xi. 29.
[p] Pſ. cxxvii. 2.

v. 9—17. Great riches, as well as all other things, however in general coveted, will be found a great vanity.

1. The earth affords enough for all, and agriculture is a noble employment, as it may be rendered, *the excellency of the earth above all things is this*; we can do much better without the merchant, than without the huſbandman. *The king himſelf is ſerved by the field*, with proviſions for himſelf and his houſehold: or, *is a ſervant to the field*, delights in huſbandry, and counts it no diſparagement to his dignity to follow the plough.

2. Tillage is a needful employment; and a decent proviſion, got by honeſt induſtry, deſirable; but inordinate love of money is criminal, and attended with much miſery.

[1.] The deſires are inſatiable, *v.* 10. He that hath much, would ſtill have more, and is ever craving. The abundance poſſeſſed cannot ſatisfy; ſomething ſtill is wanted. Hunger cannot be fed on gold; much leſs the ſoul find reſt in this ſhining vanity.

[2.] Great eſtates will be attended with great expences: as the wealth increaſes, ſo doth the family, equipage, and retinue; and the owner hath no other ſatisfaction of his affluence, than *the ſeeing it with his eyes.* He can but have food and raiment, and that he had equally ſufficient for himſelf when he had leſs. Indeed to have it in our power to do good is a bleſſing: but when the heart is covetous, it gives a man but pain to ſee his ſubſtance devoured.

[3.] The ſervant who labours hath, in ſome inſtances, the advantage. Sweet ſleep cloſes his eyes; no indigeſtion diſturbs his ſlumbers; no cares keep him waking; weary with toil he repoſes, and riſes refreſhed and vigorous. Thus ſhall the weary believer reſt, and wake with joy in a reſurrection-day. But the maſter, gorged to ſatiety, with his ſtomach loaded, lies down and toſſes reſtleſs and unquiet on his bed of down; or, filled with carking anxiety, and a world of buſineſs, his ruffled mind admits not the ſoft hand of ſleep to cloſe his eye-lids: or perhaps conſcious guilt haunts him, and ſtartles him with frightful dreams from broken ſlumbers.

[4.] Riches are often exceeding hurtful to their owners: they tempt the robber and murderer; they afford opportunity to gratify every lawleſs appetite; puff up the mind uſually with pride and ſecurity; through exceſs and luxury, bring diſeaſes upon the body; and plunge men into diverſe fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which finally drown the ſoul in perdition and deſtruction: and *a ſore evil* indeed is this!

[5.] Riches ill got, or ill uſed, ſoon *periſh by evil travel*; trading beyond their capital, many have been ruined; by miſmanagement, the greateſt eſtate melts as ſnow before the ſun; and God, in his providence, often blows upon the abundance of the wicked, and like a ſhadow it flees away. So that his ſon, who was to have inherited after him, finds himſelf a beggar, and worſe off, than if he had been born with no expectations, and taught to earn his own bread.

[6.] Riches cannot deſcend with men into the grave. Naked as they came from the womb, muſt they be carried to the tomb, and leave all their poſſeſſions behind them. *In all points as he came, ſo ſhall he go*, and if this be the caſe, *what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?* for as vain will riches then appear, and as unſatisfying. *A ſore evil* this, to thoſe who had taken up their reſt below, and ſaid to their ſoul, *take thine eaſe.* *Note*, (1.) Though our bodies muſt return to the duſt from whence they came, it were grievous if the ſoul returned as it came, unrenewed and unholy; better far never to have been born, than thus to die. (2.) They who labour for their bodies merely, will find their fearful diſappointment at laſt; whilſt they who labour for their ſouls, will carry all their riches with them.

[7.] Riches often makes a man's days uncomfortable, as well as his death miſerable. *All his days he eateth in darkneſs*, his carking cares prevent his enjoying his very meals; or he grudges the expence; or his ſoul is utterly deſtitute of the divine light and love. *And he hath much ſorrow, and wrath in his ſickneſs*; it is bad with him in health, and worſe with him in ſickneſs: he receives it not as the rod of fatherly chaſtiſement, but feels the wrath that is in the viſitation; quarrels with God's providence, grieves bitterly at the thought of leaving all behind him, and is ſhocked at the terrible apprehenſions of death. Or as the words may be rendered, *he is much angry*, a thouſand cauſes of vexation daily ariſe to him, from thoſe around him; *and he hath ſickneſs* brought on him by his fretfulneſs and anxiety, *and wrath* at thoſe about him; diſcontented and peeviſh with them, however aſſiduous to wait upon him; or with God himſelf, for having thus afflicted him, and this but aggravates his miſery.

18. Behold, *that* which I have ſeen: [q] *it is* good and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the ſun, † all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for [r] it *is* his portion. 19. [s] Every man alſo to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this *is* the gift of God. 20. ‡ For he ſhall not much remember the days of his life: becauſe God anſwereth *him* in the joy of his heart.

q Chap. ii. 24. & iii. 12, 22. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
† Heb. There is a good, which is comely.
‡ Heb. The number of the days.
r Chap. ii. 10. & iii. 22.
s Chap. ii. 24. & iii. 13.
‖ Or though he give not much, yet he remembereth, &c.

v. 18—20. Solomon, in the view of the vanity of riches, makes the ſame concluſion he had done before, *chap.* iii. 22. that the beſt uſe of them is the moderate enjoyment of them, without ſtarving ourſelves with covetouſneſs, or killing ourſelves with labour and care. All our days it is good to rejoice in the fruit of our toils; *it is our portion* in this life, and cannot be enjoyed hereafter. The poſſeſſions themſelves are God's gift, and therefore in gratitude to the giver, to be uſed chearfully; and the heart to do ſo, he muſt give alſo, or elſe he cannot have any comfort in them; and this will tend to make the days of our pilgrimage leſs tedious: whilſt, in anſwer to our prayers, God is pleaſed to fill us with food and gladneſs, make us forget our travel and diſappointments; and with thankfulneſs to him, and chearfulneſs of heart, to hold on our way, advancing to our journey's end in peace and comfort, till he at laſt admits us into his eternal reſt.

CHAP. VI.

We have in this chapter, 1. *The vanity of wealth in a miſer's hand, inſtanced in a variety of particulars,* ver. 1—10. 2. *He concludes with this plain inference from the whole, that it is folly to think of making up a happineſs for ourſelves in the things of this world,* ver. 11, 12. *Our ſatisfaction muſt be in another life, not in this.*

1. THERE is an evil which I have ſeen under the ſun, and it *is* common among men: 2. A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, ſo that [a] he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he deſireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a ſtranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil diſeaſe. 3. ¶ If a man beget an hundred *children*, and live many years, ſo that the days of his years be many, and his ſoul be not filled with good, and alſo [b] *that* he have no burial, I ſay, *that* [c] an untimely birth *is* better than he. 4. For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkneſs, and [d] his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs. 5. Moreover, he hath not ſeen the ſun, nor known *any thing*: this hath more reſt than the other. 6. ¶ Yea, though he live a thouſand years twice *told*, yet hath he ſeen no good: do not all go to one place?

a Job xxi. 20, &c. Pſ. xvii. 14. & lxxiii. 7.
b Iſa. xiv. 19, 20. Jer. xxii. 19.
c Job iii. 16. Pſ. lviii. 8.
d Prov. x. 7.

v. 1—6. The evil here remarked, is not peculiar to one place, or age; it is ſtill common under the ſun, and a grief to every attentive obſerver. Bleſſed be God, above the ſun there is no evil, and therefore no cauſe for lamentation.

1. The perſon deſcribed is a rich, covetous man. God hath given him *riches, wealth*; all which come from him, *and* are often the portion of the moſt unworthy, nay, frequently given in wrath; yet theſe bring *honour* and reſpect, for to Mammon men generally bow. Add to this, *v.* 3. a numerous family, to perpetuate his name, and long life, in which he might enjoy his abundance, even to a thouſand and a thouſand years, *v.* 6. In ſhort, heart could not wiſh for more outward advantages than God hath beſtowed upon him: but notwithſtanding, it appears evident that man's life, the comfort of it, conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things he poſſeſſes. For,

2. God giveth him not a heart to taſte his mercies, and then they are all empty and vain. He hath not *power to eat thereof*, his covetous temper will not allow himſelf or family neceſſaries, and withholding from the poor their portion, God puniſhes him, by ſuffering him to pine in the midſt of plenty. He cannot truſt his neareſt relations, or his own children; but *a ſtranger*, who hath wormed himſelf into favour, *eateth it*, preying upon him, and after his deceaſe poſſeſſing his fortune. A vanity this, and amazing folly, *an evil diſeaſe*, a madneſs ſeldom cured, and fatal both to body and ſoul. *His ſoul is not filled with good*; his purſe is filled with gold, his warehouſes with ſtores, but his ſoul is ſtill empty, uneaſy; there is an aching void within, which none of theſe things can fill. Nay, *he hath ſeen no good*, v. 6. through all his days inſenſible to the mercies around him, and unable to reliſh any of the comforts he poſſeſſes. And as his life is without joy, his death is without honour; he hath *no burial*, v. 3. or none ſuitable to his rank: the ſordidneſs of his temper makes him a niggard, even to his corpſe, and to forbid it in his will a becoming interment; or his heirs have ſo little eſteem for him, that if they huddle him into a grave, they care not how meanly it is done.

3. Better is it to have been carried from the womb to the grave, than thus to have lived and died. *For he cometh in with vanity*, the abortive birth, *and departeth in*, or *into darkneſs*, unnoticed, is laid in the duſt, *and his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs*, forgotten and unknown: *moreover, he hath not ſeen the ſun*, nor the miſeries that are under it, *nor known any thing* of the troubles of this diſordered world, or of the comforts of it: *this hath more reſt than the other*, having never groaned under the toils of labour, the evil of covetouſneſs, or the miſery of departing. They *go to one place*, the common bed of duſt, where no diſtinction marks the putrid clay.

7. [e] All the labour of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the † appetite is not filled. 8. For what hath the wiſe more than the fool? what hath the poor that knoweth to walk before the living? 9. ¶ Better *is* the ſight of the eyes, than ‡ the wandring of the deſire: this *is* alſo vanity and vexation of ſpirit. 10. That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it *is* man: [f] neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

e Prov. xvi. 26.
† Heb. Soul.
‡ Heb. The walking of the ſoul.
f Job ix. 32. Iſa. xlv. 9. Jer. xlix. 19.

v. 7—10. How vain are the toils of anxiety!

1. There is no ſatisfaction in them. *All the labour of man is for his mouth*, what he ſhall eat, and what he ſhall drink, *and yet the appetite is not filled*; avarice is inſatiable, hunger continually returning, and pampered appetite ever craving; or *the ſoul is not ſatisfied*; it can reliſh nothing of theſe ſenſual indulgences.

2. In the enjoyments of this world, there is not that difference which appears between the wiſe and the fool, the rich and the poor. *For what hath the wiſe more than the fool?* what more comfort in his poſſeſſions, or fruit of his labour? reſpecting the gratification of ſenſual appetite they are on a level: and *what hath the poor that knoweth how to walk before the living?* if he be induſtrious, and dextrous in his buſineſs, he provides a livelihood for himſelf and family; and in his ſphere enjoys his little, and taſtes as much ſatisfaction therein, as the rich, in all their abundance.

3. Contentment with what we have, is a far greater comfort, than to be always coveting more. *Better is the ſight of the eyes*, the preſent portion before us, when enjoyed, *than the wandering of the deſire*, ſtill craving and inſatiate; for *this is alſo vanity*: if the

objects we covet, were given us, they would be ſtill unſatisfactory, and the diſappointments we muſt meet with in purſuit of them, will be a *vexation of* our *ſpirit*.

4. After all our labours, we muſt remain for ever merely human, with all the infirmities of *man*, and cannot alter the divine purpoſes; ſtrive as we will, God's eternal decrees will take place: and though we could attain all the riches of the eaſt, or the empire of the world, *it is*, and muſt be *known* and acknowledged, *that it is man*, a poor dying worm, ſtill lighter on the balances than vanity itſelf.

5. There is no contending againſt God; he is mightier than we: it were preſumption to queſtion his wiſdom or goodneſs, and madneſs to oppoſe Omnipotence. His will is law, to which, willing or unwilling, even the great, the wealthy, the mighty, muſt ſubmit; and ſickneſs and death, at fartheſt, will convince them they are but men.

11. ¶ Seeing there be many things that increaſe vanity, what *is* man the better? 12. For who knoweth what *is* good for man in *this* life, † all the days of his vain life which he ſpendeth [g] as a ſhadow? for [h] who can tell a man what ſhall be after him under the ſun?

† Heb. The number of the days of the life of his vanity. g Pſ. cii. 11. & cix. 23. & & cxliv. 4. Jam. iv. 14. h Chap. viii. 7.

v. 11, 12. Hear then the concluſion of the matter.

1. Man's purſuits after creature-good but the more perplex and trouble him. *Seeing there be many things that increaſe vanity*, knowledge, wealth, power, pleaſure, *what is man the better?* nay, is he not rather the worſe? theſe things which promiſed him happineſs, inordinately ſought, prove a plague and ſnare to him.

2. Man is a poor blind creature, and knoweth not what is for his own good; *for who can tell what is good for man in this life?* none but God alone, who will do what is beſt, and our happineſs is contentment in his diſpenſations.

3. Man's life is ſhort, tranſitory, and vain. Years, nay months are too much to compute it by; it is reckoned *by days*, days of vanity, empty of all good, as a ſhadow, wherein there is nothing ſubſtantial, and ſwiftly hurrying to their end.

4. He hath no foreſight of what will happen when he is gone, what will be the caſe of his poſterity, and how his ſubſtance will be diſpoſed of; ſo that his proſpects in futurity afford him no more happineſs than his preſent poſſeſſions.

CHAP. VII.

Solomon had given many proofs and inſtances of the vanity of this world and the things of it, now in this chapter, (1.) *He recommends to us ſome good means proper to be uſed for the redreſs of theſe grievances, and the arming of ourſelves againſt the miſchiefs we are in danger of from them, that we may make the beſt of bad. As,* 1. *Care of our reputation*, ver. 1. 2. *Seriouſneſs*, ver. 2—6. 3. *Calmneſs of ſpirit*, ver. 7—10. 4. *Prudence in the management of all our affairs*, ver. 11, 12. 5. *Submiſſion to the will of God in all events, accommodating ourſelves to every condition*, ver. 13—15. 6. *A conſcientious avoiding of all dangerous extremes*, ver. 16—18. 7. *Mildneſs and tenderneſs towards thoſe that have been injurious to us*, ver. 19—22. *In ſhort, the beſt way to ſave ourſelves from the vexation which the vanity of the world creates us, is to keep our temper, and to maintain a ſtrict government of our paſſions.* (2.) *He laments his own iniquity, as that which was more vexatious than any of theſe vanities, that myſtery of iniquity the having of many wives, by which he was drawn away from God and his duty*, ver. 23—29.

1.[a] A *Good* name *is* better than precious ointment; and [b] the day of death than the day of one's birth. 2. ¶ *It is* better to go to the houſe of mourning, than to go to the houſe of feaſting: for that *is* the end of all men, and the living will lay *it* to his heart. 3. [c] † Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the ſadneſs of the countenance the heart is made better. 4. The heart of the wiſe *is* in the houſe of mourning; but the heart of fools *is* in the houſe of mirth. 5. [d] *It is* better to hear the rebuke of the wiſe, than for a man to hear the ſong of fools. 6. For [e] as the ‡ crackling of thorns under a pot, ſo *is* the laughter of the fool: this alſo *is* vanity.

a Prov. xv. 30. & xxii. 1. b Rev. xiv. 13. c 2 Cor. vii. 10. † Or anger. d Pſ. cxli. 5. Prov. xiii. 18. & xv. 31, 32. e Pſ. cxviii. 12. Chap. ii. 2. ‡ Heb. Sound.

v. 1—6. Theſe are ſtrange paradoxes to the unwiſe, but great truths to him that underſtandeth.

1. *A good name is better than precious ointment*; a name written in the book of life of the Lamb, and eminent for the exerciſe of every gracious and chriſtian temper, is infinitely preferable to all the poſſeſſions of earth, and more fragrant than the richeſt perfume. *And*,

2. *The day of death than the day of one's birth*; that is, to thoſe who die in the Lord, and are diſmiſſed from the burdens of mortality to reſt in him; a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed for, that for ever puts a period to all our ſins and ſorrows, and opens the golden gates of life and immortality.

3. *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, than the houſe of feaſting*; to feaſt is not evil, but indulgence is always dangerous: to mourn, is painful, but great good often ariſes from it; and eſpecially apt are thoſe melancholy ſeaſons, when the dead are carried forth, and the corpſe and the coffin are before us, to make impreſſions on our hearts more bleſſed in their iſſue and influence, than any we ſhould receive in the houſe of feaſting. They bid us learn to die, remember, and prepare for it; they give us a ſtriking exhibition of *the end of all men*, and make us feel that duſt we are, and unto duſt returning; *and the living will lay it to heart*, at leaſt thoſe who are wiſe will do ſo, and not forget to make application of the ſubject to their own hearts.

4. *Sorrow is better than laughter*, better for our ſouls at leaſt; *for by the ſadneſs of the countenance the heart is made better*; when beholding departing friends, whilſt we mourn over them, we are quickened to give greater diligence to follow them, and make our calling and election ſure; or affected with godly ſorrow for ſin, that worketh repentance unto ſalvation, never to be repented of. Whilſt laughter often hath ill effects, deſtroys the ſpirit of ſeriouſneſs, makes the heart light and vain, and eſtranges it from God. Therefore *the heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning*, in meditation, engaged with thoughts of mortality, though the objects are not before him; *but the heart of fools is in the houſe of mirth*, they cannot bear a ſerious reflection; if a ſolemn impreſſion of any ſcene of death hath been made upon them, they haſten to ſome gay company to efface it, and are in their element where mirth and jollity reign.

5. *It is better to hear the rebuke of the wiſe*; however ſharp or grating it may at firſt ſound, the effects of it will be ſalutary; and it will be our wiſdom, and in the iſſue our comfort, to have heard and profited thereby: and therefore rather to be choſen *than the ſong of fools*; either their flatteries that tickle the ear, or their ſongs and carouſals, which are vain, unprofitable, pernicious; *for as the crackling of thorns under a pot, ſo is the laughter of the fool*, loud and noiſy, but ſuddenly expiring; and ſucceeded with groans, and wailing without end. *This alſo is vanity.*

7. ¶ Surely oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad, and [f] a gift deſtroyeth the heart. 8. [g] Better is the end of a thing, than the beginning thereof: *and* [h] the patient in ſpirit *is* better than the proud in ſpirit. 9. [i] Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to be angry: for anger reſteth in the boſom of fools. 10. Say not thou, What is *the cauſe* that the former days were better than theſe? for thou doſt not inquire † wiſely concerning this.

f Exod. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19. g Luke xvi. 25. h Prov. xiv. 29. i Prov. xiv. 17. & xvi. 32. † Heb. Out of wiſdom.

v. 7—10. Solomon had obſerved the oppreſſions under the ſun; here he notes one ſad effect of them.

1. *Surely oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad*; either under the length and ſeverity of his own trials, he is ready to grow impatient; or obſerving the ſufferings of the innocent, under the power of the wicked, he is tempted to queſtion the equity of the divine providence; *and a gift deſtroyeth the heart*, occaſions juſtice to be perverted to oppreſſion, or *deſtroyeth a heart of gifts*, ſuch is the generous heart of the wiſe.

2. He exhorts to patient waiting for the iſſue; for however dark and lowring the ſcene may appear, when oppreſſors rule, yet mark the end; *for better is the end of a thing, than the begining thereof*; God will break the rod of the wicked, as he did Pharaoh, and relieve the injured innocent, as his Iſrael of old, from their hands. *Thus the patient in ſpirit*, who meekly ſubmit to God's providential afflictions, and wait quietly upon him, *is better*, a better man, and will by and by be proved infinitely happier, *than the proud in ſpirit*, whoſe lofty looks God will abaſe, and who, unable to endure the chaſtiſements brought upon them, as wild bulls in a net, fret and torment themſelves but the more.

3. He warns us againſt raſh anger. *Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to be angry*, impatient of contradiction or delay, and firing on every ſpark of provocation, but repreſs the riſings of reſentment; be ſlow to wrath; and if it ſwells, ſee that it quickly ſubſides, *for anger reſteth in the boſom of fools*, they entertain it, and though they cover it with deceit, they wait only for an opportunity to take their revenge.

4. We muſt not be ever complaining of the evil of our times, as men are too apt to be, and fancying the former days better than theſe; when in truth it is merely our ignorance of former days, that makes us conceit this, and a reflection upon God's providence, as if his diſpenſations were not equal. The great concern of every man in bad days, is to mend one, and then the times will be better.

11. ¶ Wiſdom is † good with an inheritance: and *by it there is* profit to them that ſee the ſun. 12. For wiſdom *is* a ‡ defence, *and* money *is* a defence: but the excellency

† Or as good as an inheritance. ‡ Heb. ſhadow.

cellency of knowledge *is*, *that* wiſdom giveth life to
them that have it. 13. Conſider the work of God:
for [k] who can make *that* ſtraight which he hath made
crooked? 14. In the day of proſperity be joyful, but
in the day of adverſity conſider: God alſo hath ſet the
one over-againſt the other, to the end that man ſhould
find nothing after him. 15. All *things* have I ſeen in
the days of my vanity: [l] there is a juſt *man* that periſheth
in his righteouſneſs, and there is a wicked *man* that
prolongeth *his life* in his wickedneſs. 16. [m] Be not
righteous overmuch, [n] neither make thyſelf over-wiſe:
why ſhouldſt thou ‖ deſtroy thyſelf? 17. Be not overmuch
wicked, neither be thou fooliſh: [o] why ſhouldſt
thou die § before thy time? 18. *It is* good that [p] thou
ſhouldſt take hold of this, yea, alſo from this withdraw
not thine hand: for he that feareth God, ſhall come
forth of them all. 19. [q] Wiſdom ſtrengthneth the wiſe,
more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city. 20.
For [r] *there is* not a juſt man upon earth that doth good,
and ſinneth not. 21. Alſo † take no heed unto all
words that are ſpoken, leſt thou hear thy ſervant curſe
thee. 22. For oftentimes alſo thine own heart knoweth,
that thou thyſelf likewiſe haſt curſed others.

k Job xii. 14. Chap. i. 15.
l 1 Kings xxi. 13. Chap. viii. 14.
m Prov. xxv. 16.
n Ecclus. iii. 21, 22. Rom. xii. 3.
‖ Heb. Be deſolate.
o Job xv. 32. Pſ. lv. 23. Prov. x. 27.
§ Heb. Not in thy time.
p Heb. iv. 2.
q Prov. xxi. 22. & xxiv. 5. Chap. ix. 16, 18.
r 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chron. vi. 36. Prov. xx. 9. 1 John i. 8.
† Heb. Give not thine heart.

v. 11—22. We have here,

1. Some of the great commendations of wiſdom.

(1.) *It is good with an inheritance*; it is in its own nature good, but with an inheritance it renders a perſon more diſtinguiſhed, and enables him to be more extenſively uſeful; *and by it there is profit to them that ſee the ſun*, men in general enjoy the bleſſing of a wiſe man's affluence.

(2.) *Wiſdom is a defence, and money is a defence*, or *a ſhadow*, under which we ſit in ſafety: ſeverally, they are a protection; united, they mutually conſpire to increaſe each other's efficacy.

(3.) It *giveth life to them that have it*, and this is wiſdom's peculiar *excellency*; riches often endanger the life of their poſſeſſor; but with divine knowledge, ſpiritual and eternal life are inſeparably connected.

(4.) It is better than ſtrength; for *wiſdom ſtrengthens the wiſe*, inſpires them with courage, directs them how to act, and enables them to foil the attacks of their enemies, *more than ten mighty men which are in the city*; which is ſafer under the care of ſuch prudent counſellors, than if guarded by numerous warriors.

2. Our duty is ſubmiſſion and conformity to the divine will. *Conſider the work of God*, the perfection, excellence, and immutability thereof, to ſilence all murmuring againſt the diſpenſations of his providence, which would be alſo vain as it is vile: for *who can make that ſtraight which he hath made crooked?* whatever afflictions he ſends, or judgments he executes, none can ſtay his hand, *or ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* therefore in every condition, our duty is to make the beſt improvement of it. *In the day of proſperity*, when God ſhowers down his ſpiritual or temporal bleſſings, *be joyful*, acknowledge his hand, praiſe him for the mercy, and improve it it to his glory: *but in the day of adverſity*, which will come in its turn, *conſider* the end for which the affliction was ſent, and ſeek to correſpond with God's deſigns therein. *Note*, This is a changing world; we may neither be too elated on proſperity, nor depreſſed with adverſity; but rejoice with trembling, and look forward in hope: for *God hath ſet the one over-againſt the other*, each in its ſeaſon, to work together for his people's good, *to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him*; either nothing that he can amend in the work of God, or nothing certain here below, and therefore he muſt live upon the divine providence, and be prepared for whatever God hath prepared for him.

3. The diſpenſations of providence that ſeem moſt dark, ought not to ſtagger us. *All things have I ſeen in the days of my vanity*, the days of his life, or thoſe more afflictive ones of his departure from God; and perhaps the obſervations he here makes, might have contributed to his fall, and tempted him to infidelity. *There is a juſt man that periſheth in his righteouſneſs*, not eternally, for his ſtate, Godward, is ſecure, but the greateſt piety doth not exempt men from the heavieſt afflictions; nay, perhaps it exaſperates the enmity of the wicked, and gives occaſion to their perſecutors; *and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedneſs*, proſpers, and is ſucceſsful, even to old age; and perhaps protected by the very fruits of his injuſtice: but this is not the place of recompence; the day is at hand, when the calamities of the righteous ſhall be found their greateſt mercies, and the proſperity of the wicked their ruin.

4. He gives an admonition to the ſelf-righteous, and a warning to ſinners. *Be not righteous over much*, which doth not refer to true righteouſneſs, of which we cannot have too much; but to the affectation of appearing righteous before men: when perſons are rigid cenſurers of others, place religion in auſterities which God never enjoined, or by intemperate zeal hurt that cauſe they pretend to defend: *neither make thyſelf over-wiſe*, either above what is written, or, opinionated of thy abilities, ſeverely critical, and arrogantly dictating; *why ſhouldſt thou deſtroy thyſelf?* by needleſs auſterities, or meddling in other men's matters, to provoke their wrath; or, *why ſhouldſt thou be ſtupid?* regarded as ſuch, through thy fooliſh conduct; or *deſolate*, every one ſhunning thy acquaintance, and hating thy company. *Be not over much wicked*, run not into riot and exceſs; or *do not fright thyſelf*, ſo as to be caſt down into deſpair, under a ſenſe of thy guilt, and thus it ſtands contraſted with the proud preſumption before rebuked: *neither be thou fooliſh*, ſo as to be terrified with needleſs fear, or to grow abandonedly profligate; *why ſhouldſt thou die before thy time?* haſtened to the grave by intemperance, or the ſword of juſtice, or in deſpair lay violent hands upon thyſelf.

5. The fear of God will be our beſt preſervative. *It is good that thou ſhouldſt take hold of this* admonition and advice; *yea, alſo from this withdraw not thine hand*, continue a diligent obſerver of theſe things; *for he that feareth God ſhall come forth of them all*, ſaved from the dangerous extremes, preſerved amidſt all difficulties; and under the divine guidance enabled to walk in the ſtrait path of wiſdom and truth, without deviating to the right hand or the left.

6. We muſt not expect ſinleſs perfection this ſide eternity. Though to do good, and eſchew evil, is the labour, deſire, and prayer of every gracious ſoul that is born of God, yet imperfection cleaves to the beſt, and in their beſt duties too. So that *there is not a juſt man upon earth that doeth good* to the full extent of the commandment, *and ſinneth not*, either in omiſſion or commiſſion; and therefore we muſt not proudly conceit ourſelves perfect, nor expect to meet with any among the ſons of men, who are not compaſſed with infirmity.

7. It is wiſe to turn a deaf ear to whatever might provoke, or exaſperate us. *Take no heed to all words that are ſpoken*, be not curious to enquire what others think, or ſay of you; and ſeem not to hear what had better be dropped in ſilence, than brought to an explanation. *Give not thine heart to it*, in the original; be not uneaſy or ſollicitous about it, *leaſt thou hear thy ſervant curſe thee*, whoſe inſolence and ingratitude would render the provocation the greater; and they who hearken to their ſervant's words, will often hear diſagreeable things: but we muſt bear with others, if it were only through the conſciouſneſs of our having been in the ſame condemnation. *For oftentimes alſo thine own heart knoweth, that thou thyſelf likewiſe haſt curſed others*, wiſhed them ill, ſpoken of them diſreſpectfully, or laid on them hard cenſures: the ſenſe of our own failings ſhould preſerve us from anger; and the provocation remind us of, and humble us for, the ſins of the like nature we ourſelves have committed.

23. ¶ All this have I proved by wiſdom: I ſaid, I
will be wiſe, but it *was* far from me. 24. [s] That
which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it
out? 25. [t] I applied mine heart to know, and to ſearch,
and to ſeek out wiſdom, and the reaſon *of things*, and
to know the wickedneſs of folly, even of fooliſhneſs *and*
madneſs: 26. And [u] I find more bitter than death, the
woman whoſe heart *is* ſnares and nets, *and* her hands *as*
bands: [x] † whoſo pleaſeth God ſhall eſcape from her, but
the ſinner ſhall be taken by her. 27. Behold, this have
I found (ſaith [y] the preacher) ‡ *counting* one by one, to
find out the account: 28. Which yet my ſoul ſeeketh,
but I find not: [z] one man among a thouſand have I
found, but a woman among all thoſe have I not found.
29. Lo, this only have I found, that [a] God hath made
man upright: but [b] they have ſought out many inventions.

s Job xxviii. 12, 20.
t Chap. i. 17. & ii. 12.
u Prov. v. 3, 4. & xxii. 14.
x Gen. xxxix. 8.
† Or he that is good before God.
y Chap. i. 1.
‡ Or weighing one thing after another, to find out the reaſon.
z Job xxxiii. 23.
a Gen. i. 27.
b Ibid. iii. 6, 7.

v. 23—29. Solomon had proved the vanity of all things by dear-bought experience, and here he acknowledges it.

1. He owns the defects of his wiſdom, after all his purſuits. *All this have I proved by wiſdom*, all that he hath ſpoken in the foregoing chapters: *I ſaid, I will be wiſe*; ſo far as the greateſt induſtry would carry the moſt enlarged underſtanding, he was reſolved to go; and with the moſt indefatigable diligence he purſued the reſearch, *v.* 25. but ſtill it fled his graſp, he could not fathom the depths, either of nature, providence, or grace; many things were hid, and whilſt the effects were evident, the cauſes of them were myſterious. Thus *it was far from me*; the wiſdom he ſought, he was unable to attain; *that which is far off*, or *far off that which has been*; the works of creation and providence are far above the human comprehenſion, the knowledge of former things loſt in oblivion, or that wiſdom, which was originally in man, now departed from him; *and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* God's perfections, providences, and decrees, are by us unſearchable, the attempt to fathom them will but convince us of our own weakneſs.

2. He deſired to be acquainted with folly as well as wiſdom, and applied his heart *to know the wickedneſs of folly, even of fooliſhneſs*

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neſs and madneſs; ſin is exceedingly deceitful, it requires pains to ſtrip off the maſk, and diſcover its deep malignity: but when its ſinfulneſs is ſeen, then ſhall we upbraid our folly for having yielded to it, and count thoſe pleaſures madneſs, which promiſed the higheſt ſatisfaction, eſpecially thoſe fleſhly luſts, to which Solomon here ſeems particularly to allude. *Note*, True penitents cannot find a name bad enough with which to brand their abominations, and upbraid their own folly and ſin.

3. The reſult of the enquiry, was a diſcovery of the great evil he had committed in yielding to the love of women; on which, with deepeſt anguiſh, he now reflects. *I find more bitter than death, the woman whoſe heart is ſnares and nets, and her hands as bands*; the ſweets of ſin were momentary, the pangs of it mortal and abiding. Now his convictions began to faſten upon his ſoul, he feels the very agonies of death in his conſcience: the ſmiles and blandiſhments that promiſed ſo much enjoyment, hath left a ſting behind, the poiſon of which drinketh up the ſpirit: and once entangled in theſe fatal cords of women's toils, hard, very hard is it to recover, and every freſh indulgence adds ſtrength to the ſnare, and renders the hope of recovery the more deſperate. *Whoſo pleaſeth God, ſhall eſcape from her*; he will preſerve them in the hour of temptation; and if he doth not, we have no power of ourſelves to withſtand for a moment. If we are therefore kept from the temptation, or under it, we muſt regard it as a great mark of God's favour, and acknowledge it with deep thankfulneſs: *but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her*; God will, in judgment, give him up to his own heart's luſts, and ſuffer him to periſh in the iniquities he hath choſen.

4. He obſerves the ſad and ſinful ſtate of man in general, and concludes with pointing out the ſource, whence all the evil proceeds. *Behold, this have I found (ſaith the preacher)* the bitterneſs of a harlot's ſnares, or the fewneſs of the faithful, *v.* 28. *counting one by one, to find out the account*, both men and women, within the compaſs of his knowledge; earneſtly ſollicitous to find out, if but one excellent among them, *which yet my ſoul ſeeketh*, and hitherto had ſought almoſt in vain, *one man among a thouſand have I found* faithful; ſo few, ſo very few walk in the narrow way: or, of a thouſand who have fallen into the ſnares of the adultereſs, not more than one have eſcaped; *but a woman among all thoſe have I not found*; of all the lewd women he had known, not one in a thouſand were ever reclaimed: or perhaps among all his wives and concubines, he found not one who anſwered that character of virtue and excellence he ſought. Some interpret this of the Meſſiah, the only one of the ſons of men perfect in holineſs, whilſt all the daughters of Eve are altogether born in ſin. *Lo! this only have I found* from the ſcriptures of truth, *that God made man upright*, perfect in knowledge and righteouſneſs, but ſad experience now evinces how fearfully apoſtate he is become, and far removed from his once happy ſtate. *They ſought out many inventions*; not content with the ſtation in which God had placed them, they affected to be as wiſe as the Elohim, and, daring to pluck the forbidden fruit, loſt their innocence, were plunged into ſin, miſery, and ſhame; which their ſorry excuſes and inventions to hide it but rendered the more notorious, and their corrupted offspring copy their deſtructive ways.

CHAP. VIII.

Solomon in this chapter comes to recommend wiſdom to us, as the moſt powerful antidote againſt both the temptations and vexations that ariſe from the vanity of the world. Here is, 1. *The benefit and praiſe of wiſdom,* ver. 1. 2. *Some particular inſtances of wiſdom preſcribed to us.* (1.) *We muſt keep in due ſubjection to the government God hath ſet over us,* ver. [illegible]—5. (2.) *We muſt get ready for ſudden evils, and eſpecially for ſudden death,* ver. 6—8. (3.) *We muſt arm ourſelves againſt the temptation of an oppreſſive government, and not think it ſtrange,* ver. 9, 10. *The impunity of oppreſſors makes them more daring,* ver. 11. *but in the iſſue it will be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked,* ver. 12, 13. *and therefore the preſent proſperity of the wicked and afflictions of the righteous ought not to be a ſtumbling-block to us,* ver. 14. (4.) *We muſt chearfully uſe the gifts of God's providence,* ver. 15. (5.) *We muſt with an intire ſatisfaction acquieſce in the will of God, and not pretending to find the bottom, we muſt humbly and ſilently adore the depth of his unſearchable counſels, being aſſured they are all wiſe and juſt and good,* ver. 16, 17.

1. WHO *is* as the wiſe *man?* and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? [a] a man's wiſdom maketh his face to ſhine, and the boldneſs of his face ſhall be changed. 2. I *counſel thee* to keep the king's commandment, [b] and *that* in regard of the oath of God. 3. [c] Be not haſty to go out of his ſight: ſtand not in an evil thing, for [d] he doth whatſoever pleaſeth him. 4. Where the word of a king *is*, *there is* power: and [e] who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou? 5. [f] Whoſo keepeth the commandment ſhall † feel no evil thing: and a wiſe man's heart diſcerneth both time and judgment.

[a] Prov. iv. 8, 9. & xvii. 24. Acts vi. 15.
[b] 1 Chron. xxix. 24. Rom xiii. 5.
[c] Chap. x. 4.
[d] Dan. v. 19.
[e] Job xxxiv. 18.
[f] Rom. xiii. 4.
† Heb. Know.

v. 1—5. Wiſdom is indeed the principal thing. We have here,

1. Its great commendation. *Who is as the wiſe man?* comparable to him for excellence; *or who knoweth the interpretation of a thing, or a word?* none but thoſe who are taught of God, can underſtand his heavenly wiſdom, or interpret his word to the edification of men, or improve the conjunctures of his providence aright. Such a one will be highly honoured and reſpected; *for a man's wiſdom maketh his face to ſhine*, as Moſes's did, when he came down from the mount; and they who ſee it, admire the luſtre and excellence which appears in all his converſation; *or enlightens his face*, enables him to ſee diſtinctly the way in which he ſhould walk; *and the boldneſs of his face ſhall be changed*; it teaches the rough and auſtere to ſmooth their rugged brows, and makes the fierce gentle as the lamb; for when the heart by grace is changed, the very countenance bears the divine impreſſion.

2. The proof of wiſdom inſtanced in dutiful allegiance to the king. I counſel thee *to keep the king's commandment*, obedient in all things to the government under which we live; *and that*, not merely for fear of puniſhment, but for conſcience ſake, *in regard of the oath of God*, the oath of allegiance; or, *but with a regard of the oath of God*; when human injunctions are oppoſite to the Divine commands, then muſt we obey God rather than man. *Be not haſty to go out of his ſight*, ſo as to quit his ſervice, and retire in diſguſt: *ſtand not in an evil thing*; if we have done wrong, we muſt acknowledge it and beg pardon, not perſiſt in our perverſeneſs: *for he doth whatſoever pleaſeth him*, and therefore to offend him is dangerous, who hath power to puniſh at his will; for *where the word of a king is, there is power*: there are multitudes ready to fly at his orders, and execute his vengeance on thoſe who dare contradict him: *and who may ſay to him, What doſt thou?* whoſe power is abſolute, and government deſpotic: and as dangerous as it is to rebel, ſo advantageous is it to obey. For *whoſo keepeth the commandment ſhall feel no evil thing*, but enjoy peace and quietneſs, protected by the powers he obeys; *and a wiſe man's heart diſcerneth both time and judgment*, waits the proper ſeaſon to prefer the grievances he may feel, and with wiſdom ſeeks to procure redreſs.

The whole of this paſſage may alſo be referred to our duty towards the King of kings, whoſe commandments are all moſt excellent, and who hath ſworn, *v.* 2. to viſit even the tranſgreſſions of his own people with ſtripes of diſpleaſure, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 30—35. From his preſence there is no hiding ourſelves; to attempt concealment of an evil thing from his allſeeing eye, were folly; to continue impenitent, deſtruction; for his power is univerſal, and abſolute, *v.* 3. and if he will puniſh, none can reſiſt, or queſtion his authority. Obedience to him will enſure bleſſedneſs; they need fear no evil, who have him for their king, and approve themſelves loyal ſubjects: and herein is wiſdom to diſcern the moment of opportunity, and in *time* to provide for eternity, knowing the *judgment* approaching, when every man muſt receive according to his works.

6. ¶ Becauſe [g] to every purpoſe there is time, and judgment; therefore the miſery of man *is* great upon him. 7. For [h] he knoweth not that which ſhall be: for who can tell him † when it ſhall be? 8. [i] *There is* no man that hath power [k] over the ſpirit to retain the ſpirit; neither *hath he* power in the day of death; and *there is* no ‡ diſcharge in *that* war, neither ſhall wickedneſs deliver thoſe that are given to it.

[g] Chap. iii. 1.
[h] Prov. xxiv. 22. Chap. vi. 12. & ix. 12. & x. 14.
† Or how it ſhall be.
[i] Pſ. xlix. 7.
[k] Job xiv. 5.
‡ Heb. Caſting off weapons.

v. 6—8. It is the deſcription of the wiſe that he diſcerneth the time, and the want of this diſcernment is the cauſe of much human miſery. For,

1. *Becauſe to every purpoſe there is time and judgment*, the proper ſeaſon and manner when it ſhould be put in execution, the ignorance, improvidence, and neglect of men in this behalf, occaſion moſt of their diſtreſſes. They trifle with the opportunity, and it ſlips irrecoverably by; *therefore the miſery of man is great upon him*, and he hath uſually only his own negligence to blame for the ſufferings he undergoes; which prudent foreſight, and careful diligence, might probably have prevented. *For he knoweth not that which ſhall be*, or whether ever again he ſhall have the opportunity he hath loſt, and none know what tomorrow will bring forth: *for who can tell when it ſhall be, or how it ſhall be?* future events are ſecrets concealed from human foreſight, the preſent moment only is our own, and time to be redeemed by us as it flies.

2. Death is haſtening towards us, and when he comes, *there is no man that hath power over the ſpirit to retain the ſpirit* from God's arreſts; his ſummons is abſolute, and muſt be obeyed; no intreaties can prevail, no bribe ſuſpend, no methods prevent the execution of the ſentence gone forth. When our hour is arrived, go we muſt; *neither hath he power in the day of death*; then the ſtrong men bow themſelves, and friends and phyſicians help in vain: *and* this muſt be, ſooner or later, the lot of all,

for *there is no diſcharge in that war*; we muſt conflict with this terrible foe; nor gold, nor tears, nor ſtruggling avail, death will not quit his hold. And as the moſt holy are not exempt from the common lot of mortality, and though the property of death is changed, yet muſt paſs in common with others through the gate of the grave; *neither ſhall wickedneſs deliver thoſe that are given to it*, all their craft, their cunning, their authority, their wealth, the fruits of their wickedneſs, profit not in this day of wrath, but will rather haſten their ruin.

9. All this I have ſeen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the ſun: *there is* a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt. 10. And ſo I ſaw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and [l] they were forgotten in the city where they had ſo done: this *is* alſo vanity. 11. [m] Becauſe ſentence *againſt* an evil work is not ſpeedily executed; therefore the heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil. 12. ¶ [n] Though a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet ſurely I know that [o] it ſhall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: 13. But it ſhall not be well with the wicked, neither ſhall he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a ſhadow; becauſe he feareth not before God.

l Prov. x. 7.

m Pſ. x. 6. & l. 21. Iſa. xxvi. 10.

n Iſa. lxv. 20.

o Pſ. xxxvii. 11, 18, 19. Prov. i. 32, 33. Iſa. iii. 10, 11.

v. 9—13. To ſupport the ſufferers under tyrannical rulers, Solomon here,

1. Remarks, amongſt the obſervations he had made under the ſun, their way and end. *There is a time when one man ruleth over another to his own hurt*, or *to his hurt*; either the hurt of the perſon oppreſſed by tyrants, whoſe liberty and property are invaded, and their peace diſturbed; or to the hurt of the oppreſſors themſelves, who, abuſing their power, at laſt exaſperate their ſubjects to riſe up againſt them; or filling up the meaſure of their iniquities, bring down upon their heads the divine judgments. For the day of the wicked is coming: *ſo I ſaw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy*, had lived in office, and kept their poſts of honour to the laſt, and were interred with great pomp and ſplendor, attended in the moſt ſolemn manner by the Prieſts and Levites; as the words may be rendered, *they came and walked from the holy place*; but how poor is all this! when death ſtamps vanity upon them, they lie down in the duſt as the beggar, where no pomp can follow them, and their deteſted names are forgotten, and buried in oblivion, notwithſtanding all the pains they had taken to perpetuate them.

2. He obſerves the impenitence of men preſuming on the patience of God; but reprieves are no pardons, as the ſinner will find to his coſt. *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not ſpeedily executed*, but God, though determined to puniſh ſin, in mercy delays, if peradventure men may repent of their iniquities, ſo far is his goodneſs from leading them, as it ought, to repentance, that they are often (ſuch is man's deſperate wickedneſs!) but the more hardned: *therefore the heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil*, preſuming on impunity they perſiſt in their iniquity. But *though a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged*, living many a year in proſperous iniquity, yet ought not the people of God to be uneaſy, nor the wicked ſecure, for mark but the end, and then it will be ſeen beyond contradiction, (1.) That *it ſhall be well with them that fear God*; it ſhall be *ſurely* ſo, notwithſtanding any appearances to the contrary: *I know it*, and ſpeak from the fulleſt conviction and obſervation; it ſhall be well with them that fear God above man, and make it their one concern to pleaſe him; well with them in time, they ſhall enjoy his favour and regard, and a happy iſſue out of all their afflictions; well with them in eternity, when the reward of glory ſhall be beſtowed upon them. *But it ſhall not be well with the wicked*, his days ſhall be paſt in vanity, his death be terrible, and after death a miſerable eternity receive him: *neither ſhall he prolong his days, which are as a ſhadow*, ſo ſwiftly paſſing, ſhort of what he expected, at leaſt ſhort of the life of glory, *becauſe he feareth not before God*, the great cauſe of all his wickedneſs, and the root of his impenitence.

14. There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be juſt *men* unto whom [p] it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there be wicked *men* to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I ſaid, that this alſo *is* vanity. 15. Then I commended mirth, becauſe [q] a man hath no better thing under the ſun than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that ſhall abide with him of his labour, the days of his life which God giveth him under the ſun. 16. ¶ When I applied mine heart to know wiſdom, and to ſee the buſineſs that is done upon the earth: (for alſo *there is that* neither day nor night ſeeth ſleep with his eyes.) 17. Then I beheld all the work of God, that [r] a man cannot find out the work that is done under the ſun: becauſe though a man labour to ſeek *it* out, yet he ſhall not find *it*; yea, further, though a wiſe *man* think to know *it*, [s] yet ſhall he not be able to find *it*.

p Pſ. lxxiii. 14. Chap. vii. 15. & ix. 1, 2.

q Chap. ii. 24. & iii. 12, 22. & v. 18. & ix. 7.

r Job v. 9. Chap. iii. 11. Rom. xi. 33.

s Pſ. lxxiii. 16.

v. 14—17. It hath been of old a matter of ſtumbling and difficulty, to behold the righteous afflicted, the wicked in affluence. But,

1. We muſt not be ſurpriſed at the ſight. It is a part of this world's vanity to ſee the juſt ſuffering, as if they had been wicked; and the ungodly proſpering, as if they had been righteous. But God hath wiſe ends to anſwer in theſe, as they ſeem to us, myſterious diſpenſations of his providence. This is not our reſt, God will have his children know it; we muſt look forward to eternity, there the myſtery will be explained, and God's wiſdom, juſtice, grace, and love therein acknowledged.

2. Since all below is ſo poor and empty, it is wiſe to make the beſt of it we can. *Then I commended mirth*, holy chearfulneſs and ſerenity; joy in what we poſſeſs, and contentment under what we want; to uſe with ſobriety and thankfulneſs, the creatures of God is all the comfort we can expect under the ſun.. And as this is all we can get by our labour under the ſun, herein ought we to abide all our days: they are few and evil, and ſhortly muſt end. Let us therefore correſpond with the Divine Providence, and accommodate ourſelves to God's will.

3. We ſhould be ſatisfied to be ignorant, where God hath ſet bounds to our reſearches. Solomon had applied his heart to know wiſdom, to inveſtigate the nature and cauſes of things, and *to ſee the buſineſs that is done under the ſun*, all the labours of men, or the works of divine providence; and day and night, with reſtleſs toil, he purſued his enquiries, *v.* 16. but after all, he confeſſes how little he knew, *v.* 17. *His way is in the ſea*, unfathomably deep, and *his footſteps in the great waters*, unſearchable; and if he, who was the wiſeſt of all the ſons of men, make ſuch an acknowledgment, they who come after him may well deſpair: be he never ſo curious, inquiſitive, indefatigable, day and night in the enquiry, *yet he ſhall not find it*: yea, though he be *wiſe*, and *may think to know it*, by taking ſome new and untried method of inveſtigating the ſecrets of nature and providence, *yet ſhall he not be able to find it*, an impenetrable vail is ſtretched over many things; he that ſet bounds to the ſea, hath ſet bounds to the human underſtanding, and ſaid, hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no farther: to attempt to exceed theſe bounds, would only prove the arrogance of folly, and end in diſappointment.

CHAP. IX.

Solomon in this chapter for a further proof of the vanity of this world, gives us four obſervations which he had made upon a ſurvey of the ſtate of the children of men in it. 1. *He obſerved, that commonly as to outward things, good and bad men fare much alike*, ver. 1—3. 2. *That death puts a final period to all our enjoyments in this world*, ver. 4—6. *from whence he infers, that it is our wiſdom to enjoy the comforts of life, and mind the buſineſs of life while it doth laſt*, ver. 7—10. 3. *That God's providence often croſſeth the faireſt and moſt hopeful probabilities, and great calamities often ſurpriſe men ere they are aware*, ver. 11, 12. 4. *That wiſdom often makes men very uſeful and yet gains them little reſpect, but perſons of great merit are ſlighted*, ver. 13—18. *And what is there then in this world that ſhould make us fond of it?*

1. FOR all this † I conſidered in my heart, even to declare all this, [a] that the righteous, and the wiſe, and their works *are* in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love, or hatred, *by* all *that is* before them. 2. [b] All *things come* alike to all, *there is* one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that ſacrificeth, and to him that ſacrificeth not: as *is* the good, ſo *is* the ſinner; *and* he that ſweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath. 3. This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the ſun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, alſo the heart of the ſons of men is full of evil, and madneſs *is* in their heart while they live, and after that, *they go* to the dead.

† Heb. I give, or ſet to my heart.

a Chap. viii. 14.

b Pſ. lxxiii. 3, 12, 13. Mal. iii. 15.

v. 1—3. Solomon had, with great diligence, been applying his mind to the ſtudy of wiſdom; he had deliberately weighed and conſidered the particulars of the foregoing chapters, and the end he propoſed was, *to declare all this*, for the edification of others. One difficulty in the ways of providence he had obſerved, reſpecting the diſtribution of afflictions and proſperity to the righteous and the wicked; they who deſerve leaſt, poſſeſſing often the greateſt affluence; and they who are the excellent of the earth, pining under ſickneſs, diſtreſs, and indigence.

Now,

Before Chriſt 977.

Now, though he cannot fully reſolve *this work of God*, the method of divine procedure, yet the following obſervations may ſerve to give much ſatisfaction to the faithful.

1. *That the righteous, and the wiſe, and their works, are in the hand of God*; he hath a peculiar regard to them, and all their affairs; he knoweth their works, and approves them; and however they may be ſore thruſt at by their enemies, none can pluck them out of his hands: he that made them righteous and wiſe, and works all their works in them, will preſerve and keep them from evil, and bring them ſafe to his eternal kingdom.

2. That *no man knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before them*; the different outward circumſtances of men, which the divine providence makes, are no proof either of God's love or hatred; or *neither love nor hatred man knows*, ſo deceitful are appearances; the profeſſions of love are often inſincere, and there is hatred ſometimes entertained where we expected the warmeſt regard: *but all things are before them*, known to the eternal Three, from whom nothing is hid, nothing is ſecret.

3. *That all things come alike to all*; *there is one event to the righteous, and the wicked*; yet are their characters widely different: theſe are *good*, renewed by divine grace; *clean*, as waſhed in the blood of ſprinkling, *devout* in their ſervices and ſacrifices, and *fearing an oath*, cautious how they ſwear, and ſeriouſly and religiouſly obſervant of it: the other are *unclean*, their nature impure, and their iniquities not waſhed away by the atoning blood; *profane*, living in the habitual neglect of the ordinances of God. *Sinners*, openly violating the laws of God and man: *ſwearers*, raſh, blaſpheming, perjured. Now that ſo little difference ſhould be put between perſons of ſo oppoſite characters, may ſeem an *evil among all things done under the ſun*, and *that there is one event unto all*, is ready to harden the wicked in atheiſm, and ſhake the confidence of the juſt. But though the diſpenſations of God's providence are the ſame, the deſign of them is vaſtly different; the ſame event is made a ſavour of life unto life to the one, and a ſavour of death unto death to the other; ſo that God will at laſt appear juſt, and all will be made to own the righteouſneſs of his government.

4. The wicked, notwithſtanding any proſperity they may en-enjoy, are miſerable both in life and death. *The heart of the ſons of men is full of evil*; obſerving this ſimilarity of events to all, they infer that God hath forſaken the earth, and give an unreſtrained indulgence to every appetite: and *madneſs is in their hearts while they live*; their delights are but a madman's dreams, they are inſenſible of their real wretched ſtate, and know not the eternal ruin to which they are haſtening; *and after that, they go to the dead*, death cloſes the ſcene, their pomp cannot deſcend with them into the grave; they go down into the pit, are numbered with the tranſgreſſors, and periſh without hope, eternally.

4. ¶ For to him that is joined to all the living, there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. 5. For the living know that they ſhall die: but [c] the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward, for [d] the memory of them is forgotten. 6. Alſo their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now periſhed; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the ſun. 7. ¶ Go thy way, [e] eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. 8. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. 9. † Live joyfully with the wife whom thou loveſt, all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the ſun, all the days of thy vanity: for [f] that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takeſt under the ſun. 10. Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.

[c] Job xiv. 21. Iſa. lxiii. 16.
[d] Job vii. 8, 9, 10. Iſa. xxvi. 14.
[e] Chap. viii. 15.
† Heb. See, or enjoy life.
[f] Chap. ii. 10, 24. & iii. 13. & v. 18.

v. 4—10. The advantages of life are here ſet forth; happy they who improve them.

1. Whilſt there is life, there is hope. Whatever be a man's condition, either temporal or ſpiritual, however deplorable and unhappy, it may amend. The chief of ſinners may, through grace, quickly become the chief of ſaints, and *a living dog is better than a dead lion*; the meaneſt beggar alive may be made uſeful, and enjoys comforts, of which the mightieſt monarch dead is incapable.

2. The certainty of approaching death is a warning to prepare for it: now is the moment of opportunity; and *the living*, who *know that they ſhall die*, are called upon continually to be ready. It will be too late ſhortly, for *as the tree falleth, it muſt lie.*

3. After death, this world is no more to us. *The dead know not any thing*, nothing that paſſes here below, or how it fares with thoſe whom they have left behind; *neither have they any more a reward*, cannot enjoy any longer the fruit of their labours upon earth; *for the memory of them is forgotten* among the living; in a few years, their very memorial ſinks into utter oblivion, and it is not known they have ever been. *Alſo their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now periſhed*, death cauſes every endeared relation to ceaſe, and terminates all quarrels; when we are removed from the world, neither the perſons, nor tranſactions in it any more affect us: *neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is under the ſun*, the worldling's portion ends with his expiring breath; he can carry nothing away with him, and the gracious ſoul, however rich his portion above the ſun, then quits whatever was near or dear to him beneath it.

4. The inference he would draw from hence, is this; to make uſe of the moment which is allotted us, to enjoy the bleſſings God beſtows with thankfulneſs; and in our place and ſtation give all diligence to glorify God, and make our calling and election ſure. The temperate uſe and enjoyment of the good creatures of God, are ſo far from being criminal, that they are enjoined us, as *our portion under the ſun*, *v.* 9. And ſince *all* of our days here are but *vanity*, the greater need have we to make the beſt of them. To eat and drink with gladneſs of heart, to be ſordid neither in diet or apparel, but to live according to our ſtation and circumſtances, and enjoy the relations of life with which the Lord hath bleſſed us. And *God*, far from forbidding us theſe comforts, *accepteth thy works*; a thankful heart in the uſe of the bleſſings he beſtows, is a daily ſacrifice. Only amidſt our enjoyments, we muſt not forget the employments which call for our diligence and labour. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do*, the duties of our ſtation, and eſpecially the great concern of religion, *do it with thy might*, with zeal and vigour, in oppoſition to every difficulty and diſcouragement, *for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt*, it will be too late there to diſcover the error of our ways, and impoſſible to amend them. To day, therefore, whilſt it is called to day, up and be doing, *the night cometh, when no man can work.*

11. ¶ I returned, and [g] ſaw under the ſun, that the race *is* not to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor yet riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of ſkill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. 12. For [h] man alſo knoweth not his time, as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds *that are* caught in the ſnare; ſo *are* the ſons of men [i] ſnared in an evil time, when it falleth ſuddenly upon them.

[g] Jer. ix. 23. Amos ii. 14, 15.
[h] Chap. viii. 7.
[i] Prov. xxix. 6. Luke xii. 20, 39.

v. 11, 12. Though diligence is our duty, yet the iſſue of all events is in the hands of God, and things often turn out ſtrangely contrary to appearances. This the preacher had obſerved, and warns us of, that we might not be too ſanguine and confident.

1. The ſtrongeſt preſumptions often diſappoint us. *The race is not to the ſwift*, they ſtumble in their courſe; or too ſecure of ſucceſs, loiter, and are diſtanced; *nor the battle to the ſtrong*, the moſt formidable armies have been often defeated by a handful of men; and the mightieſt champions, as Goliath, have fallen before the arm of a ſtripling: *neither yet bread to the wiſe*, who frequently want, whilſt fools wallow in affluence; *nor yet riches to men of underſtanding*, who, though ingenious in their profeſſions, and moſt likely to ſucceed in the world, are ſtrangely neglected, and others of no abilities preferred before them; *nor yet favour to men of ſkill*, whoſe parts and genius, inſtead of engaging the eſteem of others, ſometimes provoke their envy; and inſtead of exalting them, many ſeek to depreſs and diſgrace them: *but time and chance happeneth to them all*, far different is the event from human probability. The *time* is fixed in the divine decree, and the *chance* or *occurrence* happens according to the determinate counſel of God; ſo that whilſt we uſe all ſuitable means, we muſt depend ſtill upon God for the ſucceſs: and when he diſappoints our beſt concerted enterprizes, muſt acquieſce in the diſpenſations of his providence.

2. We are unable to guard againſt our deſtiny. *Man knoweth not his time*, what calamities are before him, when his day of evil ſhall come, or how to avoid it; but *like the fiſhes taken in an evil net, and as birds caught in the ſnare*, ſo unexpectedly do we often find a ſnare in what promiſed the greateſt ſatisfaction, and ſee ourſelves ſuddenly involved in trouble, where we ſuſpected no danger. We need be ready for every event, prepare for changes, expect diſappointments, die daily, and then the day of evil ſhall never ſurprize us unawares.

13. ¶ This wiſdom have I ſeen alſo under the ſun, and it *ſeemed* great unto me: 14. [k] *There was* a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king againſt it, and beſieged it, and built great bulwarks againſt it: 15. Now there was found in it a poor wiſe man, and he by his wiſdom delivered the city; yet no man remembred that ſame poor man. 16. Then ſaid I, [l] Wiſdom *is* better than ſtrength: nevertheleſs, the

[k] 2 Sam. xx. 15—22.
[l] Prov. xxi. 22. & xxiv. 5. Chap. vii. 19.

poor man's wiſdom *is* deſpiſed, and his words are not heard. 17. The words of wiſe *men* are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. 18. Wiſdom *is* better than weapons of war: but one ſinner deſtroyeth much good.

v. 13—18. Though the wiſe are not always ſucceſsful, yet uſually they are ſo; and wiſdom is moſt neceſſary to the management of our affairs, notwithſtanding the diſappointments from which the moſt prudent are not exempted.

1. Solomon gives an inſtance of the advantages of wiſdom, and the ſtory might have been a real matter of fact which fell under his obſervation; or it is a parable, intended to ſet the ſubject he treated of, in a more ſtriking light. *There was a little city, and a few men within it,* conſequently leſs able to ſuſtain the attacks of a beſieger; *and there came a great king againſt it, and beſieged it,* and *built great bulwarks againſt it,* ſo that the ruin of it ſeemed inevitable, and reſiſtance vain: *now there was found in it a poor wiſe man,* who, though ſo deſerving of honour and advancement, had been neglected; yet, like a true patriot, in time of danger ſtepped forth a volunteer, in the ſervice of his ungrateful countrymen, *and he by his wiſdom delivered the city; yet,* highly as he had merited, he found no recompenſe, *no man remembered that ſame poor man,* ſo ill are kindneſſes done to men often requited: God will not be ſo unmindful of the works of faith, and labours of love. Some explain this myſtically of Chriſt, and no doubt the application is beautifully appoſite: The little city is the church of God, ſeparated by walls of ſalvation from the world around it; the members of it are few in number, and utterly unable to defend themſelves againſt their ſpiritual enemies. The great king who beſieges it, is Satan, the prince of the power of the air, under whom the armies of earth and hell are leagued againſt God's people; by open attacks of temptation and perſecution, and by ſecret ſap of errors and deluſions, he ſeeks to open a way into the fortreſs. The poor man, who in this deſperate caſe ſteps forth, is Chriſt, filled with all the treaſures of divine wiſdom; and by his counſel the devices of Satan are diſappointed, the ſouls of men reſcued from ruin, and the church ſaved with an everlaſting ſalvation: yet thoſe who ſaw him in the fleſh, never thought him capable of ſuch a tranſaction, and rejected him; and even after what he hath done, the moſt of thoſe who are in the pale of his church by profeſſion, give him not the glory of his work, and aſcribe no praiſe to this great deliverer, but live and die in an ungrateful neglect of him.

2. The inferences the wiſe man draws from hence, are, *that wiſdom is better than ſtrength,* and able to extricate us from difficulties, baffling ſuperior force, and foiling *the weapons of war. Nevertheleſs,* we may ſtill obſerve in general, that *the poor man's wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard;* ſuch are the prejudices of the world againſt the poor, that many a bright genius lives and dies in obſcurity. Some few indeed may overcome the common prepoſſeſſion, and learn to value merit, however depreſſed in ſtation: by them *the words of the wiſe are heard in quiet,* they attend ſilently their ſage inſtructions, or the humble, modeſt, and diffident manner, in which they deliver their opinion, weighs *more with them, than the cry of him that ruleth among fools,* whoſe pride on his ſtation makes him noiſy and bluſtering; but the thoughtful hearer prefers the force of the poor man's reaſoning to all the pomp of his ſounding words.

3. As much good as one poor wiſe man doth, ſo much evil proceeds from one ſinner: *he deſtroyeth much good;* all the gifts which by nature he poſſeſſes, and the abundance beſtowed on him by providence, are vilely perverted and abuſed; he is the plague of his family, his city, his country; his ill example is contagious, and his ſtudy is to counteract the influence of good laws, or good advice: and through the corruption of the human heart, ever prone to evil, his endeavours are but too frequently ſucceſsful.

CHAP. X.

This chapter informs us that it is our wiſdom, 1. *To preſerve our reputation in managing our affairs dextrouſly,* ver. 1—3. 2. *To be ſubmiſſive to our ſuperiors, if at any time we have offended them,* ver. 4. 3. *To live quiet and peaceable lives, becauſe of the folly and danger of diſloyal and turbulent practices,* ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. 4. *To govern our tongues well,* ver. 12—15. 5. *To be diligent in our buſineſs, and provide well for our families,* ver. 18, 19. 6. *Not to ſpeak ill of our rulers, no not in ſecret,* ver. 20. 7. *That rulers ſhould be careful whom they prefer to places of truſt and power,* ver. 5, 6, 7. 8. *Let them manage themſelves diſcreetly, be generous, and not childiſh; temperate, and not luxurious,* ver. 16, 17. *And happy the nation when princes and people make conſcience of their duty according to theſe rules.*

1. †DEAD flies cauſe the ointment of the apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour: *ſo doth* a little folly him that is in reputation for wiſdom *and* honour. 2. A wiſe man's heart *is* at his right hand; but a fool's heart *is* at his left. 3. Yea, alſo when he that is a fool walketh by the way, ‡ his wiſdom faileth *him,* and he ſaith to every one *that* he *is* a fool.

† Heb. Flies of death.

‡ Heb. His heart.

v. 1—3. The pureſt white the ſooneſt receives a ſoil; therefore,

1. They who have the reputation of wiſdom, and make the higheſt profeſſions of religion, ſhould bethe moſt exact and careful in their conduct, ſeeing the eyes of men are upon them, ready to diſcern, and willing to expoſe, their ſmalleſt infirmities. As *dead flies* give the ſweeteſt ointment into which they fall an ill ſavour, ſo doth *a little folly,* an inadvertent ſtep, an unguarded word, or a ſinful compliance, expoſe *him* to reproach, *that is in reputation for wiſdom and honour;* the world will make no allowances for human infirmity, or the force of temptation, but looking with envy on ſuperior excellence, are happy to ſeize every ſhadow of abuſe, to degrade them to their own level, and triumph that they are no better than themſelves. May it make us, therefore, more circumſpect in our words and works, when ſo many wait for our halting!

2. The wiſe are dexterous in the management of their affairs, their heart is at *their right hand;* in difficulties, they have preſence of mind to extricate themſelves, and in all their tranſactions, execute with vigour what they plan with prudence: *but a fool's heart is at his left,* he is aukward in his buſineſs, abſurd in his contrivances, and if put a ſtep out of his way, confuſed and at a loſs: nay, he hath not ſenſe enough to conceal his folly; it appears in his very gait, in his converſation, in all his tranſactions; and whoever makes the moſt curſory remarks upon his conduct, muſt be convinced that he is a fool.

4. If the ſpirit of the ruler riſe up againſt thee, [a] leave not thy place: for [b] yielding pacifieth great offences. 5. There is an evil *which* I have ſeen under the ſun, [c] as an error *which* proceedeth from the ruler. 6. Folly is ſet in † great dignity, and the rich ſit in low place. 7. I have ſeen [d] ſervants upon horſes, and princes walking as ſervants upon the earth. 8. [e] He that diggeth a pit, ſhall fall into it; and [f] whoſo breaketh an hedge, a ſerpent ſhall bite him. 9. Whoſo removeth ſtones, ſhall be hurt therewith: *and* he that cleaveth wood, ſhall be endangered thereby. 10. If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then muſt he put to more ſtrength: but wiſdom *is* profitable to direct.

[a] Chap. viii. 3.
[b] Prov. xxv. 15.
[c] Eſth. iii. 1.
† Heb. Great heights.
[d] Prov. xix. 10. & xxx. 22.
[e] Pſ. vii. 15. Prov. xxvi. 27.
[f] Judg. ix. 53.

v. 4—10. They who would learn to rule, or to obey, muſt hear theſe leſſons of inſtruction.

1. Let ſubjects paſſively ſubmit. *If the ſpirit of a ruler riſe up againſt thee,* whether through any real provocation given, or miſrepreſentation made by others, *leave not thy place;* quit not his ſervice in paſſion, nor throw up thy employments as ill uſed, much leſs renounce allegiance and loyalty, but wait a while, and the ſtorm will blow over; or an opportunity be afforded to vindicate injured innocence, *for yielding pacifieth great offences;* and gives time for wrath to ſubſide, which anger and oppoſition would but exaſperate, and render more implacable.

2. Let rulers take heed whom they prefer to places of truſt and honour; for it is a great *evil,* yet a common *error,* thro' favour, recommendation, or partiality, without conſidering the qualifications of the perſons, to put thoſe in office who are moſt unfit to govern. *Folly is ſet in high dignity;* men who are weak, and unable to diſcharge the duties of their ſtation; or wicked, and diſpoſed to abuſe their power and influence: *and the rich,* men of character and fortune, who were removed by their circumſtances from the temptation of doing a mean thing, or men of grace and piety, *ſit in low places* neglected and ſlighted. *I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes,* thoſe of a mercenary ſpirit and low extraction, exalted, as the tools of an iniquitous adminiſtration; *and princes walking as ſervants upon the earth,* degraded and inſulted by theſe upſtart minions of power.

3. Let both prince and people beware of innovations, and keep within their due bounds; leaſt turning prerogative into tyranny, or liberty into licentiouſneſs, the fatal conſequences ſhould (too late) be felt and lamented. For as *he that diggeth a pit,* is in danger of falling into it; he that breaks a hedge, of being ſtung by the viper which is concealed in it, *v.* 8. he that removeth ſtones from a wall, of being cruſhed by its fall; and he that cleaveth wood, of being hurt by the chips that fly from the ſtroke, *v.* 9. ſo where princes turn oppreſſive and tyrannical, break in upon the liberties of the people, ſeek to demoliſh the conſtitution, render the government arbitrary, and employ force to put their deſigns in execution; they provoke the people to riſe up againſt them, and get themſelves dethroned and murdered. As on the other hand, when factious diſcontented ſpirits contrive to bring about a change in the government, would ſow diſcord among the people under pretence of zeal for liberty, would retrench the juſt rights of the crown, and alter the conſtitution, they often, by their treaſonable practices, make a halter for themſelves, and lawleſs liberty terminates in

abject ſlavery : *wiſdom is therefore profitable to direct*, how both ſhould behave in their ſtations; and hereby we ſave ourſelves much trouble and damage; as when a tool is ſharpened, it works eaſily, but when blunt, requires more violence, and the chips fly more dangerouſly around.

11. Surely the ſerpent will bite [g] without enchant-
ment, and ‡ a babbler is no better. 12. [h] The words of
a wiſe man's mouth *are* † gracious : but [i] the lips of a
fool will ſwallow up himſelf. 13. The beginning of
the words of his mouth *is* fooliſhneſs : and the end of ‖
his talk *is* miſchievous madneſs. 14. [k] A fool alſo § is
full of words : [l] a man cannot tell what ſhall be ; and [m]
what ſhall be after him, who can tell him ? 15. The
labour of the fooliſh wearieth every one of them, becauſe
he knoweth not how to go to the city.

[g] Pſ. lviii. 4, 5. Jer. viii. 17.
‡ Heb. Maſter of the tongue.
[h] Prov. x. 32. & xii. 13.
† Heb. Grace.
[i] Prov. x. 14. & xviii. 7.
§ Heb. His mouth.
[k] Prov. xv. 2.
‖ Heb. Multiplieth.
[l] Jam. iv. 13, 14.
[m] Chap. iii. 22. & vi. 12. & viii. 7.

v. 11—15. We have here,

1. The evil of a babbling tongue, *v.* 11. It is venomous as the poiſon of a ſerpent, it ſtings mortally, *without enchantment*, or without a *whiſper*, or *hiſs*, and gives no warning.

2. The oppoſition between the words of the fooliſh and the wiſe. *The words of a wiſe man's mouth are gracious*, he gives the moſt favourable character of others; ſpeaks well of thoſe who are in authority over him; ſeeks ſome topic of converſation that may be uſeful, and miniſter grace to the hearers; none go from his company, without an opportunity of being the wiſer and better for it: *but the lips of a fool will ſwallow up himſelf*; giving a looſe to his tongue, he ſpeaks evil of dignities, involves himſelf in quarrels, and brings ruin upon himſelf. *The beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſs*; he no ſooner opens his lips, than his folly is manifeſt to all that hear him, *and the end of his talk is miſchievous madneſs*; he talks himſelf into a paſſion, grows abuſive and violent, and ſticks at no miſchief. *A fool alſo is full of words*, never knows when to have done, and wearies the company with his nonſenſe; affects to underſtand every thing, and though utterly ignorant, engroſſes the diſcourſe to himſelf; and with endleſs tautologies repeats his trite obſervations, *v.* 14. or vaingloriouſly boaſts of what he will do, and what he expects hereafter, when even the wiſeſt of men know not what a day may bring forth.

3. The works of the fool are as fruitleſs as his words. *The labour of the fooliſh wearieth every one of them*; they take the wrong way, and therefore cannot but labour in vain, *becauſe he knoweth not how to go to the city*; he miſtakes the path, though never ſo obvious, and is bewildered: and this is ſpiritually true of the infatuated ſinner, and the ſelf-righteous, who ſay they are on the road to the heavenly city, but know not Chriſt the way; and therefore, every ſtep they take, even their prayers, their alms, and moſt boaſted duties, but remove them farther from the gate of heaven.

16. ¶ [n] Wo to thee, O land, when thy king *is* a child,
and thy princes eat in the morning. 17. Bleſſed *art*
thou, O land, when thy king *is* the ſon of nobles, and
[o] thy princes eat in due ſeaſon, for ſtrength and not for
drunkenneſs.

[n] Iſa. iii. 4, 5, 12. & v. 11.
[o] Prov. xxxi. 4.

v. 16, 17. The happineſs or miſery of a kingdom greatly depends on the character of its governors. A prince of a weak and childiſh ſpirit, unable to guide the reins, or debauched and luxurious, who devotes his time to the ſervice of his luſts and pleaſures, neglects public affairs, and devolves them to the management of thoſe, weak or wicked as himſelf, is a curſe to the land over which he preſides. But *bleſſed art thou, O land, when thy king is the ſon of nobles*, ennobled by the virtues of his royal progenitors, which he imitates, as well as the blood derived from them; *and thy princes eat in due ſeaſon for ſtrength, and not for drunkenneſs*, where the ſubordinate magiſtrates are wiſely choſen of the moſt virtuous, temperate, and ſober; whoſe care it is continually how to diſcharge their office, and whom exceſs never diſqualifies for buſineſs.

18. ¶ By much ſlothfulneſs the building decayeth,
and through idleneſs of the hands the houſe droppeth
through. 19. A feaſt is made for laughter, and [p] wine
† maketh merry : but money anſwereth all *things*. 20.
¶ [q] Curſe not the king, no not in thy ‡ thought, and
curſe not the rich in ‖ thy bedchamber : for a bird of
the air ſhall carry the voice, and that which hath wings
ſhall tell the matter.

[p] Pſ. civ. 15.
† Heb. Maketh glad the life.
[q] Exod. xxii. 28. Acts xxiii. 5.
‡ Heb. Conſcience.
‖ Heb. The chambers of thy bed.

v. 18—20. Three things are here obſerved.

1. The great evil of ſloth. *By much ſlothfulneſs the building decayeth*, no care being taken timely to repair the breaches; *and through idleneſs of the hands the houſe droppeth through*, mouldering faſt to ruin, and falling to the ground. Thus the ſtate ſuffers under ſlothful magiſtrates, and the ſoul of the ſinner receives hereby irreparable damage.

2. *A feaſt is made for laughter*, where ſocial mirth crowns the board, *and wine maketh merry*; *but money anſwereth all things* pertaining to this life, which it can procure. Particularly, it is the ſinews of war, and the great reſource in the exigences of the ſtate, and therefore not to be ſquandered by princes in extravagance.

3. The ſecret deſigns of treaſon will be detected. *Curſe not a king*, however ill his conduct may be, *no not in thy thought*; *and curſe not the rich*, the inferior magiſtrates, even though oppreſſive, *in thy bedchamber*; never ſo ſecretly in thy family, or in the moſt private club, or aſſociation: *for a bird of the air ſhall carry the voice*, their ſpies are ever within hearing, *and that which hath wings ſhall tell the matter*, ſwift the intelligence of theſe ſecret plots ſhall be conveyed, and the conſequence be the deſtruction of the contrivers.

CHAP. XI.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A preſſing exhortation to works of charity, as the beſt cure of the vanity which our worldly riches are ſubject to, and the only way of making them turn to a ſubſtantial good account*, ver. 1—6. 2. *A ſerious admonition to prepare for death and judgment, and to begin betimes, even in the days of our youth to do ſo*, ver. 7—10.

1. [a] CAST thy bread † upon the waters : for [b] thou
ſhalt find it after many days. 2. [c] Give a por-
tion to ſeven, and alſo to eight ; for [d] thou knoweſt not
what evil ſhall be upon the earth. 3. If the clouds be
full of rain, they empty *themſelves* upon the earth : and
if the tree fall toward the ſouth, or towards the north ;
in the place where the tree falleth, there it ſhall be. 4.
He that obſerveth the wind, ſhall not ſow : and he that
regardeth the clouds, ſhall not reap. 5. As [e] thou
knoweſt not what *is* the way of the ſpirit, [f] *nor* how the
bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child :
even ſo thou knoweſt not the works of God who maketh
all. 6. In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the even-
ing withhold not thine hand : for thou knoweſt not whe-
ther ſhall ‡ proſper, either this or that, or whether they
both *ſhall be* alike good.

[a] Iſa. xxxii. 20.
† Heb. Upon the face of, &c.
[b] Deut. xv. 10. Prov. xix. 17. Mat. x. 42.
[c] Pſ. cxii. 9. Luke vi. 30.
[d] Eph. v. 16.
[e] John iii. 8.
[f] Pſal. cxxxix. 14, 15.
‡ Heb. Be right.

v. 1—6. The great bleſſing of abundance, and proper employment of it, is to uſe it in relieving the neceſſities of the indigent.

1. Solomon exhorts to liberality. *Caſt thy bread upon the waters*, upon the multitude of poor objects, on many of whom it may ſeem loſt, as what is caſt into the ſea; but, like ſhips of merchandize, the return made ſhall amply repay the venture: *for thou ſhalt find it after many days*; the bleſſing of God ſhall often reſtore it with increaſe in this world, at leaſt in a better we ſhall reap the fruits of our benevolence. *Give a portion to ſeven*, not complaining of the number who ſeek relief, but *alſo to eight*; even to as many as through their indigence call for a ſupply, and our ability enables us to aſſiſt them; *for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth*, and therefore, inſtead of making that a reaſon for withholding the needful aſſiſtance, we ſhould be careful to make a good uſe of what we have, whilſt we have it, and what our hand findeth to do, do it with our might.

2. He urges the duty by ſeveral conſiderations taken from the objects around us, and anſwers the objections which the niggard heart might make.

(1.) *If the clouds be full of rain, they* do not reſerve their contents, but *empty themſelves upon the earth*; ſo ſhould the rich water with their bounty all around them.

(2.) *If a tree fall towards the ſouth, or towards the north*, either the ſeed that grows into a tree, or the ſtock, when it is felled, *in the place where the tree falleth, there ſhall he be*, freely producing fruit for thoſe who come to gather it; or when by death we are cut down as a tree, we can do good no longer; and therefore ſhould now, whilſt we have opportunity, improve the moment: nor ſhould the unworthineſs of the object diſcourage us; if we give in real charity, we ſhall not loſe our reward.

(3.) We muſt not be deterred by the fears of want which may happen to ourſelves, and by ſeeming future difficulties be diſcouraged from preſent duty. If every blaſt of wind, or flying cloud, diſcouraged the huſbandman, he would neither ſow his ground, nor reap his harveſt.

(4.) Though we may not ſee how God will repay us for what is expended in his ſervice, yet ſhall it infallibly be done. We know not whence the wind cometh, or whither it goeth, how the ſoul is united to the body, or the *bones grow in the womb of her that is with child*, and a thouſand things in the ways of providence are equally myſterious to us. But though we know not the manner of his operation, we feel and ſee the effects: and ſo ſhall we receive a return from him of what is in charity lent to him.

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(5.) We ſhall finally reap, if we faint not. With indefatigable diligence our duty is to labour, and truſt God for the ſucceſs; we know not which of our works of faith and labours of love ſhall moſt proſper, either thoſe of the morning of youth, or the evening of age, and may hope that *both ſhall be alike good*; watered with the dew of the divine benediction, and producing a plentiful harveſt, either in time or in eternity.

7. ¶ Truly the light *is* ſweet, and a pleaſant *thing it is* for the eyes to behold the ſun. 8. But if a man live many years, *and* rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkneſs, for [g] they ſhall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity. 9. ¶ Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and [h] walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes: but know thou, that [i] for all theſe *things* God will bring thee into judgment. 10. Therefore remove ſorrow from thy heart, and [k] put away evil from thy fleſh: [l] for childhood and youth *are* vanity.

[g] Job xiv. 12.
[h] Num. xv. 39.
[i] Chap. xii. 14.
[k] 2 Cor. vii. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 22.
[l] Pſ. xxxix. 5.

v. 7—10. After the many directions given how to live, he proceeds in the concluſion to teach us how to die.

1. He addreſſes the aged. Thoſe who have *lived many years*, and years of almoſt uninterrupted proſperity too, rejoicing in them all; to ſuch *the light* of life *is ſweet*, and *it is a pleaſant thing to behold the ſun*, to be numbered among the living, and enjoy the bleſſings God beſtows. But the more comforts we have found here, and the longer we have poſſeſſed them, the more need we fear, leaſt inordinate love of life ſhould draw us away from our better hope above; and therefore let ſuch *remember the days of darkneſs, for they are many*, days of ſickneſs, pain, and infirmity; or days of death, when the body is incloſed in the ſilent grave, and no more to be found among the living. This ſhould be ever placed in our view, that we may never be ſecure, or careleſs, but dying daily, and ready to meet the ſummons that calls us to our bed of duſt, to ſleep till the heavens are no more.

2. He addreſſes the youth. *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth*; which may be conſidered as before, as his ſerious advice, to take the moſt comfortable enjoyment of the bleſſings of life, in ſuch a way, as to be ever ready to anſwer at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt: or the words may be regarded as a pointed irony, expreſſive of the vanity and miſery of indulging youthful luſts, for which ſo ſolemn a reckoning muſt be quickly made. *Rejoice*, if ſuch wretched gratifications can afford a drop of ſatiſfaction, and *let thine heart chear thee in the days of thy youth*, paſs all the jocund hours in mirth and gaiety, *and walk in the ways of thine heart*, keeping it back from no joy, but giving a boundleſs ſcope, to the indulgence of every appetite; *and in the ſight of thine eyes*, let them wander unreſtrained on every pleaſing object: *but know thou*, however lightly it is thought of, however ſadly forgotten, *know thou*, what God will ſhortly make thee know, whether thou wilt or no, *that for all theſe things, God will bring thee into judgment*; terrible expectation to thoſe who ſpend their lives in vanity, and in a moment go down to the grave. Be admoniſhed *therefore*, before that fatal hour arrives; *remove ſorrow from thy heart*, all thoſe cauſes of it which will be bitterly felt in the days of more advanced age, if the pangs of repentance ſeize thee; or when in death, if found impenitent, the more terrible pains of hell come about thee; *and put away evil from thy fleſh*, the ſins of intemperance and uncleanneſs, to which the fleſh is addicted: *for childhood and youth are vanity*; the pleaſures of both poor and tranſient; the days ſwiftly hurrying by, old age advancing, and death at the door. The ſooner we begin ſeriouſly to weigh theſe things, and the more awfully to be impreſſed thereby, the more diligently ſhall we ſet ourſelves to prepare for our great change, and be happily ready for our appearance before the judge of quick and dead, whenever he ſhall ſummons us away.

CHAP. XII.

The wiſe and penitent preacher is here cloſing his ſermon, and he cloſes it, not only like a good orator, but like a good preacher, with that which was likely to make the beſt impreſſions, and which he wiſhed might be powerful and laſting upon his hearers. Here is, 1. *An exhortation to young people to begin betimes to be religious, and not to put it off to old age,* ver. 1. *enforced with arguments taken from the calamities of old age,* ver. 1—5. *and the great change that death will make upon us,* ver. 6, 7. 2. *A repetition of the great truth he had undertaken to prove in this diſcourſe, the vanity of the world,* ver. 8. 3. *A confirmation and recommendation of what he had written in this and his other books, as worthy to be duly weighed and conſidered,* ver. 9—12. 4. *The whole matter ſummed up and concluded, with a charge to all to be truly religious, in conſideration of the judgment to come,* ver. 13, 14.

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1. [a] REmember now thy † Creator [b] in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, [c] when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them; 2. While the ſun, or the light, or the moon, or the ſtars be not darkned, nor the clouds return after the rain: 3. In the day when the keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves, and the grinders ‡ ceaſe, becauſe they are few, and thoſe that look out of the windows be darkned, 4. And the doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreets, when the ſound of the grinding is low, and he ſhall riſe up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of muſic ſhall be brought low; 5. Alſo *when* they ſhall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *ſhall be* in the way, and the almond-tree ſhall flouriſh, and the graſhopper ſhall be a burden, and deſire ſhall fail: becauſe man goeth to his long home, and [d] the mourners go about the ſtreets: 6. Or ever the ſilver cord be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the ciſtern. 7. Then [e] ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was: and [f] the ſpirit ſhall return unto God [g] who gave it. 8. ¶ [h] Vanity of vanities, ſaith the preacher; all *is* vanity.

[a] Prov. xxii. 6.
† Heb. Creators.
[b] Lam. iii. 27.
[c] 2 Sam. xix. 35.
‡ Or fail, becauſe they grind little.
[d] Jer. xix. 7.
[e] Gen. iii. 19. Pſ. xc. 3.
[f] Chap. iii. 21. Phil. i. 23.
[g] Num. xvi. 22. & xxvii. 16. Iſa. lvii. 16. Zech. xii. 1.

v. 1—8. This is a continuation of the ſubject which cloſed the foregoing chapter. We have,

1. The application of the preacher's diſcourſe to young men, by way of admonition and counſel. *Remember now*, without delay, *thy Creator*, or *creators*, the triune God, whoſe right to us is unqueſtionable; not only our Maker as men, but our Redeemer alſo as ſinners, and thus twice our creator; and therefore juſtly expecting that we ſhould glorify him in our body, and in our ſpirits, which are his.

2. He urges his exhortation by the ſuitableneſs of the ſeaſon, and the proſpect of the evil days which are approaching, when the infirmities of age and ſickneſs as much diſorder the mind as the body, and unfit us for the great buſineſs of caring for the ſoul; when we ſhould have got, and not be then to ſeek the ſupports of religion, which theſe days of evil and anguiſh need; and when, if at laſt we ſhould bethink us of our paſt days, it muſt give us the moſt painful reflections, to look back on the flower of our years ſpent in the ſervice of the world, the fleſh, and the devil, and only the dregs of age remaining for God.

3. The calamities of old age are elegantly and feelingly deſcribed; probably the ſacred penman now ſpoke from experience. *The ſun, the light, the moon, the ſtars are darkned*, the eyes of the body grow dim, and can no longer enjoy the ſurrounding objects of light, and the faculties of the mind are impaired; the judgment weakened, the memory loſt, the imagination frozen: and *the clouds return after rain*, ſucceſſive troubles and ails follow each other, and under painful defluxions the body melts away. *The keepers of the houſe tremble*, the paralytic head, the ſhaking hand, and totttering knees beſpeak the feeble frame, *and the ſtrong men bow themſelves*; the legs can ſcarce ſupport their weight, and on ſome prop they ſuſtain their body bending to the tomb: *the grinders ceaſe, becauſe they are few*, the toothleſs gums no longer perform their office to maſticate the food: *and thoſe that look out of the windows are darkned*, the eyes ſunk in their ſockets, and no more ſenſible to the light of day. *And the doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreets*; they eat little, cloſe their lips to keep their food in their mouths, having loſt their teeth, and are unable to appear as formerly in the ſtreets; *and he ſhall riſe up at the voice of the bird*, his broken reſt is eaſily diſturbed with the crowing of the cock, or the leaſt noiſe, *and all the daughters of muſic ſhall be brought low*; the voice becomes inharmonious and harſh, the ears dull of hearing. *Alſo they ſhall be afraid of* that which is *high*, unable to aſcend the hill, or climb the tower; their breath fails, their head turns round, *and fears* ſhall be *in the way*; they are afraid of falling, through weakneſs, and ready to ſtumble at every thing in their path: *and the almond-tree ſhall flouriſh*; with ſilver hairs their heads are covered, *and the graſhopper ſhall be a burden*, either their chirping is irkſome, or if uſed for food, however light of digeſtion, too heavy for their ſtomach; *and deſire fails*, the appetite loſt, and the paſſions of youthful days utterly quenched. And in this debilitated and exhauſted ſtate, death cannot be far diſtant; *becauſe man goeth to his long home*, the grave, where his abode muſt be, till a reſurrection-day: or *to the houſe of this world*, that eternal world, which ſhould alone be regarded by us as our proper home: we ſhould conſider ourſelves as pilgrims upon earth, and ſtrangers whilſt here below, and look for, and haſten to, the everlaſting habitations which await us above; *and the mourners go about the ſtreets*, either thoſe who were hired to weep for the dead, or thoſe dear relatives, who with no fictitious tears bedew the bier of their departed friend, and fill the air with their lamentations. *The ſilver cord*, the bond of union between body and ſoul, will then *be looſed*; *the golden bowl*, that cen-

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contained the animal ſpirits, *be broken*; then ſhall *the pitcher be broken at the fountain*, and *the wheel broken at the ciſtern*, the heart ceaſe to beat, the blood to flow, and univerſal ſtagnation and death enſue. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was*, ſuch is the dire effect of one man's ſin, *and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God that gave it*, to receive its doom; either admitted to the bliſsful preſence of God, or reſerved in chains of darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day. Well might the preacher conclude from this humbling view of mortal man, the truth of the poſition he had advanced, as the text of his diſcourſe, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

9. And † moreover, becauſe the preacher was wiſe, he ſtill taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and ſought out, *and* [i] ſet in order many proverbs. 10. The preacher ſought to find out ‡ acceptable words, and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth. 11. The words of the wiſe *are* [k] as goads, and as nails faſtned *by* the maſters of aſſemblies, *which* are given from [l] one ſhepherd. 12. And further, by theſe, my ſon, be admoniſhed: of making many books *there is* no end, and [m] much ‖ ſtudy *is* a wearineſs of the fleſh.

† Or the more wiſe the preacher was, &c.
[i] 1 Kings iv. 32.
‡ Heb. Words of delight.
[k] Acts ii. 37.
[l] John x. 16.
[m] Chap. i. 18.
‖ Or reading.

v. 9—12. The preacher is drawing to a concluſion, and warmly recommends what he hath written, as the dictates of wiſdom and experience. He tells us,

1. The pains he took for our inſtruction. *Moreover, becauſe the preacher was wiſe, he ſtill taught the people knowledge*; what God had given him, he freely communicated; and being recovered from his falls, returned to his former happy employment of making others wiſe unto ſalvation: *yea, he gave good heed*, extracting all the inſtruction he could find in books or men, and well digeſting and pondering it in his own mind, *and ſought out* with elaborate and accurate inveſtigation the more difficult parts of ſcience, *and ſet in order many proverbs*, 1 Kings iv. 32. *The preacher ſought to find out acceptable words*, ſuch as might moſt effectually, powerfully, and pleaſingly convey the ſacred truths he laboured to inculcate; *and that which was written was upright*, being the dictates of God's ſpirit, *even words of truth*, proceeding from the God of truth.

2. The uſe and intention of his diſcourſe. *The words of the wiſe are as goads*, ſharp and quickning, convincing the conſcience of ſin, and ſtimulating our ſtupid hearts to diligence and activity, in working out our ſalvation: *and as nails*, to fix the wavering ſoul on God, *faſtened by the maſters of aſſemblies*, the miniſters of the goſpel, whoſe office and buſineſs it is, with ceaſeleſs labour, to inculcate theſe words of truth, *which are given from the one ſhepherd*, who alone can make their miniſtry effectual, to the converſion of men's ſouls; and he hath promiſed to be with us always, even unto the end of the world. In dependance upon him, therefore, muſt we go forth, and confidently expect to be aſſiſted by him, and made ſucceſsful in the preaching of his goſpel.

3. The Bible is the book of books; compared with this, all others are inſignificant, and whatever correſponds not herewith, is carefully to be avoided. *And further, my ſon, by theſe be admoniſhed*, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt theſe ſacred truths; or of *what is more than theſe, beware*, and affect not to be wiſe above what is written, and reject every writing that pretends to add unto, or diminiſh from, what is revealed in the word of God: *of making many books there is no end*; it is vain to expect conviction from any other book, if the book of God doth not produce it; and though our ſtudy was crammed with writings of philoſophy and morality, one page of God's word ſpeaks with more power, authority, and evidence, to the conſcience, than theſe numberleſs volumes; *and much ſtudy is a wearineſs to the fleſh*; the compoſing, or reading human works with fixed attention, wearies both the mind and body; but the ſtudy of the book of God, is as pleaſing as it is profitable.

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13. ¶ † Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter, [n] Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. 14. For [o] God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

† Or the end of the matter, even all that hath been heard is, &c.
[n] Deut. vi. 2. & x. 12.
[o] Chap. xi. 16. & xiv. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10.

v. 13, 14. Behold here reduced to a ſingle point the ſum of true religion, the certain means of happineſs, and the great end of man. *Let us hear the concluſion of the matter, fear God, and keep his commandments*; the one the principle, the other the practice, which neceſſarily flows from it. *The fear of God* comprehends all ſerious godlineſs, a reverence of his majeſty, a deference to his authority, and a dread of his diſpleaſure, and this will engage us to keep his commandments diligently, conſtantly, univerſally; making conſcience of all our ways, and ſeeking to have them more exactly conformed to that perfect rule he hath preſcribed. Two things are urged to enforce this,

1. The conſideration how much it is our bounden duty thus to fear and ſerve him. *This is the whole duty of man*, it is the great end of his creation, and ſhould be his firſt concern; or *this is the whole man*, he is then truly bleſſed and happy; which, without true godlineſs, all the world, or the things in it, can never make him.

2. The conſideration of the judgment approaching. *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment*; and of what infinite moment then muſt it be to us, how we ſhall appear at his bar, where, according to our deeds, our eternity muſt be determined for endleſs joys, or everlaſting burnings! God ſees and marks all our ways, *with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*; before the aſſembled world of men or angels they will be produced, and judgment, according to the truth, be executed. Happy they who keep this great day ever in their view, feel the impreſſion of it deep upon their hearts, reſtraining them from evil, quickning them in their courſe, ſupporting them under trials, and engaging them to perſevere faithful unto death; they ſhall have great boldneſs in the day of judgment, be counted worthy to ſtand before the Son of Man, and be admitted into the everlaſting joy of their Lord.

The End of the Book of ECCLESIASTES.

THE

EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;

OR, A

PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

SONG of SOLOMON.

ALL ſcripture *we are ſure* is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable *for the ſupport and advancement of the intereſts of his kingdom among men; and it is never the leſs ſo for there being found in it ſome things* dark and hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt to their own deſtruction. *In our belief both of the divine extraction and of the ſpiritual expoſition of this book, we are confirmed by the antient, conſtant, and concurring teſtimony both of the church of the Jews, to whom were* committed the oracles of God, *and who never made any doubt of the authority of this book, and of the Chriſtian church, which happily ſucceeds them in that truſt and honour.* 1. *It muſt be confeſſed on the one hand, that if he that barely reads this book be aſked as the eunuch was,* Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt? *he will have more reaſon than he had to ſay,* How can I, except ſome man ſhall guide me? *The books of ſcripture-hiſtory and prophecy are very like one another, but this* Song of Solomon's *is very unlike the ſongs of his father David; here is not the name of God in it, it is never quoted in the New Teſtament, we find not in it any expreſſions of natural religion, or pious devotion, no, nor is it introduced by viſion, or any of the marks of immediate revelation: it ſeems as hard as any part of ſcripture to be made a* ſavour of life unto life, *nay, and to thoſe who come to the reading of it with carnal minds and corrupt affections it is in danger of being made a* ſavour of death unto death: *it is a flower out of which they extract poiſon; and therefore the Jewiſh doctors adviſed their young people not to read it till they were thirty years old, leſt by the abuſe of that which is moſt pure and ſacred* (horrendum dictu!) *the flames of luſt ſhould be kindled with fire from heaven, which is intended for the altar only.* *But,* 2. *It muſt be confeſſed on the other hand, that with the help of the many faithful guides we have for the underſtanding of this book, it appears to be a very bright and powerful ray of heavenly light, admirably fitted to excite pious and devout affections in holy ſouls, to draw out their deſires towards God, to increaſe their delight in him, and improve their acquaintance and communion with him. It is an allegory, the letter of which kills thoſe who reſt in that and look no further, but the ſpirit of which giveth life,* 2 Cor. iii. 6. John vi. 63. *It is a parable, which makes divine things more difficult to thoſe who do not love them, but more plain and pleaſant to thoſe that do,* Matth. xiii. 14, 16. *experienced chriſtians here find a counterpart of their experiences, and to them it is intelligible; while they neither underſtand it, nor reliſh it, who have no part or lot in the matter. It is a ſong, an* Epithalamium *or nuptial ſong, wherein by the expreſſions of love between a bridegroom and his bride, is ſet forth and illuſtrated, the mutual affections that paſs between God and a diſtinguiſhed remnant of mankind.* Now, (1.) *This ſong might eaſily be taken in a ſpiritual ſenſe by the Jewiſh church, for whoſe uſe it was firſt compoſed, and was ſo taken, as appears by the Chaldee Paraphraſe, and the moſt ancient Jewiſh expoſitors. God betrothed the people of Iſrael to himſelf, he entered into covenant with them, and it was a marriage covenant. He had given abundant proofs of his love to them, and required of them that they ſhould love him with all their heart and ſoul. Idolatry was often ſpoken of as a ſpiritual adultery and doating upon idols; to prevent which, this ſong was penned, repreſenting the complacency God took in Iſrael, and which Iſrael ought to take in God, and encouraging them to continue faithful to him, though he might ſeem ſometimes to withdraw and hide himſelf from them, and to wait for the further manifeſtation of himſelf in the promiſed Meſſiah.* (2.) *It may more eaſily be taken in a ſpiritual ſenſe by the Chriſtian church, becauſe the condeſcenſions and communications of divine love appear more rich and free under the goſpel than they did under the law, and the communion between heaven and earth more familiar.*

God ſometimes ſpoke of himſelf as the huſband of the Jewiſh church, Iſa. lxiv. 5. Hoſ. ii. 16, 19. *and rejoiced in it as his bride*, Iſa. lxii. 4, 5. *But more frequently is Chriſt repreſented as the bridegroom of his church*, Matth. xxv. 1. Rom. vii. 4, 2 Cor. xi. 2. Eph. v. 32. *and the church as the bride, the Lamb's wife*, Rev. xix. 7. xxi. 2, 9. *Purſuant to this metaphor, Chriſt and the church in general, Chriſt and particular believers, are here diſcourſing with abundance of mutual eſteem and endearment. The beſt key to this book is the 45th pſalm, which we find applied to Chriſt in the New Teſtament, and therefore this ought to be ſo too. It requires ſome pains to find out what may probably be the meaning of the Holy Spirit in the ſeveral parts of this book; as David's ſongs are many of them level to the capacity of the meaneſt, and there are ſhallows in them in which a lamb may wade; ſo this of Solomon's will exerciſe the capacities of the moſt learned, and there are depths in it, in which an elephant may ſwim. But when the meaning is found out, it will be of admirable uſe to excite pious and devout affections in us; and the ſame truths which are plainly laid down in other ſcriptures, when they are extracted out of this, come to the ſoul with a more pleaſing power. When we apply ourſelves to the ſtudy of this book, we muſt not only, with Moſes and Joſhua,* put off our ſhoe from off our foot, *and even forget that we have bodies, becauſe* the place where we ſtand is holy ground; *but we muſt, with John,* come up hither, *muſt ſpread our wings, take a noble flight and ſoar upwards, till by faith and holy love we* enter into the holieſt, *for* this is no other than the houſe of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

Before Chriſt 1014.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter, after the title of the book, ver. 1. *we have Chriſt and his church, Chriſt and a believer, expreſſing their eſteem for each other.* 1. *The bride, the church, ſpeaks to the bridegroom,* ver. 2, 3, 4. *to the daughters of Jeruſalem,* ver. 5, 6. *and then to the Bridegroom,* ver. 7. 2. *Chriſt the Bridegroom ſpeaks in anſwer to the complaints and requeſt of his ſpouſe,* ver. 8—11. 3. *The church expreſſeth the great value ſhe has for Chriſt, and the delight ſhe takes in communion with him,* ver. 12—14. 4. *Chriſt commends the church's beauty,* ver. 15. *And,* 5. *The church returns the recommendation,* ver. 16, 17. *Where there is a fire of true love to Chriſt in the heart, this will be of uſe to blow it up into a flame.*

[a] 1 Kings iv. 32.

1. [a] THE ſong of ſongs, which *is* Solomon's.

v. 1. We have here,

1. The title of the book, *The ſong of ſongs*; the moſt excellent of all that ever were compoſed, both reſpecting the matter of which it treats, the love of Chriſt and his church, and the manner of its execution, which is moſt elegant and beautiful.

2. The penman, *which is Solomon*, inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, or *concerning Solomon*, the Divine Redeemer, of whom he was a type, the Prince of peace, the God of love, who makes his people happy in communion with himſelf; and in the ſenſe of his favour, gives them a joy and happineſs, which the world knoweth not of.

[b] Luke xv. 20.
[c] Chap. iv. 10.
† Heb. Loves.
[d] 2 Cor. ii. 14.
[e] 1 Pet. ii. 7.
[f] Hoſ. xi. 4. John vi. 44. & xii. 32.
[g] Phil. iii. 12—14.
[h] Pſ. xlv. 14, 15. Eph. ii. 6.
‡ Or they love thee uprightly.
[i] 1 Theſ. ii. 3.
[k] Mat. x. 21, 36.

2. [b] Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth: for
[c] thy † love *is* better than wine. 3. Becauſe of [d] the
ſavour of thy good ointments, [e] thy name *is as* ointment
poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. 4.
[f] Draw me, [g] we will run after thee: the king [h] hath
brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine:
‡ the upright love thee. 5. I *am* black, but comely, O
ye daughters of Jeruſalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the
curtains of Solomon. 6. Look not upon me, becauſe [i] I
am black, becauſe the ſun hath looked upon me: [k] my
mothers children were angry with me, they made me
the keeper of the vineyards, *but* mine own vineyard
have I not kept.

v. 2—6. Filled with a tranſport of delight and love in contemplating the glorious object of her affections, the church,

1. With abrupt addreſs, as enraptured with the ſight of her beloved, breaks forth, *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth*, as a token of reconciliation, which the ſinner above all things deſires; who, trembling under the ſenſe of guilt, cries for pardon, and begs that God would ſeal it to his ſoul, and make him rejoice in the comfort of it, by giving ſome ſweet manifeſtation of himſelf, and ſhedding abroad his love in the heart: *for thy love is better than wine*, more pleaſing to the ſoul than the moſt delicious wine to the palate, and more reviving and exhilerating than the richeſt cordial, as they who have taſted it find by delightful experience. *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments*, the unction from the Holy One, the fulneſs of divine grace reſident in Jeſus, and from him communicated to his people, *thy name is as ointment poured forth*, diffuſing the moſt delightful fragrance, and making glad the heart of the miſerable, who beholds in *Jeſus* a Saviour of ſinners, and *in Immanuel*, God with us, an all-ſufficient Saviour; *therefore do the virgins love thee*, engaged by his excellence, and longing for nearer and more intimate communion of ſpirit with him; and *virgins*, in the purity of their affections, the fidelity of their attachment, and their beauty and comelineſs as arrayed in his righteouſneſs, and adorned with the graces of his ſpirit.

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2. She prays to experience freſh conſtrainings of divine love. *Draw me* with the cords of love, for we are weak and impotent, unable to follow Jeſus one ſtep farther, than his everlaſting arms are under us, and his effectual grace ſtrengthens us; *and* then *we will run after thee*, with warm affection and eager deſire; and from experience of the ſweetneſs of the way, ſhall be inviting others to come with us, and taſte how good the Lord is.

3. She acknowledges the favourable anſwer given her requeſts. They are no ſooner offered than granted. *The King*, the anointed Redeemer, the eternal Prince and Saviour, the glorious bridegroom, *hath brought me into his chambers*, graciouſly condeſcending to take the ſinful ſoul into neareſt union with himſelf, and putting it in poſſeſſion of all the riches of divine grace ſtored up for the uſe of his redeemed: well therefore may ſuch a one ſay, *we will be glad and rejoice in thee*; in ourſelves we have nothing to rejoice in, much to be aſhamed of, much to lament, but in Jeſus we have the moſt abundant cauſe for joy unſpeakable and full of glory, both in his perſon, offices, and relation to us; and on account of what he hath done, is doing, and will do for us. *We will remember thy love more than wine*; his love was more grateful than the moſt exquiſite wines, which at feaſts ſo eagerly are ſought; and the remembrance of it, not like the impreſſions made on our ſenſes that quickly die away, but deep engraven on the ſoul, and the delightful ſenſe of it continually abiding: O that this were more our own bleſſed experience! *The upright love thee*; this is the character of the bridegroom's friends; their ſouls are renewed by grace, God's word is their rule, love is their principle, holineſs their path, and glory their end; when they who now love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity, ſhall then love him in perfection, ſhall dwell in love, ſhall dwell in God, and God in them.

4. She addreſſes herſelf to the daughters of Jeruſalem, owns her native and acquired defilement, yet points them to that comelineſs with which notwithſtanding ſhe is arrayed. *I am black as the* ſooty *tents of Kedar*, black with original guilt, indwelling ſin, actual tranſgreſſions, and manifold infirmities; black with perſecutions, reproaches, afflictions, ſufferings; *becauſe the ſun hath looked upon me*, as thoſe who are expoſed to its ſcorching beams have their ſkins diſcoloured: *my mother's children were angry with me*; for uſually from falſe brethren, and carnal profeſſors, the ſevereſt trials of the faithful come; *they made me keeper of the vineyards*, conſtrained to compliance with their falſe ways and worſhip, or ſeduced by temptation, and compelled to toil under the ſervice of corruption: *but mine own vineyard have I not kept*; with ſhame, like a true penitent, whom we muſt imitate, ſhe acknowledges her neglects and departures from God. Yet notwithſtanding, ſhe can ſay, *Look not upon me, becauſe I am black*, with an eye of contempt or diſdain; for amidſt all my infirmities and ſuffering, I am *comely as the curtains of Solomon*, *comely* in the eyes of God, ſprinkled with the blood, cloathed with the righteouſneſs, adorned with the graces of the Divine Redeemer, ſhining in patience amidſt the darkneſs of affliction; and coming from the furnace of perſecution bright as ſilver purified ſeven times in the fire.

7. Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth, [l] where
thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt *thy flock* to reſt at noon:
for why ſhould I be as one that † turneth aſide by the
flocks of thy companions? 8. ¶ If thou know not, [m] O
thou faireſt among women, [n] go thy way forth by the
footſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beſide the

[l] Pſ. xxiii. 1, &c.
† Or is veiled.
[m] Chap. v. 9. & vi. 1.
[n] Prov. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 1.

ſhepherds tents. 9. I have compared thee, O my [o] love, to a company of horſes in Pharoah's chariots. 10. [p] Thy cheeks are comely with rows *of jewels*, thy neck with chains *of gold*. 11. [q] We will make thee borders of gold with ſtuds of ſilver.

[o] Chap. ii. 2, 10, 13. & iv. 1, 7. & v. 2. & vi. 4. John xv. 14, 15.
[p] Ezek. xvi. 11—13.
[q] Gen. i. 26.

v. 7—11. We find here the Lord for a while departed, and his church, through her unfaithfulneſs, left to lament his abſence, and anew to ſeek his face.

1. She earneſtly enquires after him, and pleads hard for his returning favour. *Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth* with unfeigned affection; for though by temptation the exerciſe of grace may be interrupted, there is a habit of love ſtill abiding in all true believers hearts; and when they return to ſeek his face, notwithſtanding their falls, they can ſay with Peter, Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee; therefore *tell me where thou feedeſt* the flock of thy paſture, *where thou makeſt* it *to reſt at noon*, that my ſoul may be with thee, enjoy thy preſence, join in thine ordinances, ſit under thy ſhadow, and again be refreſhed with the ſenſe of thy love; for till this be the caſe, a child of God, who hath turned aſide, can find no reſt unto his ſoul: *for why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions?* who pretend to be ſuch, but are really hypocritical and heretical, teaching doctrines of lies and deluſion; and to be ſuffered to be ſeduced by them, nay, but to be ſuſpected of leaning towards ſuch falſe teachers, could not be thought of by the faithful ſoul without grief and anguiſh; and ſurely it ſhall not be; for,

2. The dear Redeemer quickly anſwers her enquiry, and points her to the paths of peace: none err fatally who look to him for direction. *If thou know not*, or *ſeeing thou knoweſt not*, the way, bewildered through ignorance, or ſeduced from it by temptation, *O thou faireſt among women*; ſuch an endearing title does he give her, as ſuch he regards her; and though the church, and every member in their own apprehenſions, bluſh at their deformity, and are confounded at their backſlidings, yet Jeſus is invariable in his regards, and delights in the beauty of righteouſneſs imputed and impreſſed, the comelineſs with which he hath arrayed his redeemed; and theſe he will guide and lead aright; *go thy way forth by the footſteps of the flock*, be found in the ordinances of Divine worſhip, and mark the good old way in which holy men have walked, and the faithful continue to follow them, *and feed thy kids beſides the ſhepherds tents*; attend the miniſtry of thoſe who labour in the word and doctrine, and lay themſelves out in the ſervice of immortal ſouls: nor ſhould they who have the charge of others come alone, their children, relations, ſervants ſhould be encouraged to draw near the *ſhepherds tents*, the courts of the ſanctuary.

3. Chriſt expreſſes his high regard to his church: *I have compared thee, my love*, (ſo tender an appellation doth he give to thoſe who in themſelves are ſo unworthy of his regard) *to a company of horſes in Pharoah's chariots*; the moſt beautiful of their kind, adorned with trappings, and drawing with mutual and united efforts. *Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold*; beautified with the graces, gifts, and conſolations of the ſpirit, more precious than the richeſt jewels, and ſhining brighter than burniſhed gold: and greater glories ſtill are in ſtore for her; he who hath decked her in theſe bright ornaments will add thereunto. *We will make thee borders of gold with ſtuds of ſilver*, that ſhe may be compleat and perfect, lacking nothing, eſpecially in the great day of conſummation, when ſhe ſhall be preſented in the beauty of holineſs before the throne of God: and this is the work of the ſacred Three.

12. ¶ [r] While the king *ſitteth* at his table, my ſpikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof. 13. A bundle of myrrh *is* my well-beloved unto me; he ſhall lie all night [s] betwixt my breaſts. 14. My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluſter of † camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi. 15. [t] Behold, thou *art* fair, my ‡ love; behold, thou *art* fair, thou *haſt* doves eyes. 16. Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleaſant: alſo our bed *is* green. 17. The beams of our houſe *are* cedar, *and* our § rafters of fir.

[r] John xii. 2, 3.
[s] Eph. iii. 17.
† Or, cypreſs. Chap. iv. 13.
[t] Chap. iv. 1. & v. 12.
‡ Or, companion.
§ Or, galleries.

v. 12—17. We have here the communion maintained between Chriſt and his church.

1. She expreſſes her loyalty and affection towards him, her huſband and Lord. *When the king ſitteth at his table:* he is a king, reigning from eternity, and in a peculiar manner hath eſtabliſhed his throne in the hearts of his people who ſubmit to his government, and are ſafe and happy under his protection: he is infinitely condeſcending, *ſitting at his table*, inviting the poor and miſerable ſinner to come and partake of all his rich proviſion of goſpel grace, and giving them the kindeſt reception, who in faith and love draw near at his bidding; and when he manifeſts his preſence in the midſt of his people, then *my ſpikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof*; the graces of his ſaints are in lively exerciſe, their faith ſtrong, their love ardent, their zeal flaming; and this is to him a ſavour of a ſweet ſmell, more pleaſing than the moſt fragrant ſpices. *A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me*; beloved, well-beloved, beſt beloved; compared with Chriſt, a gracious ſoul may be ſaid to hate every thing beſides: *he ſhall lie all night betwixt my breaſts*, conſtantly embraced with the warmeſt affections of her heart, and yielding a joy preferable to the ſweeteſt perfume placed in the boſom, till the night of time ſhall give place to the riſing morning of eternal day. *My beloved is unto me as a cluſter of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.* The word tranſlated *camphire* is of dubious ſignification; ſome ſuppoſe it to ſignify *dates*, which grew in plenty there; others *the cyprus vine*; it is elſewhere rendered a *propitiation:* the ſenſe is evident, that Chriſt is ineſtimably precious; all fullneſs of excellence reſides in him; his atonement, righteouſneſs, and grace, are more delightful to the heart than the ſweeteſt camphire to the ſmell, or the moſt delicious cluſter of grapes to the taſte.

2. Chriſt teſtifies his complacence in her, well-pleaſed with the profeſſion of her warm attachment to him. *Behold*, and moſt worthy it is of a note of admiration, that we who are by nature ſo defiled, ſhould be regarded thus by the God of purity; *behold, thou art fair, my love:* the words ſpeak Chriſt's gracious regard and tender affection towards his people; and they are fair, becauſe he hath put his own comelineſs upon them in robes of righteouſneſs, and garments of ſalvation; *behold, thou art fair*; ſtrange and ſcarce credible as it may ſeem, conſidering our native pollution, and the evil of our ways, he repeats it to aſſure us ſo it is, and what the king is pleaſed to call a man, that is his name: *thou haſt doves eyes*; the piercing eyes of faith, the modeſt eye of ſimplicity, and dove-like innocence. *Note*, (1.) However contemptible in the eyes of others, or loathed in their own, a believer may be, he is precious in the eyes of his Lord. (2.) We muſt remember, however our dear Lord is pleaſed to account of us, or whatever good we poſſeſs, it is all of grace, we have nothing we have not received.

3. The church echoes back the words of her ſpouſe, with mutual profeſſions of like endearment. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved:* the faithful ſcarce know how to admit this character to themſelves, but to their dear Lord with greateſt propriety it belongs; he is fair indeed, in uncreated beauty; he is the ſun without a ſpot; ſhe but the moon, who borrows all her light and beauty from him; *yea, pleaſant*, ever ſhining on his choſen with cheriſhing rays; no frowns cloud his brow, but the endearing ſmiles of tenderneſs make glad their hearts continually; and all his promiſes are Yea and Amen, ſpeaking peace and joy to their ſouls: *alſo our bed is green*; between huſband and wife there is a community of goods; when we are Chriſt's, all his things are ours: *the bed* is the church of the redeemed, where the faithful aſſemble to meet their Lord in the ordinances of his ſervice; and *green*, to denote the pleaſantneſs of the courts of the Lord's houſe, or the numerous converts that are collected therein, or the flouriſhing ſtate of their ſouls. *The beams of our houſe are cedar, and our rafters of fir*, or *galleries*; which may refer to the miniſters of the goſpel, who under Chriſt ſupport the glorious fabric; or to the ſaints in general, whoſe ſtability, and gratefulneſs to him, are hereby ſhadowed forth.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter, 1. *Chriſt ſpeaks both concerning himſelf, and concerning his church*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The church ſpeaks*, (1.) *Remembering the pleaſure and ſatisfaction ſhe had in communion with Chriſt*, ver. 3, 4. (2.) *Entertaining herſelf with the preſent tokens of his favour, and taking care that nothing happen to intercept them*, ver. 5—7. (3.) *Triumphing in his approaches towards her*, ver. 8, 9. (4.) *Repeating the gracious calls he had given her to go along with him, invited by the pleaſures of the returning ſpring*, ver. 10—13. *out of her obſcurity*, ver. 14. *and the charge he had given to the ſervants to deſtroy that which would be hurtful to his vineyard*, ver. 15. (5.) *Rejoicing in her intereſt in him*, ver. 16. (6.) *Longing for his arrival*, ver. 17. *They whoſe hearts are filled with love to Chriſt and hope of heaven, know beſt what theſe things mean.*

1. I *Am* the roſe of Sharon, *and* the lily of the vallies. 2. [a] As the lily among thorns, ſo *is* my love among the daughters. 3. As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo *is* my beloved among the ſons. † I ſat down [b] under his ſhadow with great delight, and [c] his fruit *was* ſweet to my taſte. 4. He brought me to ‡ the banqueting houſe, and [d] his banner over me *was* love. 5. Stay me with flagons, § comfort me with apples; for I *am* [e] ſick of love. 6. [f] His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. 7. [g] I ‖ charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake *my* love till he pleaſe.

[a] Mat. x. 16.
† Heb. I delighted and ſat down, &c.
[b] Iſa. xxxii. 2.
[c] 1 Pet. ii. 3. Rev. xxii. 2.
‡ Heb. The houſe of wine.
[d] Rom. v. 5.
§ Heb. Straw me with apples.
[e] Pſ. cxix. 81.
[f] Chap. viii. 3. Eph. v. 29.
[g] Chap. iii. 5. & viii. 4.
‖ Heb. Adjure.

Before Chriſt 1014.

v. 1—7. We have here,

1. The heavenly bridegroom deſcribing his own excellence, and the beauty of his bride: *I am the roſe of Sharon, and the lily of the vallies*; all perfections center in him; his perſon adorned with that fulneſs of the ſpirit, which God without meaſure gave unto him; his humanity white as the lily, without ſpot of ſin; bluſhing as the roſe, when on the bloody tree he made the atonement; in the purity of his life, and in the ſacrifice of his death, diffuſing a fragrance moſt acceptable, and well-pleaſing to God; and from which we derive all the ſweetneſs of the great and precious promiſes which grow in the garden of the everlaſting covenant of grace. *As the lily among the thorns, ſo is my love among the daughters*; ſhe reſembles him, therefore is beloved by him; he ſees in her his own image, and delights in it. *Among the thorns* of evil men, and a world lying in wickedneſs, does this lily grow, and as infinitely preferable to them as that ſweet flower in look and ſmell exceeds the briars of the field.

2. The ſpouſe returns the commendations on her beloved, and profeſſes her joy in him, her dependance upon him, her ſollicitude to pleaſe him.

(1.) She prefers him before all others. *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons*; none of the ſons of men on earth, none of the ſons of the mighty in heaven, are to be compared with the Lord; when he ſtands forth in his tranſcendent beauty, they hide their diminiſhed heads.

(2.) She declares the delight ſhe had in his preſence and company. *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight*; Chriſt is the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land; the ſinful ſoul, ſcorched with the fire of wrath, flies thither, and finds a happy reſting place: under his ſhadow are pardon, peace, and joy, protection from danger, and poſſeſſion of every deſire of the ſoul. Bleſſed and happy are they who there take up their abode. *And his fruit was ſweet to my taſte:* they who by faith feed on Chriſt, will find the promiſes of his word, the gifts of his grace, and the manifeſtations of his love moſt delightful, *ſweeter than honey and the honeycomb. He brought me to the banqueting-houſe*; led me thither by the hand of his effectual grace, where the richeſt proviſion of every bleſſing a miſerable ſinner can need, was provided; *and his banner over me was love*; love boundleſs and infinite contrived and executed the plan of man's ſalvation: love reared the banner of the everlaſting goſpel, inviting loſt ſouls to Jeſus, the captain of their ſalvation; love ſweetly, powerfully, engages them to liſt under his colours; love conſtrains, emboldens, enables them to fight under his ſtandard, and be more than conquerors. Lord, over me diſplay this banner of thy love!

(3.) She profeſſes the fervency of her love. *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am ſick of love*; overcome with the ſenſe of the amazing grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt; and, like the ſpirit of Jacob, fainting with joy at the glad tidings; or ſick with the vehement deſires, which nothing but a ſenſe of Chriſt's preſence and love could ſatisfy; and therefore deſiring a manifeſtation of his favour, to revive the drooping ſoul, as flagons of wine reſtore the fainting ſpirits.

(4.) She acknowledges the ready anſwer vouchſafed to her requeſt. *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me*; though for a while dejected, and deſtitute of ſpiritual delight, the believer ſhall ſtill experience Divine ſupports: Chriſt will keep his people ſafe in his everlaſting arms; and they who look to him to be kept, none ſhall ever be able to pluck them out of his hands.

(5.) She expreſſes her ſollicitude to preſerve her communion with the Lord. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem,* all the members of the church of Chriſt, *by the roes and by the hinds of the field*, by every thing that is dear and deſirable, *that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe*, by any quarrels and unchriſtian diſputes among yourſelves, or by your ſins provoking him to depart. He may if he pleaſes, without any cauſe, withdraw from us a ſenſe of his love, whilſt he is in regard ſtill the ſame towards us; but we ſhould be watchful over every thing that would in anger cauſe him to ariſe and leave us. The way to keep our peace and comfort abiding, is to be careful and jealous over the evil of our own hearts.

[h] John x. 3. 8. ¶ [h] The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh,
leaping upon the mountains, ſkipping upon the hills.
[i] Ver. 17. 9. [i] My beloved *is* like a roe, or a young hart: behold,
he ſtandeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the
† Heb. Flouriſhing. windows, † ſhewing himſelf through the latteſs. 10.
[k] Ver. 13. My beloved ſpake and ſaid unto me, [k] Riſe up, my love,
my fair one, and come away. 11. For lo, the winter
is paſt, the rain is over *and* gone. 12. The flowers
appear on the earth, the time of the ſinging *of birds* is
[l] Jer. viii. 7. come, and [l] the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.
13. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the
[m] Ver. 10. Iſa. lx. 1. vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* ſmell. [m] Ariſe,
my love, my fair one, and come away.

Before Chriſt 1014.

v. 8—13. It ſhould ſeem as if, notwithſtanding the charge given, the Lord had been diſturbed, and had withdrawn; but now returning in mercy, the church with rapture hears his voice, and welcomes his approach.

1. She triumphs in her beloved. *The voice of my beloved!* how pleaſing, how delightful, the well-known voice; the ſound of which makes the heart leap for joy: *behold*, with wonder, his amazing grace, *he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, ſkipping upon the hills:* thus the Old Teſtament church beheld him deſcending from the everlaſting hills to be incarnate; thus the church of Chriſt, and every believer, now behold him haſting to their relief, when mountains of guilt, corruption, and unbelief, ſeem to ſeparate them from him; and thus all his redeemed people are looking for him, when the ſecond time he ſhall bow the heavens and come down, his voice awake the dead, and his ſaints be finally triumphant in glory. *My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart*; ſo amiable in himſelf, ſo ſwift to fly to the relief of his redeemed: *behold, he ſtandeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, ſhewing himſelf through the latteſs*; ſo they beheld him before his incarnation, behind the wall of ceremonies, at the windows of his promiſes, and through the latteſs of ſacrifices, types and figures: and we ſtill ſee him through the glaſs of faith, but darkly compared with what we hope for: the vail of fleſh is between us; we get now and then a glympſe of him at the windows of his grace and promiſes, and through the latteſs of his ordinances maintain ſome near communion with him; but we expect to ſee him ſhortly face to face, and to know no more thoſe ſeparations that the body of fleſh, and more eſpecially the body of the ſins of the fleſh, now occaſion. Haſten, Lord, that happy day.

2. She relates the gracious invitation her beloved had given her. *My beloved ſpake and ſaid unto me*, with infinite condeſcenſion and tenderneſs, *Riſe up, my love, my fair one, and come away*; appellations expreſſive of the endeared affection of Jeſus, whoſe love indeed paſſeth knowledge, and the call, *Riſe up*, intimates the ſlumbering frame into which ſhe had fallen, and the need ſhe had to be awaked. The argument he uſes to prevail with her, is the beauty of the returning ſpring, when, winter's lowring clouds blown over, the vernal ſun decks in its gayeſt livery the earth with flowers, and every grove reſounds with feathered ſongſters; the turtle coes, the fig-tree buds, the grape ſhoots forth her tendrils, and all around breathes fragance; and this deſcription may be applied,

(1.) To the ſtate of the ſinner's ſoul, when Chriſt in the word of his goſpel comes to awaken him from the ſleep of ſpiritual death: frozen, dark, barren, and unprofitable, is the natural heart, incapable of producing bloſſoms or fruit of holineſs, till Chriſt the ſun of righteouſneſs ariſes with healing in his wings; by his mighty agency a glorious and univerſal change enſues; the ſoul is ſoftened to ſenſibility; impregnated by his bright beams of love, it teems with life, the flowers of heavenly diſpoſitions appear, the heart ſings for joy in the good ways of God, and the fruits of grace bud forth, ripening into glory.

(2.) To the ſtate of believers under their declenſions, or temptations, when ſtorms of unbelief, corruption, or deſpondence, beat againſt their ſouls, and dark nights of deſertion leave them melancholy and dejected, no comfort, no fruit of grace appears: but though it is winter, there is ſtill life in their root, and when the Lord returns, the hardneſs of their hearts diſſolves; they bud again and bloſſom as the roſe, the tears are wiped from their eyes, the voice of joy is heard, they ſing as the birds, and bring forth fruit abundantly unto eternal life. Hear then this hour, thou toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted, hear this ſweet voice of Jeſus reiterating the call, *Ariſe, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

14. ¶ O my dove *that art* in the clefts of the rock,
in the ſecret *places* of the ſtairs, let me ſee thy countenance,
[n] let me hear thy voice; for ſweet *is* thy voice, [n] Chap. viii. 13.
and thy countenance *is* comely. 15. Take us [o] the foxes, [o] Pſ. lxxx. 13. Ezek. xiii. 14. Luke xiii. 32.
the little foxes, that ſpoil the vines: for our vines *have*
tender grapes. 16. ¶ [p] My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* [p] Chap. vi. 3. & vii. 10. Gal. ii. 20.
his: he feedeth among the lilies. 17. [q] Until the day [q] Chap. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 19.
break, and the ſhadows flee away: turn my beloved,
and [r] be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the [r] Ver. 9. Chap. viii. 14.
mountains [s] of † Bether. [s] 2 Sam. ii. 29. † Or, diviſion.

v. 14—17. We have here,

1. The ſame gracious invitation continued. *O my dove*; to which creature the believer's ſoul may be compared; *timorous*, through fears of guilt and conſcious weakneſs; *beautiful* in the feathers of ſilver, the righteouſneſs of Jeſus, and the graces of his ſpirit; *meek* and inoffenſive in ſpirit; *chaſte* and faithful to Jeſus as the turtle to her mate. *In the clefts of the rocks*; fled to the ſhelter of a Saviour's ſide, opened by the ſpear, a ſmall but ſure retreat. *In the ſecret places of the ſtairs*; hid in Chriſt, and maintaining an intercourſe with him the world knoweth not of: or theſe expreſſions may intimate her guilty fears that led her to hide her head, and ſeek, like Adam in the garden, a covert from her conſcious ſhame; from which

retirement therefore Chriſt would draw her forth: *Let me ſee thy countenance*, be not afraid or aſhamed to come with open face into the aſſembly of the ſaints, where Jeſus manifeſts his preſence; *let me hear thy voice* in prayer and praiſe; *for ſweet is thy voice*; inharmonious as to us it may appear, and unworthy as we think ourſelves to open our polluted lips before him, he graciouſly condeſcends well-pleaſed to accept our liſpings; *and thy countenance is comely*; loathſome as we ſeem in our own eyes, and covering our faces with confuſion in the duſt, he wipes away the defilement, and transforming us into his own image, delights in the beauties he beſtows.

2. A charge is given to ſeize and remove what was hurtful to the vineyard. *Take us the foxes*; which may be the words of the church, directed to her miniſters, or rather of Chriſt to his ſervants. By *foxes* are meant falſe teachers, who with much fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the unwary, and introduce errors, hereſies, and ſchiſms into the church; *even the little foxes*, that muſt be cruſhed in their neſt, *that ſpoil the vines*; corrupting the faith, debauching the morals, and debaſing the diſcipline of the church: *for our vines have tender grapes*; young converts, whoſe tender years, or weak attainments, need an eſpecial guard againſt the wiles of deceivers. *Note*, Every corruption in the heart is a little fox, that would rob us of our comfort, and threatens to root up the vine of grace; we muſt watch over them therefore, and check the motions of evil in the birth.

3. The church exults in her intereſt in her Lord. *My beloved is mine*; *mine* as the gift of God; the faithful bridegroom united in bonds of an everlaſting covenant; *mine* in poſſeſſion and enjoyment, all his things are *mine*; his righteouſneſs, grace, glory are *mine*, *and I am his*, the creature of his hand, the purchaſe of his blood; renewed by his ſpirit, by choice devoted to him, ſubſervient to his will, zealous for his intereſt, and living in love and duty for him alone: *he feedeth among the lilies*, manifeſting himſelf in the midſt of his people, beautiful as the lilies; or, crowned with wreaths of this ſweet flower, as a ſhepherd he watches over the flock of his paſture, and feeds them with his divine conſolations.

4. She expreſſes her expectation of his ſpeedy coming. *Until the day break, and the ſhadows flee away*; ſo long God's covenant with his choſen continues, whilſt day and night endureth; or ſo long he feedeth the flock of his paſture, till the day of eternity breaks, and the night of time is fled: or, connected with the following clauſe, the words are a prayer for Chriſt's appearing, either incarnate to his Old Teſtament ſaints, or in the manifeſtation of his love to the faithful, labouring under darkneſs and deſertion, or in his glory at the great day of final conſummation, when all the ſhadows of remaining ignorance, infirmity, affliction, will be for ever fled away, and one eternal day of light, joy, and bleſſedneſs unutterable ſucceed: *turn, my beloved*, unto me, *be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether*, or of *ſeparation*; ſwift as the bounding roe, fly to relieve me from the pains of abſence, and let no mountains ſeparate my ſoul from thee; come with the comforts of thy love below, or take me to the enjoyment of thy bleſſed ſelf above! Amen!

CHAP. III.

In this chapter, 1. *The church earneſtly ſeeks, and happily finds her beloved, who had withdrawn,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The daughters of Jeruſalem admire the excellencies of the church,* ver. 6. 3. *The church admires Jeſus Chriſt under the perſon of Solomon, his bed, and the life-guards about it,* ver. 7, 8. *His chariot,* ver. 9, 10. *And calls upon the daughters of Sion, who were admiring her, to admire him rather, eſpecially as he appeared on his coronation-day, and the day of his nuptials,* ver. 11.

a Iſa. xxvi. 9. 1. [a] BY night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul
loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not.
2. I will riſe now, and go about the city in the ſtreets,
and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul
b Chap. v. 7. Iſa. lvi. 10. loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. 3. [b] The
watchmen that go about the city, found me: *to whom I
ſaid*, Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? 4. *It was*
but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him
c Gen. xxxii. 26. Matt. xxviii. 9. whom my ſoul loveth: [c] I held him, and would not let
him go, until I had brought him into [d] my mother's
d Gal. iv. 26. houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.
e Chap. ii. 7. & viii. 4. 5. [e] I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the
roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up,
f Ibid. viii. 5. nor awake *my* love, till he pleaſe. 6. ¶ [f] Who *is* this
that cometh out of the wilderneſs like pillars of ſmoke,
perfumed with myrrh, and frankincenſe, with all powders of the merchant?

v. 1—6. Though none ever ſought God's face in vain, yet ſometimes he is a God that hideth himſelf, to ſtir up our diligence, and exerciſe our faith and patience in ſeeking him. We have,

1. The church ſeeking her Lord. *By night upon my bed*; either this refers to the Moſaical diſpenſation, when, comparatively, darkneſs covered the earth; or to the condition of the faithful in every age, who know ſome dark ſeaſons when they lament after an abſent Chriſt; or this ſignifies the dull and ſluggiſh frame into which ſhe had fallen through ſloth and worldly eaſe, which had provoked the Saviour to withdraw; yet whatever declenſions had grown upon her, ſhe could ſtill ſay, *I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth*; her love was true, though grown cold, and though with too much lukewarmneſs ſhe continued to ſeek him: *I ſought him, but I found him not*, as the puniſhment of her unfaithfulneſs, or becauſe ſhe uſed ſo little importunity in the purſuit, her prayers negligent, her attention in the ordinances diſtracted, and her ears dull of hearing.

2. Perceiving her deadneſs and diſtance from him, in the power of Divine grace, ſhe reſolves more earneſtly to ſeek his face. *I will riſe now* from the bed of ſloth, *and* without delay *go about the city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth*; diſcouraged by no difficulties, and perſevering notwithſtanding repeated diſappointments, diligent in the uſe of every appointed means, and in ſome of his holy ordinances hoping at laſt to meet him: *I ſought him, but I found him not*; that melancholy ſtrain is repeated, and paints the anguiſh of her diſappointment: we muſt not however give over, if we do not meet in the way of duty with all the comfort we expected, but patiently wait, and be found ſtill in God's way. Therefore,

3. She applies to *the watchmen of the city*, whom ſhe met, for information; the miniſters of the word, whoſe office and buſineſs it is to direct poor wandering ſouls to Jeſus; they *found me* bewildered in my ſearch, and as they appeared ſolicitous and able to direct my ſteps, I ſaid, *Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth?* no other deſcription was neceſſary, the object of her longing regards was known to them. *Note*, (1.) They who are under ſoul diſtreſs, are bound to apply to the miniſters of Chriſt, whoſe advice he will bleſs to their relief. (2.) A ſoul that knows the value of the Lord Jeſus, will never reſt ſeeking till it finds him.

4. This was the bleſſed caſe of the diſtreſſed church. *It was but a little that I paſſed from them*; obſerving probably the directions they had given, though their anſwer is not mentioned; or when means and miniſters all failed, Chriſt came to anſwer all her importunate deſires; *I found him whom my ſoul loveth:* none ever were at laſt diſappointed, who in patient perſeverance ſought his face; and the longer our comfort hath been delayed, the more diſappointments we have encountered, the ſweeter will it be at laſt, when all the deſires of our hearts ſhall be granted, and our ſouls filled with his love.

5. Having found him, ſhe reſolved now to keep him, and never more to part from him. *I held him* in the arms of faith and love, *and would not let him go*; he ſeemed reluctant to ſtay, yet meant only to excite her importunity, and exerciſe her graces; *until I had brought him into my mother's houſe, and into the chambers of her who conceived me*; which may ſignify either that the ſoul who finds the Lord Jeſus, will make open profeſſion of him in the viſible church, which may be regarded as our common mother; or that the faithful will abidingly hold faſt on Chriſt, during all the trials of their militant ſtate on earth, till he ſhall bring them to that *Jeruſalem which is above, which is the mother of us all.*

6. She gives a ſolemn charge not to diſturb her Lord. Thoſe who have felt the pains of abſence will be more peculiarly jealous, leaſt they ſhould again provoke the Saviour to depart from them. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleaſe*, neither ſpeak nor move ſo as to offend him, but, watchfully obſervant of whatever would diſturb or diſpleaſe him, keep your hearts with all diligence. *Note*, They who would keep Chriſt when they have found him, muſt be careful how they walk, and ſolicitous to pleaſe him well in all things.

7. The daughters of Jeruſalem, on beholding this happy meeting of Chriſt and his church, break forth into an enquiry full of admiration. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderneſs*; either the wilderneſs of *corruption*, in which the ſouls of all the redeemed lay, unable to extricate themſelves from the mazes of error and ſin, till Chriſt aroſe to lead them in paths of everlaſting peace; or the wilderneſs of *deſertion and affliction*, ſuch as was the caſe of the church juſt before, when Jeſus was abſent from her, and ſhe lamented after him; but now having found him, what a change appears! no more weeping, mourning, afflicted, ſhe lifts up her head with joy, and marches boldly on, *like pillars of ſmoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincenſe*; as the ſmoke from the altar aſcended in curling volumes, ſo do her burning affections riſe up to God, and the lively exerciſe of her graces, through the nearneſs of Jeſus, gives a ſavour of a ſweet ſmell, acceptable and well pleaſing to God through Jeſus Chriſt; *with all the powders of the merchant*; the Redeemer is the merchant, who from afar hath brought the

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ſweet perfume; the graces we exerciſe, the ſervices we offer, come not from ourſelves but him; to him therefore for ever be the praiſe.

7. Behold, his bed which is Solomon's, [g] threeſcore valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Iſrael. 8. They all hold ſwords, *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of fear in the night. 9. King Solomon made himſelf a † chariot of the wood of Lebanon. 10. He made the pillars thereof *of* ſilver, the bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it *of* purple; the midſt thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jeruſalem. 11. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his heart.

[g] Heb. i. 14.

† Or, throne, Rev. iii. 21. Or, bed.

v. 7—11. The church deſires to turn the eyes of the daughters of Jeruſalem from admiring her, to an object far more worthy of their regard; even to Solomon, the type of the divine Meſſiah, the chief of ten thouſand. Three things ſhe points out to them as worthy their higheſt admiration.

1. His bed. *Behold, his bed,* his church, or the hearts of his people, in which he takes up his reſt for ever, *which is Solomon's*, the prince of peace, *threeſcore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Iſrael*; the miniſters of the ſanctuary, men ſtrong in faith, and mighty in word and deed, who watch that nothing may diſturb the peace of the church, or hurt her members. *They all hold ſwords, being expert in war*; the ſword of the ſpirit, which is the word of God, and know how to wield it in ſuch a manner as to vanquiſh the powers of darkneſs: *every man hath his ſword upon his thigh*, ready armed for every exigence, having the ſcriptures ſtored up in their memory, and able to apply them on every emergence, according to the circumſtances of the caſe, *becauſe of fear in the night*; when in ſeaſons of darkneſs, temptation, and perſecution, God's people are diſtreſſed and alarmed, they are prepared to ſtand by them, encourage and comfort them.

2. His chariot, *v.* 9. *King Solomon made himſelf a chariot of the wood of Lebanon*; which may ſignify the human nature of Chriſt; or the everlaſting covenant of redemption; or the miniſtration of the goſpel, in which he appears in the riches of his grace, admired of all that believe, riding proſperouſly in triumphant majeſty, attended by the acclamations of his faithful ſubjects, and his enemies, death, hell, and ſin, bound as vanquiſhed at his chariot wheels. *The wood of Lebanon* denotes the perpetuity of the goſpel word, and its fragrance the great and precious promiſes therein contained; *the pillars of ſilver, the floor of gold, the covering of purple*, repreſent its purity, excellence, and ſtability; *the midſt thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jeruſalem*; God therein appears to be all love and mercy to poor and periſhing ſinners, and he is pleaſed to take them up to ſit with him, to behold and partake of his glory.

3. The royal diadem on his head. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion*, redeemed ſouls, who are called out of themſelves to Chriſt, *and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals*; either the day when aſcending to the ſkies Jeſus was crowned king of glory, and all power in heaven and earth given unto him; or the day when the ſoul of the ſinner, called by the Divine word and ſpirit into the fellowſhip of the goſpel, beholds Jeſus the heavenly bridegroom with open arms ready to receive him, owns how worthy he is, who hath borne the croſs, to wear the crown, and with delight embraces the everlaſting covenant, in which the Saviour betroths us to himſelf in mercy and loving-kindneſs; and this time is a time of love, *and gladneſs of his heart*; then Jeſus beholds in us the travel of his ſoul, and we can ſay, My ſpirit rejoiceth in God *my* Saviour.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter, 1. *Jeſus Chriſt having eſpouſed his church to himſelf,* (chap. iii. 11.) *highly commends her beauty in the ſeveral inſtances of it, concluding her fair, all fair,* ver. 1—5. *and again,* ver. 7. 2. *He retires himſelf, and invites her with him, from the mountains of terror to thoſe of delight,* ver. 6, 8. 3. *He profeſſeth his love to her, and his delight in her affection to him,* ver. 9—14. 4. *She aſcribes all ſhe had that was valuable in her to him, and depends upon the continued influence of his grace, to make her more and more acceptable to him,* ver. 15, 16.

1. [a] BEHOLD, thou *art* fair, my love, behold, thou *art* fair, thou *haſt* doves eyes within thy locks: [b] thy hair *is* as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. 2. Thy teeth *are* like a flock *of ſheep that are* [c] *even* ſhorn, which came up from the waſhing: whereof every one bear twins, and none † *is* barren among them. 3. Thy lips *are* like a thread of ſcarlet, and [d] thy ſpeech *is* comely: thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks. 4. [e] Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded [f] for an armoury, whereon there hang a thouſand bucklers, all ſhields of mighty men. 5. [g] Thy two breaſts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. 6. [h] Until the day ‡ break, and the ſhadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincenſe. 7. [i] Thou *art* all fair, my love, *there is* no ſpot in thee.

[a] Chap. i. 15. & v. 12.

[b] Chap. vi. 5, &c.

[c] 1 Cor. i. 10.

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† Or, caſt their young.

[d] Col. iv. 6.

[e] Chap. vii. 4.

[f] Neh. iii. 19.

[g] Chap. vii. 3. Prov. v. 19. Iſa. lxvi. 11.

[h] Chap. ii. 17.

‡ Heb. Breath.

[i] Eph. v. 27.

v. 1—7, We have here,

1. The deſcription of the church's beauty, and of every gracious ſoul who bears the Divine image: however deſpicable they appear in the eyes of men, nay, however deformed in their own, Chriſt regards them with delight and love; in his eyes they are *fair*, without ſpot or blemiſh; his *love*, loving him and beloved by him, and all the marks of beauty center in them; ſince they are found in him, all his excellencies are theirs, and his grace makes them what he deſcribes them.

The images here uſed are taken from the human form, and the beauties of the body transferred to the hidden man of the heart.

The eyes of doves within the locks, repreſent the modeſty and humility, the ſweetneſs and inoffenſiveneſs of the faithful.

The hair compared to that *of a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead*, may ſignify the multitude of converts in the church; or the beauty of their outward walk or converſation, viſible to all as the hair flowing in ringlets on the ſhoulders, or a flock of goats feeding on a diſtant precipice.

The teeth even as a flock of ſheep new ſhorn, white as their fleeces when come up from waſhing, may denote miniſters in particular, who prepare the food for the infant converts, in the purity of their lives adorn the doctrine they profeſs, and, bleſt with ſucceſs in their miniſtry, ſee numerous ſouls begotten in the goſpel by their word, and *none are barren among them*; whatever ſuperior gifts ſome may poſſeſs, or more abundant fruit may crown their labours, all who preach the truth are ſure to ſee ſome fruit thereof. This may be applied alſo to believers in general, who feed upon the word of truth, are waſhed in the laver of regeneration, aſcend upwards in their affections, and are fruitful in all good works.

The lips like a thread of ſcarlet, may be conſidered as a mark of that florid health, and flouriſhing ſtate of grace in which the ſoul abides; or as the following words may explain them: *Thy ſpeech is comely*, before *men*, in all gracious converſation, whilſt the hearers delighted hang upon the ſpeaker's lips; or before *God*, in prayer and praiſe, offered through the blood of Jeſus, and therefore moſt pleaſing and acceptable.

The temples like a piece of pomegrante within the locks, the colour of the fruit of which being red, may be applied to the conſcious bluſh, with which a ſenſe of his own unworthineſs, in the preſence of his lord, covers the ſinner, and heighthens his beauty.

The neck compared to a tower, built for an armoury, filled with the ſhields of the mighty, may repreſent the miniſters of the ſanctuary, who are next to Chriſt the head, and furniſh the faithful with the ſpiritual weapons of their warfare; or this may be referred to the ſaints in general, who are each a ſtrong tower, filled with ſuch Divine artillery that all the gates of hell never can prevail againſt them.

The breaſts like two young roes that are twins, may be applied to the miniſters, who give the ſincere milk of the word; or to the Old and New Teſtaments, the fountains of conſolation; or to the two ſacraments, the great ordinances of ſtrength and comfort to the believer's ſoul.

2. The heavenly bridegroom retires for a while to wait till his beauteous bride hath made herſelf ready. *Till the day* of eternity *breaks, and the ſhadows* of mortality *flee away, I will go to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincenſe*; to the heavenly hill, whither the ſmoak of prayer and praiſe continually aſcends, and whither the glorified Saviour is gone till the time of conſummation.

3. Wherever he is, he hath the ſame regard for his ſpouſe the church. *Thou art all fair, my love, there is no ſpot in thee*; he ſees none, his blood hath waſhed out every ſtain, his righteouſneſs makes her compleat, lacking nothing; his ſpirit faſhions her throughout anew, ſo that ſhe appears in perfect beauty, without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, *Eph.* v. 25.

8. ¶ Come with me from Lebanon, *my* ſpouſe, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and [k] Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards. 9. Thou haſt † raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, *my* ſpouſe: thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. 10. How fair is thy ‡ love, my ſiſter,

[k] Deut. iii. 9.

† Heb. Unhearted me.

‡ Heb. Loves.

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my ſpouſe! [l] how much better is thy love than wine!
and the ſmell of thine ointments than all ſpices! 11.
Thy lips, O *my* ſpouſe, drop *as* the honey-comb: [m] ho-
ney and milk *are* under thy tongue, and the ſmell of
thy garments [n] *is* like the ſmell of Lebanon. 12. A
garden § incloſed *is* my ſiſter, *my* ſpouſe: a ſpring ſhut
up, a fountain ſealed. 13. Thy plants *are* an orchard
of pomegranates, [o] with pleaſant fruits, ‖ camphire, with
ſpikenard. 14. Spikenard and ſaffron, calamus and cin-
namon, with all trees of frankincenſe, myrrh and aloes,
with all the chief ſpices.

[l] Chap. i. 2.
[m] Prov. xxiv. 13, 14. Chap. v. 1.
[n] Hoſ. xiv. 6, 7.
§ Heb. Barred.
[o] John xv. 8. Phil. i. 11.
‖ Or, cypreſs, Chap. i. 14.

v 8—14. Chriſt delights in his church, and wiſhes for her company at all times; therefore,

1. He invites her to come with him, and adds the moſt endearing name to engage her to follow him, *My ſpouſe*, that neareſt, deareſt relation; the union indiſſoluble, and which ſhould, both from love and duty, conſtrain her to cleave to him; *come with me from Lebanon, or thou ſhalt come with me*; it is a gracious call to do ſo, or a gracious promiſe of being enabled for that which Jeſus doth enjoin: *Lebanon* may ſignify Jeruſalem, adorned with the wood of Lebanon, but become a den of thieves and murderers, out of which he calls his people to depart; or, as *Lebanon* was a *goodly mountain*, it may be a command to quit the joys of ſenſe, and earth's vain pleaſures and purſuits, to taſte the purer delights that flow from a ſenſe of his love: *look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards*, which frequented thoſe places: and ſuch is this world, full of wicked men, fierce and cruel in their tempers as lions, ſpotted with ſin as the leopard's ſkin, crafty, and lying in wait to deſtroy as theſe devouring animals: from ſuch therefore to depart is but to conſult our own ſafety; and to leave the ways of a world lying in wickedneſs, for communion with the Lord of life and glory, muſt be an exchange unſpeakably to our own comfort.

2. Chriſt expreſſes his delight in his ſpouſe, whom he honours alſo with another title, *My ſiſter*, for he is by his incarnation fleſh of our fleſh, and by adoption we are brought into that family, where he is the firſt-born of many brethren, *thou haſt raviſhed my heart*; or, *thou haſt wounded my heart*, or *coupled it* with thine; intimating the ſtrength of his affection to her; it drew him down from his throne in glory, made him humble himſelf to death, and even ſhed his blood on a croſs for her ſake; behold how he loved her! *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes*, or *one glance*; for no ſooner doth the eye of faith look to him, but his arms of love are reached forth to embrace the ſoul; *with one chain of thy neck*; the pearls of Divine grace, that adorn the temper and converſation of the ſaints, make them amiable in the eyes of their divine Lord; and this he with tranſport profeſſes. *How fair is thy love, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe!* love to Jeſus is the moſt grateful and pleaſing oblation: he aſks our hearts, and nothing but this inward genuine affection, is in his ſight of any price: *how much better is thy love than wine!* more chearing than wine to the weary, or more acceptable than all the drink-offerings which were poured forth at his altar; *and the ſmell of thine ointments than all ſpices!* the graces of the ſpirit in her, breathed a ſweeter perfume than the ſpices which aſcended in ſmoak from the golden altar of incenſe. *Thy lips, O my ſpouſe, drop as the honey-comb*; the ſweeteſt words of humble prayer and praiſe, of warm profeſſions of love and duty; or communicating to all around, that good converſation which miniſters grace to the hearers: *honey and milk are in thy tongue*; the doctrines of the goſpel, ſo pleaſant and ſo refreſhing to the ſoul, of which the faithful delight to ſpeak for their own and others edification and comfort; *and the ſmell of thy garments is as the ſmell of Lebanon*; either the robes of his righteouſneſs, with which his people are arrayed, or the garments of that holy profeſſion which they make, and adorn with every good word and work, which renders them amiable in the eyes of God, and reſpected before men.

3. He compares her to *a garden incloſed*; ſeparated from the world without, and ſet apart for himſelf; ſmall, compared with the vaſt country around it; fenced from all intruders by Almighty love and power; planted with every choice ſeed of grace, and bringing forth fruit unto eternal life: *a ſpring ſhut up, a fountain ſealed*: ſuch are the ſouls of believers, ſealed of Chriſt for his own, ſhut up to be no more polluted by ſin, and never failing, ſince he is the ſpring-head, and will preſerve them unto the day of redemption. *Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates*, &c. the garden of the church is full of trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord; bearing all the richeſt fruits of grace, perfuming the place of their abode by their good converſation, moſt excellent and valuable in themſelves, eſteemed of Chriſt, and mutual comforts to each other.

15. A fountain of gardens, [p] a well of living waters,
and ſtreams from Lebanon. 16. ¶ Awake, O north-
wind, and come thou ſouth, [q] blow upon my garden,
that the ſpices thereof may flow out: let my beloved
come into his garden, and eat [r] his pleaſant fruits.

[p] Jer. ii. 13. John iv. 10.
[q] John iii. 8.
[r] Phil. ii. 13.

v. 15, 16. Some have ſuppoſed theſe a continuation of Chriſt's ſpeech; but they are rather the reply of the church, on hearing herſelf thus commended, and aſcribing to her Lord the praiſe of all.

1. He is to her *a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and ſtreams from Lebanon*; or, *O fountain of gardens*, &c. as the words may be rendered, and immediately addreſſed to him. Chriſt is the glorious fountain-head, from whence all our waters of grace and conſolation flow; the author of all our fruitfulneſs, and the ſource of every bleſſing in time and in eternity; whatever we have we receive from him, and every gracious ſoul will aſcribe the whole to him.

2. She prays for the influences of his bleſſed ſpirit, that her garden may flouriſh, and breathing fragrance, invite Chriſt's pleaſing viſits thither, and afford him ſatisfaction. *Awake thou north wind, and come thou ſouth, blow upon my garden*; by theſe winds may be ſignified the operations of the Spirit, in his word, providences, ordinances, ſuited to the caſe and neceſſities of the ſoul, as may moſt effectually conduce to its ſtrength, comfort, and fruitfulneſs: ſometimes the north wind of adverſity is needful; ſometimes the ſouth wind of Divine manifeſtations warming the heart, quickning it from its coldneſs, and drawing forth the graces into lively exerciſe, *that the ſpices thereof may flow out* in warm affections towards God and man, in zeal for his glory, in exemplary diligence to adorn our profeſſion, and, in ſhort, in every good word and work: *let my beloved come into his garden*, then, when thus breathing fragrance, let him viſit our ſouls with a delightful ſenſe of his preſence and love; for we are *his garden*, purchaſed by his blood, called by his grace, and by choice devoted to him; let him come *and eat his pleaſant fruits*; whatever fruits of holineſs we bear, it is by virtue of union with him, who is the living root: he is the great author of all good in us, and takes delight in the works of his own hand; and this eſpecially is what the believer longs for, that he may find gracious acceptance and favour with his divine Lord.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Chriſt's gracious acceptance of the invitation which his church had given him, and the kind viſit which he made to her*, ver. 1. 2. *The account which the ſpouſe gives of her own folly in putting a ſlight upon her beloved, and the diſtreſs ſhe was in by reaſon of his withdrawings*, ver. 2—8. 3. *The enquiry of the daughters of Jeruſalem concerning the amiable perfections of her beloved*, ver. 9. *and her particular anſwer to that enquiry*, ver. 10—16. Unto you that believe, he is *thus* precious.

1. [a] I Am come into my garden, my ſiſter, *my* ſpouſe;
I have gathered my myrrh with my ſpice, [b] I have
eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my
wine with my milk: eat, O friends, [c] drink, † yea,
drink abundantly, O beloved.

[a] Chap. iv. 16.
[b] Ibid. iv. 11.
[c] Pſ. xxxvi. 8. Or, John iii. 29.
† Or, and be drunken with loves.

v. 1. Swift are the returns of prayer; it is no ſooner aſked than granted; lo, Chriſt is here. *I am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe*; he admits the garden to be his own, and willingly viſits the ſoul that by faith waits for his coming; *I have gathered my myrrh with my ſpice*; all the produce is his own, and he delights in the gifts and graces he hath beſtowed; *I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey*; the doctrines of his goſpel, in the faithful diſpenſation of which he delights; *I have drunk my wine with my milk*; ſitting at the table of his grace, and partaking of the banquet his ſpouſe, like Eſther, hath provided; yet ſhe can give him only of his own: nor doth he partake alone of the proviſion, but welcomes and invites all his friends, the faithful members of his church, to come and ſup with him: *eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved*; in the goſpel there is grace abounding, and whoſoever will may come and feed upon the wine and milk, the great and precious promiſes contained in the everlaſting covenant, without money and without price.

2. ¶ I ſleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of
my beloved [d] that knocketh, *ſaying*, Open to me, my
ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head
is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the
night. 3. I have put off my coat, [e] how ſhall I put it
on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?
4. My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*,
and my bowels were moved † for him. 5. I roſe up to
open to my beloved, and my hands dropped *with*
myrrh, and my fingers *with* ‡ ſweet-ſmelling myrrh,
upon the handles of the lock. 6. I opened to my beloved,

[d] Rev. iii. 20.
[e] Luke xi. 7.
† Some read in me.
‡ Heb. Paſſing; or, running about.

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loved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, *and*
was gone: my ſoul failed when he ſpake: [f] I ſought
him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he
gave me no anſwer. 7. [g] The watchmen that went about
the city, found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me;
the keepers of the walls took away my vail from me.
8. I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, if ye
find my beloved, § that ye tell him, that I *am* ſick of
love.

[f] Chap. iii. 1. Lam. iii. 8.
[g] Chap. iii. 3.
§ Heb. What.

v. 2—8. After the ſweet communion which had paſſed between Chriſt and his church, we have here a ſad account of the interruption which aroſe from her ſecurity and ſlothful ſpirit: negligent of her mercies, ſhe is puniſhed by having them withdrawn.

1. Sleep ſtole upon her. *I ſleep*; not the dead ſleep of ſin, but through the decay of grace, and the prevalence of corruption, her heart grew cold and careleſs, as is too common a caſe, even with thoſe who are truly faithful; yet, though the exerciſe of grace lay dormant, the habit remained; *my heart waketh*; tho' the fleſh be weak, the ſpirit was willing; and tho' temptation prevailed, there was ſtill a ſtruggle, and ſpiritual life in the ſoul.

2. Chriſt will not leave his people under their backſlidings without warning. *It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh*: he is ſtill beloved, and his voice, though indiſtinctly heard, is known: he knocks at the door of the heart, by the calls of his word, the convictions of his ſpirit, and the alarms of his providences, and will not ſuffer his poor deluded people to enjoy any ſound reſt during their unfaithfulneſs; and he pleads hard for admittance, with every endearing appellation: *Open to me, my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled*; nothing can engage our hearts, if his love doth not: this he pleads as the moſt conſtraining argument; and adds what he hath ſuffered on her account: *My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night*, particularly of that fatal night when he agonized in the garden, and when his head was crowned with thorns, and covered with clotted gore. By ſuch amazing grace, how ſtupid muſt be the heart that remains unaffected! how grievous to requite ſuch dying love with coldneſs and neglect!

3. With frivolous excuſes ſhe wants to cover her ſinful ſlothfulneſs; as a perſon undreſſed and in bed, whoſe feet are waſhed, fears to dirt them, and hates to be diſturbed, ſo ſhe cared not to expoſe herſelf to any inconveniences for his ſake, and rather choſe to ſleep on ſtill and take her reſt. *Note*, (1.) They who want to turn away from Chriſt, have always ſome pretext for their conduct. (2.) When we have once given way to corruption, and grown negligent in the path of duty, we ſhall find the difficulties of returning to it exceeding great.

4. Chriſt by his power and grace overcomes our corruption, and if he did not, by a kind of holy violence, turn us again to his bleſſed ſelf, every backſliding would iſſue in apoſtacy. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door*, to unbar it, and open himſelf a paſſage to her heart; and this effectually wrought upon her: for,

5. *My bowels were moved for him*; gracious relentings, and a ſenſe of baſe ingratitude, began to work; love kindled afreſh in her heart, and ſhe could no longer contain. *I roſe up to my beloved*, ſhook off dull ſloth, and ran to meet him, *and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with ſweet-ſmelling myrrh, on the handles of the lock*, with tears of bitter and penitential ſorrow for her unfaithfulneſs, which were to Chriſt a ſavour of a ſweet ſmell; or when ſhe put her hands on the lock, ſhe found the ſweet ſavour of his grace; for thoſe who draw near to Chriſt, will by bleſſed experience ever taſte how good the Lord is.

6. To her bitter diſappointment, when ſhe expected to meet her beloved, he was withdrawn in diſpleaſure at her ſlothfulneſs. *I opened to my beloved* to give him a welcome reception, *but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone*, and left her to mourn her folly and negligence; or departed to prove her ſincerity and earneſtneſs in ſearching after him, and with grief and eagerneſs ſhe cries, He is gone, he is gone: *my ſoul failed when he ſpake*; either at parting in anger, or at the kind language he uſed, which ſerved to upbraid her baſe ingratitude. *Note*, (1.) When we have been faithleſs, no marvel, even after our return, if the Lord puniſhes us by leaving us comfortleſs. (2.) A ſoul that hath ever taſted the ſweetneſs of communion with Jeſus, cannot but bitterly grieve at his abſence. (3.) It is a gracious ſymptom of remaining grace, when the heart poſſeſſes tender ſenſibility, and feels the evil and ingratitude of its departures from God.

7. She ſets herſelf to ſeek him, but meets with ſad diſcouragement. *I ſought him*, in the ordinances of his ſervice, and the courts of his houſe, *but I found him not: I called him* aloud, in fervent prayer, *but he gave me no anſwer*, no ſenſible tokens of his regard. Such dark ſeaſons of deſertion do God's deareſt children ſometimes endure; nay, ſhe was not only forſaken, but abuſed, whilſt through the city ſhe enquired as before after her beloved; *the watchmen that went about the city found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me*; which may refer to the true miniſters of God, who ſometimes are too ſevere in their upbraidings, and harſh in their cenſures, and with the terrors of the law wound thoſe who need the healing of the goſpel. Or rather falſe teachers are intended, who perſecute and afflict the true members of Chriſt, and with pernicious errors and hereſies rend the peace of the church. *The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me*; they who by office and profeſſion ſhould have been her comforters, expoſe her to ſhame, and do her the greateſt injury; enemies often both to the doctrines and practice of true godlineſs, and moſt effectually undermining the intereſts of the church, which they pretend to ſerve. The treacherous watchmen of Zion have ever done her greater injuries, than her moſt avowed enemies.

8. She earneſtly beſeeches the daughters of Jeruſalem to befriend her. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem*, or *adjure you*; charges them on oath, which intimates her own eagerneſs and fervent affection; *if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am ſick of love.* The abſence of Jeſus is to a loving ſoul inſupportable; and as the fainting hart thirſteth for the water-brooks, ſo eager are their longings after him their Saviour.

9. ¶ What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved,
O [h] thou faireſt among women? What *is* thy beloved
more than *another* beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?
10. My beloved *is* [i] white and [k] ruddy, † the chiefeſt
among ten thouſand. 11. His head *is as* the moſt fine
gold, his locks *are* ‡ buſhy, *and* black as a raven. 12.
[l] His eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, waſhed with milk, *and* ‖ fitly ſet. 13. His cheeks
are as a bed of ſpices, *as* ſweet flowers: his lips *like*
lilies, [m] dropping ſweet-ſmelling myrrh. 14. His hands
are as gold rings ſet with beryl: his § belly *is as* bright
ivory overlaid *with* ſapphires. 15. [n] His legs *are as* pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. 16. His
mouth *is* † moſt ſweet: yea, he *is* altogether ‡ lovely.
This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters
of Jeruſalem.

[h] Chap. i. 8.
[i] Dan. vii. 9.
[k] Iſa. lxiii. 2.
† A ſtandard bearer.
‡ Or curled.
[l] Chap. i. 15. & iv. 1.
‖ Heb. Set in fulneſs.
[m] Luke iv. 22.
§ Or bowels.
[n] Rev. i. 15.
† Heb. Sweetneſſes.
‡ Heb. Deſires.

v. 9—16. In anſwer to the charge given,

1. The daughters of Jeruſalem enquire after the deſcription of the perſon, whom the church ſo earneſtly ſought. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou faireſt among women?* Such is the title they give her, and moſt deſerving of it ſhe appears; for no beauty is like the beauty of holineſs, wherein the ſaints are arrayed; and the image of Jeſus ſtamped on all his living members, make them glorious in the eyes of God and all good men. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?* which ſome take as a ſlighting queſtion, as if he, whom ſhe ſeemed ſo diſtreſſed about, was ſcarce worthy ſuch concern; and then theſe daughters of Jeruſalem muſt be the formal profeſſors, who are ſtrangers to the warmth of a zealous heart; and having never known the excellencies of the Lord Jeſus themſelves, wonder at, or deride the eagerneſs and ſollicitude which others ſhew in ſeeking him. But it may alſo be the ſerious enquiry of young converts, deſiring themſelves to be more acquainted with Chriſt, his perſon and offices, that they might know him better, and love him with more enlarged affection.

2. She launches out into a deſcription of his excellencies, in images borrowed from the human form. *My beloved is white and ruddy*, the lily and roſe unite in him; not ſo much indeed reſpecting his form, for therein appeared no peculiar comelineſs to make him deſirable; but, as God incarnate, to ſave ſinners, he was full of grace and truth, fairer than the children of men, in the unſullied purity of the human nature, and infinitely exalted above them in the glory of the divine: *the chiefeſt of ten thouſand*, nor earth beneath, nor heaven above, affords his fellow, neither angels nor men are to be compared with him; or *a ſtandard bearer over ten thouſand*, under his banners his redeemed people are collected; ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands, and he exalted above them all, as an enſign on an hill. *His head is as the moſt fine gold*, which may refer to his divine nature, which gave value to all the ſufferings of the humanity; or may ſignify his ſovereign dominion and authority over his church, and the powerful influences each member derives from him their glorious head: *his locks are buſhy, and black as a raven*; the faithful, who ſpring from him, are thus numerous and beautiful; or it expreſſes his eternal youth, the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves*, ſharp-ſighted, yea, all-ſeeing, withal full of gentleneſs and love, looking with tendereſt ſympathy on his poor afflicted people; *by rivers of waters, waſhed with milk, and fitly ſet*, appearing in their greateſt beauty: *his cheeks are as a bed of ſpices, as ſweet flowers*, when, manifeſting his preſence in the midſt of his people, and ſhedding abroad his love in their

hearts, they enjoy delightful communion with him, and rejoice in the light of his countenance: *his lips are like lilies, dropping ſweet-ſmelling myrrh*, pure are all his words, precious all his promiſes, ineſtimably fragrant the doctrines of his grace, that ſpeak pardon, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation to the ſouls of his people. *His hands are as gold rings ſet with beryl*, all the works of his hands in providence and grace are exquiſite, and to be admired: or his people are thoſe rings, which none can pluck from him; or his hands are full of the gifts of his munificence, the graces and conſolations of his ſpirit, which he liberally diſpenſes to thoſe, whom, as a king, he is pleaſed to honour: *his belly is*, or *his bowels are, as bright as ivory overlaid with ſapphires*, which ſome underſtand of the human nature of Chriſt, as exalted by its union with the divine; others of that tenderneſs and pity, that lead him to yearn over the diſtreſſes of his ſaints. *His legs are as pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine gold*; he is Almighty, to ſuſtain the weight of all the ſins of his people laid upon him; of the government of his church and kingdom; and alſo to trample under foot all his enemies and theirs. *His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars*; majeſtic, exalted higher than the kings of the earth. *His mouth is moſt ſweet*, or *ſweetneſſes*; the very eſſence of delight, when ſpeaking in his goſpel the great and precious promiſes, the moſt reviving news that ever greeted ſinners ears; or when ſealing with the kiſſes of his love our pardon and peace. *Yea, he is altogether lovely*; deſcription cannot paint his excellence; when fancy hath laviſhed all her ſtores, and imagination collected every beauty that creature ever yet poſſeſſed, the half of his glory is not told us.

3. She concludes with triumphant exultation in her beloved. *This is my beloved*; I love him; no marvel, his beauty is ſo tranſcendent; and he is mine in an everlaſting covenant, and that makes Chriſt eſpecially precious: *and this is my friend*, on whom I have placed all my dependance, whoſe kindneſs ten thouſand times I have proved, whoſe fidelity ſhall endure to eternity; for he will never leave nor forſake me, and then I ſhall never leave and forſake him: know him therefore, love him, ſeek him, *O ye daughters of Jeruſalem.*

CHAP. VI.

In this chapter, 1. *The daughters of Jeruſalem, moved with the deſcription which the church had given of Chriſt, enquire after him,* ver. 1. 2. *The church directs them where they may meet with him,* ver. 2, 3. 3. *Chriſt is now found of thoſe that ſought him, and very highly applauds the beauty of his ſpouſe, as one extremely ſmitten with it,* ver. 4—7. *preferring her before all others,* ver. 8, 9. *and recommending her to the love and eſteem of all her neighbours,* ver. 10. *And laſtly, acknowledging the impreſſions which her beauty had made upon him, and the great delight he took in it,* ver. 11—13.

1. WHither is thy beloved gone, [a] O thou faireſt among women? whither is thy beloved turned aſide? that we may ſeek him with thee. 2. My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of ſpices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. 3. [b] I *am* my beloved's, and my boloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

[a] Chap. i. 8.

[b] Chap. ii. 16. & vii. 10.

v. 1—3. Struck with the deſcription of the excellence of Jeſus, which the ſpouſe his church had given, they no longer wonder ſhe ſhould ſo highly value him; their own hearts caught the ſacred flame; and ſince here no rivalſhip awakens jealouſy, the daughters of Jeruſalem are reſolved with her to ſeek him. Her diſcourſe ſhewed the intimacy of her acquaintance with him, therefore they in their turn are ſollicitous to learn of her where he may be found. We have,

1. The queſtion, *Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou faireſt among women? whither is thy beloved turned aſide, that we may ſeek him with thee?* Holy love and zeal is a ſpreading flame; they who delight to proclaim the glories of Chriſt, will find others charmed with his beauty, and ready to join in ſeeking him, in prayer, his word and ordinances, and he will be found of all that call upon him, even by ſuch as call upon him faithfully.

2. The anſwer is given, *v.* 2. *My beloved is gone down to his garden.* The ſpouſe had toiled in vain to ſeek him in the ſtreets; in the noiſe and hurry of the world he is not to be found; ſhe now remembers he had gone down to his garden, his church, *to the beds of ſpices*, the ſeveral congregations of his ſaints, or the ſouls of his faithful filled with divine graces, where he takes up well-pleaſed his abode. *To feed in the gardens*, either his flocks in the green paſtures of his ordinances, or himſelf with the pleaſant fruits of holineſs, which he with delight beholds growing up before him; *and to gather lilies*; to place his ſaints now in the boſom of his love, or at death to gather them into his everlaſting arms.

3. She profeſſes her confidence of an aſſured intereſt in him. *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine*; the knot of union indiſſoluble is tied, notwithſtanding her manifold infirmities; and though for the preſent ſhe ſuffered the pains of abſence, yet ſhe entertains not a doubt of his regard, and is conſcious of the ſimplicity of her own heart before him. *He feedeth among the lilies*; there in the midſt of his people ſhe expected with delight to find him, nor was diſappointed of her hope. *Note,* (1.) That ſoul is truly happy that in faith and love can ſay, *My beloved is mine, and I am his.* (2.) Rebukes and temporary deſertion prove not a change in the heart of Jeſus: whether he frowns or ſmiles, his everlaſting covenant ſtands faſt. (3.) When we can reſt aſſured of our own unfeigned attachment of heart to him, we may ſafely conclude our ſure intereſt in his regard.

4. ¶ Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jeruſalem, [c] terrible as *an army* with banners. 5. Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: [d] thy hair *is* as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead. 6. Thy teeth *are* as a flock of ſheep which go up from the waſhing, whereof every one beareth twins, and [e] *there* is not one barren among them. 7. As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks. 8. There are threeſcore queens, and fourſcore concubines, and virgins without number. 9. My dove, my undefiled is [f] *but* one: ſhe *is* the *only* one of her mother, ſhe *is* the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters ſaw her and bleſſed her; *yea,* the queens and the concubines, and they praiſed her. 10. ¶ Who *is* ſhe *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the ſun, *and* [g] terrible as *an army* with banners?

[c] Ver. 10.

[d] Chap. iv. 1, &c.

[e] Chap. iv. 2.

[f] Eph. iv. 4.

[g] Ver. 4.

v. 4—10. The gracious Lord no longer hides his face, nor delays to ſatisfy the deſires of his people. He comes; grace is in his lips, and tenderneſs in his heart.

1. He admires her beauty: *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah*, a city of Iſrael, moſt pleaſantly ſituated on a riſing hill; *comely as Jeruſalem, terrible as an army with banners*, to all her enemies, who muſt finally bow before her feet.

2. He expreſſes the delight he took in her: *Turn away thine eyes from me*; he can no longer bear the earneſtneſs, anguiſh, love, and tenderneſs, which ſpeak in her looks. Or, *Turn thine eyes over againſt me*; the eyes of faith and affection; hang not with ſhame thine head, but raiſe theſe down-caſt looks: all the paſt is forgiven and forgotten, return then unto thy reſt again; *for they have overcome me*, brought me back again: or, *they have ſtrengthened me*; it refreſhed his heart to behold her penitent return: or, *lifted me up* with joy, ſo delighted was he with her love.

3. He gives the ſame deſcription of her beauty which he had done before, *chap.* iv. 1—3. Though by her unfaithfulneſs it might ſeem to be ſullied, and ſhe might be fearful Chriſt's love towards her would abate, he aſſures her of the ſame warm affection, and that ſhe is ſtill the ſame in his eye. Bleſſed be our dear Lord, he hateth putting away; and whatever corruptions for a moment prevail to our defilement, the fountain of his blood is ſtill open; and when we come to waſh there, our ſouls ſhall then appear as the moon, fair as ever, when the cloud is paſſed away.

4. Her excellence is above all compare, *v.* 8. By the *queens*, *concubines*, and *virgins*, ſome underſtand the world in general, from the higheſt in rank and ſtation to the loweſt; others, the falſe churches and deluded people; but rather it may mean believers in general, the moſt advanced in ſpiritual attainments, or the converts of leſſer experience, who are afterwards ſaid to *praiſe her*, ver. 9. Whatever amiable qualities may be in any individuals, the church in the aggregate poſſeſſes them all. *My dove, my undefiled, is but one*; dear to him above all others; *one body*, of which he is the living head. *She is the only one of her mother, ſhe is the choice one of her that bare her*; more tenderly beloved than an only darling child. *The daughters ſaw her and bleſſed her*; *yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praiſed her.* Either this ſignifies the high honour the church will receive in the latter day, *See Iſa.* lx. 3—11. or the delight in her expreſſed by all the faithful, and their prayers for her proſperity.

5. They who praiſed her, burſt forth into admiration at her beauty. *Who is ſhe that looketh forth as the morning?* The image is taken from the light, and may be applied to the church, whoſe day began to dawn in the patriarchal age: *fair as the moon*, as increaſing diſcoveries of the divine Meſſiah were reflected from the prophetic word: *clear as the ſun*, when in the diſpenſation of the goſpel the full blaze of ſpiritual light and knowledge were diffuſed: *terrible as an army with banners*, going on conquering and to conquer, till all the powers of darkneſs ſhall be at laſt finally and eternally ſubdued. And this may be applied in particular to every redeemed ſoul, to whom the light of truth at firſt, like the grey morning, is indiſtinct: as they advance in grace they ſhine with borrowed ſplendor derived from Chriſt, ſhewing ſtill

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their ſpots and infirmities; till at laſt they appear bright as the ſun in the firmament of glory, and all their enemies that in their militant ſtate oppoſed them, ſhall for ever become their foot-ſtool.

11. I went down into the garden of nuts, to ſee the fruits of the valley, *and* to [h] ſee whether the vine flouriſhed, *and* the pomegranates budded. 12. Or ever I was aware, my ſoul † made me *like* the chariots of Ammi-nadib. 13. Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return, that we may look upon thee: what will ye ſee in the Shulamite? as it were the company ‡ of two armies.

[h] Chap. vii. 12. Pſ. xcii. 12, 13.
† Or, put me in the chariots of my willing people.
‡ Or, of Mahanaim, Gen. xxxii. 2.

v. 11—13. The reconciliation now being compleat, Chriſt gives his church an account whither he went, and how he was affected during his abſence from her.

1. *I went down into the garden of nuts:* though his ſenſible and comforting preſence was withheld, he was among the trees, *to ſee the fruits of the valley*, what graces were exerciſed by his church, and the faithful in it; *and to ſee whether the vine flouriſhed, and the pomegranates budded*; either the firſt movings of his ſpirit quickening the hearts of new converts, or the riſings of gracious repentance for the unfaithfulneſs which had cauſed him to hide his face, which he with delight obſerved.

2. He declares how ſtrongly he felt his heart drawn forth towards her: *Or ever I was aware, my ſoul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib.* He could refrain no longer; ſwift he flew to dry the tears of her penitence, and with the ſenſe of his preſence and love, to comfort her diſconſolate heart. Or, *My ſoul made me as chariots to my willing people:* ſince they began to ſeek him in faith and prayer, his heart is open for their reception, and he takes them up into his chariot of love. Some make theſe the words of the ſpouſe, pleaſingly ſurprized to find her Lord come down to viſit her, and flying to meet him with rapid eagerneſs.

3. He invites her with affectionate importunity to return to him, and be happy. *Return, return, O Shulamite:* Chriſt, the greater than Solomon, communicates his name to his ſpouſe the church; ſhe is the *Shulamite. Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia.* And leſt, diſcouraged by her paſt conduct, ſhe ſhould be aſhamed or afraid to meet him, he aſſures her of the kindeſt reception. Guilt makes the ſoul fearful, and bitter are the diſquietudes the poor backſlider experiences; but let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. *Return, return, that we may look upon thee*; Chriſt now taking pleaſure in her, and all the ſaints and angels admiring her beauty, when preſented without blame before him in love.

4. A ſhort account is given of the Shulamite. *What will you ſee in the Shulamite?* which, conſidered as her own words, beſpeaks her modeſty and humility. Chriſt deſired to look upon her, and ſhe is not conſcious of ought in herſelf worthy the leaſt regard from him: *as it were the company of two armies*; a ſcene of warfare between her and her enemies without, or between grace and corruption within. Or this is the deſcription Chriſt gives of her: She is beautiful as two companies that go forth with muſick and dancing to convey the bride to her huſband's houſe; or, as divided into two bands, the church militant on earth, and triumphant in heaven, and both glorious in holineſs.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter, 1. *Chriſt the royal bridegroom goes on to deſcribe the beauties of his ſpouſe, the church, in many inſtances, and to expreſs his love to her, and the delight he has in her converſation,* ver. 1—9. 2. *The ſpouſe, the church, expreſſeth her great delight in him, and the deſire that ſhe had of communion and fellowſhip with him,* ver. 10—13. *Such mutual eſteem and endearment is there between Chriſt and believers! And what is heaven but an everlaſting interchanging of loves between the holy God and holy ſouls!*

1. HOW beautiful are [a] thy feet with ſhoes, O [b] prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman. 2. Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not † liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat, ſet about with lilies. 3. [c] Thy two breaſts *are* like two young roes *that are* twins. 4. [d] Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory, thine eyes *like* the fiſh-pools in Heſhbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy noſe *is* as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damaſcus. 5. Thine head upon thee *is* like ‡ Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* § held in the galleries. 6. How fair and how pleaſant art thou, O love, for delights! 7. This [e] thy ſtature is like to a palm-tree, and thy breaſts to cluſters *of grapes*. 8. I ſaid, I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now alſo thy breaſts ſhall be as cluſters of the vine, and the ſmell of thy noſe like apples: 9. And the roof of thy mouth like the beſt wine, for my beloved, that goeth *down* ‖ ſweetly, cauſing the lips † of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeak.

[a] Eph. vi. 15.
[b] Pſ. xlv. 13.
† Heb. Mixture.
[c] Chap. iv. 5. Iſa. lxvi. 11.
[d] Chap. iv. 4.
‡ Or, crimſon.
§ Heb. Bound.
[e] Eph. iv. 13.
‖ Heb. Straightly.
† Or, of the ancient.

v. 1—9. We have here,

1. A freſh commendation of the church's beauty, addreſſed as a *prince's daughter*, begotten of the King eternal, and eſpouſed to the Prince of the kings of the earth. She had in a great variety of expreſſions deſcribed the ſurpaſſing excellence of her Lord, and he now, rejoicing over her on her return to him, launches forth into her deſerved praiſe. From the beauty of the human form ſome faint traces are collected of the infinitely ſurpaſſing beauty of the ſoul, by divine grace renewed, and made all glorious within. The ſimilitudes here uſed repreſent to us,

(1.) The miniſters of the church ſhod with the preparation of the goſpel of peace, and with their feet beautiful on the mountains, haſting to proclaim the glad tidings of great joy, *v.* 1.

(2.) The firm connection between the members of the body myſtical, who are knit together in love, ſtrong by their mutual union, and readily moving in the paths of the divine commands, *v.* 1.

(3.) The preachers of the word, full of divine truth, as a goblet crowned with wine, and ſtrong to labour in the cauſe of God, *v.* 2.

(4.) The fruitfulneſs of the church, teeming with precious ſeed, and beautiful to view as the hedge of lilies, *v.* 2.

(5.) The rich conſolations which are beſtowed from the breaſts of the word, where all the children of the church milk out, and are ſatisfied with the abundance of her glory, *Iſa.* lx. *v.* 3.

(6.) The ſtrength of faith, and purity of manners, that diſtinguiſh the faithful, *v.* 4.

(7.) The depth and clearneſs of their underſtandings, enlightened by divine grace; and the calmneſs of their tempers, unruffled as the ſurface of a ſtanding pool, *v.* 4.

(8.) Their ſharp ſagacity, and impregnable conſtancy.

(9.) Their glorious head, Chriſt Jeſus; or their heavenly-mindedneſs, and elevation above the ſtorms and tempeſts of this lower world, *v.* 5.

(10.) The number and royal dignity of the faithful, who ſpring from their glorious Head, depend upon him, and are nouriſhed by him, *v.* 6.

2. Since ſhe is ſo beautiful, Chriſt expreſſes his delight in her. *The king is held in the galleries,* well-pleaſed to take up his reſt in the hearts of his people, and held by the ſtrong cords of love to maintain abiding communion with them. *How fair and how pleaſant art thou, O love, for delights!* all her words and ways pleaſed him, and ſhe was in his eyes altogether lovely; tall as *the palm-tree*, and *her breaſts like cluſters of grapes*; ſtrait in her walk and converſation, and fruitful in all good works, that make glad the heart of God and man. *I ſaid, I will go up to the palm-tree*, to ſolace himſelf in the ſhade, or to behold its flouriſhing ſtate; *I will take hold of the boughs thereof*, to gather the fruit, or to prune the luxuriant branches by afflictions and rebukes. *Now alſo thy breaſts ſhall be as cluſters of the vine*, yielding the moſt grateful ſavour; *and the ſmell of thy noſe like apples*; for Chriſt's preſence draws forth the graces into lively exerciſe, and makes them give their ſweet ſmell: *and the roof of thy mouth like the beſt wine for my beloved*; her gracious diſcourſe being refreſhing and pleaſing to the ear, as wine to the taſte, *that goeth down ſweetly:* or *to righteouſneſſes*, leading the ſouls of men to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and directing them in the ways of holineſs; and by its reviving influence, *cauſing the lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeak*; as thoſe who were faint and their eyes cloſed, are recovered by a cordial draught; ſo the ſouls of thoſe who ſlept in the death of ſin are recovered by the word and ſpirit of Chriſt; and the ſaints who had been overcome by temptation, or under decays, are revived and reſtored thereby.

10. ¶ [f] I *am* my beloved's, and [g] his deſire *is* towards me. 11. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages. 12. Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us [h] ſee if the vine flouriſh, *whether* the tender grape † appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there [i] will I give thee my loves. 13. The [k] mandrakes give a ſmell, and at our gates *are* [l] all manner of pleaſant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

[f] Chap. ii. 16. & vi. 3.
[g] Pſ. xlv. 11.
[h] Chap. vi. 11.
† Heb. Open.
[i] Ezek. xx. 40, 41.
[k] Gen. xxx. 14.
[l] Mat. xiii. 52.

v. 10—13. The ſpouſe here,

1. Expreſſes her confidence in her Lord, and makes profeſſion of her fidelity to him. *I am my beloved's*, wholly his, and not my own. Whatever excellencies I poſſeſs, they are derived from him; I have nothing that I have not received: *I*

am his ; I know, I am aſſured of it ; for faith in lively exerciſe caſteth out fear and doubt, and gives the ſoul the moſt aſſured certainty : *and his deſire is towards me* ; from everlaſting his affections were placed on his church ; for her ſake he came down from heaven, and loved not his life unto death : eager to accompliſh her ſalvation, he underwent the bloody baptiſm, *Luke* xii. 50. for her redemption ; her company and converſe he is now pleaſed with ; nor will he reſt till the utmoſt deſires of his ſoul are ſatisfied, and all his people ſhall be brought to the enjoyment of his glory.

2. She invites him to come and give her the enjoyment of his preſence : *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field.* Wherever we are, we ſhould deſire Chriſt for our company : if taking recreation, his preſence will make the air doubly ſweet : if engaged in the labours of the field, a ſenſe of his nearneſs will beguile our toils, and make them eaſy. *Let us lodge in the villages*, retired from the noiſy town, for ſolitude is the friend of contemplation ; and they who would enjoy ſweet communion with God, muſt be often alone, ſpeaking with him that ſeeth in ſecret. Or it intimates, that his preſence can make the cottage a palace, and the place of meaneſt accommodations a dwelling of delight with him. *Let us get up early to the vineyards* ; for thoſe who have Chriſt with them, muſt improve their opportunities, early ſeek him in their youth, early ſeek him every morning ; for a ſlothful ſoul that dozes away the light of day, can never be in a flouriſhing ſtate. *Let us ſee if the vine flouriſh, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth* ; in what ſtate the church and the ſeveral members of it are ; whether our ſouls are putting forth the freſh bloſſoms of grace, and promiſing a plenteous vintage of every good word and work.

3. She promiſes to give him there her warmeſt affections : *There will I give thee my loves* ; the deſires of her ſoul being enlarged by his preſence, and all her graces going forth in moſt lively exerciſe towards him. *The mandrakes give a ſmell* ; which ſome tranſlate *lovely flowers* ; others ſuppoſe ſome agreeable fruit, (*See* Gen. xxx. 14.) and ſignifies the fragrance of the graces of the ſaints, and their acceptableneſs to Chriſt : *and at our gates are all manner of pleaſant fruits, new and old* ; the abounding works of faith and love ; or the doctrines of the Old and New Teſtament, from which the miniſters of the ſanctuary, as from a ſtorehouſe, draw forth the richeſt proviſion for the ſoul ; *which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved* ; for though the proviſion be made for our uſe, who are members of his church, yet doth it ultimately tend to his glory. *Note*, All we have is Chriſt's ; it is a poor all indeed, and unworthy of his acceptance ; but a gracious ſoul delights to lay it, ſuch as it is, at his feet, and feels the deepeſt gratitude that he condeſcends to accept the ſervice.

CHAP. VIII.

The affections between Chriſt and his ſpouſe are as ſtrong and lively here, in this cloſing chapter of the ſong, as ever, and rather more ſo. 1. *The ſpouſe continues her importunity for a more intimate communion and fellowſhip with him*, ver. 1—3. 2. *She charges the daughters of Jeruſalem not to interrupt her communion with her beloved*, ver. 4. *and they thereupon admire her dependence on him*, ver. 5. 3. *She begs of her beloved, whom ſhe raiſeth up by her prayers*, ver. 5. *that he would by his grace confirm that bleſſed union with him to which ſhe was admitted*, ver. 6, 7. 4. *She makes interceſſion for others alſo, that care might be taken of them*, ver. 8, 9. *and pleaſeth herſelf with the thoughts of her own intereſt in Chriſt, and his affection to her*, ver. 10. 5. *She owns herſelf his tenant for a vineyard ſhe held of him at Baal-hamon*, ver. 11, 12. 6. *The ſong concludes with an interchanging of parting requeſts : Chriſt chargeth his ſpouſe that ſhe ſhould often let him hear from her*, ver. 13. *And ſhe begs of him that he would haſten his return to her*, ver. 14.

1. O That thou *wert* as my brother, that ſucked the
breaſts of my mother ! *when* I ſhould find thee
without, I would [a] kiſs thee, yea, † I ſhould not be
deſpiſed. 2. I would lead thee, *and* bring thee into
[b] my mother's houſe, *who* would inſtruct me : I would
cauſe thee to drink of [c] ſpiced wine of the juice of my
pomegranate. 3. [d] His left hand *ſhould be* under my
head, and his right hand ſhould embrace me. 4. [e] I
charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, ‡ that ye ſtir not
up, nor awake *my* love until he pleaſe.

a Pſ. ii. 12.
† Heb. They ſhould not deſpiſe me.
b Gal. iv. 26.
c Prov. ix. 2.
d Chap. ii. 6.
e Chap. ii. 7. & iii. 5.
‡ Heb. Why ſhould ye ſtir up, or, Why, &c.

v. 1—4. We have here,

1. The deſire of the ſpouſe after the moſt endeared intimacy and communion with her Lord. *O that thou wert as my brother*, with whom ſhe might indulge a holy familiarity, and from whom ſhe might find the warmeſt regard and ſuccour under all her afflictions and infirmities ; *that ſucked the breaſts of my mother* ; which may refer to the incarnation of Chriſt, who became a babe at the breaſt, and partaker of the ſame fleſh and blood with us ; and therefore from him we may hope for the tendereſt ſympathy and affection.

2. She profeſſes what ſhe would do in this caſe. *When I ſhould find thee without*, or *in the ſtreets*, in the public ordinances, *I would kiſs thee* ; make open profeſſions of her love and attachment to him : *yea, I ſhould not be deſpiſed*, for ſuch marks of affection which to a brother were becoming, and which Jeſus would not diſdain, but receive with pleaſure. *I would lead thee* with delight *to my mother's houſe*, the place of the aſſembly of God's children, *who would inſtruct me* how to behave aright towards thee ; or, *there thou wouldeſt inſtruct me*, and teach me how to walk and to pleaſe God. *Note*, True wiſdom cometh from Jeſus alone ; without his divine teaching we can know nothing as we ought to know. *I would cauſe thee to drink of ſpiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate* ; the lively exerciſe of grace, and her diligence in his ſervice, more pleaſing to him than the moſt delicious juice of the grape or pomegranate. *His left hand ſhould be under my head, and his right hand ſhould embrace me* ; comforting me with the moſt endearing expreſſions of his love, and ſupporting me with his almighty power.

3. She gives a charge to the daughters of Jeruſalem, as before, not to interrupt her communion with her beloved. *I charge you, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe. Note*, They who know the bleſſing of Chriſt's preſence, will be careful themſelves, and mindful to caution others, not to grieve the Saviour, and by any unfaithful and diſpleaſing conduct to provoke him to depart.

5. ([f] Who *is* this that cometh up from the wilderneſs,
leaning upon her beloved ?) I raiſed thee up under the
apple-tree : there thy mother brought thee forth, there
ſhe brought thee forth *that* bare thee. 6. ¶ [g] Set me
as a ſeal upon thine heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm :
for love *is* ſtrong as death, jealouſy *is* † cruel as the
grave : the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath*
a moſt vehement flame. 7. [h] Many waters cannot quench
love, neither can the floods drown it : [i] if a man would
give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, it would
utterly be contemned.

f Chap. iii. 6.
g Iſa. xlix. 16. Jer. xxii. 24. Hag. ii. 23.
† Heb. Hard.
h Rom. viii. 35, 39.
i Prov. vi. 35.

v. 5—7. The daughters of Jeruſalem are here repreſented,

1. As breaking forth into admiration on beholding the ſpouſe. *Who is this that cometh from the wilderneſs, leaning upon her beloved ?* dependent on him, and ſweetly ſupported by him. And it may repreſent the church in general, driven into the wilderneſs during the times of perſecution, but through the power of Jeſus at laſt triumphant : or the caſe of every particular believer, who is by nature found in the wilderneſs of ſin, far from God, the ways of truth, and the road to glory ; but by the grace of Jeſus called, and by his arm ſupported : faith reſting upon him, we are enabled to go up, traveling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, till we come to the eternal reſt, which remaineth for the people of God.

2. The ſpouſe relates her own experience. *I raiſed thee up under the apple-tree.* The words are addreſſed to Jeſus, who, when he ſeemed aſleep, and to diſregard his people's diſtreſſes, hath by prayer been raiſed up to ſtretch out his arm and come and help them. *There thy mother brought thee forth, there ſhe brought thee forth that bare thee* : in the miniſtry of the word ſouls are brought forth, and Chriſt formed in the heart. This is compared to a woman travailing in birth, the pangs of repentance being moſt acute and painful, and followed with joy and peace in believing.

3. She begs for an abiding intereſt in his regard, and a happy aſſurance of it. *Set me as a ſeal upon thine heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm.* The alluſion is to the high-prieſt's breaſt-plate, or to bracelets worn with the name, the hair, or the picture of any beloved object ; and intimates the deſire of the faithful, to have a ſure place in the heart of Jeſus, a conſtant ſenſe of his nearneſs, a lively experience of his love, and the abiding ſupports of his grace. To urge her ſuit, ſhe pleads her vehement affection ; *for love is ſtrong as death.* As it brought Jeſus to the death of the croſs for us, ſo, if need be, will it engage us to lay down our lives for him. It will make us dead to the world, and every object, compared with his bleſſed ſelf : it will engage us to live for him, and make us happy to die and go to him. *Jealouſy is cruel as the grave*, and will not admit a rival to Jeſus in the heart. Or, it beſpeaks the jealous fears which the faithful are apt to entertain, reſpecting the love of Chriſt towards them. *The coals thereof are coals of fire*, which have *a moſt vehement flame*, or, *a flame of Jehovah*, burning with reſiſtleſs fury, conſuming the droſs of baſe affections, and aſcending in circling volumes to the ſkies. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.* It burns the fiercer with oppoſition, and riſes fairer and ſtronger from the waters of perſecution. No ſcoffs or reproaches, no ſufferings or loſs can extinguiſh it : where it hath once been kindled in the heart, there it will burn to eternity. *If a man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, it would utterly be contemned.* Offer a child of God ten thouſand worlds, in exchange for the love of

Jeſus, he would count them all dung and loſs. Or it intimates the freedom, as well as riches, of the grace of Chriſt, which, though ineſtimable, he beſtows on his people without money and without price.

8. ¶ [k] We have a little ſiſter, and ſhe hath no breaſts: what ſhall we do for our ſiſter, in the day when ſhe ſhall be ſpoken for? 9 If ſhe *be* a wall, [l] we will build upon her a palace of ſilver: and if ſhe *be* a door, we will incloſe her with boards of cedar. 10. I *am* a wall, and my breaſts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found † favour. 11. Solomon had [m] a vineyard at Baal-hamon, [n] he let out the vineyard unto keepers: every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thouſand *pieces* of ſilver. 12. My vineyard which *is* mine [o] *is* before me: thou, O Solomon, *muſt have* a thouſand, and thoſe that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred.

[k] John x. 16.
[l] Eph. ii. 22.
† Heb. Peace.
[m] Iſa. v. 1. Mat. xxi. 33.
[n] Luke xx. 9.
[o] Iſa. xxvii. 3.

v. 8—12. This loving pair, now in bonds inſeparable united, are here repreſented as conſulting together about their affairs. Huſband and wife muſt conſult together; this is a part of the mutual comfort of that endeared relation, for two are better than one.

1. The ſpouſe propoſes a caſe for her beloved's advice: *We have a little ſiſter, and ſhe hath no breaſts*; which may be interpreted of the Gentile church, a *ſiſter* to the Jewiſh church, but *little*, younger in years, and *having no breaſts*; not grown up to a woman's eſtate, deſtitute of miniſters, ordinances, and the word; and, as a little child, ignorant and fooliſh; *what ſhall we do for our ſiſter, in the day when ſhe ſhall be ſpoken for?* when the Gentiles ſhould be called into the fellowſhip of the goſpel, or *ſpoken againſt* by the unbelieving Jews or heathens, loaded with reproaches, and urged to deſert the faith of Chriſt. Or this may be referred to the elect of God, who are not yet brought into the fellowſhip of the faithful, and made partakers of ſpiritual life, yet ſhall in due ſeaſon be ſpoken for, and converted to God. And they who have themſelves been joined to the Lord, cannot but be ſollicitous to ſee the bleſſed work of grace extended to others alſo.

2. He anſwers, *If ſhe be a wall*, raiſed on the foundation of apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt being the chief corner-ſtone, *we will build upon her a palace of ſilver. We*, for though the power is Chriſt's alone, he is pleaſed to employ miniſters as workers together with him; and the work of grace is well compared to a ſilver palace, to denote the excellency of the ſoul, made *the habitation of God through the Spirit. And if ſhe be a door, we will incloſe her with boards of cedar.* As ſoon as ever the door is open for the preaching of the goſpel among the Gentiles, they ſhall grow up into a glorious temple.

3. It is no ſooner ſpoken but done. *I am a wall, and my breaſts like towers*, which are the words of the Gentile church. What Jeſus hath promiſed, is ſpoken of as already done: ſhe is built upon him the foundation, and ſtrengthened by his grace, a fortreſs impregnable to all the aſſaults of Satan and ſin. *Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour*; affectionately regarded of Chriſt, and favoured with all the privileges and bleſſings of his redeemed people.

4. The Gentile church deſcribes the progreſs of the goſpel, and Chriſt's glory therein manifeſted. *Solomon*, the Prince of peace, the Lord Jeſus, *had a vineyard*, a church, *at Baal-haman*, in the Gentile world, conſiſting of many nations: *he let out his vineyard to keepers*, the miniſters of the ſanctuary, whoſe buſineſs and office it is to dreſs and keep it, *See* Mat. xxi. 33. *Every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thouſand pieces of ſilver.* He expects to receive fruit from their labours, and to ſee multitudes of immortal ſouls gained by their miniſtry, which will be as much to their account as to his glory.

5. The church expreſſes her concern for all her members. *My vineyard which is mine is before me*; every plant requiring conſtant care, and every redeemed ſoul watching with jealouſy over himſelf, leſt any noxious weeds growing up ſhould choak the fruits of righteouſneſs. *Thou, O Solomon, muſt have a thouſand*; for ſince all our increaſe cometh from him, moſt juſtly ought we to render to him the praiſe of what his grace hath wrought; *and thoſe who keep the fruit thereof, two hundred.* They who labour in the goſpel, ſhall be abundantly gainers thereby: the ſouls that are preſented to Chriſt, as the fruit of their miniſtry, ſhall be their own joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of his appearing, when *they who turn many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars in the firmament for ever and ever.*

13. Thou that dwelleſt in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: [p] cauſe me to hear *it*. 14. ¶ [q] † Make haſte, my beloved, and [r] be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon [s] the mountains of ſpices.

[p] Chap. ii. 14.
[q] Rev. xxii. 17, 20.
† Heb. Flee away.
[r] Chap. ii. 17.
[s] Luke xix. 12. Acts iii. 21.

v. 13, 14. Though for a moment they are parting, Chriſt and his church expreſs their mutual regard, and look for their future happy meeting.

1. Chriſt at parting expects often to hear of her and from her. *Thou that dwelleſt in the gardens*, here below, enjoying the ordinances and means of grace; *the companions hearken to thy voice*; ſweet intercourſe and communion being maintained between the faithful, and all of them paying the moſt attentive regard to the miniſtry of the word. *Cauſe me to hear it*, aſcending in prayer and praiſe, in bold and open profeſſions of her faith before the world, and in zealous endeavours to ſpread the knowledge of his grace among men. *Note*, When Chriſt courts us to come to him, and declares himſelf ſo willing to hear, ſhall we be backward to go? No, Lord, *early in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and look up.*

2. The church deſires his ſpeedy return. He is gone away for a while to heaven, on her account, to be her friend and advocate before the throne of God, to prepare eternal manſions of glory for her reception; and ſhe begs him to haſten back, and take her to himſelf, that where he is, ſhe may be alſo. *Make haſte, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices.* Chriſt is now ſet down on the mountain of ſpices, the throne of glory: there the eye of faith beholds him, and there love ſtill embraces him; love, which no diſtance of time or place can change. With eagerneſs his waiting ſervants expect him, and whilſt they enjoy any bright gleams of his reconciled countenance here below, in ſweet communion with him, their ſouls the more importunately pray for his appearing, that they may ſee him face to face. Nor ſhall the time be long delayed; ſwift are the rapid hours hurrying by; time draws to its period; eternity approaches; the Lord is at hand: bleſſed and happy are they, who in that day can welcome his arrival, and, when he bows once more the heavens, and comes down, in the aſſured confidence of his love can meet him, and cry, *Come quickly, Lord Jeſus!* Reader, may this be thy happy caſe, Amen!

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